

Editor's Mail

Hope-pray

Dear Jim:
A word of appreciation to your paper for keeping us in touch with the progress of Margie Griffiths. Despite the fact she's been in hospital more than four months, she's still very much a part of our thoughts and prayers, and will continue to be.

Margie's misfortune has created a void in this community that cannot be filled. She was very special here with a wide circle of friends.

We hope and pray that some day soon she'll be returned to us, the same delightful Margie that so many know and love.

Sincerely,
Joyce Ferguson,
Stouffer Street,
Stouffville.

A booster

Dear Mr. Thomas:
Please pass on my compliments to your Jim Irving for his excellent critic's report on various events and functions in the area including "Sleeping Beauty" at Goodwood Public School and Music Mania.

I find it interesting to read another's opinion, particularly when I've attended the same program. Whether or not I agree doesn't really matter — to each his own.

Mr. Irving appears to have a flair for this sort of thing and puts his thoughts down on paper in a very interesting way; once one begins to read it, it's impossible to stop.

What I appreciate most is his understanding that community shows are put on by amateur talent and while their skills may border on the professional, they don't pretend to perform at that level. Mr. Irving seems to realize this, choosing to boost rather than berate the performers.

This makes for a "let's do it again" feeling; a desire to begin planning for Music Mania '83. Let's hope.

Sincerely,
Barbara Jones,
Tenth Line,
Stouffville.



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ROAMING AROUND
School days - happy memories



By JIM THOMAS

School days, school days, dear old golden rule days, readin' and writin' and 'rithmatic, taught to the tune of the hickory stick — and so it goes.

While it may not have seemed so great at the time, it's safe now to say that no period in one's life brings back fonder memories than those "dear old golden rule days", albeit, the hickory stick's tune seemed a trifle off key.

While recollections from today will not be quite the same as those related to the smaller sectional system with its one and two-room structures, friendships now as then will never be forgotten.

On Sat., June 19, many friendships will be renewed when former teachers and students of Mt. Joy Public School (S.S. No. 16, Markham) return for a reunion on the occasion of the building's 75th anniversary.

Two area residents (and former pupils), planning to attend are Oliver and Nancy Shank. Oliver still lives on the home farm east of Hwy. 48 while sister Nancy divides her time between the family homestead and Parkview Apartments, Stouffville. An older brother Jacob (he'll be 88 on July 31), has an alma mater history that goes back to when the school was constructed in 1907.

Oliver and Nancy can recall the good times shared at S. S. 16 like it was yesterday. Jacob's memory is just as keen.

As I talked to Oliver and Nancy in the kitchen of their century-old farmhouse, Satur-

day, the following names came to mind — George and Ethel Ireson, Frank Lunau, Ed Byer, Russell Wideman, Mabel Fretz, Howard Graham, Fred Spring, Norman and Hazel Miller, Allan, Jean and Gerlie Balsdon, Arthur and Clarence Hoover, Russell, Louis and Frank Grove, Elizabeth Williamson and more.

Two of the more prominent teachers were Albert Urmie and Nellie Myers. Mr. Urmie was a strict disciplinarian. Oliver recalls one incident where he threw the strap at one of the bigger boys seated near the back of the class. The lad (in his twenties) hurled it back, breaking the blackboard.

Nancy recalls her love for Miss Myers. "She couldn't have been any nicer — a wonderful teacher," she said. She spent more than 20 years on the Mt. Joy staff often handling up to 45 children in four classes.

Memo Ramer had a dog, recalled Oliver, that didn't take kindly to teasing. When Stanley Jones persisted, it attacked, tearing the seat out his pants. "He went home and told his parents we'd been fighting."

A trick often pulled was placing a magnifying glass close to the neck of the boy ahead, catching the sun's rays just right. "Wouldn't that make him scratch," he said.

The Christmas concert was always a highlight of the year. It was held upstairs. Bert Ferrier was master of ceremonies and sometimes the Santa Claus along with George Maynard. "We always had a beautiful tree

and decorated the room from one end to the other," said Nancy. Because there was no hydro, the concert was held in the afternoon. Each pupil received a bag filled with oranges and nuts.

Arbor Day was an event when everyone pitched in and cleaned up the yard. Later, they all trooped over to Sammy Ramer's bush.

Nancy remembers Jess Byer as having one of the first cars in the community. "We were always sure of a ride when we'd see him coming; he would never pass a child on the way to school."

And aeroplanes, now that was really something, said Oliver. If one passed over, everyone stopped and stared.

"I doubt if any generation has seen more," said Nancy, "from early motor cars and aeroplanes to watching a man walk on the moon."

Although Oliver hasn't seen the change that's taken place from school to museum, Nancy has, and thinks it's marvellous. She also thinks John Lunau, the museum's manager is "tops". "He's the right one for the job," she said. Nancy says she could spend several hours in the place and still not see all the exhibits. She's pleased the school is being used for such a worthwhile purpose.

Oliver and Nancy are looking forward to the June 19 reunion; Jacob is too. That's one Saturday when their stay at St. Lawrence Market will be cut a few hours short.

Editorials

We're Magic Town Ontario

Sheer magic! The four-day festival, organized by the Town's chief librarian in co-operation with Claremont's Dan Laffey and the Whitchurch-Stouffville Chamber of Commerce was without doubt, the most exciting thing to happen here in years.

While outdoor activities, Saturday, were hampered somewhat by the rain, this unsolvable problem was totally forgotten by the close to 1,000 people who packed the High School auditorium at night.

It was the show of shows, a promenade of professional performers that left even the cynics awe-struck in their seats.

While "illusion" was the word used by several participants to describe their acts, "dumbfounded" would best portray the

reaction by the crowd. And at the conclusion, a standing ovation, a compliment often deserved but seldom accorded here.

As we had hoped and suggested, all elements of the festival were carried through in the best of good taste, nothing demonic, satanic or ritualistic as some well-meaning writers to this newspaper had predicted. Just good clean fun.

Only George Schlubbier, the aforementioned Dan Laffey and the executive of the Chamber of Commerce can know the tremendous amount of work that went into the organizing of this event. Their reward comes in the form of total acceptance, of praise and appreciation.

Stouffville — Magic Town, Ontario, Canada. May the symbol last forever.

Progress must mean change

Progress to many is a dirty word even when it means improvement. It's not that the individual is totally satisfied with stagnation, often quite the opposite. He wants to see the municipality move ahead as long as the move creates no personal problem or inconvenience.

Yes, we live in a Me Society, unmindful of the fact that, in most cases, the Me (or I) wouldn't be here in the first place if the same selfish attitude had been applied.

Politicians, particularly those involved in planning, are continually faced with these kinds of appeals. Last week, Councillor Bill Kamps, after sitting through several meetings of repeated moanings and groanings over a proposed two-store, two-apartment complex at Pine Orchard (on the Vivian Road), teed off on the complainants and said what needed to be said. He was later admonished for the frankness of his statements and accepted the rebuttal without reply.

Many of us who purchased a house and lot in Stouffville (and perhaps even in Whitchurch Township), fifteen, twenty and thirty years ago, can recall open spaces on all sides. Wasn't it wonderful, a backyard view for several blocks. But we all knew it wouldn't last, nor did we object when neighbor after neighbor purchased properties and erected homes on those sites.

However, there are still those who hold up their hands in horror at such a thought and conjure up all kinds of reasons (excuses) in an effort to win support. "We moved out from the city to get away from this sort of thing," is an oft-repeated favorite. We wonder then, if they ever posed this question to themselves: "Did someone have to agree to let us in?"

Municipal planners come under terrific pressure in such situations. We commend those, like Councillor Kamps, who aren't afraid to stand up and be counted.

Window on Wildlife



Canada Geese pass-over

By Art Briggs-Jude

At first it sounded like the far-off barking of several small dogs, but as the cadence increased the familiar calling of wild geese was recognized. We rushed outside to better hear the spirited music and hopefully to catch a glimpse of the untamed musicians. Our haste was needless. The huge pulsating flock was still below the tree line. However in a moment they appeared skimming the still naked forest like a flight of Spitfires on an early morning low-level. On they came, their wings beating strongly, their voices now an excited din overhead. In the budding sunlight long necks reaching forward, white cheek patches flashing, necks black against grey bodies. We stood, two small mortals wondering. Caught up as countless others have been in the past, by the magnetizing sight that only a flock of Canada geese can provide.

with only an intermittent honk to help pinpoint the position. As we moved back into the warmth of the wood-heated kitchen, we decided then and there to try and keep track of just how many geese used our valley for a flyway. For we knew it was a traditional migration route even before Old Hilton Ellsworth had let slip the word he was spring shooting them more than 35 years ago. In fact, we had seen numerous flocks at this season every year for the past three. It was time to get some numbers down in our notes.

At this time of writing, we have listed 1,796 sightings with another three flocks heard that we couldn't see due to darkness or low cloud cover. The average skein contains about 50 birds although we did record one mammoth flight that numbered 300. And most of these big birds are seen in the morning and evening with very few flying in the middle of the day. And unlike their autumn migration in October, when they fly fairly high, these geese

seem to know there's no hunting and they come in a great deal lower.

Canada geese range in size from the giant Maxima race weighing up to 24 pounds to the small crackling Minimas that seldom exceed four pounds. Some species such as the Aleutian are on the endangered bird list, while others like the giant Canada's are causing nesting problems in southern Ontario. But whether they are Canada's or not, all geese are a fascinating family whose history and incredible feats in some cases are just now being realized. For instance, Greylag geese were among the first birds to be domesticated by man some 4,500 years ago. And more recently, flights of Bar-headed geese have been observed flying over Mt. Everest at a height of nearly 30,000 ft. So, during the next few weeks when the call and sight of the migrating geese draw your attention, remember, they may have just lifted from a nearby lagoon or have come non-stop from a place of refuge 2000 miles away.