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Five-year-old Michelle Smith was given the royal treatment Saturday by Georgetown and District Hospital Auxiliary members (Iga Lazovoy, on the left, and Ann Lawson). The hat Michelle was trying on was one of many items for sale at the Auxiliary's Family

## Bannockburn WI hears CAS speaker

By EDITH MEDLAND  
Herald Special  
The May meeting of the Bannockburn Women's Institute was held at the home of Ada Sinclair with 13 members present.

The president, Dorothy Hilton welcomed the members and read a riddle called God's Great Gift is Mother for Mother's Day. The roll call was "bring a piece of

jewelry and explain its special meaning." Many lovely pieces were brought by the ladies with very interesting stories about them. The motto was read by Ruth Lihnam entitled "worry is interest paid on trouble before it is due."

Ada introduced Mrs. Rutherford, the speaker for the evening. She belongs to the Children's Aid Society of Halton. She gave a very in-

formative talk about adopting children. The main ingredients for adopting children are understanding and lots of love. Anne Hollis thanked Mrs. Rutherford and gave her a gift on behalf of the Institute.

The hostess and Mary Matthews served lunch and a social time was enjoyed. Courtesies were given to Ada by Bertha Fox. Our next meeting will be held at Ruth Lihnam's home June 9.

## Wedding bells and doctorate ahead for Rev. Jean Stairs

By ANI FEDERIAN  
Herald Staff

When Jean Stairs' car gets decorated next time, it won't just be an April Fools joke by the Acton Baptist Church youth group. This time it will be for real.

The petite minister is getting married Oct. 16. She laughs as she recalls the Sunday her old green Bobcat was spruced up with tin cans and adorned with the bold sign "Acapulco or Bust". A shut-in parishioner used to sit by the window and when he saw Rev. Stairs' car decorated, he assumed she had gotten married over the weekend and not told him.

"It started spreading all through Acton," Jean laughed. "I spent the next week correcting everybody I met on the street that I hadn't gotten married."

But this time, it will be for real. Rev. Stairs is marrying a fellow minister, Rev. Dr. Wayne Sobie. He is the minister at James Street Baptist Church in downtown Hamilton.

The couple are planning a Friday evening wedding at the James Street Baptist Church, and an informal reception across the street, at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church. Members of the three congregations have been invited to attend.

"We're not like your average couple who have everything wrapped up eight months in advance," Rev. Stairs said, admitting she hadn't bought a wedding dress yet. "Wayne and I are both very detail conscious when it comes to our jobs, but not when it comes to our personal lives."

She laughed and said her congregation is prodding her on the wedding details. Recently, eight couples of a bridal section in the Guelph newspaper were dropped off at Rev. Stairs' home anonymously by concerned parishioners.

The couple have known each other for more than six years. They met while Jean was working on her Master of Divinity degree. Her fiancé used to be her field education supervisor for one year.

"It was some time after that it became a more significant relationship," the attractive woman said. When Wayne first started to ap-



pear on the scene, the Acton Baptist congregation became concerned Jean would get married and leave her parish. That was a thought even when they hired her.

That's not the reason why Jean is leaving now, she insists. The reason is her decision to go on with her theology studies.

Rev. Stairs has been accepted into the Doctor of Ministry program at the Toronto School of Theology. She'll be taking courses twice a week across from Queen's Park, starting Aug. 31. Only 10 students across Canada have been accepted into the program.

The couple will live in Hamilton after the wedding, so Jean will join the GO bus commuters to Toronto.

A scholarship from McMaster Divinity College, called the Fred Jewell Scholarship, will help finance the schooling.

Jean anticipates getting the doctorate in three or four years. "I feel very ready to stretch and be challenged," she said.

Already she knows what area she'll be exploring with her doctoral thesis. It will deal with the relationship between a congregation and a seminary student. How the two

relate, and the nurturing of the student into a minister will be explored while Jean acts as supervisor to students placed at James Street Baptist Church.

Once a week she'll also teach peer learning seminars in which seminary students will share their experiences and learn how to be better ministers.

"On top of that, I also hope to do some pulpit supply work on Sundays as an interim minister. I want to keep my hands in the pie of the ministry that way too," Rev. Stairs said. "She's already got two preaching engagements lined up for November."

Oct. 25 will be the last day Rev. Stairs will be in the employ of Acton Baptist Church. That also happens to be the 143rd anniversary of the church. The downtown Acton church was founded in 1842.

"That Sunday is also the anniversary of my own ordination in 1982. This church ordained me, and that particular Sunday has a lot of significance for the church and I it's rich with memories and meaning," she said. "I'll have been here exactly six years that Sunday."

Does the departing minister have any words of advice for the new, as yet unknown, minister who will be replacing her? No.

"I would hope that whoever comes would allow the people to minister to them as much as they minister to the people, because these people have a lot to give," she said. "These people are good people. I will really miss them."



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# the HERALD FAMILY

## Adoption patterns change recently

EDITOR'S NOTE: With fewer infants and more older children available for adoption, the Halton Children's Aid Society is providing better training and post-adoption support to couples who adopt older children.

Special workshops are also being offered to parents who have adopted native children.

The following article describes the changing need for these services and how they are provided. This article was submitted by Karen Hewer, the Public Relations Co-ordinator for the Halton Children's Aid Society.

Adoption has changed over the last decade. With fewer infants available for adoption, and the need for Crown Wards to become part of a permanent family, more couples are adopting older children.

As a result, the Halton Children's Aid Society has recognized the need to provide follow-up support to adoptive families, and the adoption enrichment program was established in 1985.

In an interview, program co-ordinator Mary McCallum explained that the children who have been adopted at an older age have been in foster care prior to adoption, and often have experienced physical or sexual abuse or abandonment - losses which have precipitated emotional or behavioural problems.

To help parents deal effectively with their adopted sons or daughters, Marg provides weekly peer group counselling for eight to 15 weeks.

Adoptees are referred to their own peer groups. Last year a group for adolescent boys was run for 15 weeks, and another group is planned for later this year for latency adoptees.

Some of the issues adopted children are grappling with include anger at being "thrown away", which is exactly how they describe their feelings. The group helps them

to reduce their feelings of isolation, by relating to other adopted youngsters.

As a result of some of the difficulties experienced by adoptive parents, Marg said, "we are preparing people better for adoption of older children. The Agency is even considering requiring couples to foster prior to adopting an older child."

By supporting adoptive parents before and after adoption it is hoped adoption disruption will be prevented, and those children who need treatment will be identified.

John and Leslie Rutherford are parents of five adopted children, three of whom were adopted after six months of age, and find the support group very helpful to them.

In an interview, Leslie Rutherford recalled that, "when we first adopted, we knew intellectually that it would be more challenging (than having biological children), but we hoped problems would bypass us."

When children are adopted at an older age, they come without a "totally clean page", in that they have usually experienced separation anxiety, because they have left their home of origin and/or foster home. Therefore, parenting adoptive children involves more frustrations more frequently, or of longer duration, she said.

While Leslie says that neighbors and friends are supportive, "they don't understand the complexities of (the children's) special needs."

The support group, she said, helps adoptive parents feel less isolated, as they find other people having similar kinds of problems.

**NATIVE CHILDREN**  
Three of the Rutherfords' children are of native background, and through their volunteer work with

the Halton Children's Aid Society, they are well aware of some of the stresses placed on native children, especially during the teen years, when they are struggling with their identity and cultural backgrounds.

Cultural clashes and conflicts in values have resulted in adoption breakdowns in a number of adoptive homes involving native children. To prevent family breakdown, running away situations, and promote family unity, the Halton Children's Aid Society co-operated with the Hamilton Wentworth Children's Aid Society and the Catholic Children's Aid of Hamilton-Wentworth to present "Parenting the Canadian Indian Child in a Non-Indian Home", a panel presentation, including adoptive and foster parents, an adoptee, and a leader of a group for native children.

Of particular interest to adoptive and foster parents, a very successful workshop was held on Monday, May 4, from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. at the Burlington Cultural Centre, 425 Brock (at Lakeshore) Burlington, Ontario. For more information on further meetings, contact Margaret McCallum, at the Halton Children's Aid Society, 844-8211 or 878-2375.

## Recognition event

The public is invited to attend the 13th annual meeting and Volunteer Recognition Event being put on by the Board of Directors for Halton Adolescent Services, this Thursday, May 28.

The event gets underway at 5:30 p.m. at the Halton Region Administration Building. For more information, call 639-0025.

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