

The Tribune
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Editorial

Assessment chaos

While ratepayers in municipalities all around us are stiffening their opposition to the new municipal taxes, any outcries in Stouffville have been pretty well limited to conversations on street corners.

Farm population especially is threatening to organize a tax strike and large delegations have been appearing particularly before rural councils. The councils for their part are caught in something of a squeeze. The new assessing has been taken out of their hands and the tax bills that have followed have created chaos.

Like the blunder the provincial government instigated with the quick switch to an amalgamated school system and all its resulting jumps in cost, the department has now brought a complete mix-up to the municipal taxing system. Government has changed its mind so many times on what it will do to remedy the situation that councils are at a loss to know what to tell their irate citizens.

It would appear that insufficient study, is given to the consequences of these quick government moves and a storm of protest soon results. Some of changes will find considerable favor with the population

at large, particularly the increasing of tax on land held for speculation. Vast sums of money have been made on such properties, often at the expense of the ratepayers. This land hitherto paid only a pittance in taxes could be held back from development for an eternity at very little cost to the speculator. This flaw has been remedied. There have been other instances as well where little or no taxes were being paid on fully justified assessment.

However, the bulk of the protest has been from farmers who are trying to work their land for a livelihood. Some areas of urban dwellers are also unhappy.

Some of the increases have been astronomical as much as a hundred and two hundred percent. In some cases ratepayers have been advised to pay the first instalment and by that time something would be done to ease the load. However, they fear that in so doing they will be accepting the liability for the entire tax bill as it stands and this they are reluctant to do.

Inequalities have been multiplied many times and government will need to take more positive and immediate action if it hopes to escape a full-scale tax revolt.

Central area study required

On April 14 of this year, Stouffville Planning Board met with downtown businessmen to discuss problems and entertain solutions, related to the central core area of Main Street. Less than a dozen businesses were represented.

Three months have since gone by with nothing accomplished.

Weekend traffic is bad and getting worse.

Tieups at intersections are terrible.

Parking remains at a minimum. It is now apparent that someone must take the tiger by the tail and do a little twisting-if nothing more than to hear it roar.

That someone should be Village Council.

We would recommend that the firm of Murray Jones and

Associates or another comparable company of council's choice, be invited to attend a meeting here and provide members with an estimated cost of a survey, similar to the one completed recently in Markham.

If the price is practical, then proceed.

If it's not, then phase it down to one that is.

It may be many months-yes, even years before development to the north and south is sufficiently advanced to permit the construction of bypass arteries between concessions 9 and 10.

Can Stouffville afford to wait that long for some kind of traffic and parking relief?

We don't think so. We'd like to see some attention given to the solving of these problems now.

Ward division excellent

The ward boundaries, as established by the steering committees and approved by the councils of both Whitchurch and Stouffville are, in our opinion the end result of sensible thinking.

The main desire, as we see it, was to establish wards comparable in population. This, in itself was a difficult chore since rural Whitchurch and a southerly slice of rural Markham had the area while urban Stouffville had the people.

The only answer then, was to split Stouffville up and share sections of urban buildup with sections of rural

farm land.

While this type of electoral system seems fair, the real bonus will come Jan. 1 when regional government takes over.

Successful candidates in Wards 4, 5 and 6 will represent, not only the residents of Stouffville but ratepayers in Stouffville and Whitchurch (Wards 4 and 5) and Stouffville and Markham (Ward 6).

Such an arrangement will automatically halt any urban-rural tug of war that could easily have developed had Stouffville, as a village block, remained intact.

An unholy mess.

Persons who enjoy walking to worship services on Sunday mornings are advised against taking the 'scenic route' along Main, between Mill and Church Streets or Market and Civic Avenue.

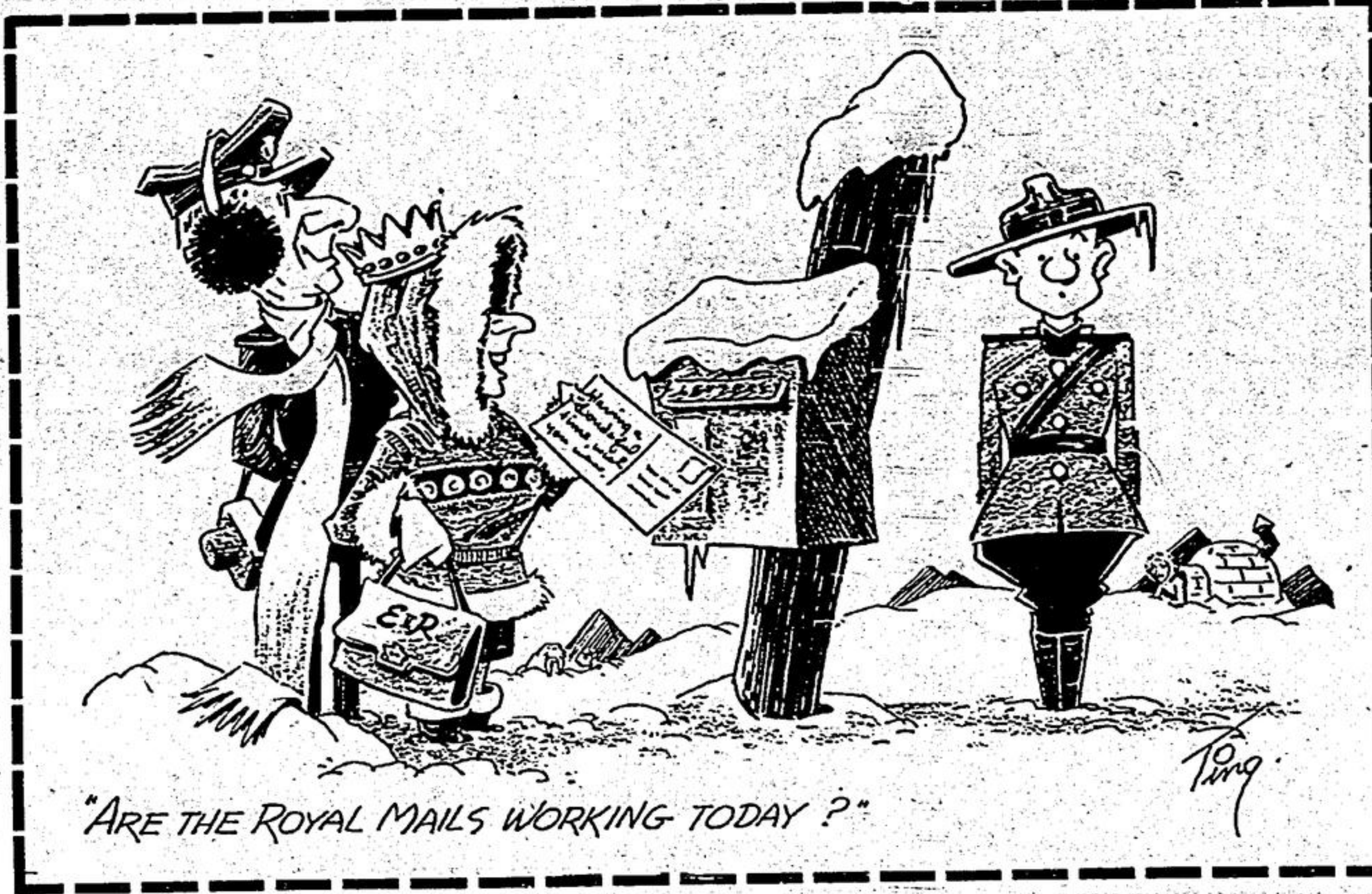
It's an unholy mess.

On Sunday last, debris of all description littered the sidewalk area, some of it whisked along in small whirlwinds of dust and dirt. And last Sunday was no different than the one before or the one before that. In fact, every Sunday morning, all summer long, the same unsightly

condition exists.

New waste containers, purchased by the village at considerable expense, have failed to alleviate the problem.

We would suggest that, for appearance sake at least, council acquire the services of two students, from now until the start of the September term. Perhaps by then, the town staff will be back to full strength and better able to handle this additional chore without assistance.



SUGAR AND SPICE

A Ba-hai wedding at the Smiley house

By BILL SMILEY

You've heard of rock-and roll groups. But have you ever heard of Ba-hai groups? Just when my wife and I get everything squared around, and look forward to a period of doddering about in peace, somebody throws the overalls in the chowder and we have to fish them

Editor's mail

The Tribune staff: Thanks for the free-gratis copy of The Tribune. Your coverage of 'the lake' in last week's paper was excellent.

We have been making it a practice to do our shopping in Aurora and sometimes Newmarket.

This was because, in all honesty, we really weren't aware that Stouffville had so much to offer.

So, if you see a bald-headed man in his 50's, a lady, not a day over 29, three children and a poodle strolling down your Main Street every Saturday afternoon-it's us.

Harvey and Joan Moore.

Dear Editor: As a trailer resident this month at Cedar Beach, I wish to express my appreciation to you and the staff at The Tribune for the effort put into your 'Lake Special' of last week.

This is our first season at Musselman's. But it is not the first time we have received a weekly paper. Yours, however, is the best we have ever had the pleasure of reading and I speak for my wife, myself and the kids too.

Thanks again. The gesture was much appreciated.

Sincerely,
Jim and Ina
Cathy and Kenneth.

Usually, it's one of our kids. Sometimes, old or new friends. This time it was a little of both.

First of all, Kim arrived home Friday night with a car-load of friends. They'd come for a Fireside.

She and many of her friends have become Ba-hais. It sounds like something out of the musical South Pacific, but it isn't.

A cynical colleague of mine asked: "Is it one of those Indian religions that justify sitting around on your rump and doing nothing?" I don't think it is.

It's something new that came out of the Middle East about a century ago, complete with prophet, and has grown, quietly but steadily.

A Fireside is a meeting of Ba-hais and those interested in learning about it. People of all ages and faiths and colors sit around quietly at somebody's home, listen to those who have "declared" themselves, pray together and meditate. There are no churches, taxes, and all the ills that plague the modern church institution.

It has great appeal for the idealistic young, because it contains the best and the essence of the world's great religions: Love for God, neighbor and self; gentleness; honesty; abstinence. It seems to have no political or racial overtones.

No good Ba-hai will touch drugs or alcohol. Though I notice they all smoke like fiends, and never have any cigarettes of their own.

I could see the pincers closing in (I'd been away fishing the week before). To my relief, a young fellow from another world dropped in at the crucial moment. Davie Lodge, leader of Major Hoople's Boarders, just to tell us his rock group was playing that night at the local area.

My wife went to the Fireside. I went to hear the Major and the bedlam. We both arrived home slightly dazed, I slightly deaf. The Ba-hais had gone back to their lairs in the city, but the Hooples came home with me for a cold drink. With their girl singer, Gail, the tiniest girl with the biggest voice on either side of the Rockies.

It was interesting. Two completely different groups of young people, about the same age. One flat broke, spreading the gospel, talking about establishing a commune in the country. The other flat out, with thousands of dollars of equipment, hurtling from one engagement to the next, in their own expensive rolling commune. All of them bright and polite.

The generation gap that night didn't seem as wide as the caste system among young people themselves. There was no confrontation, but the two groups had less in common than we middle-aged yahoos had with either of them.

But to get back to my point, if possible. The up-shot is that we are committed to having a Ba-hai wedding in our backyard in October. The bride's mother can't afford a wedding reception. The groom's mother offered to have it at her place if all the blinds were drawn.

Anybody who wants to get married outside in October needs a pretty strong faith. I suppose they could roll in the leaves in some symbolic ritual.

But the moment of truth came when the prospective groom informed us joyously that a rock group had agreed to play at the wedding. I've heard them. Clearly. From three blocks away.

I have a feeling I'm going to put my foot down.

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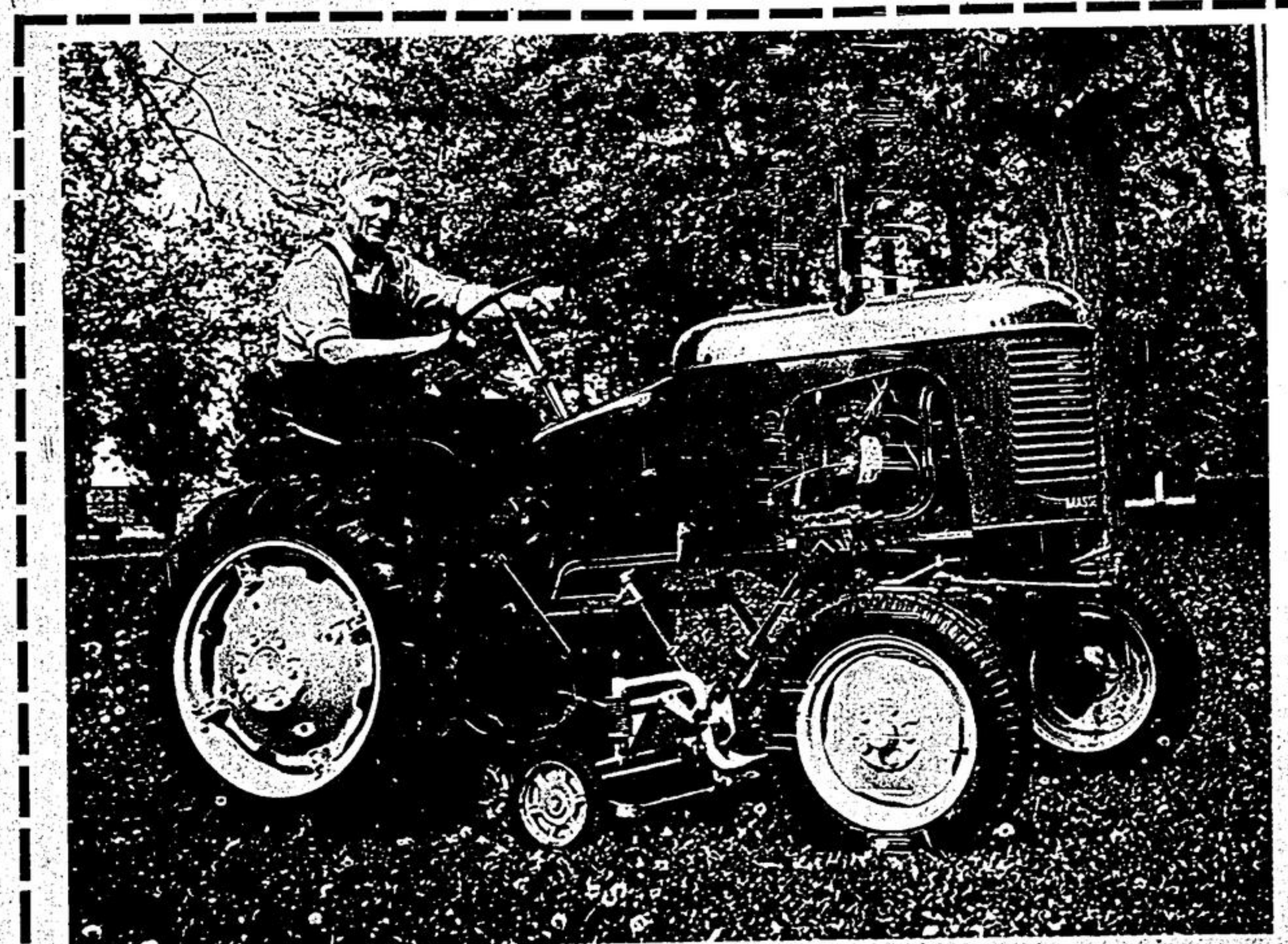
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Portraits from the past

The year was 1952 and a valuable addition to Stouffville Park equipment was this Massey-Harris 'Pony' tractor and mower attachment. The

operator and caretaker of that day was Bert Batt, Main Street West. While the mowers have since been replaced, the tractor is still going strong. Cadieux Studio.

ROAMING AROUND

Home on wheels

By Jim Thomas

If you were one of the few who remained in Stouffville, Sunday, or perhaps one of the hundreds who passed through, you may have noticed a kind of hybrid-type truck parked at the south curb on Main Street East. It resembled a cross between a bus and a house. In reality, that's what it was-a Winnebago motor home.

While the vehicle itself was indeed attractive, it was, as always, the human element that caught my eye. Her long legs, and short skirt had the East End natives languishing over the line fence.

Unlike some folks, I have little time for such frivolities. Sunday afternoons are included in my 7-day work week.

Following two spins around the Stouffer Street block, I spotted the licence markers-the red and white of Iowa State. A-ha, strangers in town, I said to myself, better stop and check.

And strangers they were, although not for long. I was introduced to John and Barbara Kiely and their daughter, Beverley, the latter, an accountant's assistant at a Toronto Branch of the Bank of Montreal. Mr Kiely, a talented piper and so named, holds the position of Assistant Director with Winnebago International Travelers. His wife is a sister of Bill Hook, with whom they were visiting for a few days.

It is John's ambition to organize motor home owners into caravans-travelling across Ontario and Quebec. Typical visitation points would include-Niagara Falls, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal and Quebec City with stop-over points along the way.

In November, a similar trip is planned for Mexico and next year to the British Isles.

A Winnebago motor home complete, costs about \$18,000. Production, at the rate of 400 per month, is located at a plant in Forest City, Iowa.

Club tours, lasting about two weeks, often include up to 100 units and 400 persons-a small village on wheels.

While the majority of trips are taken during summer vacation months, U.S. educators now consider them of such geographical and historical value that school-aged children receive credit for time spent out of class.

Although comparatively new, the mobile home idea has caught on in a big way, particularly in the United States, Mr Kiely said. Some couples already retired, have sold their properties 'to follow the sun', he went on.

What is a Winnebago mobile home really like?

I readily accepted an invitation to a guided tour.

Ninety-nine percent of the chasis are built by the Dodge division of Chrysler Corporation although General Motors and Ford may join the production line, Mr Kiely explained. The 8-cylinder, 413 cubic inch engine produced plenty of power. The transmission is equipped with a cruise-a-matic speed control, a kind of overdrive device for open-highway runs.

And talk about conveniences-this 'buggy' has everything.

It's air-conditioned to keep you cool.

It has a heater to keep you warm. There's a stove, a freezer-refrigerator, a built-in toilet, a shower-you name it.

The units come in body lengths ranging from 22 to 27 feet and will sleep from 6 to 10 persons.

The cab seats two-the driver and the 'navigator'.

"But see this," Mr Kiely said, pointing to a curtain, "whenever I grow a little weary-I just pull the curtain closed and then, can't hear a thing".

That's one feature that should be made standard-the world over.

Sign of the times

A sign off Hwy. 11 near Bracebridge reads: We by junk-we sell antiques.