

'If Ignorance Is Bliss, The Majority Must Have Been A Happy Lot'



O. M. MacKILLOP MEMORIAL SCHOOL ERECTED 1955

"If ignorance is bliss, the majority of juveniles of that day must have been a happy lot," wrote a correspondent to The Liberal in referring to education in Richmond Hill in the early 1800's. Education in the village began under very primitive circumstances and previous to the introduction of the common school system in 1867, local boys and girls stood a slim chance of obtaining even the rudiments of education. Richmond Hill has scaled the gamut of educational facilities with the opening last Monday of the O. M. MacKillop Memorial School on Lucas Street, the second school now in operation, which has evolved from a 20 x 40 foot log cabin where the children of the pioneers were escaping from "their blissful state."

There were however, in the early history of the village, a few families who did not believe with the poet that "A little learning is a dangerous thing", but a little knowledge, if it was not profound, was better than none. So, if there happened to be among them a man who could read and write, and he had time on his hands, his services were secured and his abilities utilized for the benefit of the rising generation.

Schooling Until Sugar Time

The school term generally lasted through the winter months until "sugar-making time" when all youngsters were wanted to carry sap and sticks to keep the "kettle bilin." After that, there was always something to do at home, so the remainder of the year was vacation.

Richmond Hill's first school was held in a deserted Settlement Duty house with earth floor and pine blocks for seats. The master's desk was a hewn pine log slab with legs of the same material. The books, all sorts and sizes were few and far between and were moved from student to student until each scholar received his share of the lesson.

The first passable supply of books of instruction that arrived in the village was imported from England by James Miles, and reached here two months from

the date of the order. They were supplied by the British and Foreign Bible Society. Any danger arising from the use of the Bible as a text book in the common school had not then occurred to the unsophisticated mind of those early days.

The village, with a very different knowledge of management and discipline, adopted the public school system of 1816, "the germ of which had become one of the noblest institutions in the Dominion, and the admiration of visitors from many lands."

The school, then an infant industry of those days, received its share of government assistance from the legislative grant of 5,000 pounds for the payment of teachers and the purchase of supplies. The grant was later increased.

Advancement In Architecture

This was an inducement for the people to build their first school house which was the second hewed log building erected in the village, showing "the advancement in architecture and public spirit". Its foundation was laid in 1810 in a small clearing, a few rods south of the present school site which was then covered with forest. Like all large public undertakings, it took some time in its erection, but when built was a substantial structure used as a school house

place of worship and Town Hall for nearly 30 years when it gave way in the march of progress to its brick successor built in 1847. The village's first school master, Benjamin Barnard, a gentleman from Surrey, England, put the Truant Act into effect long before the legislature launched it. After four o'clock the parents of an absentee would see the master coming round the corner of the bush, or striding across the clearing to know the reason why.

Up to 1866, the Public School was sustained by the Rate Bill, with all its objectionable features, but locally the agreement that the property should be assessed for education as well as for protection, early prevailed. In 1867, its doors were thrown open to all who chose to enter. When the village set up municipal housekeeping for itself in 1873, the Village's share of the Clergy Reserve Fund was \$1,450.

Not only was there a Public School in Richmond Hill, but Mrs. L. McConaghy, Centre St. West, has happy memories of being a pupil of Miss Christina Campbell's Seminary For Young Ladies, which she entered in

1873 at the age of six. The Seminary was located on Yonge St. in the building directly north of Oakley Real Estate. Mrs. McConaghy said there was another such school at that time, but Miss Campbell's was the more exclusive one.

Yonge St. School Cost \$30,000

The Public School on Yonge Street was officially opened March 5, 1915, the school built at a cost of \$30,000. Members of the Board of Education at that time were G. Cowie, chairman, G. A. McDonald secretary-treasurer, F. McConaghy, T. H. Trench, D. Hill, Wm. Harrison, H. A. Nicholls, J. Innes, Geo. Reddit, W. A. Wright, Geo. Harding, J. N. Boyle, and C. Mason.

Five teachers were on the staff — A. E. Lehman principal, Miss M. Trench, Miss E. M. Holmes, and Mrs. L. McConaghy. As part of the entertainment program during the afternoon, records show "Master George Wiley gave a concert solo and Master Rand Phipps read a poem dedicatory to the new building, the poem composed by W. D. T. Atkinson, B.A., of the Collingwood Collegiate staff, Mr. Phipps is yet a resident of the village



LOG SCHOOL ERECTED 1810

High Sch. Bd. Cuts Capital Expenditure

(Continued from page 1) Education, who confirmed Trustee Rumble's stand that according to the Act, capital expenditure should not exceed \$5,000, without O.M.B. approval. Mr. Kinnee said that the Department and the balance of the Board felt, however, that they had been obeying the spirit of the law if not the actual letter of the law. He said that the law had been designed primarily to restrict boards from spending too freely on capital expenditures rather than to hold them to the exact \$5,000 figure.

The portion of the capital expenditures being cut was designed primarily to allow the Board to have ready cash to negotiate for a new school site in Woodbridge, if the opportunity came. A number of the trustees expressed concern over the fact that if it is necessary to make a deal on a site in Woodbridge, it will now be necessary to borrow money and pay interest since the matter of capital expenditures has been raised.

Felt Obligation
Trustee Rumble, speaking on behalf of his action in the matter, said that he felt obligated to call the attention of everyone concerned when a matter involving public funds such as this arose. "The Board has actually collected money without legal authority and it is being done all across the province according to this," said Mr. Rumble. "Not really, when you consider that both the auditors and the Department of Education itself approve of it," countered Mr. Kinnee.

May Consider Administrator
Mr. Kinnee commented that the time was close at hand when the Board would have to give serious consideration to hiring a business administrator for the school as the work was getting beyond individual members who have only a limited time to devote to school affairs.

Building Report
Trustee W. R. Dean, chairman of the building committee, reported that the councils of Vaughan Twp. and Woodbridge village planned to look over a proposed site for a new High school in Woodbridge and then to meet further with the Building Committee.

Prior to Monday's meeting, the Building Committee members met with Markham Township Council regarding the road into the Thornhill School. Earlier the Board had approved the spending of approximately \$6,700 to install the road but a revision of township road standards has jumped the cost to nearly \$12,000. After meeting with the committee, it was suggested by Markham Council that the township assume half the cost of the increase. Mr. Dean added that Markham Council had urged the Board not to count too much on receiving water from North York Twp. for the Thornhill School.

Shift
A motion to alternate the shifts for next year, proposed by Trustee Robert Tamblin, and seconded by Trustee Rumble was lost when the Board deemed too many transportation, staff and organizational changes necessary. In making his motion, Trustee Tamblin said that representation had been made in the Thornhill area for the change,

and expressed surprise that the Board had received a petition signed by 29 Thornhill parents objecting to any change.

Free Text Books
The Board voted to continue the distribution of text books to students, but decided to discontinue the \$1 returnable deposit fee. The books themselves will be given to the students outright and will not need to be returned at the conclusion of the school year. Principal A. S. Elson said that he felt that this new system would be as equally economical as the old method as it would reduce bookkeeping to a minimum.

Approval was given for the discontinuation of the practical agriculture course for Grades 10 and 11, due to lack of interest in the course.

Cars ARE MY Line



By Bud Lauria

The easiest way to tell a car story is to trap a mechanic in a grease pit, stand over him and shout. He just can't escape. The advantage of being a reader is that you can leave anytime.

But here are a few that I've forced our people to snicker at. There was a man in Vancouver, Canada, who told the judge he wasn't guilty of failing to have his new license plates on his car by the deadline. "The plates were on my car," he said, "right on the front seat." "Best excuse I've heard in a long time," said the judge after the prosecutor had talked himself out explaining the difference between "in" and "on". Gave him a suspended sentence.

The law, just the same, was able to trip up another driver who thought he had an angle. In Portland, Oregon, a man set out to prove a bet that there was no law against driving in the nude—and was arrested for not having his driver's license on his person.

Things went easier for a woman in Tyler, Texas, who was asked by the judge to explain why she had overparked in front of a dress shop. "Trying on a girdle and was unavoidably detained," she explained. I don't know how she was, but her sentence was suspended.

Like the woman in the girdle, once you buy a car you're going to be in it for some time. That's why it's good sense and good business to pick out a car that fits—that fits your needs and fits your pocketbook. We have such a large display of quality cars at our lot, we're pretty sure we can find one just right for you.

LAURIA
PONTIAC • GMC • BUICK
WILLOWDALE
USED CAR OFFICE
6167 YONGE ST. BA-1-9388 BA-1-6133

CNIB Raises Over \$1,000

The committee in charge of the local campaign for funds for the Canadian National Institute for the Blind reports a total of \$1,090 received in contributions to date. Last year's drive brought in \$868. Donations will still be accepted, however, although personal canvassing has been completed.

Mr. G. Brown, district supervisor, would like to express his appreciation on behalf of C.N.I.B. to Mrs. J. Koning and all canvassers who assisted.

Fail To Blow Up Safe

Butler & Baird was broken into over the week-end for the second time during the past year. Thieves attempted to blow up the safe with nitroglycerine but left the job uncompleted. An expert from the C.I.B. was called in Monday morning to remove the glycerine.

ROXY THEATRE MARKHAM

EVENINGS
DOORS OPEN 6.30
SAT. MAT. 1.30

Thurs., Fri., Sat.
MAY 12, 13, 14

Starring
Academy Award Winner
GRACE KELLY
in
'BRIDGES AT TOKO-RI'
Technicolor
with Wm. Holden

FOUR DAYS
Mon., Tues., Wed., Thurs.
MAY 16, 17, 18, 19

'WE WANT A CHILD'
Children under 16 not admitted
plus
'MYSTERY LAKE'
with
GEORGE FENEMAN
In Glorious Technicolor
ADMISSION 65c

FILM FESTIVAL
— at —
CHARLES HOWITT SCHOOL
Pearson Ave., Richvale
SATURDAY, MAY 28
From 2 to 4 p.m., 8 to 10 p.m.
Admission: Adults 35c, Children 15c
Sponsored by Chas. Howitt Home & School Assoc.

TOWNSHIP SCHOOL AREA NO. 1
MARKHAM & VAUGHAN
PRE-SCHOOL REGISTRATION 1955
(For Children Enrolling in Grade I in September)

LANGSTAFF SCHOOL
Tuesday, May 24, 9.30-11 a.m.

POWELL ROAD SCHOOL
Wednesday, May 25, 9.30-11 a.m.

RICHVALE SCHOOL
Thursday, May 26, 9.30-11 a.m.

CHARLES HOWITT SCHOOL
Friday, May 27, 9.30-11 a.m.

THORNLEA SCHOOL
Monday, May 30, 9.30-10 a.m.

For Pupils not already Registered at Thornhill & Henderson Ave. Schools:

THORNHILL SCHOOL
Friday, May 27, 9.30-10 a.m.

HENDERSON AVE. SCHOOL
Wednesday, May 25, 9.30-10 a.m.

As all pupils enrolling for Grade I — 1955-56 must reach the age of SIX ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 31, 1955, and acceptable proof of age must be presented at the Registration.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

TRUCKERS WANTED
With 3-ton stake bodied trucks or larger for delivery of Concrete Blocks in Toronto and Suburbs
Phone Maple 6 Phone
Days: EM. 6-5373 Evenings: Maple 170

NOTICE

Dog tags and bicycle licenses will be issued from the police office Saturdays only.

ALL LICENSES MUST BE PURCHASED BEFORE JUNE 15

RICHMOND HILL POLICE DEPARTMENT

DYNAMICALLY NEW!

THE 1955 DESIGN AWARD-WINNING **McCLARY REFRIGERATOR**

SDR 10-S

- ★ FULLY AUTOMATIC DEFROST!
- ★ FULL-WIDTH FREEZER CHEST!
- ★ FOUR DOOR SHELVES!
- ★ MEAT KEEPER!
- ★ BUTTER KEEPER!
- ★ GIANT CRISPER DRAWER!

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TU. 4-1610

Would you like to see **BEHIND THE SCENES** of a **TELEPHONE EXCHANGE?**

We'd like to take you backstage and show you how your telephone system works. We'd like you to see what happens when you call a number. And we'd more than like to meet you and have you meet the telephone people who serve you!

SO We're Having **OPEN HOUSE** TONIGHT at the **RICHMOND HILL TELEPHONE EXCHANGE**

19 RICHMOND STREET between 7 and 9 p.m.

An interesting tour is planned for your enjoyment
May we look forward to seeing you?
C. E. BLOSDALE, Manager

THE BELL TELEPHONE COMPANY OF CANADA

Wednesday Night Bingo 8.15 P.M. \$100 JACKPOT
LEGION HALL - STOP 23 **Carrville Rd. W**