

Turning Back the Clock

Historic photo submitted courtesy of Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum



As we head into another long summer vacation, we take a trip back in time to the class of 1940 at Lemonville Public School. Pictured here are: Back row: Evelyn Yake, Norma Gray, Earla Gray, Morely Sanders, Roy Flewell, Walter Hall. Third row: Ken Hamm, Lloyd Hamm, Merelyn Preston, Donald Whetter, Daniel Hall, Allin Wells, Harold Drewery, Evelyn Gilroy. Second row: Joan Gilroy, Doreen Rae, Ruth Cooney, Jean Preston, Pat Cooney, Darlene Gray, Elaine Rae, Phyllis Wells, Mervin Gilroy. First Row: Don or Bruce Barkey, Jerry Whetter, Keith Martin, Grant Wells, Keith Hamm, Marsden Steel, Ray Steel.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL VISIT
www.strawberryfestival.ca

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 We request you include a phone number (not to be published) for verification of the letter writer.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.wstouffvilleonline.com



Kate A'la carte

Honest Feedback Not The Best Policy

"Abandon all hope, you who press Enter here."

Once again, Anon says it best for those of us who endure the slings and arrows of outrageous software incompatibility. My new eMac is a joy to behold and a thing of beauty for at least three months, or however long it takes to become obsolete. But, like an introverted child who'd rather be reading, it doesn't play well with others.

I know this because I decided to buy my daughter an MP3 player for her birthday. Because I love her, I spent an endless afternoon at the mall comparing models before selecting a cute little blue box.

Recognizing the importance of expert help, I went into the electronics store which specialized in my chosen brand and asked if it was compatible with my computer. Assured that it was, I bought it and drove home. The next day, when my daughter input the software, it didn't work. After plowing through the accompanying literature we eventually discovered that her player was, in fact, not Mac compatible.

She phoned the manufacturer's Canadian headquarters and spent 10 minutes on hold, while a voice-activated answering machine ignored requests to put her through to a person. When she finally reached someone and asked whether Mac software was available for the product, the woman didn't know and suggested she call the U.S. office. Another long wait ensued, with similar results, and a suggestion that she should phone the original number in Canada.

It was time for a consumer rant. Thanks to the wonders of technology I was able to vent instantly, by e-mail. Five days went by before a reply arrived, expressing regret that my purchasing experience had been less than stellar. Apparently, however, the person who sent it was not up to helping me electronically.

"You may be better to attempt to call our Customer Information Centre toll free, and hopefully one of our representatives can bring this matter to a satisfying conclusion," my correspondent suggested, rather tentatively, I thought. "We should also be able to address the less than pleasurable customer service that you received. Thank you for your feedback, because without honest feedback from customers like you we would never be able to improve our company."

The e-mail was signed Customer Information Centre, Service and Engineering Division. I called the number supplied and reached a machine, which informed me the average wait time to speak to someone was five minutes. Unwilling to spend another fruitless hour on the phone, I decided to resort to e-mail again. After all, this was an electronics company, so you would think this would be their preferred method of interaction.

I suggested that, in light of my previous unsuccessful attempts to phone them, the company might like to call me. If I was home when they rang, I added, they wouldn't have to wait even one minute to speak to me. Judging from their remarkably prompt reply, however, their enthusiasm for my honest feedback was clearly on the wane.

"We have once again received your e-mail reply," they wrote. "Due to the complexity of your situation, we absolutely require verbal contact with you to discuss your inquiry further and in depth. We have already directed you to the appropriate telephone number and department to have this matter addressed and this will be the final e-mail response from our office."

At that point, I threw in the towel and looked up computers in my quotations' dictionary. As always, it came up trumps:

"Smash forehead on keyboard to continue". T-shirt, Los Angeles, 1996.

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64 Sandiford Drive, Unit 1,
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