

Weekender

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Trip down Fair's memory lane

By JIM THOMAS

It was a trip down memory lane.

Ken Deacon, the 1944 president of the Markham and East York Agricultural Society, took his audience on a 142-year historical journey at the official opening of Markham Fair, Wednesday night.

Mr. Deacon was the evening's guest speaker, representing 22 past presidents gathered on the platform.

The 79-year-old retired farmer, who still retains an interest in purebred beef cattle, recalled the good times and the bad, the strong years and the lean, the hills and the valleys, during his trek through bygone days.

There were fires and floods; feasts and famines, said the speaker, in fact, he said, the Markham Fair of the 1850s was a 'vagrant' with no home to call its own. It was sometimes held at Unionville, in Markham and at Stouffville.

At one point during the hungry 30s, the Fair was so deep in debt, cancellation seemed a certainty, Mr. Deacon said. However, the directors of that day, (1932), put up \$1,500 and carried on.

It was Captain Wm. Armstrong, (the charter president), who donated five acres of land on which was erected an ice arena called The Palace. It lasted 90 years.

In 1916, a fire caused extensive damage, Mr. Deacon said. The replacement was estimated at

\$8,500 but later totalled \$15,000. "That was quite a blow," he stated.

The board's elder statesman told of "The Great Auto Race" in 1915 when two McLaughlin Buicks left four Model Ts in their collective dust. He also recalled how one year, the Fair took on a circus atmosphere. Trouble was, when the animals were taken to Milne Pond for a drink, two hippos refused to come out.

Then there was the time one of the directors took it on himself to get rid of the pigeons. Trouble was, the speaker said, he shot at them from the inside the building rather than the outside, putting many rain holes in the roof.

Mr. Deacon referred to the parking problems related to the Hwy. 7 site and the back-up of cars that often extended over two miles.

"Think of what we have now," he said, "we're the envy of all fairs, we're the best."

President Mary Cosburn, introduced by son Mac, referred to the challenges of the position. She expressed appreciation to secretary-manager Tony Arkell, Doris Thomas, president of the Homecraft Section, the board of directors and all members of committees. She said the Fair represents a means by which urban and rural people are brought together. Quoting the 1986 motto, Mrs. Cosburn said "we are indeed celebrating the good things in life."



At Studio 134

'Obscene' sex acts spark controversy

By ROBERT DONNELLY

She is near the end of her strip routine. Her naked body is exposed to the eyes of the men around her as she lazily slides on top of the candy apple red platform.

Lying on her back, with legs spread-eagled toward stage centre, she is joined by a fellow stripper. The routine concludes with both women apparently engaging in oral sex in front of the lascivious and now cheering patrons of the strip club.

"One might think this could only be found in some seedy Soho district or Boston's 'combat zone' or perhaps Bangkok, Amster-

dam, or even Toronto's infamous stretch of Yonge St. aptly dubbed the 'sin strip'.

The performance, described by lawyers and police alike as 'obscene' and therefore subject to criminal charges, was witnessed by a reporter late last Thursday night at Markham's only strip club, Studio 134.

"I have been to other strip joints before but I have never seen anything like what they were doing at this club (Studio 134) tonight," observed Phil, who requested anonymity.

(Continued Page 3)

Page one news

Lynn McGarrigle literally made front page news this week with this replica of the Weekender's front page. She won the grand championship in the cake decorating section at Mar-

kham Fair. The Fair continues all day today and is open until 6 p.m. tomorrow.

— Bill Lanning

WHAT'S INSIDE



Sandra Halpern
Organizer of antique show/20

Directory

- Comment..... P.4
- Editor's mail..... P.5 and 6
- Entertainment..... P.12
- Sports..... P.22 to 23
- Church Page..... P.26 to 27
- Children's page..... P.34
- Real Estate..... P.29 to 39
- Classified..... P.40 to 47

Mark Falzon
Outstanding citizen/14

