

"Will hold hands with Dix"

Snow-shoveller retires with a tear in his eye

By JIM THOMAS
STOUFFVILLE — "He's been God's gift to Seniors."

That's how one long-time Stouffville resident described the helping hand provided by Robert 'Bun' Sellers of Harold Street.

For the past 17 seasons, Bun's been clearing snow-clogged driveways all over town, with up to 35 places on his automatic call list.

However, all good things must come to an end. At 57, Bun has decided to call it quits, turning his one-man operation over to Pete Turner of Lloyd Avenue.

"I feel kind of bad about it," Bun said in an interview, Friday, "but it was impossible to plan anything ahead."

He admits both he and his customers shed a few tears.

It was back in 1969 that Bun purchased his first 'Bobcat'. The

machines were relatively new at the time. For Bun, it was 'love at first sight'.

He would keep each unit about three years. This way, he never ran into costly repairs.

The purchase price back in '69 was \$4,400, he recalls. The last one cost \$21,000.

Bun's rates for plowing snow didn't escalate quite that fast. Initially, he charged from five to seven dollars. Last year, it was ten to fifteen.

After every snowfall, regular as clockwork, Bun was on the job. Folks enjoyed watching him work and often invited him in for a cup of tea.

Fourteen-hour days were not unusual. On occasions, when he also worked for the Town, he remained on the job almost round-the-clock.

Sometimes weather conditions

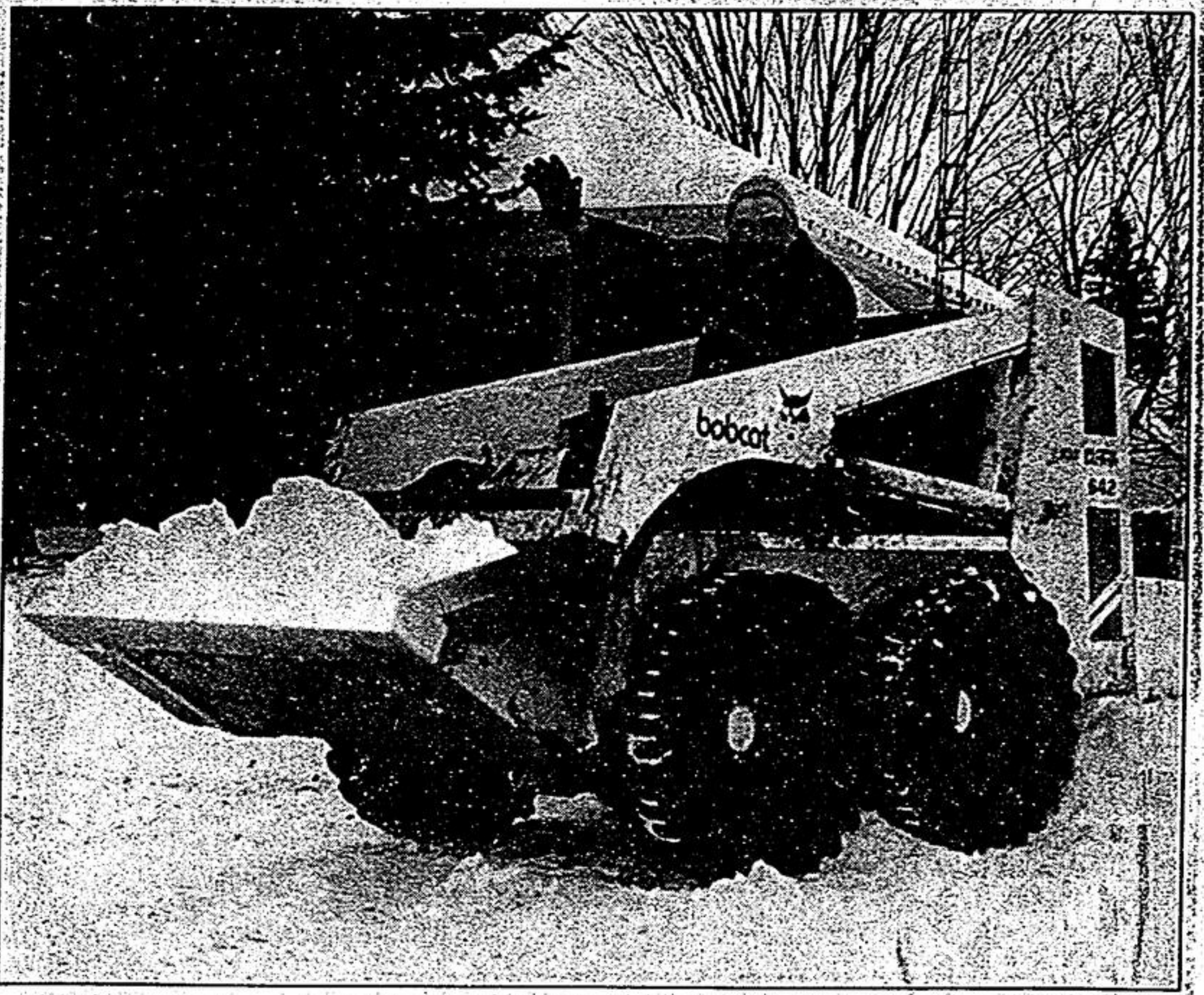
were severe, but Bun came prepared under five layers of clothes plus three pairs of socks and two pairs of gloves. Even then, he's had his ears and face frozen.

Bun and his Bobcat worked together as a team. Never, in 17 seasons of snowplowing did he ever get into any serious scrapes. He plans to continue his summer-long contracts with golf courses, as many as 15 throughout southern and central Ontario.

As for the winter, the weather's so unpredictable, Bun says. "It's either a feast or a famine; doing nothing or going day and night." For all that, he honestly admits he's going to miss it, not so much the cold days and the colder nights, but the warmth of the friendships he's made.

So what are you going to do now? I asked.

"Brush up on my solitaire and hold hands with Dix," he replied.



For Robert 'Bun' Sellers of Harold Street, Stouffville, his snow-shovelling days are over. Since 1969 he's been cleaning driveways all over town and making friends wherever he went. Now, with more time, he plans to brush up on his solitaire "and hold hands with Dix." —Jim Thomas

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