

20 years of service Veteran marks a milestone

By KATE GILDERDALE
Twenty years later, Stouffville Works Department Foreman Bob MacAloney is coming into his own.
On Sept. 23, he received a Town Pin to celebrate 20 years of service while next April, he will also mark 20 years with the volunteer fire department, a job which he admits with characteristic understatement "takes up a bit of your time."
Bob, the youngest of 12 children, came from Nova Scotia in 1953 to visit his brother Ed,

who also lives near Stouffville. "I came up for a visit and got off the train with a dollar in my pocket," recalls Bob. "I decided to work here and go back in the fall."
He never did make it back; instead he worked for various local companies for 15 years before joining the Town in 1968.
He and his wife, Lillian, were married in June, 1958 at the Bloomington Christian Gospel Church, which they still attend.
They started life together on Victoria Street, later buying a

house on Rupert Street. Their present home originally belonged to Lillian's mother; they moved in to take care of her in 1969. They have two daughters, Joy and Mary, who both live in town.
When Bob isn't busy at work or dragging himself out of bed to answer the fire siren, he spends time with Murray Grove, showing horses at county fairs.
"We give sleigh rides in the winter on the farm," he says. "We go down to Markham Museum and give rides to the kids twice a year."
It all started when Bloomington Christian Gospel Church wanted to organize sleigh rides for the Sunday School.
"Murray said he would give the rides, but when we got there, there were too many kids for one sleigh and he didn't have another driver, so I volunteered to drive a team," he says.
During their partnership they have shown Murray's horses at many different fairs, including Markham, Sutton, Lindsay, Peterborough and Barrie, and have won an impressive number of ribbons.
Currently, the Grove's have 21 horses or, "too many," as Marion puts it.
Looking back over his years with the fire department, the incident that stands out most vividly in Bob's mind is Nov. 9, 1971, when the Ratcliff Block burned down.
"We spent 29 hours straight, we didn't get any sleep," he

remembers. Nowadays, he says, the biggest number of calls are road accidents.
His own job brings him into close contact with residents.
"I like working for the town. The only time I feel bad is when I'm filling people's driveways with snow," he smiles.
"We used to know practically everybody here. We even had our own police force. If something went wrong or someone did something they knew who to point the finger at."
Town growth has meant an increase of staff in the municipal offices.
"When I first started there were six people in the office and four in the works department. Now we have five in the works department here and five at Vardorf, with 38 in the municipal office," he observes.
Pressure on space will eventually lead to a new location, Bob believes.
"Someday they'll have to move the works department and join Vardorf with Stouffville." With eight years to go before retirement, Bob is pretty happy with life in town.
He is looking forward enthusiastically to retirement.
"I don't have any special plans," he says, "I'd just like to help people and do odd jobs for friends." He's also handy at woodworking, Lillian points out.
Unlike many people, he looks on retirement as a chance to do all the things he hasn't time for now.

Magical offerings during mealtime

By KATE GILDERDALE
Stouffville's Dave Houston has a little magic up his sleeve for diners at Kellington's.
And at the end of a hectic week when thoughts of going out for a family meal can be most tempting, Houston is there to captivate visitors as Shakespeare the Magician.
Every Friday night between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. at the restaurant, Shakespeare entertains patrons with table magic.
Wandering from one group to another, he performs tricks, creates animals out of balloons ("I do 167 different types") and banters cheerfully with the kids.
Houston explained that it all started when he offered to do

table magic on the night of the Magic Festival. It went so well, he said, that Kellington's decided to try it on a regular basis and he has been entertaining children aged nine to 90 for the past three weeks.
His ability to communicate well with all types of children goes back to the time he ran magic workshops in schools. He often dealt with groups of mentally or physically handicapped students, as well as those who were socially disruptive.
To his delight, he found even the most difficult responded to his efforts.
"It was really rewarding. I would still love to do it, but they don't have the funding now."

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