



(Photo by Photique Studio)

The Country Day School Foundation, supported by more than 100 York Region parents, is negotiating for a site for a new private day school for boys and girls from pre-school to grade 13. They are aiming for an opening date in September of this year.

Pictured above Trustees Moffat Dunlap of Newmarket (left), and Edmond Ebert of Aurora (right), go over the plans for the school with John Pratt of King who has been appointed to conduct feasibility studies for the school.

If the trustees are successful in acquiring a site, they have been assured of the support of about 100 families. An experienced teacher and housemaster in private residential schools, Pratt will be headmaster for the Country Day School.

Private Day School Planned For York Region

By MARGARET LADE
A new independent day school is being planned for the Region of York. Its board of trustees is aiming for an opening in September. To date, however, they have no land, no building and no teachers.

It all began about a year ago, when a group of mothers who were tired of driving their children great distances to independent day schools in other municipalities, enlisted the support of their spouses. In March, the parents' committee appointed John Pratt, 35, a teacher with postgraduate degrees in English and education, to lead their efforts. He received his early education at Roslyn School, Westmount, Quebec and Bishop's College School, Lennoxville, Quebec, and later taught at Trinity College School, Port Hope. At the latter he was also coach of football and skiing, director of folk masses, and a housemaster.

FEASIBILITY STUDY
Pratt was appointed to conduct a feasibility study of a proposed co-educational country day school. The study began July 1 of last year. By late October, 125 families had expressed

an interest in the country day school idea and 130 parents attended one or more general meetings.

Interest to date has been concentrated chiefly in the King Township and Aurora area. Pratt and his wife and three children have moved into a house on the King-Vaughan Sideroad. In October a declaration of trust for status as a non-profit organization was accepted and the Country Day School Foundation was established. Trustees of the foundation are Moffat Dunlap of Newmarket; Edmond Ebert, Aurora; Howard Hunter, Mulock Sideroad; King City Lawyer Christopher Johnston and Pratt.

WORD OF MOUTH
Although there has been no advertising or publicity to date, news of the plan got around by word of mouth. Questionnaires were printed and there were 122 requests for copies. To January 6, altogether 97 families had responded — representing 103 children from pre-school to grade 13. Of these, 73 families said they would consider sending children to the school.

It is interesting to note, says Pratt, that a few of the parents who replied are dissatisfied with

the public school system. "Those whose preference is for independent school education have sound, if different, reasons for their preference," he says in presenting the rationale for the school.

The description of the program says the learning of basic skills will be the minimum requirement for all children. The aim will be to prepare each student to achieve at his or her optimum level rather than becoming satisfied with a generally high level of achievement.

MUST KNOW WHY
"To know why a demonstrably intelligent child does not progress is essential," says the report of the foundation. "Expert diagnosis, too, is one of the keys to success with evidently slow learners. But more important than anything is to provide a school atmosphere which views children as individuals as well as members of a group. Skillful, enthusiastic teachers make it

the school's avowed aim is to avoid labels. The summary states, "Such terms as 'traditional,' 'progressive,' 'open plan' and 'integrated day' are difficult to define and misleading at best. They inaccurately label schools. The Country Day

and staff. High standards of achievement will be encouraged in reading and writing skills. For those who need it there will be remedial work to improve these skills.

Outdoor as well as indoor education will be part of the program, says Pratt. There will be activities such as art, music, drama, dancing and physical education under the guidance of experts. There will be science projects, conservation activities, a mini-farm, regular field trips and formal and informal athletics such as team sports.

TO RENT FIRST
Although the school expects it will have to open in rented accommodation, it hopes to locate on premises that will also give space for individual sports like archery and cross-country skiing to encourage recreational habits which whole families, present and future, can form together regardless of their athletic talents.

EXPULSION POSSIBLE
It cites punctuality and neatness as important aspects of this consideration and warns that repeated disruption of the school's routine or disregard for the rights of others may result in removal from the school. Discipline will not be arbitrary, however. The statement continues, "The school's responsibility is to attempt always to uncover the causes of serious misbehavior."

The school hopes to become a part of the community, making facilities available whenever they are not in use for student activities. It intends, also, to seek opportunities to participate actively in teacher-training programs with universities, colleges and boards of education in the area.

In discussing plans for the school, Pratt expressed appreciation for the co-operation received from local school boards and from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

School therefore avoids them, and does so in favor of examining on its own merits each educational practice and proposal."

The founders also believe in morals and ethics. They believe a school should not only impart basic skills, but should also help children to live with other children, to learn from their environment, to enjoy the present and get ready for the future, to create and to love, to learn to face adversity and to behave responsibly.

STRESS STAFF QUALITY

They believe that any pre-occupation should be with quality of staff rather than with flashy facilities. They have announced they are searching for top teachers, well trained, dedicated and of proven humanity and expertise. And the plan is to ultimately provide on-campus accommodation for staff. This is because the school will be open for the use of students for longer hours than it is customary in most schools. And it will also provide a wide range of curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Unlike the founders of a number of independent schools that have opened in Ontario in recent years, the trustees of the Country Day School Foundation do not consider "discipline" a dirty word. It has its own subtle in their proposal. "To instill respect for sympathetic and skilled authority and to assure achievement by demanding completion of reasonable assignments — is part of the Country Day School's basic philosophy. In addition students will be taught that the essence of good behavior is consideration for others."

Off-Duty Policemen Shun Arenas

Hockey Fans Too Hot To Handle

Off duty York Region Police officers to fill such jobs," he said. He cited the fact there was a feeling the pay wasn't worth the problems one man would meet trying to control an unruly hockey crowd.

At least this was the implication Wednesday night of last week when Regional Police Chief Bruce Crawford related to the police commission his objections to reports that his force failed to adequately police the arena during games.

Chief Crawford said neither he nor any of his subordinates had received any complaints from the arena over lack of police assistance during any trouble at a hockey game.

He was commenting on a resolution sent to him by Markham Town Council petitioning for police to cover the Markham Arena for crowd control purposes.

Chief Crawford told the commission there were 11 other arenas in the region and he didn't feel he could spare a man for each arena for crowd control purposes. "Whenever it's possible we have an officer drop into an arena and view the situation," he said. "Of course we're always available if trouble does break out."

The problem arose with the reluctance of off-duty policemen to hire themselves out to arenas to control crowds.

Markham Councillor Hi Lawrie, a member of the police commission, commented that the Markham Arena was having "difficulty finding any off-duty policemen to work at the arena."

Chief Crawford said this didn't surprise him. "There seems to be a bit of

reluctance on the part of police officers to fill such jobs," he said. He cited the fact there was a feeling the pay wasn't worth the problems one man would meet trying to control an unruly hockey crowd.

"It seems that the crowds can give one policeman a rough time and it's getting so they'd rather not be bothered with arenas," said Chief Crawford.

"In some arenas violence has become a problem with riots almost occurring sometimes and an officer just doesn't want to intervene when he's off duty and alone."

Newmarket Councillor Ray Twinney said with playoffs coming up at Markham there "should be something done to keep things cool. You get people coming in from out of town and the first thing you know you've got trouble."

Chief Crawford said he would discuss the matter further with Markham municipal leaders. "I'm sure we can work out things to the satisfaction of us all," he said.

In other business, the commission approved the low ten-

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