

THE FREE PRESS UP FRONT

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PHONE 564-0005

▼Ormiston murder

High court refuses appeal

A 34-year-old Fraser Lake rancher convicted of murder has struck out in the nation's highest court.

A Prince George jury convicted Bruce Douglas Peters of second-degree murder in April 1997 for killing fellow Fraser Lake rancher and neighbour Alfred "Scotty" Ormiston, 53.

Following his April 1997 conviction, Mr. Peters appealed to the B.C. Court of Appeal, with his lawyer arguing the trial judge failed to adequately instruct the jury on the law of self-defence. The province's highest court dismissed the appeal. Mr. Peters then went to the Supreme Court of Canada.

However, Thursday morning, the Supreme Court of Canada dismissed his application for leave, declining to hear the case.

Mr. Ormiston went missing on October 10, 1995. He had been out looking for cattle, but his horse came home alone that evening.

Mr. Ormiston's body was not found eight days later. He had been shot to death and stuffed down an abandoned well. Bruce Peters was arrested and charged with second degree murder on January 26, 1996.

House burns to hole in the ground



A firefighter sprays water through the front door of the fully involved house late Tuesday afternoon on Iona Road. JOHN MCKENZIE/FREE PRESS

By MICHELLE LANG

Free Press staff writer

A house in the Old Summit Lake Road area burned to the ground Tuesday afternoon in a blaze so all-consuming that fire crews could not enter the structure to fight the fire.

It took the Prince George Fire Department six hours to extinguish the fire that hurt no one but totally destroyed the 1,200 square foot home on Iona Road and the belongings of a Prince George couple.

The occupants were not home at the time and are currently staying in an area motel. They have fire insurance.

Fighting the fire was made all the more difficult by the lack of water — there is no municipal water supply on Iona Road and the nearest fire hydrant was at Shady Valley Elementary School, almost one kilometre away.

The department had to use two tanker trucks to carry water between the fire scene and the school. The trucks made seven trips altogether and firefighters used at least 11,000 gallons of water to extinguish the fire.

The fire proved a difficult case from the get-go for the Prince George Fire Department.

The fire wasn't discovered until it was already well underway. It took the Fire Department 11 min-

utes to get to the scene because the house is on the edge of the fire department's jurisdiction, near Old Summit Lake Road, and because there is no direct route to the property.

By the time fire crews reached the property the structure was fully involved with fire.

"The house was so dangerous when our men got on the scene, they couldn't enter it from the back. They went to the front but realized there wasn't much of a floor left," says Fire Chief George Crawford.

Fire crews had to extinguish the fire from the exterior while the building essentially collapsed into the basement.

The fire department's investigation of the fire has been closed. Mr. Crawford has not been able to determine the cause of the blaze because of the extent of the destruction.

Investigators do know the fire began in a storage area in the basement. They believe the fire burnt up the walls of the storage area, through the floor, up the side of the cement block chimney and through the roof of the house.

Materials like wall board over press paper board used in the construction of the house all burn very readily and Mr. Crawford says this contributed to the rapid expansion of the blaze.

The damage estimate is about \$165,000.

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