

## Obituary

# Animal shelter founder dead at 91

*Peel Bio. Oct. 12/97 MN*

Marion Kuhns, a co-founder of the Peel branch of the Ontario Humane Society and a former Grand Matron of the Order of the Eastern Star, has died at age 91.

The long-time Port Credit resident rose through the ranks of the Eastern Star, a benevolent organization for women providing service to their community, to become Worthy Grand Matron of the Ontario Order in 1968-69.

In an interview with The Mississauga News in 1973, Kuhns explained the intent of the organization.

"We like to do humanitarian work," she said. "It is very satisfying and rewarding."

In the same interview, Kuhns

said, "Everyone who knows Merdy (her husband Meredith) and me knows that we work for animal and bird welfare. In 1964, we realized that an animal shelter was needed in this area."

A campaign was organized and, eventually, township council was persuaded to give land for the venture on Mavis Rd.

Marion Viola Gibson Kuhns was born in South Greensburg, Pennsylvania, and moved to Canada immediately after her marriage to Meredith in 1931.

The former school teacher in the United States became a nurse and subsequently taught nursing for many years at Toronto General Hospital.

During the Second World War, she was in the Air Transport Command and flew Piper Cubs and Stenson 107s out of the Island Airport in Toronto.

Kuhns also travelled to the east coast to meet war brides and escort them to their new homes in Ontario.

A great music lover, Kuhns taught herself to play the organ and became grand organist for the Eastern Star in 1959-60.

Kuhns and former Mississauga resident Col. Harland Sanders, founder of the Kentucky Fried Chicken chain of restaurants, are the only two local residents to be made members of the Honorary Order of Kentucky Colonels, a

benevolent group that funds children's institutions in that state.

The former treasurer of the Port Credit Residents' Association lived on Cumberland Ave. At one time she wrote travel articles for The Mississauga News in its first years of operation.

Long-time friend Reta Hunter says she will always remember Marion's "indomitable spirit. She always used to say, 'stand up and be seen, speak up and be heard and shut up and be appreciated.' I think I heard her say that every day," Hunter said.

Kuhns is survived by her sister Nellie Ida Gibson of Etobicoke.

Funeral services were held yesterday in Mississauga.