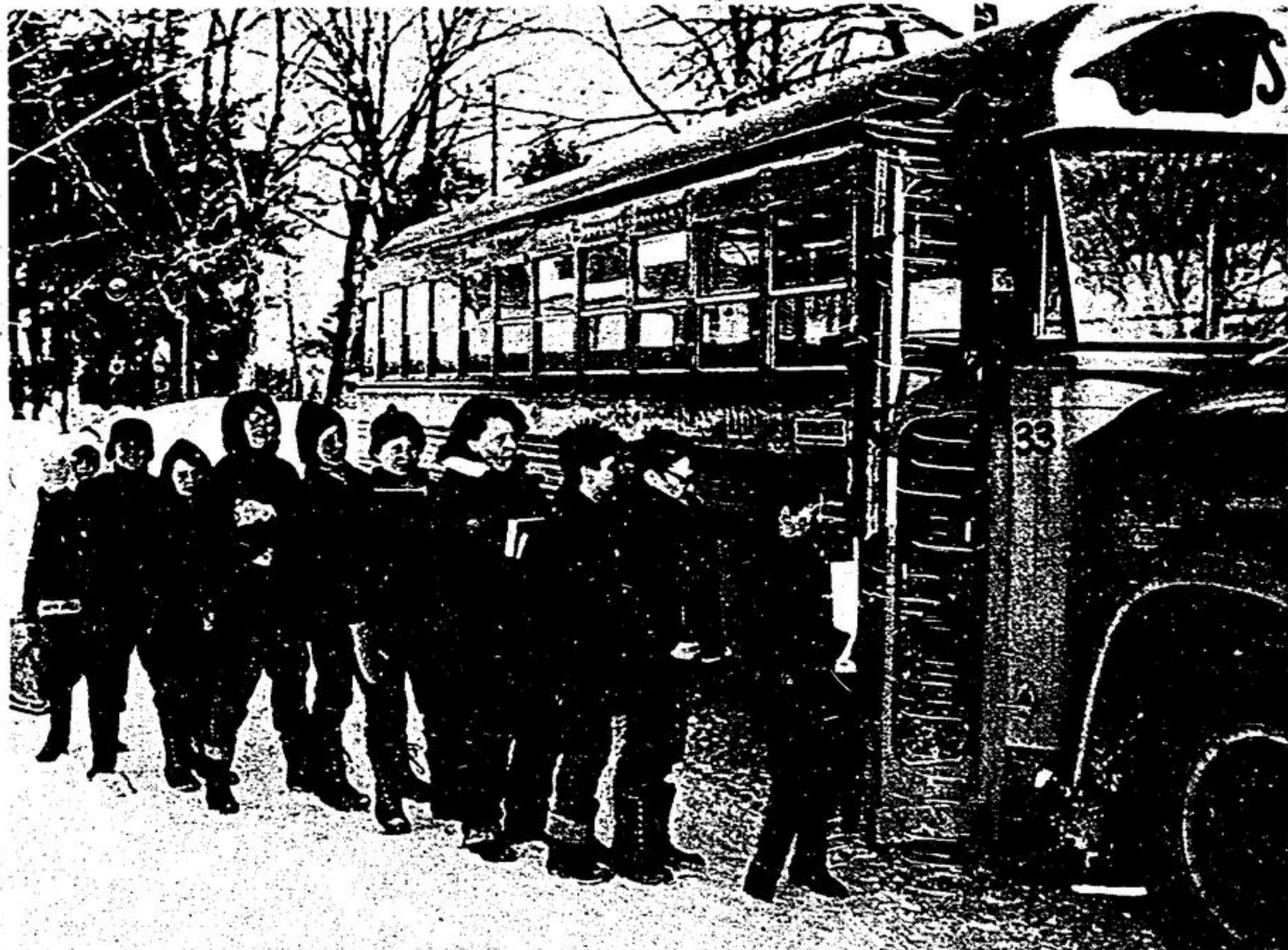


A lady school bus driver - in love with her work



Mrs. Margaret Baker, R.R. 2, Stouffville, at the wheel of her school bus, prepares to pick up a load of students at Ballantrae. —Staff Photo



Boys and girls line up for a ride home at 3:30. Mrs. Baker loves her work and in spite of its responsibilities wouldn't trade it for any job. —Staff Photo

Accident-free record

WHITCHURCH TWP. — At 8.15 a.m. every morning, five days a week, a big, yellow school bus noses its way up the lane-way from the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Baker, Highway 48, north of Ringwood.

Behind the wheel of this multi-tonned 'monster' is not Mr. Baker, but his wife, Margaret, all five feet of her.

In the forty minutes that follow, she twists and turns the vehicle around the winding route at Mus-selman's Lake, picking up dozens of boys and girls for delivery on time at Ballantrae.

The road that she must travel, is certainly no super highway. But she mounts the hills and negotiates the curves like she was pushing a grocery cart down the aisle of a neighborhood supermarket. In three years, she's yet to have a single accident.

How did it all start? "Three years ago, I was approached and asked to take the job. I agreed to give it a try. The first two days, I had a co-driver along. On the third day, he failed to show up and, I had to go it alone. What a time. On the 7th concession, I couldn't get the blessed thing to go into second gear. I remember one little boy remarking 'Boy, I wonder where she learned to drive'."

Since that rather nerve wracking experience, Mrs. Baker has driven thousands of miles.

"The children are wonderful," she said, "I seldom have any trouble. The bigger ones help to supervise the smaller ones. I love them all!"

Like any job, driving a school bus has its hazards. Mrs. Baker recalled one day, it was so foggy, that visibility was reduced to only a few feet. Suddenly, without warning, the engine stopped and the lights went out. Not professing to be a mechanic, she just waited until help arrived. She discovered that a couple of cables on the battery had come loose.

Mrs. Baker is not the only woman bus driver in the area — in fact there are many. All must pass stringent tests as set by the Department of Transport.

"I would recommend it to any woman. It only takes a couple of hours each day. There's still plenty of time to look after the house. 'I love it and wouldn't change for anything'."

The position pays \$140. per month. For the responsibility involved, it's worth every cent of it.

Grade 6 girl top speaker

YORK CTY. — A petite and pretty Grade 6 student of Langstaff Public School, Vaughan Township, captured the interest of her audience and the nod from the adjudicator to win the York County oratorical competition at Newmarket,

Feb. 13. Marie Ellen Souche, an entry in the contest last year, won her listeners' attention as much with her pleasing personality as her subject. She spoke on 'Sports in Winter' with particular emphasis on the

part played by the snowmobile for transportation in remote rural regions. The runner-up was Randy Davy of Meadowbrook Public School, East Gwillimbury. He centred his remarks around the question 'Why?' and 'Why

Not?'. Both students will represent York in the Zone Finals at Central Public School, Lindsay, Feb. 27. Other Counties to be represented will include — Durham, Ontario and Victoria.

Joseph Ringhoser of Woodlands Senior Public School, Markham Township, placed third. His subject was 'Canada'.

Every municipality in the County had a representative with the exception

of North Gwillimbury. Stouffville was represented by David Herbert, Orchard Park School; Whitchurch by Sandra Davies, Shrubmount Public School and Markham Town by Kim Willson-Rymer, James Robinson Public School.

Warden Stewart Rumble praised the participants and urged those who had not been successful to try again.

On request by deputy-

reeve Lawrence Hennessey of Whitchurch, the majority of persons in the audience indicated that they wished the speaking competitions continued.

The chairman of the County education committee is deputy-reeve Bill Parsons of Stouffville.

Driver injured

A two-car collision on Hwy. 48 near 19th Avenue, resulted in injuries to both drivers, Doris Perry, 62 of Green River and Jean Kirby, 35 of Main Street, Markham. Both vehicles were northbound. The accident was investigated by Constable Terry Fox, Oak Ridges Detachment, Ontario Provincial Police.



York Warden Stewart Rumble is shown here with the thirteen participants in the County oratorical competition at Newmarket Feb. 13. Holding the two trophies (front centre) is the winner, Marie-Ellen Souche of Langstaff. The second place student is Randy Davy (right) of East Gwillimbury and third, Joseph Ringhoser (left) of Woodlands School, Markham Township. Other entries from this area include David Herbert (front-left) Orchard Park School Stouffville, and Kim Willson-Rymer (second row-left) James Robinson School, Markham. —Staff Photo

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