

**Editor's Mail**

**Bad taste**

Dear Jim:  
As a member of Music Mania and as members of this community, we were greatly saddened by The Tribune's unfortunate 'cartoon' regarding Music Mania's 25th reunion year.

Surely, the messages of tolerance and concern for others should be guiding principles for you and your editorial comments. This is especially important now when we are welcoming so many new residents to our community.

Sincerely,  
Lovanna and Jim Sanders,  
O'Brien Avenue,  
Stouffville

**Editor's Note:** Music Mania was originally a 'black face' show, a fact that will be recalled by those associated with the cast back in the early 70's and by this newspaper in requested photo reprints of concerts staged at that time. Certainly, no offence was intended.

**Concerned**

Dear Mr Thomas:  
The proposed industrial subdivision at the westerly entrance to Stouffville sounds great—on the surface.

The fact open storage will be permitted, albeit to the rear of the site, bothers me. I object to open storage anywhere, particularly in an area so visible as this.

I appreciate the Town's 'protective' policies with regard to planning. I trust members of council will give the above matter careful consideration.

Sincerely,  
Basil Pettigrew,  
R.R. 2, Markham



PAT WHEELER '84  
THE TRIBUNE



**The Tribune**

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JAMES THOMAS  
Editor

BRUCE ANNAN  
Publisher

PAT PAPPAS  
Advertising Manager

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**ROAMING AROUND**



**An historical event**

BY JIM THOMAS

In thirty-three years of full-time journalism, Thursday was a first. Yes, in three decades plus, there's still some virgin soil left—unturned. I'm learning something new every week.

However, Thursday's experience was completely new. I succumbed to the pleadings of a muffled conscience and attended a meeting of Regional Council.

Ah, I can hear the groans from Bethesda through to Balsam and from Bogart town through to Brougham. "How boring," you say, "surely there's something more exciting to write about than that..."

Wait! This was no ordinary Regional Council meeting. This was special—very special. In fact, this was the biggest thing to hit Lower Slabovia (Whitchurch-Stouffville) in years. Our mayor who, back in 1966, began his political career as a trustee in Markham School Area 2, was going for the top job in the Region of York.

Is that such a big deal? you ask. You bet you bouncing boobies it is. If it wasn't big, I mean big, Big, BIG, why would I bother to attend? I've more important things to do than listen to Engineer Bob Hodgson and Mayor Angus Morton argue over a size of a culvert on the Sharon Road.

And that, to be honest, is the real reason I've never frequented the hallowed halls of regional hierarchy. Our town so

seldom makes the meeting's agenda, there's nothing of importance to report. But Thursday, wooweee, this was our one occasion to rise and shine. I wanted to be there and hopefully share, with Mayor King, his moment of glory.

I tried to disguise myself as a veteran regional newshound, holding a camera in one hand and a notepad plus three pens in the other. Ten steps inside the front door, however, the charade was uncovered. I walked straight into the ladies' washroom. Fortunately, (for me), the lone occupant was only combing her hair.

The regional council chambers can best be described as like a horse's hoof with the chairman at one end and the gallery at the other. The press are situated halfway between the spectators and the politicians, presumably to absorb the impact of eggs, tomatoes and other short-range missiles.

On entry, I fully expected some media 'clown' to holler out: "Hiya Jim, what brings you here?" or "long time no see", but none did. In fact, the press boys were unusually quiet, expecting, along with me, the biggest story of the year.

Five minutes after I'd settled into my seat, the 'troops' filed in—M.P. Tony Roman, with his conservative smile and liberal handshakes, (anything but independent); Markham's Carole Bell, fifty-

two going on twenty-nine; Metro Chairman Denis Flynn; Durham Chairman Gary Herrema and others.

Markham's Bud Bonner came over and shook my hand. "You're sure not particular about the company you keep," he said good naturedly with reference to the Economist and Sun's Don Atanasoff; seated at my right.

"It was the only place left," I replied. And that was a fact. The press desk and the public gallery were packed, including all members of Whitchurch-Stouffville Council; for one reason and one reason only. It was D-Day (Decision Day).

"There's your man," Don stated, showing an elbow between two previously fractured ribs. Eldred King had just walked in, taking up a position between Ron Moran of Markham and Lorna Jackson of Vaughan.

He was immaculate, a blue pin-striped suit contrasting his weather-tanned face and silver-grey hair.

After Eldred and his lone opponent, Allan Duffy of Richmond Hill had addressed the delegates, a show-of-hands vote was taken. It was King by 11-6.

The Council, in unison, rose and applauded.

I stood and applauded too. It was Whitchurch-Stouffville's finest hour.

**Editorials**

**Honor for our Town**

Thanks to Mayor Eldred King, the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville has, at long last, won a place of distinction within the Regional Municipality of York.

In addition to the honor bestowed on our municipality, Mayor King has also distinguished himself. And it couldn't happen to a more deserving individual.

As Chairman of York Region, Mr King, becomes the fourth person to hold this important post since the system was established, following in the footsteps of Garfield Wright, Bob Forhan and Anthony Roman. We're confident he's equal to the task.

Eldred King's success as a municipal administrator came by the sweat of his own brow. The leadership he provided here was admirable. And while sometimes criticized by this media for his ultra-conservative policies; his way, in almost every instance, proved the right way.

No one is irreplaceable. Eldred King would be the first to admit this. Still, it will be difficult to find his equal. His successor will undoubtedly admit this also. York Region's gain is Whitchurch-Stouffville's loss. However, there's some solace in the fact that our Town's a much better place for his being here.

**Preserve landmark**

The trustees in charge of the Altona Meeting House, the 132-year-old Altona Mennonite Church, are currently wondering what the future holds for this historic building. They are seeking the advice of the community; (if such, in reality, exists), on the following options: (1). Preserve the building on its present site. (2). Move it elsewhere (perhaps to a museum). (3). Demolish it. (4). Find a practical use for it at the present site.

Leaflets, requesting recommendations, were distributed following a service Sunday. It's a difficult decision, due to the fact many families, once directly associated with the church, are scattered hither and yon across the province. Still, an interest remains. This was proven by Sunday's attendance. The little country chapel, built in 1852, was almost filled.

Through the process of elimination, (dealing with each of the options), a decision can be reached. Our opinions follow.

No. 3, demolish it, is definitely out. Too many historic sites, (e.g. the Stouffville Railway Station), have been demolished already. No. 2, moving it, isn't practical. The cost would be considerable, more than a service club or the municipality would be prepared to pay. Besides, the Pickering Museum already has a church on its grounds. We see no reason for two. No. 4, find a practical use for it, fits the same category as No. 2. It isn't practical. The hamlet already has a Community Centre, that's little, if ever used. This brings us down to No. 1, preserve the building on its present site. This is our choice. The church and the cemetery should remain as one. The building

appears in reasonably good condition—immediate repairs should be minimal.

The property is not government-owned. It was excluded from airport expropriation. The trustees, working in close cooperation with Pickering Town Council, should ask that the site be assumed by the municipality—a memorial to "The Society of Mennists" who established it, one hundred and thirty-two years ago.

It was Mayor Jack Anderson who, at the opening of the Green River Community Centre, pointed with pride at Council's involvement in preserving landmarks in Pickering's rural area. No building fits this criteria more than the Altona Meeting House. Let this part of our rural heritage live on for, once gone, it's gone forever.

**Fair time!**

It's Markham Fair time, an event that's as much a part of this community, (Whitchurch-Stouffville), as the Town where it's located.

In recent years, with urban expansion to the south, the Fair's importance has increased. For it represents an intermingling of urban and rural interests, a 'common ground' for two completely diversified cultures. However, the fact remains, it's a meeting place for people; a 'people place'. Whether it's a relative across the province or a neighbor across the street, Markham Fair means 'togetherness'. Be a part of it.

**WINDOW ON WILDLIFE**

**Swans not so mute**

BY ART BRIGGS-JUDE



This is the time of year we notice huge white swans on local waters. The sight of these royal birds, often presented to municipalities as gifts, may look good on the surface. Lemonville, for example, has three of them cruising on a pond within that hamlet. Although these are privately owned, other centres have such birds as property of corporations.

In private ponds, public parks, and along the shorelines of the Great Lakes, there are about 100 of these majestic Mute Swans thriving in Ontario. Incidentally, the Toronto waterfront hosted half of this province's Mute swan population last winter. This, despite the general belief that most Mute swans are sedentary, or are taken into shelter for the cold weather. They come from places like Presquille, Oshawa, Long Point, and private sanctuaries across Ontario.

The largest and most noble of the waterfowl, swans are also the most familiar and long lived. Their association with man dates back at least to the Stone Age, where archaeologists have discovered tracings in the rocks pertaining to that period. Swans are not only prominent in Greek mythology, they have always been held in high esteem down through the ages. Because of their pure white plumage, they are looked on as 'sacred'. The so-called "swan song", a prolonged exhalation of air from the wind pipe of a dying swan that produces a series of musical notes, was also first mentioned by the ancient Greeks.

Mute swans were domesticated in the British Isles some time just previous to

the 12th century. As the exclusive property of the Crown, they could only be possessed and reared by persons holding a permit from the Royal Swan Master. Later, "royalties" were granted to corporate groups to own swans, which they marked with their registered symbols or "swan marks", on the upper bill. Thus, any unmarked Mute swans on the Thames River were the property of the reigning monarch. The annual and colorful ceremony marking the young swans was traditionally called "swan-upping". During this ritual, the adolescent birds were also pinioned, a painless process that renders them flightless.

Unfortunately, due in no small measure to protectionist groups, this pinioning process was largely discontinued some time after the Mute swans were brought to this continent in 1919. Today, local numbers of these swans have swelled and spread throughout the countryside. There are, for instance, about 100 birds in Vancouver, some 1500 in Michigan, and well over 4000 along the mid Atlantic coasts.

This ever increasing feral population of Mute swans is already causing great concern among ornithologists and waterfowl managers on both sides of the international border. These inspiring white aristocrats, traditionally protected for their beauty and aesthetic qualities, have long been favorites in zoos, parks, and waterfront properties. To label them aliens alongside the house sparrow, starling, carp and Dutch elm beetle, is not easy or readily accepted.

Yet today in several U.S. states, such as Michigan and New York, Mute swans are already beyond recall, driving native Whistling or Tundra swans off habitual feed beds. Their domineering nature also seriously limits other species of our native waterfowl from nesting nearby. At upwards of 30 pounds, the male Mute swan or cob, as they are rightly called, is a formidable opponent and a controlling competitor. Because of this aggressive nesting nature and its effect and threat to other forms of wildlife in the wetlands, Doctor Harry Lumden of the Ministry of Natural Resources, Maple Research Station, has been monitoring Mute swan behavior in Ontario for a number of years.

His findings, and subsequent study of our own native swan species, has led to the program of reintroducing Trumpeter swans into Ontario waters. The painstaking research by this dedicated scientist, uncovered enough evidence to convince even the most skeptical of Ontario's naturalists, that the Trumpeter swan did originally nest in this province and Quebec. In fact, since 1982, Trumpeter swan eggs brought in from Grand Prairie Alberta, have been placed under some brooding Mute swans. When this fostering project is perfected in a few years, the results will be two-fold. First the Mute swan population will be controlled, and second the Trumpeter swan will once again return to its rightful place as part of our native scene. A scene that not only includes remote wilderness lakes; but also waters closer to home.