

Harding is tapped for SIU duty

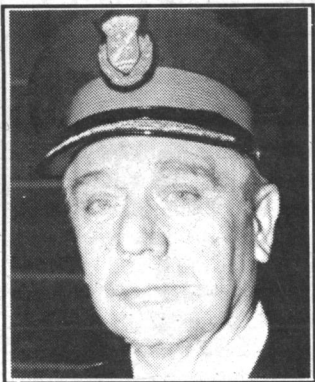
By Oksana Buhel

Halton Region Police Chief James Harding's extensive law enforcement experience will be put to good use when he becomes a member of the attorney-general's civilian watchdog group mandated to monitor police shootings.

Harding will be joining the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) Dec. 1, but his position has not yet been announced.

He was involved with

SIU proceedings last November as a member of a task force which ultimately recommended the SIU needed more power to investigate alleged police wrongdoings and also have the power to lay charges against police officers. Around the same time, Harding argued staunchly that a section of the Criminal Code be modified because of its leniency towards officers who shot at fleeing suspects.



James Harding

The citizens' group has been criticized by some police forces for the length of time taken to conduct investigations, but Howard Morton, SIU director, insisted Harding was not selected because of his policing background. Morton said Harding will not be a liaison person between the two organizations, but did not explain

what his exact position would be.

Harding's retirement becomes official Dec. 31. If the Halton Regional Police Services Board is not able to find a new chief before Dec. 1, Harding's position with the SIU will be limited to an investigative or administrative one, because of the potential conflict of interest.

Halton Police Services Board chair Barry Quinn, also a member of the selection committee mandated to select a new chief, said he was optimistic Harding's position would be filled by Dec. 1. He did not say how many applicants are currently battling for the post. "We are at a point where we can make a decision," he said. Quinn added the decision "will probably be made in two weeks."

\$8,000 blaze

Approximately \$8,000 damage was caused to the International Protein Corp. building on Wallace St. in Acton Wednesday afternoon when the plastic coated siding caught fire. A company employee was welding beside the premises when the accident occurred. Halton Hills Fire Department was called to the scene and the fire was quickly extinguished.

Transformer blows

A hydro transformer blew at 2:30 a.m. Thursday morning at the corner of Hall Rd. and Guelph St. in Georgetown. Halton Hills Fire Department arrived quickly and extinguished the flames. The area temporarily affected is bound by Armstrong Ave., Todd Rd., Mountainview Rd., Hungry Hollow, Edward St. and

Police Beat

Guelph St.

Items stolen

A suspect entered an unlocked garage on McKinnon Ave. in Georgetown Sunday between midnight and noon and made off with a tool box, baseball mitt and electric drill. The goods were valued at \$3,000. Other items were strewn over the front lawn. Police have no suspects or witnesses.

Gas siphoned

Suspects siphoned gasoline out of buses at Laidlaw Transit Ltd. on Mountainview Rd. in Georgetown Wednesday night. Police have promised to step up patrols at the location, since this is the second incident in three days.

Crime Stoppers pays

Crime Stoppers is reporting a slight increase in the number of phone tips received during the third quarter of 1993. Calls received in the July to September period numbered 53. This compares with 50 in the first quarter and 45 in the second.

Sgt. Rod Cliffe (police coordinator for the program) is pleased with the increase, but would like to see an average of at least a call per day.

Crime Stoppers pays cash rewards for anonymous tips that result in arrest. The civilian-run program is one that combines the efforts of the public, the media and the police to solve or (in some cases), prevent crimes. A recent example would be a hit-and-run accident in Milton in September.

Approximately \$4,000 worth of damage was done to a parked car. The local newspaper ran the story and it resulted in a call to Crime Stoppers that suggested a possible suspect. The driver of the other car is now charged in the case.

In an effort to improve the program, the coordinator is now writing stories about three crimes each week - one each for Oakville, Burlington and Halton Hills/Milton. It is hoped crimes which may be of more local interest will result in more calls which will solve more crime. Crime Stoppers can be reached at 1-800-668-5151 or 825-TIPS.

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