

Leaving Stouffville to find good 'ole days

Back to the Future, starring Michael J. Fox, was a top box office attraction two decades ago; so popular, several successful sequels followed.

While far-fetched, they prompted people, particularly older people, to long for the good old days.

Many of us go down this road continually, but never truly believing we can actually turn back the clock.

Don't tell this to Stouffville native Bill Keeping. He and wife Muriel not only believed it, they did it. They moved to a community called Stirling, population 2,172, 10 minutes north of Belleville. And they plan to stay — except on the fourth Thursday of each month when Bill returns to practise his barbering skills at Parkview Home, Parkview Village and Buckingham Manor seniors residences.

While here, he invariably stops at Stouffville's Tim Hortons to catch up on local news. During one of these stop-overs, we renewed acquaintances.

"It was a step back in time," Bill claims, likening Stirling to the Stouffville he knew 40 years ago.

But why Stirling? "We were looking for a small town not too far from our Bancroft cottage," he explained. "I was preparing for retirement and wanted to be ready."

They checked out sites in several communities including Brighton, Madoc and Campbellford. But nothing quite met their requirements. Then, one afternoon, while passing through Stirling, Muriel commented: "I always liked this place."

They stopped, checked with a realtor and were directed to a property meeting their needs. They made an offer the very next day.

After moving in, Bill said to himself: "You know, we can sit here and look out the window, or we can become part of the community."

They selected the latter, with amazing results. Bill became a member of the Foxborough Men's Club, the Centre Hastings Community Services, the Diner's Club, the Stirling Theatre Association, a Bible study and hymn-sing group and, best of all, the Golden Spike Club that meets every Friday morning in a refurbished railroad station in nearby Frankford.

Here, in this unique setting, George and Lois Thompson host a breakfast. But the patrons don't just sit around and talk. They sing songs and play musical instruments.

"They're the greatest group of people one will ever meet," Bill says. "I wouldn't miss it for the world."

While Bill admits he's no



Roaming Around

with Jim Thomas

Luciano Pavarotti, he did agree, on one occasion, to do his vocal thing. It was close to Christmas and he sang Away in a Manger — to a standing ovation.

"You can do what you want," says Bill, "but mostly it's country and gospel."

"The atmosphere's unbelievable," says Bill. "We're like one big happy family."

Shortly after joining the club, Bill suffered a major heart attack. He was declared clinically dead. Offers of assistance immediately flooded their home, along with a card bearing everyone's name.

Word of Bill's brush with death soon circulated throughout the area, prompting speaking engagements everywhere. This personal experience, plus 30 years as a Toronto paramedic, has given him immense knowledge in this field — knowledge he cheerfully dispenses to eager audiences in the area.

Prior to this rewarding career, Bill worked with his dad and brother Dave in a Stouffville family barbershop where Stonehouse Travel's now located.

"The arrival of the Beatles marked the end of my full-time barbering," Bill recalls. "Mothers kept coming in requesting Beatles haircuts for their sons. Instead of every three weeks, it was every three months. It was time for a change."

For Bill and Muriel Keeping, 2003 was, for themselves a time for change. He describes Stirling as "like Stouffville in the 1960s."

"We were looking for a small, friendly community, far from Toronto," he says, "We wanted to turn back the clock."

Bill claims the move has worked to their advantage in two ways — "We've kept the friends we once knew in Stouffville and have made many new friends in Stirling. We've no regrets."

Two towns, two welcome mats, 200 miles apart.

Jim Thomas is a Stouffville resident who has written for area newspapers for more than 50 years.

STUFFED PORK TENDERLOINS

These are the dinner of choice for many. We begin with pork tenderloins which we've trimmed nicely, and then we stuff them with a bread stuffing which is full of fancy dried fruit.

The result? Not only do they present well, they taste even better.

Reg. \$9.95 lb.

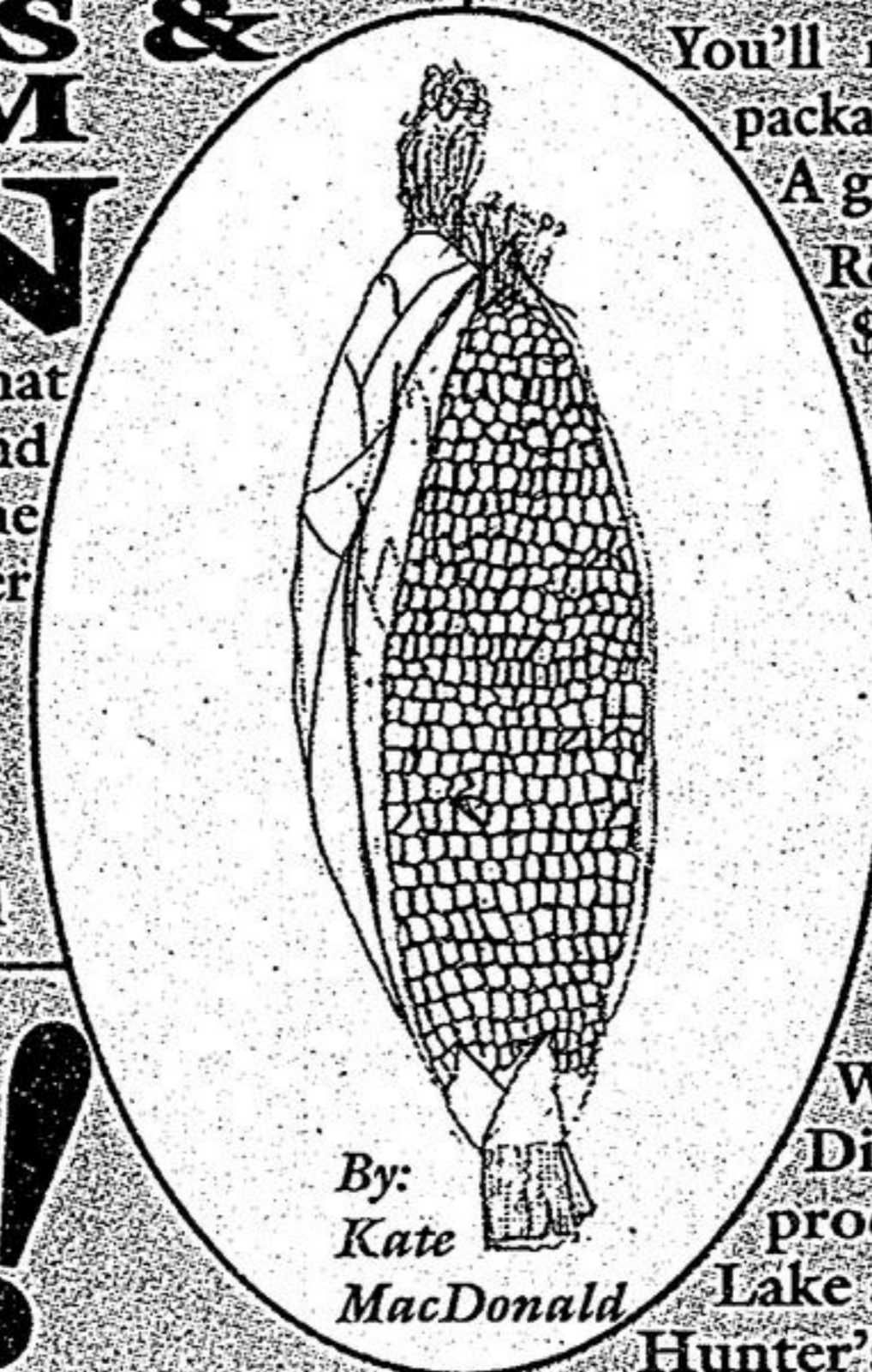
25% OFF THIS WEEK

PEACHES & CREAM CORN

This corn was so good last week that people were back for it again, and sometimes for a third time — and the farmer tells me he has some even better coming along! Same deal as last week —

from Welsh Bros. Farm in Scotland, Ontario.

2.99 dozen



By: Kate MacDonald

SEEDLESS ENGLISH CUKES!

Like most every other product, there are various qualities of English cukes available. The best are those which are 'hand wrapped' — they are the cream of the crop which have been selected as the best. The second best are machine-wrapped, which go through a heat tunnel to shrink the plastic wrap (bad for any produce), and the third quality are 'utilities' which are of irregular size and form. We sell 'hand wrapped' whenever we can throughout the year — and they are now back for the season.

Large size.

Ontario grown!

99¢ Ea.

CATHY'S SUMMER SALAD

We have this salad at home often, but to my mind, not often enough. She boils cobs of corn and then cuts the kernels off in swaths, de-seeds and then dices local tomatoes and sweet onions, and then seasons it with some light oil and rice vinegar.

Add some chopped fresh basil and oregano, and voila! It's great at either room temperature or chilled.

Very light and refreshing.

99¢ 100 g this week

WILD ONTARIO BLUEBERRIES

I try to eat a bowl of these every morning to stay sharper than my kids — but I think that I'm losing ground. One thing though, they're really delicious just as they are, with a touch of sugar, or with a major dollop of vanilla ice cream.

500 L container

3.99 Ea.

LASAGNA! WEEK

We make three types of lasagna for our frozen entree section, and all three will be on sale this week. The types are: our meat lasagna with lots of meat sauce, ricotta, onions, mozzarella and parmesan, (fresh noodles). Next is our vegetable lasagna, made with tomato cream sauce, onions, fresh noodles, lots of oven-roasted vegetables and lots of cheese, and thirdly, our chicken lasagna, made with fresh noodles too, plus mushrooms, shallots, white wine and, as always, lots of cheese!

You'll need to follow the directions on the package!

A great meal.

Reg. \$14.95 and \$15.95

Serves 3 - 4

25% OFF THIS WEEK

NIAGARA PEACHES

We get these through my friend Doug Dineley who operates a couple of great produce markets in Niagara-On-The-Lake and St. Catharines. They're from Bob Hunter's Farm who, according to Doug, is 'the biggest and best peach grower in Niagara!'

The variety is 'Harrow diamond' which is a variety unique to the Niagara area. It's semi-free stone and a very good-eating early peach.

Available in 3 L baskets.

3.99 ca.

SQUARE DEAL!

All of our decadent dessert squares will be on sale this week. Our varieties will include: double chocolate brownies, cream cheese brownies, lemon-coconut squares, pecan squares, nanaimos, creme de methe nanaimos, date squares and our frosted lemon squares, which were a big hit during our lemon week.

These are cut in 3" x 3" (approx.) size — it's a minor meal.

Reg. \$2.49 ea.

25% OFF THIS WEEK

ONION JAM

This is a new product which we've made. We use sweet onions, red wine, a touch of both cranberry and apple juice, olive oil and spices.

I first had this in Gaston's Restaurant on Markham Street off Bloor a long time ago — and loved it. Use it as a condiment for roast or grilled chicken, pork or veal, with pate, cheese — or as an additive to sauces, or even as an hor d'oeuvre on crackers. Its real good!

OCTOBERFEST SAUSAGES

This is my favourite sausage. They're made with coarse-ground pork, marjoram, mace (an underrated spice), coriander and nutmeg.

Reg. \$3.99 lb.

Great with a glass of beer!

25% OFF THIS WEEK

SPECIALS IN EFFECT UNTIL CLOSING SUNDAY AUGUST 7TH

Hours:

Mon. 11:00-7:00 ~ Tues.-Thurs. 9:00-7:00 ~ Fri. 9:00-8:00

Sat. 9:00-6:00 ~ Sun. 10:00-5:00

548 Carlton Road, Unionville

940-1770

