



**yesterdays**  
by mary dawson

## Berczy led the way to Markham Township

Distinguished architect, adventurous explorer, artist, linguist, engineer, colonist and writer, William Moll Berczy is the subject of an illustrated booklet which came into my hands recently through the kindness of Ilse Brandhoff, Avenue Road, Richmond Hill.

Berczy was the founder of Markham Township. The booklet at a cost of \$1.50 is available from the Historical Society of Mecklenburg Upper Canada Inc., P.O. Box 496, Station K, Toronto, Ont. M4P 2G7.

Berczy's objective of founding a better society in the wilderness of the new world was funded by a wealthy German company.

By agreement with John Graves Simcoe, first lieutenant-governor of Upper Canada, he was to settle his Germans on the 64,000 acres which later comprised the Township of Markham.

Part of the agreement was the construction of a road from Lake Ontario to Lake Simcoe by the German settlers.

They began their work late in August 1794 on what is now Yonge Street, which was planned as a trail only 18 feet wide, but which still required backbreaking work in felling the huge trees, clearing the dense underbrush, corduroying the swamps and building bridges.

By the end of November that same year the road was passable (more or less) as far north as

Langstaff and Berczy's followers (186 men, women and children) were able to move their belongings to their new settlement in Markham.

They had made an unsuccessful attempt to settle in the Genesee region in the state of New York prior to this and travelled to their new home in Conestoga wagons pulled by oxen.

Temporary huts were built for shelter for that first winter and as much land as possible was cleared for spring planting, tools and seed being supplied by the German company.

Food for the first winter, as well as occasional gifts of liquor and tobacco, were supplied by Berczy.

Giving the settlement its name of German Mills were the two mills built by Berczy on Lot 4, Concession 3. The large saw mill with three saws started operation in April 1795 and the grist mill began yearning.

Berczy discovered a navigable waterway from Lake Ontario to his settlement via the Rouge River and proposed to link it by means of a canal to the Holland River and so to Lake Simcoe to provide an ideal route for the north west fur trade.

This would have spelled economic isolation for the young town of York.

Therefore, although encouraging Berczy to pursue the matter of the waterway, Governor Simcoe quietly made it

impossible for him to build a harbor at the mouth of the Rouge, effectively killing the plan.

A crop failure in the summer of 1795 hit the young settlement hard bringing famine during the long winter months.

Compounding the hardships of pioneer life was a decision of the government of Upper Canada (Simcoe had gone) cancelling the land grants on the argument that aliens could not legally own land before they had lived seven years in Canada. This meant bankruptcy for Berczy.

He travelled to London, England, to appeal this decision and although the decision in 1801 was in his favor it was subject to

confirmation by the executive council of Upper Canada.

That body decided against the ruling of the British government and Berczy's holdings at German Mills were sold at auction to settle his debts.

Although it would appear on the surface that William Moll Berczy failed, the booklet points out that his work did not perish.

Yonge Street, the German Mills, the Rouge River water-way and an industrious, well organized pioneer community attracted new settlers and made Markham Township one of the most successful settlements in Upper Canada.



## NOTICE

**TO ALL INHABITANTS OF THE TOWN OF VAUGHAN ENTITLED TO DIRECT TAXES FOR SCHOOL SUPPORT PURPOSES**

I am in receipt of a list supplied to me by the Assessment Commissioner under Section 23 of The Assessment Act, R.S.O. 1970, as amended, which shows the school support of every inhabitant who is entitled to direct taxes for school support purposes. The list was publicly posted in my office on the 19th day of October, 1977.

You are hereby requested to examine the list for any errors or omissions in my office at the Municipal Offices, 2141 Major Mackenzie Drive, Maple.

The last day for the filing of applications for revision of the list is November 4th, 1977. I shall attend at my office on the 24th day of October, 1977 between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. for the revision of the list and shall continue to do so from day to day, except Saturday and Sunday, until all applications filed on or before November 4th, 1977 have been disposed of.

FREDERICK G. JACKMAN,  
Clerk,  
Town of Vaughan,  
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive,  
Maple, Ontario 832-2281  
October 19th, 1977.

## Hydro Utility Restructuring REGION OF YORK NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

**RICHMOND HILL HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM**

**8:00 P.M.**

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1977**

VARIOUS ALTERNATIVES FOR FUTURE HYDRO SERVICE IN YORK REGION, AND THE TOWN OF RICHMOND HILL IN PARTICULAR, WILL BE DISCUSSED.

COPIES OF THE RESOURCE GROUP REPORT MAY BE OBTAINED FROM RICHMOND HILL HYDRO, 10184 YONGE ST., L4C 1T6.

W.S. COOK, CHAIRMAN  
YORK LOCAL STUDY TEAM

# Markham Place Grand Opening - Oct. 19, 1977

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Repayment plans up to 5 years. Fast, professional, confidential service. Rates subject to change.

Example of a \$10,000 Second Mortgage Loan amortized over 20 years.

Rate	Term in Months	Cost of Loan	Monthly Payments
11 1/2%	60	\$5,529.00	\$106.65

Example of a \$5,000 Personal Loan repaid over a 5 year term.

Rate	Term in Months	Cost of Loan	Monthly Payments
12 1/2%	60	\$1,750.00	\$112.50

**Guaranty Trust**

10132 Yonge Street  
884-1188

W. N. Girard, Manager