

Longtime employees praised by town

Two important behind-the-scenes Midland municipal office employees are retiring.

Mary Bennett has been the confidential secretary to the clerk, mayor and council, since 1975. She

went to work for the town in 1968, as secretary to planning director Ken Johnson. She became the clerk's administrative assistant, as well as confidential secretary, when Mike Owen was the town's

clerk. She has worked for three clerks, Bill Hack, Owen, and Fred Flood. She is retiring in May.

Marg Rintoul retires on April 17. She has been the confidential secretary to the commissioner of works

for 13 years.

Bennett and Rintoul are the only non-union secretaries in the town office. The positions they hold are exempt from being occupied by union members.

The confidential secretary to the commissioner of works position was the centre of a tug of war between lawyers yesterday. The union representing the rest of the town hall employees argued that the person in that position by default belongs in the bargaining unit. The commissioner of works position was eliminated in early 1986. The town argued that the confidential secretary's duties have not changed, and that the wording of the collective agreement is open to interpretation.

The two women were recognized at the most recent town council meeting. A letter from Doug Reed was read. Reed wrote in praise of Bennett and Rintoul. "As a former news-gatherer for radio, television and newspapers and as a former member of town council, may I take this opportunity to say how co-operative I found both employees."

"They have proven themselves to be very professional in their calling and above reproach."

"Both Mrs. Bennett and Mrs. Rintoul have always

been able to rise above life's little surprises at town hall and to do their work both cheerfully and faithfully."

"They are indeed special people."

"Best wishes Mary and Marg for a long and very happy retirement."

The longest sitting member of the council, Reeve Bev Day, said, "I think we all feel that way about them." Bennett and Rintoul take pride in doing their job and do their job well, he said. "We wish them well in their future endeavours."



Mary Bennett



Marg Rintoul

PROBE awaits council answer

Midland council is going to consider whether it wants to get involved in a local educational controversy.

During its Mar. 23 meeting, a representative of the group Preserve the Right of Bilingual Education (PROBE) asked the council to sign a resolution opposing the phasing out of French language instruction at Ecole Secondaire Penetanguishene Secondary School.

Councillor Buzz Brown,

a former principal at Midland Secondary School, asked a question of the PROBE representative. "Not being involved anymore, I don't know what is going on," Brown said.

Brown was told that approximately 142 students attend Ecole Secondaire Le Caron. The ESPSS student said that 169 ESPSS students take at least one subject in French.

The French Language

Education Council has upset many supporters of bilingual education in the area with its decision, the effect of which will be to make unilingual Le Caron the only area high school where a student can obtain an education in French.

PROBE wants to preserve bilingualism at ESPSS and in Simcoe County, the council was told.

Mayor Al Roach wondered if the rights of the FLEC members would

be infringed if the municipal council members tried to persuade them to change their minds.

A council response in this matter could leave the door open to representatives of other elected bodies to come to Midland council with requests, the mayor suggested.

The resolution will be studied by the council before it arrives at a decision, Mayor Roach said.

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