

JUST WHAT IS

Your Newspaper?

THIS QUESTION HAS MANY ANSWERS. HERE ARE A FEW:

It's a public service

It serves this community with news, advertising, editorial comment, and entertainment. It promotes projects which it believes will make this a better place in which to live.

It's a manufacturing plant

It converts ink, paper, metal, and power into a finished product. It gives employment, year round.

It's a business

It enjoys full status as both a wholesaler (of newspapers) and a retailer. It plays its full part in the commercial life of the community.

It's a service-establishment

It tries to give information and guidance both through its columns and personally through its staff. Its classified section is the local market place. It is the 20th century town crier and community counsellor.

It's a 100% home institution

It serves this district first, last and always. Its taxes help support local schools and local government. It buys all possible supplies and services locally.

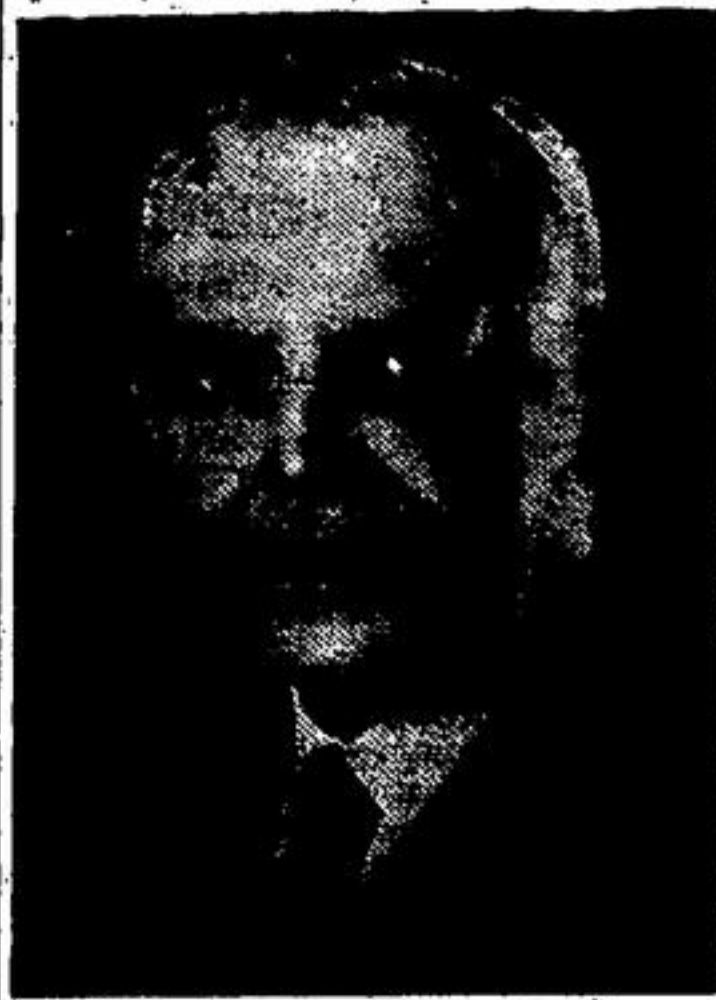
It's the voice of the people

Its printed reports, comment and pictures mirror this community in such a way that we may understand both its problems and its opportunities. It is a vital factor in the operation both of free, responsible government and in the life of free, democratic individuals.

Acton Free Press

★ participating in National Weekly

Newspaper Week—October 1-8, 1955



Prime Minister Pays Tribute To Weekly Papers

Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent has included his endorsement of National Weekly Newspaper Week. His message to Canada's weeklies follows:

"I am pleased to have this opportunity to pay a tribute to our Canadian newspapers on the occasion of 'National Newspaper Week'.

"The successful functioning of our democratic system depends in large measure on the extent to which Canadian citizens are aware of the issues with which their elected representatives at all levels of government are faced. Those who have the responsibility of presenting these issues to their readers are playing an essential part in the democratic process for a free, responsible press helps to create a well-informed public opinion.

"I should like to mention in particular the important role of the weekly press of this country which serves one-third of Canada's population. In many areas remote from our cities the weeklies constitute the principal source of news for their readers who depend greatly on them to keep informed of public affairs.

"I feel confident that the vast majority of Canadians would wish to join with me in extending sincere appreciation to our newspapers in Canada for providing us with local, national and international news and in wishing them continued success in their important work."

It takes 11 pounds of milk to make a pound of cheddar cheese.

Behind the Paper Curtain

Typographical Terrors, A-Bomb Fail to Subvert Voice of Weeklies

This address was given by W. H. Cranston, one of Canada's outstanding weekly newspapermen and publisher of the Midland Free Press, before a group of men in Vancouver during the recent C.W.N.A. convention. His remarks so well summarized the part weekly newspapers are playing in Canadian life today, that we print his humorous and informative message in full:

A few months ago in one of our more widely circulated magazines, there appeared an article about the editors of Canada's 800 weekly newspapers.

The article was entitled "Cracker Barrel Oracles."

And the title was reasonably accurate—at least in respect to the first two words. Most weekly editors consider themselves "crackers" for even staying in the business and most of them also agree that, one way or another, they are most of the time over a barrel.

Yet perhaps living high and being up a tree are not too far apart these days for most of us, let alone for the journalistic oracles, so-called, who attempt to mirror and interpret the lives of the million folk who live in non-metropolitan Canada.

Even Marilyn Monroe, when even the publishers of the daily newspapers, must wish they could find seclusion among the upper leaves of some stalwart oak.

Take, for example, the case of the manager of one of the units in the daily chain which issues a morning paper here on the Coast. It seems that when his compositors were making up the classified page the other day, they found themselves a bit short of advertisements. They decided to fill up the space with the pictures of two well-known Hollywood beauties.

Across the top of that classified page, as it appeared in print a few minutes later, was the advertising slogan: "Try one today, they are so economical." And right beneath that admonition, side by side, were rather revealing photographs of Jane Russell and of Marilyn Monroe.

"Could Be 4,367,428 Errors. But perhaps not too many of us should laugh at these typographical errors that haunt the days and nights of the journalist. We are told, for example, that

The Weeklies' Week

The Free Press, serving Acton for over 80 years, is far from alone in the services to the commercial, social, political and institutional life it performs for this community. It has brother weeklies across Canada's broad breadth, who each in their own pressroomstap on paper the births, marriages, deaths, deeds and misdeeds, ideas and actions that make the local news for 2,392,000 Canadian families.

This week, with our nearly 800 "brothers", we're proud to be members of a huge family of editorial, clerical and printing workers who present the news week after week. This week is National Weekly Newspapers' week, the first time observed as such in Canada, and we'd like to use the occasion to say "Thanks!"

We're thanking our readers, who at the same time are our correspondents. We're thanking our advertisers, who make every newspaper economically possible. We're thanking our staff members, the team that puts the paper "to bed and out" every week. And we're thanking our community as a whole, host to all the activity reflected on these pages.

This week we may pause, possibly take some pride in past achievements as one week, or reflect on our growing prestige as one of many weeklies. However, it's a short indulgence, for next week is another week and by the time this paper is being read we're already at work on the next issue.

modern electronic computers have proven that on each newspaper page there is a potential of no less than 4,367,428 typographical errors, let alone potential mistakes in English or in fact.

Faced with such an awe-inspiring prospect, is it any wonder that a number of the weekly editors now in your midst are giving serious consideration to abandoning forever their groaning presses and their stomach ulcers?

In the first place, while they themselves may be small businessmen—the average full time employment in Canada's over 800 weekly, twice-weekly and tri-weekly offices is under 10 employees per plant—nonetheless there are over 5,000 men and women engaged in producing the weekly newspapers which today serve 2,392,400 families—well over half the nation's total population.

Three Times as Big. And these close to eight million Canadian weekly newspaper readers constitute a market three times as big as Toronto and Montreal combined.

Because of the geographical distribution of this market, its significance in the over-all Canadian economy is sometimes less evident to national advertisers than it is to the local town and village businessman.

That it is a substantial market for goods and services, however, and that the weekly press is the major merchandising factor in this 2,392,000 family market, is well illustrated by the fact that last year Canada's weekly, twice-weekly, and tri-weekly newspapers carried close to \$12 million worth of advertising. This is an average advertising investment of nearly \$5 per subscriber family.

These 2,392,000 families, however, spread out over \$5 million per year.

or \$20,000 per week to ensure that they got a steady diet of home town news and views in their local weeklies. The average Canadian invests more per issue for his local weekly paper than for any other newspaper or magazine of comparable circulation.

Very Real "Local Yokels" There is still a lot of Canada, a lot of Canadians and a heap of Canadian dollars outside the big cities and in the markets served by the weekly newspapers of this country. But while weekly newspaper publishers can justifiably talk in big figures, it doesn't mean that they do.

Despite the fact that there are many weekly newspapers with net paid circulations bigger than a number of Canadian dailies and despite the fact that there are a number of businessmen of substantial financial stature among the country editors of this nation, weekly publishers and editors are quick to admit that they are in a very real sense "local yokels."

Indeed their business depends in no small degree on their being just that.

A few months ago in Montreal I was attempting to explain to a group of senior public relations experts why it was that so many of their publicity releases so unerringly and so speedily found their way into the giant waste paper basket which now adorns each weekly editorial office.

Not Even the A-Bomb I had quoted examples, both serious and comic, to try to prove that, only as the weekly newspaper concentrates its reporting and interpreting on the community it serves, can it hope to perform its true social, cultural and economic function. Therein lies its strength to both reader and advertiser—every single bit of news, comment

and photography tied to people and places its subscribers know.

At which the chief publicity man of one of Canada's larger industries commented somewhat caustically:

"I suppose you didn't even print anything about the A-bomb."

"No," I replied, "and I'll tell you why. The bomb didn't go off in our trading area and there wasn't one relative of one local resident in Hiroshima at the time."

I doubt if I convinced him.

No Easy Task. And I may have stretched the point a bit, as the editorial pages of Canada's weekly press are not entirely un mindful of the world stage. Its editors, however, have long since learned the absolute accuracy of the psychologist's finding that man learns easiest by progressing from the known to the unknown: Reporting what happens at home to the home folks is the surest way of correctly interpreting our changing world.

And like most other weekly editors, and like most of the several millions who read our papers, we are more interested in what happens at home and to home folks than in attempting to interpret the latest twist in the tail of the Chinese dragon or last week's growl by the Russian bear.

Of course publishing a local paper about local people when one is oneself entirely local is no easy task.

In Same Glass House. May I assure you it is much easier for any editor to analyze in public print any one or all of the problems facing the North Atlantic Treaty Organization than it is to express on paper an opinion as to whether the town dump should be moved to a new site on West Seventh Street be paved. You see very few people really know much about NATO but you'd be amazed how many local grandstand quarterbacks there are living near the new dump site or on West Seventh Street.

The editor of a local newspaper, you see, has to live in the same glass house in which live all the rest of the people whom he may nick with an occasional editorial stone.

As publisher and editor you cannot take the position of a detached observer. There are no experienced receptionists or agile office boys to ward off irate readers who demand to see the weekly editor. Your Daniel's den has a rather steady tenancy of local lions—and I do not refer to members of any service club.

Take, for example, our staff writer in a nearby town. When a sizable forest fire broke out recently on a farm near the community, he raced out, equipped with camera, to get pictures and story for the next day's edition.

Picture or Scotch Pine? But the owner of the Scotch pine plantation which the flames were threatening didn't see it that way.

As soon as the reporter arrived, the farmer told him in unambiguous terms to put away that blasted camera and get a shovel... that he'd be doing a lot more good fighting the blaze than photographing it.

You know, that farmer may have been right. Is a page one picture worth more than 50 acres of Scotch pine?

Local newspaper editors have to practice what they preach. On their editorial pages they do a lot of preaching so most of their spare time is devoted to practicing.

May I read you this obituary notice of a weekly newspaper publisher in the small village of Marmora, Ont. This is how it appeared in the Toronto Globe and Mail.

An Editor's Service. "Marmora, Oct. 2.—Howard Wendell Cabine, publisher of the weekly Marmora Herald since 1907, died in Kingston General hospital after a brief illness.

The son of Rev. and Mrs. Jago Sabine, he was born in Palmerston in 1871 and educated in Western Ontario, where his father held several Methodist church charges. He took his printing apprentices in St. Mary's.

He was village clerk 10 years, served on the Marmora school board; the Marmora Community school board and later the Marmora High school board. He was secretary of the Marmora Agricultural Society and a member of the Marmora Public Library board.

He was an elder, member of session and lay representative to presbytery from St. Andrew's Presbyterian church. Thirty years ago he was superintendent of the Sunday school and adult Bible class. He was president of the Marmora branch of the Upper Canada Bible Society and a justice of the peace.

He was a member of Marmora AF and AM 222 and master of the lodge in 1916. In 1953 he was DDGM of Prince Edward district.

Last of the "Characters". Here, gentlemen, is a tentative over-estimate of the "characters" of the weeklies, and a not untypical one, either, among weekly journalists.

In a day of collectivism, in a time when the great god government is spreading its tentacles over almost every phase of our life, in a day when we are prone to say "what can one man do anyway", here in this field of Canadian weekly journalism remain one of

"WHAT'S GOING ON IN TOWN"?



Can you picture what life in your town would be like without a weekly newspaper? You'd have nothing to keep you up to date on happenings right in your own neighbourhood. If you had something to sell, you'd have to go out and look for a buyer. If you needed to buy something, you'd have to look all over town for it. Your neighbours could marry, have children, or even die; without you hearing about it until much later. Council could pass a by-law affecting you and you might never hear of it. Plans for worthwhile community projects might never get started for lack of news and support. And how would you keep up with the fortunes of the hockey team or the baseball club? Fortunately, your town has a weekly newspaper, a source of local information that no other kind of publication can replace. Over the years, Canadian weekly editors have lent their support unstintingly to many a good community cause. This year, for the first time, they are celebrating National Weekly Newspaper Week, and Imperial Oil is glad to participate in paying tribute to your weekly newspaper.

NATIONAL WEEKLY NEWSPAPER WEEK—OCTOBER 1st TO 8th



IMPERIAL OIL LIMITED



This man works for our advertisers

He is a highly specialized A.B.C.* circulation auditor, who periodically visits our office to examine and verify our circulation information. He is also a reporter. His findings are published in an easy-to-read A.B.C. report which we make available to our advertisers.



In a very real sense, this man is working for you, providing facts about our circulation audience that help you to invest your advertising money on a sound business basis. Ask us for a copy of our latest A.B.C. report.

*This newspaper is a member of the Audit Bureau of Circulations, a cooperative, nonprofit association of publishers, advertisers, and advertising agencies. Our circulation is audited by experienced A.B.C. circulation auditors. Our A.B.C. report shows how much circulation we have, where it goes, how often, and other facts that tell advertisers what they get for their money when they use this paper.



ACTON FREE PRESS

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