

Politicians erred at Nineteen on Park

Since I served as a volunteer with the Clock Tower Theatre Association from 1995 through 2007, I honestly felt the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville owed me and my colleagues something, even a letter of thanks.

However, for whatever reason, since no memo of appreciation, written or verbal has been forthcoming, I decided Saturday to take the law into my own hands.

I borrowed a brick from the Nineteen on the Park job site in downtown Stouffville.

While I won't dwell on the importance of my prize, there's a scant possibility this age-old chunk of baked clay could be the missing hinge between a century-old movie house and a brand new arts centre.

I'll run the risk. If this all sounds like a get-even soliloquy, you're right.

Clock Tower theatre group members did everything expected of them, even to digging into pockets and purses for membership money.

Not to mention the fact they raised thousands of dollars to cover requested, but rejected, planning proposals.

The result? Total dismissal.

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Like the committee never existed. Twelve years of service down the drain.

So what do we have? Only a shell, a fragile skeletal structure requiring eight steel props to hold it up.

Rightly or wrongly I keep hoping the ghosts of the former home of the Stanley Theatre will, some night soon, whip up winds of sufficient strength to knock the wretched remains to the ground.

For that's where it belongs. And that's what I've always contended, even though most committee cohorts felt differently.

Start fresh, I once argued. This way, the area's artsy folk could have a building that suited their needs and the town could save a hunk of cash.

But no, there's always of a segment of populace that



Roaming Around

with Jim Thomas

sees irreplaceable beauty in something old. Despite the fact a major overhaul usually proves impractical.

The other option to a favoured new structure on the Civic Avenue site could have been a blended addition to the Lebovic Centre, already a hive of activity with plenty of parking.

Unfortunately, our politicians, already pressured to do something, bowed to the whims of a vocal minority.

So we have what you see: an ugly, decrepit building, grossly undersized for a community bursting at the seams.

I call it tunnel vision. You'll call it sour grapes.

No, I'm not a member of the Start-Up Team. And I feel sorry for those who are: chairperson Harry French, Councillor Susanne Hilton, Jane Bishop, Eric Button, Dorie Billich, Brenda McGowan, Nancy Matheson, Elizabeth Plashkes, Kym Pyke, Bob Stover and Kathi Wood.

All good people with the needs of the town in tow.

Unfortunately, the parameters in which they're forced to work are so small, their hands are virtually tied.

History may prove me wrong.

This downtown ugly duckling may emerge as a graceful swan.

This former bowling alley, market place and movie theatre may some day shine like a priceless gem.

Colourful productions may light up the stage six nights a week and audiences may flock to the site from kilometres around.

I hope.

However, on this occasion, I wish council had momentarily forgotten the past and concentrated on the future.

That's where the life of our town lies.

Regardless, I retain in my 'room of memories' one Stanley Theatre brick.

It looks as forlorn as its brittle counterparts scattered about a site some still regard as sacred.

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

FLYERS

Inserts for Thursday, July 17, 2008

- 2001 AUDIO VIDEO*
- A & P*
- ASIAN GOURMET*
- BAD BOY*
- BEST BUY*
- CANADIAN TIRE*
- COAST MOUNTAIN SPORTS*
- DOMINION*
- EVEREST COLLEGE*
- FIRST STUDENT*
- FOOD BASICS*
- FOODLAND*
- FUTURE SHOP*
- GIANT TIGER*
- HENRY'S CAMERA*
- HOME DEPOT*
- KATHY'S NAILS*
- LEON'S*
- LOBLAW'S*
- LONGO'S*
- LOWES*
- M & M MEATS*
- MAYTAG*
- MDG COMPUTER*
- NATIONAL SPORTS*
- NEVADA BOB'S*
- PRICE CHOPPERS*
- REAL CANADIAN SUPERSTORE*
- RONA*
- SEARS*
- SHOPPERS DRUG MART*
- SOBEY'S*
- THE BAY*
- THE BRICK*
- THE SOURCE BY CIRCUIT CITY*
- WAL-MART*
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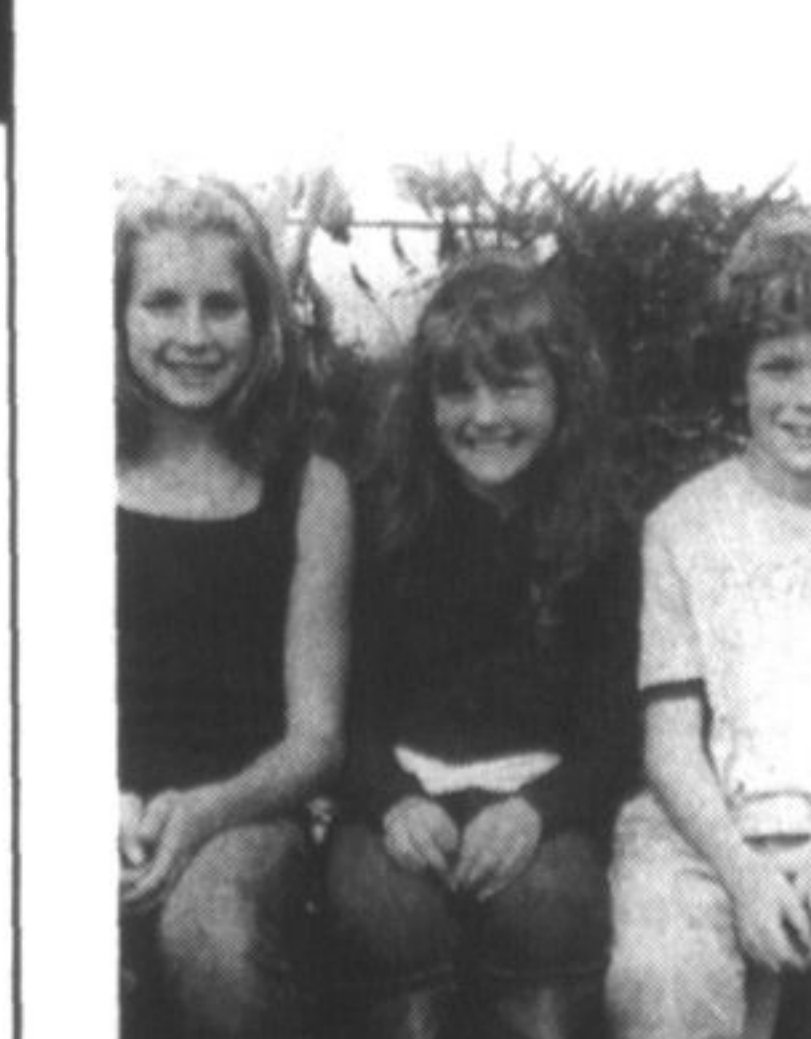
What's On in Whitchurch-Stouffville

Olde Tyme Picnic

In support of Drowning Prevention Day

Saturday July 26
2-5 p.m.
Memorial Park

Join us for a FREE family day at the park that includes a swim, games and relays at the outdoor pool, live music in the park, art activities, old fashioned relays and games in the park, face painting, storytelling, games and puzzles for adults and youth. As a part of our fundraising, you can discover the "pitchburst" machine. An updated version of the dunk tank. Soak or get soaked, its all good fun for a good cause. Bring your toonies...



Leisure Services

Lebovic Leisure Centre, 30 Burkholder Street, Stouffville
Phone: 905-642-PLAY (7529)

Summer Camp

Great new additions to our summer camp schedule. An Island Adventure, starting July 28, now features an **EXOTIC ANIMAL SHOW**. Pirates Cove, starting August 11, now features a visit from a **REAL PIRATE**, ahoy matey!

Scavenger Hunt

Thank you everyone who participated in the June is Recreation and Parks month scavenger hunt. Many people enjoyed both locations for the hunt and we had a record number of submissions. Winners have been contacted to pick up their prizes at the Leisure Centre. Scavenger hunt forms are still available at the Leisure Centre, should you want to explore the community in a fun way.

Library

30 Burkholder Street, Stouffville
Phone: 905-642-READ (7323) or 1-888-603-4292

<h4>A Summer Afternoon</h4> <p>Pilgrimage to the Himalayas A film screening as a spiritual journey with Victor Demko Thursday, Aug. 21 12:00-4:45 pm Cost \$47.25 Preregistration is required.</p>	<h4>Whitebread's Art Camp</h4> <p>July 28 - August 1 at the Library OR August 11 - 15 at the Lemonville Community Centre 9:00-3:00 Ages 8-11 Cost \$130/child Pre-registration is required!</p>
<p>Monday, July 21st 1:30 pm "Racing Stripes" Rated PG Free Admission</p>	<p>Interested in learning or improving chess skills??? Summer Chess Camp Sundays, July 6 - August 24 1:00-2:00 pm Age 7+ Pre-registration is required.</p>
<p>Laugh Out Loud Summer Reading Program Read at leisure and for pleasure with a bonus of earning fantastic prizes! Call or visit the Library for details</p>	

Museum

14732 Woodbine Avenue, Gormley
Phone: 905-727-8954 or 1-888-290-0337

This is YOUR Museum...

Come lend a hand at the Car Show!

Do you like antique cars? Do you enjoy contributing in your community? The Museum is looking for volunteers to help at the BBQ, the Tea Garden or at the admissions gate during our 35th Annual Car Show. Give us a call before August 1st if you're interested. Training will be provided at our informal Prep Rally on Wednesday, August 6th.

35th Annual Antique & Classic Car Show

Sunday, August 10, 2008
11:00am - 4:00pm

Join us as Exhibitors from across southern Ontario display their prized antique & classic cars. Food available in the Tea Room or hot off the BBQ. Historic buildings are open with heritage demonstrations, children's activities and live entertainment to provide fun for the whole family.

Admission: \$5.00 (children under 7 free)
\$12.00 per family of up to 4
Rain date: August 17th, 2008

For more information, visit us online:
Town: www.townofws.com
Library: www.whitchurch-library.on.ca