

Will He See Shadow To-day?



Despite a mild winter, any day now we begin to look for the first signs of spring. When will the robins appear? Has anyone seen a robin yet? Are the pussy willows breaking their buds? And what about Groundhog Day - Will the groundhog come out into bright sunlight and see his shadow on February 2nd? The old folk tale says that if he does, we will be in for six more weeks of winter. Let's have a look at the groundhog or woodchuck and see how the story of Groundhog Day might have been started. The woodchuck is a large member of the squirrel family, about 12 to 25 inches long and weighing from five to ten pounds when fully grown. It lives in burrows in the ground. This habit considered together with the heavy-set body, short legs and apparently clumsy movements, have gained it the name groundhog. They are herbivores, or plant-eaters. The young are born in the spring and are fully grown by fall. The family usually lives in a system of burrows, having several entrances. The animals may often be seen sunning themselves in their doorways or feeding nearby. The kind of woodchuck in Ont., is also found in Quebec, the Maritimes and southward into Virginia, Alabama and north and westward through the Dakotas, Montana and the Canadian prairies, and even north to the Yukon.

The woodchuck is famous as a hibernating animal. Early in the autumn it retires to its den at the bottom of the burrow and rolls up into a tight ball with the head and feet drawn up tightly. Breathing becomes very slow and the heartbeat becomes faint and the body temperature falls to a very low level. This is true hibernation - quite unlike natural sleep - a state in which the animal is almost insensible to disturbance. Awakening may take several hours when the temperature warms up.

The old story has it that on February 2nd the groundhog slowly emerges from his hibernating den to the daylight. If he emerges in bright sunlight and sees his shadow, he at once returns to hibernate through another six weeks of winter weather. If he comes out on a cloudy day and sees no shadow, winter is over and the groundhog remains active. Considering the date, his story must have had its origin in New England, or further south in the region of Maryland or Virginia, where woodchucks often do emerge early in February. There may also be some connection with the religious celebration of Candlemas Day, which falls on February 2nd. In Ontario, groundhogs usually come out much later when the weather warms up.

GORMLEY NEWS

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Gormley Couple Celebrate 60th Wedding Anniversary

On Sunday afternoon and evening, January 29, 1961, Mr. and Mrs. George French were at home to their wide circle of friends and relatives at the home of their son-in-law and daughter, Rev. and Mrs. Roy Nigh.

On Jan. 30, 1901, Miss Mary Ethel Sheffer, daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Nicolas Sheffer, was joined in marriage with Mr. George French, son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Wm. French of Sunderland. They were married at the home of the bride's parents (the present Langley place) by Elder Fred Elliott (Mr. Elias Elliott's father). The bride's sister, Miss Mabel Sheffer, was bridesmaid and Mr. Wm. French was groomsmen. Later the bridesmaid and groomsmen were married. Fifty-six guests were present. Six of whom are still living. Mr. Wilmot Connor (a cousin) of Oak Ridges and Mr. Frank Harvey and Mr. Ernest Harvey of Cedar Valley (both nephews of Mr. French) were present for both occasions.

Mr. and Mrs. French farmed on the present Langley farm until they moved to New Gormley in 1920 (the present E. W. Jones property). In 1937 they moved to Springvale and in 1944 they moved to the farm on the 6th concession of Markham where they now live with their son-in-law and daughter.

One daughter Clara, born in 1903, died in 1905. Alma (Mrs. Nigh) is the only other member of the family. There are 8 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren who were all present.

Mr. and Mrs. French had celebrated on two other occasions, their 10th and 50th anniversaries.

Both Mr. and Mrs. French were saved in 1902 at Heise Hill Church when Evangelist J. R. Zook was conducting special meetings. In November, 1902, they joined the Brethren in Christ Church. Here they have served very actively through the years. Mr. French taught the Young Men's Class for many years. While at Springvale Mr. French was elected as deacon and continued in this office when he returned to Gormley.

Mr. and Mrs. French spent three summers from 1921 to 1923 assisting with tent meetings in October.

The French home has always been known for hospitality. Both have shown a keen interest in people. Rev. Ernest Lucas of Wallaceburg and Mrs. John Weir (May Marker) of Grenville, Ohio, both made their homes with the French's for a number of years, and still call it "home". Mr. French, now 85 years old, and Mrs. French, 82 years, have many visitors. Both have enjoyed good health. One year ago Mr. French was very ill but has made a remarkable recovery for his age. Mrs. French is well known for cutting quilt patches, and piecing quilts. She has pieced 21 log cabin quilts, 14 Dresden plates, besides hundreds of others. She still pieces enough quilts to keep three sewing circles busy.

Over 150 friends and relatives called on Sunday to extend best wishes to this grand old couple. Friends from Hagersville, Boyle, Ridgeway, Welland, and Toronto and other local places were present. Congratulations were received from Prime Minister Diefenbaker, Premier Frost and Mr. C. A. Cathers, local representative to Parliament.

Many beautiful floral tributes, gifts of money, and other gifts added to the pleasure of the occasion. We extend congratulations and hope they may reach another milestone together.

W. M. S.

At the annual re-organization meeting of the Evening W.M.S. of the United Missionary Church on Monday night at the home of Miss Marilyn Harman, the following officers were elected: President - Mrs. C. Milsted, Vice Pres. - Miss Louie Bolerder, Sec. Treas. - Mrs. R. Elliott, Work Committee - Mrs. M. Bennett, Mrs. G. Campey and Miss G. Bruce.

Congratulations to Mr. & Mrs. Carl Reesor (nee Alma Smith) who were quietly married at the bride's home on Wednesday, Jan. 25. Mr. and Mrs. Reesor left for a honeymoon in Florida.

Mr. and Mrs. Owen Witmer and children of Salem Ohio, and Mr. and Mrs. Norman Wenger of Wakarusa, Indiana, were home last week for the wedding of Mrs. Wenger's and Mrs. Witmer's father, Mr. Carl Reesor.

Mr. George Cober left on Friday morning by bus for a holiday in Florida.

The large mail truck broke down on Saturday morning near Willowdale. The mail was over two hours late arriving at our local office, making the couriers much later in their delivery on Saturday.

Master John Campey entertained a number of little friends and their mothers at his birthday party on Friday afternoon, on his fourth birthday.

Rev. and Mrs. Roy Nigh and Mr. and Mrs. Harold Heise attended the funeral of Mrs. Fred Traver at Wellandport on Wednesday afternoon.

Miss Velma Brillinger spent the weekend at Fordwich where she spoke on her missionary work in Southern Rhodesia.

Dept. of Highway officials and appraisers are meeting with considerable opposition as they buy up land in our area for the new 404 highway.

Sunday, February 5, is Missionary Sunday in the United Missionary Sunday School. A special speaker will be present for the occasion.

The Crusaders group of the U. M. Church enjoyed a skating party on Tuesday night.

Flying Officer and Mrs. Wm. MacKinnon and Wayne of Seven Islands, Quebec, spent the weekend with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Harman. Mrs. MacKinnon and Wayne are remaining for a longer visit.

Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Schildroth and children of Brampton, Mrs. Gordon Guse and daughter, and Mrs. Chas. Heft of Owen Sound spent the week-end with Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Heft. Mrs. Guse and Mrs. C. Heft remained for a week longer.

CONGRATULATIONS FROM QUEEN

Following on their 60th wedding anniversary -- Mr. and Mrs. George French on Monday, January 30th, received a cable from her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth -- congratulating them on the honour of the occasion.

HIGHLAND PARK NEWS

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Henderson Ave. Home and School

The regular monthly meeting of the Henderson Ave. Home and School was held last Monday evening January 23rd at 8 p.m. A general meeting of the York County Home and School will be held at Aurora on Thursday, February 2. The subject is to be debates and public speaking. Mr. McDermid is to be the speaker. Miss Fowler's class once again won the grade count and was awarded the five dollar prize to purchase for her classroom something they wanted. A letter was read from Principal Kizinger of Thornlea School and head of the sports committee of School area 1 requesting a trophy to be purchased by the Henderson Ave. Home and School, this was agreed upon. One large trophy for hockey to be awarded to the winning school and kept until the following year when it will be turned

over to the next winners. Mr. R. Priestman then took the chair as panel moderator, and introduced the following members of the panel. Superintendent E. J. Sand, Principal of Henderson School Mr. Martindale, Physical Training Instructor on the staff at Henderson Mr. Westlake and Mr. McVicar P.T. instructor at the Thornhill High School. Their subject was "The Part School Plays in Physical Training." The aims of P.T. were outlined as follows: To promote healthy growth, physical fitness and development skills. To develop good citizens by desirable behavior and good health habits. To improve posture, and provide for future leisure and skills. Mr. Martindale outlined the stages in public school. Mr. Westlake described the program for both boys and girls from the fall through to spring, explaining

that the popularity of the games depended on the glamour attached by TV audiences, parental preferences etc., pointing out the self control, and self discipline each game taught the children.

A vote of thanks went out to the teachers who transported both players and spectators to games at other schools in the area without any compensation. Also to Mrs. Allen who voluntarily taught the children dancing after school hours. This accomplished many hidden advantages - namely - muscular co-ordination, social skills and self assurance.

Then on to Mr. McVicar and the physical fitness tests of high school. These are taken on entering High School in the fall and again in the spring, each year from grade 9 to 12. They include push-ups, chin-ups, static balancing tests and aim for a seven minute mile. Improvement is gradual in most cases but maturity always helps.

Automation in this country places us at a disadvantage compared to our European neighbours, attitude and traditions also enter into the picture. It was

felt inadequate facilities, lack of financial grants, etc., also entered into the picture. 10% of school time provided a happy medium in the brains vs brawn battle. This most interesting meeting closed promptly at 9:45 p.m. when refreshments were served. Next meeting Feb. 20.

2nd Thornhill Scouts

A very interesting program was planned for this week when Scouter Norm Foster and the Skipper of Rovers from 1st Beverley Acres came to talk and show movies on camping in the Eastern lake districts. Light-weight gear was demonstrated, and activities of Rovers was shown with the idea in mind that possibly a Rover pack can be started in this district. This Saturday a hike is planned for the Thornville area.

Thornhill Church Hockey

Once again the Pee Wee team scored another victory, they are in the lead with no losses at all, congratulations to the boys and their leaders.

Last Saturday at Ravina Gardens we chalked up another loss for our Bantam league team, however, Thursday night at Unionville we finally scored a

win, no victory was ever sweeter to the boys, their coach or the cheering section who went along to witness and encourage the boys. They went in hungry for a win, scored the goal in the first couple of minutes of play then held it for the remaining thirty-eight minutes of play. It would be impossible to single out any two or three players for star awards they were all marvelous - Larry Nelson scored the goal. Barry Burnett gained a shut-out and earned himself a new pair of socks, at my expense. Larry Sturges saved a tie game when he came scooting across in front of goal on his seat from out of nowhere. The defense was terrific and the improvement in skating speed of those who had been practicing was most noticeable. But the biggest thrill was the compliment to the coach on the discipline and team spirit displayed by the boys. It was 1-0 for Thornhill against Spring Garden Baptist Church their first win in nine games. I can mention here we have only three boys who are Bantam age, and six who are eligible to still play Pee Wee. We are mighty proud of these fellows.

1st Thornhill Guides

There was much disappointment among the Guides this week when their beloved "Cap" was made district commissioner of the new district which includes the area south of Thornhill. Mrs. Morrison is now captain in Mrs. Jewitt's place with Mary Gage promoted to "Lefty." A third leader hasn't been appointed as yet.

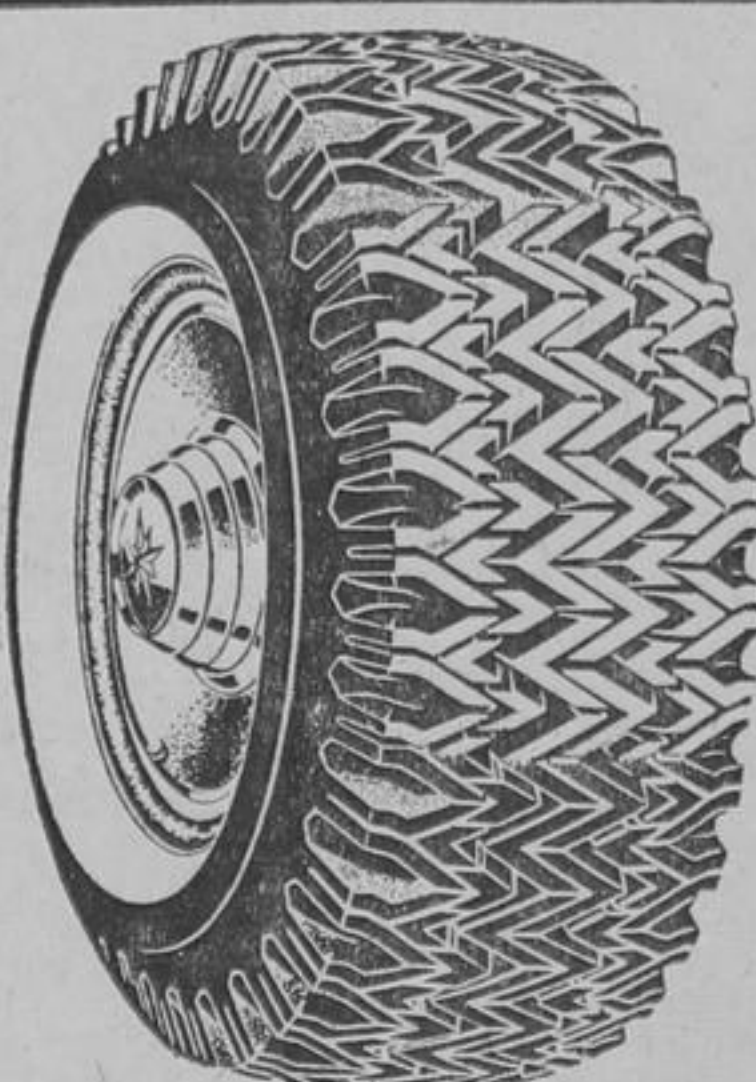
A meeting of the Mother's auxiliary of the Brownies and Guides was held at Vi Johnson's home on Thursday night. Twenty-seven mothers were present. Mrs. Kennedy of Grandview Ave. is the new vice president. A new Brownie pack has been started to include the waiting list in the Highland Park area and the new Grandview Estates girls. They have 14 Brownies enrolled. It is unofficially known as the 4th Thornhill group to meet each Wednesday after 4 p.m. in Henderson Ave. School. Mrs. Paige of Bright-Bay Cres. is to be Brown Owl. Mrs. McCullough and Mrs. Hughes both of the new Grandview Estates subdivision as Tawny Owls. The weekend at Camp Samac was discussed for early in March.

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