

Editor's Mail

Sets record straight

RE OLD ARENA

Dear Editor:
To set the record straight, Council is running the town as the electorate voted.

Many in this town are very attached to the old arena.

Many in this town give constructive ideas, not destructive criticism.

The old arena is a very large structure. It may well be saved for some purpose not in competition with our new complex.

You, sir, give up too easily!

There are many sporting activities we could offer in this respect. We have many enterprising entrepreneurs in this town. You have only to look around to realize this. The service clubs, the industrial and commercial sector, are all alive and well! Many winners of awards are known across this Province. They make profits. They invest those profits. Hopefully, in a successful enterprise in our town.

If we ignore the people who wish to comment on projects that change the nature of this town, we would indeed be remiss! If we try and nothing suitable is brought forward, bringing down the "ball and hammer" is easy.

Tough decisions is what this job is all about! This town and its assets belong to all, NOT JUST Council.

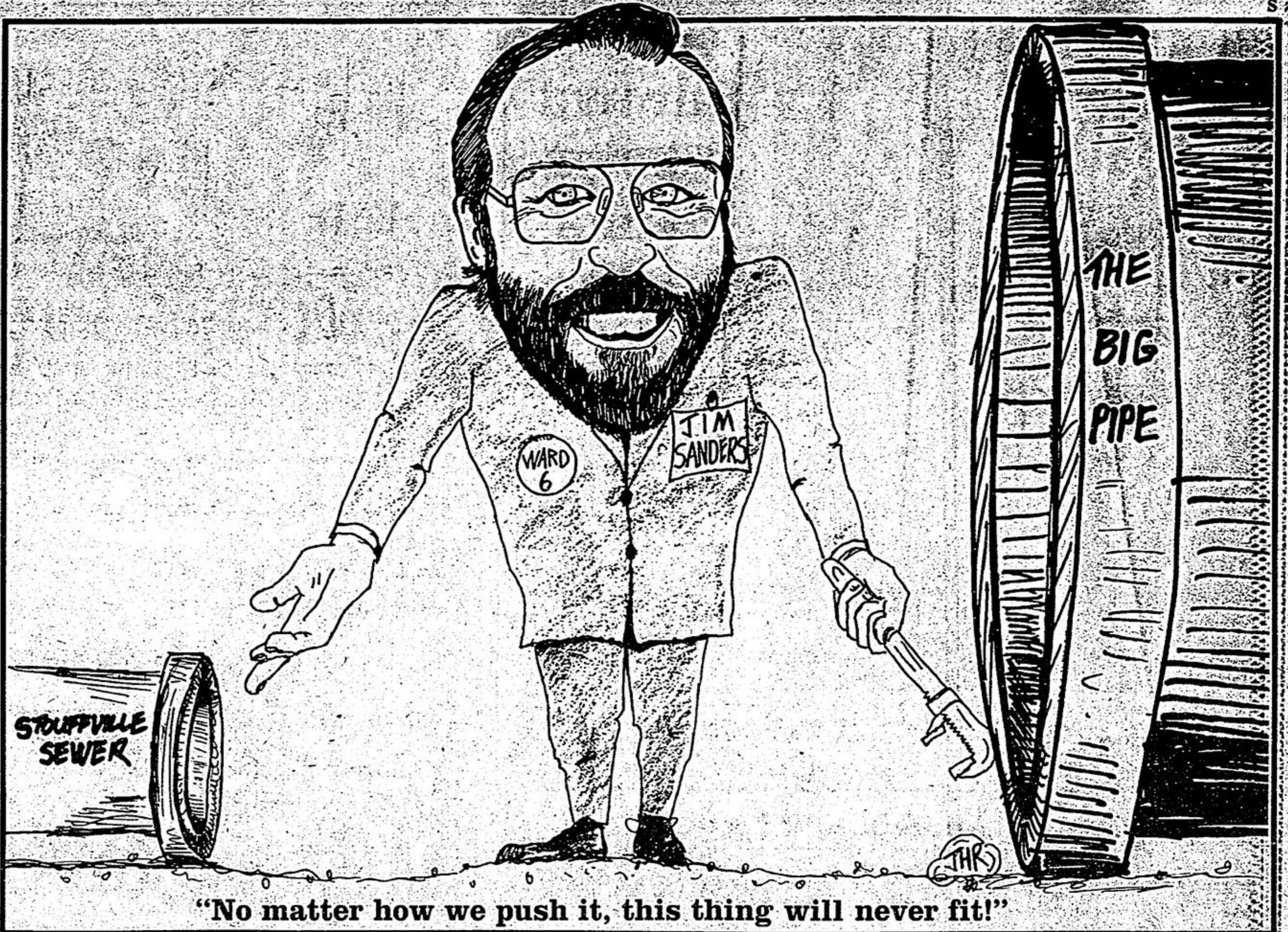
Where there's life, there's hope. Never let it be said we didn't ask.

Sincerely,

Fran Sainsbury,

Mayor,

Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville



"No matter how we push it, this thing will never fit!"

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ON THE LIGHTER SIDE
Sexist words abound
BY ERKI POHJOLAINEN



In recent years, countless attempts have been made to eliminate gender from job titles and to some extent, it's been worth the effort.

But in certain instances, using non-sexist language is simply confusing and horrifying. Let me explain.

When municipalities changed the titles of their elected representatives from "aldermen" to "councillors", it was well accepted by the constituents. This substitution was one that worked. It removed the presupposition that one is a man if that one is in local government.

For a time, things went along smoothly with that change, but then someone had another great idea: "Let's not have 'chairmen' any more. Let's instead have 'chairpersons'." This too was generally well accepted. But it marked the beginning of the confusion.

"So," you ask, "what's this scribbling going on about? Why shouldn't man be removed from the title since many women occupy such positions?"

Well, here's the problem. If the language is to be made completely non-sexist, we'll have to work hard to achieve it.

Simply changing 'man' to 'son,' as in chairman to chairperson, doesn't solve anything. Eventually, these types of changes will have to be worked out again.

Simply changing words ending with man to those ending with son won't be enough. More creative revisions will have to be invented.

Once that's done, we won't be human any more. The word human has in it, man. So does woman and many others.

Will these words become obsolete? Perhaps they'll be corrected by simply changing the spelling, or misspelling them.

Whoops, misspelling is sexist too. Why should the word connote the female gender. Sorry, female will also have to go. It contains male.

This is just the tip of the iceberg. The confusion that will result when sex is removed from common terms will mangle (another sexist word to be axed) the language.

No longer will we be able to call anyone a lady. The word lad, in lady, is a reference to masculinity.

After all the terms with lad, miss, him, her, she, he and so on are removed, what then? Will society begin to stop using words that sound sexist even if they're spelled slightly differently?

For example, will boisterous sound too much like boy-sterous to be an acceptable word?

And once all these sound-a-like words are eliminated, what then? Certainly the crusade will have found more words to remove from the language.

Perhaps the next phase would include censoring words that contain reference to gender from all species of life. Words such as bulldozers, sounding so masculine, would certainly be dropped.

Perhaps this will benefit future generations, several centuries from now. Children of the year 2186 will only have to learn three-quarters the language we were taught, making it possible to grasp it much faster. And of course, sexism will be at an end.

After the language is changed, people will benefit. But for our generation, this is a Herculean mandate.

Editorials

Options for old arena

Stouffville has its very own Dome Stadium dilemma — the Old Arena. While Toronto politicians, breweries, and other special interest groups argue over a recreation complex that hasn't even been built, Stouffville worries about one that has existed for many years. What do we do with the Old Arena now that a sports progeny — the Rec Centre — and its fresh concrete has dried? Should we demolish the old mare across from Latcham Hall? Should we renovate the historic rink and give it life again? Should we lease it off to some business group and let them do what they want with it? Should we save the front portion of the building for summer sports facilities like changerooms, washrooms, and a "snackbar"?

The Town assigned a task force to investigate the possibilities and come up with an answer. The people of Stouffville, especially the elder folks and sports groups, are anxious and skeptical about the final recommendation.

Surprisingly, only 25 people attended a meeting at Latcham Hall, March 5, to discuss the fate of the Old Arena. More questions with few answers came out of it. A council meeting last night was to decide if the task force is ready to make a decision or if it needs to examine more proposals.

A few private enterprise schemes were left sealed in their envelopes at the public

meeting, March 5. Why weren't they disclosed? Could one of those unseen designs be the fate of the Old Arena? As of last night, maybe those envelopes won't have to be opened. Stay tuned.

By ART BRIGGS-JUDE

While a new fall of snow excites skiers, snowmobilers and tobogganists, I appreciate it for a different reason. Even when it builds up to depths requiring the use of snowshoes I like the fresh white covering. For this is the time and condition that scripts the lives of the wildlife around us.

These footmark trails and other signs in the snow are a wonderful record of a creature's activities, needing only the patience and the persistence of the observer to unravel the puzzle. And an inch of fresh snow just before midnight lays the groundwork for the best stories of them all.

Like some of the other senses civilization has dulled within us, the art of tracking and reading nature's indicators has largely been lost. No longer dependent on tracking an animal as a source of

food, we seldom give wildlife prints in the snow a second glance.

Only about half the hunters and naturalists I know can decipher the riddles left in the winter landscape by the various wild inhabitants. The rest seem content to locate the actual birds and animals by sight. Yet successful trackers, such as our native people and those who followed in their footsteps, know the surest method of locating the creature itself is by following and correctly reading its fresh trail.

Since the trail is such a revealing and rewarding part of the winterland, I believe we miss a great deal by not taking the time to look closely at the various tracks we see. Of course the first lesson in track reading is identification.

While no substitute for the outdoor classroom, 'Peterson's Field Guide to Animal Tracks' and 'Animal Tracks and

Hunter Signs', by Ernest Thompson Seton, are two reasonably priced books that will help with your home studies. Armed with such aids and encouraged by your own observations and experiences, you will soon discover the wealth of information a set of animal tracks contain.

Increased observation and study will make you even more proficient. You will quickly notice that even the same species of squirrel in your back yard often have slight differences in their footprints.

Keeping these track variances in mind when you go for a ramble further afield and applying it to larger mammals such as deer, it is possible to distinguish between the footprints of fawns, bucks and does. The size difference in fox tracks gives a clue to the animal's sex. As January signals the start of the mating sea-

son you will notice an increasing number of fox tracks in pairs. This is a good time to check these parallel sets of prints and note the difference in size between male and female.

Other indicators of the male sex, especially in fox and coyote tracks, are the scent posts they frequently use. These posts are tufts of grass, stumps or hummocks above the snow, where the male lifts its leg in the same manner as your male dog.

Because a track in the snow is like a book, in that it tells a story, it's not enough to give it a casual glance to find out what has transpired. Following a fresh track not only arouses your curiosity, but also opens up new chapters in the life of the creature that made it. Even if the track is old, and if you have the time and inclination to persist, it'll eventually lead to a fresh one.

One of the first lessons in tracking is to keep to one side of the tracks you're following. Some animals, especially rabbits and fox, when pursued are masters at back-tracking — a trick wherein they double back on their same trail stepping carefully into their previous marks. Because of this, or the sudden joining of two tracks, the novice tracker will be at a loss as to which course the animal took if he tramples the original footprints.

Another helpful hint when tracking animals, one that often produces the actual sighting of the print-maker, is to skirt around heavy brush or cover rather than try to struggle through it. With practice you will soon be able to pick up the same set of tracks you were following when they appear on the other side of the tangle.

However, while it's impossible to describe the wealth of information tracks in the snow provide, it's sufficient to say the size, age, mood, activity and habits of the animal are often revealed.

Sometimes the most common creatures furnish the most memorable tales. Mouse marks ending in feathered imprints show in detail how a hawk caught a meal. A set of rabbit tracks running wildly, overlaid with those of a coyote leading to a scuffed and crimsoned patch in the snow needs no further explanation.

There are a hundred such stories written every night. The interesting hobby of track watching doesn't require expensive equipment, just the outdoors and a fall of new snow. Try it.

Smile of the week

Dear Mr Thomas:

When space permits, I'd like you to include this little memory in your "Smile of the Week."

At our country schoolhouse, the heating system was a pot-bellied stove with pipes extending the length of the classroom.

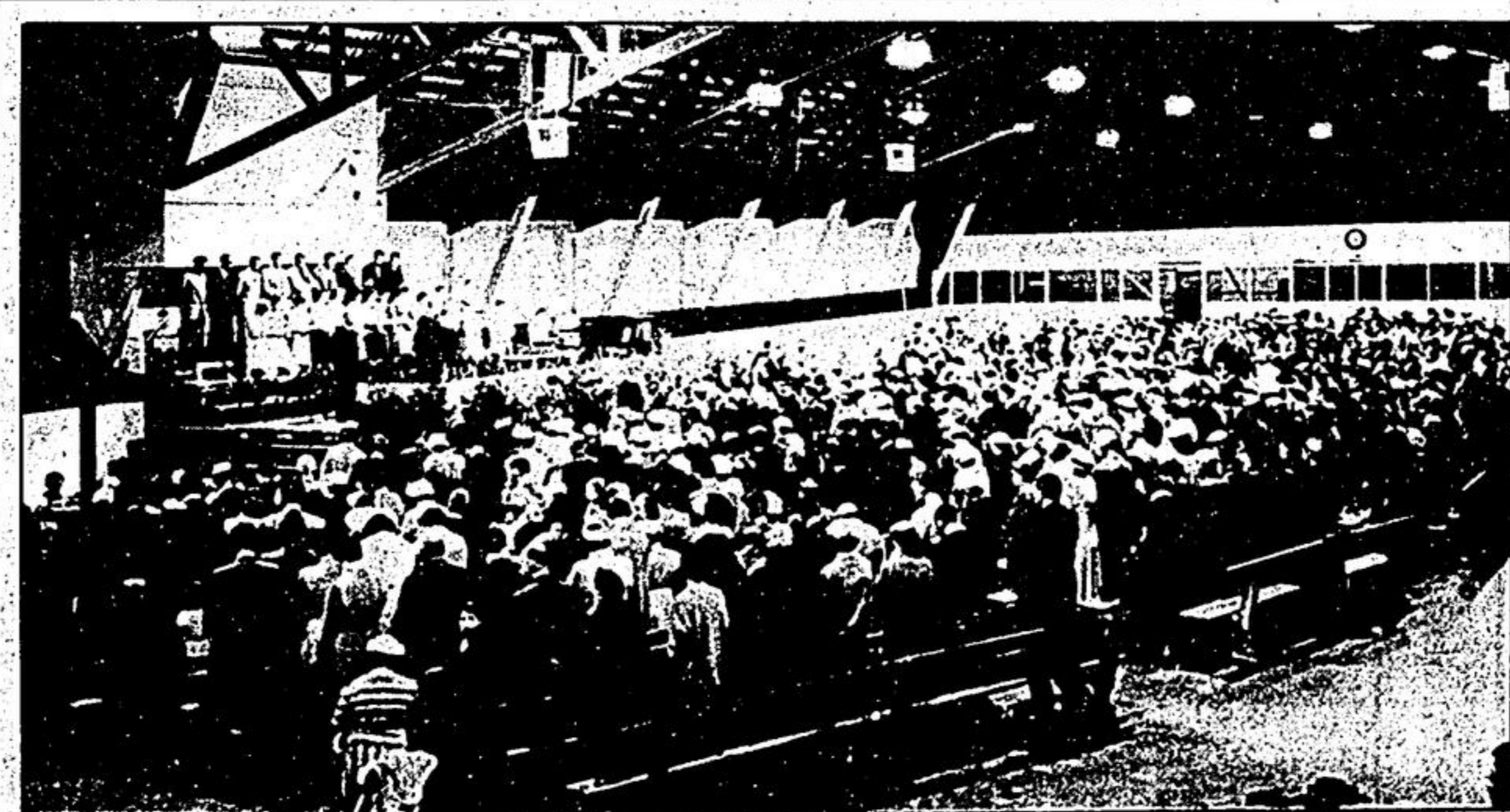
The temperature was never the same, either too hot or too cold. It's a wonder we all didn't succumb to heat stroke or pneumonia.

One day, several of we older boys climbed up on the roof and put a 'cap' on the chimney. We then placed a brick on top of the cap.

When classes resumed at 1 p.m., the teacher tossed in several large sticks of wood and got the fire going real good. That's when the smoke began belching back. In minutes the whole building was filled, forcing everyone outside.

The teacher, of course didn't know the cause and we weren't about to tell. We were given a half-day holiday but even the next morning the tell-tale sign of our mischievous deed remained, hanging like a blue fog from the ceiling.

Sincerely,
Gordon Fitzsimmons,
R.R. 1, Pickering



Arena worship services attracted large audiences

Back in the 60's, community worship services were held in the Stouffville Arena, attracting large congregations. The majority of Stouffville and area churches

were involved. Size of the audience attending one of these gatherings is indicated by this photo taken in 1969. — Jim Thomas