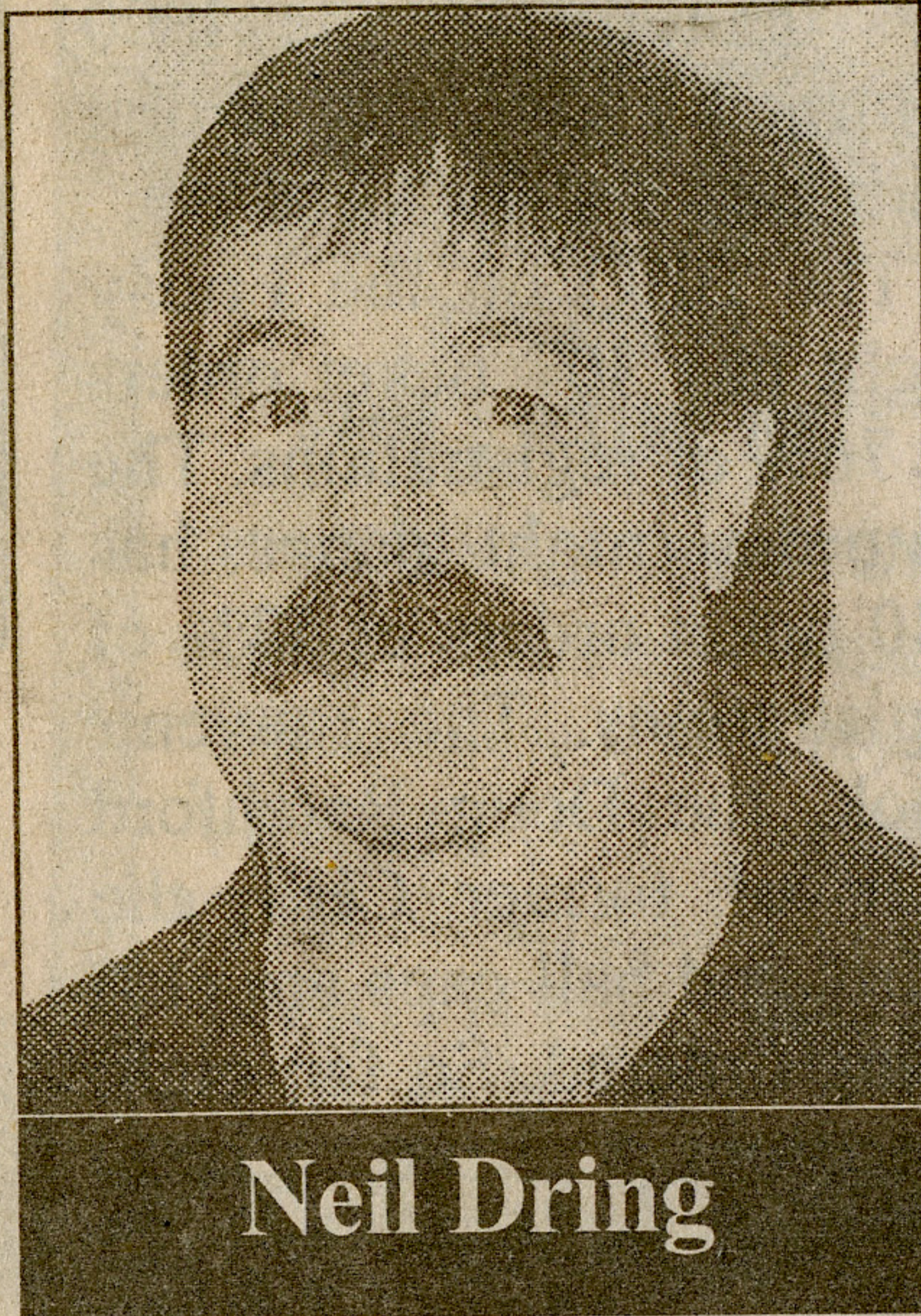


# Charles Aldridge finally free to tell his story

## *Veteran honoured oath to conceal secret mission from family and friends*

Some people just can't keep a secret. Charles Aldridge kept his for over 50 years. He kept his wartime experiences confidential from those he loved the most and who would have been the most proud of him. And now, unbridled from his wartime oath, he speaks passionately of his unrequited achievements that saved the lives of many and helped the Allies obtain victory.



Neil Dring

It was at this time that Charles was sworn to secrecy and went to work on a top-secret classified mission.

He remembers old friends in Caledonia being interviewed by wartime personnel before he was admitted into the secret project - but nobody from Caledonia ever really knew what Charles Aldridge was up to during the war... until now.

When Charles started with Operation Colossus, the Germans had a superior code machine than the Allies called 'Enigma. It would be Charles' team's job to break the code. And

communications, and developing superior codes for the Allies.

The Allies often changed their secret code more than once a day to keep the Germans guessing and would also put out false messages that they hoped would fool the Germans.

During this time, Charles and his teammates had many adventures including landing into Belgium. Charles' partner was even arrested for being a double-agent. "We worked in teams of two," he recalls, "and they came into class one day and arrested him. I never saw him again."

It was also during this time that Charles began to have health problems. He started to lose his hearing and wrote often to his mother back home in Caledonia about his deteriorating health but never spoke a word of what he was actually doing. He could only write about the weather.

After the war, still sworn to secrecy, Charles returned to Canada but found that he could no longer work at the



Charles Aldridge with his wartime scrapbook at the Sachem office last week.

Sachem photo

Hamilton.

It was at this time that he met and married his wife,

hearing.

He applied for his disability pension nearly 20 years

that Operation Colossus had been de-classified, he was cautious. He wrote to the