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Redraw Markham Wards

Markham Councillors missed the mark badly in late 1970 when they saw the present town ward boundaries set. And municipal affairs at Queen's Park wasn't watching as closely as it might have when the ward pattern was approved during the process of establishing regional government. That was a busy and confused time.

The new Markham Town ended up with its largest ward having almost three times as many electors as its smallest. The ward boundaries were used in the last municipal elections held in 1970.

Unfortunately nothing has been done about revising the ward pattern since then. It appears unlikely the council will now get into action after doing nothing about the matter for nearly two years. This even though a municipal election looms December 4 and an enumeration of voters for the election is due September 5.

The pattern of population growth in Markham has been such that the imbalance of the ward pattern must have grown much worse in the past two years. So Markham is moving into municipal election time with what most certainly is an inadequate ward system. It can expect to suffer for another two years at least from all the evils and dislocations that grow out of disproportionate representation in government.

Markham has six wards. Each ward elects one councillor. Two regional councillors and the mayor are elected at large in a vote of all the electors, to make up the nine-member council that sits at Buttonville.

The Thornhill area bounded by Highway 7, Yonge Street, Steeles Avenue and a line just west of Woodbine Avenue (Don Mills Road) is divided approximately in half by a line just north of John Street to form two wards.

Ward One, the southerly Thornhill portion, was the most under-represented in the 1970 election. It had 4,528 people on the voters list.

In contrast, Ward Six had only 1,751 voters listed. Ward Six is the sparsely populated half of the town north of 16th Avenue.

Northern Thornhill area's Ward Two had 2,476 recorded electors in 1970. Ward Three comprises the Buttonville-Unionville area east to Concession 7 and in 1970 had 2,906 electors.

The east Old Markham Ward Four between Concession 7 and Highway 48 had 3,078 electors. West Old

Markham Ward Five, from Highway 48 to the Ontario County boundary, had 2,772 electors.

Throwing the situation even more out of balance is the probability that many new Markham residents weren't on the voting rolls in 1970 because the enumeration machinery fell apart during the regional government reorganization. Old election rolls were used after municipal clerks made the best effort they could to bring them up to date.

Thornhill's Ward One probably had the most new residential growth and therefore also had the chance of having the most new citizens missed in the voting, while already being the most under-represented in the council's ward system.

The Thornhill area had one-third of Markham's ward seats on council. It is the fastest growing area and under the Toronto-Centred Region Plan is scheduled to have several times the population of the rest of Markham in the near future. If Thornhill area doesn't now have more than half Markham's total population, then it certainly will have by the subsequent election time two years from now in 1974.

Markham should revise its wards to give Thornhill area half the six ward seats in time for the municipal elections this December 4 if it is at all possible — and if the town is to have a fair and equitable ward pattern. If this can't be done, then it should certainly be done immediately after the next election and not forgotten about and neglected as it has been in the past two years since the last vote.

There is some consolation for the under-represented areas of the town in the way Markham Council is organized. The large majority of voters can bring its influence to bear on the mayor and two regional councillors who are elected at large by the voters of all wards.

Since these three non-ward members of council can heavily influence the balance of power and are sensitive to the majority, especially on the larger issues, there is at least some representational weight that can be balanced against the abuses arising from the poor ward system. Still, this is only a safeguard and is no excuse for ignoring the need to draw new Markham ward boundaries to give all the town's citizens a fully fair and equal representation in their local municipal council.

Travel Is A Great Teacher

Travel as a learning experience has proved valuable to York County students in the past. A recent decision of the board of education to assess the value of establishing regular student trips to areas in Canada and other countries may well lead to more and more trips for more and more young people.

Trips to Great Britain, the Mediterranean, Africa, Mexico and Jamaica have been taken by groups of students in the past few years at their own expense. In some cases the money needed to see that all members of a class participated was raised through a series of projects. In other cases, parents paid the whole cost themselves.

We agree with members of the board of education that such travelling can be very beneficial to young people — acquainting them directly with how other people live and with other people's problems. We believe that they should be continued and

expanded.

We doubt very much that the York Board of Education or any other such board, under the ceilings imposed on expenditures by the Department of Education, will be able to find the funds to underwrite the cost of such travels. In fact we don't think they should ask the ratepayers to provide the funds.

The experience of organizing and conducting money-raising events to help defray the costs is another valuable learning experience. If the desire to participate in the trips is great enough, the young people may well surprise the educators and their parents with their enthusiasm for the task.

We must also express the regret that we were born too early by many years to be included in the opportunities now being made available to students at all levels. We would have enjoyed them, we would have benefitted from them.

Summer Vacation

On the one rainy day of summer vacation. Campers set out for this new sensation. Camping it's called. That's the name of the game. Though many don't come back just quite the same.

Diapers for baby, toys for the kids, Pots and pans, their covers and lids. Sleeping bags, toothbrushes, pets and clocks, Boxes and books, and tons of warm socks.

They reach their first campsite late that night. And secure their tent to the ground nice and tight. They attempt a campfire in the pouring rain. But end up eating cold beans and bread — plain.

After a week of lots of such fun, Daddy and Mommy are ready to run. "I'll race you", says Daddy and they begin to pack. So ends the vacation just like that!

Don't get me wrong, I think camping is great, But the fun part of it is up to fate!

CHRISTINE BROWN, (Age 12), Keele Street, Maple.

Letters to the Editors

CONTROL GROWTH UNTIL WATER SERVICE ADEQUATE

Dear Mr. Editor:

Your July 13 issue carried a story covering most of the comments contained in a statement I recently made regarding sewage treatment facilities in Richmond Hill. Your reporter failed to mention my oft-repeated suggestion, that until sewage and water services are brought up to a sufficient standard "This council should adopt a policy of allowing within the old town limits (pre-1971) only such growth as it is legally required to allow, and cease for the interim the processing of Official Plan and zoning amendments to any higher density".

My statement concluded by saying that it was my firm belief that present sewage treatment and water production facilities dictated such a position not merely as a prudent, but an essential one.

DAVID SCHILLER, Councillor, Ward 2.

NO TIME LIMIT ON ABORTIONS

Dear Mr. Editor—

The front page story "Catholic Trustees Say Abortion Moral Issue", in the July 13 issue of "The Liberal", made a serious error in stating that "Abortions are permitted before the 20th week of the period of gestation".

Our Canadian Criminal Code gives no time limit for the performance of an abortion. Although most doctors prefer not to do an abortion after 16-20 weeks of pregnancy, legally they are free to perform an abortion until the moment before the baby is born. Canada is the only country in the civilized world which does not

provide a time limit after which an abortion cannot be performed—one of the many reasons we Canadians should clamor for tightening of our abortion law.

The therapeutic abortion committee must consist of not less than THREE qualified medical practitioners, rather than five as stated in the same article.

MRS. MARY BARRY, 384 Tyneview Lane, Richmond Hill.

Airport Site Historic Buildings To Be Saved

Provincial Treasurer Darcy McKeough says buildings of historical importance in the Pickering - Markham International Airport site area will be preserved.

He said in a press statement issued recently that a Joint Historical Preservation Coordinating Committee is being formed to identify any historically significant buildings on the airport site or on the adjacent new town site.

When such buildings can't remain where they are, they will be considered for removal to suitable sites elsewhere.

The oral history of the area is being gathered this summer by two university students using tape recorders. This recording project was suggested by the Pickering Historical Society and is being carried out under the auspices of the Archives of Ontario.

The historic buildings selection committee is to include representatives of the Ontario Heritage Foundation, North Pickering Development Project, McKeough's department, and the Toronto Airports Projects team of the federal Ministry of Transport.

NEWMARKET — The owner of an average home valued at \$20,000 here, this year will have a \$70.78 tax decrease—not quite enough to offset the extra \$73. tax rebate withdrawn by the provincial government. The tax bill on a \$20,000 home (public school supporter) will be \$579.10.

In the Spotlight



By MONA A. ROBERTSON
Bright Is Her Future

Ever say to yourself, "I could write better than that!" — after reading a badly written novel?

In Richmond Hill we have a new authoress — who not only said that — but did just that, and, consequently wrote her "first" book. ("First", because she already has a commission to write a second novel.)

We were visiting Heather Smith Hurst, authoress, wife of Walter Smithhurst, Church Street South, Richmond Hill, enjoying coffee in the Smithhurst's very elegant sitting room — where damask and velvet compliment each other in a bevy of gorgeous colors. We admired the Queen Anne chairs, the checkered table of burnished chestnut-colored wood, a chess game set out, waiting for the first "move"; scanned the open bookshelves, containing antique-bound, as well as the latest "modern" books; noted the fireplace, ready for kindling — and oil paintings gleaming softly. We felt transported for a little while — away from the hustle and bustle of "ordinary" living. We were in another time and place as we discussed Heather Smith Hurst's novel, "Dark Is My Destiny".

Now a first novel is a beautiful and wonderful thing. It is especially wonderful (for the reader) if it has been written with naturalness and loving care.

The plot of DIMD rings so "true" — to the reader — we asked Heather if it was in any way autobiographical. To which she replied, "Not in any way. Wales was chosen as the setting, but I have never lived there."

The publisher (Avalon), has no outlet in Canada — so the rights have been sold to Dell Books, who will bring it out in paperback for distribution in Canada sometime later this year.

We're always interested in hearing not only "how" a book came to be written but also, how long it took to complete, and to find a publisher.

Heather Smithhurst explained that about five years ago — when she was an executive secretary in Toronto — she picked up a book which caused her to vow she would try her own hand at writing a novel. A novel that would not only have a believable plot — but that would also be written in good English!

The outline of her book called then, "One More Grave To Fill" — (her publisher changed it, and her last name to Smith Hurst for aesthetic reasons), took her one or two months of spare time five years ago. Then other things intervened — the major one being the renovation of the Church Street South residence by her husband Walter, well-known consultant decorator who designed and inspired their beautiful "new" home.

Her "book" in draft only was filed away. But about a year ago, Heather started on it again.

In three months of working in the pleasant (Continued on Page 14)

THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF BOOKS

RICHMOND HILL PUBLIC LIBRARY
Mayor's Collection Library Display

Through the courtesy of Mayor William Lazenby, patrons of the town public library have the opportunity to enjoy yet another display, one in a series of unusual and interesting collections that are presented monthly in the library showcase.

During the middle ages the application of the term apothecary became restricted to those who prepared and sold drugs, and in keeping with the profession of pharmacist, the Mayor has gathered a notable collection of artistically decorated apothecary jars, both porcelain and glass, that once graced the shelves of pharmacies, containing exotic sounding potions and powders including Red Jalapp, Ipecac, Sem. contra, Mercuron with chalk, Jeweller's rouge, and an imposing glass jar capped with a measuring glass, for dispensing hair oil.

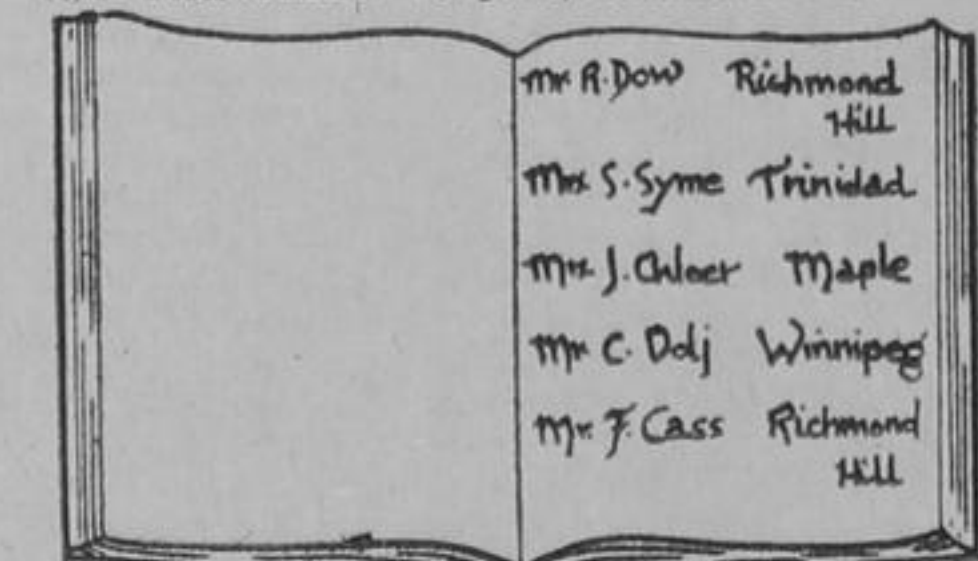
Several decorated mortar and pestle sets are on display including an Austrian or South Tyrol piece, delicately inscribed and dating back to the late 1700's.

Smaller items included samples of pills, liniments, Han-son's corn salve, dyspepsia tablets, and, guaranteed to cure all that ails you, "Red pills for pale and weak women!"

A fascinating collection and one that you should not miss on your next library visit.

YORK CENTRAL HOSPITAL Memorial Fund

(c/o York Central Hospital, Richmond Hill)



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Daily Demonstrations Corn Broom Making

Demonstrations of pioneer corn broom making are being held every day this summer in the Dalziel Barn at Black Creek Pioneer Village.

In the pioneer days, farmers often grew their own broom corn to supply their family with brushes, but there was also a thriving industry making brooms about the mid 1850's.

One man could make between five and eight dozen brooms in a day working with a simple broom-making machine, which is the type being demonstrated at the village. The brooms are used in the village to keep the buildings clean and are also sold in the village's general store.

The daily broom-making demonstrations are being carried out by students who are working at Black Creek Pioneer Village under the Ontario Government's S.W.E.E.P. Program which was set up to provide summer employment for high school and university students.



HELP STAMP OUT STRANGERS

None are quite so alone as the stranger in town, or the newcomers to the neighborhood.

Remember your last move... how you felt as the moving van pulled away... how you more than half wished you'd never come!

Spare your new neighbors feelings such as these. Let the Welcome Wagon Hostess bring greetings and gifts to make them feel at home.

Help stamp out strangers. Call Welcome Wagon today at

Mrs. Watters
Thornhill
881-0917



Joy Riders Still Bane Of Bicycle Owners In Region

By JIM IRVING

Shortly after the Second World War, a starkly realistic Italian movie called "The Bicycle Thief," made a resounding impact on audiences throughout the world, as it portrayed the agony experienced by a workman as he searched the city for his stolen bicycle, a machine vital to his livelihood.

But that was some 20 years ago and nowadays they make jokes, not movies, about that sort of thing, because bicycle thefts have reached such epidemic proportions that in the long run people have found it easier to laugh than cry over the ritual of misfortune.

In Metro alone, so far this year some 3,500 thefts have been reported. And these have occurred despite the machines being swathed in chains and locks that even old Houdini might have given up on.

The thieves, however, are not dismayed by the abundance of protective devices on the vehicles, coming well equipped to their task with

clippers to snip the chains and number punches to alter the serial numbers.

However, the fact remains that the chances of losing your bike in Metro are so bad that mandatory equipment for cyclists, besides pant clips and the usual assortment of locks, now includes enough money to get home on.

And about the only way a bicyclist can be certain when he leaves home that he's not going to have his bike stolen before he gets back, is if he doesn't get off until he does. Once home and inside the house, however, his chances grow dim again.

That may be a slight exaggeration of the situation, but the latter is bad enough in many communities that some, such as Ottawa, have formed special bicycle theft squads.

It hasn't quite reached

that point in the Region of York yet, but some definite precautions are being taken.

Chief of these is an index system organized by the police safety branch. Police distributed cards to all public schools in the region, requesting bike owners to fill them out giving a complete description of their vehicles, including serial numbers and any other identifying marks on them.

So far the response has been overwhelming, with some 30,000 cards being returned.

Staff Inspector Fred Mason of the Richmond Hill Division, said police expected about 10,000 cards back. And even though the sudden deluge means extra work for them, they're not complaining; the card system should prove invaluable in helping retrieve any lost or stolen bicycles.

So far, both in Richmond Hill and throughout the re-

gion, stolen bikes have been mostly a thing of joy—riding, where leg-weary pedestrians have latched onto the machines, and used them as a means of getting to their homes or other destinations, and then abandoning them nearby.

In Richmond Hill so far this year, police have recovered 47 of 64 bikes reported stolen. And many of those still missing, were only recently reported.

Only two people, both juveniles, have been prosecuted in Richmond Hill since January 1, for taking bicycles without the owners' permission. Both were convicted of joy-riding and were put on probation.

In Ottawa recently, convictions of bike stealing against two youths found with cutters and punches, resulted in \$150 fines or 15 days, while another youth got 14 days in jail.

"It (bicycle theft) isn't