

# Life Can Be Beautiful But Also Busy For Mabbett

BY FRED SIMPSON

You don't necessarily have to have three arms to be an arena manager but Richmond Hill's Bill Mabbett must find himself looking around for a third one sometimes.

This was the situation as the reporter took pencil in hand and dropped around to visit Bill in his office.

The time was 3.30 p.m. and Bill was on the phone. Just outside his office door a couple of painters were welding brushes against the inside panelling of the new addition.

A peek through the windows of the addition onto the ice surface below revealed darkness. For one of the few times the ice surface was emptied of skaters and the lights out. Not for long.

It was 3.45 now and Bill was off the phone. A few moments of conversation in his

office and then he excused himself saying he had to get the sound system adjusted for the local skating club who would be taking to the ice at 4 p.m.

The reporter tagged along and asked questions while Bill worked.

Question: "What's it like managing an arena?"

Answer: "Busy." And that's the way the story goes for Bill who commenced duties at the local arena in September.

"Things are just a little bit hectic," he said. "We're just getting things organized and it takes some doing."

Managing the local arena is a relatively new experience for Bill who managed the curling rink in Newmarket prior to coming to Richmond Hill.

But he's had quite a few experiences

in his 37 years to date and this includes playing hockey for the Ayr Raiders in Scotland during the 1951-52 season and sojourning in Cuba for a time in his capacity as electrical contractor.

Bill was in Cuba at the time when Castro was just in the process of organizing his revolutionary club in the hills.

"I was doing some wiring at the Oriental race-track in Havana and there were some uprisings but things were pretty quiet as far as I was concerned."

Cuba hasn't been much aid to Bill in his arena managing duties but his electrical wiring experience helps a lot.

"I had an appliance business in Newmarket after coming back from Cuba and knowing about wiring helps in the ice-making business."

At the present time, Bill handles the

ice-making duties at the arena, stocks the concession booth, and worries about "things going wrong".

"I hope to confine myself to just managing in the near future," he said, "when I can get someone trained to handle the ice duties."

One of his biggest problems has been solved with the acquisition of a new ice machine tractor and floor scraper.

"It takes less time to reflood the ice," he points out. "And this is important when the rink is in action most of the time."

Scheduling ice-time is another problem but it solves itself in the sense there are only so many hours in a day. An average day begins at 6 a.m. for Bill but sometimes does not end until the early hours of the next day.

"I often get here at 5.30 a.m. and open up the dressing rooms," he said, "and get the ice ready."

Bill broke off at this point. It was 4 p.m. and some of the skaters were arriving. He turned the arena lights on and then did some more fiddling with the dials on the sound machine.

"Sometimes you get called out at the strangest hours," he said, "when something goes wrong with the equipment. But it is part of the job and it's interesting."

At this point the telephone rang again, a boy was wanting the key to a dressing room door, and the man who looks after stocking the cigarette machine had some questions to ask.

Bill was on the phone when your reporter left.

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Second Section

Sport Spots



BY RON CRAINE

## Open Minor Arena In April, Vaughan Teams First Crack At Ice Time

More ice time for young hockey players at a decent hour.

With this in mind, Vaughan developer Bill Sills is attempting to solve a headache common to parents who have to drag out of bed at all hours to get hockey practice for their youngsters at a price they can afford.

Announced Tuesday was the April, 1964 opening of the world's first enclosed double rink minor hockey arena being constructed by Mr. Sills and company at Highway 7 and Jane Street in Vaughan Township.

On the priority list for good ice time are Vaughan Recreation Committee's teams when the \$521,000 building is ready for business next spring. There are about 1,000 minor hockey players in the township.

It will also set the pace for another "first" in the sports world.

The arena will rely for its year-round operation on total energy for its light, heat and refrigeration through the use of natural gas.

Co-incidentally it was the Crothers heavy equipment plant once mooted for Vaughan's industrial area, that

has since been the pilot project for the natural gas energy concept.

Doublerrink Arenas Limited of which Mr. Sills is president has indicated the company chose the gas energy concept on the basis of savings and convenience over other methods.

The design by Ron Meschino of Meschino and Associates Consulting Engineers is expected to save about \$12,000 a year over conventional hydro facilities "on a level associated with professional hockey," Mr. Sills said.

**PHYSICAL DESIGN**

The twin rinks will be full size, 185 feet by 85 feet, separated by a locker and lounge section.

The 8,000 square foot heated lounge, protected from wayward pucks by youthful sharpshooters by armour plated glass will run the full length of the playing surface to provide a double-barrelled look at the entertainment down below.

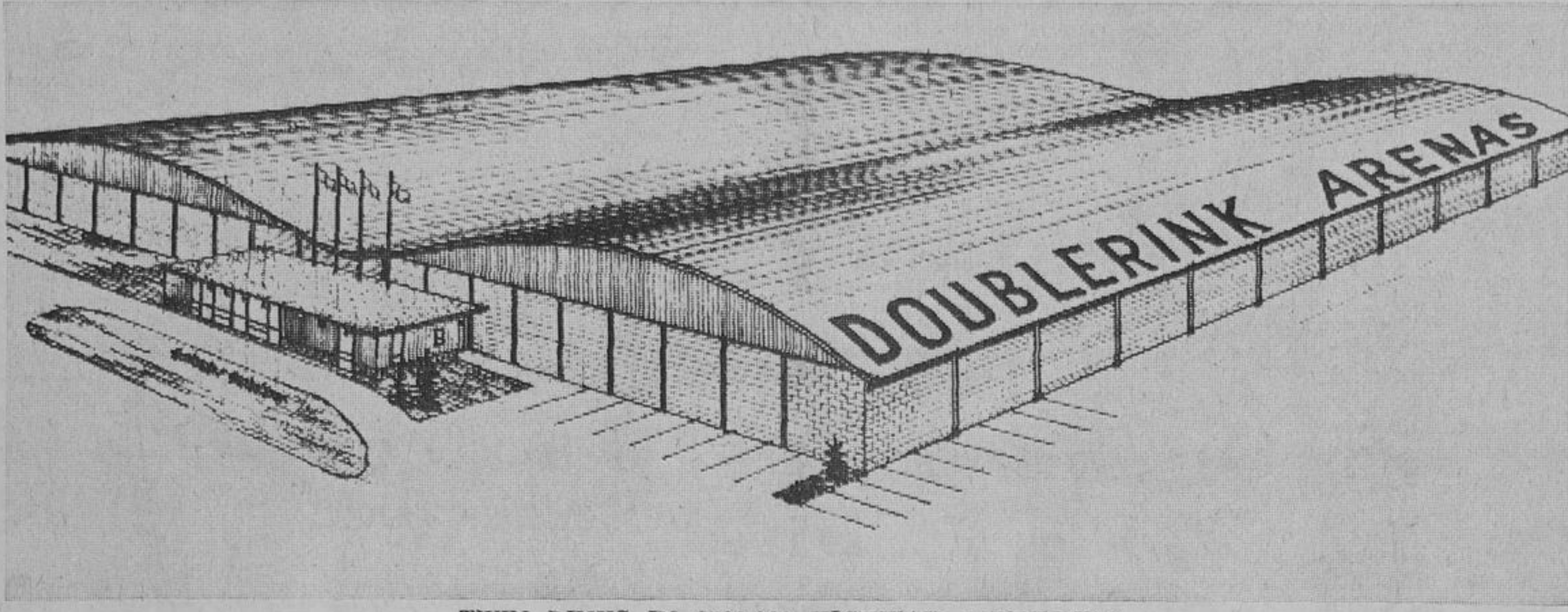
Twelve heated dressing rooms with showers will be located beneath the lounge. The rinks will each also have space for 300 spectator seats in addition to the lounge space with provision for more seats if ever required.

"Basically the rinks are designed for the hockey players, though," Mr. Sills said.

Even spectators' toes will be kept warm (at least 50 degrees) by radiant heating pipes fed with by-product heat from the plant which will also warm up the lounge to 70 degrees.

There will be a skate room and sports shop for hockey equipment and magazines, a snack bar and locker rental area.

Income will come mainly from rental to minor hockey



TWIN RINKS IN \$500,000 HIGHWAY 7 BUILDING

teams, both at practice and in games, and some from pleasure skating. Mr. Sills said spectator admissions is not expected to contribute significantly.

He said there is considerable interest in the arena project by the Toronto Hockey League which numbers about 30,000 members ( reputedly the largest of its kind in the world) who buy their ice time at whatever price and wherever they can find it.

**WELCOME NEWS**

Vaughan Recreation Committee Chairman Dalton

McArthur of Maple told "The Liberal" the committee is very happy there is going to be a rink. If the proper arrangements can be made, Vaughan teams will certainly be playing there.

Mr. McArthur, a former National Hockey League referee said the rink was a "necessary thing". He said the committee surveyed the need for an ice surface last year and was considering one to be built by the township.

He said the committee was negotiating rates for Vaughan teams which have been playing in Schomberg, Brad-

ford and Nobleton arenas.

In Thornhill where about 600 boys are active in minor hockey community and church leagues (about half reside in Markham Township), news of the rink was welcomed by Thornhill and District Hockey Club official Dave Barbour who said, "we shall have to wait and see how their ice rates compare with other rinks."

Thornhill rinks mainly travel to Bradford for their hockey or get ice time at 1 a.m. in Richmond Hill "which is not a very good deal for the young fellows", Vaughan Councillor Gar-

net Williams called the announcement "excellent Christmas news for the township's recreation committee as well as township children, many of whom had to get up so early since prime time for hockey was taken up by other teams."

The company announced its plans Tuesday at a press conference attended by hockey officials and members of the Toronto Maple Leafs organization. Mr. Sills said construction on the rink has already been started by Toronto contractors E. S. Martin Limited. It is adjacent to CNR Marshalling Yards.

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## Vaughan Sch. Area Bd. Approves Three Rinks

A delegation from the Jefferson Community Club met Vaughan Township School Area Board Thursday evening, requesting permission to use the Jefferson School property for recreational purposes. The club proposes to build an outdoor skating rink 150 feet by 50 feet on the level land behind the school. It is planned to use the rink mostly on weekends, and from six to eight p. m. on week-day evenings if simple lighting can be installed.

The request was granted subject to signing of the standard agreement, and provision of insurance which would relieve the school board of responsibility in case of accident. The board will provide an outlet for water and the hydro for lighting, but the club will be expected to install and pay for an outside meter and switch.

The two members of the delegation stated the club was willing to pay for water for initial floodings in case it was felt that this flooding would

deplete the supply of water in the school's well.

Approval was also given to the execution of the standard three-year agreement between the board and the Charles Howitt School Association for the use of school grounds for recreational purposes.

Approval was also given to a standard agreement with the Kleinburg and Nashville Recreation Committee for a rink at the Kleinburg School. An amount of \$150 will be made available in the new year toward provision of stone dust layer on the rink. Permanent hockey boards are being installed at this school by the recreation committee.

**STOUFFVILLE**: A party of seven Unionville district men shot and killed one of the largest wolves ever seen in the area. The chase occurred between the 5th and 6th concessions Markham Township. The wolf's female companion escaped.

## First Special Hockey Night

Despite the wintry blasts and the date, Friday, the thirteenth, the first special hockey night of the year was a successful event. But the thirteenth couldn't let the day pass without taking a minor swipe at tradition.

Dave Keon was scheduled to be the guest of honour but fate and the date combined to keep him away. Keon has been under a doctor's care for a minor ailment and was refused medical permission to be present Friday night.

The mites, youngest members of the Richmond Hill hockey family put on a crowd pleasing performance in their own inimitable manner. Slithering, sliding, staggering their relentless pursuit of the puck shows a singleness of purpose that is almost frightening. Their native and uninhibited antics are a sight to behold. In what other brand of hockey would a stoppage of play come about because a player had to go to the bathroom?

The teams from Richmond Hill won their respective games from teams woefully wanting in talent and hockey know-how but they won much to the enjoyment of assembled fond parents.

President Earl Methé announces that next Friday night the pee-wee, bantam and midget O.M.H.A. teams will be in action at Newmarket.

The juvenile Town and Country team will be hosting the '62-'63 O. M. H. A. champions, Orillia, at the local arena starting at 8 p.m. These two evenly matched teams will provide hockey thrills and chills for any real hockey enthusiast.

During the coming week it is hoped to have the new timer and scoreboard, donated by the Bank of Montreal, mounted and wired ready for the next week's action.

## Indians Whoop It Up At Season End

Last Saturday night saw the Richmond Hill football Indians gathered for their last pow-wow of the 1963 season. Sunday Indians, their comely squaws and beauteous maidens gathered at the Masonic Hall for the closing ceremonies.

Each player received a football trophy as a memento of this year's team while separate awards were made to those players judged most competent in various departments. The special awards were kept secret until the actual moment the award was made. Reactions by some award winners were priceless.

Ian McIntosh was the recipient of the most valuable player award. McIntosh is a football player who can run, kick and pass, play at a fullback or halfback spot and take over quarter backing chores

when necessary. This award came as no surprise to his team mates.

The award to the outstanding rookie on the team was won by the hard working, highly competitive Bob Harris. By sheer persistence and drive Harris made a real contribution to the Indian attack during the past season.

Freddie "the veteran" Parsons was awarded the outstanding lineman trophy. Despite injury during the season Fred was in on every play and did more than his share to rally Indian forces in moments of need. He is one of the quietest players on the team but lets his football abilities speak for him.

Two players shared honours as the most valuable to the defensive unit. Charlie Dunn and Gary Sokol made their contributions in different ways. Dunn is the roller-type athlete who can roast and rouse a football team with his tongue while not forgetting to play himself. Gary Sokol is a defensive end with an uncanny ability to diagnose plays and a penchant for pursuit that finds him deep in an opponents backfield, dropping ball carriers for losses more often than not.

Ron Sheridan won the coveted award for the player judged most valuable to the offensive unit. Sheridan combines speed and savvy with a surge pair of hands plus a willingness to take or give a hard jolt. His selection came as a surprise only to him.

A newcomer to the squad, Ralph Mercury, was deemed the player who made the biggest contribution during the playoffs. Mercury, naturally enough a speedy defence half-back, displayed an ability and alertness to recover fumbles and also to make key defensive moves that blunted a foe's attack. He was the most surprised player of the evening and was quite overcome with the honour accorded him.

## Presentations were made to Coach Del Madeley and to trainers Larry Wall and Clare Sheridan. After the presentations a buffet supper and dance officially sounded the knell of the local football season. The slogan seemed to be somewhat like that of the late, lamented Argos squad - "Wait till next year" - but we believe that the Indian team next year will be worth waiting to see!

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