

# Oak Ridge reveals renovations

The sun is shining just a little bit brighter in one of the wards in Penetanguishene's Oak Ridge Mental Hospital.

Last Thursday it was seen what \$250,000 can produce in renovations. When you look at the old wards in the hospital you might wonder how anyone lives there. They are cramped, eight by ten feet rooms with hard cement floors underfoot.

Oak Ridge is a maximum security institution for some of society's most desperate offenders. These offenders have committed crimes but have been declared not guilty by reason of insanity. Hence, as the management at Oak Ridge is quick to explain, the term "criminally insane" is technically inapplicable for the patients at Oak Ridge.

The Director of the hospital told a crowd of about 50 people on Thursday that the renovations represent "modern treatment in a modern facility."

George Kytayko called the patients at Oak Ridge "most complex to treat." He says it is important to create a sound environment at Oak Ridge since "most of the patients return to their communities."

This sound environment will not be limited to just one ward. The renovations represent a long term plan to achieve long term goals. Kytayko says funding is already available for ward 5 and eventually - finances allowing - the entire hospital will be transformed.

Jim Park, the Public Relations Officer at Oak Ridge says nothing has ever been done right with the interior design at the hospital. So renovations today are essential to rectify the mistakes of yesterday. Park says when the hospital was erected in 1933 it was built according to designs produced in the 1920s; these in turn owed much of their architect-

tural conception to a Victorian era lunatic asylum. Park says renovations in the 1950s only repeated the mistakes of the past and the basic design of the wards was untouched.

To give you an idea of how different a renovated ward is from an unrenovated one, we need only consider the beds. Currently, patients sleep on a mattress on the floor. Presently, they will sleep on a simple but sturdy bed.

But where is the money coming from to pay for these changes? The Acting Director of Mental Health Operations says the renovations are merely a standard allocation of existing funds. Theresa Firestone says "it is a question of priorities" at the hospital.

"I mean we could get a new fridge for the kitchen, or George (Kytayko) might think this place needs better plumbing. Right now we've decided that renovations are the most important project on the agenda and the most pressing problem to solve." She adds that "we have a long way to go."

Dr. Malcolm MacCulloch is a former direc-

tor of Park Lane Special Hospital in Liverpool, England. He was hired by the Provincial Government and is currently Chief of Staff of Psychiatry at Oak Ridge

MacCulloch is a forensic psychiatrist which simply means that he deals with the application of psychiatry to the law.

He says the facilities at Oak Ridge are drastically behind those of Europe. MacCulloch estimates that the hospital needs "about 90 more staff immediately."

But he considers the renovations to be "terribly necessary" for the proper development of Oak Ridge's services. "So many of the patients here have had peculiar parenting - broken homes, being abused as children, chronic runaways - that we're dealing with an incredibly complex personality by the time he reaches this institution. Our job should be to make this as near a normal home as you possibly can."

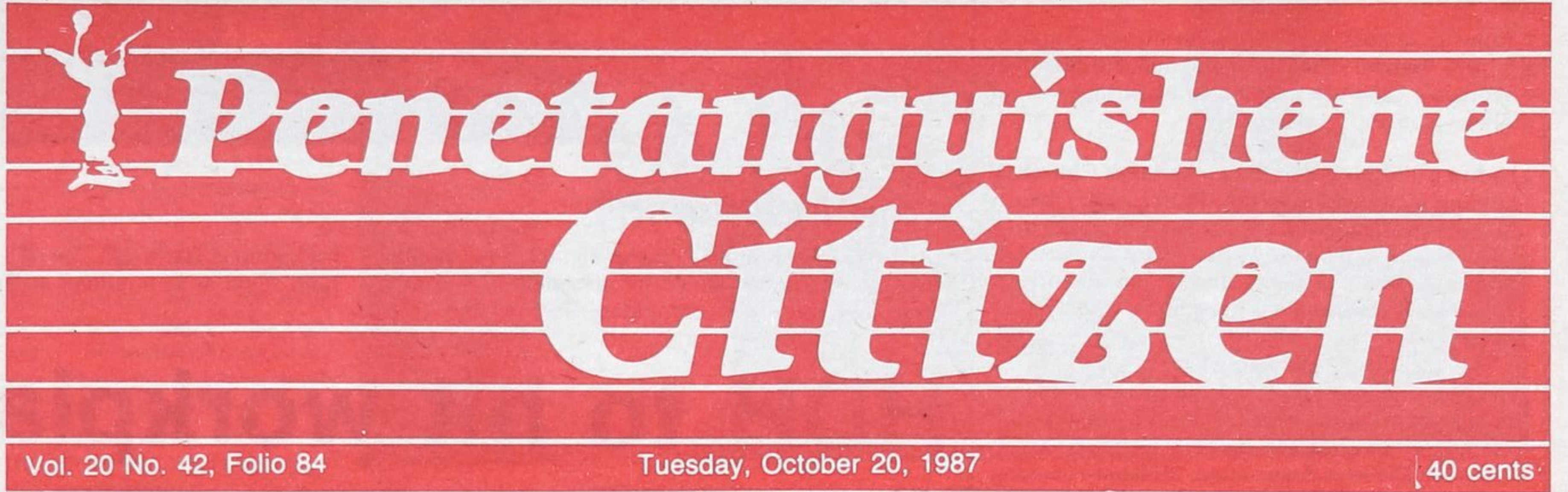
MacCulloch claims that it is "never too late to rehabilitate someone's personality." He says that by producing an environment

which is conducive to "proper social development" the worst anti-social behaviour can be modified and the most complex psychiatric cases can be adequately understood.

MacCulloch says that anyone who would deny the patients at Oak Ridge a chance at rehabilitation is "out of step with Parliament, the majority of Canadians and the general direction of the entire civilised world."

Kytayko claims that renovations will have to occur every eight to ten years. But attendants at Oak Ridge are worried that the renovations will not survive for eight to ten months. They say that patients will have the carpets ripped up and the rooms dismantled in weeks.

Jim Park explained that the rationale for not supplying beds in the old wards concerned safety. "A bed can be taken apart and the individual components can be used as weapons. A post, a leg or a headrest can all be used to smash someone over the head. A mattress cannot be utilized in that same way," he says.



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## Court's effect calming

The Supreme Court's decision to grant Le Caron over \$4-million instead of transferring its students to ESPSS has been greeted as a victory by virtually all education interests in Penetanguishene.

No one is saying that the problems are all going to be solved but all do agree that a major catastrophe has been diverted.

The principal of ESPSS says he is "greatly relieved" over the decision. Gilles Cinq-Mars says everything is going to work out now. "I think if I described my reaction to all this as 'overjoyed' that might be too much of an overstatement. I don't think you should feel overjoyed that something plainly ridiculous didn't happen to you. I thought the original plan of moving all the students was an idea out of fantasy land."

Cinq-Mars criticised the Ministry of Education for its "very insensitive position" and called the matter a "mistake for the Peterson Government."

The principal is quite proud of his students. "The students here are proud of their school and I must say that I was happy to see them react so quickly and so decisively when that school was perceived to be in jeopardy."

Cinq-Mars also reserved some praise for the Board of Education. "I really feel that the Board took a solid stance in opposing the initial plan and I'm happy to see that. We had something of a united front," he says.

But Denis Chartrand, the French Education Supervisor for the area went much further in his praise for the Supreme Court's decision.

"I have to echo the sentiments of FLEC: there is a definite feeling of elation and I must say that we're satisfied with the outcome."

The supervisor says there are some very important philosophical underpinning to the decision. "The Supreme Court has recognized the validity of the FLEC demands; it has underlined the essential authority of FLEC to regulate the flow of French language education in this province."

Chartrand says the Ministry of Education's proposal didn't concern him at all. "Their proposal was made at such a late date that I have to call it irrelevant. I don't think it would have been part of the solution and may have actually intensified the problem."

Chartrand believes that the ramifications of the court's ruling are going to be explosive and extensive. He says this could be the beginning of an autonomous French Language School Board placing the decisions regarding Francophone education entirely into the hands of Francophones.

"The Association of French School Trustees have been in favor of such an organization all along. The Government is going in that direction anyway. I know that in Ottawa-Carleton there are separate School Boards. It's been called a pilot project by many people."

"As far as long-term solutions go, there is absolutely no way of knowing if this decision is going to work forever. I will say that this decision means the recognition of the basic rights of French speaking students and so Francophone rights exist in fact as well as in principle now," he says.

Lieseje Lancia agrees with that principle. Lancia is the President of the James Keating PTA and also a mature student at ESPSS. She was an outspoken critic of the previous proposal to move ESPSS students to MSS.

Her fight was not with Le Caron. "I have no quarrel with Le Caron," she says and adds that "the French have the same rights as we do."

Lancia says the court's decision might have enormous consequences for education in Ontario. She says other minority language groups in the province might someday exercise control over their own education. "If there were an Italian-speaking majority somewhere then I think they should have their rights too," Lancia says.

## Motorola employees remember

It may have been ten years ago, but the people who worked for the old Motorola plant haven't forgotten their old company.

Back in 1977 Motorola left town because it could make the car radios it manufactured cheaper overseas. Eventually, TRW moved into the abandoned plant.

Over 700 employees worked for Motorola. A few of them didn't want the tenth anniversary to pass without some sort of remembrance. So Bea Waples and the gang did



### The beginning of a new day

Theresa Firestone and George Kytayko cut the ribbon to open up a newly renovated ward at the Oak Ridge Mental Hospital. The project cost \$250,000 but only represents the beginning of plans to totally renovate all the wards in the hospital. The interior of Oak

Ridge has changed very little from the way it looked in 1933, when it was built. Minor repairs in the 1950s did not substantially change the look of the wards or rectify problems like ceilings which are too low.

something about it. She and Joe Montgreen, Laura Kaus, Irene Connell, Mary Grace, Barb Archer, John Loughran, Ken Rolan, Pauline Baddan, Debbie Pender and Delva Lecroix have organised a reunion to remember the working days of the not so distant past. All the excitement is happening this Oct. 24th. On that Saturday night there'll be a prime rib buffet at the Country Mill and music by the Phantom Four. Cocktails are at 5:30 and dinner is at seven. The cost is \$25 per person.

Guests are quite welcome and the tickets are going fast.

But just why are so many people going to have a reunion for a plant that closed a decade ago? Waples says it has everything to do with the company. It was just a special place to work.

"I really enjoyed working there. The people all seemed to get along and that made it a nice environment," she says.

Roads less travelled...see pg. 3