

## Two-week shutdown ends

# Unionville shop back in business

By EDO VAN BELKOM

Bill Mann is back in business after a two-week period that saw him locked out of his Croissant Corners shop on Main St. in Unionville.

Mr. Mann, 28, was kept from his tiny stall by his landlord who changed the locks on the door, effectively closing him down for two weeks.

The tenant landlord disagreement arose from Mr. Mann's attempt to expand his modest operation.

His expansion, which took the form of a rear patio and an additional product line, also brought out a number of municipal inspectors from several different agencies. There were five visits in a

two-week period prior to his closing.

The first attempt at expansion came in the form of a cafe patio in the rear of the building Mr. Mann is renting.

The patio was open just three days before inspectors from the York Region Board of Health ruled the operation did not conform to a Food Premises Regulation. (Regulation 24%4 requires that washroom facilities be provided for customers along with food service.)

Although Mr. Mann had made arrangements with Calathumians Restaurant across the street for joint use of the restaurant's facilities, he was still not able to conform to regulations.

Visits to the patio were also made by building by-law inspectors who received reports of a new eating facility that had opened up and investigated because no permit had been issued.

### COMPLAINTS RECEIVED

Jim Brown, deputy building director for the Town of Markham buildings and bylaws department, said his department received complaints about the patio and were forced to investigate. He said that each inspector is required to make follow-up investigations which accounts for the frequent inspections at the Main St. shop.

Mr. Mann's second attempt at expansion came when he expanded his product line to include skateboards and accessories, along with the existing croissant and coffee fare.

A skateboard shop attracts skateboarders, which didn't fit in well with the other tenants in the building.

Mr. Brown said that his department also received a complaint regarding the skateboards.

"Skateboarders were going up and down the street and people said they couldn't walk along the street without getting bumped by

them," he said, adding that Mr. Mann was issued a warning.

With a stall that measures nine feet by three feet, Croissant Corners does not carry too much weight with a landlord who has three other businesses as well as apartments in the same building.

### NOT WELCOME

"Other businesses on the street didn't appreciate a congregation of skateboarders on the street," said Mr. Mann, who has been in business at the same location for three years.

"My business isn't very big, so I don't have a lot to say," he added. "My weight exists at 150 pounds and that's it."

So when complaints from the other tenants reached the landlord, the locks on the door were changed and Mr. Mann was without a business.

"It's hard to believe that people can be so aggressive and it's ludicrous that one simple business can cause such problems," said the entrepreneur, who is also an executive member of the Unionville historical board.

After two weeks of finding out what went wrong and settling the disagreement with his landlord, Mr. Mann was allowed to re-open

— without a "full menu" as he calls it, of skateboards and croissants.

Mr. Mann is still pleasant and calm after the whole ordeal and holds no grudges against municipal inspectors who he says, "did their job and took care of whatever complaints they had about the place."

### AREA CHANGING

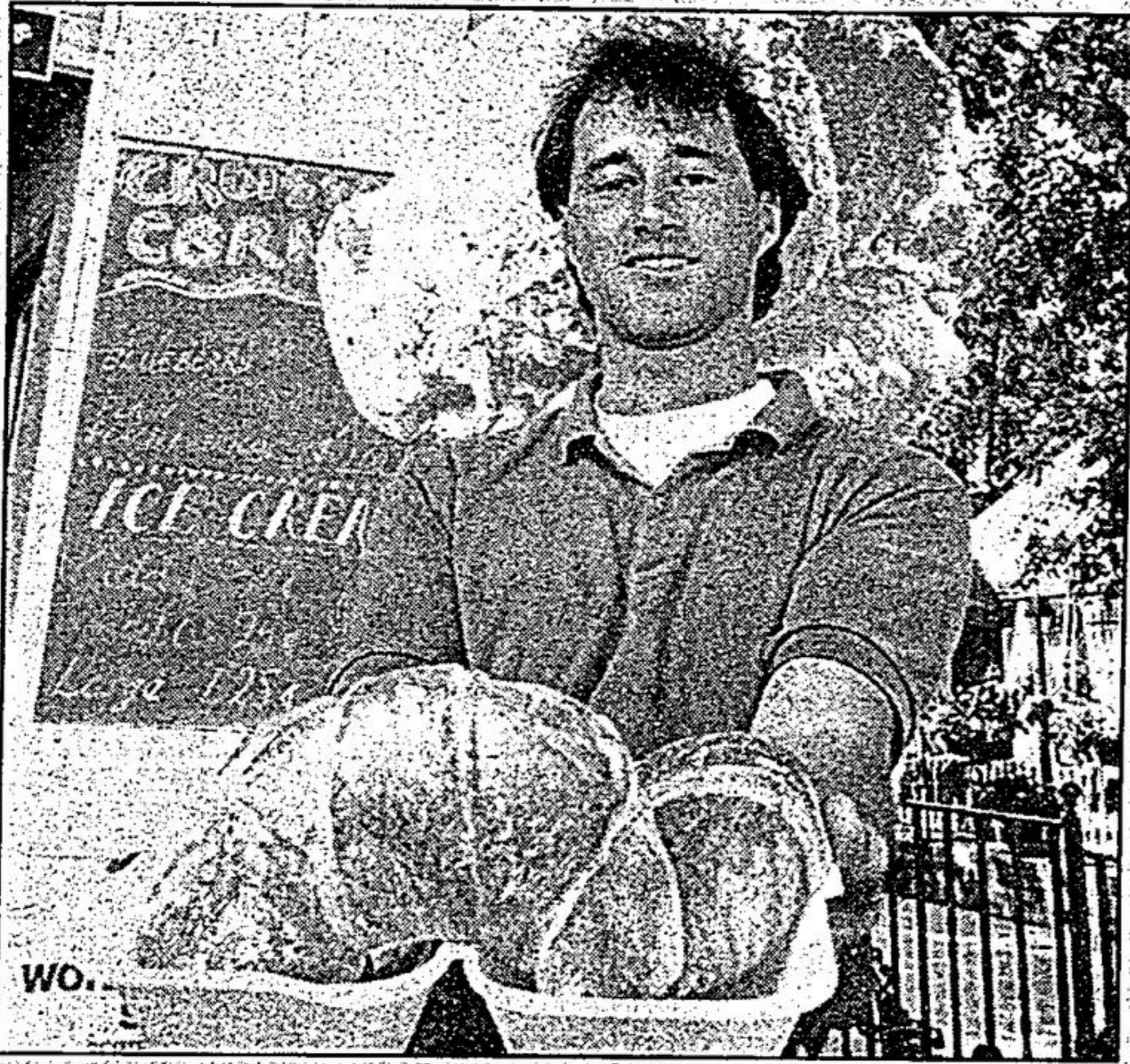
But he does admit that the friendly small-town atmosphere that his business is based upon is slowly disappearing as Unionville becomes more and more popular.

"I have seen changes in the atmosphere here and I hope that the bigger we get, we don't get more and more commercial," said Mr. Mann. "Some people are interested in business and not the community."

Mr. Mann said he has no problems going with the flow or dealing with his recent setback.

"I'm still here," he said. "I'm still providing a service."

However, he added that he's right back where he started and noted that he won't stay long unless he's able to expand his business in one way or another in the near future.



Bill Mann, owner and operator of Unionville's Croissant Corners; is back in business after a two-week shutdown. The Main St. shop was closed down after Mr. Mann attempted to expand his product line and add a rear patio to the premises.

— Roberta Di Maio

## Home show shaping up

Although still a month away, the fourth annual Markham Home Show is shaping up to be another big success.

Organizer Fred Cox, president of Canadian Tel-A-Views Ltd., said things are in good shape and nearly ready to go. Residents can see what's new, learn what to do and save at the Oct. 24, 25 and 26 home show at the Markham Fairgrounds.

"We're well underway and have put together a good list of high quality exhibitors," he said. "We're expecting another very successful show."

Hundreds of exhibitors will offer their newest and best products for the home, at special show prices. It's a unique opportunity to see the latest home products, obtain friendly expert advice and complete your home shopping at super value prices all in one convenient spot.

The Markham Home Show offers a vast variety of sophisticated and quality products in a relaxed atmosphere. Like Markham itself, it's the perfect blend of city selection in a country setting.

In addition to products carefully selected to represent virtually every aspect of the home, visitors will also be able to enjoy free ongoing seminars and demonstrations. Included are Mark Cullen from Weall and Cullen, interior designers from the Seneca College Interior Decorating Faculty and professionals from St. Clair Paint and Paper.

Visitors will also be able to shop for the latest appliances at John Galloway's Appliance Centre, see the new 1987 General Motors cars, or complete some Christmas gift shopping at the Country Store.

## Catering to preppie youngsters

# Business venture young at heart

By EDO VAN BELKOM

Barry Sambrook and Elizabeth Talenti are two young entrepreneurs whose business venture is young at heart.

Mr. Sambrook, 22, and Ms. Talenti, 21 are co-owners of Little Wonders clothing store on Main St. in Unionville which caters to preppie youngsters from newborn to teenagers.

The business was financed in part by a \$5,000 loan from the Ontario Youth Venture Program, as well as with capital of their own. The loan is interest free for a year, but must then be paid back at a rate of five per cent per month after that.

The store, set back and almost hidden behind the more established businesses in the Old Village has been open for about two months. Although the location is not exactly ideal, Mr. Sambrook is pleased to have it.

"We were really lucky to get this place. There's a waiting list for businesses to get on the street," he said. "I was asking everyone on the street if they knew of anything and I found out they were building this place. I gave the guy a call and the lease was signed May 1."

Mr. Sambrook was studying international business at Seneca College when he found that business theory didn't quite interest

him as much as business in practice.

"I said to myself, 'forget this. I want to make some money,'" he said.

### BUSINESS PARTNERS

So he went into business with Ms. Talenti, his girlfriend. The couple said they've been going together for two years and a popular question these days is how long will they stay together not that they're business partners as well.

"Hopefully forever," answers Ms. Talenti, with a nervous laugh.

But from speaking with the two of them one gets the impression that they're not about to fall apart at the seams the minute the going gets tough. Together they did all the work on the interior of the store, sometimes working 15 hours a day to get it finished.

Mr. Sambrook still works in the morning delivering bundles of Toronto Star newspapers with van and then goes back to the shop for the rest of the day.

"We work 12 hours a day, but you want to do it because it's your own business," he said. "I think our youth is an asset for us right now."

And hard work has paid off for the pair as they both admit that knew absolutely nothing about children's clothes when they started.

### QUIZZED MERCHANTS

"We asked all the merchants on the street what was needed. There were no other clothing stores for children on the street," Mr. Sambrook said.

At present the store is operating with about 25 per cent of their stock. Their biggest problem at the moment is filling the store with clothes.

Prices range from \$3 for a pair of leotards to \$125 for a jean jacket. Their hottest sellers are bright, multi-colored socks and popular Oshkosh overalls that start at \$45.

The clothes are not one-of-a-kind designer's clothes and are available in other stores, "but they are unique for the area," said Mr. Sambrook, adding that they hope to get imported Italian clothes in the upcoming months.

"We pick out what we like. The kids seem to go for the style the older kids are wearing," explained Ms. Talenti.

Mr. Sambrook is optimistic that Little Wonders will make a modest profit this year and hopes to pay off his government loan soon after.

But these are only immediate goals. He's already considering opening up other stores in similar tourist areas such as Harbourfront and Yorkville.



Elizabeth Talenti and Barry Sambrook are two young entrepreneurs who recently opened Little Wonders clothing store on Main St. in Unionville. The store caters to preppie youngsters from newborn to teenagers.

— Roberta Di Maio