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By Patricia Adams

As October inches closer, the Milton Rotary Festival of the Arts, sponsored by Milton Rotary, Arts Milton and the Milton Champion, is continuing to take shape. Jacqueline Smith, who was profiled in the Champion recently, has applied to bring her award winning highland dancing to the Festival. Jacqueline is a two time Adult World Champion and she is the only dancer to win the prestigious award outside of Scotland - twice. She has taught highland dancing at her studios in Thornhill and Milton.

A Capella Showcase is also entered to perform at the upcoming Festival. Judy Comeau founded the group in 1996, and since then they have won international contests and attracted new members. They now have women from all age groups ranging from 22 to 83. They have been designated Area Three in the umbrella group Harmony Inc., with 2,000 members in North America.

A Capella has a varied repertoire, which includes barbershop favorites as well as Beach Boys and Patsy Cline music. They welcome new members. Any woman who can carry a tune is invited to join them. Their rehearsals are held every Monday night at Milton Alliance Church at 7:30.

Aside from making beautiful music, this group has fund raising events for the Autism Society. "It is very satisfying to know that you are helping people and at the same time having the time of your life," commented Hilary Flynn, Communications Director for A Cappella. The group has activities all year round, from their summer concert to their Christmas Carolling. They will be performing at the Milton Farmers Market on August 21 and September 25. As part of their fund raising effort at the Market, they will be offering baked goods and will even sing happy birthday to you. You can also buy their happy birthday tape.

Kim DeBruyn is a mixed media artist. She has her studio in Glen Williams and lives in Milton. Her educational background includes collagraph printing, stained glass, glass blowing, computer drawing, fine arts and the school of Crafts and Design. Her work has prepared her to produce collagraph printmaking/painting and large leaded glass pieces. Her work contrasts dramatically textured black and white collagraph prints against emotionally charged and colourful oil paintings and drawings.

Kim has exhibited her art from Milton to the Art Gallery of Hamilton. She is a member of the Artists in Stained Glass and she gives private and group lessons at the Williams Mill Creative Arts Studio. As well, her work is featured in many private collections. Her work will be juried and we may have the pleasure of seeing her work at the Festival.

In the next few weeks I will highlight even more of the wonderful artists, artisans and performers that this community will see at the Festival.

Fax your Letters to the Editor to 878-4943. Use the same number for Dateline and sports items.

Author proposes new theories to shed light on ancient mysteries

By IRENE GENTLE
The Champion

Man through the ages has been haunted by the quest for the Holy Grail. So it only seems appropriate that Mann should devote a decade or so to it as well.

That would be Bill Mann, an Oakville resident, planner at

the Town of Milton and author of the newly published historical chronicle Labyrinth of the Grail.

He has spent about eight years penning the 250-page epic that is a smorgasbord of religion, philosophy, art and mathematics.

He reins all these elements in to tackle the notion of history itself.

Oh, and on the way, he challenges the meaning of the Holy

Grail.

Long considered to be a chance or material treasure, Mr. Mann contends that the grail is actually knowledge.

But others have had different ideas.

His story begins with a heretic theory advanced by the Knights Templar in the 11th century, shortly before the first bloody Crusade. It claimed that a marriage between Jesus Christ and Mary Magdalene had created at least one child.

That progeny was the holy bloodline, or, in other words, the living, breathing holy grail.

A commitment to protecting the grail took the Templar's far afield from Europe.

As far, contended Mr. Mann, as Nova Scotia.

Long before Columbus stumbled onto the Americas, the Knights Templar had arrived to set up their own 'heaven on earth,' he suggests.

He also wonders if the Templar take on the meaning of the grail had actually been a ruse.

"For those people who get hung up on the holy bloodline, they can't see what the grail really stands for," said Mr. Mann. "To me the real activity was the perpetuation of hidden knowledge."

Geometry, in particular.

It was geometry that allowed the knights to establish longitude before it was commonly known, said Mr. Mann.

"That would have been pure

power," he said. "These guys were able to travel to Nova Scotia because they had accurate enough maps."

Once there, they would have discovered another reason to keep the Templar knowledge concealed.

"On a non-esoteric level, if you had an unlimited source of minerals and gold, you'd keep it secret, too," said Mr. Mann.

While not completely sold on the idea of a holy bloodline, he has become convinced that ancestry plays a part in the formation of a person's unique personality.

The Manns, as it happens, are steeped in Masonic and military history.

And it was being shown a Masonic ring as a young teenager that ultimately led to this book, said Mr. Mann.

The simplified version is this — by putting the design of a Masonic ring on a map, Mr. Mann was able to pinpoint where he believed the Templar 'heaven on earth' stood.

Having discovered it in theory, he sallied forth to check it out in reality.

Even to his own surprise, the spot held ruins.

So far, it is anyone's guess if they are proof that the Knights Templar had once set up shop in Canada.

But Mr. Mann is less interested in providing answers than he is in asking the questions.

"I'm not saying that this is

• see RIDDLE on page 19



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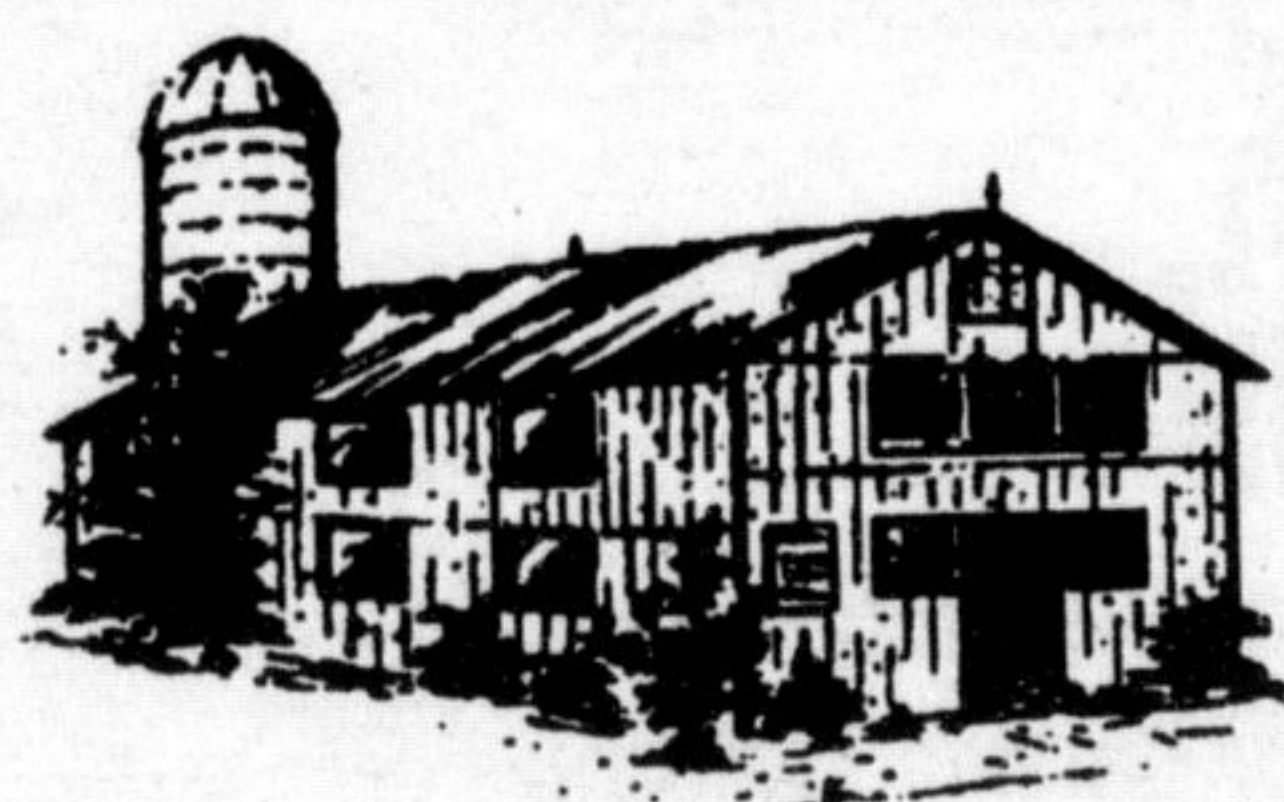
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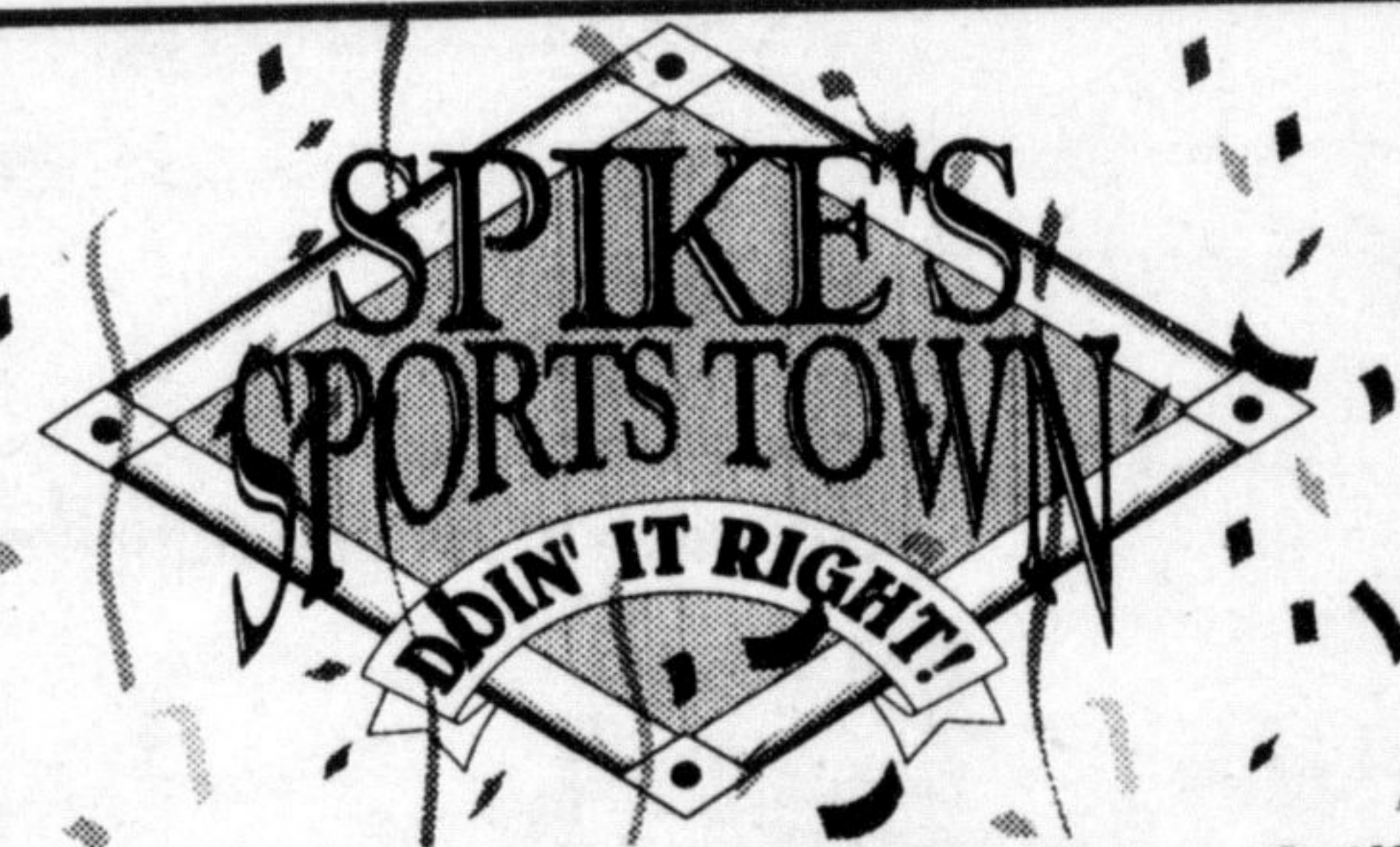


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