

Police take 140 firearms off the street in latest weapon amnesty

By HOWARD MOZEL
Special to The Champion

While Halton Regional Police say every weapon collected in their latest firearms amnesty program has a story, the most important thing is they all end the same — they're off the street.

That said, Staff Sgt. Tom Chapman explained the weapons were turned in by law-abiding citizens who simply have no more use for old hunting rifles and wartime memorabilia — especially with Canada's new gun laws coming into effect in the new year.

"It makes me feel good," he said. "The program was a resounding success. The public co-operation was great."

Police set aside November 17 and 18 for residents to turn in firearms, ammunition and military ordnance.

More than 100 homes visited

In total, 120 homes were visited and 40 handguns and 120 long guns (rifles and shotguns) were turned in for disposal.

One weapon officers will be pleased to see smelted is a Belgian-made FN, which can easily be converted to fully automatic with a match stick.

"Basically you have a machine gun," said Sgt. Frank Phillips. "It's designed for only one purpose and that's to kill someone."

This variety of gun was used by the Canadian military and was to have been sold off as surplus until officials realized how dangerous it really was in the wrong hands.

Far more quaint, but also a hazard was a tiny, nickel-plated .32-calibre handgun that was easily more than 100 years old, said Staff Sgt. Chapman. This, and three live rounds, were found in the home of a man's 90-year old aunt.

A small dueling pistol without a trigger guard was also turned in, as was a semi-automatic handgun, a black powder flintlock and pistol brought home from the Second World War.

In fact, the amnesty collected an assortment of military ordnance, including artillery rounds and even some live shells. These will be disposed of by Canadian

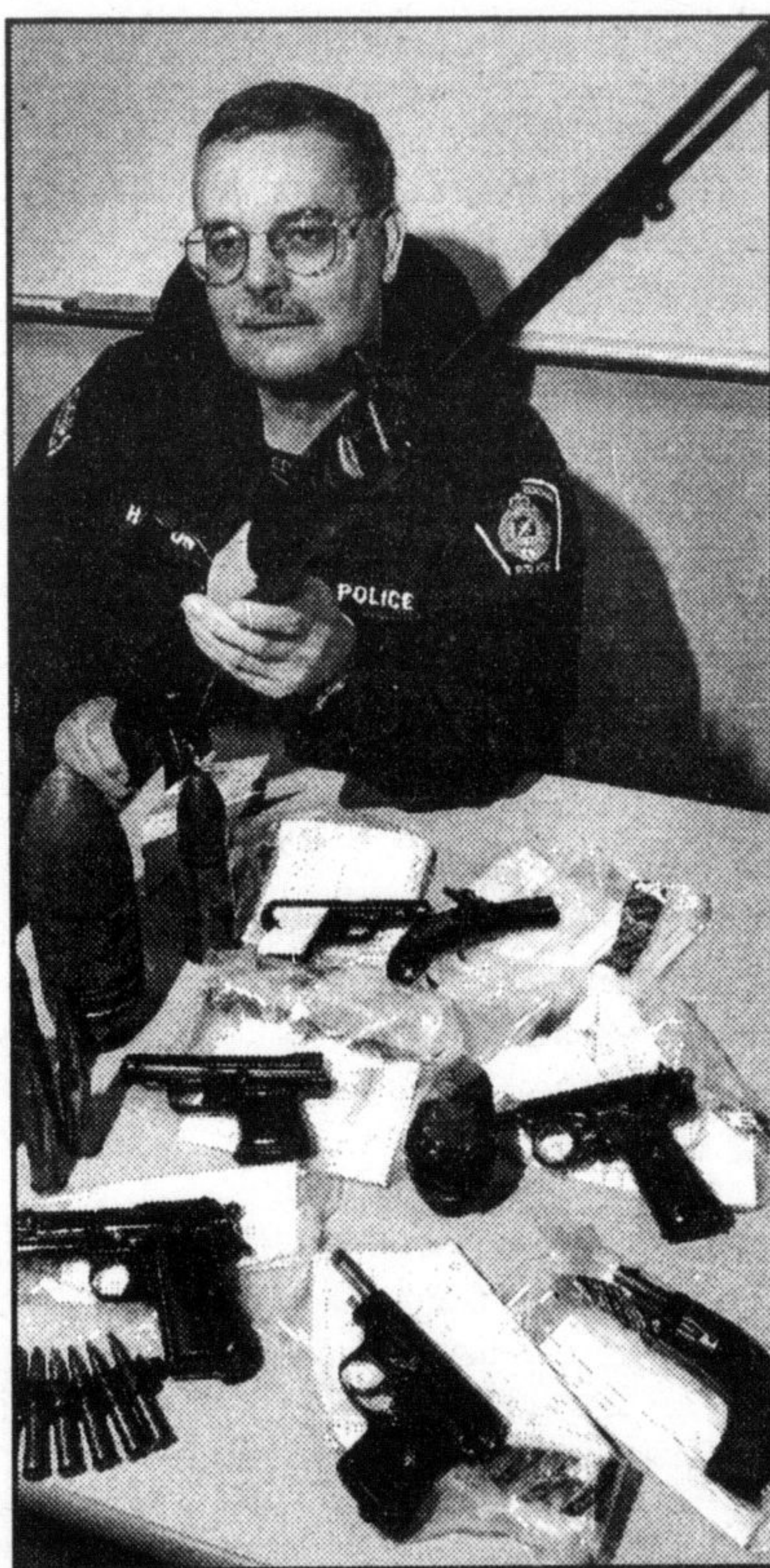


Photo by BARRIE ERSKINE

Staff Sgt. Tom Chapman of Halton Regional Police's Explosive Disposal Unit holds a 7.62 FN assault rifle, one of the many guns collected in police's recent firearms amnesty.

military ammunition technicians from Base Borden.

All the guns too will be taken to an undisclosed location, shredded, then melt-

ed down.

Under the Firearms Act, every firearm owner must register before January 1, 2001 while all guns — including war trophies and old firearms no longer used — must be registered by January 1, 2003.

Owners who no longer want to keep their firearms must take action by the end of this year by properly selling them or disposing of them to avoid placing themselves in a position of illegal possession. In short, they must sell their firearms to a valid licence holder or turn them over to police for disposal.

In order to sell a firearm, the purchaser must have a valid firearms licence and an authorization of transfer must be obtained by calling 1-800-731-4000.

A phone call to a police station will determine the process to follow for disposal.

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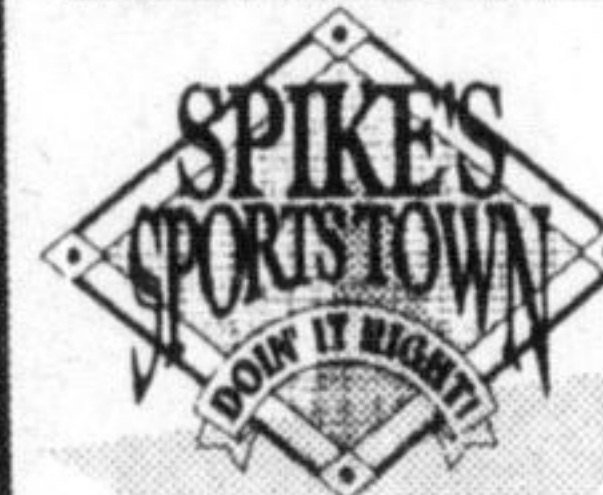


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Evidence supplied to Municipal Affairs Minister Dec. 1, 2000 regarding involvement of Mayor Rob MacLennan, Halton Chair Joyce Savoline and Halton Regional Councillor Joan Lougheed on 2 counts of Municipal Corruption as well as the Halton Chair's use of Region resources in her 2000 election campaign.

THE AUDITORS
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For details call (905) 639-5684

FUTURE SHOP CORRECTION NOTICE

In our November 29-December 12, 2000 flyer, the following error occurred:

- On page 3, the Gone in 60 Seconds DVD movie should read \$24.99 not \$20.99.

We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused our valued customers.