

Arson suspected in church fire

by Denise Dicy

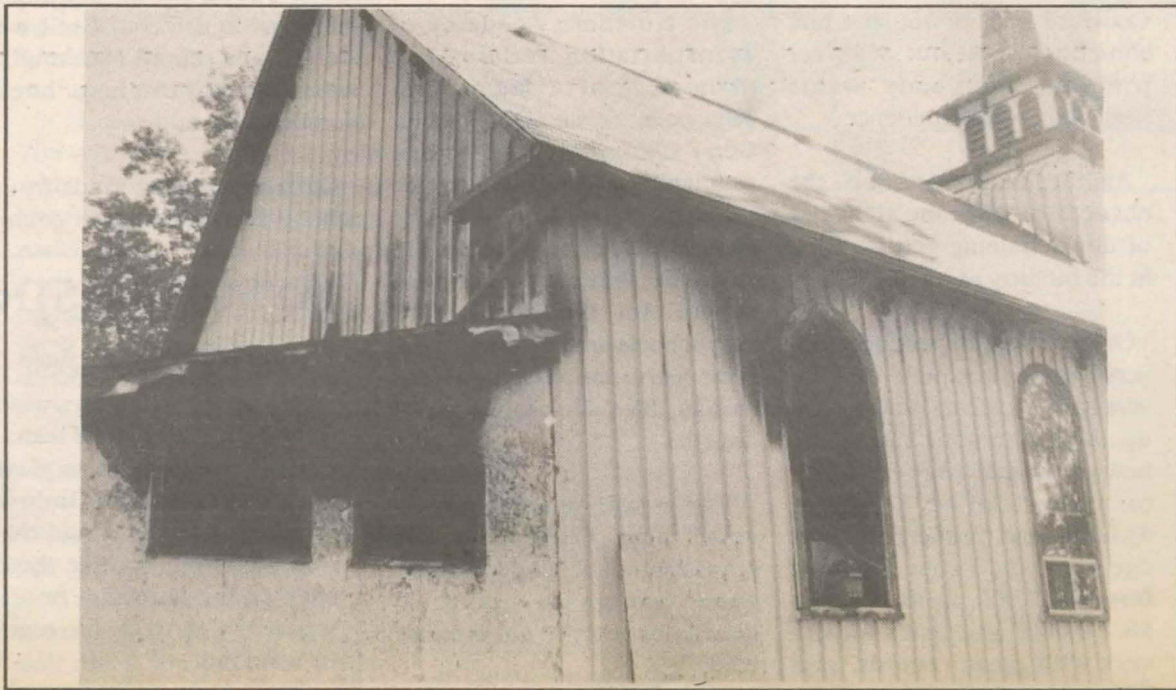
SIX NATIONS - Christ Church, located on Cayuga Road, was set ablaze on August 30, just before 11:00 p.m. .

The cause of the blaze has been traced to two Molotov Bottle Bombs which were thrown into the rear windows of the church.

The speedy arrival of the Six Nations Fire Department and the responding pumpers from Caledonia and Hagersville saved the church from becoming a pile of ashes.

The damage to the church may seem nominal, being more cosmetic than structural, but for this quaint church and its small congregation this fire comes as just one more blow.

According to Shirley Carpenter, the Peoples' Warden at Christ Church, this fire is but



Charred siding, smoke stained windows, the hollowed remains of Christ Church which was set ablaze just before 11:00 p.m. on August 30th.

one of the more recent woes that the church has had to face.

In May, the church was broken

into. The intruders, said Carpenter, made their way into the church through the basement windows and missing was Sun-

day school and kitchen supplies. Since then, the basement windows have been wired shut.

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The church's windows were recently replaced with lexan, a plastic alternative to glass which prevents window breakage. Carpenter said this step was taken because there were people throwing stones repeatedly through the regular windows.

From theft, to vandalism, and now arson, the Christ Church and its congregation has had many trials but the fire has wreaked the most havoc.

Although the addition on the back of the church received the most damage, the rest of the church suffered smoke, heat, and water damage which, according to Fire Marshal Clifford Miller, will be the source of the big costs. Miller did not want to put an estimate to the damage for he

said he did not know the costs of restoring a church.

Damage costs will include the restoration of the intricate wood work and the antiques that made the Christ Church unique, including an antique pump organ that pre-dates the Church's opening of 1874.

The fire at Christ Church comes just days after the Mohawk Chapel in Brantford was deliberately set on fire.

On the possibility of a link between the two blazes, Miller commented that there was "nothing to suggest the two are connected except for coincidence of time." Suspects, however, will be questioned as to both fires, he said, because there's always a possibility.