

Stouffville

Close-Up

Mission work worth the effort for busy Stouffville resident

BRUCE STAPLEY
Correspondent

Just a few months ago, Martyn Hartley was running a \$15-million department of a machinery breakdown insurance company, and heading up a staff of 40.

Today, he's a full-time staffer with a Stouffville area mission dedicated to improving the lot of Third World countries, and he's still not sure where his desk is going to be.

For Mr. Hartley, a 42-year-old Stouffville resident and father of three, the decision to chuck his career in business stems back to a family holiday in Jamaica in 1985.

An ardent Christian, and a deacon at Springvale Baptist Church, Mr. Hartley was curious as to what the Jamaican churches were doing to help their people deal with the poverty that is so widespread in that country.

Upon his return home, he contacted the people at Emmanuel International, the grass roots Stouffville missions operation which sends workers and resources to assist local churches in their efforts to improve basic living conditions in Third World villages mired in poverty.

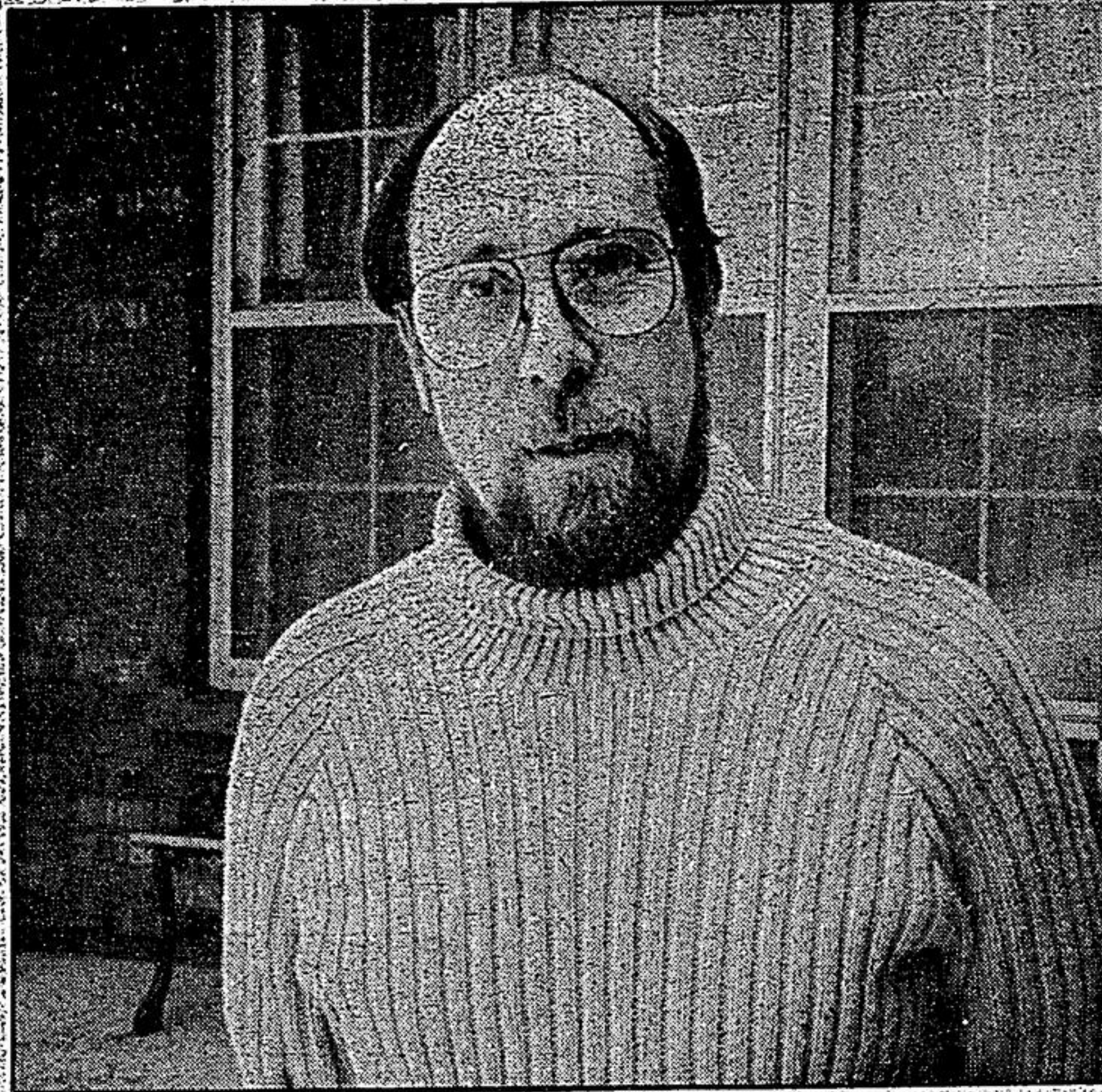
Over the next four years, Mr. Hartley involved himself in the organization of four overseas work projects involving laymen from Stouffville area churches.

The groups would participate in ongoing Emmanuel programs, working shoulder to shoulder with local church workers in Jamaica and Haiti.

"We were involved with things like water improvement, the capping of wells, road work, and rebuilding church-sponsored family centres and facilities," says Mr. Hartley.

He says his decision to take what will end up being a 75 per cent cut in salary to join the Emmanuel team is a matter of doing what he knew he had to do.

"As a result of those short term projects, and out of a desire to serve God, I am encouraged to be drawn into full time work with Emmanuel. You get hooked after



Stouffville resident Martyn Hartley is doing all he can these days to help poverty-stricken peoples in Third

World Countries. His interest in helping less fortunate families stemmed from a family vacation he spent in Jamaica.

you've been involved in these projects, seeing how positive they are."

Mr. Hartley will become the mission's Church Co-ordinator, whose job it will be to present the ministry of Emmanuel to Canadian churches.

"I'll explain how Emmanuel creates links with local churches in developing countries, and how they work under the authority of the local people to help alleviate the daily hardships associated with poverty. We don't want to be seen as an organization which sets up its own 'foreigners' projects. When we leave, we leave it in the hands of trained local people."

Mr. Hartley joins his wife, Jill, who has worked in the missions' financial department since last May.

He will be responsible for lining up most of his own financial support through donations from church members in the Stouffville area and elsewhere.

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The reaction to his resolution to join the mission has been favorable, he says, although, understandably, some people can't fathom why he would make such a severe life adjustment.

"You worry about how the kids will accept it, but they seem to be taking it in stride."

"My clients say they are sad to see me go, but they all wish me well. My oldest son thinks I've taken early retirement, which I had always planned to do."

While Mr. Hartley admits he's heading into an unknown lifestyle, he's optimistic. "I feel that God wants me to be available for this type of work. We'll sell the house and buy a less expensive one."

He insists he's in it for keeps, that it is something he has known he would eventually do ever since making that first trip back to Jamaica in 1985.

"As far as I'm concerned, this is it. Where it's going to lead, I really don't know."

SDSS students bring Shakespeare to town

KATE GILDERDALE
Correspondent

"A fabulous experience," is how Stouffville District Secondary School teacher Jim Rehill described the Shakespeare In Action (SIA) program, which a group of SDSS students from Grades 9 to 13 have been involved in for the past two months.

The program at this school is a pilot project, explained Company Artistic Director Michael Kelly. "The normal work of the company is a day school program we run throughout Metro high schools and junior high schools in grades 8 through 13. The day school program is based on a workshop series and the premise is to make Shakespeare accessible to students."

With funding from the Ontario Arts Council's Theatre in Education department and the York Board of Education, the focus is on demonstrating the relevance of Shakespeare for today's audience.

"The idea is to assist the company to come into the school and work with various departments over an extended period of time with a selected group of students," said Mr. Kelly.



Shakespeare In Action Artistic Director Michael Kelly makes a point during a session with students at SDSS.

"We've done everything from improvisation, movement, Elizabethan dance and African jazz dances," he noted. "During the first four weeks of the program, we took the students through a workshop process to give them the tools needed to present Shakespeare. Then we gave them scenes to start working on. All the stuff in the workshop process is directly related to the scene work."

Students do different scenes from various plays "and the focus is on the individual students and how far one can take them within a given scene." SDSS held an Elizabethan banquet yesterday, where students enacted the scenes they had worked on.

Mr. Kelly said SIA "goes beyond the normal parameters of classroom teaching and provides students with an insight into artists in the community and what it means to be a professional artist. It's unusual for students to have that kind of contact with the outside community."

The company has high expectations of the students who take part, treating them as they would professionals. "They have to be there when they're supposed to be; if they miss a session, they have to have a really good reason." The SDSS students have grown tremendously since the beginning of the project, he noted.

As far as Jim Rehill is concerned, the program has been a very positive experience for all students involved. "People will be absolutely amazed at what these kids are doing," he said. "They've been treated like adults and an adult commitment has been expected from them. They've taken a big load on."

School staff have been very cooperative in working around revised schedules during the five-week program, he reported. "I've enjoyed watching them (the students) advance. The more that's been demanded of them, the harder they've strived for their goals. I'm proud of the work they've done."

Rats won't be welcomed as family pets

I like to think of myself as an involved, caring parent, lavishing on my children every enriching experience known to humanity, so that when they go into counselling, they can't blame their deprived childhood for their damaged psyches.

But I draw the line at a pet rat. Perhaps I'm hard-hearted, but when my nine year old daughter announced that a schoolmate's rat had been blessed with a multiple happy event, a cheery "oh how wonderful, can we have one?" didn't spring to my lips. Her representations to me were brushed aside; hands on experience is fine when it comes to computers - but rats?

Later that day she told me another



kate's corner

kate gilderdale

friend was willing to sell her a cage in which to install ratty so what, precisely, was the problem? She would clean it (as she cleans her room no doubt, once a month whether it needs it or not), feed it (I may not like rats, but I'd hate its death by starvation to be on my conscience), and give it all the nurturing genus rattus desires.

I knew it was hopeless to try a logical approach, so I pointed out that Portia, our resident feline, may not take kindly to a rival,

however unappealing. Indeed, I explained, warning to my theme, ratty would be in considerable danger of ending up as the hors d'oeuvres to Portia's daily gourmet diet of nutritionally correct canned food.

Ratty, I was told, witheringly, would be installed in my daughter's bedroom with the door closed, and Portia would not be admitted without a chaperone.

In vain I tried to explain that drawing parallels between caring

for a goldfish and a rat was hardly fair. Sprinkling a dusting of fish flakes into a tank is simply not in the same league as scrubbing out ratty's cage and having actual physical contact with a live rodent.

While this column could well result in the formation of a league for the protection of rats' rights, nothing can make me feel an empathy for what Funk and Wagnall defines as "a destructive and injurious rodent, larger and more aggressive than the mouse." Now my daughter tells me her friend will buy one for her as a birthday present.

As a confirmed cat lover, I used to worry that my children would beg for a dog or hanker after a hamster, but frankly, rats didn't

cross my mind, and I'm not planning to let them cross my threshold. I'm sure rat fans will tell me that rats are sensitive, that they respond to cuddles, that they're fastidious. Nevertheless, if ratty moves in, I'm moving out.

Rats are creatures which lurk malevolently in Stephen King movies and Allen Poe novels. In medieval times, they roamed the streets carrying the plague, but never have rats as pets even been an outside contender.

At the risk of endangering my close relationship with my daughter and denying Portia a shortlived playmate and snack, I've declared the issue of rat ownership closed.

I don't think even Dr. Spock will condemn me on this one.