

Markham volunteers honored for service to the community

By PAULA CROWELL
Staff Reporter

Volunteers have a thankless job, but once in awhile a token of appreciation comes their way.

Six Markham residents were recently honored with a Volunteer Service Award for their work with the Markham District Historical Society, a group that helps out the Markham Museum.

The awards, presented by the Ministry of Citizenship and Culture are given for five, 10 or 15 years of volunteer service.

Gordon Penny, one of the volunteers said, "It makes you feel as though you've accomplished something worthwhile."

Mr. Penny is a wood hobbyist and a director of the society's board of management. He has been involved with the museum since its earliest days and has watched it grow as more buildings were added and more artifacts collected.

"It's one of the finest museums in Ontario for the number of years and artifacts it has. Smaller museums come to us for information about what they can do," he said.

Mr. Penny received his gold pin — in the shape of a trillium with the number 15 in the centre — for 15 years of service, along with Levi Diller, Aileen Lunau, Archie Little, Simeon Reesor and Austin Reesor.

The volunteers spend a lot of their time preparing for the annual Founder's Day in June and the Heritage Festival in September. These are days when the public is especially invited to see the methods their

forefathers used to complete daily tasks. The volunteers demonstrate the old-fashioned way of doing things.

Some of their skills are rare, reminders of how things were done many years ago. Aileen Lunau quilts along with about 15 other women volunteers at the museum.

Archie Little makes butter and hand crafts wooden toys from designs invented long ago. Simeon Reesor carved a 100-link chain of wood in honor of the Town's centenary, and helps to identify antiques collected by the museum.

And just recently, Austin Reesor planted an apple orchard on the museum grounds which includes a variety of the kinds of apples grown in Markham's early days.



Three of the six winners of Volunteer Service Awards were in Orillia recently when the presentations were made. Austin Reesor, Eileen Lumeau and Gordon Penny were presented with the honor by former Ontario government minister Allan MacLean (second from right).

Museum needs volunteers

The Markham Museum's future is in danger if younger people in town don't take an interest in it.

This is the opinion of Gordon Penny, a director of the Markham District Historical Society and recipient of a volunteer service award.

"Volunteers are becoming less and less," he said, adding that public interest in the museum is waning.

"It's sad to see when we put on a day up there, we advertise it and except for the

schools, we don't get any response from the public."

Mr. Penny is one of six people with the historical society who were recognized for their volunteer work by the Ministry of Citizenship and Culture. An award reception, also attended by Stephanie Pyle of Information Markham, was held in Orillia in late April.

He is concerned because the people who work with the society are senior citizens. As they get older, the work becomes more difficult and there is no new blood to pick up where the original members leave off.

Mr. Penny said of the younger people in Markham, "Their interests are somewhere else. People don't support their home town. They go back to their old neighborhood for neighbors."

Col. Lewis Twambley, director of the museum agreed.

"We're trying to get people of a younger age out but people come and go so quickly in this area," he said.

"We would never be able to run a museum like this without a good, strong volunteer group to support it," he stressed.

The museum depends on the older volunteers as they have more experience and are more inclined to stay involved because they are permanently settled in Markham.

But as Anne Diller said of her husband Levi, "He's not as active as he was, and anyway it's nice for the younger ones to take over."

Do we have any takers?

Old trustees return to hospital board

The resignation of two members of the Markham Stouffville hospital board has allowed Lachlan Cattanach and Dr. Jack White to return as trustees.

Ken Deer, an incumbent member of the board, and Paul Tomory, who was elected in June, handed in their resignations at the Thursday night meeting of the board.

Board Chairman Mac Cosburn said he was unaware of their intention until the meeting. "Neither resignation was requested; both were offered voluntarily."

The board appointed Mr. Cattanach and Dr. White — experienced, long-time members who were defeated in the last election — as trustees until the annual meeting next summer.

Mr. Deer, a United Church minister, said, "I felt somebody better get off there to make room for them. I thought I'd better make a vacancy to accommodate people more valuable to the hospital than me."

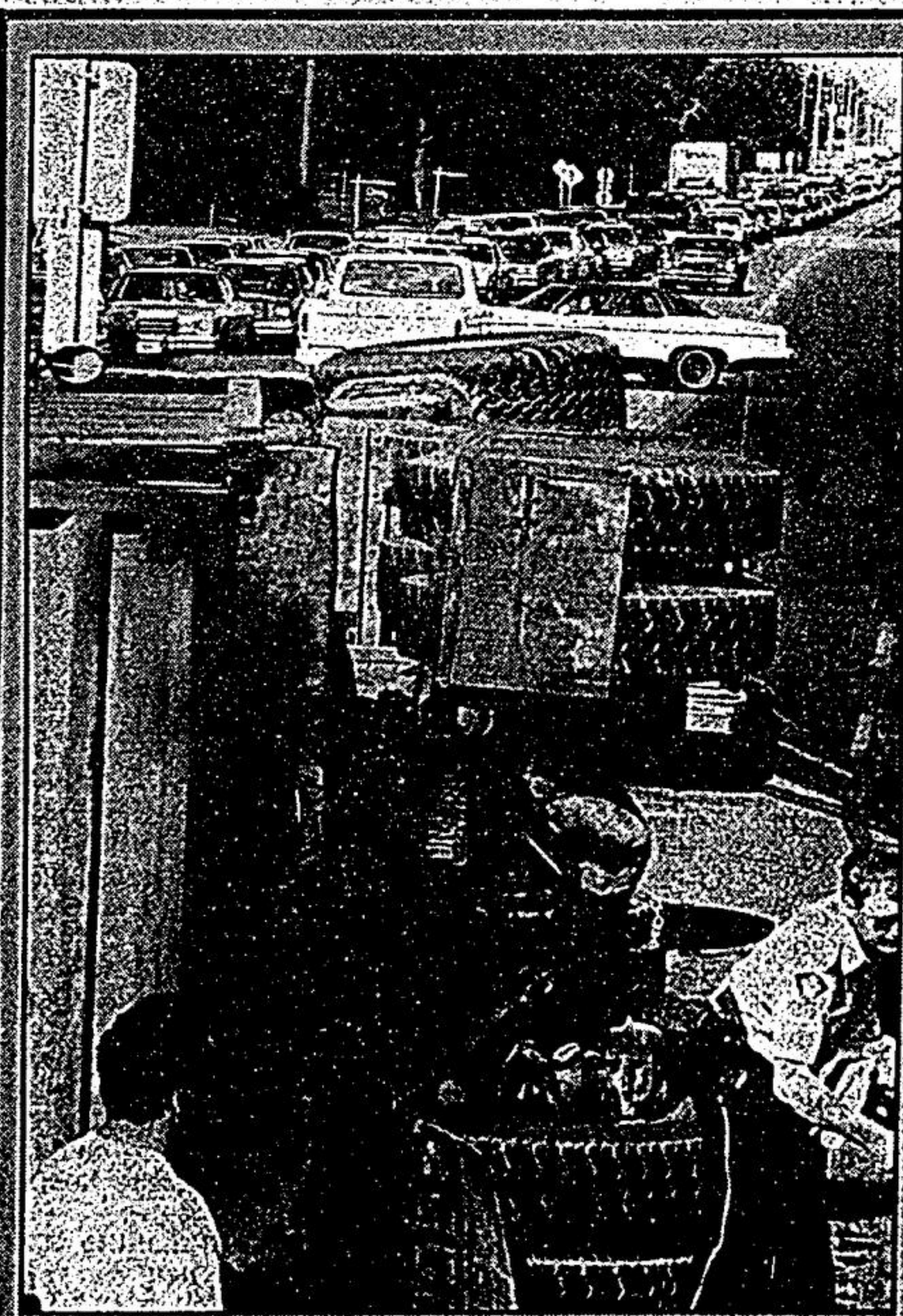
"We need them on that board," he said of Mr. Cattanach and Dr. White, "and no one else volunteered to resign."

Mr. Tomory resigned for much the same reasons. "I felt Mr. Cattanach should be on the board. He's a very valuable individual. And since I was new on the board I thought I should resign."

Mr. Tomory said he had been considering his resignation since the night of the election. Mr. Cosburn has asked him to serve on committees of the board and he has agreed.

It was also announced that former trustee Doug Meharg will work with the planning committee. He said earlier that he would not offer his services unless he could continue to be a hospital trustee.

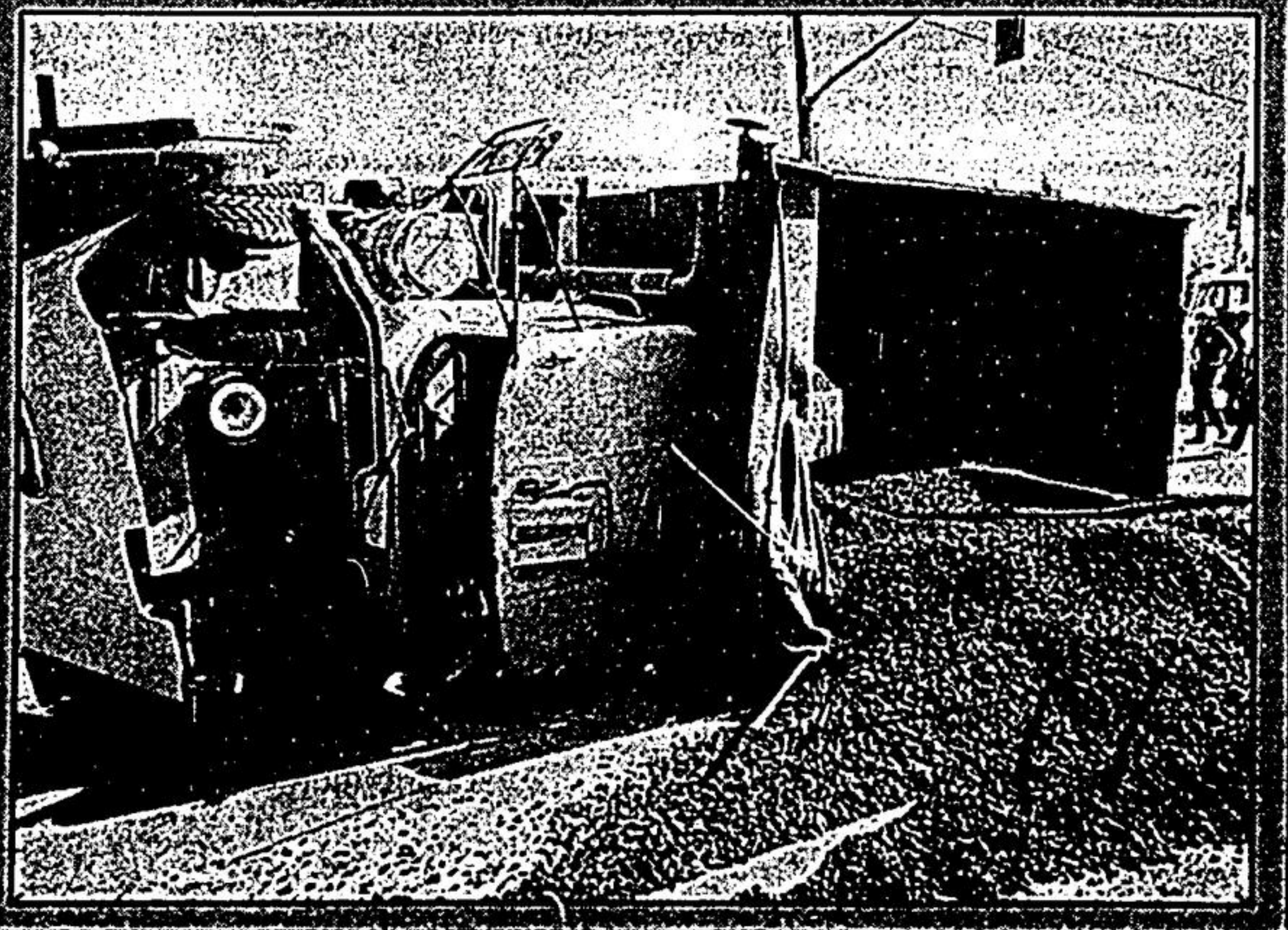
Mr. Cosburn said of the trustees, "I'm really pleased at their willingness to pull together."



Traffic snarled

Ontario Provincial Police had to close eastbound Hwy. 7 from Kennedy Rd. to the Unionville Bypass during Tuesday afternoon's rush hour when this truck driven by Salvatore Rabito of Markham, tipped over and spilled its load of asphalt. Markham Fire Department and Ministry of Transportation officials spent an hour cleaning up the eastbound lanes, getting the truck turned upright and diverting traffic. There were no injuries and no charges have been laid.

— Sjoerd Witteveen



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