

Richmond Hill high school head retiring

By Jim Park

RICHMOND HILL — After 36 years as a teacher and administrator, Richmond Hill high school principal George Domina is retiring June 30 — and heading back to the classroom as a student.

In an interview last week, Domina said he plans to enrol at Humber College next fall "to study the building trades — carpentry, plumbing etc., just for my own amusement. I could also take courses in small engine repairs".

And he's not a novice at it. In 1949 he built his own house in Islington and "it hasn't fallen down yet". Next will come "a lot of work on the house and the cottage".

Domina is an affable, sparkly-eyed man who has seen many changes in his 20 years as a teacher and 16 in front offices.

A graduate in chemistry and physics from the Ontario Agricultural College in Guelph and the Faculty of Education in 1940, he began his teaching career at a boys' private school in New Brunswick. Then he joined the staff of Harbord Collegiate in Toronto for 16 years.

From there he moved to Bloor Collegiate as head of the physics department, later coming to York Central as one of the first master teachers in the province.

He had one year as a vice-principal at Bayview before his 11-year stint as principal at Richmond Hill. His first job in the region was at Langstaff Collegiate.

"Certainly in all my teaching years I couldn't have been happier than to be in the classroom," he said. "I had no particular desire to become an administrator. (But) after 20 years ... my point of view had changed a little bit. It was time to try something else".

As with many teachers who began their careers before the tumultuous sixties, Domina has lived through many changes — some of which have



George Domina

back to school

destroyed less pliable academics.

"One of the toughest things I've had to do," he noted, "is adapt to the changing times ... a sort of permissive age" unheard of 15 years ago.

But he added he finds "student groups to be a little more conscious of appearance (now) ... and it's hard to say which is better."

"I think if anything courses are better than ever before ... (and) I think students are becoming more serious. I can see a swing away from universities toward community colleges" in a tight job market where a premium is placed on practical knowledge.

As for the York County board of education, Domina said it has "shown itself over the years to be extremely willing to try new things". He cited the example of administrative interns which he termed "very good".

He noted the "greater drop-out rate at the end of Grade 12" as people move

to the college system. "A great many people graduated in courses that didn't lead to employment particularly. I tell parents that 'we don't prepare students here (for anything but) more of the same' ..."

One of the things Domina feels students have lost in recent years is a feeling of class spirit.

"To me," he said, "changes in curricula, the change to individual timetables has been probably the major cause of the loss of class spirit and perhaps from that the loss of school spirit. When I was in school and through all my teaching years, students travelled in the same class all day long. Tremendous spirit was built up. Now, the kids are in their home room (at the start of the day) but that's the only time they're all together."

But unlike many of his colleagues, Domina has adapted to the changes wrought by William Davis and the Ontario Tories, and he finds them for the most part beneficial.

One major change came in 1966 when Grade 13 departmental exams marked in Toronto were abolished.

"There were good things and bad things about the departmentals. One bad thing was that a student's entire future was based on one set of examinations ... and the good thing about the abolition was that individual

schools could establish their own standards and set their own examinations.

"We've always tried here to give Grade 13 students some liberties to (help them adapt to the freedom at universities)" he said.

And he added that today's students "are in and out of here as if it was the kitchen at home — and that suits me

fine."

But it's a far cry from his early days in the classroom.

"When I went in to Harbord Collegiate there were 1450 students in a school built for 600 — and there were no portables. I taught junior science in a standard classroom with no equipment ... there were 45 desks in the room and half of them had two kids sitting in

them. Every teacher had eight classes and no teacher had a spare period ever.

"I'm not by any means saying that's how it should be, but that's just the way it was."

"We had one little old lady in the office who did all the paper work. She was the principal's secretary and the only secretary in the school. And she seemed to have all the time in the world."

"When I left 16 years later, there were four women in the office and they were rushed off their feet."

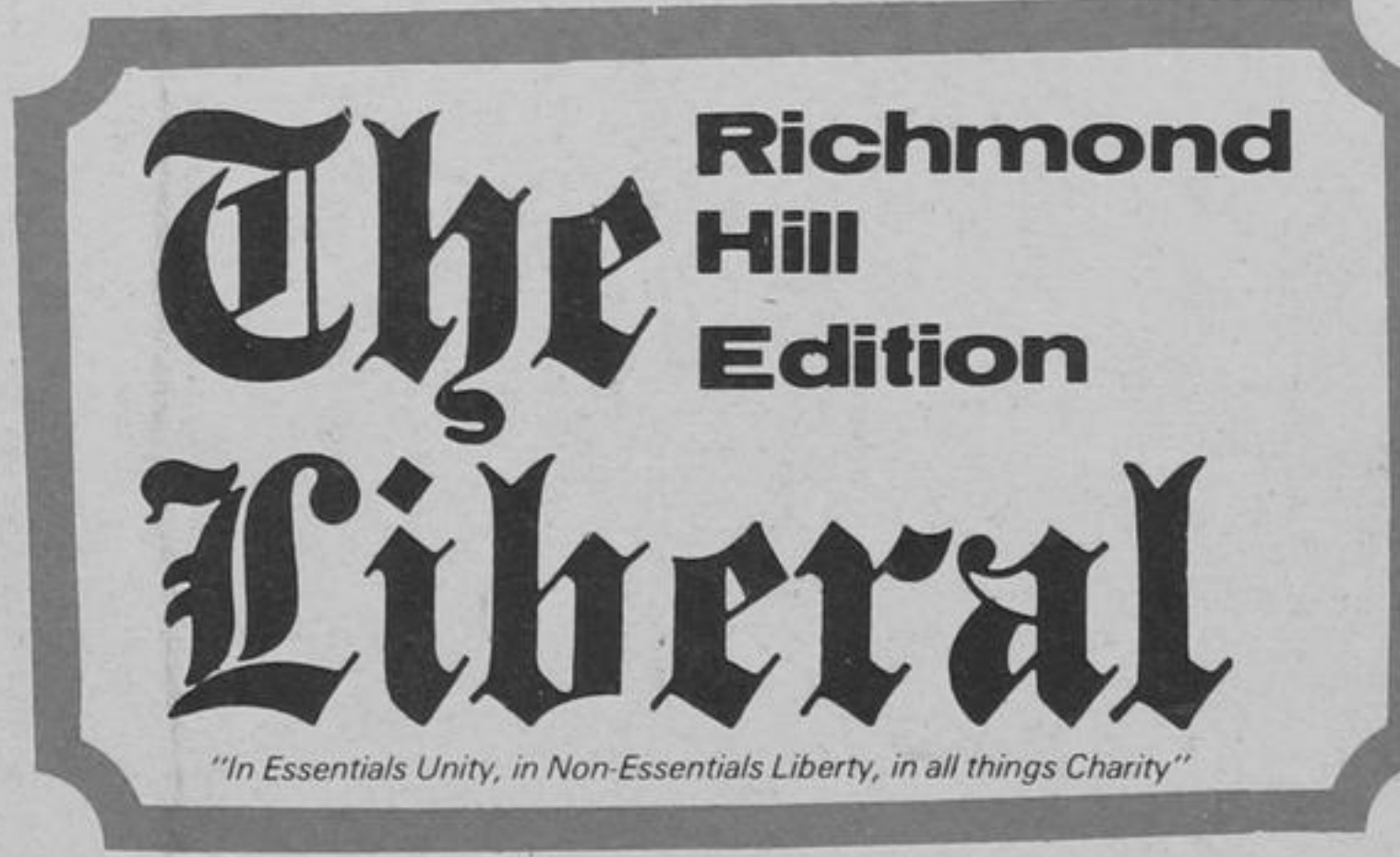
Next year, George Domina will be behind a student's desk for the first time since 1957-58 when he went back to the University of Toronto for a "special sabbatical".

He feels the school is in "excellent shape" for incoming head John Buell from Aurora high school, and said he is leaving two years earlier than necessary because his health is good and he has a few more things he wants to learn.

Domina has two sons, Glen, 24, graduates this year from York University and wants to be a history teacher.

Keith, 22, works for Bell Canada in Vancouver.

Richmond Hill high school had 600 students registered Sept. 30, with a total staff of 37, counting administrators.



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Beginning is made on York housing action

THORNHILL — Competition is still the key to providing lower cost housing, as well as municipalities to get into the Ontario Housing Action Program, says

Holmes, a provincial civil servant who previously worked on Bramalea, commented following regional planning committee's approval in principle of Pine Valley Village.

The region is going to allow housing for 21,000 people in the area bounded by Highway 7, Langstaff Road, Weston Road and Pine Valley Drive to go with the 20,000 already allocated for Woodbridge.

But the region is asking the province to pay 100 per cent of the cost of providing the trunk sewer services to the area. Holmes says this has already been agreed to by the minister of housing.

The problem is the servicing by the York-Durham sewer is not scheduled to reach the area before about 1985. There is interim servicing for only 400 houses, all of them on property owned by Milani and Milani, and only 160 eligible for OHAP grants.

Planning committee chairman Dave Fraser, Vaughan regional councillor, was trying to get the agreement with the province speeded up so Vaughan would be able to receive provincial grants of \$600 per unit by the March 31 deadline.

Holmes said he thought the Pine Valley Village plan was a good one "from the first time I saw it when I moved here in 1975. There should be some basements for the 400 units this year." He was glad to see a mix of housing types.

He is now looking for housing in Thornhill-Vaughan to provide the necessary competition. "I understand the Thornhill-Vaughan plan will be approved by the end of the month. (at the local level)".

Six weeks have been allocated by the Ontario Municipal Board for hearings next fall.

The Thornhill-Vaughan plan will provide housing for about 72,000 people. The province is paying about \$100 for the planning co-ordinator to sort out the differences between 28 developers and government agencies and expedite the plan.

It will provide 4,000 lower cost (OHAP) housing units. Holmes said competition between three or four developers is needed to insure lower prices.

The main constraint on Thornhill-Vaughan will be the market-place, officials say. All but a small portion south of the CN rail line can be serviced immediately.

Once the plan is approved each developer will be able to start on his

portion when he sees fit.

There are incentives for individuals as well as municipalities to get into OHAP housing.

Holmes said he could not give an exact figure on the income level of those eligible for OHAP.

He had not had time to analyze the latest federal-provincial program.

Vaughan has received \$100,000 for planning Pine Valley Village, \$125,000 for Thornhill-Vaughan and \$25,000 for Maple, Holmes said.

But municipal politicians are still reluctant to approve smaller houses because of the projected deficits in services compared to tax revenue.

As Markham councillor Bud Bonner said recently, "We are not approving a single house worth less than \$80,000."

Juno win

TORONTO — The Good Brothers of Richmond Hill were among the winners at the recent Juno music awards in Toronto.

The brothers, who still perform in the Hill occasionally, won their award in the country group class.

Drug raid in Newmarket

NEWMARKET — Two people were charged and a quantity of drugs was seized in a raid on a home in Newmarket last week by York Regional Police.

Charged with possession of cocaine, marijuana and phenylclidine, all for the purpose of trafficking, were Brian Smoley, 33, and Colleen Rigobom, 24, both of RR 1, Newmarket.

Police said they seized 1½ ounces of cocaine, three pounds of Columbian marijuana, 60 Thai marijuana cigarettes and three-quarters of a pound of phenylclidine.

Pool drowning

WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE — Marcus Gerstung, 2, son of Mr. and Mrs. Manfred Gerstung, Fairview Ave., Whitchurch-Stouffville, was declared dead on arrival at Scarborough Centenary Hospital, Mar. 15.

The child, who had been the object of a search, was taken there after being found in a backyard pool by some people who had been looking for him.



(Photo by Hoag)

Too bad goalie

The Richmond Hill Legion Midgets look like winners here as the puck gets behind Peterborough goalie John Turney for a goal in Monday night's encounter. Scene was the 10th annual Richmond Hill International

hockey tournament. Richmond Hill player is Peter Halliday (6). The Legion led 4-1 but ended up losing 5-4 in overtime. (See results Page B-1).

Day care cost to double

THORNHILL — The Thornhill Day Care Centre has a waiting list of 114, almost double its capacity.

The regional social services committee is proposing a small move to alleviate the problem by providing a new "home day care" program that will provide 125 more places for children across the region.

The new program which will provide day care in the home rather than an

institutional setting, will cost \$100,000. All but \$17,000 of that will be picked up by the province.

The region operates centres in Newmarket, Richmond Hill and Georgina as well as the one in the Thornhill Community Centre which has 65 places including 10 for handicapped children.

The over-all day care budget is up to \$243,200 from the \$104,800 in 1976.

Besides Thornhill, the new program will be allowed in Aurora, Stouffville and Richmond Hill where centres do not have infant day-care programs.

As well, it has been touted for places too small to have a day care centre, such as Musselman's Lake, Lake Wilcox, Woodbridge and the northern part of Georgina Township.

Dr. Owen Slingerland, medical officer of health, reported to the com-

mittee all home day-care applicants will be carefully screened.

One staff person will be hired to supervise the 25 homes which will supervise not more than five children each.

The program, as part of the \$5.2 million social services budget, still has to get past regional council. Markham Councillor Ron Moran did not think there would be a problem.

Formold talks deadlocked

RICHMOND HILL — The 132 workers at Richmond Hill's Formold Plastics Co. of Canada Ltd. walked off their jobs at midnight Sunday following the breakdown in the first contract talks since the plant was unionized last fall.

Members of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America shivered in yesterday's snow as they waited for trailers and other supplies to keep them warm.

Company president Elgin Strong, who took charge in December after a transfer from a sister plant in Mississauga, called the strike "unfortunate."

In a telephone interview yesterday, he said, "This place was in pretty bad shape when I took over (and this puts you back). I thought we were going to turn the corner."

And he added that "it's very easy to lose customers" in Toronto, noting there are "over 100 injection moulders" in the city. "Business is not really good, (and the strike) is going to hurt us a real lot."

As for the strikers, they claim the main issue is money. Bargainers from the firm's parent company, Ethyl Corp., of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, "just threw their last offer on the table and went back to the U.S. of A.," according to strike marshal Lee Manuel.

He said negotiations are "now at a standstill" and the company offer was "just not enough — snow or no snow."

National union representative Ralph Currie, on the picket line yesterday, said the workers are mainly women, roughly half single.

He stated more than half the 97 female employees were being paid \$2.75

per hour, with men making \$3.25 to a high of \$6.75 per hour for craft electricians.

He also said women up the street on Newkirk Drive at Plasticap Ltd., represented by the same union and a competitor of Formold, are earning \$1.50 per hour more than those on strike.

The company makes a wide range of

products from stick deodorant containers to the caps for Seagram Crown Royal rye whiskey.

A subsidiary of the Valve Corp. of America, in turn owned by the Ethyl Corp., Formold was purchased roughly two years ago.

The union was certified in November, and when it wins its first contract, will become local 544 of the U.E.W.



(Park photo)

132 workers go on strike

It was sloppy and chilly on the picket line yesterday at the Formold Plastics plant on Newkirk Road in Richmond Hill. But that didn't deter union members who walked off

their jobs at midnight Sunday. Second from left, leading the picketers, is Ralph Currie, national representative for the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of

America. Talks at press time had broken off. The 132 strikers will receive \$25-35 per week in strike pay.

Inside The Liberal

Rams coach is fired

Hill Rams Coach Brimblecombe fired. Ridges Dynes drop first game with Stratford 6-2 in Junior B playoffs. (See Page B1)

Local classical guitarist finds going hard but has concert coming up. (See Page C-1).

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