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Chapel fire deliberate:



Brian Thompson, Expositor Staff

Canon Peter Townshend, right, of Grace Anglican Church surveys damage to the rear of Mohawk Chapel with Brantford firefighters Saturday morning.

Arson is suspected in a fire that came close to destroying Mohawk Chapel.

Members of the Brantford fire department rushed to the Mohawk Chapel at 2:30 a.m. Saturday in response to a fire alarm. They arrived just in time to put out flames licking at the ceiling above the chapel altar. The fire had already destroyed the wood siding behind the church.

Damage has been estimated at \$50,000, said Brantford police Staff Sgt. Rick Ireland.

"It was torched before," Williams recalled, "and we had to fund-raise and rebuild it." The restored chapel was officially reopened by Queen Elizabeth during her 1984 visit to Canada.

"I would have hoped people were smarter these days."

Around the side of the chapel a second burn mark could be seen above a window well, said platoon chief Bill Clawsie, who is convinced the blaze was deliberately set.

Mohawk chapel, an Anglican church, was built in 1785. It was a gift of appreciation for the native people from the British Crown.

Many dignitaries have visited the tiny sanctuary, framed by trees near the banks of the Grand River.