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## Town abandons dump bylaw

Council is rapidly developing a reputation for being wishy-washy.

In our view, last week's decision not to proceed with legal action against York Sanitation should go a long way toward enhancing this dubious distinction.

The court case was not heard because of a minor technicality in the serving of the warrant and in no way reflected on the validity of the bylaw.

This seems like a capitulation before the battle had even begun and calls into question council's sincerity in opposing the dump.

A great deal of money has already been spent on the Environmental Hearing, in drafting the bylaw and in preparing the groundwork for a fight in the courts.

By giving up this easily it seems council is just throwing this money out the window.

Many people in the community felt the money should not have been spent in the first place but to proceed this far and then quit places council in a totally untenable position.

This expensive course should not have been embarked on in the first place unless council intended on battling through to the bitter end.

Councillor Merlyn Baker's position, we feel, is the most inconsistent, Mr. Baker has said his original reason for running for council was to oppose the dump and yet he supported the motion not to proceed through the courts.

In a similar case Uxbridge successfully fought a provincial policy on gravel pits to the Supreme Court of Canada — and won.

## Transportation study needed

Opponents of the proposed Pickering airport (as well as those that favor the project) will greet the creation of a federal-provincial committee to study transportation in southern Ontario with open arms.

The study was announced by James Snow, provincial minister of Transportation and Communications, last week. The Minister is quoted as saying that the Pickering airport will be considered as one "option."

The statement in itself raises the question of the provincial government's avowed opposition to the project. After all the province has never come out against the airport itself. The cabinet merely stated that the provincial government would refuse to pay for services for the facility.

In other words, Mr. Snow and the study group must consider the airport in their deliberations. Certainly, the project is very much alive as long as the freeze remains on the land in the noise areas.

Only if the freeze is lifted will the airport be dead. The opponents of the airport feel that any study of transportation in the Metro Toronto area will reject another airport and insist on more efficient use of the present facilities at Malton.

Be that as it may, Mr. Snow's statement seems to suggest that the federal-provincial committee will consider all the transportation options open to it. If it does a proper job, the committee is compelled to do just that.

Such a study is sorely needed.

## A tough fight ahead

Inflation seems to be the topic on everyone's lips these days (notwithstanding the present Yuletide season) and we like to see that the school board, the region and the local council plan to use the federal guidelines in setting their 1976 budget.

But let us not remember that the federal guidelines do not apply directly to regional and municipal employees. The Anti-inflation board does not have direct jurisdiction (as far as can be ascertained thus far).

The provincial government has made it clear that grants will not be forthcoming to keep the mill rates down. This means drastic cost cutting at the local level. Certainly, some services will suffer in such an economy.

Fighting inflation requires determination. But it also requires willingness to sacrifice. This attitude seems to be unfortunately lacking in the present situation. Every group seems to feel that each other group should be fighting inflation.

This lack of concern, makes us wonder about local, regional and school board budgeting. Public acceptance could prove to be very significant here. From the experience so far (with teachers and postal workers) the general public is not seriously concerned with fighting inflation.

In that atmosphere, limiting budget increases will take courage. We hope our local politicians are up to such a difficult task.

## CNIB fund drive should succeed

The local Lions Club has fallen short in its drive to raise \$2,500 for local facilities for blind people. The funds are to be used to provide for people in the area, who have eyesight problems.

Under the auspices of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, the local project would include some six blind or almost blind residents of Whitchurch - Stouffville.

The project is certainly a worthy one. The shortfall is about \$500 on the fund-drive. We hope that the local project will not be scrapped because of the lack of funds.

It seems to us that the last \$500 can be raised, and that the planned project should go ahead. Just a little more work and a few generous donations are all that's needed for success.

The Lions Club is well-known in town for its success at fund-raising and we hope the CNIB service will go ahead as planned.



There is still time to buy the original and interesting UNICEF Christmas cards for this year. They will be on sale at the Whitchurch - Stouffville Public Library until Dec. 20. These are two samples of some of the note cards



available this year..The one at left is "Boy Blowing Bubbles", by Dutch painter Fr. van Mieris while at left is "Floral Still Life" by A. Bosschaert.

## Bible thought for the Week

From The Living Bible

How prosperous Israel is — a luxuriant vine all filled with fruit! But the more wealth I give her, the more she pours it on the altars of her heathen gods; the richer the harvests I give her, the more beautiful the statues and idols she erects. The hearts of her people are false toward God. They are guilty and must be punished. God will break down their heathen idols. Then they will say, "We deserted the Lord and he took away our king — we don't need one anyway!"  
 Hosea 10: 1-3



## Home-made presents rewarding

By DON BERNARD

There is a well-known cliché about Christmas and you still hear it from people. It goes something like — "Christmas is too commercialized nowadays." This attitude is quite prevalent in our day. Doing something about it however, is harder than grousing about the problem.

More and more people feel that Christmas is too "commercialized", but few people seem to want to do anything to take the commercial emphasis out of the season. In fact, most of us finally give in and blow a bundle on presents, albeit reluctantly.

Last year I said to myself that I would have to do something to avoid this problem myself. While I was only partially successful, my efforts have expanded this year.

My idea (certainly not an original one) was still to give Christmas presents, but to add a more personal touch. I would make them myself. As it turned out that was easier said than done. Firstly, making something is more time consuming than going out to a store and buying something.

Making a gift also requires thought and planning. However the benefits are also great: The person receives an original, hand-made gift that has obvious value because someone took the time to make it. You can see that this type of approach is more personal, and I might add, more satisfying for me.

Well, enough of the philosophical background. Let's get on with the presents themselves. Last year was a relatively small start. My wife needed a serving tray and I designed and made one for her. It was then I realized that other women on my Christmas list would appreciate such a practical, but attractive gift.

The pre-Christmas season is a busy one, but I managed to find the time to make four of the trays. They consisted of a flat piece of plywood, covered with vinyl material and trimmed around the four sides.

The other hand-made gift consisted of flat board with some names burned into one side (using one of the cheap wood-burning kits). A maple stain and a coat of urethane complete the plaque.

Last year's efforts did not deal with all the presents on my list. I did have to buy some of them, but it was a start. Bigger and better things were still to come (I thought).

This year, I started earlier and made more careful plans. In the meantime, I had acquired a number of labor saving tools, thus making possible more ambitious projects. A radial-arm saw has proven to be of major assistance in this regard.

My first decision was to expand the use of wood-burned plaques. For this purpose, I decided to do plaques with Bible verses, which would seem appropriate to the person it was intended for. Johanna and I went through our list and found short scriptures for each person. She designed the lettering on the wood and I did the burning. A total of seven of these will be given away this year.

The plaques are time-consuming in the extreme, because it takes a long time to burn the letters into the wood. Luckily, we started quite early in November and managed to make good progress. A spare hour here and a spare hour there took care of the wood-burning. Staining and finishing them was a relatively simple matter after that.

I must say that very little skill is involved in the wood-burning. It just requires time to complete. At the writing, they are not quite complete, but the end is in sight.

The other gifts stemmed from some promises I had been making my wife for some time. She wanted a spice rack and a spoon rack (for small souvenir tea spoons). These also seemed like naturals as Christmas gifts and would not be too difficult to make.

After some careful figuring and purchase of appropriate wood, the major work began.

As the first spoon rack took shape I was surprised how easily it seemed to come. There were a few mistakes and some spoiled pieces, but in one evening, I had one spoon rack assembled.

The first two were quite monstrous and each holds 34 spoons. The third one was more modest, having space for 22 spoons. After they were assembled the stain work was left to be done. But more of that later.

The spice rack proved to be a tricky proposition. It seemed to require straighter cuts and more exact fitting than the spoon racks. Unfortunately, I did a little too much planing and the rack only barely holds spice bottles. But it looks good and holds quite a few of them. At the writing of this column, the first coat of walnut stain is on the wood-working pieces, and they look reasonably good.

I can't tell you how the people will like these home-made items. But somehow, it doesn't matter all that much. The enjoyment was in the making and giving them, not really in the finished product. Still, I remember last year, when I gave the trays, I was the most excited one when they were unwrapped, I guess because they were a part of me and something of myself was put into them.

I don't feel this is the whole answer to what ails Christmas, but it is the first time that I have tried to avoid the real commercial rush of the season and for me it has been a rewarding experience. My projects aren't complete yet, but the excitement has started to mount.

They are simple gifts by material standards. The spoon racks are not an expensive item in a store. The plaques are even less expensive. But values are certainly misplaced in our society. No price could really reflect the time, effort, and if I might say it, love that goes into the gifts.

It probably sounds corny, but I am sorry I did not think of it sooner.



## SUGAR AND SPICE

## Family reunion a joyful time

By BILL SMILEY

"And cousins by the dozens." That line from an old nursery rhyme or something seemed to be the theme when the Thomson clan held a family reunion at the old homestead, on a beautiful day in October.

There was a lot of kissing and hugging (we're an emotional family). I was bussed and squeezed by a lot of middle-aged ladies and made up for it by heartily bussing and squeezing a number of extremely bussable and squeezeable nieces and daughters of nephews and various other attractive young hussies drifting about.

Most people have been sucked in, at one time or another, to a family reunion. It can be a ghastly experience, or a joyful one. This one fell into the latter category.

There was no mourning for the dead, only a great sense of being alive, and the pleasure of knowing that all these people, of all shapes and ages, were blood kin, all sprung from the fertile loins of one Walter Thomson, an Irishman of Scottish extraction, away back there in the 19th century.

Walter was prolific, and his sons were no slouches either. One of them, Mountain Jack Thomson, a sometime scourge of the Ottawa Valley during the great lumbering days, had about 10 children by his first wife, and when she died, married her sister and produced another large family.

Another, William, after whom I was named, sired 10 children. And there was the last of them, my uncle Ivan, 84, dancing around like a 30-year-old, welcoming all of us with something close to tears of joy in his eyes.

He's as handsome as always, slim as a boy, blue eyes sparkling, wit bubbling, striding about as though he'd never heard of arthritis. A man of many talents, a conservationist who plants trees lovingly, a traveler whose next letter might be from New Zealand, an artist in working with wood, a deep lover of nature and people, and a concerned and loving patriarch of the clan.

It is my casual boast, and my brothers' and sisters' grudging concession, that I "take after him." I wish I did. He remarried at 80 and has a three-year-old grandson. Figure that one out. No way can I match that.

He snowed me the room in the old brick homestead, a fine house on a steep bluff overlooking the Ottawa River, the bedrooms in which my grandmother bore the 10 children. No wonder she died at an age when most modern women are just getting their second wind, or their second husband.

He showed me a picture of his family at the dining table. At the head, my grandfather, white hair and huge curly beard. On one side, four strapping sons. On the other side, three daughters and two little sons, and an empty place set for Emerson, a maverick who was in the Klondyke when the photo was taken. How would like to try to feed a mob like that in these days? You'd be bankrupt in a week.

Another picture showed my Uncle Ivan the sole surviving member of the Shawville Pontiacs, taken in the days when hockey was deadly serious but played for fun, and Shawville used to journey by sleigh to take on the stalwarts of Renfrew and Pembroke.

Perhaps sadly, there was no living to be made for huge families on the barren land of Calumet Island, and the tribe dispersed, some of the boys joining the great exodus to The West, the El Dorado of those days.

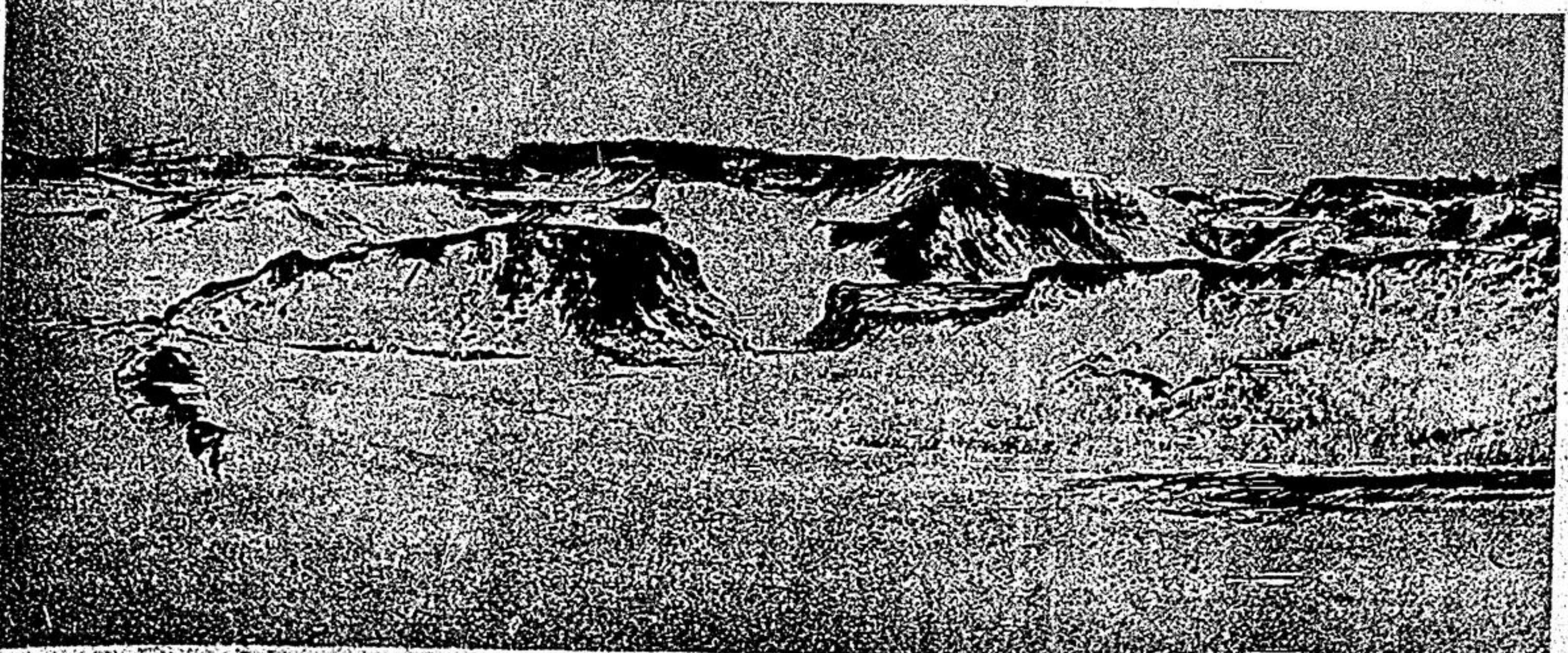
They were honest, hardworking, good-looking, gregarious people. But it wasn't enough. They established themselves and worked like slaves to build something. Then came the Depression.

And they suffered. Boy, how they suffered! All of Canada took it in the neck, but the prairie farmers took it in the neck and in the guts and in various other parts of the anatomy.

Most of my uncles went through The Great War. Many of their sons went through World War II. Some didn't come back.

Things picked up. Some of them even made a decent living before they died. Their children are moderately well off, middle-class people with warm hearts and no pretensions.

But they're fiercely proud of being Thomsons. (And don't ever try to spell it with a "p". We have no truck with the poor white trash Thomsons with a "p".)



The desolate scene of a partially snow-covered gravel pit is an eerie one indeed as this photo shows. The shadows and cliffs with a grey-white color could pass for a scene on the moon or some other such rocky and empty planet. The gravel pit equipment in the upper left-hand corner of the picture gives it away, however.  
 — John Montgomery.