

# Francophones hail decision

by Chris Harries  
Staff Writer

The Supreme Court's decision on Quebec's language law has been hailed by local francophones.

But there are misgivings mingled with their pleasure at seeing minority language rights supported by the judges of Canada's Supreme Court.

Lafontaine businessman Jacques Marchand, the immediate past president of the Franco-Ontarien Society suggested that "All francophones outside of Ontario are

happy with the way the decision was worded. It shows that there is something in the charter to protect minority linguistic rights."

But Marchand, whose suit against the county board of education and the provincial government led to the upgrading of Le Caron Secondary School, added that he was "conscious of a deep dilemma" the decision had produced in Quebec.

"It is a serious problem, a deep rooted problem. We" he said, referring to francophone communities outside of Quebec, "need a strong French Quebec for French to survive. At the same time we are happy

to see that minority language rights are protected by the charter."

The chair of the school board's French Language Education Committee, Basile Dorion, echoed Marchand's misgivings but added that it was too early to judge the practical consequences of the decision.

Dorion sees much that is positive in the law, at which the Supreme Court has been chipping away since 1979 when it "struck down" provisions relating to the language of courts and legislature. But he said "the decision was generally expected."

While the heads of those intent on preserving Simcoe County's Francophone

community welcome the decision's confirmation that the language of Quebec's largest minority has a right to be preserved, their hearts, it seems sympathize with that province's determination to keep a strong base of French culture alive in Canada.

## Holiday hours

Telemedia Community Newspaper offices in Midland, Penetanguishene and Elmvalle will be closed Dec. 23 to 26 due to the Christmas and Boxing Day holidays.

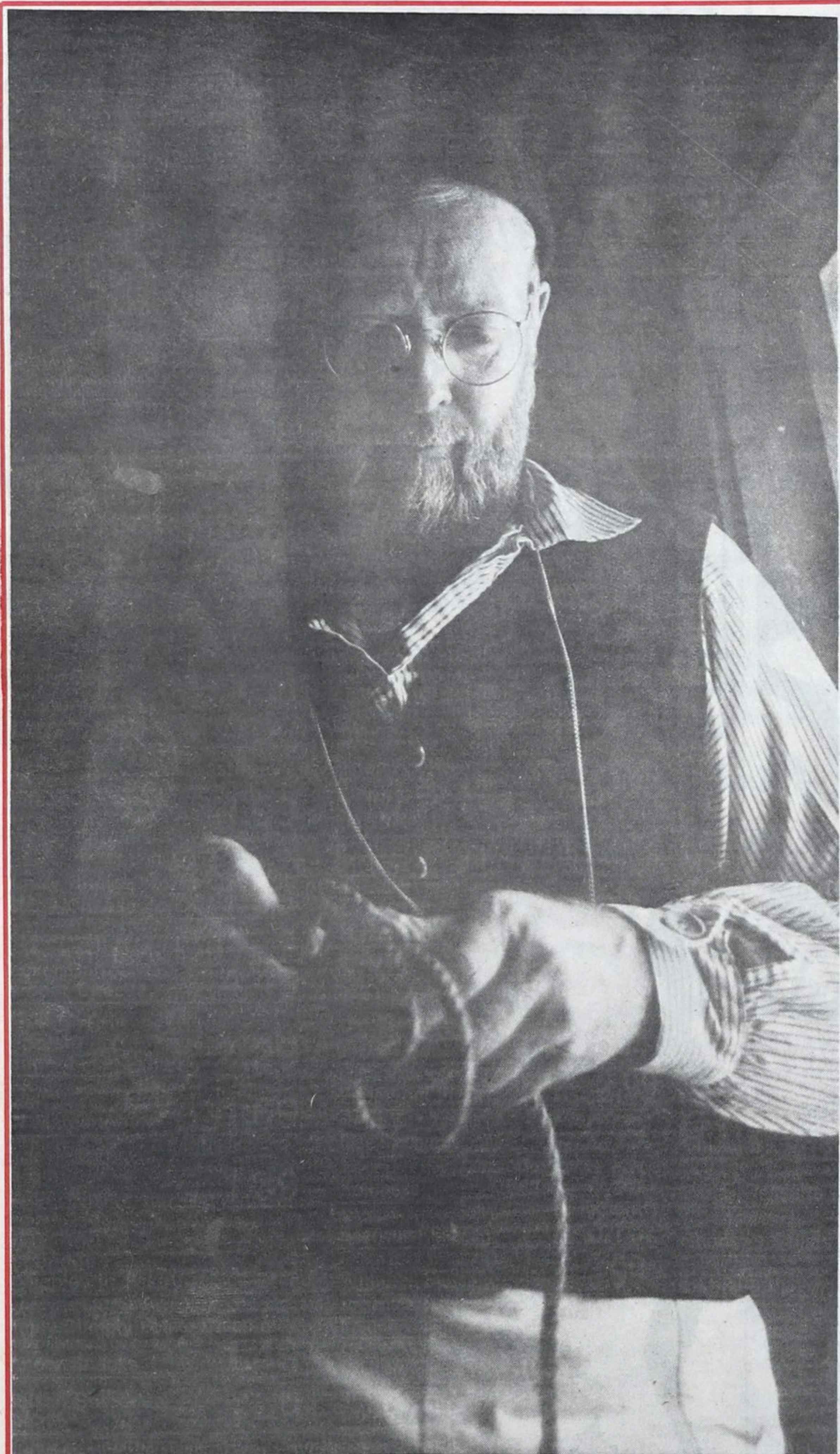


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## Monkey's fist

Wyevale's John McCallum ties a "monkey's fist" out of rope, used to add weight to a messenger line on sailing ships. It also was called a "starter" to encourage people to get on with their work and finish it quickly. It was all part of Christmas at the Establishments in Penetang Saturday.

# Mall getting large facelift

by Robert Risk  
Staff Writer

The Village Square Mall in Penetang is getting a major face lift.

An extra 25,000 square feet of retail and office space is being added, which has required a fair amount of construction and excavation.

Four houses were demolished and another was moved to make room for the new addition which will face Main Street.

The building will have two floors, with the bottom being for retail space and the top mixed with both retail and office space.

Mall owner Jerry Light said he expected the work to be completed March 1, 1989, which will be a big plus for the town.

"Up until recently we had nothing to offer ... the customers were compelled to drive out of town. There isn't a day that goes by that people haven't said this is a great project," said Light.

He estimated there is room for 35-40 units, most of which are already spoken for.

"It depends on the size of the units on the bottom floor - how much the retailers need and are able to afford."

Light said one of the biggest plusses the new mall will have is the opening up of the far end, which has been used for storage

up to now.

"We've got McLeod Hardware and Saan department stores coming in. Those two alone will occupy the entire (south-west) end of the mall."

The addition will also have a distinct look to it, being done in Bradstone.

"It's a gray stone with a hunter green trim. We want to make a village effect ... we'll never be a huge metropolis, so that's the concept we want to keep in mind," said Light.

He said the whole project has cost over \$5 million, mainly through the purchase of property around the existing mall.

"With the extra business expected, we needed more parking spaces (519) and better access to the mall."

Light said there will be two temporary entrances from Main St., which eventually will be discontinued.

"The town has been very helpful. We're working with them to line up a permanent entrance with Edward Street. Eventually we'll get stoplights put in to help traffic flow."

Light said he's also gotten very good responses from other merchants.

"A new Tim Horton's will be going in on the corner of Main and Pointz. We'll have a good cross section of retail outlets once we get everything settled. I'm really looking forward to seeing it work."

## Council backs commerce

by Robert Risk  
Staff Writer

Owners of any land zoned Commercial General in Penetang will be unable to convert their buildings to apartments until the spring.

Council passed a recommendation by Councillor Bob Klug, chairman of the planning advisory committee to deny any further conversions until the town's official plan has been reviewed.

Klug said the concern is that Main St. may lose what's left of its commercial nature unless proper steps are taken.

"(The official plan) will allow us to take an inventory...decide whether we have enough apartments and where they might

be put," he said.

Klug pointed out that several years ago there were several unoccupied buildings on Main St., so council changed their building policy to permit the conversions to apartments.

"In the past several years there were a substantial use of this provincial convert-to-rent program with many desirable improvements," said Klug in a letter to council.

However, Klug said the planning committee believed the program needs to be reassessed when the official plan is reviewed.

"That's not to say we're cutting off the money from the province...but people have a right to input (for the official plan review)."