Thornhill And District News . . .

TELEPHONE AV. 5-1338

The Liberal is always pleased to publish items of interest contributed by its readers in the Thornhill area . . . . Our representative in Thornhill is Mrs. Elizabeth Sumner. In order that your items may appear in The Liberal simply phone AV. 5-1338.

Mrs. C. Bolton, wife of the Scoutmaster of 1st Thornhill troop, entertained a group of Scout Mothers at her home on Arnold Ave. on Friday, March 11. There were four tables of Court Whist and light refreshments were served.

The monthly meeting of the 1st Thornhill Scoutmothers Auxiliary will be held Monday, March 28, in the United Church Hall at 8.15 p.m. There will be a panel discussion between Scout leaders and parents. Scoutmaster C. Bolton, Akela K. Chambers and Akela Palmer will represent the Scouts on the panel and problems affecting leaders, parents and scouts will be discussed.

FortnightersHold St. Patrick's Tea

The Fortnighters of Thornhill Presbyterian Church held a successful St. Patrick's Day tea in the church hall on March 17.

Receiving the guests were the group's president, Mrs. J. MacKay and Convener of the tea, Mrs. J. Maver.

The church hall was decorated in the St. Patrick's theme and 15 individual tables were set in green and white, centred with daffodils. The tea table was centred with a bouquet of yellow and white Spring flowers and Mrs. Calvin Chambers and Mrs. Gordon Campbell poured tea.

Tea was served by members of the group to over 100 guests and children were served chocolate milk and cookies.

Those assisting were Mrs. Eric Bare, Mrs. J. Ariss, Mrs. Alex Brown, Mrs. H. Styles, Mrs. W. Neeland, Mrs. J. Davies, Mrs. H. Anderson, Mrs. L. Magee and Mrs. G. Patterson.

School Board Protests Dogs

A letter from the Board of School Area No. 1 Markham and Vaughan was received by Vaughan Township Council last Monday, protesting the dogs running at large around the schools.

While Council was quite aware of the problem of dogs running at large, there was no suggestion made at the meeting. "We've tried everything possible to restrict dogs running at large but it is a costly project and generally we receive little or no co-operation from the township residents in controlling dogs. Council would be willing to try any new suggestions put forward by anyone in the township", said Reeve McMurchy.

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Poor Reading Habits And Attitudes Towards Books Have Roots In The Home

Miss Jane McLaren, librarian of Thornhill Public Library, was guest speaker at the March meeting of Thornhill Home and School Association. Miss McLaren was introduced by Mrs. Ralph Edwards, chairman of the Library Board.

The purpose of Miss McLaren's talk was to increase the parents' concern in their children's reading, in their own reading and to arouse interest in the local library. She gave a short sketch of the history of the library which was begun in 1843 as a "library of useful information". In 1897 the library was established as a permanent concern and some of the original books of that time are still on the shelves and are a source of interest and curiosity.

Some of the rules and regulations which are pasted inside those first books are highly amusing now, and show what the librarians of those days might have expected from the users of the library. "The Reading Room shall be open to all over 12 years of age. (There was apparently no interest shown in the public school age child.) No person in an intaxicated or disorderly condition shall be admitted. No person shall be allowed to spit upon the floor or smoke in the room. Each member shall be entitled to one volume at a time."

Compares Annual Reports

Miss McLaren compared the annual report of 1920 with that of 1954. For instance in 1920 $110 was spent on buying books and last year $600 was spent. There were 72 books in the library in 1920 but by 1921 there were 566 of which only 22 were juvenile. In the library now there are 3,215 volumes of which 1,221 are for children. Also for the year 1920, the library membership stood at 42 — all such members being over 21 years of age. Today there are 258 adult members and 355 juvenile members. Adults may take out five books and children four and it is encouraging to see how many youngsters take out their four books, generally once a week, and read them all.

The selection of suitable reading for children is of paramount importance. Miss McLaren stressed the choice of the classics. To define the word "Classics" to a child by telling them it means a book which is well written, or highly thought of, or which has been read by a good many people for a great number of years is not enough. To the child's mind this could apply to almost this could apply to almost any reading material, including the comics.

Influence of Comic Books

With reference to the comics, Miss McLaren suggested every parent should read "Seduction of the Innocent" by Frederic Wertham, written to show the influence of the comic books on today's youth and called the most shocking book of recent years. The book is the result of seven years of scientific investigation conducted by Dr. Wertham. It is thoroughly documented by facts and cases. He has found that comic books harm the development of reading from the lowest level of the most elementary hygiene to the highest level of the appreciation of good literature.

Quoting from Dr. Wertham's book — "Parents and other adults are often deceived into believing children can read because they read so many comics. In teaching children to read, the schools have to compete with the pictures of comic books. Failure in reading occurs so infrequently because a child has developed the illusion that he can read because he can follow a comic book story from the pictures with the occasional reading of a word or two in the balloons. The bad reading habits he develops from such reading interfere with laying the foundation for proper reading habits. The basis of a child's future reading career is usually laid in the first and second grades and it is at this stage that comic books do the greatest harm."

Dr. Wertham is very scathing about even the so-called better comics, saying that many children think the word "Classic" means Classic Comic Books. As an illustration of this, Miss McLaren quoted an advertisement for "Macbeth" — "Told in the modern manner. No longer is it necessary to wade through pages of text. Streamlined for action. Adapted for easy and enjoyable reading. A dark tragedy of jealousy, intrigue and violence." Shakespeare and the child are corrupted at the same time.

Fortunately Canadians do not have the problem of "crime comics" in the same horrendous proportion as the American parents. Recent legislation banned 25 crime comic books from the newsstands.

The main problem, as Miss McLaren stated, is how to get children not only to read but to read good, worthwhile books. In a report on a survey of reading habits of Ontario school children there appears this statement. "The results of a three year survey show that poor habits and attitudes toward books have their root in the home." Thus good reading habits on the part of the parents will stimulate those of the children. Adults should be aware of what their children are reading and if necessary help them to choose their books.

W. I. Meets At Holmes Residence

The regular monthly meeting of Thornhill W.I. was held on March 17, at the home of Mrs. Robert Holmes, Yonge St. Mrs. C. Sinclair, the president, presided at the meeting.

The roll call, "What device in your home are you most thankful for?" was answered by 25 members.

Twelve dollars was collected at the meeting for Penny Roundup. Mrs. C. Thompson gave a report on the birthday luncheon in February.

Nomination of officers for 1955-56 was held.

Mrs. Mizen, convenor of Home Economics and Health took charge of the programme. Mrs. Mizen read an Essay on Bones by a school boy, which was followed by Health Hints by several members.

Miss Lois Perkins gave two Irish readings and Mrs. T. White sang.

The theatre tickets donated by the Richmond Theatre, were won by Miss E. Clubine.

A supper dish and tea were served by the hostesses.

Seven of the members attended the Board meeting in Toronto at YMCA last week.

The next meeting will be held in the Masonic Hall, Thornhill, April 21 at 2 o'clock.

O. A. C. Professor Stresses Importance Planned Landscape

Thornhill Horticultural Association held its monthly meeting in the United Church hall March 15.The speaker of the evening was Professor John Weall of the Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph. Prof. Weall not only teaches but has written extensively on almost every phase of gardening. His subject in this instance was "Landscape Gardening."

At this time of the year, said Professor Weall, spring is a tonic, physically and mentally. In refreshing atmosphere of changing colours and returning birds, we begin to plan, clean up and order. But here a word of warning. March being a treacherous month, warm one day and freezing the next, great care should be taken removing winter protection and irreparable damage can be caused to lawns while they are still very soft. When pruning shrubs, be like a surgeon who wants to know something about the patient before he starts cutting. "Don't go hacking at your shrubs until you are sure "when and how" to perform such an operation," he continued.

Professor Weall expressed the importance o fcareful planning and planting for a permanent and pleasing result. He picked up some coloured chalk and standing before a black board demonstrated the wrong and right materials for landscaping.

He suggested the low-spreading Junipers for ground cover. The silver-voiced salesman makes a special point of telling the owner these evergreens were specially grown and shaped for this type of planting, but what he did not add was that these conifers, removed from their natural environments, "the cedars from rich mucky soil, the pines from sandy soil, the junipers from a rocky area, and jammed against the foundation of a house and growing in sub-soil that the builder has left, is inviting failure.

In a few years the view from the picture window is one of disappointment. Prof. Weall suggested the formal type of landscaping with evergreens can be successful and suggested Japanese Yews, broad-leaved evergreen which thrive in shade and are resistant to town conditions such as smoke and soot.

To those who insist on cedars and pines, plant them where they have space and air because they are going to grow. Prof. Weall demonstrated, with the same setting what can be done with grouping flowering shrubs — floribunda roses, a group of silver birches, broad-leaved evergreens and periwinkle for covering under trees.

Terraced gardens should be designed fo ease. The first terrace should be made up of a stone patio, rose beds and lawn. A second type is the rock garden.

Prof. Weall stated that no other phase of gardening needed such careful choosing and knowledge as rockery plants. A third terrace would be the kitchen garden. "If you have ever observed sheep ascending a hill you will notice that they follow the contour of the land," he said. "So take a lesson from the sheep and construct and connect the paths of the terraces accordingly." With regard to the care of lawns, the best advice is to be obtained from those who take care of golf courses. These men are experts. For ariation the lawn should be spike rolled and the holes made by this operation are excellent for the fertilizer.

Prof. Weall extended an invitation to "Come to Guelph and see what's new." Dr. Scott, in thanking the speaker, expressed the appreciation of the audience in Oliver Goldsmith's lines —

"And still they sat and eyes with wonder grew
How one small head could contain all he knew.

Guide Leaders Urgently Needed For Thornhill Pack

Thornhill Association of Girl Guides met last Monday at the home of R. McArthur. The purpose of the meeting was to make known the need for Guide leaders and to arouse interest in Guiding in the Area.

The meeting expressed grave concern over the leadership situation as foreseen next autumn. In Thornhill there are two large companies of Guides which require a minimum of three leaders each.

The Local Association is formed not only of Guide and Brownie mothers but also of women who are interested in this work. They assist Guide Companies, find Guiders and help in the work of the District Commissioner. Guiders are the adult members of the movement who are appointed to lead the packs and companies. A Guider is appointed by the Commissioner and the Local Association, must be in agreement with the aims and methods of the movement and is expected to adhere to its policy and rules. She learns Guide methods of training, must pass the Tenderfoot Test and is enrolled by the Commissioner. The Guider has the full support and encouragement of the Local Association which leaves her free to assume her own responsibilities.

If anyone has had experience or is interested in gaining experience in Guide work, please telephone Mrs. J. E. MacNell AV. 5-1663 or Mrs. Betty Ball at AV. 5-1513.

1000 Hours Of School

David Smith, co-ordinating principal for School Area No. 1 Markham—Vaughan addressed the general meeting of Thornhill Nursery School on March 14 at the home of Mrs. R. C. Fairfield.

Mr. Smith spoke to the 24 parents present, on "1000 Hours of School." He discussed the school's role in the training of the child, along mental, physical, spiritual and social lines of development. He urged parents not to expect the school to take over all aspects of training. "We must look at the school and the teachers as one of the aids to child training," he said.

In the discussion period, Mr. Smith answered questions about the level system used in Grades 1 to 3, teachers' salaries and special classes.

BRADFORD : Heavy steel in the safe of the Liquor Control Board office fouled drills and other attempts to remove the week-end receipts of $4,000.

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