



The Royal Canadian Legion (Branch 120) honored a number of members and supporters Saturday night at its Georgetown headquarters, where Branch president Harold Badham presided over the initiation of 30 new members as well as the special certificate of merit presentations. Honored for their service to the branch and the community were (seated, left to right) dedicated member Evelyn "Bubbles" Waites, former Pipe Band Major George Greig, Car Club secretary-treasurer Barbara Reyce, (standing) branch treasurer Frank Nicholson, who received a Life Membership, Car Club chairman Gord Harley, Ontario transportation and communication minister Jim Snow (a Hornby resident), Mayor Pete Pomeroy and President Badham. Not shown are Gord Crozier, Ora McLaughlin, Roy Norton and Maude Norrie. The evening's initiation Night proceedings marked an important step in the branch's history when members' daughters were welcomed to the Legion for the first time. (Herald photo by Harold Branch)

SENIOR SCENES

By Morley and Lauretta Mills
877-3915

Hurrah! The birds and sidewalks are back. In this town, the sidewalks are carefully wrapped in ice and snow and put away for the winter.

It reminds me of my father's Ford car, which was jacked up, the tires removed and the garage locked until spring. Here, the elderly without transportation, have two options, either hibernate during the cold weather or risk life and limb in the art of mountain-climbing over the mounds of snow. Sometimes, the banks are made higher by unthinking car owners who shovel the accumulation from their driveways onto the sidewalk.

Even the birds fare better than we do. In fact, they haven't

hit them. They have their own transportation south. Thank goodness it's spring!

A group called the "Friends-In-Deed", organized to help the handicapped, has been active in Acton for some time. They meet in the M.Z. Bennett School library in Acton the last Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m.

These meetings offer fellowship, inspiration and support to those who may otherwise feel forgotten by the community. Their activities include card-playing, speakers, films, craft demonstrations and visits from similar groups in Guelph and Fergus. If anyone in the Georgetown area is interested, transportation can be arranged by appointment with the ActiVan 853-1530. For further information, call Ann Dadds 853-2423.

For those interested in furthering their education, Waterloo University is offering two courses in the Georgetown Library Mondays beginning April 5 from 7-10 p.m., "Social Problems" (Sociology 1022) is offered and Tuesdays from April 6 from 7-10 p.m. "The United States Since 1865" (History 2502).

WHAT'S A GRANDMOTHER?

By a Third Grader

A grandmother is a lady who has no children of her own. She likes other people's little girls and boys. A grandfather is a man grandmother. He goes for walks with the boys and they talk about fishing and stuff like that. Grandmothers don't have to do anything except be there. They're old so they shouldn't play hard or run. It is enough if they drive us to market where the pretend horse is, and have a lot of dimes ready. Or if they take us for walks, they never say, "Hurry up!"

Usually, grandmothers are fat, but not too fat to tie your shoes. They wear glasses and funny underwear. They can take their teeth and gums off. They don't have to be smart, only answer questions like, "Why isn't God married?" and "How come dogs chase cats?"

Grandmothers don't talk baby talk like visitors do because it is hard to understand. When they read to us, they don't skip or mind if it is the same story over again. Everybody should try to have a grandmother.

New members join Legion

Saturday night was the largest initiation the Branch has seen; approximately 50 new members were initiated into the Branch. This was followed immediately by the Honors and Awards ceremonies.

Comrade Frank Nicholson received a life membership award and certificates of merit were awarded to the honorable James Snow, Peter Pomeroy, Bubbles Waites, Barb Reyce, Gord Harley and George Greig.

The Sonic will be entertaining in the Lounge Saturday night.

The ladies auxiliary did an excellent job on palm reading.

The next ladies auxiliary general meeting will be held April 15 at 8 p.m.

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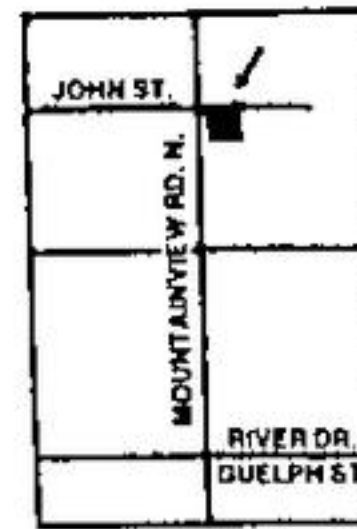
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Trial continues

Continued from page A3

Mr. Stunt explained, but a second-degree murder conviction would make the guilty party eligible for parole after 14 years in prison. Manslaughter sentences vary widely, from life in prison to probation.

Mr. Stunt said Mr. Mercuri was charged because it is believed he set the hotel fire to improve his financial position. While no one ever believed Mr. Gibbons' death to be intentional, he was a murder victim just as much as anyone who is shot or stabbed, he said.

The arsonist should take the consequences because, in a hotel fire, death or injury to residents should have been seen as a possible or even highly probable outcome to the arson, Mr. Stunt said.

Charges were laid against Mr. McCrystal because it is believed that he helped Mr. Mercuri in the alleged arson.

Mr. Stunt said the Crown's first task had been to prove the hotel fire was arson, not an accident.

Through testimony from numerous volunteer firefighters the Crown proved the existence of at least four fires in the building Aug. 19.

Once arson was proved, the Crown had to prove motive for the crime, Mr. Stunt said.

In Mr. Mercuri's case the motive was to get rid of the hotel mortgages and leave himself with an empty lot on which he could build a new facility such as another hotel or a plaza.

In the two years after he purchased the hotel, Mr. Mercuri had only been paying interest on his mortgages, Mr. Stunt said.

When Mr. Mercuri tried to refinance them, he had to scramble to find someone to accept them.

Although Mr. Mercuri denied how low his income was from the hotel, Mr. Stunt said, the fact his shareholder loan account was dropping about \$4,000-a-month tells its own story. He borrowed \$4,500 from his real estate friend Tony Fucicello and the loan was due August 31.

The Acton bank wasn't hon-

oring his pay cheques even though he had a line of credit with that branch. His mortgages and loan payments cost him more each month than he earned and he still had living expenses on top of that.

Then the Ontario Liquor Licence Board suspended his lounge licence for 15 days and cut off his main source of income.

Mr. Mercuri was "a man in a boat with a five-inch hole and three-inch bailer," Mr. Stunt said. "He couldn't keep it up."

In addition to motive, the Crown had to prove Mr. Mercuri had the opportunity to set the hotel fires, Mr. Stunt said.

That proof was given by Whitey Engleby, a nursing home employee, both of whom saw Mr. Mercuri and his car at the hotel after he was seen leaving with his friend Frank Pugliese.

The only way that that could happen was if Mr. Mercuri left, then returned to the hotel in direct contradiction of his statements to the police, Mr. Stunt said.

He described Mr. Mercuri's testimony as "contrived and tailored to exonerate himself from an onerous situation."

"He intended to deceive us as he did his employees and his family," Mr. Stunt said.

Mr. Stunt described Mr. McCrystal as "a follower, easily led, easy going, who believed he had no alternative," when Mr. Mercuri asked for his help in the fire.

"He owed Mr. Mercuri his personal existence," Stunt said. "He was indebted to Mr. Mercuri and hadn't the sense or will power to say no. Mr. Mercuri knew Mr. McCrystal had a weakness and used him as he used others."

In his charge to the jury, Justice Osborne, warned members not to become involved in the moral issue of whether the ministry of the attorney-general should make deals with informers.

"We're not here to pass judgment on paying or not paying, or dealing or not dealing, with police inform-

ers," he said.

He pointed out that there are two defendants in the trial and said they must be treated separately. If jurors fear there is honest, fair doubt, based on commonsense about any issue in the case, the accused must benefit from that doubt and be acquitted.



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