

Rink memories live on

Stouffville has two arenas and four ice pads. Each arena has one snack bar. So what's so unusual? All arenas have eating areas where players and spectators can grab a bite. However, for those old enough to remember, none can quite compare with the refreshment booth in the since departed ice rink on Park Drive, across from Latham Hall.

What made this snack site so special? Two staff mainstays, Betty Grove and Mary Moffatt. Because of their infectious personalities, people enjoyed dropping by, not just for a coffee or a Coke, but for a visit. And both ladies were always willing to oblige.

Betty, 80, has lived in Stouffville more than 60 years, coming here from Scarborough. Mary, 84, was a Burlington resident until 1968 when she, husband John and family moved to town. Betty has four sons, one daughter, five grandchildren and one great grandchild. Mary has one son, one daughter and five grandchildren.

"I'd never before heard of Stouffville," Mary says, "but I fell in love with the town on our first visit."

In total, Betty spent 23 years on the snack bar staff, including four years at the current arena on Ninth Line. Mary also worked at both locations, including 18 years at "the barn" as it was commonly called.

Mary recalls the day she responded to a newspaper ad and was interviewed. She talked to rink manager Joe Lewis and two arena shareholders, Eldred King and Bob Hassard. She was hired on the spot.

"Betty, my very dear friend, was already there," Mary said. "We both soon became comfortable in our work and with each other." She describes Mr. Lewis as "a terrific boss, an employer who allowed each of us to do our own thing without looking over our shoulders."

"It was a family affair," she says, declaring maintenance employee Ken Kirby as "one of the finest gentlemen I've ever met." In addition to regular duties, Mr. Kirby along with fellow custodian Bud Lehman sharpened skates.

"Joe (Lewis), counted on we women to handle duties off the ice," says Betty. "He was particular about everything he did. It was a big job, more responsibilities than most people were aware."

The snack bar operation was very personal, Mary says. "Often, we knew what customers wanted before they asked." Both could greet most patrons by name.

"We always had lots of coffee on hand," Betty said. Hotdogs, hamburgers, chocolate bars and chips were also popular. During hockey playoffs, with the rink filled to the rafters, the snack bar area "was a zoo", Betty said.

The season-end figure skating show was always a highlight, says Mary. So were the skaters.

"Betty Acton and Blanche Cook were wonderful skaters," Mary said. "And Keith Acton too," she adds. "Keith still remembers me and always says hello," says Betty, "but now that he's in Edmonton, (associate coach of the Oilers), I don't see him as often as I'd like."

Betty also recalls the day the old arena was demolished. "There was a cloud of dust like you wouldn't believe," she remembers, "lucky for me, the wind was in the right direction."

"I came home and cried," Mary says.

While the arena with its legendary snack bar is gone, Betty Grove and Mary Moffatt retain many fond memories.



Roaming Around

with Jim Thomas

Jim Thomas is a Stouffville resident who has written for area newspapers for more than 60 years.

IT'S THANKSGIVING

in the States

— and we're doing a little culinary salute to our good friends south of the border. It's hard to have a neighbour as big as they are, and not have a considerable influence on what we do, and food isn't an exception to that. A great deal of fresh produce, and a lot of other items and recipes come from the States, and we'll be giving them a nod on the occasion of their biggest holiday of the year.

WHAT'S FOR LUNCH?

Lunch will be oven Roasted Turkey, Avacado, Tomato and Red Onion Slivers, lots of mixed greens and Chipotle Mayo on a San Francisco-style Sour Dough Bun. **\$7.99 ea.**

Also — a heads-up that we'll have fresh gluten-free bread available Friday!

For Sunday Brunch, we'll be starting with New England Clam Chowder followed by either New Orleans Chicken and Penne Pasta, or El Paso Fajitas, with either mashed potatoes or rice, tea or coffee and a token dessert (or two). Served from 11:00 am till 2:00 pm. All for ... **\$10.95**

SIRLOIN STEAK ROASTS

The correct nomenclature for these would be 'top sirloin roasts', but we use our own names so that we don't get confused. These are cut from the same meat that we cut the steaks from, and then we lean it out to make sure you don't have waste and unusable bits. They are good oven roasts, and especially good if you prefer leaner cuts of beef. Sizes range from 2lb to a max of about 7lb, which is more than enough to feed a dozen. Reg. \$9.95/lb **25% OFF THIS WEEK**

CANTELOUPES

These are now plentiful after a period of pretty stiff pricing. Country of origin here is Guatemala, and they are quite sweet and nice — and size 9's, so you'll find them worthwhile to cut and prepare. **\$1.99 ca. THIS WEEK**

DEL MONTE PINEAPPLES

These are super-sweet pines from Costa Rica. We bought the largest size this week — 5's — and they are too big to fit in our coring machine, so you'll have to slice them at home. **\$2.99 ca. THIS WEEK**

KETTLE CHIPS

I was surprised to learn that 'potato chips' as we know them originated in Saratoga Springs, New York, and spread from there around the world. We'll have a feature on 'Kettle Chips' this week. All flavours. **1/3 OFF THIS WEEK** 220g bag. Regular \$3.99

PIZZA PIZZAZ!

Since smoking meat is a long time American tradition, we'll start with Smoked Turkey, then add some North of the Border Brie, our Brandied Cranberries and some Cippolini onions. Eat up... it's delicious!

WHAT'S BAKING THIS WEEK?

We are making traditional American Desserts this week! Interesting thing is that all of these were invented in the late 1800's and early 1900's, mostly by hotel chefs, and they are still going strong today and holding their place as most popular desserts in the USA, and around the world.

KEY LIME PIES — One of Florida's best gifts to the world. Folks who have had our Key Lime Pie say that it is even better than the ones from the Keys! Graham crust filled with a mix of egg yolks, fresh lime juice and rind and condensed milk. Topped with whipped cream and fresh lime slices. We bake ours, however the original is not even baked but the interaction between condensed milk and lime juice thickens the mix. **\$14.95 each.**

CHICAGO TRIPLE CHOCOLATE BROWNIES — Brownies were invented by the chef of Chicago's Palmer Hotel at the end of 19th century, when Mrs. Palmer requested a dessert that would be smaller than a slice of cake and easy to pack in a lunch box. Voilà...the ever-popular brownie! We make ours with unsweetened chocolate — melted with butter, add a bit of flour, sugar, chocolate chunks, and cocoa powder. After baking they are glazed with ganache. Best when eaten at room temperature. **\$2.99 each.**

CHOCOLATE CHUNK COOKIES — Originally made by the owner of Toll House Inn, Massachusetts, since then they've spread like wildfire all around United States. It really took off when the American soldiers stationed overseas requested "Toll House Cookies" in their care packages from home. Everybody has their own version. We make ours with the large semi-sweet chocolate pellets, lots of butter, and both white and brown sugar (just like the original). Available both in our octagonal packages and the large individual size. **\$7.95/container or \$2.29 per large single cookie.**

NEW YORK RED VELVET CAKE — Red Velvet Cake is commonly considered a Southern cake, but it was originally invented by the chef of the famous Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York. The beautiful texture, flavor and color come from the reaction between buttermilk, baking powder and cocoa powder. We add a bit of red food color, sour cream and apple cider vinegar to enhance the process. Our version has a layer of ganache inside along with cream cheese icing. **\$15.95 and \$24.95** **25% OFF THIS WEEK**

All of these items are ... *While quantities last!*

ROGERS' CHOCOLATES

We do have some of their great Advent Calendars yet, as well as a very large assortment of their famous chocolate, in all shapes and flavours. If you have ever been to the original store out in Victoria, you'll know that it's the epicentre of chocolate in Canada.

WHAT'S COOKING AT THE DELI

We'll start with salad, and in this case it's the KENTUCKY COLE SLAW. If I recall correctly, this recipe is from an old 'gourmet' magazine (we've got a few at home) and its main feature is red cabbage with the green, in a vinaigrette. It's light and refreshing. **1/3 OFF** Regular \$1.49/100g

Next, we'll be making NEW ENGLAND CLAM CHOWDER. This is the creamier version, with onions, carrots, celery, potatoes, cream — and the clams, of course! **\$7.95** Litre

Following that will be EL PASO CHICKEN FAJITAS. We use our chicken breasts, sweet onions, poblano peppers, tomatoes, shredded cheese, lemon, and sour cream on tortillas. **\$7.95**

Next up, we'll have MAC AND CHEESE. This is the frozen version made in 8"x5" foils, which I find to be just enough for one if you're watching the hockey game from your easy chair. You'll need ketchup, and possibly a beer, to make the meal complete. **25% OFF THIS WEEK** Regular \$11.95 each.

And lastly, we'll have a soup, from the frozen zone as well, and this week it's Chicken Vegetable. We use lots of chicken and lots of veggies to make this. It's quite hardy. 900ml size. **25% OFF THIS WEEK** Regular \$7.95.

CAJUN SAUSAGES

To make these we use a Paul Prudhomme Seasoning; that's the guy who brought you blackened food, although most anyone who cooks has blackened something anyway. It's a fairly unique seasoning with a bit of heat, just so you know. **25% OFF THIS WEEK** Regular \$4.99 lb.

BELLAVITANO CHEESE

This is one of my fave cheeses, and I like any and all of the flavours of this fairly firm and crumbly cheese. Available in raspberry, balsamic, merlot. And as usual, samples abound. **1/3 OFF OR LESS** Regular \$6.29/100g

ELEGANT HAMPERS

We've got lots now and they can be tailored to your particular needs — both for individuals and corporate clients. See either Robert or me in the store and we'll look after your needs.

HOCKEY WITH HEART

We begin our Christmas Street Walks this weekend. We will visit on Saturday with a Bag and a note, and return Sunday in force to pick it up. To find out if we'll be on your street, visit: www.thevillagegrocer.com. Also, our Twitter and Facebook accounts are now active, with a website to come shortly.

SPECIALS IN EFFECT FROM THURSDAY TO CLOSING SUNDAY, DEC. 1st



Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8:00-8:00
Sat. 8:00-6:00 - Sun. 9:00-6:00
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