

Child molester gets 42 months

A former Milton girl, aged eight at the time, was sexually abused by her mother's boyfriend. And the girl's father says the offender's 42-month jail sentence is too short and the case took too long to reach court.

"I don't want to appear to be overly vindictive. I don't feel three and a half years is justice served that well based on the evidence," said the father recently outside the Milton district courtroom.

The father, who is estranged from the girl's mother, went on to cite cases used by the Crown with sentences that ranged up to eight years in prison. He also said the case took two years to get to trial and during that period the victim often felt frustrated.

The process of laying the charge, going through a preliminary inquiry and then a trial is too long and not easy on anybody, said the victim's father.

Judge James Clarke sentenced Richard Potter, a former police officer with the Metropolitan Toronto force, to the 42-month term.

Mr. Potter, 44, received concurrent sentences of three and a half years based on convictions for sexual assault, sexual interference, inviting the girl to touch him for a sexual purpose and anal intercourse.

The offences occurred in homes in Milton and Brampton during a six-month period.

Mr. Potter, of Lisa Street, Brampton pleaded guilty to some of the charges in June. However, during a one-day trial he testified that the eight-year-old "kept coming on" to him. "She kept on after me and after me and 90 per cent of the time, I refused."

Judge Clarke said he found Mr. Potter's attempt to shift the blame to the victim shameful.

The victim, who lives with her father and other members of her family, has been devastated by her mother's choice to stay with Mr. Potter, court was told. The woman met Mr. Potter, who has two failed mar-

riages, when he answered her newspaper advertisement for a companion, court was told.

Both the victim and her mother were in the courtroom when the man was sentenced. The mother cried in court after her common-law husband was led away by officers.

The offender has received counselling at the Clarke Institute of Psychiatry. According to the defence, Mr. Potter knew he was doing wrong but could not stop himself.

The victim's father said she is seemingly well adjusted, though she will need more counselling.

Players staging new works

Season ticket subscriptions are now available for the Milton Players Theatre Group, which will stage its 12th season at the St. Clair Masonic Hall.

Three plays will be offered. Written by Seymour Matthews, *Dead Man's Hand* (Nov. 23, 24, and 30 and Dec. 1) is a murder mystery set in a remote Italian villa where two couples have been lured to be murdered.

Suitehearts (Feb. 15, 16, 22 and 23), written by William Van Zandt and Jane Milmore, is a fast-paced dinner theatre comedy which takes place in a hotel. Mistakenly, two couples have been booked into the same honeymoon suite. As the relationships become entangled, we wonder who will end up with whom.

Steel Magnolias (May 3, 4, 10 and 11) is set in a beauty salon in Louisiana. Six witty and intelligent women share their lives over an 18-month period. Humorous yet sensitive, this play written by Robert Harling has bittersweet moments.

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