

Markham Fair's First Lady

It's a 'way of life' for Mary

By BRENDA LITTLE

For Mary Cosburn, Markham Fair is much more than just a yearly carnival, "it's a way of life."

For approximately 20 years now Mary has been involved in the Fair to some extent. Her presidency this year can thus be viewed as the culmination of many years of dedication and hard work.

After so many years of involve-

ment one would think that Mary would know pretty well all there is to know about the Fair. Mary thought so too until she assumed the president's chair.

"Now that I'm in the chair I can see that there's still a lot to learn," says Mary.

The fact that she doesn't know all there is to know makes Mary's job more interesting. Not that coordinating the activities of 74 committees with a total of 400

volunteers could possibly be boring, especially in the couple of months surrounding Fair time.

"For most of the year being the president is a part-time job," says Mary. "But for a month before and after the Fair it's definitely full-time."

During these busy months Mary's phone never stops ringing.

"Most of them (committee members) come to me with their problems," explains Mary.

To these wisdom-seekers Mary will often offer advice but, despite her position on the executive, she doesn't act as a law enforcer or lawmaker.

"I won't rule them," says Mary. "And I don't like getting involved with committee prob-

lems. My main aim is just to keep everyone happy."

And surprisingly enough, considering Markham Fair has 400 volunteers, Mary seems to manage to do just that.

One of the keys to Mary's success as president is her organizational skills. Despite all the work she has to do, she usually has it all done ahead of time.

"I don't like anything last minute," she says. "You're always going to get the unpleasant little surprises but the fewer the better."

Besides her organizational skills, Mary also brings to the job her loyalty and dedication.

Although there are many times when Mary could or should perhaps be doing something else,



MARY COSBURN

Dedicated to the Fair

she often opts to do Fair work. "When you take on a commitment you have to stick with it," says Mary. "You have to devote your time to it."

Although Mary is dedicated to the Fair, her involvement goes far beyond commitment.

"The Fair is a very personal thing with me," explains Mary. "I get so much satisfaction out of working with 400 people who all have the same goal — to create the best Fair possible."

Although after 20 years Mary has reached the point where she can't climb the Fair ladder any higher, she will not end her involvement with Markham Fair when she gives up her chair in January.

"I'll never give up my interest in the Fair," she says. "My grandchildren will keep that interest alive."

Already, Mary's grandchildren, Mary Lyn, 13, and Blair, 14, are on committees.

Having her grandchildren, and young people in general, involved in the Fair is very important to Mary.

"I like to see young people take part," she says. "Without them the Fair would die."

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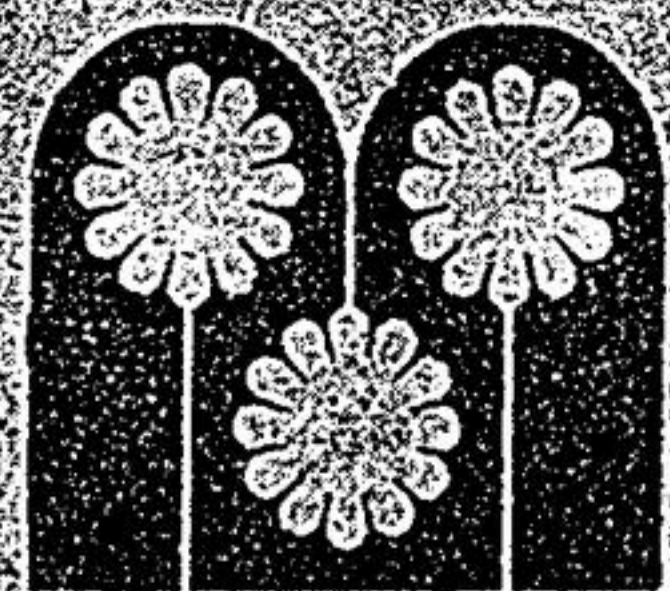
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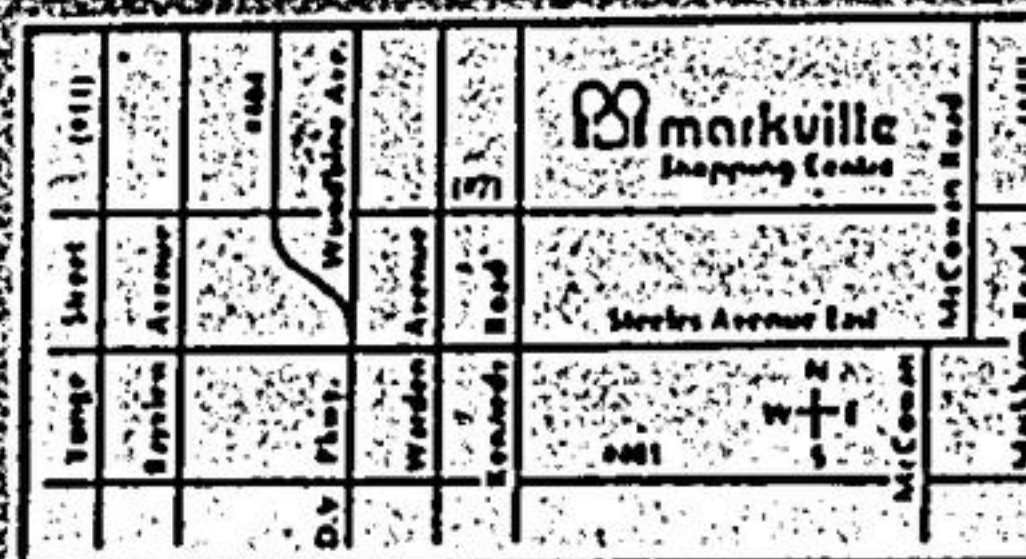
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