Last call

Circuitous routes on way to the bar

By Mary Hasbitt of The Free Press

For most of the 29 law students called to the bar Monday in London, the road had been fairly straight — from high school to university to law school.

But for several candidates, the path toward the legal profession had a few unique twists and turns.

Take Jerry Richardson, for example. He is 34 and for eight years it appeared that teaching elementary school was to be his lifelong profession.

At the same time, Richardson was working on his BA at the University of Western Ontario and graduated in 1970.

A law career “was always there in the back of my mind” and he entered UWO’s law school in 1973.

With a family of four to support, he manoeuvred his schedule to allow for some part-time teaching and took on “everything and anything, including house painting,” to stay solvent. And somehow he managed to find the long and necessary hours for studying.

Richardson has accepted a position with a London law firm. “I’m really glad it’s all over,” he said. “I’ll be nice to have a steady income again.”

For radio personality Roger West, 11, opening his own law office here won’t mean the end of other interests. He said he intends to continue doing “a bit of radio” and other entertainment work as well.

The weekend stints at CFPL-FM while he earned a general BA at UWO followed by a law degree were “a source of relaxation” as well as income.

A freshman at UWO at the age of 23, West said the academic routine didn’t pose insurmountable problems. “It was a foreign environment but I didn’t find it difficult to adjust ... I suppose it’s easier when you come back to education with a purpose.”

Ninety members of the UWO bar admission course participated in the two-part ceremony. They were first called to become members of the Law Society of Upper Canada, then took oaths entitling them to practice in the Supreme Court of Ontario.

They were the second class to graduate from the UWO program, which duplicates the course at Osgoode Hall in Toronto.

University to eliminate older student entry test

The University of Guelph will eliminate admission tests for mature students in an attempt to open a larger slice of the part-time student market.

Beginning in May, Guelph will implement a general studies program for persons at least 35 years old and with a minimum of two years experience in the workforce. Students may apply for a degree program after completing five courses.

The university plans to use results from the five courses as a measure of whether a student should go on. Credits from the general studies program could count towards a degree.

Students may continue taking general studies courses without being required to work towards a degree.