

## Love of children keeps Vi youthful

Whether in the quiet of her Eastern Gate home or seated among friends at Stouffville's Tim Hortons, Vi Renwick's smile lights up the room.



**Roaming Around**

with Jim Thomas

How would anyone guess that, on April 28, this lovely woman will mark her 91st birthday. She could pass for someone half her age.

Born Viola Bunker, one of six in the family of Norman and Margaret Bunker, Vi grew up in the hamlet of Altona, two miles east of town.

She, along with brothers Clarence, Harvey and Mervyn and sisters Leta (Carson) and Ethel (Wagg), attended Altona Public School.

"Irene Harper of Goodwood was my first teacher," Vi recalls. "She was wonderful. She gave me a good start."

She recalls as many as 32 children crowded into eight classes in one room.

While Glasgow was really her rightful school, because of a distance factor, the boundary line was altered.

"I could walk home for lunch," Vi remembers.

Discipline was strict, recalls Vi. "If you received the strap at school, you would surely get it at home," she says. Because she completed grades 7 and 8 in one year, Vi graduated at age 12. She wrote her final exams at Claremont, then stayed home to help her parents.

Vi remembers snowbanks so high she could walk over the tops of fences. Her dad thought nothing of driving the horse and cutter eight miles to the farm of her grandparents, Fred and Elizabeth Bunker, on the Ninth Line of Markham.

Vi and her family attended church on the site of what is now Stouffville Christian School. The Mennonite and Christian congregations held services there on alternate Sundays. Open-air baptisms were sometimes conducted at the Altona pond.

The site was also a favourite place to skate. She remembers her father curling there.

It was all family fun, she recalls, including sleigh rides down Hodgins' Hill.

Vi and Richard Jones were married in Midland Oct. 23, 1933. Rev. Auld, formerly of Markham, performed the ceremony. Although still in her teens, this was normal back then, she explains.

"If a girl was 19 or 20 and not married, she was considered an old maid," she laughs.

Vi and her husband operated a store and a seven-stool lunch counter on Woodbine Avenue, south of Hwy. 7.

One of their regulars was Joe Primeau, former coach of the Toronto Maple Leafs. In 1952, you could buy a bowl of soup, sandwich and coffee for

55 cents, she recalls.

For 11 years, she worked at Simpson's, at Fairview Mall and Scarborough Town Centre.

In 1981, after the death of her first husband, Vi married Charles Renwick in a ceremony at Melville United Church.

"Our first date was a dance in Goodwood Hall," Vi recalls. "We both loved dancing." Friends often referred to them as the old smoothies.

They lived on Kennedy Lane, south of Stouffville Road, but spent 17 wonderful winters in Florida. Mr. Renwick died last year.

Vi is proud of her family, a son Bruce of London, Ont., a daughter Dorene Howe of Bolton, 11 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren. A great-granddaughter, Crystal Shepherd of Kincardine, will be married in August.

Vi moved to Eastern Gate six years ago and loves it. Rooms upstairs and down are filled with family photos. She describes her neighbours as wonderful.

Vi drives her 1999 Dodge van downtown for groceries, but not on Hwy. 401.

"I've never had an accident," she says, "and only two tickets."

At age 80, she enjoyed her first ride on a motorcycle, an event captured by a Toronto Star photographer and retained by Vi for posterity.

Despite the Leafs, pre-playoff exit, Vi loves the team dearly. She's also an enthusiastic Blue Jays baseball fan.

She seldom misses The Gaithers Sunday gospel music TV program and already has a ticket for their May concert in London.

The secret of her longevity?

"I love children," she says. "They keep me young". She also adheres to an adage often spoken by her father: "If you can't say something good about someone, don't say anything." Then, she adds: "I love everyone, but some better than others."

Happy birthday, Vi. Keep on brightening people's lives.

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

## OUR SIRLOIN STEAK

I've explained a couple times that these are not the most tender of steaks, but they sure do have a following which would include my wife. These are cut from beef that has all been picked by me — so I'm the one to blame if it's not quite right.

One thing we do is sell only the centre cuts.

Reg. \$8.95/lb.

P.S. — We'll be making our sirloin burgers as well.

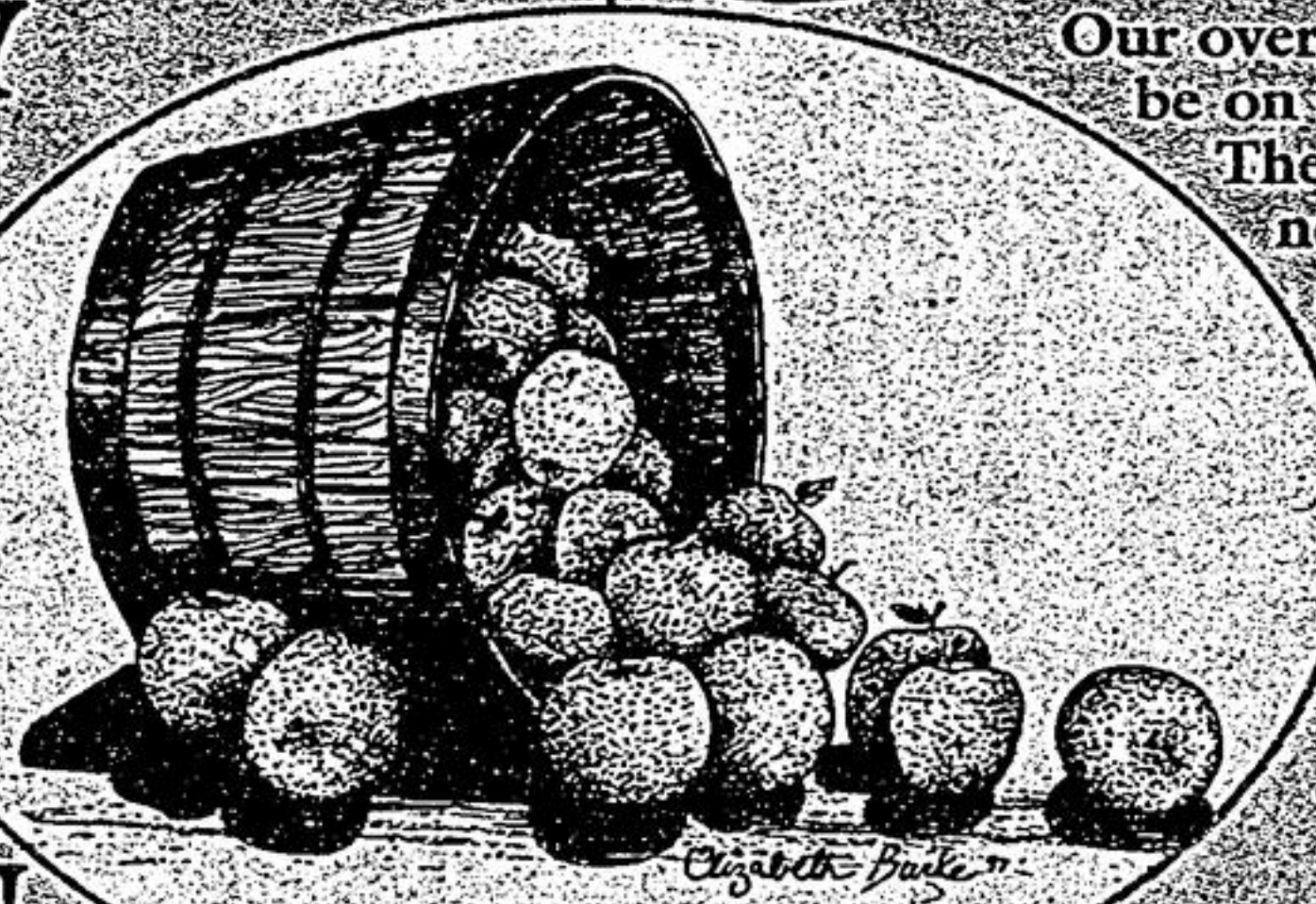
**25% OFF THIS WEEK**

## BEEF BARLEY SOUP

Our feature soup is Beef Barley. I love the heartiness of this soup — it has great flavour, lots of beef (brisket point) and it's filling.

Reg. \$5.99 ea.

**25% OFF THIS WEEK**



## WHAT'S COOKIN' AT THE DELI!

This is the big day folks, there will be lemon chicken happening in our dinner counter. The big chef has put me off for long enough on this. When we eat Chinese at home, this is all I need.

We'll also be making some calamari, New Zealand style, breaded with a touch (just a touch) of cayenne.

## CALIFORNIA STRAWBERRIES

Our overfilled quarts of strawberries will be on sale this week.

These are from a newer area of California and they're great.

**1.99** Quart

## WHAT'S BAKING! THIS WEEK!

This is apple week in our little bakery. We've got a lot of apples happenin'.

We'll be making.....

• **SPICED APPLE CUSTARD CAKES**, these are the same as the fruit-topped variety, except the spiced apples will be baked in and over the top. If you can't get it all eaten in one day, don't despair, it's even better the next. Two sizes: **\$14<sup>95</sup> & \$22<sup>95</sup> ea.**

• **APPLE TURNOVERS**, made with our homemade puff pastry lots of filling. **\$2<sup>99</sup> ea.**

• **DEEP DISH APPLE PIES**, these are the big ones folks. They'll be available with either a lattice or streusel topping. Two sizes: **\$6<sup>95</sup> & \$15<sup>95</sup> ea.**

• **APPLE SUGAR COOKIES**, our painted cookies are always a hit — so many types — always very pretty, always done by hand. This week they'll be apple, in keeping with the theme. **\$2<sup>49</sup> ea.**

• **APPLE CRISPS**, I love these because they're so easy and comfortable. You just put them in the oven when your dinner comes out — and when it's time for dessert (and coffee) your dessert is warm and ready — and your house smells like you've been baking all day. **\$10<sup>95</sup> ea.**

• **APPLE-CURRENT WALNUT SCONES**, it's a sparked-up scone with lots happening. Reg. **\$1<sup>49</sup> ea.**

• **APPLE CHEESECAKE FLAN**, we bought some deeper flan pans to make these — they have a shortbread crust, apple slices with cinnamon and our cheesecake. A rustic dessert. Two sizes: **\$12<sup>95</sup> & \$22<sup>95</sup> ea.**

• **APPLE-FRANGIPANE SQUARE**, this is made in a foil, with almond creme (frangipane), spiced apples on a shortbread crust with brandied custard. It's all good! One size **\$9<sup>95</sup> ea.** — Best to serve a bit warm!

**25% OFF WHILE THEY LAST**

## TEXAN SAUSAGES

These are a fairly sparky pork sausage with enough bite to notice. We use coarse-ground pork and we make them a little bigger than most others.

Reg. \$3.99/lb

**25% OFF THIS WEEK**

## CHEESE PLEASE!

Our little cheese feature this week will be Irish Cheddar with Porter. Porter, to the uninitiated, is a dark ale, which, in this case, adds a lot to the character of this cheese.

Reg. \$5.49/100g

**1/3 OFF THIS WEEK**

## CHICKEN PIES

Many folk from the trade come to visit our store to see what — and how — we do what we do. Usually they'll ask how we got started in the frozen entree business. It seems to me that we've done it forever — but when I think back, Doreen's Chicken Pies were the first thing (and for the longest time, the only thing) that we made. When it came to having a huge backlog of orders, we realized that our customers were telling us something. So this is it, folks, the 'Charter Member' of our frozen entree business that has grown quite large indeed.

Reg. \$14.95 ea.

Serves 3-4

**25% OFF THIS WEEK**

## CANTALOUPE

We have a load of amazing 'lopes for this week. They are thin-skinned, bright orange and full of sugar.

Size '9' which is very large.

**1.99** ea.

## WHAT'S HAPPENIN' OUTSIDE!

We've got lots of pansies, some in the very large bowls, medium bowls and lots of flats with more arriving on Friday. We also have another shipment of the round Kalanchoe bowls that we had at Easter.

## OUR WEBSITE

has been tweaked a bit — have a look at what we've done!

## ... A SPECIAL! THANKS!

Kevin and I want to thank all who contributed — and bid on our 'Mystery Packages' at the Hospital Gala. For those of you who weren't in Paris, they fetched \$68,000 — *Many Many Thanks!*



**SPECIALS IN EFFECT UNTIL CLOSING SUNDAY APRIL 22<sup>ND</sup>**

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

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