

History of B & S Telephone Company

(By Mr. A. D. Bruce)

We are drawing towards the close of this history, and there are a few incidents which have not been recorded but which stand as landmarks along the road which we have travelled.

In 1909 we built on the 6th con. line of Whitechurch to serve about six or seven subscribers. One of these subscribers was James Cooney who lived on the east side of the road on lot 12. Very soon after this circuit was in operation Mrs. Cooney was working at a table placed at a window from which she had a clear view of the magnificent landscape sloping towards Lake Ontario. As she worked Mrs. Cooney noticed smoke curling up from the shingles of the house on the Foote farm, and that flames were spreading on the dry shingles. It was also evident that the occupants of the house were unconscious of the danger that threatened. The Footes did not have a telephone, but Mrs. Cooney rushed to her own telephone and spread the alarm of fire to every subscriber on her own line. As it happened David Clarke had a team hitched to a wagon and was near his own barn when the alarm came to him. Throwing a ladder and some pails on the wagon Mr. Clarke and his sons drove at break-neck speed towards the Foote farm. The first intimation that something unusual was happening was when the Clarke outfit dashed up to the house, followed by other neighbors carrying pails. The ladder was planted against the house, a bucket brigade was formed, and the fire was extinguished. When the excitement was subsiding and before the neighbors had departed from the scene James Cooney expressed the opinion that was uppermost in the minds of all. Addressing Mrs. Foote he said: "Mrs. Foote, don't forget to get down on your knees to night and thank the Lord for the telephone."

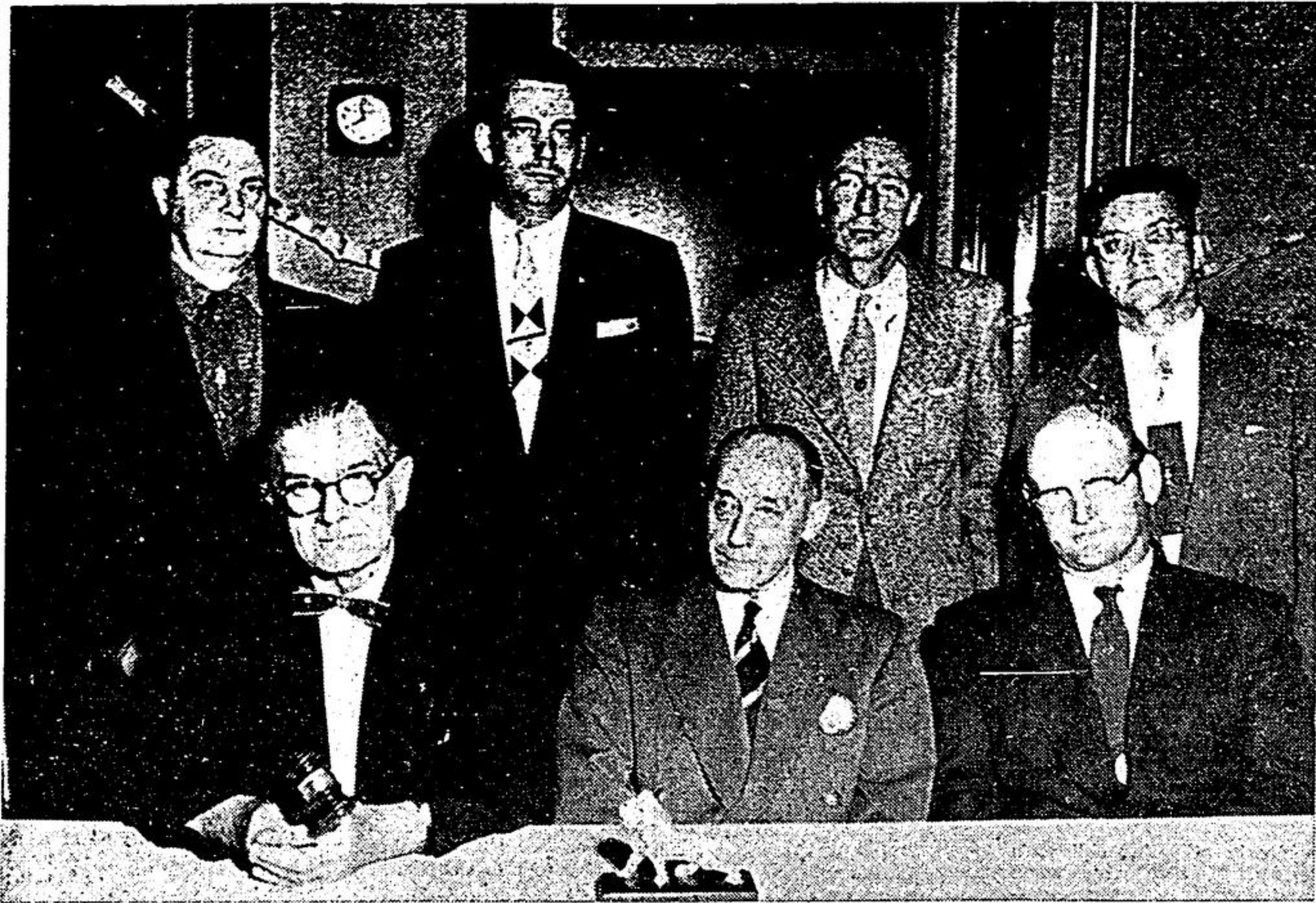
Today fire protection through the telephone service is accepted as part of our way of living. In those days it was a topic of general conversation and gave to our infant company some valuable publicity. In my mind that incident makes a definite forward movement in our business. During that year our telephone subscribers increased from 65 telephones to a total of 125, and from that period until 1916 the demands for telephone service were so numerous that the directors were hard pressed to meet them.

In fact the records show that in 1908, in 1913 and again in 1914 the directors refrained from soliciting business because of scarcity of capital yet the increase of subscribers was constant until 1916 when the increase was only seven telephones, the total at the end of 1916 being 825. The only reason that the writer can give for this slackening is that in 1915 what would otherwise have been a bumper crop of grain was almost ruined by continuous rain and continuing wet weather in the spring of 1916 made seeding so late that another very poor crop was harvested when many telephones were ordered out. The year 1926 saw another slackening of business. In that year the number of our subscribers actually decreased by seven. The first time in our history that we had registered a decrease during a yearly period.

About the time of the close of the First World War we received a request from the residents along the 6th con. line of Exbridge Township for telephone service. The applicants were outside our territory, and we referred them to the Markham & Pickering Co. Sometime later the applicants repeated their request and informed us that The Markham & Pickering Co. had declined to make the necessary extension giving as their reason that they had not the money wherewith to build. Our reply was that we would not build into the territory of The M. & P. Co. unless we received a letter from that company stating its inability to make the extension and also agreeing that our company should undertake it. The next that we heard about the matter was a letter from Mr. Dagger of The Municipal Board drawing our attention to the fact that certain residents of Exbridge Township had been unable to obtain telephone service and reminding us of the fact that they were entitled to such service.

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LIONS CLUB INSTALLS NEW OFFICERS FOR 1955-56



On Monday evening, members of the Stouffville Lions Club were installed in office for the year 1955-56. Pictured above are the new officers from left to right, Front row: Ed Neville, President; Bill Ford, Past Pres.; Cy Bellman, 1st Vice. Back Row: Jim Austin, 3rd Vice.; Albert Smalley, Director; Dr. John Button, 2nd Vice. and Walter Pipher, Lion Tamer.

Richardson Lodge Opens New Masonic Temple

With more than three hundred masonic brethren attending, Richardson Lodge officially opened their new Masonic Temple on Monday evening. Fifty-two lodges were represented and over fifty past and present Grand Lodge officers were on hand for the occasion.

Ken Wagg, Worshipful Master of Richardson Lodge presided and greetings and congratulations from the municipality of Stouffville were extended by Reeve Elmer Daniels.

Worshipful Master Ken Wagg pointed out that in five years time, the local masonic lodge would celebrate its one hundredth anniversary. Thanking Past Master Mac McLean for historical references, W. M. Wagg reviewed the history of Richardson Lodge. The lodge was named after Rt. Wor. Bro. Francis Richardson. It met in 1860 for the first time in a room above the horse stable in Samuel Mighton's Hotel at Cashel on the 6th con. of Markham. In March 1866, the brethren moved their quarters to

Whitchurch Farmer is Killed Under Tractor

Axel Berg, 57, was crushed to death on Friday at Pine Orchard when a tractor toppled over onto him while he was engaged in pulling stumps. The Bergs live at lot 34, on the 5th concession of Whitchurch.

He is survived by his wife, the former Thala Neilson, and four daughters, Oda (Mrs. E. Barlow), Bodil (Mrs. N. Perry) and Lillian of Norval, and Gudrun (Mrs. R. Lloyd) Newmarket.

The funeral service was conducted on Monday from the Thompson Funeral Home with interment in Aurora Cemetery.

Health Services for High Schools in York County

Students in high schools in York County will be included in a school health service program supplied by the York County Health Unit beginning in September, 1955, according to plans made by the Board of Health.

Up to the present time, only elementary school children in public or separate schools have been included in the health services provided by the health unit. Now the Board of Health proposes to include about 3,000 high school students in 6 high schools in Markham, Stouffville, Richmond Hill, Sutton, Aurora and Newmarket in the regular health supervision activities of the health unit.

This added service from the health unit is made possible by a consolidation of existing program, and will not add new costs to the County. Prevention of illness is the aim of the service. Students with health problems will be

Nursery School Graduation

The 7th Annual Graduation Party of Stouffville Nursing Kindergarten was held on Friday morning, May 27, at Stillmeadow Farm, the home of the president, Mrs. Jack Fraser Jr.

Of 22 pupils enrolled this year 18 were present with mothers and several sisters and brothers who enjoyed the program and picnic. Thirteen children received graduation certificates, six of whom will attend Kindergarten here. One will enter Grade 1 while 2 will enroll at Altona and 1 at Ringwood. The supervisor reported 150 had been served by the school in its seven years.

Parents interested in registering children for Autumn classes may contact the Secretary Mrs. T. Topping or Mrs. DeWitt at 7513.

Health Unit Cheap Service Council Told

The services being rendered by the York County Health Unit are the most economical method of obtaining such protection, and much cheaper than could be provided by the individual municipality. Dr. King told members of the Markham Township Council when he appeared before them on Monday night. Markham is presently paying \$7,000 towards the county unit.

It is a co-operative venture, Dr. King told council, with only half of the cost being collected from the municipalities, the remainder coming from government grants.

Dr. King was questioned on various aspects of the Health Unit's operation including the dumping of sewage disposal on township farm lands. "This," he said, was not new, and some farmers were known to purchase the refuse material. If proper precautions were used it need not present any problem, he told council.

Lobster License \$125.00

A vendor of lobsters who sells his wares on Yonge St. during weekends, appeared before council to object to a license fee of \$250.00 established by bylaw some weeks ago. Reeve LeMasurier said that that was the fee established, and council could not discriminate but they could amend the bylaw. The vendor said that he paid only \$30 in Scarborough and \$25 in East York. He added that the product, which he sold could not be purchased elsewhere so that he was not conflicting with other merchants.

Councillor Vern Griffen commented that the fee of \$250 seemed pretty high. Councillor Deacon expressed the view that vendors generated business. After some discussion it was agreed to amend the bylaw, making the fee \$125.00 for six months, since the lobsters were dispensed during the summer only.

Mrs. Anna Schell is now in town with her daughter, Mrs. Lloyd Moyer.

Assessment Rise Helps Markham Taxes

Markham Township Council set the general tax rate on Monday night at 18.5 mills, down 7 mills from 1954. An increase in overall assessment of three million dollars helped council hold the line.

Included in this general rate are: general township purposes 5.6 mills for \$33,050; roads and bridges (township share) 8.3 mills for \$87,500; police costs 3.8 mills for \$36,500; and fire costs 8 mills for \$7,500.

There was a small drop in road costs and general government expenditures. Fire costs were up one mill and the police department a fraction of a mill increase.

Markham Township's county levy is 6.3 mills, raising \$72,575.00. Unionville Police Village rate was set at 9 mills to raise \$4,305.00, the bulk of which is for road expenditures.



Norman Fretz, son of Mr. and Mrs. Oran Fretz, who is one of nine university of Western Ontario graduating students winning a gold medal for top marks in the final year of an honor course. He is a graduate in Psychology.

Ratepayers Show a Keen Interest in the Sewer Vote, June 13

A turnout of more than a hundred ratepayers showed keen interest in the public meeting conducted by the Stouffville Municipal Council on Friday evening in connection with the forthcoming vote on the installation of a sewerage system, June 13th. A steady flow of questions were put to the council and visiting authorities, and the temper of the meeting appeared to be favorable to the proposal, few critical questions being asked.

Clerk Garveld Brown conducted the question period and was assisted by members of council. Dr. King of the York County Health Unit and Hisey & Barrington, Consulting Engineers, who are presently conducting the survey from which the contract would be let providing assent is given by the electors.

Would Handle Cellar Drains
One of the questions which appeared to be uppermost in the minds of many ratepayers concerned whether or not the sewerage system would carry all cellar drains. To this question, the first to be asked, the Engineer gave a definite "yes". All waste, drain, toilet and tap, could be carried, the only exception being water from eave-troughs. In large cities a separate system is installed to carry roof water which in the event of a flash cloudburst, flood the disposal plant.

Problem a Municipal One
Dr. King gave a brief summary of the situation in Stouffville, one that he said was typical of many Ontario communities. The problem of sewage disposal did not loom so important forty or fifty years ago when residents enjoyed more space. Now the community is interlaced with tile drains running in every direction. Many lots he stated, were not designed to handle tile beds and many, particularly in the business section, had every square foot of area built upon. The dumping of waste material into the nearby streams presented a real threat of spreading disease. In the past many cases could be treated individually where improper drainage was found, but today with the growth of the community, the sewerage problem had become a municipal one and such a system was an absolute essential.

Figures on Cost
Reeve Elmer Daniels outlined for the audience the estimated figures on cost being as follows: Church St. east 132-225; Timbers sub-division \$17,485; Hawtin sub-division \$15,755; balance of municipality and disposal plant \$410,255, making a total of \$475,720. These figures raised more questions as to finance and the reeve stated that, based on last year's assessment, the annual cost per thousand dollars would be between \$20 and \$25. However, the engineers stated that the earliest the entire system could be put into operation, if it were proceeded with at once, would be the

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Convict Former Businessman on Serious Charge

Norman Farr, former local appliance dealer, now operating from his home on the townline, west, was convicted on a charge of indecent assault when he appeared in Magistrate's court, Newmarket, on Tuesday, and was remanded for sentence in custody.

Farr pleaded guilty to the charge when he appeared before Magistrate Hollinrake No witnesses were called in the case, O.P.P. Officer Case of the Vandorf detachment providing the evidence.

Former Resident Dies in Winnipeg

The death occurred in Winnipeg on Monday, May 30th, of Harry G. Banner, former resident of Stouffville. Mr. Banner will be recalled by our older residents as an employee of the late W. H. Toft, and Mrs. Banner, the former Miss Mitchell, who survives him, was organist at one time of the Methodist Church in Stouffville. Funeral service is being conducted in Winnipeg on June 1st.

Women's Institute Fifty Years Old

On Monday afternoon, the Stouffville Branch of the Women's Institute, celebrated its 50th anniversary. More than 160 members from 12 branches joined with Stouffville in marking the occasion. The President of the local organization, Mrs. W. G. Sanderson, was in attendance along with the Vice-President, Mrs. Les Wilson, the Secretary, Mrs. J. Williamson and the Immediate Past President, Mrs. Floyd Fairles.

The first meeting of the Stouffville Branch was held on June 16th, 1905, at the home of the late Mrs. Geo. Brodies, the president. The late Mrs. L. C. Williamson was Sec. Treas., and there were 24 members on the roll. From this inaugural meeting only two members are known to be living, Mrs. Elias Hoover and Mrs. Pugh.

The accomplishments of the Stouffville Branch during the past half century have been many both during the years of World War I and II and in the period that followed. The local Branch has also been very active in promoting worthwhile projects in the town. The public and high schools, the park, the library, the legion hall and many other projects have all received financial assistance through the generosity of this organization. Relief work both locally and distant has been one of the Institute's foremost considerations. No appeal was too large or none too small to receive a helping hand from this group of workers. This organization has done much to make Stouffville a better place to live both economically, socially and spiritually.

In the accompanying pictures Mrs. Elias Hoover and Mrs. G. H. Saunders are grouped around the head table. Mrs. E. Hoover is a charter member while the other ladies are life members of the organization.

