



Photo by Inez McCuaig.

Five Brownies were presented with their Religion and Life badges by Rev. J.M. Cano at the evening service in Holy Angels' Roman Catholic Church on January 22. This is a difficult badge to attain as candidates must know the tenets of their religion offices of the various Church authorities, and the governing of their country. Those receiving the honor included left to right Brenda Cebrario, Judy Parent, Elda Holland, Betty Anne Huard, Alma Cenerelli. Back Row: Mrs. Pat Cook, Mrs. Marcy Cebrario, Rev. Cano, and Mrs. Betty Huard.

R. B. Spadoni and Reeve F. V. Harness were named as the finance committee at the January meeting of the Schreiber municipal council. H. J. McParland was appointed acting reeve.

Councillors H. H. Fisher and R. B. Spadoni were appointed as ratepayers' representatives to the community centre. Library board appointees were held over for further discussion.

The regular meeting night for 1967 was set for the second Wednesday of each month.

Mr. McParland was appointed to take charge of special decorations at the town hall. Const. Keith Scott stated films on safety programs are available from Ontario Provincial Police.

One of the most eye-catching centennial decorations put up by the town will be the four by eight foot replica of the Canadian flag made out of plywood by Edmund Borutsky. Made to scale it will be lighted in the evenings. It is to be placed on front of the town hall.

There will be one service at

Library rental was set at \$800. There were many requests for donations to public service organizations, but council deferred these for consideration. Most councillors felt last year's decision should be retained. Since all of the agencies make yearly canvasses of the town, ratepayers would be giving two donations, if one came from the town.

A letter of appreciation was sent to retiring councillor P. J. Guina thanking him for the time and work he had spent on Schreiber's behalf during his term of office.

Clerk George Robson was appointed to attend an assessors' seminar being held Feb. 8 at the Lakehead. If possible, a councillor will also attend.

7 p.m. in St. John's Anglican Church on the first, second, fourth and fifth Sundays of each month, with a service at 9 p.m. on each third Sunday. Church school will continue at 10 a.m.

Miss Aeja Lee, of Seoul, Korea, visited Miss Ora Mae Harness last week.

## by Bill Smiley

### Just a starter

In recent years, there has been a great deal of criticism of education in this country, from both outside and inside the system. It doesn't take a Ph. D. to realize that a whale of a lot of it is justified. And I speak as a parent, tax-payer, and teacher.

Only by frantic efforts and vast infusions of money have we managed to keep our system a mere couple of decades behind the times.

I know it's easy to indulge in hindsight. But holy old jumpin' Jupiter, surely there could have been a little foresight somewhere along the line. Look what we have: shortage of buildings, shortage of teachers, shortage of just about everything except pupils. And a vast surplus of them. This didn't happen overnight. They weren't all born last summer. It was all there 20 years ago, perfectly obvious to anyone who could add and multiply. The only people doing any multiplying were the parents.

And the crazy part of it is that we keep urging the kids to stay in schools which haven't enough room for the new crop arriving. "Drop-out" has become almost synonymous with "delinquent". It doesn't matter whether they're doing any work, or learning anything, or are just being bored silly. They're told to stay in school until, through sheer old age and the tidal wave pushing from behind, they get a magic piece of paper that will open a golden door to success.

Chiefly to blame are parents. They have my sympathy. Many of them remember the great depression. Many others honestly believe material security means happiness. But far, far too many of them, delude themselves. They insist that Jack, who wants nothing more than to get out of school and become useful and happy as a salesman or a policeman, has the makings of a great surgeon, because he has always got more than 60 marks in science. Or that Jill, a born wife and mother, who wants nothing more than to get married, should struggle through a course in psychology, because she's always been a first-class baby-sitter.

Almost equally to blame are the big industries and institutions, from oil companies to banks. They are too lazy, or too cheap, or both, to interview young people and hire them on what they are. It's much easier, and a lot cheaper, just to say, "We don't want anybody unless he has at least a Grade 12 certificate", even if all they want him to do is stick square pegs in round holes.

Another thing vastly wrong with education is the way it is financed. Let's take a couple of examples. Here's an elderly couple on a small, fixed income. After years of struggling, they own their own house. They pay \$400 a year in municipal taxes. About half of that is for education, even though they've paid taxes for years to educate their own children or, if childless, somebody else's.

This system makes a mockery of the concept that every child has the same educational opportunities. Don't try to tell me that the kid in a poor bush town in the north has the same facilities, options and quality of teaching as the kid in a rich suburb. He simply does not. Money makes the difference.

And speaking of inequalities, isn't there something quite ridiculous in a country of 20 million having 10 separate and distinct educational systems? Much larger countries have one system, and yet have far more diversity and opportunity within that one than we have with our 10 rigid and separate ones. It is provincialism, literally and figuratively.

Rigidity is another thing that sticks in my craw. We have rigid curriculums, rigid timetables, rigid divisions of the school year, and anything else rigid that avoids difficulty and keeps the vast, Victorian vehicle shambling along somehow.

You know what? I'm getting a little worked up about this. But you can't keep a good belch down, and I've been developing indigestion over the whole business for some time.

So rather than galloping off in all directions, let's say this is the first of a series of articles on education by a plain, ordinary layman. I'll bet you can hardly wait for next week's thrilling instalment.