

Ringwood eatery attracts locals

By KATE GILDERDALE
One of the most popular eating and meeting places for local farmers is Ringwood Restaurant, on the south-west corner of Hwy. 48 and Stouffville Road.

Elgin Hastings estimates he's been visiting the location for about 50 years, "not the same restaurant though, this place has only been built about four years."

He started coming because "it was pretty well the only place around apart from a hotel across the road."

There are 12 regulars, "mostly cash crop boys," although some of them are out of town.

"Two car loads have gone to Florida this week," explained Elgin.

The biggest crowds come in between 8 and 9 a.m. for breakfast and again at noon, but rarely at night.

"If they're married they have to stay home," he grinned.

Coming in here beats working," observed Brian Gibson.

How long do they usually stop? It depends on how long the interviews are," he laughed, "maybe two hours."

Don Thomas, a 15-year veteran of the restaurant, added hastily, "you'd better say five minutes, I don't want the boss getting the wrong idea."

Murray Empringham is another local farmer who frequents the restaurant.

"I've been coming here for 10 years. It's kind of central and I come in through the winter."

He enjoys chatting with other farmers and although he sometimes visits Greens, that Brian claims is "too classy for the rest of us." Ringwood is his usual hangout.

Elgin remembers the time he had to stay overnight.

"I couldn't get home because the townline was blocked. That was in 1946."

On another occasion about eight years ago, he once found himself stranded at the restaurant during a severe snow storm.

"I had cattle to milk at that time and I couldn't get out of here. The police wouldn't let me leave."

He could have walked home he said, "but it wasn't safe. Cars were coming in here all smashed up." He finally left at 8 p.m.

"When I got back I had to milk the cows at 9:30," he recalls.

"The cows went the next year," quipped Don.

When the restaurant was rebuilt, he said, it didn't really change much.

"We didn't want it to change," insisted Elgin. "We get good service here; of all the hang-outs this is the best and they give you better coffee than anywhere else," he added to a chorus of general agreement.

"We come in to hear what's going on." They exchange gossip, discuss crop prices and banter with the waitresses.

"We really come in here to see them," he grins.

Trish Keuken has been working at the restaurant for 10 years and describes the farmers as "really nice and easy going."

"If they aren't here we miss them. We joke a lot and they tease me all the time and that's what I like the most."

With such goodwill on both sides, it looks as if the Ringwood Restaurant will continue to serve local farmers their favorite coffee for many years to come.

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ADVERTISING CORRECTIONS

Eaton's Spring Showcase #2 Insert appearing in the Markham Economist/Stouffville Tribune, Wednesday, March 15, 1989.

Pg. B16 — Item "A" — Men's Footwear T-Express shell boater colour tan is not available. Oliver Green and Ice only.

Page B35 — Item "P" — Cow Fondue set has been substituted with Geese pattern. Inadvertently, the errors listed appeared in our advertising. We sincerely regret any inconvenience or confusion to our customers.

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