

**Cops'n'robbers**

# Claremont seniors recall 1930s shootout

**CHRIS SHANAHAN**  
Correspondent

A wild cops-and-robbers shootout isn't the first thing one associates with the normally sedate community of Claremont.

But such an incident, dating back to the 1930s, remains a vivid memory for several long-time Claremont residents, including 73-year-old Earl (Curly) Cook.

Mr. Cook local teenager of about 15 when the gun-toting, Depression-era bandits blew through the village in a hail of bullets following a clothing store robbery in Uxbridge.

"It was rather an exciting evening. It was big news around the village for a long time," recalls Mr. Cook, who was asleep in his bed at 5012 Brock Rd. at the time.

Though not certain of the exact date of the incident, he places it in the springtime circa 1930. It was the early morning hours when the local telephone office received a call that a break-in had just occurred in Uxbridge and the suspects were speeding in a getaway car toward Claremont.

The village's police constable, a Goodwood native named Wid Miller, sprung into action in hope

of intercepting the culprits as they drove through Claremont on Brock Road. There was no bypass at that time and all traffic came directly through the village, Mr. Cook says.

Constable Miller, trusty shotgun in hand, opened fire on the robber's vehicle as it raced through downtown Claremont. The telephone operator also fired some shots with his own weapon but it's unclear if the wanted men returned fire.

"The policeman shot and hit the getaway car while the telephone operator's shot sprayed the house where I was living at the time," says Mr. Cook, who was awakened by the gunplay and screeching of tires.

"The robbers were going fast enough that they didn't make the corner and they had to stop," he says. "They almost hit a large brick building (which was located near Claremont's existing Four Corners)."

Lloyd Linton, 71, is another Claremont native who recalls the shootout. "I remember it well. Wid Miller shot at them and their vehicle almost hit a building."

Uxbridge Township historian Allan McGillivray has come across this and other 1930-40s era

robberies while reading through old newspaper files.

"After they got cars, there seemed to be a lot of these type of robberies," Mr. McGillivray says. "Service stations were a popular target as people stole gasoline."

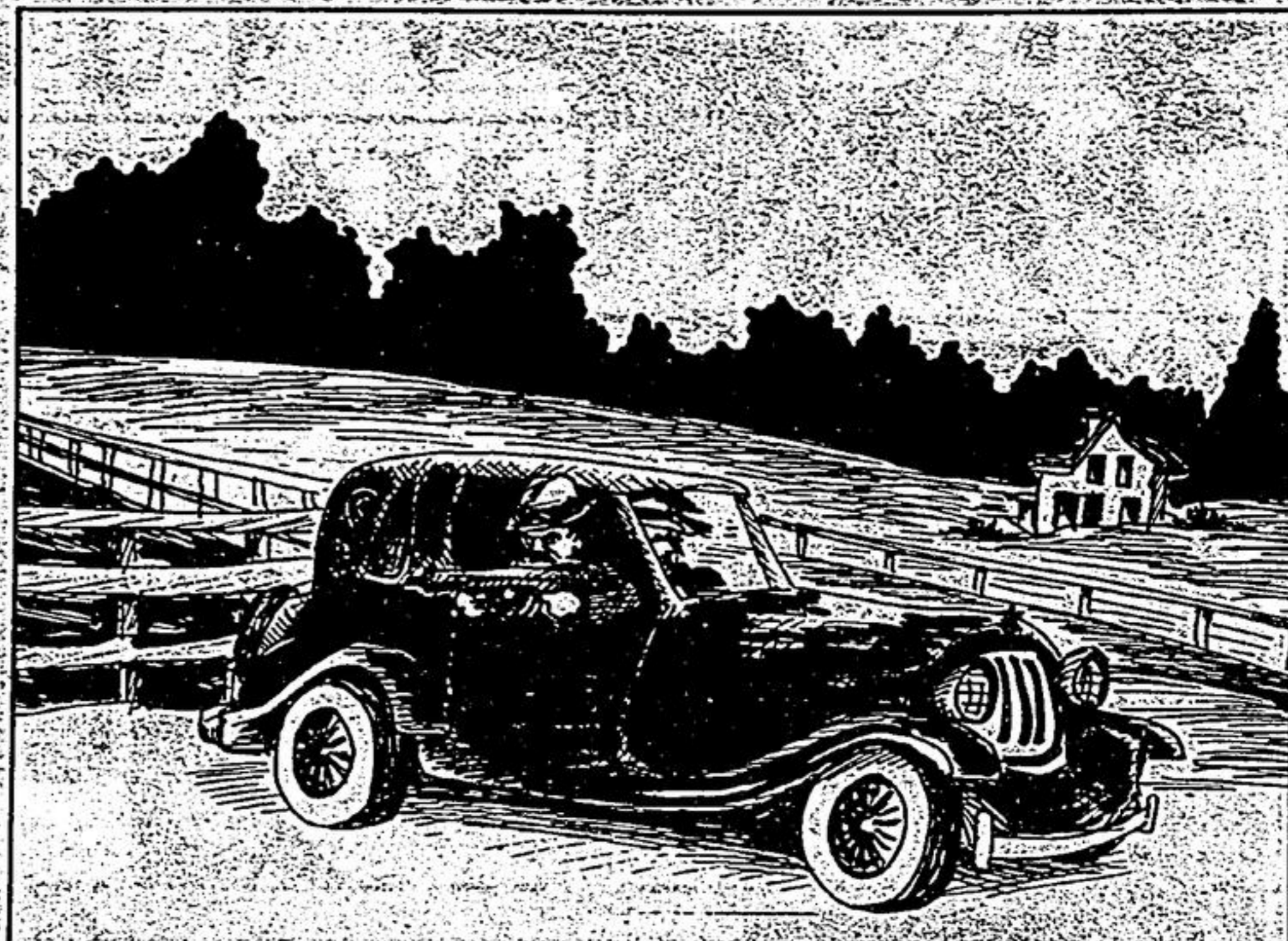
Mason Acton, 85, is an area native who operated an Uxbridge service station until his retirement in 1970, and he also served a five-year stint as a local police constable.

Mr. Acton had his share of run-ins with criminals of the day and even had his car stolen by notorious gangster Red Ryan, who used it as a getaway vehicle during a 1930 crime spree.

"He was a smooth operator. He was pretty slick," Mr. Acton says of Ryan, a cold-blooded killer who was himself shot dead during a Sarnia liquor store hold-up around the start of World War II.

He's convinced it was Ryan and his gang who were involved in several Uxbridge robberies during the '30s, including the one leading to the Claremont shootout.

"I think it was Ryan," says Mr. Acton, noting that Ryan was never convicted in that case.



## Village Box Meats

### SWEETHEART SPECIALS



Boneless, skinless  
**SOLE FILLETS**  
  
**\$11.99**  
3 lb. box

oven/micro  
**PIZZA FINGER STIX**  
  
**\$5.99**  
Tray of 12

oven ready  
**BEEF WELLINGTON**  
• Beef Tenderloin  
Pate & mushroom sauce  
Wrapped in puff pastry  
**\$15.99** Box of 4

NEW Unbreaded  
**STUFFED CHICKEN BREAST**  
With wild & long grain rice.  
**\$17.99** Box of 6  
6 oz.

**ROCK LOBSTER TAILS**  
  
**\$17.99** lb.  
Various sizes  
3-9 oz. Available

GOURMET  
**CORNER NEW YORK STRIPLAIN STEAK**  
  
**\$19.99**  
6x7 oz.

Baby  
**BACK RIBS**  
  
**\$21.99**  
5 lb. box  
(Fully trimmed - no tail or breast plate)

oven bake/micro  
**POTATO SKINS WITH CHEDDAR & BACON**  
  
**\$3.29**  
8 pcs./pkg.

8555 McCowan Rd. Markham (1.5k N. of Hwy #7 near Bivay Store) 471-5260  
Offer expires Feb. 13/90 or while quantities last.  
5 Glen Cameron Place Thornhill (Behind Red Lobster - beside Valdi) 764-0698

VISA, MasterCard, American Express logos.  
**HOURS:**  
MON-FRI: 9:30 AM - 6:00 PM  
SAT: 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM  
SUN: 11:00 AM - 5:00 PM  
**HOURS:**  
MON-WED: 10-3  
THURS-FRI: 10-9  
SAT: 10-5  
SUN: 11-5:30



### THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE NOTICE TO CLOSE, STOP UP AND SELL PORTIONS OF RAM FOREST ROAD AND NORBETT DRIVE

TAKE NOTICE THAT the Corporation of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville intends to pass a by-law to close, stop up and sell those portions of Ram Forest Road shown as Blocks 16 and 17 on Registered Plan 65M-2107 and those portions of Norbett Drive shown as Block 14 on Registered Plan 65M-2107 and Parts 1 and 4, 5, 6 and 7 on Plan 65R-13357, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

AND FURTHER TAKE NOTICE THAT the Council of The Corporation of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville shall, at the hour of 8:00 p.m., Tuesday, February 27th, 1990, in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Buildings at 19 Civic Avenue, Stouffville, Ontario, hear any person who claims that he/she will be adversely affected by the by-law and applies to be heard.

DATED at the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville this 10th day of January, 1990.

Patricia G. Oakes, Clerk  
Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville  
19 Civic Avenue  
Box 419  
Stouffville, Ontario  
L4A 7Z6  
Published a first time the 24th day of January, 1990  
Published a second time the 31st day of January, 1990  
Published a third time the 7th day of February, 1990



### THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE NOTICE OF CHANGING OF STREET NAME

TAKE NOTICE THAT The Corporation of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville intends to pass a by-law to change the name of the street known as Ram Forest North on Registered Plan 65M-2571 and Part 8 on Plan 65R-8735 to Ram Forest Road.

AND FURTHER TAKE NOTICE THAT the Council of The Corporation of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville shall, at the hour of 8:00 p.m., Tuesday, February 27th, 1990, in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Buildings at 19 Civic Avenue, Stouffville, Ontario, hear any person who claims that he/she will be adversely affected by the by-law and applies to be heard.

DATED at the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville this 10th day of January, 1990.

Patricia G. Oakes, Clerk  
Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville  
19 Civic Avenue  
Box 419  
Stouffville, Ontario  
L4A 7Z6  
Published a first time the 31st day of January, 1990  
Published a second time the 7th day of February, 1990