

SPW May 1968

# SOUTH PEEL'S PEOPLE

By TOM SLATER  
MISSISSAUGA—She's active in politics for the Liberal Party, wife of a well-noted winemaker and businessman, mother of two active children and owns a female mutt named Harry with an odd personality.

Rosemary McLay is the type of person who gets involved with projects, causes and people. Yet at the same time, she is basically a housewife caring for her husband and two boys, and keeping that odd dog Harry out of trouble.

"I've worked at many, many things during my life," said Mrs. McLay, "and I have found almost all my work to be terribly interesting."

Mrs. McLay has served in the American Forces in the medical corps, worked as a cigarette girl, baby-sitter, labored in factories, and involved herself with volunteer groups.

## UNIVERSITY DAYS

Some of these jobs were taken during her university days at McGill when she needed "some extra money for the frills, such as a new dress for a dance."

Rosemary McLay's life began to shape when she graduated from high school at 16 years of age. "I was much too young to go to university," she explained, "so my parents decided to send me to a convent."

"While I was there," she continued, "I made up my mind to be a nun."

That particular project was abandoned shortly afterward at the advice of the nuns and novices of the convent.

"So I ended up at McGill, but I didn't graduate because I met James and two years later we were married."

## OUTSIDE WORLD

It was during her days at McGill that Mrs. McLay began to get her real education on the problems of the outside world.

"I worked in the gift shop of a hotel for a while," she said, "and I got a real education. Even at 22 I couldn't believe some of the things that went on at that hotel."

After marriage and the two children, Mrs. McLay found that she had to conform to living in suburbia. "To avoid complete boredom," she said laughing, "I enrolled again in McGill by correspondence to study philosophy and English."

After moving to South Peel 17 years ago, Mrs. McLay eventually found herself involved with a great deal of volunteer work at South Peel Hospital. Eventually she accepted a position of training other volunteers to carry out their duties.

## HEADED CAMPAIGN

Because of her work in the area, Bruce Beer contacted Mrs. McLay in 1965 to head up his campaign for the Liberal seat in the federal election. "I worked up to 16 hours a day for Bruce," she said, "but it was all worth it when he won."

"I was almost sorry to see election day arrive," she said, "because then it was all over. It was a terribly interesting and exciting job."

Her next attempt at campaigning was less successful

when Ted Glista was defeated by Doug Kennedy for the Peel South seat in the last Provincial election. She herself was defeated last December when she ran for a council seat against Harold Kennedy in the Mississauga election.

Rosemary McLay has travelled extensively throughout Europe, the United States, Canada and South America. "The time spent in South America was terribly interesting," she remembered. "I wanted to crawl through the old Aztec ruins, but this was frowned on. Women there don't seem to have as much freedom as we do."

## GROWING CONCERN

She also golfs and curls at Mississauga Golf and Country Club. "I don't golf seriously though," she said smiling, "I like to get out there and look at the water and trees. Rarely do I ever keep score."

Sons Michael, 15, and Mark, 10, are a going concern for Mrs. McLay. "I try to teach them to be individuals and to be honest," she said. "I don't think I could stand it if they weren't so active. They are much more interesting this way."

The basement of the McLay house is alive with fermenting activity. Two huge garbage cans are full of home-made wine bubbling and brewing. And there are at least a dozen big glass jugs full of the home-made brew.

But one of the most interesting character's in Mrs. McLay's life is her dog Harry. "This dog is famous throughout the area," she said.



ROSEMARY McLAY

"Everyone knows her and in the old days, the dog-catcher used to bring her back home along with my son Mark."

## WHAT A PUP!

Once Harry was trapped in a culvert. The McLays were advised that nothing could be done for her and she should be put out of her misery. But Mrs. McLay couldn't stand for that.

She called Toronto Township Reeve Mary Fix, who assembled some men from the works department and with the help of blowtorches Harry was released.

Although 13, she still actively guards her mistress from all approaching strangers with a fierce bark. But Harry is a phony. Approach her and she will wag her tail and lick your hand.

SPW McLay May 1, 1968

McLay, Rosemary