

...night shift

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single ward attendant on the 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. shift. Carson fashioned a noose by tearing strands from his mattress. He gained some height by standing on two, untearable blankets and then stepping off them.

Carson was in H Ward for 60 days for observation on a remand from a judge. He was admitted on July 12.

Dr. Russell Fleming, head of the forensic assessment unit at Oak Ridge, told the jury that Carson's suicide had "all the appearances of being quite deliberate and planned." In a letter written the day he died and delivered to his brother, an employee at the Mental Health Centre, Carson included his wishes for his funeral arrangements.

Carson was not suffering from one of the classic mental illnesses, such as schizophrenia or paranoia, Dr. Fleming said. Carson did have a personality disorder which accounted for his long history of trouble with the law, he said.

Carson was considered capable of suicide. He had suicidal ideas before he came to Oak Ridge, the jury was told. Carson spoke of suicide on Aug. 16, the last day he was seen by Fleming, during his regular Monday rounds.

Carson was put on a confined level that day or the next day. He was in one of the ward's safe rooms. The light in room 30 was set on bright rather than dim to make observation easier. The attendant, Michael Caughey, said he checked each of the approximately 36 rooms at least four times an hour, and that he checked Carson 10 to 15 minutes before he found him hanging from his door's window grille.

During the 11 p.m. to 7 p.m. shift when only one attendant is on duty in Ward H, all of the doors

are locked with a master lock, as well as individually. A key to release the master lock, to allow the opening of Carson's room door, had to be brought from the Oak Ridge front office. William Robbins, the security attendant on the midnight shift, said he went from the front office to Ward H in 40 or 50 seconds. Jean Jones, a nurse, said she took a minute to get from the Oak Ridge dispensary to the scene.

Carson was confined several times. Carson was never violent, but considered capable of being violent, and he was disruptive at times while in therapy groups, the jury was told.

In their last talk, Dr. Fleming said, Carson said he might kill himself. He would choose the time and the place. Carson said he wouldn't return to jail and he wouldn't change, the doctor reported.

Carson not given 24-hour watch

by RON JOHNSON

Twenty-four hour observation by a staff member is the highest degree of security available for a patient held in the Oak Ridge division of the Penetanguishene Mental Health Centre, the Stanley Carson inquest jury was told on Wednesday in Midland.

Carson was not put under 24 hour observation at any time between his committal on July 12 and his suicide on Aug. 22.

The coroner's jury made four recommendations as a result of hearing details of the Carson case. One recommendation was for an increase in the number of ward attendants working the 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. shift.

Carson hung himself in H Ward on Aug. 22. Testimony given at the Mitchell May inquest last fall was that B Ward is reserved for violent and suicidal patients. H Ward is the other ward in which new patients are placed after admission, and is reserved for the patients considered less of a danger to themselves or others.

Dr. Russell Fleming, an Oak Ridge psychiatrist who saw Carson five times, told the jury last Wednesday that he considered Carson to be more apt to be violent toward others than to take his own life.

Carson told Dr. Fleming on Aug. 16 that he might kill himself, at the time and place of his choosing. Other testimony was given that Carson was considered suicidal upon admission.

Coroner Dr. Herman Jilesen remarked that 24 hour observation is the only way to stop suicides, in his final remarks to the jury.

The coroner also noted that patients could be checked more often than every 10 or 15 minutes.

Testimony pointed out that brain death can occur in five minutes, he said, and with the present system of locking ward doors between 11 p.m. and 7 p.m. at Oak Ridge, two more minutes, according to testimony, pass before a particular patient's door can be opened.

Reducing the time it takes to open a door on the 11 p.m. to 7 p.m. shift was another of the jury's recommendations.

Sunnyside resident arrested

A 46-year-old Sunnyside man, James Edward Allen, was charged by Midland OPP, early Tuesday evening, with

possession of an offensive weapon.

The man, OPP report, was taken into custody after being arrested on

Centennial Drive following a domestic incident.

The weapon reportedly was a butcher knife.

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