

"History Of Vaughan Township" Is Record Of Two Rural Centuries

BY MARGARET GOVAN
Thornhill Correspondent

"A History of Vaughan Township" by the late Dr. Elmore Reaman is now being distributed to advance buyers. It is also on sale at the Vaughan Township offices, the Thornhill Public Library (Monday nights only) and elsewhere.

Dr. Reaman died before the manuscript was in the hands of the publishers and it was then that the Vaughan Township Historical Society was founded to get the book printed and into circulation. It is due to this society, and the executive in particular that the book is now in print: James McDonald, Ernest Redelmeier, William Halliwell, Fred Constable, Harold Hayhoe, Charles Miller, Mrs. Pierre Berton, Jesse Bryson, and George C. H. Snider, the president.



LATE DR. ELMORE REAMAN
Well Known Scholar, Author

And what a book! Its subject is two centuries of life in the township and it deals with those two centuries from every angle: government, transportation, agriculture, religion, and education. It lists the early settlers and follows their family trees with meticulous care. It gives complete coverage to the villages, some of which are no longer in existence. It is exceedingly well illustrated with photographs, pictures and sketches, the latter two being done by Thoreau MacDonald.

PIONEER LIFE

The descriptions of pioneer life, events in the township, and short biographies are very readable. These are written against a background of tables, minutes and documents which have been assembled with painstaking care. The result is a complete account of a piece of rural Ontario history.

Of course this will mean much more to many of the old families in the township. They will find their ancestors, details of the lives of those ancestors, their land and their work... all of which is incorporated into the book. It will provide great pleasure and interest today and will be an heirloom for future generations.

R. Hill Artist Wins Trip To Disney Land

Young Kim Thoms of 439 Alper Street, Beverley Acres, is a very happy young lady these days. She and her parents are preparing for a trip to the Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida. Kim won the trip as first prize in the 1971 Art Derby for Kids sponsored by the harness racing division of the Jockey Club.

Kim is a grade 6 student at Beverley Acres Public School. A former resident of Beverley Acres, Jackie Cameron, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Greg Cameron now of Amherst, Nova Scotia, received honorable mention in the same contest.

Inquest Failed To Take Precautions Drowned While Helping Police

A police skin diver's decision to pick up an extra set of air tanks led indirectly to the drowning death of 23-year-old Michael Robertson of 139 Mill Street, Richmond Hill, at the Bruce's Mill Conservation Area in Markham August 15.

Richmond Hill Constable Douglas Strong told a coroner's jury Tuesday night of last week that he was on his way to a conservation area drowning incident with his diving equipment when he decided to stop at the residence of Robertson.

"I had air tanks good enough for about 35 minutes," he said, "but I stopped to borrow an additional set in case I would need them."

He said he had a slight acquaintance with Robertson and knew he was a skin diver.

Robertson wouldn't loan his equipment. Instead he had decided to come along and help in the search.

SUCK THROUGH SLUICE

He drowned when he was sucked through a sluice gate in the dam. The sluice had been opened to lower the water to assist in the search for 42-year-old Lenardo L'Erario of Toronto. L'Erario had drowned earlier in the afternoon in the same swimming area.

The coroner's jury concluded Robertson died of drowning and "in his enthusiasm to help failed to take basic precautions."

It also recommended that the Metro Conservation Authority "lay down basic procedures in the operation of dams when an emergency occurs in the bathing areas."

Constable Strong said his original intentions had been only to borrow Robertson's equipment. But he had been convinced by the latter that he (Robertson) was experienced in diving and could be of assistance.

"It was a case of two divers being more helpful than one," he said.

READY FIRST

On arriving at the scene, Robertson got into his regalia before the policeman and decided to jump in without waiting for his partner.

Conservation Area Assistant Supervisor Herbert McIntosh said he opened the sluice gate to let some of the water out after the pool area had been cleared.

"Mr. Robertson arrived on the scene and was about to jump in. I warned him to be careful because the sluice gate was open. He just nodded his head as if he heard me and it was all right. And then he jumped in."

Witness McIntosh said the victim then swam away from the dam toward the centre of the swimming area.

"I couldn't see him but I could follow his air bubbles. Then the bubbles turned and came back toward the dam. Then I lost sight of them. It was shortly after this that I heard someone shout that there

was a body on the other side of the dam."

Constable Strong said he would not have entered the water himself until the sluice gate had been closed.

"I wouldn't have gone in at the dam area anyway," he said, "because the body of the other victim would have likely been farther away from the dam area."

He also said he had been in the area when the victim was warned the sluice gates were open.

"This was when I went back to the patrol car to get dressed," he said he had no idea Robertson would enter the water before he returned.

NARROW SLUICE

The further evidence indicated the sluice pipe was 36 inches in diameter and 39 feet long.

An autopsy showed the victim had severe bruises on the

lower end of his body indicating he had been sucked through the pipe feet first.

There was no concrete evidence there were any major faults in his skin diving equipment.

William Mulholland of the Metro Conservation Authority said the sluice pipe was rarely opened and then mainly in the fall to empty the swimming area or to clean the pool.

He said he knew little about the operation of the sluice pipe.

Other witnesses included York Central Pathologist Dr. Donald Guthrie and York Region Police Constable William Sheridan.

The jury comprised Harry Kennedy of RR 4, Stouffville; James Ryan, of RR 4, Stouffville; Larry Saunderson, RR 2, Gormley, foreman; Barbara Hart, RR 2, Gormley; and Howard Shaddock, RR 1, Unionville.

Coroner was Dr. Bernard Granton.

Post Office Holiday Hours

As a convenience to the public, Richmond Hill Post Office will be open for a full wicket service the next two Saturdays, December 11 and 18. The wickets will be open and manned from 8 am until 5:45 pm.

There will be no letter carrier service December 11, but there will be on December 18.

The local post office will be closed for four days at Christmas—December 25, 26, 27 and 28. The three-day holiday period for the New Year will be January 1, 2, and 3.

Christmas mail for distant points in Canada should be on its way December 8. To nearby communities the deadline is December 13 and for local delivery it is December 17.

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