

Sunday is really an early Christmas for Budd Watson

by Murray Moore

The only carpet laid Monday in the old YMCA building on Midland's Hugel Avenue separates the walls of the former gymnasium from its bare centre.

A new entrance has been made in the west side of the wall that separates the gymnasium at the building's rear from the lobby of the 52-year-old building. The opening is wide enough and high enough to let a marching column five wide with rifles on their shoulders enter the old gymnasium.

The official opening of The Budd Watson Gallery is Sunday and a lot of work remains to be done and Budd Watson is as happy as a kid at his first big Christmas.

"It's the largest privately-owned photographic gallery in the world," he exclaims, eyes sparkling with excitement.

"If I had \$1 million, I couldn't make a building any better than this."

The president of Loblaws will be there Sunday at the official opening. David Nichol doesn't know it, Watson confides, but he is going to be asked to take a picture of the print-lined and, hopefully, people-filled gymnasium-turned-main-gallery by setting off by remote control a camera positioned on the balcony that surrounds the inside of the new gallery.

Logistics

Or maybe he won't, if Budd Watson doesn't have the time in the next five days to work out

the logistics.

"I haven't had more than 12 minutes sleep since I bought the building," he claims.

On first view Monday he was down in the basement, surrounded by prints of landscapes he has made, prints which measure several feet by several feet in size, and which are standing, leaning against each other like a horizontal house of cards, drying.

Watson is wearing a mask and is spraying a print with lacquer.

Lacquer does several things. It preserves the prints. It makes them look like photographs, because of the stipple finish.

After several sprayings, a print need not be covered by glass for protection. The prints

also will last longer because damaging ultraviolet rays will be screened out.

The tour starts on the top floor.

The Wildflower Room. The Georgian Bay Room. The seminar room, with chairs on order for 100, with a teak divider that pulls down out of the ceiling, with an adjoining kitchen.

The Y's old cook, Watson notes with satisfaction, will be coming to cook Thanksgiving supper for the invited guests. He knows they used to feed 200 without any problem.

The shiny wood of the refinished floors shines with a translucent light. They are half an inch thick and solid oak. Wainscoting,

inlaid wood panels, on the stairway to the second floor and in the lobby, are four feet high, and also oak.

Building

"We didn't have to do much with the building except clean it up," Watson says between floors.

The balcony around the second floor that clings to the inside of the old gymnasium will be the display area for antique photographic equipment, including the stock Watson's acquired when he came to Midland and bought out the business of a local photographer many years ago.

"This building will be standing when the new Y falls down," Watson exclaims, hitting the nearest wall with his closed fist.

Off the main floor lobby is Watson's future office, a small room that looks on the inside like a log cabin. The walls are real logs. A fireplace is fitted into the east wall. The floor is made of six-inch wide pine planks.

Watson explains that the Boy Scouts used to use this room for meetings. Photographs of beaver ponds are his favourite class of picture.

"I'm going to put six of my favourite photographs of beaver ponds on the walls." Suspended from gun racks will be not firearms but tripods and cameras, and his pack with his other important gear. Rustic pine furniture is on order.

Gallery

Watson tells of a visitor who came up from Toronto and parked his new Rolls-Royce in front of the gallery. Watson stood across the street and looked at the \$150,000 car parked in front of his \$125,000 building, and thought about the contrast.

"I bought the building the first day the For Sale sign went on the front. If it had been possible I would have frozen the deal for 10 years, but I couldn't. I had to jump when the opportunity came. It was a terrific price.

"It will take a while to get the building into full use I can see the teaching of art, crafts, performances of musical and theatrical productions, the holding of social activities. The opportunity will exist for 100 or 200 people to have a nice time without having to go out of town.

"When the Governor-General came to visit, Midland didn't have a nice place for him to stop for a luncheon. There will be one next time."

In the basement again, Watson outlines the future. The separated boys and girls shower areas and washrooms will easily convert into two dark rooms, one for developing colour film and the other on the other side of the basement for developing black and white film. A locker room will become a lecture room for students who are using either of the dark rooms, and the adjacent print making equipment.

Trustee questions letter's content

A Simcoe County Board of Education trustee expressed his disappointment two weeks ago during a board meeting that some Simcoe County newspapers saw fit to print a letter critical of a course available in county schools.

Orillia trustee Bill Brown quoted excerpts from a letter that he said was printed in the Orillia Packet and Times.

Brown also believes the letter appeared in one other paper as well.

Brown said the letter was written by a St. Catharines woman and that it made claims about Simcoe County's Human Relations course that were completely unfounded.

Brown asked if the board had any legal recourse to stop the appearance of such letters.

Last week he said he

had handed over the clipping he had to the superintendent of curriculum who, Brown said, would check into the matter and report to him.

The trustee is concerned readers will not realize the letter originated from an address outside the

county, that readers will think the letter refers to the local course.

Brown dismissed the contents of the letter as ridiculous.

Everyone involved in education in the county would be disturbed if events like those described in the letter were occurring here, he

said.

One of the claims in the letter Brown mentioned as inapplicable here was that in the letter writer's son's class 12-year-old children were asked to pretend to commit suicide, with a toy gun and a long-playing record as aids.

ATTENTION:

**Mayors, Fire Chiefs,
Police Chiefs,
Medical Officers of Health,
Municipal Emergency Planners.**

Register now to attend a conference entitled **Emergency Preparedness for the Eighties**. This important conference will deal with practical issues facing all those involved in emergency planning in government and industry.

Issues to be covered include the nature of emergencies and the capabilities of response; the role of the local emergency planner and the responsibility of elected officials.

The Mississauga train derailment will be used as an example of the sort of emergency for which you must be prepared.

Emergency Preparedness for the Eighties.

October 16-19, 1980, at the Harbour Castle Hilton, Toronto.

To do so, phone (416) 961-6505. Telex 06-986766.

Ask for Emergency Conference Secretariat. Address is: Emergency Conference, Conference Secretariat, 112 St. Clair Ave. West, Suite 303, Toronto, Ontario M4V 2Y3.

Sponsored by the Ontario Government and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario.



**SIMCOE DISTRICT
CO-OP**

**ELMVALE
Effective
October 14**

**new winter hours
open daily
8 a.m. to 12 p.m.
except Saturday**

SIMCOE DISTRICT CO-OP

The Elmvale Plant has a wide range of farm supply products.

- Fertilizers (bag & bulk)
- Seed
- Livestock feed
- Horsefeed & Dog food
- Feed additives (minerals & salt)
- Animal health products
- Milking supplies
- Weed control products
- Pest control products

**Come and see us
on the 8th of Flos,
200 yards west of
Hwy. 27 or phone**

322-3041

**For supplies other than
winter hours, call Barrie
726-6531**



Get your anti-freeze NOW!

Only **\$6⁹⁹** gal. (reg. \$8.19)



**H.S.
ST. AMANT
& SONS
LTD.**

**Plumbing
Heating**

• DOMESTIC
• INDUSTRIAL
SHEET METAL WORK

Specializing in:
**SUMMER
COTTAGES**

Satisfaction
Guaranteed

PENETANG

549-7227

3A ROBERT ST. W.