

Sculptures win awards

STOUFFVILLE — Michael Redquest's clay sculpture, entitled "Micro Chip Guy," placed third in the Juried Sculpture Exhibition sponsored by Cable Tech Company Limited of Stouffville and held at Latham Gallery.

Mr. Redquest was the only successful award winner from Stouffville. Presentations were made Thursday by Seigfried Reimer, President of Cable Tech.

Twenty-five entries were received.

Others honored were:

BEST IN SHOW — a carved yellow birch by Dorsey James of Scarborough.

SECOND — a plaster sculpture by Marlene Hilton-Moore of Barrie.

HON. MENTION — a cast resin sculpture by Ted Fullerton of Tottenham and a mixed media sculpture by Laurel Hassell of Toronto.

An honor to give and to receive



Cub members from Ballantrae attended a meeting of Whitchurch-Stouffville Council, April 22 and were cordially received by Mayor Fran Sainsbury. Pre-

sentations were made to each of the boys before leaving. And who knows? Out of this number may come a future mayor of the town. —Chris Shanahan

Ruth (Clarke) Roberts Memories of a country girl

Ruth (Clarke) Roberts grew up on the Sixth Line, (Kennedy Road), in the former Twp. of Whitchurch. She attended Hillcrest Public School, S.S. No. 8. Recently, a newsletter published by Mountainview Baptist Church of Georgetown, (Halton Hills), carried the following story, written by Mrs. Roberts under the heading "Memories Of A Country Girl." It reads:

The world has changed so much in the last 50 years or more that it is worth recording some of the changes I have experienced since I was a child growing up on the farm. I'm sure there will be others who can identify with some of these or similar experiences from their own past.

Our family consisted of seven children — four boys and three girls — which would be a rarity in today's society. As well, our grandfather lived with us till he was 87.

Granddaddy had a wealth of stories from pioneer days to tell of when his parents came over on a sailing ship from Ireland in the 1840's taking seven weeks to cross. They settled on a farm north of Toronto, cleared the land and built a log house. Later on, the year my Dad was born, they built the large white frame house which was our home.

There were two full-sized verandahs going around two sides of the house. We had a woodshed on the back which was essential as we burned wood both in our cookstove and furnace. We had soft water in the house from a cistern but our drinking water was from a pump outside. Our food supplies were kept in the pantry off the kitchen — we got our tea twice a year and our flour in 100 lb. bags. Perishables were kept in the cellar, which was always cool. The cellar was white-washed in the spring and smelled so fresh and clean after that. We had no refrigeration of course, and not even ice as some did.

We had a full house, even though it was a large one. There were hired men to feed as well as a hired girl to help in the house. There would be about 12 of us for meals each day and of course, if company came, our dining-room table was just extended to make room for more. This has carried over to the present day for me and I always liked to have plenty on hand "just in case". If salesmen were passing through at meal-time my grandfather always invited them in for a meal. They got so that they would time it to be there at noon. My mother didn't appreciate this very much.

Summers were spent picking fruit and preserving it for the winter months, besides making a variety of pickles. Baking pies and other goodies was a weekly chore. Threshing and corn cutting times were especially busy. The neighbors would get together and help each other and you could have from 12 to 17 men to feed, usually for two or three days.

The men would come in after washing up in a large tub outside as they would be black from the dust. They would sit down at the table laden with our best efforts in culinary endeavor and in half an hour it would seem as if the locusts had gone through and eaten everything in sight. This would be repeated at the next meal. There was a camaraderie in those days among the neighbors that is often lacking in our affluent society today.

We attended a one-room school house about a mile down the road where all eight grades were taught. In those days, you started in Primer and went up through Junior and Senior classes to Fourth Class. Then you tried your "Entrance". This was a memorable if somewhat awesome experience. The teacher spent a lot of time with the Entrance Class getting them prepared and if you passed you could go on to High School seven miles away. It always seemed as if the winters were more severe then and I can remember on really cold days sitting around the wood stove in the centre of the school to keep warm. The walks to and from school were real adventures. Everyone took their lunch, including the teacher who boarded locally.

Every spring, the first Friday in May was Arbor Day (weather permitting). This was always looked forward to with great anticipation. The girls' job was to clean the inside of the school while the boys raked and tidied outside. Then we got the afternoon off which was a great incentive to work hard and finish on time.

We had no hydro in our home and no indoor plumbing until I was grown up. The radio I first remember had a large horn for a speaker. At 7 p.m., every evening for years, we listened to Amos 'n' Andy, Fibber McGee, and Molly and dad always had the news on.

My grandfather used to make apple butter in a large black iron kettle outside over a fire. Our neighbors had a sugar bush bordering our farm and tapped trees on a large scale. We would often go and sample the sweet sap in the process of becoming syrup. The heavenly smell that greeted us when we entered the sugar shack was overwhelming and one I still remember with nostalgia. They always had a sugaring-off night and invited the neighbors. You put the boiled-down syrup on the snow and it hardened to form taffy.

It was a busy life and unsophisticated. We felt rather superior to the "city slickers" who would come out sometimes and show off. But they probably thought we were "country bumpkins" and, looking back, I suppose we were rather sheltered and unworlly.

During the Depression, being on the farm, we always had lots to eat but were glad to accept hand-me-down clothes from our city cousins. Everyone was in the same boat so it didn't bother us not to have a new wardrobe every season. Money was scarce but we were rich in the love of our parents and family as well as the heritage they gave us.

We attended a little Baptist church three miles away and seldom missed a Sunday. Our family filled a whole row. We made lasting friendships there and often after church we would be invited home for dinner (before there were seven of us) or we would have a family at our place for a meal. There would be singing at the piano and often lively discussions on spiritual subjects. At times the discussion got a bit heavy and opinions were strongly held.

Our Young Peoples Group was a strong and binding influence on us in our teen years. We met on Sunday evenings and were in charge of the service. The older people came to the meetings and were an encouragement to us. I feel a great debt of gratitude especially to an elderly saint of the church who built us up and encouraged us in the faith, as did many others. There was no barrier between the generations back then. We had socials in the homes with games or skating parties on the pond. We never seemed to lack for entertainment so we didn't feel tempted to draw away from the group and seek thrills or companions that were less wholesome. Saturday nights we were encouraged to get to bed in good time because Sunday mornings were for Sunday school and church. We didn't feel pressured into going, it was just a natural part of life. We were conscious at an early age of God as a strong influence on our lives. I realize how fortunate I am to have had parents who gave me a good grounding and exemplified a faith that worked.

I can't say I would like to go back to those days but there was something about the fact that our relationship with other people meant more to us than the lack of material things. On the whole it was a resourceful and uncomplicated life with the satisfaction of accomplishment and the compensation of living close to nature. Time has a way of erasing the frustrations and discouragements. We had our joys and our sorrows as most people do but we had the support and ties of a Christian family as well as the love of a God who cares both of which have stood us in good stead through the years and for which I will be forever grateful.



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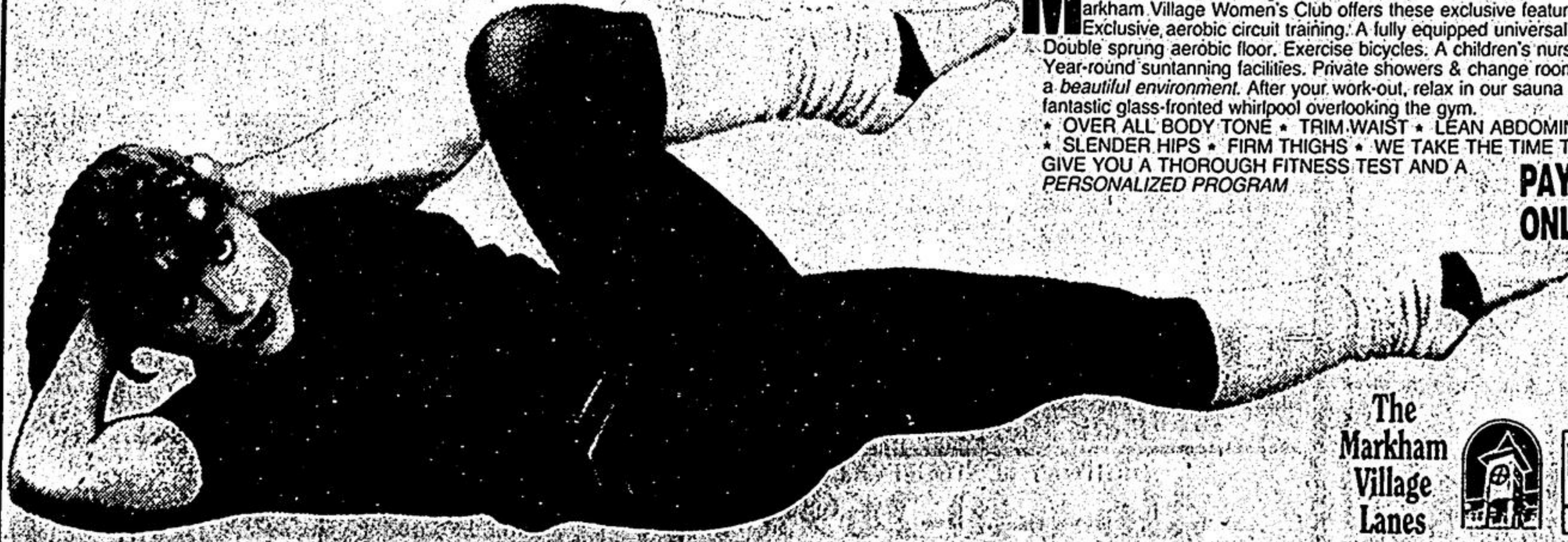
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