

Editor's Mail

Outreach

Dear Jim:

Recently, there have been several Page 1 stories in the Toronto Star regarding the ever-increasing number of people dependent on food banks and clothing depots for survival.

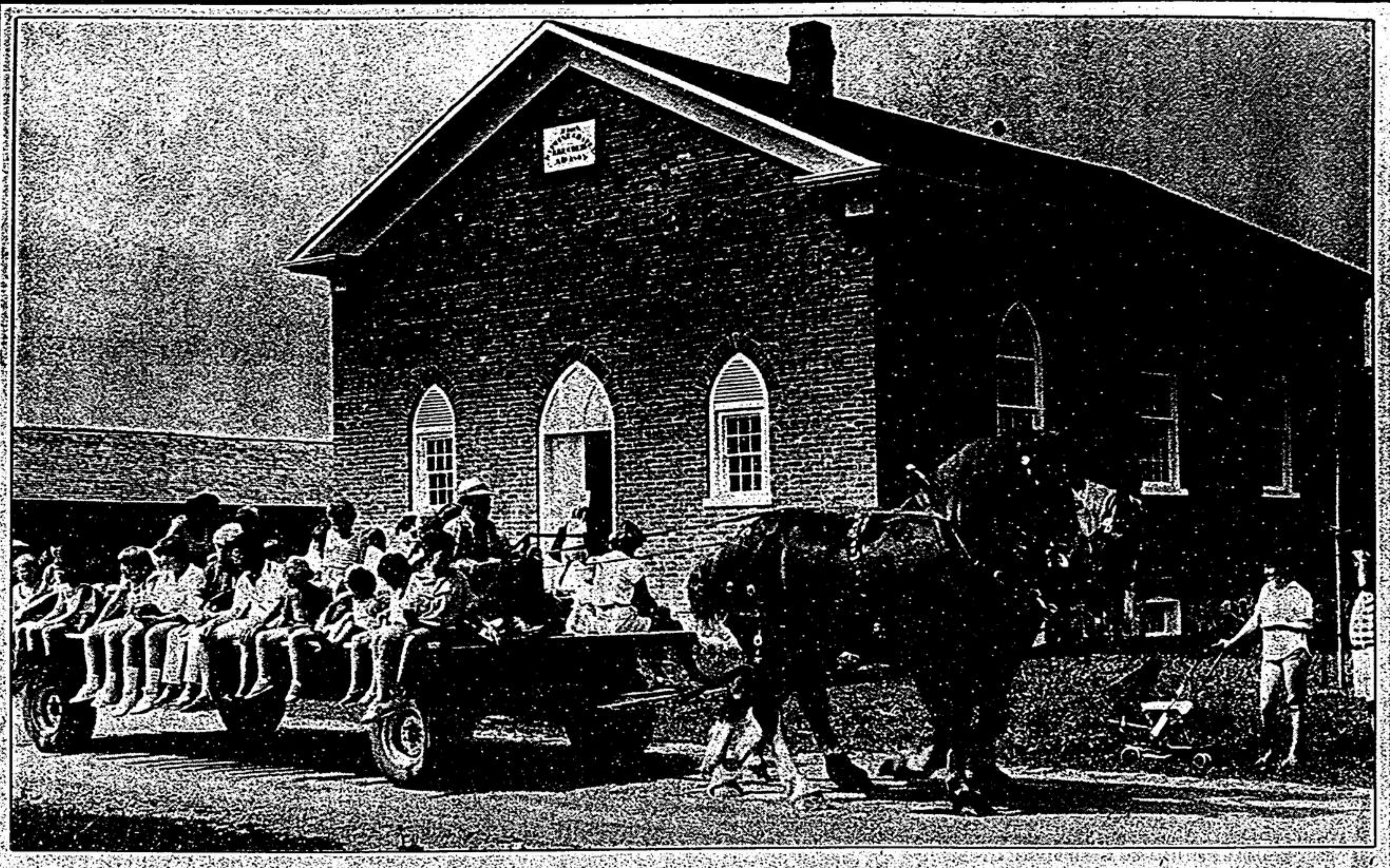
For nearly three years, many residents of the Stouffville area have been supporting the Ecumenical Outreach Committee in its effort to help the needy by contributing food, clothing and money.

Those who wish to join this program may do so by buying an extra non-perishable food item and placing it in the special boxes at the A & P and the I.G.A. (ask the cashier for location), or by leaving the food at Christ Church (Anglican), Sunset Boulevard, next to Orchard Park School, Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

Clean men's clothing may also be left at the church. Limited quantities of fresh produce can be accepted and anyone who would like to contribute produce is asked to call 640-4479 for information.

Cash donations may be made to the Deacon Al Fund, Box 339, Stouffville, and receipts for income tax will be issued upon request. During the period June 1 to Aug. 31, 1985, the sum of \$1,140.00 was distributed from this Fund, some in Toronto and some in Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Ecumenical Outreach Committee
Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville



Markham's Heritage Day linked the old with the new



The Tribune

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Editorial

Our proudest project

Whitchurch-Stouffville's Recreation Centre, phase one of the Town Recreation Complex, will officially open Thursday.

Ontario Premier David Peterson will do the honors.

It's a tremendous project, one we can point to with pride.

Yes, we did it ourselves. Certainly, there has been (and will be) assistance from outside government sources. But, for the most part, (for a change), we've accomplished something on our own hook, without the usual handout from a private entrepreneur (Art Latham), to which we'd become accustomed.

The Centre has had, and still has its critics. In a project of such size and cost, this was to be expected. Certainly, when we continue to debate such minor issues as the relocation of downtown pedestrian traffic lights and the repainting of the B.I.A. fire hydrants, the construction of a \$2.3 million edifice such as a new Rec. Centre, was sure to ruffle a few feathers. At this point, we trust the agers will bury their collective hatchets (at least on Thursday evening), and come out and see the result of this magnificent Town undertaking.

This is not just another hockey rink. The facility will be the source of varied social and recreational activities, something this municipality has needed for years. The possibilities are endless and we have the confidence in the present Parks and Recreation Department to predict ongoing programs that will capture the enthusiasm of all ages.

All is not finished, not even in Phase I. In order to keep costs down to an acceptable level, Council had to delay completion of certain items. These will be finished as funds become available.

Many groups and individuals are deserving of praise and appreciation. Space will not permit acknowledgement of all. We wish to single out only two former Mayor Eldred King and members of the 1983-1985 Whitchurch-Stouffville Council who actually put the show on the road, and the Whitchurch-Stouffville Co-ordinating Committee through whose endeavors, this dream has become a reality.

Yes, it's a project we all can point to with pride. Display that pride at Thursday's celebration. It'll be a night to remember.

Ban smoking at S.D.S.S.

For several years, a situation at Stouffville Dist. Secondary School has been a source of irritation to this newspaper and many parents.

At various times during the day, a handful of students would congregate on the road, puffing on cigarettes. The group became known as "The Smokers' Circle."

While no major crime, it made the school look bad. Citizens undoubtedly wondered who, if anyone, was in control. In truth, no one was in control, for the road, then, was a public highway.

That has changed. This section of Edward Street is now school property and the principal has total jurisdiction over what goes on in this area.

And it hasn't taken him long to exercise his authority.

The Smokers' Circle there is no more. However, this doesn't mean there's no more smoking at S.D.S.S. The "ring" has simply drifted from one location to another. The smokers will congregate, (on a trial basis), to the north of the cafeteria, outside the building, but on school property.

From a visual standpoint, we applaud the move, out of sight, out of mind. We feel, however, the edict didn't go far enough. We contend there should be no smoking ANYWHERE at Stouffville High.

The habit is a definite health risk. By allowing it, the school is condoning it.

ROAMING AROUND

An abused wife speaks out

BY JIM THOMAS



Did you beat your wife today? Many husbands will smile, so will many wives. Wife abuse, to them, is not a problem.

For others, thousands of others, the question will prick their conscience. They won't smile, neither will their wives. For them, wife abuse is a problem, although some husbands won't admit it. It's a problem in Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Unfortunately, few wives talk about it. It's embarrassing, humiliating, they try to keep it quiet, sweep it under the rug. But not Donna. She wants the world to know what she endured, and she's starting right here in Stouffville.

Would you believe that in Metro Toronto, there were 50,000 REPORTED wife beatings last year? And probably just as many not reported, maybe twice as many.

Although Donna has no statistics for our Town, she's not naive enough to believe "quiet little Stouffville" is immune to this sort of thing, and neither am I. I know of cases, and so does she.

Her own story is devastating.

Donna was sixteen when she met a man who, by her own admission, "swept me off my feet." Two years later, they were married.

At first, the incidents seemed minor. He would light his cigarette, then touch the hot end of the match to her hand. Despite protests, this continued. He considered it a joke, Donna said.

About a year after the birth of their daughter, (now nine), the abuse, both verbal, physical and sexual, worsened. On the advice of a neighbor, Donna made an appointment with a counsellor at the Markham Family Life Centre. They both attended and it helped. However, six months later, the situation deteriorated further.

"I planned to kill myself—to jump off a bridge," Donna said. But she didn't. Instead, she prayed. "I was given the strength to continue," she says, "for my daughter's sake and eventually mine."

The straw that broke the camel's back, says Donna, was the evening she returned from work and observed a red welt on her daughter's back. Questioning her husband about it, he admitted he'd kicked her.

That was too much. They separated and are now divorced.

Donna describes the past 3 1/2 years as a struggle, both financially and emotionally. She appreciates the support she's received from her church and her friends.

"My faith in the Almighty God, in life itself, has helped me through. I now look forward to tomorrow and will face whatever it brings, a little stronger and a little wiser."

While knowledge of wife abuse is more public today, such acts of violence date back to 2500 B.C., Donna explains.

"Women were considered chattels of their husbands and treated accordingly."

For some, this opinion still holds. Here are the facts:

MARITAL STATUS: 62.3% of all abused women are legally married; 24.2% are living common-law; the remainder are single, separated or divorced. Fifty-five percent of their husbands are steadily employed; 34% have a criminal record; 50% were themselves beaten as children. Eighty percent of all battered wives are beaten during pregnancies. Middle class husbands are more prone to physical assault than the poor. Habitual wife-beaters are said to be doctors, lawyers and business executives.

MEDICAL RESPONSE: Many physi-

cians, says Donna, characterize wife battering as a "psychic problem of the woman." She's either given tranquilizers or is referred to a psychiatrist.

POLICE RESPONSE: Although police can charge the husband with assault, this often worsens rather than improves the situation, Donna explains. "The husband becomes angry and resumes beating his wife when he returns." Also, many police officers tend to side with the husband, sharing the belief that a man's home is his castle. This leaves the wife with feelings of isolation and helplessness.

Donna is highly critical of pornography. Explicit photos and films, she says, leave some men with the idea that violence against women is normal and acceptable. Pornographic literature and movies have become more widely available in Canada in recent years, she points out.

SANCTITY OF FAMILY: Most social workers, says Donna, are trained to respect the sanctity of the family and encourage reconciliation.

She agrees with this, to a point. "My daughter kept me there. I feared for her," she said. "I kept hoping things would change. These are traps into which wives fall. They're afraid of what may happen when they leave, so they stay."

BAND-AID TREATMENT: Most government assistance programs are short-term, says Donna. She calls it "a pacification ploy to gain the women's vote." Donna urges long-term housing projects, re-training programs, subsidized daycare facilities, improved marriage preparation and parenting courses, drop-in centres and family health clinics.

If Donna had the last eleven years of her life to live over, she'd undoubtedly do many things differently. Right now, she's anxious to use past experiences to assist others facing similar problems.

Members of organizations wishing to hear Donna's story first-hand, can contact her at 640-5765.

Abused wives in Whitchurch-Stouffville?

I'd like to think it isn't so. But it is, another tragedy in our time.

Amazing

Dear Editor:

I was intrigued by the story concerning the Markham area girl struck by lightning while employed at a provincial camp site in Northern Ontario.

The fact she survived is indeed a story for Ripley's Believe It or Not. The fact she survived with only a couple of burns and a shattered ear drum is even more amazing. She is certainly the luckiest girl alive!

Sincerely,
 Cecile Harpur
 Hemlock Drive,
 Stouffville



This is a scene typical of the annual Quilt Auction at Black Creek Pioneer Village, the event organized by the Mennonite community, will be held Sat., Sept. 21 beginning at 12:30 p.m. Auctioneers are Arnold Wolton, (foreground), of Bowmanville and Frank Bennett, (background), of R.R. 1, Unionville. The quilt auction usually raises in excess of \$15,000 with over-all proceeds surpassing \$30,000. Funds are utilized by the Mennonite Central Committee for world relief.

Editor's Mail Festival

The autumn festival at Black Creek Pioneer Village isn't hosted by the Mennonite community. The festival itself was initiated almost 30 years ago. The Mennonites became a part of it some time later, a very important part.

The fact these people raise up to \$35,000 for world relief is almost unbelievable. The sale of home-made quilts alone brings in over \$15,000.

Through The Tribune, I'd like to emphasize the fact the Festival is Sat., Sept. 21. I'd like it known too that the Mennonite contribution is all volunteer.

Those interested in quilts, (or merely attending a quilt auction), should be on the grounds by 12:30 p.m. The quilt sale is an education in itself.

Next to Markham Fair, it's the most enjoyable fall event in the district.

But your readers shouldn't take my word for it. They should come and see for themselves. Thousands do every year and they still keep coming back.

Black Creek Pioneer Village is located on the south-east corner of Jane Street and Steeles Avenue.

Sincerely,
 Arnold Hunter
 R.R. 1, Unionville