

Turning Back the Clock

Historic photo submitted
courtesy of Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum



Young ladies got beautifully dressed up for their Sunday school class at Stouffville Missionary Church in days gone by. Back row: Jessie Wideman, Emma Schell, Marjorie Mertens, Frances Shirk, Frances Reesor, Bertha Stouffer. Front row: Adah Reesor, Carey Johnson, Louise Stouffer, Blanche Burton, Ina Mertens.

LET'S HEAR FROM YOU WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE

Whitchurch-Stouffville This Month believes your opinions are important, and encourages you to voice your comments or concerns in a Letter To The Editor. We accept all letters, but only publish letters which have been signed. We request you include a phone number (not to be published) for verification of the letter writer. While Whitchurch-Stouffville This Month reserves the right to edit letters, due to content or length, in most cases letters will be published as written.

Fax your letters to: 905-642-2368, or e-mail to: gilderdale@sympatico.ca
or mail to WSTM, Kate Gilderdale, 6111 Main St., Stouffville, Ont., L4A 3R4

Whitchurch-Stouffville This Month is on the web.
Look for us each month at: www.stouffvilleonline.com



Kate A'la carte

A Permanent Attempt To Go Straight

One of the unfortunate side effects of struggling to maintain a youthful air while growing older is wind tunnel hair.

In the past few years, Hollywood stars have been admired as much for their choppy, artfully dishevelled locks as for their acting acumen. Some of us have been known to go to movies just to gaze at their tresses, picking up *Tribute* magazine on the way out so we could take it to our hairdresser, show her a still from the movie and tell her we want a Meg Ryan.

Most hairdressers don't have the heart to tell you that no amount of effort and expertise can turn your hair into Meg Ryan's. For one thing, she's a lot younger than you and for another, you don't have a small army of estheticians following you around with a blow dryer, a phalanx of hair products and a camera which shows you only in your best light.

As a boring old boomer, my life has been one long litany of hair disasters, starting with the days of lying sleeplessly in bed with my hair in spiky metal rollers, the Western equivalent of a fakir lying on a bed of nails. In the sixties, filled with enthusiasm for the pre-Raphaelites, I decided to get a perm. Worse, I went to my mum's hairdresser in downtown Wanstead, an emporium which had been turning out helmet-headed matrons since the dawn of time.

I emerged from the salon of broken dreams with a Brillo-style halo. Every time I walked past a shop window, I was horrified anew by the alien, unimproved me. My brothers were speechless with mirth when they saw the catastrophic result and my father wasted no time in taking a photograph at the scene of the crime.

Although I kept his snap as a warning against future hatchet jobs, after a decade or two I allowed myself to be persuaded that the new, soft perms could transform my crowning glory into an angelic cloud of silken beauty. I have another photo which proves that my faith in the advice dispensed by women's magazines was once again sadly misplaced.

Over the years I have ironed my hair and endured cuts which made me look like Elvis Presley on the day he joined the army. I have paid huge sums of money for blonde streaks which turned acid green when I went swimming. I have gone dark warm brown (coal black), natural light auburn (violent fire-engine red) and golden brown (mouse).

Not long ago, punk went middle-aged and women of a certain vintage started emerging from the salon sporting spikes and uneven bangs. Reader, I was among them, the hair at the back of my head defying gravity by standing at right angles to my skull. I looked as if I'd put my hand in an electric socket, or was fighting my way through a force ten gale.

Alas, the result was more Margaret Thatcher than Winona Ryder. Forget those commercials where a woman's hair ripples seductively with a casual toss of the head, Hurricane Hazel couldn't mobilize a single strand of wind tunnel hair, so securely is it sprayed and gelled into submission.

These days I've given in to my hair's natural inclination to grow downwards. Half-finished jars of expensive goop, promising hair which is more profuse than John Kerry's and shinier than Cher's uplifted visage, have been jettisoned along with my attempts at maintaining a cool persona.

And I only have to look at my photos to find a permanent reason for going straight.

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