

Our Readers Write

THE HIGH SCHOOL
Acton, Ontario,
March 27, 1965.

The Editor,
Acton Free Press,
Acton, Ontario.

Dear Sir:
The article written last week entitled "The High School" prompted this letter. I am submitting the letter with mixed feelings. There is no intention to belittle what I suspect are the underlying good intentions of the writer. However, because she chose to voice her personal opinion through the press, there is no choice but to discuss the matter through the same medium.

The writer of last week is of the opinion that Mr. Bevan's absence during the coming year will result in nothing less than chaos at Acton District High School. Although I join her in expressing appreciation of Mr. Bevan's work as vice-principal and guidance councillor, I should like to assure her that the school's foundation and organization are firmly and deeply established. The fact that the Board of Education has seen fit to approve the exchange exemplifies a liberal attitude rather than the grave mistake that the writer implies. Mr. Bevan will return to Acton with an enriched point of view which will be certain to be an asset. At the same time, we shall have on staff next year a highly-rated British teacher whose ideas are certain to be stimulating.

It is stated that the vice-principal at times has done the work of the principal. If the writer had observed more closely, she would have seen that the principal sometimes does the vice-principal's work. Indeed, the function of the school is entirely dependent upon their cooperation. It is a well-known fact that administrators cannot please everyone with whom they come in contact. If people in such positions tried to follow the wishes of everyone, they would never

accomplish anything or maintain their self respect. The aspersions cast upon the function of a devoted administrator in this case represents personal opinion. In addition to having no foundation in fact, the criticism is in extremely poor taste.

I take exception most strongly to the description of members of our Board of Education as "bench warmers" or "windbags." For the information of those who may be interested, may I point out that I have yet to see an instance where our Board has failed to show avid interest in any worthwhile matter concerning the cause of education. I am sure that I am better acquainted with the board than is the writer of the article in question. In my opinion, these men can be best described as being sincere, interested and progressive. They have done everything possible to attract the best teachers available. The salaries paid and benefits offered are in line with even much larger schools in the district.

The wish is expressed in the article that board meetings should be opened to the public. I heartily disagree with this idea. If a person becomes ill, he consults a doctor; if his neighbor proceeds to sue him, he consults a lawyer; if a water pipe breaks, he calls a plumber. However, it seems that the same individual, who would not consider himself capable of presenting his case in court, diagnosing his own illness or doing his own plumbing, expects himself an educational expert. An inexperienced opinion about education is of no more value than a similar opinion might be to any other profession or occupation.

If lay opinion were to govern our educational policies to the extent suggested, the result would not be accomplishment, but instead, aimless confusion. It should be pointed out that board meetings are open to the press, which represents the interested public. It is the duty of the press to report the proceedings fairly, accurately and without fear or favour.

There is a further reference made to the apparent lack of training of our graduates and to the advisability of adopting university methods at the high school level. It is unfortunate that no parallel has been drawn with the general situation in the province. If this is done, it could be readily proved that our graduates compare favourably. The degree of intellectual stimulation carried away by each graduate is dependent entirely upon the degree of maturity attained by that person. Therefore it is impossible to force any stereotyped

mental development upon students.

It may be that high school teachers can take a lesson from the universities regarding the use of discussion and seminars, especially for the social sciences. However, anyone who has digested a full diet of university mathematics and science course will hasten to point out that the universities have an even greater lesson to learn about the art of teaching.

Most high school students are not ready for the do-it-yourself techniques of higher education. Our students must obtain a sufficient grasp of fundamentals in order to pass departmental examinations. To achieve this, the Socratic method of teaching has survived many hundreds of years as our most effective means of imparting knowledge. I take pleasure in pointing out, also, that the Department of Education inspectors have approved and complimented both our level of teaching and the achievement of graduates.

Speaking for the teaching profession, I extend the most hearty welcome to any person who is sufficiently inflamed with the cause of education to join us. To become a teacher requires from three to five years of university followed by at least one full year or two summer courses of teacher training. Thereafter, there is an endless line of summer courses, seminars and meetings which a teacher must attend in order to keep in touch.

Anyone who has intestinal fortitude to do this, and still has enough of the same commodity left to face about two hundred critical adolescents each day is entitled to join our ranks. When dealing with teenagers, I am always consoled by a statement made by Mark Twain.

He said that when he was 16, he thought that his father was the most ignorant man in the world. However, when he became 21, he was amazed how many men could have learned so much in five years.

The writer has no need to feel alone as the first champion of education. At all times, teachers are obliged to keep in mind their responsibility to parents, students, fellow teachers, the Board of Education and the Department of Education. Even if they keep this cumulative responsibility foremost in their minds, they will not be free from criticism.

Please do not get the wrong impression—we want constructive criticism and suggestions. However, there is an important caveat: constructive criticism is dependent entirely upon the degree of maturity attained by that person. Therefore it is impossible to force any stereotyped



LEGION ESSAY WINNERS received individual awards during assembly Friday morning at the Robert Little school and first place winner Catherine Knuppelberg received the Legion plaque for the Robert Little School. Front row left to right are Miss Knuppelberg, Marion Reinhardt second and Linda Lawson third. Back row left to right are Ted Pratt, James Gunn, Legion president, Rev. A. H. McKenzie and Mrs. H. F. Rogers, local high school teacher. Mr. Pratt, Mr. McKenzie and Mrs. Rogers were judges for the local essay contest.

goal of the school, but so have other teachers.

The phrase "All the good things will be done by those who are left behind" is a fallacious and erroneous statement which has nothing for a basis but one person's narrow opinion.

I think this excellent had better take a close look at what really goes on at Acton High. There are many others at this school who have done just as much as Mr. Bevan.

I would also like to point out to Miss Lasby that Mr. Bevan does not, as she seems to think, run the school. Mr. Hansen has performed his duties at Acton High without fail and with assistance from Mr. Bevan, only when asked for as it should be.

In my association with Mr. Hansen, he has never once overlooked anything, and as for getting, come now, Miss Lasby, have you never forgotten? We are all human.

To praise a person is a fine and wonderful thing, but in your praises, do not use words and phrases which have no meaning, no basis, no truth.

I agree with your praises about Mr. Bevan, but you are wrong, dead wrong, Miss Lasby, about the other teachers and Mr. Hansen. Your letter seems to indicate that during your school years, you have seen only those who helped you last, and you hold those who could not help you in contempt. This is a very narrow point of view. There is no need for any drastic changes, Miss Lasby, at least not here at the school.

In regards to the "bench warmers" and "windbags", this type of information can only be by word of mouth but anyone can find out for themselves as these meetings are open to the public. A statement like this is not worthy of any student or ex-student of Acton High.

The Student Council is very proud of the teachers and we are grateful for the support given by both teachers and the Board. It seems that Miss Lasby has sounded off just for the sake of doing so.

John Wood,
President of Student Council

Baptized Sunday
Baptized Sunday morning at the United Church was Victoria Tracy, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. H. Collett. Another baby who was to have been baptized here was late arriving from Summer side, P.E.I., and missed the service. Parents are Corp. and Mrs. Mike Middleton (the former Jean Fiedler of Acton). They are visiting here while he is on leave and the ceremony was postponed to Friday evening.

Gifts for all Grandmothers At Dublin Institute Meeting

Mrs. Ed Norton, Mill Street East, Acton, hosted the regular monthly meeting of Dublin Women's Institute last Thursday evening. Mrs. D. Moffat, the president, presided for the opening exercises. Minutes of the previous meeting and business were presented by the secretary, Mrs. N. Douglas. The roll call was responded to by the name of a textile and from what it is woven.

Final plans for the bake sale to be held in Acton on March 27 were made, and Mrs. C. Armstrong, Mrs. I. Van Fleet will look after the arrangements. Members were requested to provide for the sale.

Several members of the local 4H girls have received provincial honors. Mrs. J. McCarron and Mrs. J. Wilson will procure mementos of the occasion.

Standing committee conveners were requested to present reports at the April meeting. As a practical affair, apron and tea biscuits have been chosen for the competition at the District Annual. The ladies were asked to make entries at the next meeting. These articles will be judged, and the best one in each class will provide entries at the District Annual in May.

Splendid talks on Education stressing the new mathematics system, by Mrs. I. Duffield, on public relations by Mrs. M. McCullough, and on Canadian industry, speaking specially on Du point of Canada, by Mrs. I. Wilson, were much enjoyed by the ladies.

To honor the grandmothers of the Institute, readings were given by Mrs. C. Armstrong, Mrs. Norton and Mrs. I. Winfield, and a contest "Famous Grandmothers" was conducted by Mrs. Norton, with Mrs. C. Britton being the winner. As a memento of the evening, each grandmother was presented with a gift.

A novelty bakeless bake sale was well responded to. Some of the ladies of the branch have been busy quilting, and have just completed a fine quilt at the home of Mrs. George Robertson.

Mrs. D. Macpherson, a member who now resides in Milton, will be hostess for the annual meeting next month, when a potluck dinner will be served at seven o'clock on April 15.

Mrs. C. McIntyre, as captain of the canvass of the Dublin section in the interests of the Canadian Cancer Society, has lined up her canvassers who will proceed shortly.

A dainty lunch was served by the hostess, Mrs. Norton, assisted by Mrs. M. Nellis and Mrs. C. Britton. Courtesy conveners were Mrs. Wm. McIntyre.

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Honor Mr., Mrs. Grant Baker At Presentation in School

A presentation was held in Ballinalua hall on Friday night for Mr. and Mrs. Grant Baker. Each was played. Ladies' high Mrs. R. McEnery, gent's R. A. McEnery. Mr. A. Law, chairman, asked the bride and groom to come to the front. Mrs. Louise Snow read the address and they were presented with a coffee table, two step-up end tables and a smoker stand. Grant thanked all for the lovely gifts. After singing, "For They Are Jolly Good Fellows," all went to the basement for lunch, after which all enjoyed dancing to the Belaire Orchestra.

Another successful evening was held on Tuesday night, when 19 tables were played; high ladies, Mrs. Hall, Tom; Mrs. Watson and Hillsburgh and Mrs. Snyder of Georgetown tied for second, Mrs. Watson winning out, gent's high, Frank Robinson, Georgetown; second, Elmer Hinton, a lovely draw, Ernie McEnery, a lovely plant donated by Mr. and Mrs. Keith Webb of Naval Forces. Mr. Joe Allan, who once lived in this community, passed away in Guelph Hospital on Friday. Mr. Bert Rogers, also a former resident, passed away in Georgetown Hospital, on Saturday. Mrs. Parker, who lives on the 7th Line, had a lucky escape when she clipped off a couple of guide posts, landing in the ditch just below Peacock school.

The U.C.W. held a St. Patrick's supper on Saturday night in the church basement.

From the West
Increased attendance at Tuesday's practice put new pep and impetus into plans for the Lions' western show. It's shaping up very well, with popular western songs, drifting out over the snow straight from the west—draw, Ernie McEnery, a lovely plant donated by Mr. and Mrs. Keith Webb of Naval Forces. Mr. Joe Allan, who once lived in this community, passed away in Guelph Hospital on Friday. Mr. Bert Rogers, also a former resident, passed away in Georgetown Hospital, on Saturday. Mrs. Parker, who lives on the 7th Line, had a lucky escape when she clipped off a couple of guide posts, landing in the ditch just below Peacock school.

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- 1963 PONTIAC Parisienne 4-door sedan, \$1,995.
- 1963 PONTIAC Parisienne convertible, automatic, radio, V-8, all power, \$2,595.
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- 1963 FORD Consul Cortina, \$895.
- 1963 CHEV. Impala 2-door hardtop, automatic, all power, radio, \$2,195.
- 1963 PONTIAC Strato Chief 2-door, \$1,495.
- 1962 PONTIAC Strato Chief 4-door, automatic, radio, \$1,850.
- 1962 PONTIAC Laurentian 2-door, radio, \$1,595.
- 1962 MERCURY Meteor deluxe, automatic, radio, \$1,495.
- 1962 FORD Fairlane 500, automatic, radio, \$1,450.
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- 1960 CHEV. 2-door, \$1,195.
- 1960 CHEV. 2-door, V-8, automatic, radio, \$1,295.
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- 1962 BUICK Le Sabre 2-door hardtop, fully equipped, one owner, \$1,995.
- 1961 RAMBLER Classic station wagon, roof racks, radio, new tires. Be ready for your summer vacation, \$1,295.
- 1960 FORD Fairlane 2-door, automatic, V-8, \$995.
- 1959 PONTIAC Laurentian sedan, standard transmission, radio, whitewalls, ready to go, \$895.
- 1958 CHRYSLER 4-door hardtop, radio, power steering, power brakes, automatic, runs well, \$295.
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Open Meetings

Editor's Note: There is apparently some misunderstanding about high school board meetings, and that is why the reporter attends. The press has no special status that would permit a reporter to attend a meeting which the public could not. At almost all meetings of council, school boards, elected and appointed bodies are open to the public, and therefore, open to the press as well.

STUDENT WRITES

To the Editor,
Acton Free Press,
Dear Sir:
In regards to the letter written last week by Miss Lasby, a former student at Acton High, I would like to make the following comments. I have spent almost five years in this school and during that time, I have come to know the teachers and the students very closely. I have been taught by Mr. Bevan and have had many conversations with him. In my last year at this school, I consider Mr. Bevan a very fine person and a good teacher. He has aided many a person to obtain their goal and has contributed much for the

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