

December 22/88

Female native JP to serve Simcoe

Norma General Lickers says being a female native has absolutely nothing to do with being a justice of the peace.

"I'm a justice of the peace for all," Lickers said at the Six Nations band administration building yesterday afternoon where she was officially sworn in. "I just happen to be a native person.

A large gathering of friends and relatives, as well as judicial and political dignitaries from around the province crowded into the council chambers at the administration building yesterday to see Lickers sworn in.

"I'm proud to be a native," Lickers said when she addressed the people there. "I aim to show integrity and respect in my new position."

Lickers, whose Indian name is Ojisthodadae, which means Bright Star, began her professional career as a medical records technician at the Children's Hospital in Buffalo. She then went to Niagara College where she took a human relation course and worked for Canada Employment and Immigration after that. She had to be recommended for the new position and family court Judge Donald Cooper, who conducted the ceremony, said she would get on-the-job training for several months.

Lickers said she will work sensitively in the new job and will try to take the fear out of dealing with the judicial system that most people have.

"I hope that they'll have the confidence in me so that when they meet

me in the judicial system, they'll be a little less afraid," she said.

Conducting marriages will be one of Lickers' duties and Cooper told her to make sure those are done well.

"I would like to insure they last because if they don't, they'll be back in my court, and we're busy enough," he said jokingly to her.

Lickers will have an office in Simcoe.