

# 'Priest' gets six month jail term for fraud

A Limehouse man and self-proclaimed Catholic priest who operated a convent on the Fifth Line will spend the next six months in prison after being convicted of three counts of fraud last month.

Denis Edward Scallen, 56, was sentenced to the six month jail term, after once again professing his innocence, by Judge Allan B. Sprague, Monday, in Halton County Court.

The jury of six men and six women deliberated for 10 hours following the sensational and sometimes bizarre nine day trial, before bringing in the guilty verdict.

Scallen was found guilty of defrauding a Brantford couple and three Oakville residents who attended the church he ran at his Benedictines of Mary Immaculate monastery of \$4,000, while posing as a Roman Catholic priest.

Following a short recess after sentencing, the man

known as Brother Dan and later Father Benedict to his parishioners. Sprague decided rape and indecent assault charges against Scallen will be tried this fall.

Scallen's lawyer Jack Bellegem of Georgetown said he didn't know yet if his client's conviction for fraud will be appealed or if the rape trial will be moved out of Halton because of the fraud trial publicity.

In his remarks to the court just prior to sentencing Scallen maintained his claim that he is a validly ordained Roman Catholic priest.

He said the entire basis of his trial was if he was a valid Roman Catholic priest and declared he had shown in testimony that according to canon or church law, he is a valid Roman Catholic priest. Scallen countered that neither the prosecution witnesses from the Roman Catholic Church, Father Harvey Roach and Most Rev. Paul Reding, Bishop of the

Hamilton Diocese, denied his findings in canon law.

Scallen said he wasn't guilty of fraud, reminding the court that both he and his so-called victims testified he made them aware that his ordination by Bishop Joseph Rauber, a priest in the Old Catholic Church and a member of the Syro-Antiochian rite, would be questioned by local Roman Catholic authorities.

He gave a hearty wave to the court audience Monday as he was lead away to waiting police.

Scallen claimed during his trial that it didn't matter that he wasn't ordained by a Roman Catholic bishop. He said he was validly ordained by Rauber, a fact not disputed at the trial, and since he is a life long Roman Catholic and preached Roman Catholic doctrine he was therefore a Roman Catholic priest. Scallen maintained just because the man who ordained him wasn't a Roman Catholic

priest didn't mean he wasn't one.

After his ordination Scallen became Father Benedict and started holding Sunday masses with as many as 40 people in attendance. Later three teenage girls, whose parents gave Scallen money to keep the church going and thought he was a Roman Catholic priest, went to his Fifth Line retreat and became nuns.

Some Catholics were attracted to his church because he performed the old Latin mass and supported traditional Catholic customs.

During the trial the court and jury heard the young "nuns" testify about life at the monastery during their 30 month stay. They stated they were forced to strip in front of Father Benedict as penance.

The jury heard about the twice divorced man's involvement with a visionary in New York and his interpretations of "miraculous pictures" which were simple Polaroid shots with hidden meanings.

Scallen also claimed to have helped the FBI search for murdered former United States teamster boss Jimmy Hoffa's body, said he didn't contact Rome about his ordination since the Pope is being held prisoner and has a double and charged the Roman Catholic Church is being infiltrated by Communists and Zionists.

Bellegem urged his client receive a suspended sentence and two years probation while assistant Crown Attorney Larry Owen asked for a stiff jail term.

Bellegem said Scallen had already suffered through the humiliation of arrest, conviction and publicity and a jail term or fine wouldn't accomplish anything.

He reminded Sprague the jury took 10 hours to reach a verdict indicating there was some doubt in their minds. Bellegem said because of the publicity surrounding the case Scallen couldn't likely pose as a Roman Catholic priest again although maybe he could be declared another type of priest in a civil action. He predicted regardless of what happens his client won't likely give up his strong religious views.

He said keeping the daughters of his fraud victims as nuns for 30 months cost more than slightly over \$4,000 Scallen received in donation from the five people.

Owen noted the probation department's pre-sentence report suggested Scallen may have mental health problems and need psychiatric help but this was rejected by the defence and he had no expert testimony to introduce on the subject.

He said the only appropriate penalty would be



Denis Scallen

also very learned and knowledgeable about canon law.

He said Scallen's crime was so bound up with his strong religious beliefs he doubted society needed protection in the future from the man.

The judge thought Scallen and his followers felt so strongly about their beliefs they were "blind" to the real facts of his ordination until dissonance arose among them.

Sprague suggested Scallen's beliefs and convictions are so strong a jail term won't change them but conceded a jail term could possibly act as a deterrent for others.

The fact the state doesn't interfere with religious beliefs in Canada made Scallen's crime all the more "heinous".

Sprague said Scallen was a very religious man who was

## Dehaans celebrate 25th anniversary

June 20, 1953 was a special day for Frits and Mary Dehaan. July 1, 1978 was again a special day as they celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary at Ballinacra Community Centre.

Arrangements were made by their children for a celebration. Mrs. Joan Parker prepared a buffet dinner, music was supplied by Alvin Moore and the Country D's (brothers of Mrs. Dehaan).

Bill Chagnon, son-in-law, acted as master of

ceremonies and introduced guests from afar. Special guests were, Mrs. Shirley Wright, maid of honor and her husband, Ken, of Newmarket, and Mr. and Mrs. Dehaan's children, Bill and Diane Dehaan, of Pembroke, George and Wayne Dehaan and daughter

Mary Ann and husband Bill Chagnon and Mrs. Dehaan's mother, Mary DeVries all of Acton.

A two-tiered wedding cake belonging to Bill and Mary Ann Chagnon was re-decorated by Mrs. Robert Hart of Acton for the anniversary party.

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# Calgary conflag cause stampede

Go west young man many have been good advice, at the turn of the century, but it may not be such good advice for councillors attending conventions.

A storm broke Tuesday night over a Calgary convention of the Canadian Institute of Planners at the end of July.

Councillor Peter Morris sparked the debate by objecting to four councillors going to a convention that distance away. As it happened the four had been reduced to three well before the meeting, when Councillor Marilyn Serjeantson said she would not go. The three remaining councillors Roy Booth, Russ Miller and Pete Pomeroy will go to Calgary.

Booth said according to town policy any councillor can attend two conventions a year. He said if they wish to change the policy that should be done, but at present there is no need to ask permission.

Councillor Mike Armstrong said he was in favor of attending seminars and conferences within 50 miles, but saw no reason to travel long distances. He said he was at fault since the policy had been set and he had made no effort to change it.



Pete pays own way.

"That would mean 13 people could go on conventions twice a year," commented Morris. He pointed out there is a limited amount in the budget.

Malby said he found it regrettable four councillors would go at a time of restraint. (At this time council did not realize Serjeantson had dropped out.) He suggested one should go and report back to council.

Booth said he had not attended any conventions this year, and only one last year.

Councillor Pat McKenzie claimed there had never been three councillors at one convention before except around the Toronto area.

Councillor Walter Biehn contended no councillors should attend conventions, since they may not be around very long. He said if anyone should attend it should be staff members who can make use of any knowledge garnered.

McKenzie suggested the chairman of a committee or his designate be allowed to go. He said he hadn't had a chance to discuss it.

Mayor Tom Hill said the policy says two conventions a year for any councillor and does not state any destination. "There's only so much in the convention fund."

Pomeroy retorted to McKenzie, "If you had attended the planning board meeting you would have had a chance to discuss it."

McKenzie shot back, "I was at an important meeting. I was at the graduation at McKenzie-Smith school, and I will honor that commitment as long as I live."

Malby stated the political nonsense should be stopped and the policy changed if council doesn't like it.

Councillor Pat Patterson remarked, "I've never heard such crap and futility. We've wasted half an hour of my time, that would be better spent helping the poor farmers of Esquimaux."

On the vote Morris, Armstrong, Biehn and McKenzie opposed the Calgary junket.

## Pete pays own way

Councillor Pete Pomeroy will pay his own air fare to Calgary, when he attends the Canadian Institute of Planners conference at the end of July.

Pomeroy told this newspaper he would pay his own fare, and the town could pay

his hotel and meals, the same practice as would be carried on if the convention was in Toronto.

A disgruntled Pomeroy commented, "This way there's no more expense to the town than if the convention was in Toronto, Hamilton, or Speyside."

## Jeanettes has excellent turn-out

An excellent turn-out was reported by organizers of Jeanettes rest home open house.

The open house was held on Sunday from 2 until 5. Many people from both in and out of town strolled through the home looking at facilities and chatting with residents.

Music was provided by the group Studio 12 and dancing was enjoyed in the parking lot. Refreshments were served to visitors.

Organizers were extremely pleased and surprised at the large turn-out. They would like to extend their thanks to all those who came out for the afternoon.

## Carburator is blamed

A new carburator is blamed for a fire which caused an estimated \$1500 in damages says deputy fire chief Bob Hyde.

The fire occurred last Wednesday at the junction of Highway 25 and 17 Sideroad. The car was owned by James Allison of Mississauga. He had had a new carburator installed the day before.

Fire swept through the entire car, completely destroying it.

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