

Stouffville and Uxbridge noted in 'Markham 1793-1900'

Anyone looking to gain a little insight into just how we got to where we are today in York and Durham Regions would do well to spend a few hours perusing a book called 'Markham 1793-1900'.

This work, put together by the Committee for the History of Markham Township in 1979, is a veritable treasure chest of factual accounts and personal anecdotes relating to the founding and continuation of the entire area to the north east of Toronto.

For instance, did you know that William Lyon Mackenzie's famous printing press, the one that got chucked into the cold waters of Lake Ontario after wild Willy led the ill fated Rebellion of 1837, ended up in Stouffville, printing the newspaper which would end up giving way to the Stouffville Tribune? The contraption would eventually be shipped off to Uxbridge.

The book also outlines this area's Pennsylvania Dutch connection, how the staunch, upright loyalists from that American state came north by Conestoga wagon in the early 1800s to help develop this part of Upper Canada. With the passage of time, these hard working settlers would change their names from the Germanic Burghalter, Dohner, and Roemer to Burkholder, Doner and Ramer, names considered more adaptable to an English speaking society. These surnames, and numerous others belonging to early pioneers from Pennsylvania, are still very much among us today.

The twinning of Uxbridge with one time Quaker town of Cattawissa, Pennsylvania some years ago has served as an appropriate recognition of the long standing connection between the two areas.

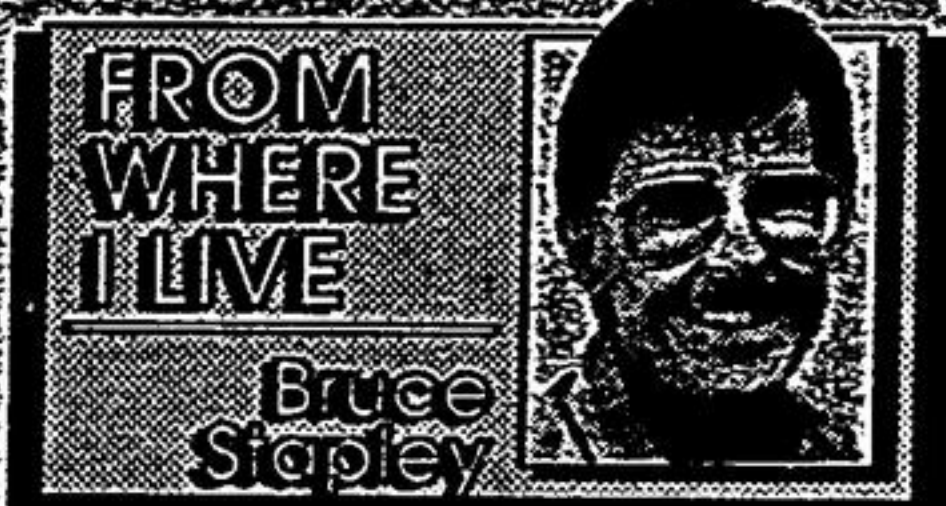
What captured my imagination the Tim Horton is in town

The largest Tim Horton store opened in Markham this week. The store is at the south west corner of Woodbine Ave. and John St. and employs about 35 people either full and part time.

This is the first Tim Horton store to open in Markham. It has a seating capacity of 70 - the largest of more than 500 stores.

Store owner Rainer Gaic said the store will offer an extensive soup and sandwich menu. There will also be the assortment of donuts, muffins, pies, cakes, cookies and tarts the chain is known for. The store will also serve its famous Tim Horton coffee.

The Markham store opened Thursday.



most in the book, however, were the stories of the old wayside inns which once thrived in the regions, back in the days when weary travellers were in need of overnight lodging as they made the trip from town to town by horse drawn vehicle.

In Stouffville, the Mansion House, now rooming house/fast food complex on Main St. near Edward St., was as highly rated a hotel as was to be found anywhere. With the coming of the Toronto and Nipissing Railway to the town in the 1870s, the Mansion House hosted many a grand ball for train loads full of Toronto people of some means.

But the establishment with the proudest past would appear to have been the Queen's Hotel in Unionville. First opened in the 1860s, the Queen's was run by a Mr. and Mrs. John Webber, formerly of Devonshire, England.

Mrs. Webber would make the weekly trip to Toronto by train, paying 40 cents

for her return ticket, and would return heavy laden with supplies for the hotel. She then prepared grand meals on the huge wood burning stove.

On special occasions, the menu included such items as oysters on the half shell, Charlotte Russe and champagne, all for the hefty tariff of 50 cents. The Webbers charged \$2.50 a week for room and board.

The hotel was the focal point of the community. Council sat there, and criminal cases were tried on the site as well.

Ladies would arrive at the formal hotel balls decked out in evening gowns and long white gloves, while the men wore tails. One of the highlights of the Queen's was a formal drawing room with wall to wall red carpet, large gilt edged mirrors, marble topped tables, ornate lamps and a trio of large sofas.

The Queen's would send its own horse drawn bus to meet every train. The hotel became a favorite stopping point for people making the trip to the Markham Fair in horse drawn vehicles.

The Webbers eventually passed over control of the hotel to their grandson who in time sold it to another three-

some. The Queen's remained a going concern when Hwy. 7 and the hydro lines came to Unionville after the 1920s. But with the coming of the automobile, commercial travellers no longer needed overnight accommodation, and the Queen's went the way of so many hotels outside the larger

Ontario urban centres. As the clock of history struck midnight, the ball was over, and the Queen's became a boarding house and snack bar. I can only wonder what fate will have befallen the sparkling new hotel in Stouffville 100 years from now.

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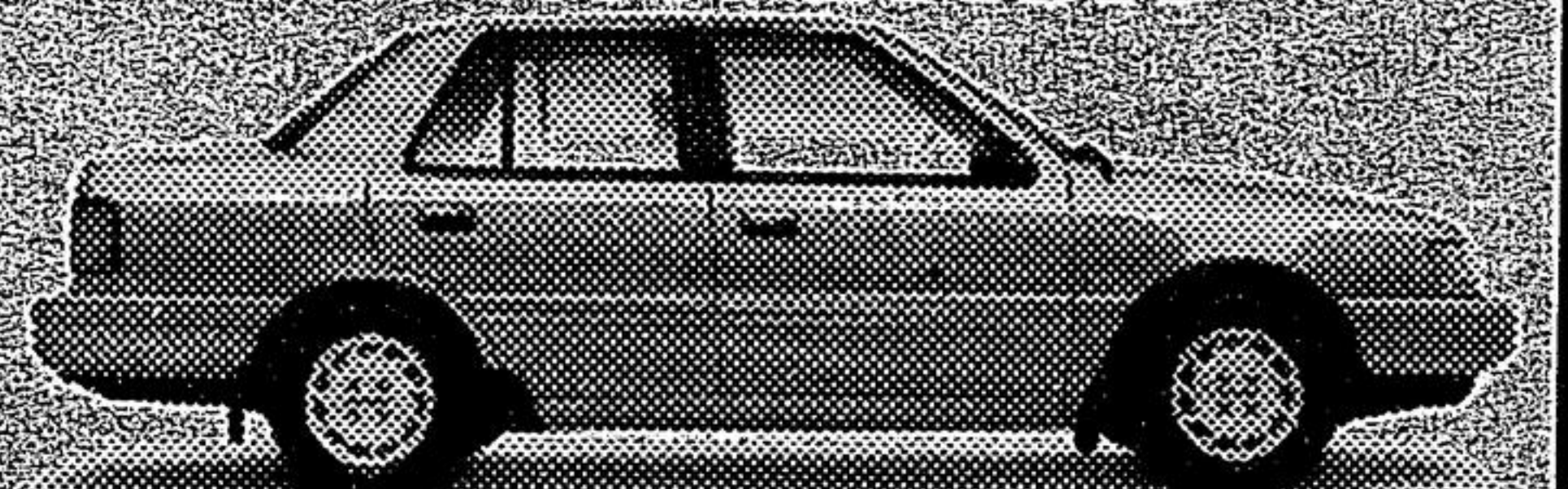
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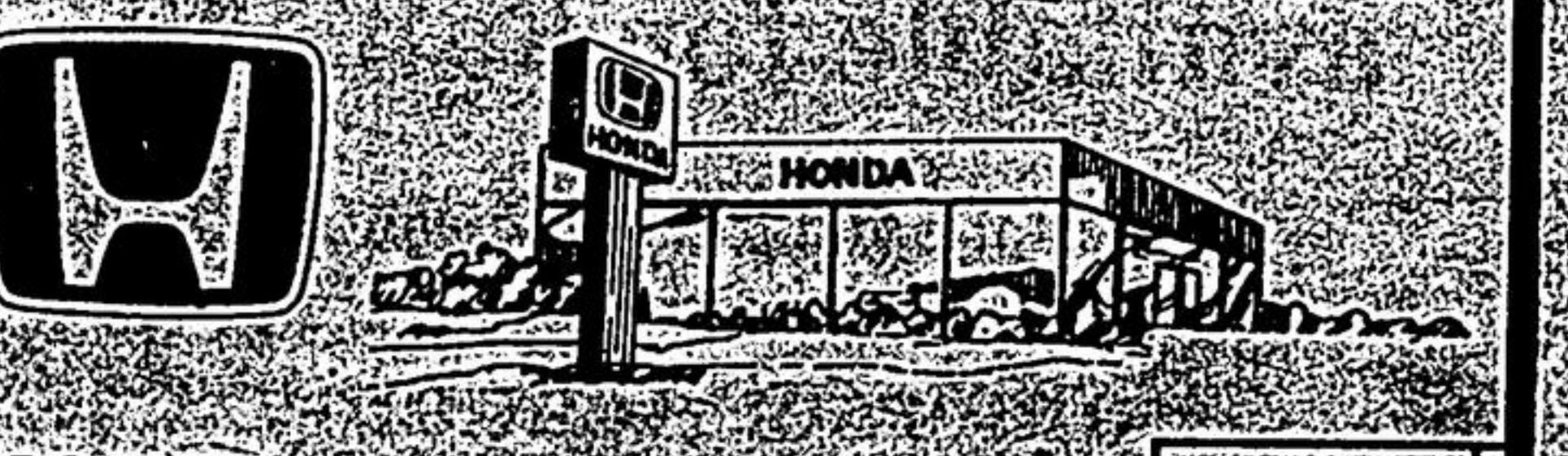
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