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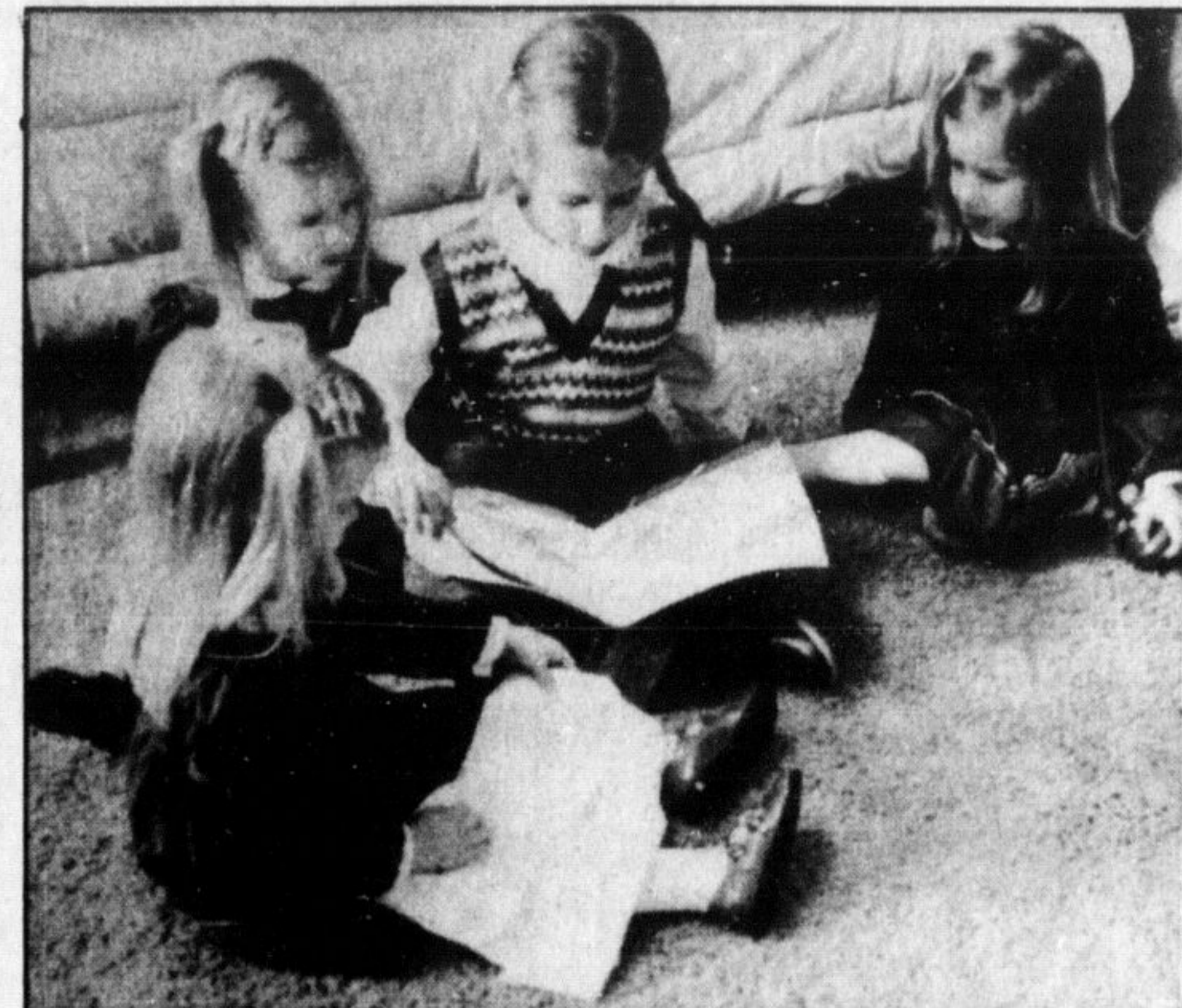
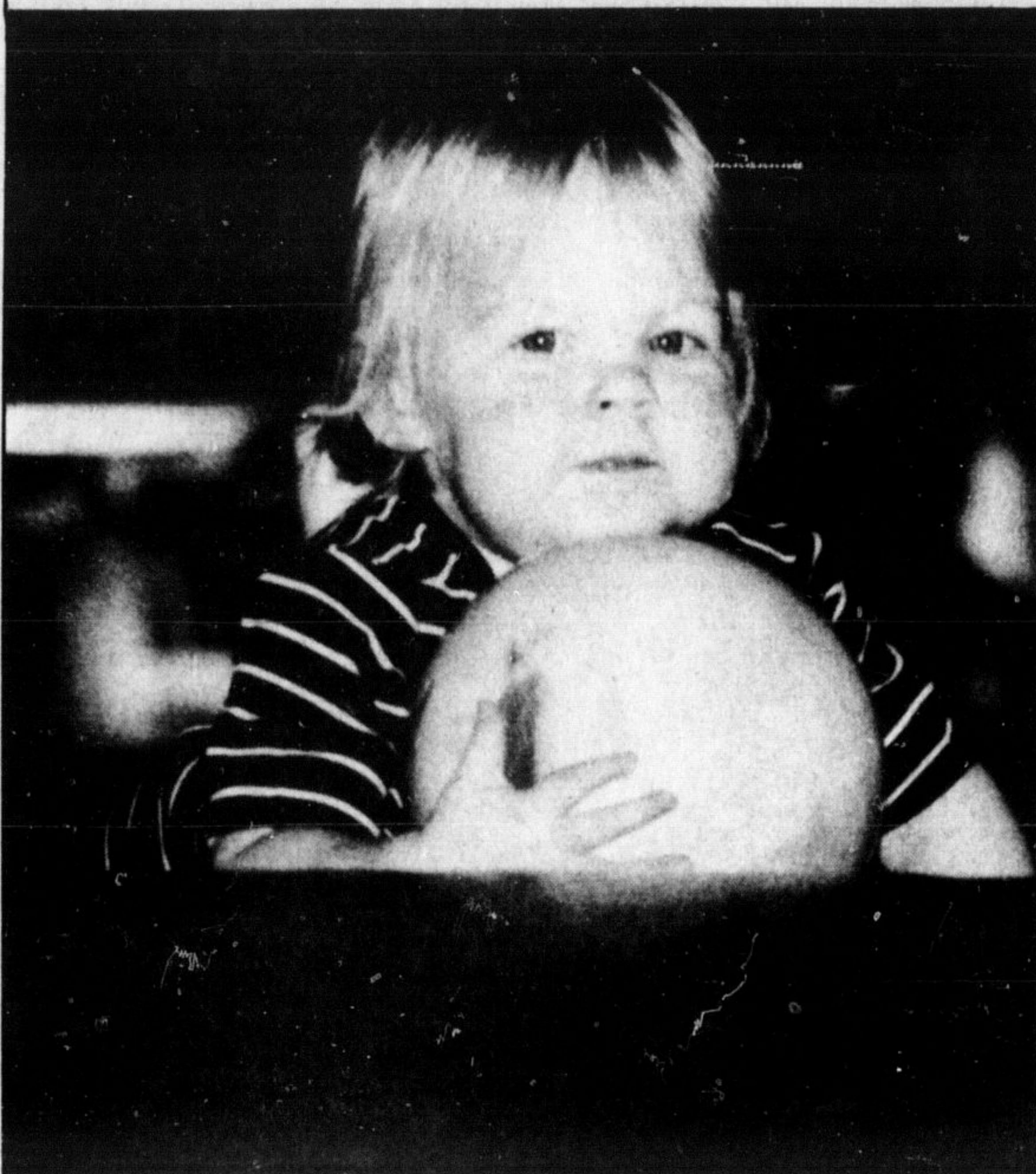
about town

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 1983

THIRD SECTION

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Future Springers get jump on gymnastics



The youngest offspring of Olga and Richard Laughton represent a one-of-a-kind happening in Milton. Tessa, Edwyna (left) and Jennifer (right) are the only triplets to have lived in Milton. Their six-year-old sister Melissa entertains the three-year-olds. Tessa and Edwyna are identical and Jennifer is a fraternal triplet.

Parents of multiples united with POMBA

By JANE MULLER
Staff Writer

Imagine changing 210 diapers and preparing more than 100 bottles of formula a week and you'll have an idea of the challenge of raising triplets.

It is a challenge faced by about 30 families each year in Canada—among them are the Laughtons who hold the distinction of being the only parents of triplets to live in Milton.

Jennifer, Edwyna and Tessa have recently turned 3-years-old, proof that despite what seems an incredible feat it is possible for all involved to survive those first years.

Richard and Olga Laughton were planning to provide a younger sibling for their first-born, Melissa when the slim odds of creating triplets caught up with them.

"We were going to have two children," Olga recalls. "So much for family planning in the '80s."

Her attitude reflects the sense of humour she must call on those nights when three crying infants sought their mother's attention. Actually, she admits that the chance of parents surviving a multiple birth means both must make equal contributions.

Her husband, an engineer, has been known to challenge anyone to a diaper changing contest.

The couple's acquired expertise in this unique aspect of child rearing is not going to be lost to others in their situation.

They have recently completed updating a handbook aimed at helping parents of triplets and quadruplets. The detailed manual deals with the situation from the time of discovering the multiple birth will occur, up to the children's first few months in the world.

The original version of the handbook is among Olga's collection of information concerning multiple births provided through the Parents of Multiple Births Association (POMBA) of Canada.

A national organization since 1978, POMBA grew from smaller groups originating in Western Canada.

Now most twin clubs are affiliated with the national group as well as individuals who do not have access to these smaller organizations in their areas. The POMBA head office is at Lethbridge, Alberta.

There is a small group in Milton which is affiliated with the Mississauga Parents of Twins Club. Olga has been active in this and POMBA, acting as an area representative last year. This year she is program convener for the Mississauga group and chairman of Parents of Triplets Council for POMBA.

According to Olga, some research into multiple births has been carried out in the United States but Canadian statistics are hard to come by.

"There is a dearth of material unless you use American information," she explained.

POMBA is still able to aid parents of multiple births by providing printed material like the handbook the Laughtons helped produce. Specific information on breast feeding multiples, sending them to school and references for further reading are also supplied.

Before Olga became the mother of a rather large family, she was working on her doctoral thesis in the field of political science. Consideration was given to her situation and she was granted an open ended completion date for the final step toward attaining her degree.

Since becoming involved in POMBA, however, she has managed to satisfy her academic appetite. A guide for parents of triplets and quadruplets and a multiple birth directory are her current projects.

The connection with a common interest group offers more than information. It gives parents a united voice, necessary to increase public awareness of the problems they face, especially in obtaining baby supplies at a discount.

"New mothers wonder, how can I cope, what can I do?" "They find out there are moms who have survived," suggested Olga.

Offers of assistance from women within these organizations are "meant from the bottom of the heart," she assures.

Olga was 20 weeks into her pregnancy when ultra-sound detected three little heads and spines. Twins would not have been as much of a surprise as triplets owing to the fact both Olga and Richard's families have produced twins.

"I was excited but I was told to expect them to weigh only three pounds," recalls Olga.

There is always a great risk of losing one or more baby when three or more are delivered. To Olga's relief, her little girls all weighed in at five pounds.

They were born at Women's College Hospital, Toronto, 34 weeks after conception.

"It was the most incredible thing when the nurse pushed three bassinets to the window."

"You need those moments," remember Olga.

As Jennifer, Tessa and Edwyna grew, they ventured into the world in a three-seater stroller. While the extraordinary piece of equipment gave Olga freedom and cured her cabin fever, the unusual site attracted curious people who managed to turn an outing into a quiz period.

Despite this drawback, the triple stroller was a blessing and one difficult to come by. There are only two manufacturers of strollers designed for a trio of toddlers and of them, only one exports to Canada.

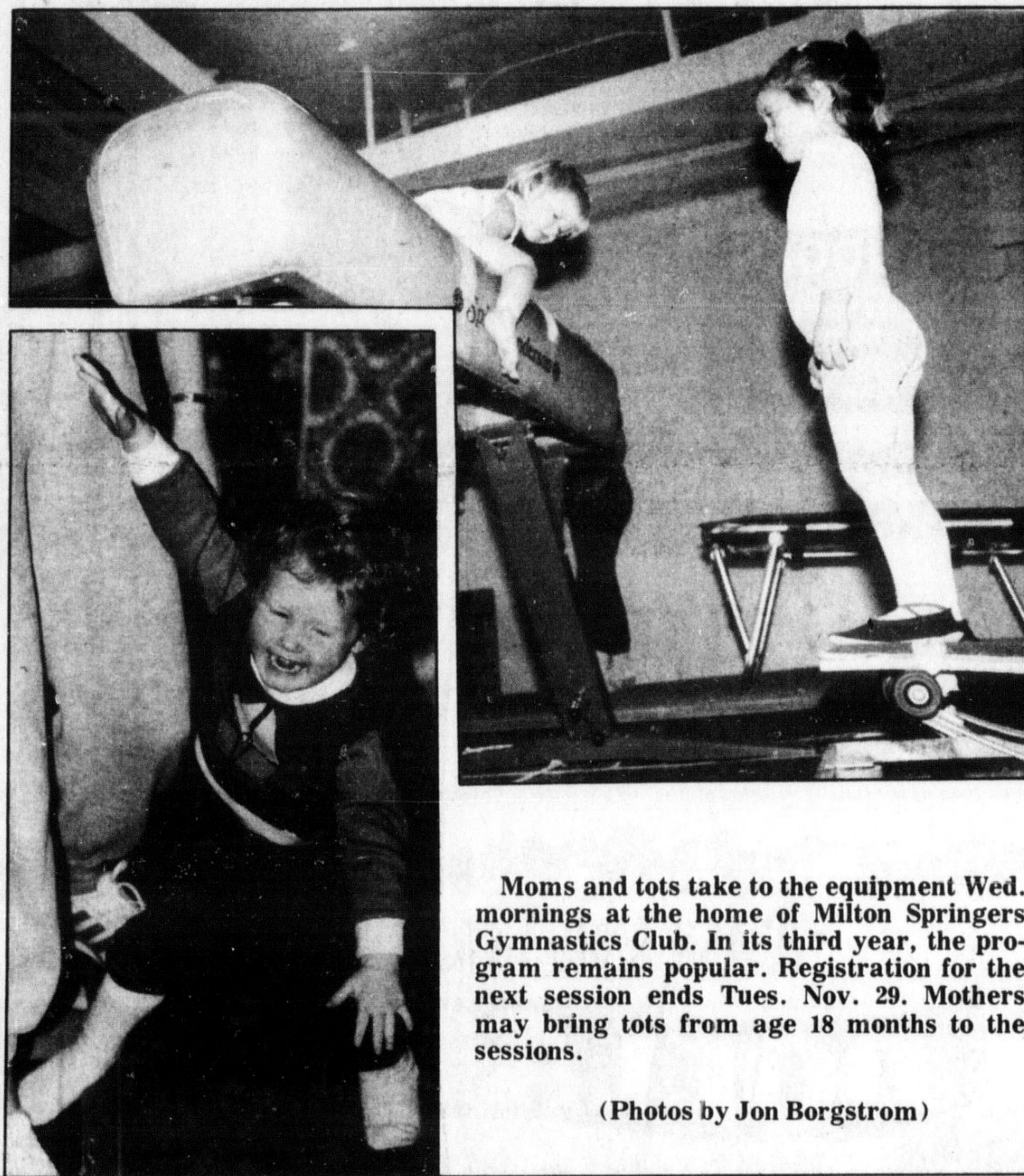
The challenge of finding strollers for twins and triplets is such that it warranted a special pamphlet produced by POMBA. It should be comforting to potential and current parents of multiple births that with each difficulty encountered there are those who are attempting to address them. POMBA members will hold their 7th annual convention at Ottawa in the spring of 1984.

The Victoria Weekend conference will feature seminars and workshops dealing with child development and other topics specific to multiple births.

POMBA was incorporated this year and is now attempting to receive charitable status.

"We're now getting involved on a worldwide scale," Olga said of the organization.

One of POMBA's major aims is to encourage provincial governments to offer financial assistance to parents of multiples. Presently, only Quebec provides funds to help parents of triplets and quadruplets.



Moms and tots take to the equipment Wed. mornings at the home of Milton Springers Gymnastics Club. In its third year, the program remains popular. Registration for the next session ends Tues. Nov. 29. Mothers may bring tots from age 18 months to the sessions.

(Photos by Jon Borgstrom)

Hand-crafted kneelers Grace Church

The skill, dedication and patience of seven parishioners at Grace Anglican Church will be evident to all who approach the altar there.

The culmination of two years of commitment has resulted in seven new alter rail kneelers, each a carefully stitched piece representing the history of the town. The worn look of the former cushions or kneelers prompted the Alter Guild at Grace to look into replacing them.

"The project captured the imagination of a lot of people," explained Rev. Robert Lennox.

He recalls the enthusiasm of church and Alter Guild member Betty Mercer who helped get the project underway and followed it through to completion.

"They are really unique, most simply have religious symbols on them. You would have to go a long way before you'd see similar ones," Rev. Lennox said of the needle point creations.

A woman responsible for one of the cushions told the Reverend it took 700 hours to complete.

The kneelers were officially dedicated to the church Sunday during the regular 10:30 a.m. service by the Right Reverend Clarence Mitchell, Suffragan Bishop of the Diocese of Niagara. Also at the service were Mayor Gord Krantz and Arch deacon Homer Ferris who was Rector of Grace from 1949 to 1953.

G. Boughton Smith of Don Mills is the artist who designed each cushion taking care to include historical, recreational and cultural aspects of the town. Birds, flowers and fruits common to the area were included to make the illustrations even more appealing.

The owner of a craft store at Oakville, Joan Phillips, consulted with the needle-point workers throughout the project. She offered expertise in stitchery which she shared in monthly meetings with the group.

Robert Argall, the only man involved in the undertaking, stitched the kneeler placed at the far left of the altar. The first cushion depicts a Mississauga Indian canoeing on Sixteen Mile Creek with the Niagara Escarpment in the background.

The next kneeler, created by Barbara Havard includes a missionary on horse back, a stage coach and a single horse plow. Jenny Stodart's contribution depicts boaters on the mill pond, Martin's mill and the bandshell, formerly located at Victoria Park.

The centre cushion is an example of Betty Mercer's handiwork, showing the existing church, the original church it now incorporates and the Niagara Diocese crest.

A more traditional kneeler design is seen in the cushion sewn by Carol Senicar. It pictures an open bible with the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet on its pages as well as a baptismal font and a chalice. Unlike the other designs which deal mainly with the town itself, this one's theme is never ending faith.

Moving through the years toward the present-day Milton, the sixth cushion, stitched by Betty Stark, shows the four seasons as they effect the area's recreational areas.

The Anglican Church of Canada and Town of Milton crests appear together on the final cushion to reinforce the theme the series is intended to convey. Pat Mill's needlework can be seen in the crests and the landscape of the Ontario Agricultural Museum backed by the GO Train passing in front of the escarpment.

Blanch Appleton added her touch to the project by stitching the rope which cordons off the altar area.

According to Rev. Lennox, the project was financed through contributions from individuals, church groups and a number of memorial donations documented on a plaque at the church.

A booklet describing the entire project will be available at the church.



Alter rail kneelers rarely receive as much attention as the new set to be dedicated at Grace Anglican Church Sunday morning. Their unique designs depicting the town's history were stitched by a group of seven parishioners including Betty Mercer who displays her contribution.

128th Anniversary

Friends and visitors were welcomed to the 128th Anniversary Service of Knox Presbyterian Church on Sun., Oct. 30.

Our guest speaker was the Rev. R. Campbell Taylor of Knox Church, Oakville. His address was entitled "Staying Power."

A heartfelt "thank you" is extended to Marjorie Magee for training and leading our Anniversary Choir. Their anthems, "Holy, Holy, Holy" and "The Lord's My Shepherd" were beautifully sung by the large choir. Mr. Don Williams

of Oakville was guest soloist and favoured us with two delightful selections, "Count Your Blessings" and "The Hymns of the Old Church Choir." Mrs. Magee at the organ and Mrs. Dawn Brodie at the piano performed two duets which were enjoyed by all.

It was a truly meaningful service with the music being a major part.

Our anniversary celebrations actually began on the Friday evening prior when a large number attended our "Celebration of Talents."