

CHRISTMAS GIFT GUIDE

Unique gifts created by local residents

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Correspondent

Handmade gifts often become family heirlooms, even when the item isn't made by the person giving it.

More than 160 talented artisans comprise the Markham Guild of Village Crafts, a group that has expanded each year since its formation 18 years ago.

"Originally we met over a store on Main Street," explained

current President Joyce Rumney. "Our first Christmas sale made \$80, enough to pay our rent for a month. We have since attracted people from all adjoining areas."

When searching for that special Christmas gift, don't overlook the Guild. While the group recently hosted its Christmas craft sale, mini sales will be held each Friday and Saturday until Dec. 17.

A retail shop has also been temporarily set up during the holiday season, in Markham Village Lanes.

Special gifts include porcelain dolls, gingerbread houses, candles that resemble favorite foods, tole painting, wooden trucks and cars and numerous interior decorating ideas.

The Guild is currently located in a building owned by Markham Parks and Recreation, at 96 Church St. According to Joanne Burr, director of sales, Guild members work closely with the town, having recently worked to get the building updated.

Space has always been a concern for the group, which grows each year.

"We have always been acutely aware of our space problem. We were offered the Robb House, a century home which we could have located on the Markham Museum property, but found that it was extremely costly and we just couldn't afford it. It would have been a wonderful solution for permanence though," Burr said.

The group has been putting money aside in its "Expansion Fund," hoping that one day it will be able to afford its own building.

With members from Toronto, Scarborough and Markham, Burr explained that the Markham Guild is a "multi-media guild," which is unique.

"We teach a variety of craft persons; from weavers, spinners and quilters to potters and woodworkers, who range in age from 14 to 70," Burr said.

The Markham Guild of Village Crafts is not limited to women, Burr said. There are many classes taught by male members in the Guild, including woodworking, minatures and model airplanes, which are popular with youngsters.

"Rod Peters, who has made quite a name for himself with his molded paper creations, and painter Barry Finan are both in the group," Burr explained.

Burr said there are a number of children involved in special interest groups.

"If you want to perpetuate a craft the best time to get them involved is before age 14," Burr suggested.

Children's classes are offered after school and during holidays, and include Introduction to Needle Arts, Paper Creations, Puppetry and Porcelain Dolls.

The Guild also offers evening classes and weekend workshops for men and women who work during the day, or would like a break during the evening.

"Our class schedule has greatly expanded over the last several years to accommodate as many as possible," Burr said. "We recently cleaned up our basement to make way for further classes."

Open House for winter registration takes place Jan. 11 and 12, from 9:30 a.m. - noon and from 4 - 8 p.m.

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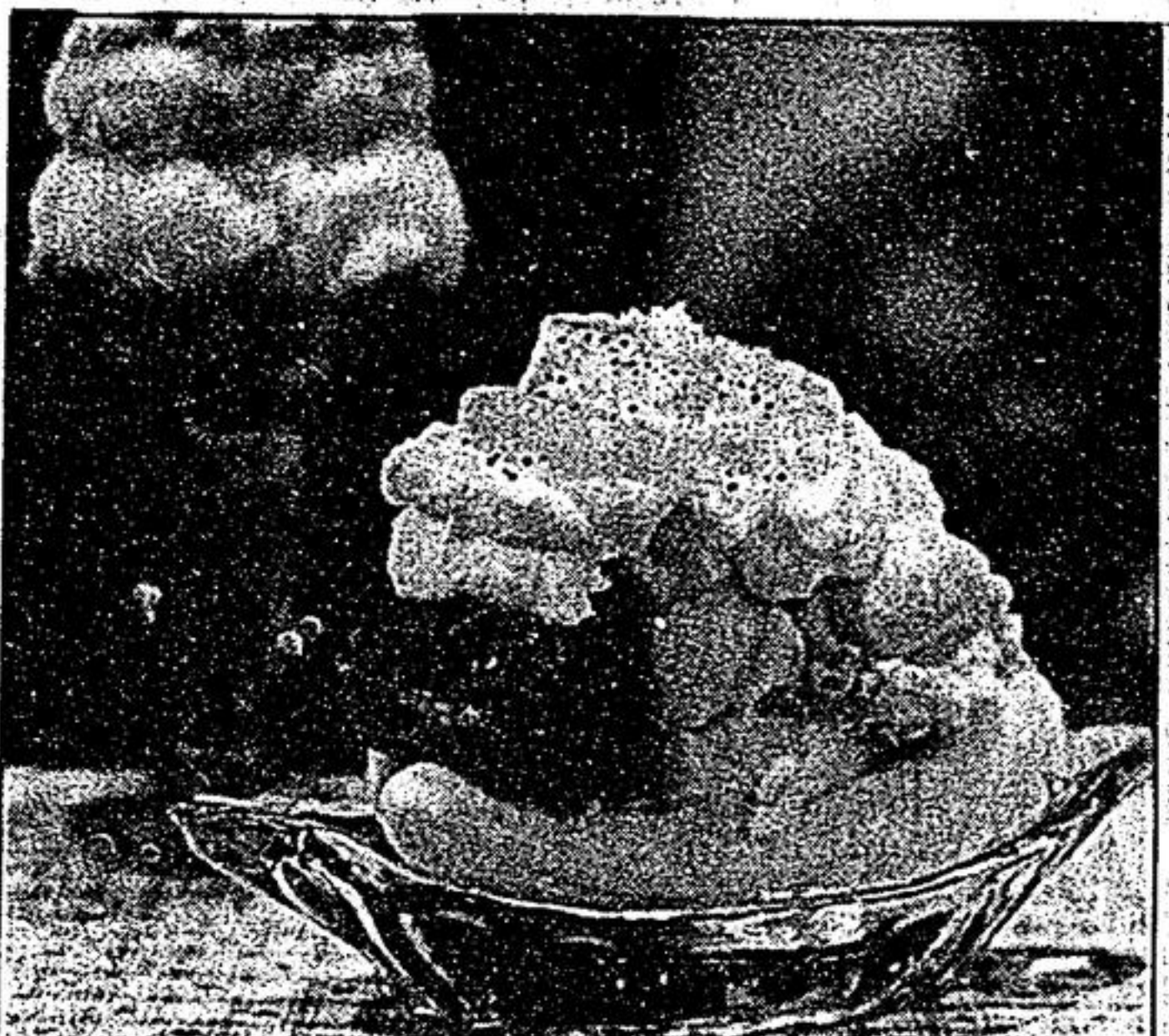
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The Markham Guild of Village Crafts offers a host of Christmas gift-giving ideas. Everything from traditionally crafted wooden cars and trucks to porcelain dolls and gingerbread houses are created by its talented members. Above left is a cuddly stuffed camel, made by Corrie



Van Poeke. At right is an ice cream sundae that's sure to brighten anyone's day — it's actually a candle. These items and more are available at the Craft's new shop in Markham, Village Lanes on Main Street.

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CORRECTION NOTICE

Due to an error on the part of Miracle Food Mart, the following item which appears in Monday, Dec. 12, 1988 insert is incorrect.

The following item should have read:

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