

## York's oldest society lives

# From the folks who gave you sirens and beer

By JULIAN BELTRAME

The autumn leaves come tumbling down, the sky turns a cold hue of blue, tree limbs shiver with each gust of northern air, and the green grass of summer is no longer. It is the winter of despair, when young vibrant spirits fight approaching gloom with each step towards their destination, York.

Then it happens; in a half deserted park or an empty CNE stadium, a loud siren belches out from the sidelines, drowning out the mini-skirted band and the quarterback's irregular huts.

It sounds like the warning preceding an attack from the air, and perhaps, some 30 years back, these same sirens warned the war-battered inhabitants of London of yet another strike from the enemy on the east.

But today, they only attest to the Red and White Society, a group of perhaps crazy, perhaps drunken, probably both, York students who turn out to cheer, fight, and drink for one of the worst football teams ever assembled to disgrace this institution, as well as more worthy athletic events.

There is a tradition to be discovered in the Society. Lorne Strachan, this year's president, proudly points to the fact that the society is the oldest at York, tracing back its history to 1965.

And a tradition to be proud of too, and one the current members strain to live up to.

### OLD CHALK

In 1968, a member of that society stole the chalking equipment used to mark the football and soccer fields and wrote the society's name in large letters on BOG Hill, that mound of grassed-over debris 100 yards in front of the Ross building. (The mound was named by the Brotherhood of Geographers, another on-campus group of rowdies, who have recently quieted their ways.)

This brave feat was the society's first official act, and one that was hard to follow. But they tried. Several years later, another member of that proud society 'borrowed' a siren from an OPP officer's motorcycle and, demonstrating remarkable ingenuity, found a way of adding it to the group's act during football games. That year, president Paul Leonard thought it was such a good idea that he immediately went out and bought five World War II air raid sirens, manufactured in Manchester during that war.

The sirens have been part of the Red and White act ever since, although only three remain in func-

tional order.

And the sirens have served the society well. Why, only last year members of this well-meaning school of timid students (sic) were viciously beaten into submission by the Lady Godiva band during the annual York-Toronto football match. Their excuse for the attack was that the boisterous musical instruments belonging to the Red and White members drowned out the band's own selections.

### POPPYCOCK

Drowned out a band? What poppycock! What chance did three sirens have of drowning out an entire band?

But not all efforts of the happy-go-lucky siren players have been so rudely received. Last week the group performed a solo at half-time during the York-Wilfrid Laurier game and outshone the Yeomen by 90 points.

And this was only one of the society's good works. Who was that group of fun-loving students who purchased an old automobile, somehow smuggled it down the stairs of Winters College and proceeded to cut the vehicle in half lengthwise?

And what other association hands down to its members from year to year an impressive collection of beer bottle caps, boasting one cap from the farthest reaches of Africa?

Certainly no other society can boast a list of past presidents, none of whom have made good. Strachan emphasizes that "all have degenerated into standard good citizens."

But wait a minute! One of these "standard good citizens" is in prison, one has disappeared from the face of the civilized world, another is working inside a women's prison (he's no fool), and yet another has made the big time of auto body repair shops. Let's see you beat that, CYSF.

### MERCY

And no-one can say that the Red and White is afraid to try anything new. The Mercy Humppe band was another of the society's many attempts to put class in their act, but it met with a few of those unforeseen obstacles.

Strachan explains that "the band was never much good anyway," and that "it took up too much valuable drinking time", and so had to be disbanded. Yes, a failure, an inoperative statement; but not before the band marched around the campus making the pub-rounds to celebrate Team Canada's 6-5 win over Russia in the first meeting of the two hockey giants. It was the band's and Canada's last hurrah,



Head cheerleader Carolyn Reid poses in front of an assortment of Red and White Society paraphernalia, including one of the infamous sirens and a selection of hard hats.

featuring the first ever marching siren.

Some of the squares around campus have slurred the society, saying it is nothing more than a congregation of all the nuts, weirdos and fatbellied beer-drinkers that have been dumped on this university in the past four years. But they're wrong—the members also drink the hard stuff.

But if any doubts remain concerning the minds of the above-mentioned, possibly the following facts will end all rumours.

This year's Red and White has amalgamated with the York cheerleaders, so that the ladies could meet expenses of purchasing sweaters, skirts, and bus tickets to and from games.

Strachan told this reporter confidentially that the society must "work as closely as they can (get away with) with the cheerleaders" and that as those same cold winds which tear the leaves off the trees at York send goosepimples streaming up the cheerleaders' legs, the society must double as cheerleader warmers.

And for all this service, the society gets close to \$400 from the CYSF council. One year they got as much as \$800.

Now does this sound like the society's filled with crazies?

No! Those are not the actions of crazies; they are acts of an up-

looking, dedicated group of people who know what they want and how to get it.

The good part of this story is that you too can join the Red and White society. That is, if you happen to be a faculty member, student, or alumnus of York. Those of you who fit in all or one of these categories are in-

cluded to come and get into the swing of things.

Join "Crank" Lamb on the lead siren, John Titus playing second siren, and prez Strachan on the third siren, as they switch from the losing footballers to the winning ways of the York puck-hurlers.

Come one, come all!



THERE IS 'LOIS' AND THERE ARE OTHERS...

## Cage girls win

By WENDY MICHALOWICZ

The York Women's basketball team tasted the sweetness of success for the first time in many seasons.

In an invitational tournament held this past weekend at the University of Toronto, York won 54-27, 44-37, and 30-29 against Centennial College Colts, IPA, and York Raiders respectively. A week previously, York Raiders had slaughtered York 68-25.

This tourney victory followed a trouncing defeat over Sir Wilfrid Laurier University last Thursday. Coach Alf Lane was pleased with his team's performance and believes the girls will do much better than in previous years' efforts in league competitions which begin in mid-November.

York hosts an invitational tournament featuring Queen's University, the University of Guelph and Loyola University this weekend. Game times are 5:30 p.m. and 7:45 p.m. on Friday, and 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. on Saturday.

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