

Hockey star Bill Bradbury recalls 'the good old days'

By BRUCE STAPLEY
Bill Bradbury stands in front of his Uxbridge home, putting the finishing touches on a snow shovelling job that speaks well for a man who had two heart attacks 11 years ago.

The man whose dippy doodle style made him a legend with the old Stouffville Clippers in the Ontario Intermediate Hockey League, in the late 40s, looks fit as a fiddle as he opens up the old scrap book and pulls out a yellowed copy of a Clippers 1948-49 'Official Program'.

A flip through the pages and we're immediately taken back to the magic of small town hockey in the post war years. Hockey that was intense, but fun; a style of play that was fast moving, but cleanly played.

Bill's picture adorns the front cover of the program, whose inner photos include the likes of other bright lights of days gone by; Les Clarke, Hal Gibson, Herb Rose, Polly Minton, Gord Lewis and Bob Lawrie.

Bill Bradbury sits back and reflects. "Back in those days," he recalls. "You could go into any small town in Southern Ontario and be entertained more than you would be today at most NHL games."

He admits to being a Maple Leaf fan these days, but claims it "breaks my heart" to see the type of game they're playing now. "It's all money," he laments. "And today, you dish out a good check, and you've got a goon on you."

Bill recalls the day when players came to play, not dare someone to knock the chip off their shoulder. "There's few good body checks now. It's all sticks and dirty stuff. I guess you could say I have a love-hate relationship with the game today."

The quick forward was born in Oshawa, and made whistle stops in Kapuskasing, Sudbury, McTier, Markham and Claremont before settling down in Uxbridge with his family in 1938. "Dad was a baker," he explains. "He went to where the jobs were."

His father would buy a bakery in Uxbridge, giving Bill the chance to get the feel of a town for more than just the wink of an eye. He developed his interest in hockey, and started playing in church leagues. He remembers playing on the Uxbridge Pond, where the local ice dealer would be constantly cutting blocks out of the pond, leaving a smooth surface that was ideal for skating on once it froze over again.

"I remember playing puck hog on Sunday afternoons with about 75 kids," he laughs. "And then I played Midget with the church. We had a four game season, playing home and home against Port Perry and Whitby."

At the age of 14, Bill played Intermediate for Port Perry. He tried out for an Oshawa Junior team that included Charlie Conacher, and eventually auditioned for the Toronto Marlboros, who had Bob Hassard in their lineup at

the time. "I played a few exhibition games for the Marlies," he recalls. "I remember scoring a goal against Terry Sawchuk."

He didn't make the team, and despite a request from the manager of the day, one Harold Ballard, to play for the team's Scarborough farm team, Bill went back to Uxbridge.

He went to Scotland for a year in 1947, when he was 19, playing hockey with the Scottish Ice Hockey Federation. "The calibre was close to Junior A," he recalls. "They were mostly Canadians, and there were some army and navy guys. I remember playing with Ron Ellis' dad."

It was when he returned from his year in Scotland he finally ended up with the Clippers. He remembers the rivalry with the Markham Millionaires to have the edge on us, but I think we beat them out one year."

Bill recalls with pride the brand of hockey played in the Intermediate League in those days. "Guys knew how to play then. They didn't just go down the ice and blast a slap shot in."

He laughs when he remembers the time the goalie for the visiting Midland team staggered off the team bus, obviously inebriated, and proceeded to stone the Clippers for two periods. "But we finally caught up to him in the third and put ten pucks past him."

"The camaraderie stands out in my mind," he says of his days with the Clippers. "Even the guys you played against, you enjoyed.

We played hard, tempers would flare, but then it was over."

Bill would move on to play for the Newmarket entry in the Intermediate League for two years. After a short retirement, he came back to play for an Intermediate 'A' team put together in Stouffville by ex-Markham Millionaire great Bob Bangay. Bill toiled for that squad before finally calling it quits for good. "I was older, and I was married with kids," he says. "We wouldn't be back after some road games til 3 a.m. It was too much."

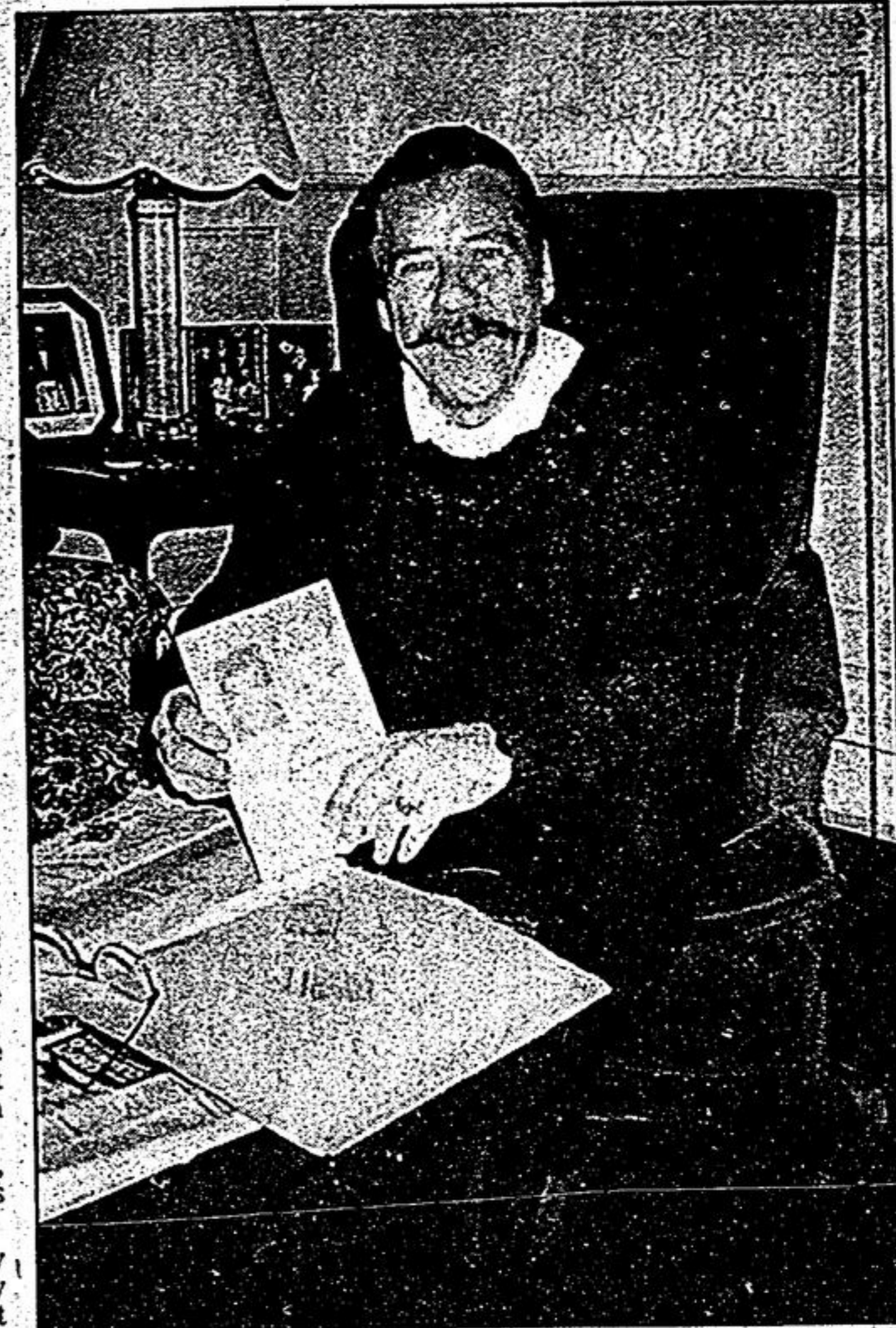
Today, Bill lives with his wife Joyce in Uxbridge, and works at Cherrydowns Golf Course. He has three children, and a grandchild. While he hasn't been on skates for several years, he boasts a successful curling career in his post hockey days that saw him vice skip his 'Colts' Division rink to the All Ontario 'Globe and Mail' title in 1964.

An avid golfer, he has five holes-in-one to his credit, the most recent scored in South Carolina last year.

Does he miss his playing days, stickhandling his way across opposition bluelines?

"I would have liked to play some of that old timers' hockey after I retired, but they didn't have it back then," he claims. "But I'm keeping fit. I walk and kind of do a half-jog."

At age sixty, Bill Bradbury can look back and still look ahead; an exciting past and a satisfying future.



Bill Bradbury, born and raised in Uxbridge, still lives in town. He played Jr. 'C' with Uxbridge in 1946-47 and the following year joined the Scottish Ice Hockey Association. He was a member of the Stouffville Intermediate 'Clippers' in 1948-49. Bill hopes to attend the Markham-Stouffville Oldtimers' Hockey Reunion at the Rec. Centre April 29. —Bruce Stapley

DRUG WORLD WAREHOUSE DRUG STORE

GRAND OPENING

OF OUR 7th GIANT LOCATION... IN ETOBICOKE!

 <p>Redpath SPECIAL FINE Granulated SUGAR</p> <p>79¢ ea. LIMIT 2 PER CUSTOMER</p>	 <p>Hostess chips regular nature</p> <p>99¢ ea.</p>	 <p>HUGGIES DISPOSABLE DIAPERS</p> <p>9.99 ea.</p>	 <p>Hi-Dri PAPER TOWELS</p> <p>69¢ ea. LIMIT 2 PER CUSTOMER</p>
 <p>PEPSI OR DIET PEPSI 1.5 L</p> <p>1.88 EACH PLUS DEPOSIT</p>	 <p>CLOSE-UP, MACCLEANS OR AIM TOOTHPASTE 100 ml</p> <p>99¢ ea.</p>	 <p>EXTRA-STRENGTH TYLENOL Acetaminophen tablets</p> <p>4.89 ea.</p>	 <p>Kodak Video Cassette T-120</p> <p>4.99 ea.</p>

DRUG WORLD WAREHOUSE DRUG STORE

PRICES IN EFFECT UNTIL MARCH 12th, 1988 OR WHILE QUANTITIES LAST. NO DEALERS PLEASE. QUANTITIES MAY BE LIMITED. NOT ALL PRODUCTS EXACTLY AS SHOWN.

<p>SCARBOROUGH 264-3271</p> <p>MON-FRI: 9 AM-10 PM SAT: 9 AM-9 PM SUN: 10 AM-6 PM</p>	<p>MARKHAM 470-0567</p> <p>MON-FRI: 9 AM-9:30 PM SAT: 9 AM-6 PM SUN: 10 AM-6 PM</p>	<p>NEWMARKET 853-6712</p> <p>MON-FRI: 9 AM-9:30 PM SAT & SUN: 9 AM-6 PM</p>	<p>BRAMPTON 450-0007</p> <p>MON-FRI: 9 AM-9:30 PM SAT & SUN: 9 AM-6 PM</p>	<p>ETOBICOKE 620-7007</p> <p>MON-FRI: 9 AM-9:30 PM SAT: 9 AM-6 PM SUN: 10 AM-6 PM</p>	<p>HAMILTON 387-0430</p> <p>MON-FRI: 9 AM-9 PM SAT: 9 AM-6 PM SUN: 10 AM-5 PM</p>	<p>KITCHENER 748-9450</p> <p>MON-FRI: 9 AM-9:30 PM SAT & SUN: 9 AM-6 PM</p>
--	--	--	---	--	--	--