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New development highlights Markham's past

By IAN BAILEY

Although it features 21 new stores, the \$8 million Markham Village Lanes development on Main St. is tied to Markham's past.

The melding of the past and the present was accomplished by incorporating two historic buildings into the new 60,000 sq. ft. site while preserving a third by dismantling and sending it to the Markham Museum.

When the Lanes were officially opened on Saturday afternoon, a representative of one of those homes was in attendance. Fergus MacDonald, 71, who grew up in MacDonald House, a 98-year-old home that has been converted into a restaurant called Lindner's, cut the ribbon opening the mall. Mr. MacDonald said he is delighted with the fact that a building he calls "the old homestead" has found a modern use.

"It's excellent," said Mr. MacDonald about the renovation of MacDonald House, where he lived between 1919 and 1932.

"There's enough there (of the original home) and they've added to it. They've preserved the exterior and changed it on the inside for building codes," he said.

"When they proposed the project, I'd been away from it long enough so that it didn't bother me," Mr. MacDonald continued. "But my sister would have hollared about it," he added with a laugh.

Mr. MacDonald's sister, Dr. Innes MacDonald, used the house as her medical office starting in 1927. She succeeded her father, Dr. J. A. MacDonald, who used the home for his office for over 30 years.

While the MacDonald House became a restaurant, the nearby William Browning House, constructed in 1845, has become an ice cream parlor called Flavors. Previously, the home housed such businesses as a watch repair shop and a telegraph office.

A third historical building, that once stood on the acreage, was not incorporated into the develop-

ment. Instead, the 120-year-old Wilson General Store was dismantled and moved to the Markham Museum for reconstruction in January.

At the Saturday afternoon ceremony, the history of the homes was brought to life by members of the Markham Little Theatre who portrayed William Browning, Henry Wilson and Dr. J. A. MacDonald.

The developer of Markham Village Lanes, Manny Elkind of Sherwood Lanes Development Incorporated, describes his project as a community mall with "a feeling for the character and history of Markham."

Elkind is predicting success for his project thanks to a mix of tenants who give the mall a character distinct from large shopping centres.

"I think that the major retail malls will always be successful, but Markham Village Lanes has an intimacy to attract people who don't want to go to the big malls

and be jostled," he said.

The mall features everything from a specialty lingerie shop to a chocolate shop that has a particular offering coated with 24-karat gold.

Aside from the tenant mix, Mr. Elkind predicts that parking spaces for nearly 200 cars behind the mall plus an atmosphere he calls "villagey" will help ensure success.

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The \$8 million Markham Village Lanes officially opened on Saturday. The 60,000 sq. ft. development that houses 21 new stores, saw partners David Warsh (left) and Manny Elkind escort Markham Mayor Carole Bell on a guided tour. — Bill Lanning

Home of the Week

This store front ranch-bungalow located on Kennedy Rd. near 14th Ave. in Unionville has an asking price of \$210,500. The home has triple-glazed windows, extra insulation, and a 24-foot living room with beamed ceiling and heatlator fire place (bottom right). There are three bedrooms, three bathrooms, a recreation room with a fireplace, bar, wine cellar, sauna and extra shower. Outside there is a large garden complete with 500 spring bulbs and 13 fruit trees, an inground pool with change house and a greenhouse. The kitchen (at left) has all of the appliances included. The home is listed by Family Trust, Markham, and the agent is Jack Brooks. He can be reached at 294-0471. There is also an open house, from 2 to 4 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 15.

