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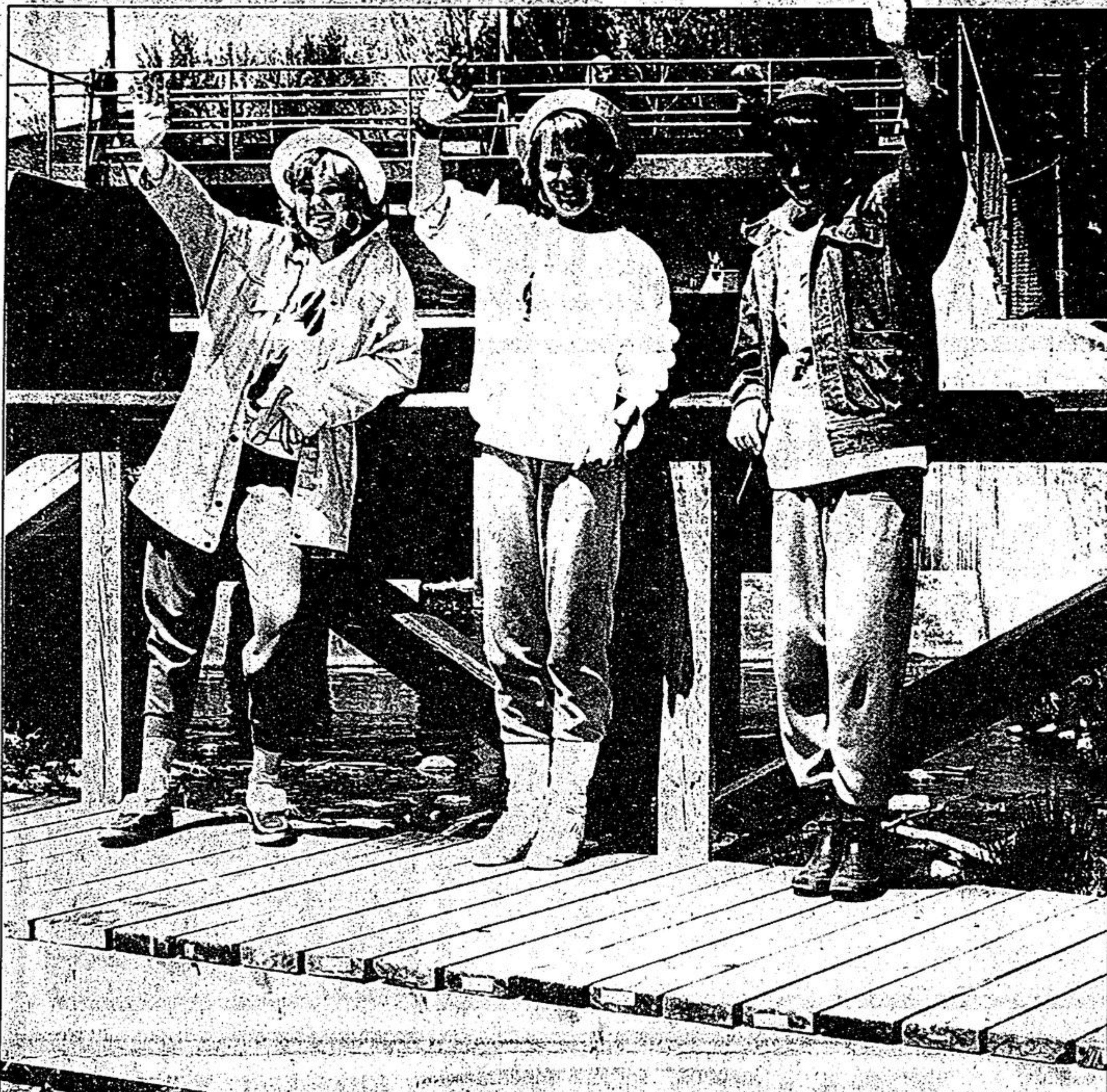
# Tribune Community FOCUS

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## Girl Guides enjoy wide open spaces

On June 10, a band comprising elementary students from across York Region, will perform at the Ontario Place Forum. Two members of this esteemed group are Laura Summerfeldt, 13, (left), of R.R. 2, Stouffville and Heather LeMottee, 14, of Rupert Avenue, Stouffville. Both attend Orchard Park Public School. Concert time is 11 a.m. —Jim Thomas

## In Stouffville apartment

# British war brides reunited

Gladys Hutchinson and Irene Thompson have lived in the same apartment block in Stouffville for a year and a half, but their friendship goes back almost 48 years.

"We met at Victoria Station in London, England, when we were 17 years old," recalls Gladys. The two girls had just joined the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF) and met getting into an air force truck. They were both posted to Northern Ireland where they served for two-and-a-half years, with home leave only once every six months.

During their posting, Gladys met Bob Hutchinson, a Canadian with the Toronto Scottish Regiment, and the two were married while on leave in England in 1942. "I introduced Irene to her hus-

band, Wally, who was with the same regiment, and they got married in 1945," she remembers.

Even then, the situation in Ireland was volatile, and Gladys mentions the time when she and Irene decided to take a bicycle ride. "We saw a beautiful Catholic Church, and although we were not Catholics ourselves, we thought we'd go in," she explains. When they emerged, eight male civilians were waiting outside. "We didn't know who they were or whether they were IRA and we didn't wait to find out. We just took off as fast as we could."

Despite some frightening moments, Gladys and Irene enjoyed their two-and-a-half years in Ireland and found most of the people friendly and helpful. "When the Dieppe raid came, one lady gave

me shelter," Gladys notes. When their tour of duty was over, they were posted back to England, this time to Southampton.

### Gave up house

In 1945, Gladys and Bob and their nine-month-old son left England for Canada. "My whole family came to see me off," remembers Gladys. "There were a lot of tears, but at the time I was more excited than upset." When the couple arrived, they moved into Bob's parents' house in Scarborough.

"I found the first few years very difficult," she recalls, "not everyone welcomed the English girls with open arms in those days." Irene and Wally arrived in 1946 and settled in Toronto, and the

two ex-WAAF's were united once more.

The Hutchinson family moved to Bethesda in 1958. "The years there were my happiest," smiles Gladys, citing the support and friendship of everyone at Lemonville Church. She and Bob lived there until his death in 1985.

In the meantime, Irene, who had lost her husband at an early age, had been busy bringing up her three children. The family moved from Toronto to Lindsay and then to Bancroft.

When Bob died, Gladys reluctantly decided she couldn't cope with the house any longer, and after a trip to England, she moved into her comfortable apartment in Stouffville. "I wasn't very keen on the idea at first," she admits, "but now I wouldn't live anywhere else. It's very friendly, the building is quiet and there are some lovely people living here."

A year and a half ago, Irene phoned her from Bancroft to ask if she knew of an apartment in the same building. As luck would have it, one was available on the floor below Gladys, and the two women were re-united.

"They enjoy each other's companionship and spend a lot of time together but, "we are both very independent people," Gladys asserts and the arrangement they have suits them perfectly.

### Family nearby

Gladys feels very fortunate, with her son still living in Bethesda, a granddaughter at Stouffville High School and her life-long friend dropping in regularly "for a cup of tea and a chat." To complete the family picture, her sister also lives here. "She came out 12 years ago with my nephew," Gladys explains. "Last year they decided to return to England. They were back here in six weeks."

Gladys will always feel affection for her native land. "When I hear 'Land of Hope and Glory' I really feel a lump in my throat," but she knows she couldn't be happier than she is now. "You really can't go back," she claims, but she can do all the reminiscing she likes when she and Irene get together over a nice cup of tea.



## Too Orchard Park's horn at Ontario Place

On June 10, a band comprising elementary students from across York Region, will perform at the Ontario Place Forum. Two members of this esteemed group are Laura Summerfeldt, 13, (left), of R.R. 2, Stouffville and Heather LeMottee, 14, of Rupert Avenue, Stouffville. Both attend Orchard Park Public School. Concert time is 11 a.m. —Jim Thomas

# Stouffville Lions mark 50 years

By KATE GILDERDALE

In the 50 years its members have served the community, the Stouffville Lions Club has always been able to find the energy to roar into another fundraising project.

The local branch had its beginnings in the fall of 1937. A member of the Bradford Lions, Hugh Bannerman, moved to Stouffville and worked toward forming an organization in his new home town.

On January 10, 1938, the first dinner was held at the Mansion House Hotel with 20 members of the sponsoring Bradford Club in attendance. Charter night was April 8, 1938, during one of the worst snow storms of the year. The first president was John Hodgins a CNR station agent. Hugh Bannerman was secretary. Carl Boadway was program chairman, Allen McConnochie was the club's pianist and Elmer Still was treasurer.

### Initiated Markham branch

The second president, taking over in 1940, was Mervyn Watts. It was he who initiated plans for the Markham branch, formed in 1943 with John Cattinach as the first president.

The Stouffville organization has held meetings in a variety of places over the years, including the Mansion House Hotel, Summitview School, the Royal Canadian Legion and recently, Deer Park Inn.

The impetus for the Lions organization originally came from Melvin Jones, a Chicago insurance agent, who started researching the idea in 1916 by writing to various service clubs in the U.S., proposing a national association.

Mr. Jones, who was a member of a local business circle, felt the powerful and influential men involved could better use their abilities together to serve their communities.

On June 17, 1917, 20 delegates representing 27 clubs from across the country met in Chicago to lay the foundations for what was to become Lions Club International.

A vote at the meeting resulted in the tentative name Association of Lions Clubs, and in 1920 the organization became international when the Lions of Detroit chartered the Windsor, Ontario branch. Lions Club International now has over 1.3 million members and 34,000 clubs in 150 countries around the world.

### Social services

The Lions philosophy, summed up neatly in their motto, "We serve," Club support services cover many aspects of community life including social services for the poor, the aged and the mentally and physically handicapped.

They help to build community centres, sponsor sports teams and provide educational services. White canes for the blind were introduced by the Lions.

The Stouffville club, with a membership of 44, is an active and dedicated organization. To raise funds for community projects, the club is involved in many different activities including running refreshment booths at Markham Fair, selling Christmas cakes and trees, holding toll days and selling fertilizer door to door.

The proceeds benefit a wide range of organizations and services such as minor sports, the Hospital for Sick Children, Block Parents, Easter Seals, the library, the skating club and Home Support Services.

### Help for unemployed

Jack McDermott, who is chairman of health and social services committee, explained that the club donates between \$12,000 and \$15,000 annually for various needs.

"We assist people who are having difficulty in marriage breakups and those who are out of work," he noted. "We support the Family Life Centre and the Salvation Army, and we give out Christmas baskets to needy families."

One event that Lion Neil Patrick won't forget in a hurry is the time the club borrowed a piano from the Masonic Lodge sometime around 1958.

"We used to have street dances at that time," Mr. Patrick recalled. "And we didn't have a piano available." Art Weldon at the Lodge agreed to lend the piano to the Lions.

"He said he knew he could trust me to take care of it," Mr. Patrick said.

### Piano fell off truck

At the end of the evening, there were only three people left to load the piano onto the truck — Neil Patrick, Bruce Winterstein and John Foulds.

"As I turned off Main Street at the corner of the Ninth Line, the piano came right off the truck and landed in the ditch and broke into about 14 pieces," he remembers ruefully.

His two companions were laughing so much he had to pick up most of the pieces himself and take them to his showroom.

"I had to go back the next morning and tell Art what had happened to the piano," Mr. Patrick said.

All ended well and the piano was rebuilt successfully. But the club members will never forget that night.

Every year the local Lions host a barbecue for the Strawberry Festival and enter a float in the Santa Claus Parade. They have donated to the recreation centre and the Markham Stouffville Hospital.

On June 3, the Stouffville Lions Club will celebrate its 50th anniversary in grand style at Spring Lakes Golf Club, with a dinner and dance.

Club members invite everyone to join them for their biggest celebration yet. Tickets are available for \$35 from Neil Patrick at 640-3450.

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