

Tour Township Schools

# Many Problems To Be Faced By Schools In Suburban Areas



Pictured above is the interior of the Victoria Square Public School. The teacher, Mrs. B. Cochrane, is shown with the class. The frame structure was built in 1877.

As part of the observance of Education Week, and through the courtesy of Mr. Maynard Hallman, Inspector of Public Schools York 2, this reporter had the privilege last week of visiting a variety of public schools in Markham Township. In the company of Inspector Hallman, we observed every type of educational process from that obtained in the traditional one-room rural school to the more enriched programme of studies offered in the Township School Area No. 1 Markham and Vaughan.

Our first stop was at S. S. 13 Markham, known locally as the Melville School and located at Almira in the farming district of the township. Here we met the teacher, Mr. E. C. Mazur, and watched as members of his class did a reading exercise, performed in a one-act play and sang several songs. After making an inspection of the building and watching as the children prepared for an afternoon skating party, we moved on to our next school.

At S. S. 5 (Buttonville School) we found Grades 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 writing an examination in penmanship under the supervision of Mrs. F. Powell. The junior grades attend school in the morning under the supervision of

their teacher, Miss J. Howard. This staggered system was necessitated by overcrowded conditions in the school due to a rapid growth in the population of the area. It results in the disadvantage of a shortened school day for the children, and is introduced only as an emergency measure. The Board, in a move to solve its accommodation problems, plans to construct a two-room addition to the school, tentative approval for which has been granted by the Department of Education.

From Buttonville, we travelled on up the highway to S. S. No. 6 (Victoria Square) and Mrs. B. Cochrane's class. We noted with interest that instruction in a rural school is on a very personal basis, and through the leadership of a kind and considerate teacher rural children can enjoy a full and happy life. Any lack of improved educational facilities enjoyed by their brothers and sisters in urban communities is compensated for in part by this warm, personal basis on which life in a rural school revolves.

Other advantages available to rural school children today and which were unknown to children in similar circumstances years ago, include the weekly visit of the music teacher, religious instruction by a local clergyman, and regular visits from a nurse on the staff of the York County Health Unit. Some Boards, such as that at the Melville School, provide school children with free milk for lunch.

The one problem common to all rural Boards is the steadily increasing student population and the corresponding lack of adequate facilities. All the buildings were well over half a century old and were erected during the 1880's.

A quick glance at the available records, shows that each year a far greater number of students are entering Grade 1 than are leaving Grade 8 for high school. Rural Boards are finding, too, that although they must find accommodation for an ever-increasing number of pupils, the student population in one section is not large enough to fill an additional classroom if one were erected. Should they put up with the difficulties of overcrowded conditions and staggered classes, or construct a bigger problem today than



New modern one-room school on the Vandorf Sideroad, Whitchurch Twp. built in 1951.

an additional classroom only to have it partially filled? That is the problem facing many rural boards today.

In Township School Area No. 1 Markham and Vaughan, which comprises seven schools located in the Yonge Street area of Markham and Vaughan Townships, we received an insight into an altogether different type of educational system. These schools are located in an ex-urban area and all contain several classrooms, the majority of which are of modern construction. The School Area was created in 1950 from a number of individual school sections within the two townships.

Children here have the opportunity of an enriched educational programme which is not available in a rural school. In addition to improved physical facilities and equipment such as a gymnasium, modern washrooms, fluorescent lighting, etc., the Area makes provision for the slow-learning child by special instruction in auxiliary classes and by making available the services of an Area Psychologist.

Our tour was an "education" in itself and afforded us a practical insight into the educational system as it operates in Ontario today. Our only regret is that this week as we are being reminded of the fact that "Education is EVERYBODY'S Business", more people do not have a similar opportunity. Many parents will be receiving invitations to visit the school in their area, however, and we would urge them most strongly to do so.

The cancer death rate in Ontario was 142 per hundred thousand of population in 1953. In 1942 it was 134. In 1932 it was 119. This increase in rate is partly due to the fact that fewer people are dying from pneumonia, tuberculosis and other killers, but it illustrates that cancer is a bigger problem today than

## Markham Considers Its Policy On Subdivisions

Markham township has laid down a general policy for any future subdivision development. At Monday's meeting the members put forward several points which will serve as the broad over-all basis for any subdivision development. These points were the result of a joint meeting of Council and Planning Board will now be forwarded to township Solicitor J. D. Lucas for further study.

In future any potential subdivider will be required to pay the township a fee of \$700.00 per lot to cover the cost of water and sewers. In order to be considered for water and sewers a subdivision must contain at least 1200 homes. The township will only take the water to the boundary of the subdivision and the developer must supply all the sewers. The subdivider will also have to put in the roads.

Council feels that an adequate water supply is one of the most urgent problems to be faced by the township today. As the cost of introducing a water system without outside assistance would be prohibitive, Council feels the only way to keep these costs at a safe level is to have the subdivider share in their cost. It has been estimated that the cost of a water system would force a 20 mill jump in taxes for those people residing in the water area.

Recently Venchiarutti and Venchiarutti, Toronto architects, waited on Council as representatives of the four owners of 500 acres of land located in the south-west section of the township and who are anxious to

gain permission to subdivide. At that time the Toronto firm asked Council to list just what the municipality would require in the way of services as the prelude to any plan of subdivision.

**Hospital Property**  
Reeve A. LeMasurier tabled a letter from Mayor N. Phillips of Toronto, stating that the city and Markham Twp. might arrange a joint meeting to discuss the matter of the Ontario Hospital at Langstaff. For some time now Markham has been endeavouring to secure the hospital property for use as an industrial site. The property was originally owned by the city but was taken over by the province during the war. In his letter Mayor Phillips offered little real hope that Markham will ever secure the property. He stated that at present there are strong indications that the Province may wish permanent title to the property.

In reply to a question by Councilor D. Deacon, Solicitor J. D. Lucas has stated that in cases where two or more families are living in a one-family dwelling contrary to the by-law the assessment on such properties can be increased accordingly.

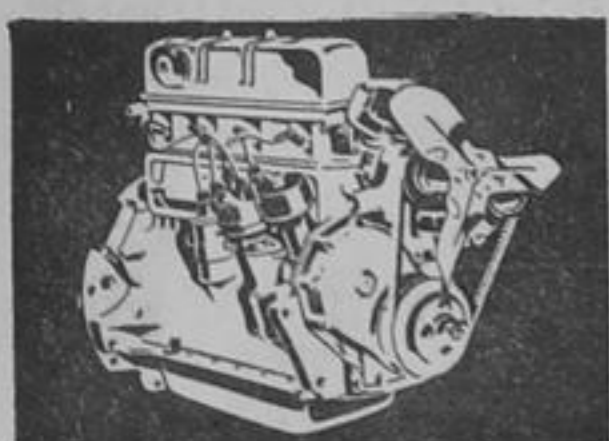
Council has awarded the contract for the purchase of two new police cruisers to W. Neal, Dodge - DeSoto dealers in Richmond Hill. Neal's price was \$2,050.00 complete for each of two Dodge cars.

According to the 18th Annual Statistical Report of the Ontario Dept. of Health, 6,630 died of cancer in the Province during 1952. This is an increase of 59% in the past 20 years.

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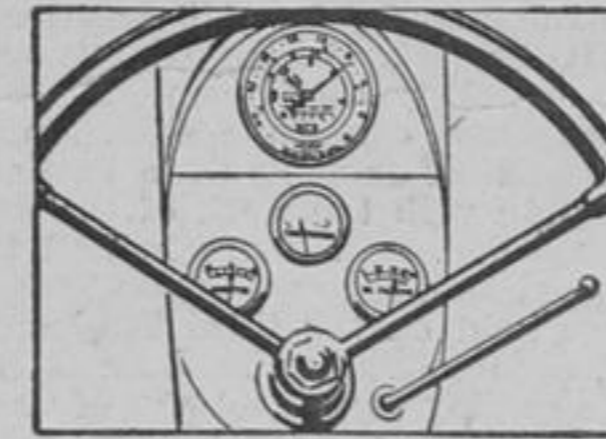
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