

# Hamill celebrates 85th birthday

SARA DIMERMAN  
Correspondent

Myrtle Hamill moved to Markham 33 years ago, but for 30 years before that, in 1926, she started teaching at Hagerman's Corners SS #8 Public School, part of which is now the dining area of newly opened 'The School' restaurant on 14th Avenue.

On her 85th birthday, Hamill and her family celebrated over dinner in a building where she

had stood 63 years earlier. She is thrilled that the building was not torn down.

"It's a very nice place, and the proprietors were very friendly and kind to me," she said.

Hamill is a graduate of Box Grove Public School, Markham High School and Toronto Normal School. After graduating, she went on to educate two generations of area children.

She welcomed them into her

classroom at age five and stayed with them until they entered the senior classroom at age nine. She felt that it was important for the children to have the consistency of her teaching.

"My fondest memories are the people on the farms and in the village — they were all so kind and friendly," said Hamill.

After leaving Hagerman, she built her own home in Markham and taught at

Markham PS for 17 years. Hamill never married, nor had children, but her life was and is still filled with lots to do.

She has many nieces and nephews and has always been very active in the community. Until recently, she sang in the choir at Zion Church at Cedar Grove and was an officer in the Sunday School. She was also secretary of the Cedar Grove Community Club and sang with the Cedar Grove Choral Group.



A FRIEND  
IN MEADE

Dr. Ed  
Meade

# Death of pet lingers

Dr. Ed Meade is a registered psychologist and director of the Markham Stouffville Family Life Centre. In this column he answers questions from readers who remain anonymous.

**Q:** This may sound silly, but I cannot get over my dog who was recently put to sleep after being with the family for over 10 years. I keep dreaming about him and thinking that he is still with us. It's been six months now and I feel I should be over him. Am I going crazy?

**A:** An animal can become very much a part of the family. They have an amazing ability to absorb and reflect the emotions of family members.

Animals can also help reduce stress and tension. They so often give unconditional positive love — for instance, that incredible greeting that they give on your returning home.

With all this, an animal can have a special place in the home and so, losing such a family member may constitute a genuine loss and mourning.

That you are still mourning after six months and are dreaming about him, would suggest that you find some assistance in getting through your mourning.

What you may discover is this: that your pet has become a substitute for another relationship in your life. It makes sense that either you develop a greater human support system or replace your pet with another.

This is often easier said than done and that's why I suggest that you talk it over with a counsellor.

**Q:** My son has just been diagnosed as depressed. My family doctor wants to put him on medication, but my son refuses. Are there any alternatives?

**A:** Your question is really a medical one and should be handled by a physician. Would your son be willing to seek another opinion?

Perhaps he would be willing to discuss the matter with someone else. If the depression involves a suicide risk, then something more drastic would be needed.

It may be that your family doctor would suggest a consultation with a psychiatrist. There are other ways to handle depression than through medication but it may be that your family doctor considers this a medical problem that should be handled with drugs.

In lieu of an alternative opinion, I would respect your doctor's opinion and keep working with your son until he deals effectively with the depression.

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