Former teacher unofficial mother hen

By MAGGIE HANNAH Herald staff writer "Entrez. Fermez la porte et

A wild was a supply of the countries of

assisez-vous, s'il vous plait." Those words were the introduction first year students entering the brand new Acton High School in 1954 got to a large, grey-haired lady who was the school's unofficial mother hen and eventually its vice-principal.

While none of the students knew exactly what Marion Reed was saying to them they did know that French was the only second language available in the school apart from Latin, and if they had any hopes of eventually going on to university they'd need all the help this stern-looking lady could give them. They walked

in, closed the door and sat down. Gradually the strange garble of sound began to mean something and after four or five years of daily sessions some of the more interested and industrious students could even speak French.

Looking back on those early days when there weren't even desks, Just stacking chairs and enough texts to go round if some students shared, one student recalls how hard it was to learn French. But more vividly she recalls Mrs. Reed's struggles to make the basics of the language simple enough that they could be used as a base and built on.

Mrs. Reed was also one of ed Brampton High School and

Town council has abolished

its recreation advisory com-

mittee after five years of

operation that witnessed seve-

ral stormy confrontations bet-

ween committee members and

The decision was made Mon-

day night during a closed-door

session of council in which

appointments were made to

four local boards and commit-

tees. When it came time for

council to consider applicat-

ions for membership on the

councillors.

the few local teachers in the school. She was the second daughter of one of Norval's oldest residents, Col. Noble. and she tells proudly how her grandfather bought the mill in 1867 and her father moved to Norval when he was a year old.

The Norval mill ground flour oatmeal and cornmeal as well as animal feed. Her grandfather bought it from the Provincial Bank of Ontario who had taken it over because the previous owner had gone bankrupt. Her grandfather died in 1908, the year after Mrs. Reed was born.

Her mother was also a Norval native and among the family treasures she has "an immense bible" which was given to her parents because they were the first couple to be married in Norval Presbyterian Church. When the Presbyterlans and Methodists united in 1924 the family went to the United Church.

with the 20th Halton Rifles during World War I but he had begun his military involvement with the unit while it was still a militia unit, Mrs. Reed says. He lived to be 96.

The Noble family moved to Toronto in the mid 1920s because the eldest daughter, Ethel, was ready to start medical school and Mrs. Reed was almost ready to start University of Toronto where she studied modern languages. The Noble children all attend-

Recreation advisory committee

abolished after five stormy years

recreation advisory commit-

tee, however, council voted to

inform the committee's incum-

bent and prospective members

that their efforts and intent-

tonger necessary.

ions are appreciated but no

The advisory committee was

to have taken on a slightly new

format this term, applying for

the first time to Halton Hills as

a whole. For the past two

years, only Wards 3 and 4

(Georgetown) have supported

a recreation advisory commi-

Mrs. Reed says they boarded in town, going in on Monday and returning Friday night. "That's why Mother wanted

to move to the city," she chuckles. "She said she couldn't stand rattling around in this house all week while we were all away at school."

Although they moved to Toronto Col. Noble never sold the farm. He had a man hired to look after his cattle and the colonel drove out from the city every day in his old Dodge car. Mrs. Reed lost her younger brother in 1931.

Mrs. Reed graduated with an Honours B.A. in 1929 and decided to go to France with a good friend Madelaine Laking who had won a scholarship to study at the Sorbonne in Paris. Although her friend stayed for two years because of her scholarship Mrs. Reed only spent one year there.

ENJOYED IT "I enjoyed it," she says of Col. Noble earned his title her year in Paris. "We had living quarters where the madame spoke beautiful French and I liked living over there and being among the French

Mrs. Reed worked at Bigwin Inn at Huntsville to earn money for her tuition at university and recalls that books were expensive even then.

"The first year I waited on tables carrying those big trays over my shoulder," she recalls. "Then towards the end of that first summer they asked me to take on the position of

ttee to provide a tiason bet-

ween the public sector and the

municipal recreation depart-

A recreation advisory com-

mittee for Wards 1 and 2

(Acton and Esquesing) was

disbanded in 1976, largely due

to a lack of public interest.

Both committees had been

formed when Halton Hills was

amalgamated in 1974, replac-

ing the standing recreation

committees that existed in

Acton and Georgetown.

"He used to say 'If I can do a painting a week I can keep us eating," she says, "He got working for another advertising firm and once things settled down there was no question that he could do really

The Reed's went to Montreal when Mr. Reed found work there and during the war he was one of the men loaned to the government to help with troop morale for the province of Quebec. Although he helped with entertainments for the troops and continued to do business for his firm on weekends Mr. Reed also made mysterious trips to New York.

"He never talked much about those trips," says his son, Halton MPP Julian Reed. "He was always vague about them. But if you stop to think about it people just weren't making trips like that then.

hostess at the dining room. Maybe he was up to something

door. I held the position for the we didn't know about."

next three years."

worry about the heavy travs

she was now worrying about

instead, she says. Waitresses

uniforms were black with a

collar and cuffs while in the

evening they wore white. The

hostess were the opposite col-

It was while she was working

at Bigwin that Mrs. Reed met

her husband. Bert, a widower

with two young children. She

went on to take her teacher's

training at the Ontario College

of Education in Toronto and

taught French in Kitchener for

a couple of years before she

"I was getting kind of old by

then so we decided to get

married in 1934. We waited

four years to get married and

still we wound up in the middle

of the Depression," she chuck-

ren, Prudence, King, Julian

and Laurie.

honeymoon.

The Reeds raised four child-

Mrs. Reed can vouch for how

hard things were at that point

when she explains how her

husband's job disappeared

while they were away on their

Mr. Reed was an artist and

the advertising company he

worked for folded up while

they were away so he had to go

job hunting as soon as they

decided to get married.

CHARCOAL PORTRAITS While she no longer had to Mr. Reed specialized in charcoal portraits and he was the artist responsible for the her hair and her grooming first portraits in the Hockey Hall of Fame at the Canadian National Exhibition grounds in white apron and stiff white

Mr. Reed was also a writer of many things including radio scripts. Mrs. Reed collaborated with her husband on one series featuring Girl Guldes who performed heroic acts. Her interest in the Gulding movement gave her the impetus to research the stories and her husband turned them into polished scripts for a program sponsored by an oil company. Although Norval had had no

Guide company when she was a girl she joined the Ranger group when she was older and found it to be such an enjoyable experience that she wanted to share it with others. When Norval eventually got its own Guide company Mrs. Reed was its first Captain. Through the years she held various posts including District Commissioner and Lone Guide Commissioner for the province of Ontario. It was even due to her involvement with Guiding that she qualified herself as a St. John's Ambulance instructor and eventually taught courses in first aid at Acton High School as well as to her Guides.

"She was the camp comandante at Doe Lake (a special Guide camp) for a couple of years," her son chuckles. "She was so busy with Guides that Dad used to threaten to write a book entitled 'I Married a Girl guide"." Mrs. Reed was also an active

member of the Norval Women's Institute and took her turn working on the branch's Tweedsmuir history of Norval. She was also active in Norval United Church and belonged to the choir. Her music goes back to her youth, her son

says, when she sang with some

of the big choirs at the Canad-

ian National Exhibition. "That would be going back to the 1920's," he says, "when they treated the big choirs something like the Scottish Tattoo today. They had no electrical ampliphication system so they had to rely on numbers. Some of those choirs

had 2,000 people in them. She

had no musical degree but she

was a fairly accomplished

musician. She had a big In addition to teaching French and later German, Mrs. Reed taught physical education to most of the girls at Acton High school. Students might have had a little more respect for her struggles to get them through the basics of volleyball, basketball and square dancing if they'd known how her own youngsters put her through the wringer trying to teach her to ski.

"It was while we were still in Montreal," Julian says. "I think it was the year I learned. My older brother and sister already knew how to ski and they decided it would be just the thing if Mother learned too so they took her along. She really thought she could do it but she was already getting fairly well on to start something like that. I remember she came home black and blue from head to foot. I guess she fell down every bump she saw. That was the last time she ever tried that."

RECALLS PARTIES Contrary to what might be expected Julian Reed says his family were never big on politics. He recalls his father talking about voting for both the major parties at different times and he doesn't see his mother as a particularly polit-

ically minded woman either. One of her former students, however, recalls very vividly how Mrs. Reed cornered her on stopping to think of the consequences of various political theories after the student made a speech on behalf of the CCF party (the forerunner of the NDP) at the demand of

An English teacher decided

another teacher.

that fourth year students should represent the three major parties that would be battling the 1958 election and designated three students to be the candidates. After appropriate research each student had to deliver a speech of a specified length over the school's public address system and the next day the students all voted. It was after the speeches were made that Mrs. Reed took the students aside and asked some probing questions on how such government changes would be financed and made her subtle point on how responsibilities must be met even by large groups like governments.

"Mother is pretty much a one to one sort of person," Julian says, "and that would be her approach if she thought it was needed. The student must have done a good job of convincing her of her sincerity if she took the trouble to talk to her about it because Mother just wasn't particularly politically minded."

Mrs. Reed lost her husband with a heart attack just before Christmas 1957. She was teaching at Acton at the time and she continued there until the early 1960s. She spent a short time at East York Collegiate but-returned in the late 1960s. In 1971 she fell and broke her hip and took an early retirement because of her health. Parkinson's disease was diagnosed the next year and she is presently in Toronto General hospital taking treatment.

budget committee and recommend to council all

Mayor Pete Pomeroy has appointed a four-man steering committee of town council that budgets. will handle preparations for the adoption this spring of Halton Hills' 1979 operating

Mayor appoints

and capital budgets. Councillors Ross Knechtel of Ward 1, George Maltby of Ward 2, John McDonald of Ward 3 and Harry Levy of Ward 4 will meet specially as an ad hoc committee to review

matters related to the two

Mayor Pomeroy, a self-professed critic of the current system of having council installed for two-year terms, falled Monday night to persuade council that the budget steering committee should itself stand for two years and consider matters related to both the 1979 and 1980 budgets.

Lions seek nominees

The Georgetown Lion's Club has set a tentative deadline of January 20 for nominations for the Citizen of the Year.

A nomince for the Citizen of the Year award should be someone who has given outstanding service to the community over the past year, or over many years, in any and all

Mr. Sykes suggested anyone wanting to nominate someone for Citizen of the Year should write a letter describing why they think their nominee is deserving of the award, and Any decisions which the comgive it to a member of the mittee makes, he added, must Sykes' Bakery on Main Street.

Citizens appointed

Town council Monday night appointed six Halton Hills cilizens to fill positions on four local boards and committees for three-year terms that will

expire Dec. 31, 1978. They are: Rick West of Wesleyan Street in Georgetown, Wayne Ruse of Storey Drive in Acton and L.L. Hartford of RR3 Georgetown to the Halton Hills Committee of Adjustment; Michael Ross of Chelvin

Drive in Georgetown to the Halton Hills Parking Authority; Norman Elliott of Elmore

Drive in Acton to the Halton Hills Public Library Board (a re-appointment); Pamela Sheldon of .RR3 Milton, recommended for appointment to the Halton Reg-

ion Land Division Committee,

subject to approval by regional

council.

"Il seems like we drag our feet on the budget every year," he said. "I'm just trying to get

things speeded up. I don't agree wholeheartedly with the two-year council term system anyway."

DEFENDED COMMITTEE Mayor Pomeroy first defended his proposed committee format against Coun. Marilyn Serjeantson's contention that

the budgets are important

enough that council should

collectively examine and final-

ize them. The mayor pointed out that each ward was to be represented on the ad hoc committee, meetings of which would nevertheless be open to any and all council members. Lion's Club, or drop it off at then be ratified by the town's general committee and then

> Coun. Levy agreed that a two-year term for the committee was a good idea, saying that the committee's simultaneous examination of budgets for two calendar years would provide badly-needed continuily and offer a liason that he said the town's finance department would "appreciate."

Coun. Roy Booth said he could agree with the concept proposed by Mayor Pomeroy but found it to contradict council's previous decision to drop its committee system altogether, with the single exception of the general committee. Having the budget committee sit for two years, he argued, creates yet another standing committee of council. Coun. Walter Biehn suggest-

ed after Mayor Pomeroy's proposal was defeated that the steering committee for 1980's budgets could still be appointed later this year well ahead of budget time.



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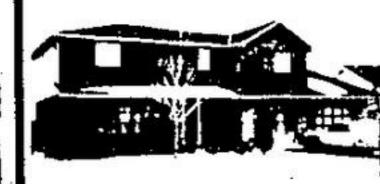
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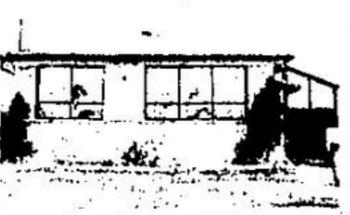
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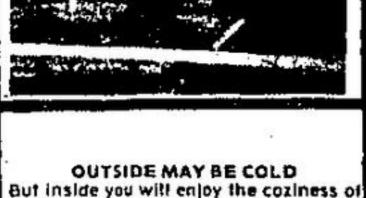
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