

Apple farm rebuilds after costly blaze

By ALAN MACKIE
The Herald

A fire that destroyed four buildings at Chudleigh's Apple Farm on Highway 25 north of Sideroad 5 Feb. 13 was a "temporary serious setback" that forced the owner, Tom Chudleigh, to quickly set goals to get his business back on track.

The blaze was reported to cause \$775,000 damage and kept firefighters busy throughout the night as Milton, Georgetown and Acton fire departments responded to the original fire and then to a couple of smaller fires that were

the children playing in the tent, she said.

Once the fire site had been cleaned enough and a larger tent was found the children's play area moved away from the road and behind the Chudleigh house, Ms. Rosenbersky said. The two dogs are having the time of their lives now that they are around children, she said.

Approximately 425,000 people visit Chudleigh's annually.

Mr. Rosenbersky also said Chudleigh's pies were being made within a week of the fire. The pies

ing" business since 1967 with Mr. Chudleigh's first apple crop. When

the business grew the farm started selling refreshments and finally

the first Chudleigh's apple pie was made in 1973.

Chudleigh's
...a tradition for over 20 years

created from the barns smouldering remains.

Although no people were injured in the fire, two pets, Rambo the sheep and Tammy the Ram, died.

The day after the fire Mr. Chudleigh had set goals to quickly restore the business to as close to normal as possible within two weeks.

Four days after the blaze a tent was set up near Highway 25 to take care of the people who had already booked their visits to the farm, Shirley Rosenbersky of Chudleigh's said.

The tent could not be too close to the ashes of the barns until a clean-up had finished, she said.

While everyone was very understanding about the limited resources of the apple farm at that time, the two Labrador dogs Mac and Tosh were upset, Ms. Rosenbersky said. The two dogs are only allowed so close to the road and sat at that point watching

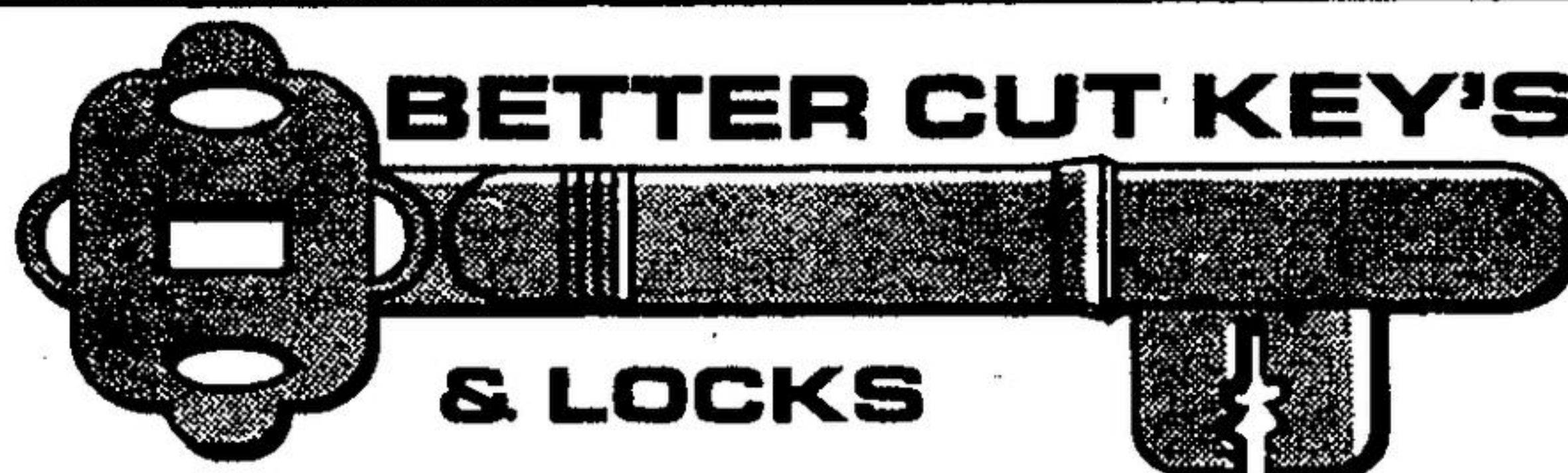
are being made at Marvin Gardens in Aberfoyl, she said.

While Mr. Chudleigh wanted all of his employees to return within two weeks of the fire, about 34 were not able to stay with the company. Ms. Rosenbersky said the production of pies absorbed as many of the jobs as possible, but since a lot of the employees are students the extra travelling made it difficult for many to return to their jobs.

While the pie making continues through the week, the farm is no longer open all week. It is open on Saturdays and Sundays.

For the summer the tent will be the children's play area but Ms. Rosenbersky is hoping one building will be open for the autumn season. Plans for a building will be coming in May, she added.

Chudleigh's Apple Farm has been in the "entertainment farm-



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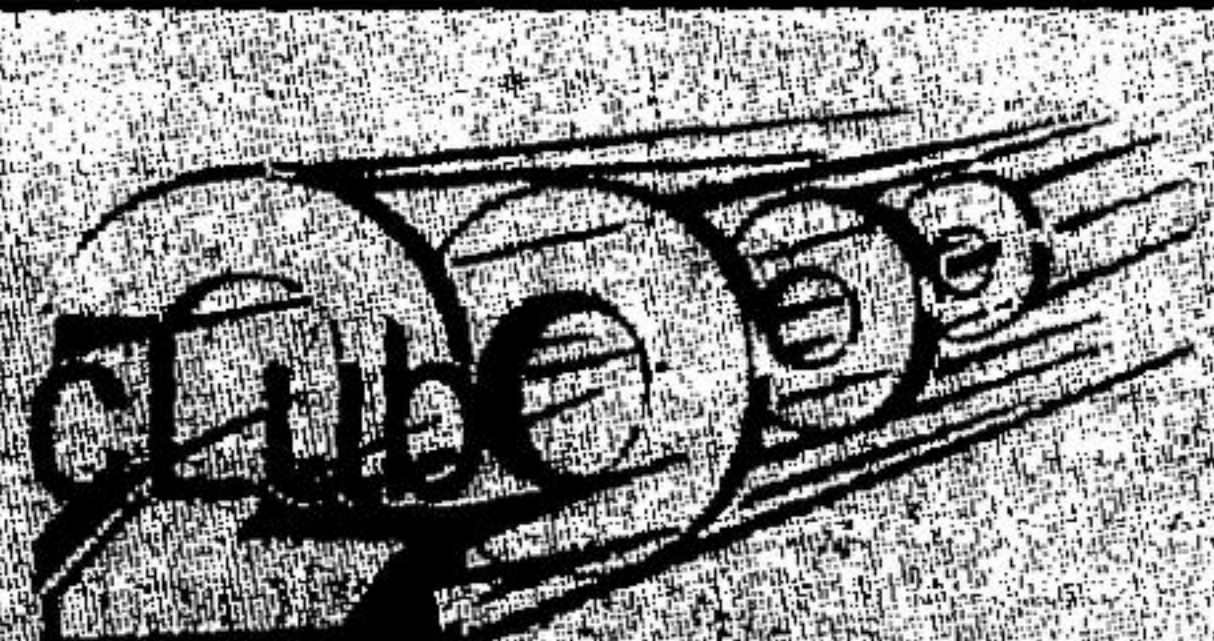
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