

Tunnelling robbers face 14-year terms

COURTENAY, B.C. (CP) — Two men accused of tunnelling into a branch of the Royal Bank in the nearby Vancouver Island community of Comox pleaded guilty in provincial court Monday to charges of breaking, entering and theft.

Charges against a third man were stayed by the Crown.

Emil Dobrovolny, 46,

and Vernon Weening, 22, both of the Nanoose area on Vancouver Island, were remanded to Feb. 21 for sentencing. They face a possible maximum sentence of 14 years imprisonment.

It was estimated more than \$300,000 in cash and valuables were taken by thieves who spent about three weeks tunnelling into the bank and drill-

ling through the floor of the vault.

RCMP arrested three men seven weeks after the bank vault was looted during the 1983 May 24 weekend. The arrests were made last July 14.

Almost all the loot was recovered.

Crown prosecutor Jim Taylor ordered a stay of proceedings on charges against the third accused, Fred Weening, 25, brother of Vernon Weening. Taylor told the court the elder Weening had played a minor role in the crime.

The guilty pleas came on the first day of what had been expected to be a week-long preliminary hearing.

Burning boat found

SAANICH, B.C. (CP) — An apparently abandoned eight-metre wooden pleasure craft was found burning in Saanich Inlet Monday.

An air and sea search of the area produced no sign of survivors. After the charred hulk was beached, searchers found no evidence of anyone on board, RCMP said.

The RCMP spokesman said officials will check provincial government registry offices today to try to find the boat's owners.

An air search of the area by Canadian Forces rescue aircraft and an RCMP helicopter was called off because of darkness.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Literacy problems helped

by ARNOLD OLSON Staff reporter

Volunteer College of New Caledonia instructors are doing their level best to help fight illiteracy, which affects about 20 per cent of adults in B.C. and 28.4 per cent in Canada.

The instructors are part of the Volunteer Adult Literacy Tutoring (VALT) program which is offered free to those who apply.

The program, in its fifth year, has openings for at least 10 students.

Fran Gee, in charge of the program, said, "I have 10 instructors dying to get someone to teach, but this doesn't limit the number. I could have 14 by tomorrow."

She dismisses the popular myth that only re-

cent high school and university graduates cannot spell: "Fifty per cent of the adult population has trouble with spelling."

VALT is intended for people who have either no or little ability to read and write.

Some who apply for private tutoring have achieved some skills, while others are either completely illiterate or unable to read and write English.

The program is operated on a confidential basis unless the student is willing to come forward to help the program gain publicity.

Successes range from learning to read and write to upgrading those abilities to cope with new job or school demands.

"I classify anyone who comes to us, even for the shortest time, as being a success," she said.

No one can register another person. Each student must make the initial contact, although the system depends on people bringing VALT to the attention of those who need it.

"It takes an incredible amount of courage for someone to call and admit they have trouble."

Gee is proud of the CNC program, because of a recent critique of similar U.S. programs.

The study listed what their experts considered a superior system than their all-volunteer programs.

She said, "I was so happy. It described the

CNC program exactly."

U.S. systems depend on volunteers, without institutional support. She said CNC combines volunteers with professional instructors' supervision, providing full funding for all materials except for pens and paper.

Instructors are expected to provide two one-hour instructional periods a week, within a 15-hour program, but Gee said most of them exceed that limit greatly.

Each volunteer instructor is given training and is matched to a student whose spare time matches theirs.

After the first 15 hours, those who began with no skills can advance to the Level One program which is de-

signed to bring them halfway toward high school graduation level of reading.

Gee says one student stayed with the program for four years, improving from complete illiteracy to achieving a high-school graduation level.

Two students who began as illiterates have taken instruction for 18 months, are completing Level One and are planning to go to Level Two, to high school graduation level.



Ferry fares drop

VANCOUVER (CP) — Operators of a high-speed ferry service between Vancouver and Nanaimo have cut fares again in a bid to fill the 75 per cent of available seats that now go empty.

Seaspeed Transport Canada Ltd. of Vancouver, began service between the mainland and Vancouver Island in November using 84-seat hovercraft. The company has announced the regular one-way midweek fare will be cut from \$19 to \$12. The weekend fare, which was cut to \$12 before Christmas, will be reduced to \$10.

Company president James Yates said the latest drop in fares is an attempt to lift winter traffic above 25 per cent of capacity.

"We are doing what the hotels do at this time of year and adjusting rates. We originally targeted ourselves at the business traveller, offering a fast 65-minute crossing. But that traffic is down because of the slow economy on Vancouver Island."

Yates said Seaspeed expects to start daily service between Vancouver and the Sunshine Coast in the spring.

the weather

Synopsis

Central Interior — Today mainly cloudy with snow showers. A little milder. Highs near 2 except —12 in northern sections. Tonight mainly cloudy with a few snow showers. Lows —10 to —18 in the north. Wednesday a few showers. Highs near zero except —12 in north. Probability of precipitation 50 per cent today, 30 tonight and Wednesday.

Chilcotin, Cariboo — Today mostly cloudy with a few showers of snow or rain and snow mixed. Highs zero to 2. Tonight mostly cloudy with a few showers of snow or rain and snow. Lows zero to —5. Wednesday cloudy. A few showers. Highs zero to 2. Probability of precipitation 50 per cent today, 30 tonight and Wednesday.

Thompson, Okanagan — Today cloudy. Occasional rain or wet snow. Highs 4 to 7. Tonight cloudy with isolated showers of rain or wet snow. Lows near zero. Wednesday mostly cloudy. Highs 4 to 6. Probability of precipitation 80 per cent today, 20 tonight and Wednesday.

Kootenay, Columbia — Today mainly cloudy with isolated rain or wet snow. Highs 4 to 6. Tonight cloudy. Isolated rain or wet snow. Lows —2 to 2. Wednesday mainly cloudy. A few showers. Highs 4 to 6. Probability of precipitation 60 per cent today and tonight, 40 Wednesday.

Greater Vancouver, Lower Fraser Valley — Today cloudy. Rain changing to showers this morning. Highs 8 to 10. Tonight mostly cloudy with a few showers. Lows 1 to 3. Wednesday a few showers. Highs 8 to 10. Probability of precipitation 80 per cent today, 30 tonight and Wednesday.

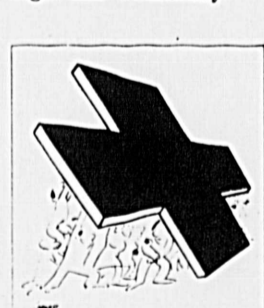
Greater Victoria, East Vancouver Island — Today cloudy. Rain changing to a few showers this morning. Highs 8 to 10. Tonight mostly cloudy. Isolated showers. Lows 2 to 4. Wednesday mostly cloudy. Highs 8 to 10. Probability of precipitation 80 per cent today, 20 tonight and Wednesday.

Howe Sound-Whistler, Sunshine Coast — Today cloudy. Rain changing to a few showers this morning. Highs 5 to 8. Tonight mostly cloudy with few showers. Lows near zero. Wednesday a few showers. Highs 3 to 6. Probability of precipitation 90 per cent today, 30 tonight and Wednesday.

North Vancouver Island, West Vancouver Island — Today mainly cloudy with showers. Highs 7 to 9. Tonight mainly cloudy with a few showers. Lows 4 to 6. Wednesday a few showers. Highs 7 to 9. Probability of precipitation 70 per cent today, 30 tonight and Wednesday.

Northern Mainland — Today mainly cloudy with showers. Snow showers inland. Highs near zero inland and 7 to 10 on the coast. Tonight cloudy with showers. Lows —3 inland to 5 on the coast. Wednesday a few showers. Highs near zero inland and 8 on the coast. Probability of precipitation 70 per cent today, 30 tonight and Wednesday.

Queen Charlottes — Today mainly cloudy with showers. Highs 8 to 10. Tonight mainly cloudy with a few showers. Lows 3 to 5. Wednesday a few showers. Highs 8 to 10. Probability of precipitation 60 per cent today, 30 tonight and Wednesday.



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Hyette's CORRECTION

January Sale 1847 Rogers Bros. Flatware Decorator Stainless Group II; Patterns Silhouette, 1867; New Charm and Navaho.

Read Sale Retail \$22.50 SHOULD HAVE READ Sale Retail \$27.95

We apologize for any inconvenience caused by this error.

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4x8x1/2 Sheet..... **\$4⁹⁰**

4x10x1/2 Sheet..... **\$6¹⁵**

4x12x1/2 Sheet..... **\$7³⁵**

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3/8" Utility Drill

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Family pak Knotty Cedar Panelling — adds a decorative rich effect to walls or ceilings. 5/16"x3 1/2". Bundle covers approx. 16.3 sq. ft.

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Wall or Ceiling Mount

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1x6, lin. ft. **35¢**

1x8, lin. ft. **40¢**

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8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday to Saturday

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