

"Premature" press reports...

We must admit being a little perturbed about accusations at a recent school board meeting that "premature" press reports contributed to misunderstandings about the proposed addition to the M. Z. Bennett school.

The public school board passed a motion at their November meeting to abandon rooms in the stone school so the Department would endorse their request for an addition at the M. Z. Bennett. The Free Press representative reported the motion without twists or inclusions.

Some concern was felt by trustees that their motion would be misinterpreted, that it would supply ammunition to those opposed to building an addition to the school. As it turned out their fears were not groundless. Some members of town council did question the need for an addition in spite of being acquainted with figures which showed a need exists.

However, since the original motion was made at the board's public meeting this newspaper was obliged to publish it in the interests of ratepayers who are, after all, paying the shot for this and any other additions or school buildings.

They are entitled to know what's happening to their tax money.

We don't for a moment think the school board intended to keep this or any other information relative to the proposed addition a secret from the public. They were concerned only with the timing of the motion and its impact on the public.

We are not advocating secret or special meetings of which we are unaware, ignoring the press won't make it go away. Give a reporter the facts and in almost every instance it will be better stated and more understandable than a publicity release.

In this case a special meeting was held to rescind the original motion about vacating rooms at the stone school. The press was not notified. Consequently neither we nor the public are aware of why the board rescinded the motion.

Delays in releasing certain information, such as personal matters, may be justifiable, but attempts to suppress any areas of news permanently will eventually fail.

And when the news is bad, complete frankness with reporters is the best guarantee of objective treatment.

Free Press Editorial Page

What is news? ...

The lead editorial leads into the question of what is publishable news. Some editors take the attitude news is everything fit or safe to print. An editorial in a recent issue of the Ridgeway Dominion clarifies the motives behind news stories.

Why do newspapers always print the bad things, ignoring the good? Although we question the question, the stock answer, of course, is that it is the abnormal in which the reader is interested. Good conduct is normal, taken for granted.

For instance John Doe's Sunday program would normally be of no interest. If he met with an accident it would be abnormal and newsworthy.

It has been suggested publicity given to crime is an incentive to criminals. One of the best papers known never

uses sensational crime stories; therefore it's hardly likely to be popular in criminal circles.

Even truth can be unwise, however, if it creates the wrong impression.

The old story about two antagonistic editors who conducted rival papers in the same town bears this out. One consumed more than his share of booze. The other was a teetotaler.

The latter printed in his paper that Editor So-and-so was drunk all day Tuesday. To the natural protest, he replied it was the truth even if it was normal.

His rival got back at him the next week by publishing "Editor So-and-so of the Herald was sober all day last Tuesday."

See what we mean?

Pension plan compulsory ...

There appear to be many Canadians who are still unaware of the compulsory nature of the Canada Pension Plan.

Note, for example, the experience of one national revenue official who mingled with a group of farmers attending a plowing match last year. He came away in a state of disbelief. Time after time when asking farmers about their reaction to CPP, he received some version of this reply: "I don't think I'm interested in joining up."

Despite all the publicity and advertising since the plan came into effect, The Financial Post says that officials are

faced with the fact many Canadians still think the plan is a voluntary scheme with membership and contributions optional to the individual.

The greatest concern about those in this group is that many may be short-changing themselves of benefits they could buy and profit from at minimal expense.

It is among the self-employed, and specifically among those who don't file income tax returns, where the problem of non-contributors is most likely to occur. These may include marginal income farmers or fishermen, women with some income from rent, and casual workers.

Over and Out...

A lot of Canadian kids didn't get that radio walkie-talkie outfit they wanted for Christmas, says an article in Canadian Electronics Engineering, because Santa got orders from the Department of Transport that these low-powered radio sets are not toys and their use as playthings by children is against radio regulations.

These regulations say that "if radio equipment causes interference or its operators use improper language or otherwise abuse its proper use, the owners may be required to restrict communications or cease operations entirely." The rules specifically prohibit transmissions of a frivolous nature and communications which are nothing more than "a diversionary or recreational activity."

The walkie-talkies operate in the GRS (general radio service) wave-band, meant to provide low-cost short-range communications for personal or business purposes, definitely rules out kids using them to play war games in their neighborhood park. The sets do not have a range of more than a few city blocks, but, says the transport department, transmissions from improperly adjusted sets could spill over into other radio bands.

DOT is "re-evaluating requirements for the licensing of low-power units. Users may be required to indicate the use for which communications are required."

Okay, kids, over and out.

Editorial Notes

Driving in snow, heavy traffic, or in any other adverse conditions: drive as if you were early for an appointment with your dentist, advises the Ontario Safety League.

To get maximum attention it's hard to beat a good big mistake.

Skidoos or skimpiles, what ever you prefer to call them, are becoming quite popular in this area.

A delegate to a convention in England left his car in a no-parking zone with this note in the windshield: "I have circled this block 20 times. I have an appointment to keep. Forgive us our trespasses."

When he returned he found a reply from a courteous London policeman. "I've circled this block for 20 years. If I don't give you a ticket, I lose my job. Lead us not into temptation."



YANGLED BRUSH, fallen logs and winter ice restrict the movement of the Black Creek in its cold journey to join the River Credit. But the fast flowing waters break through and continue past

this fourth line scene eventually merging with the parent river at Norval. On the way the creek merges with sister tributaries before flowing through Stewarttown. (Staff Photo)



Sugar and Spice

by Bill Smiley

Teachers got some pretty funny notes from parents, explaining the absence of a pupil. Usually it's because the harassed mother or father stubs down anything at the last minute, as the kid, heading for the door, and already late, screams in dismay; "Oh, I gotta have a note."

Thus you get such things as, "Please excuse Jane's grandmother for being absent due to her illness." The baffled teacher finally figures out that granny had the flu and Jane had to stay home and look after her because Mom can't miss a day at the shoe factory, because that's the only way she can muster enough money to buy Jane some decent clothes so she can go to school so she can be a real whiz and help out Granny and Mom.

Sometimes the notes are not so funny. "Please excuse Jim for being late as he had to appear in court this morning for drunk and disorderly, but it was the other guy's fault."

Well, teachers aren't the only ones who receive sad and funny letters. The rest of the column will be made up of sentences taken from actual letters received by the Toronto Welfare Department from applicants for aid and assistance.

They may explain why English teachers look so stunned so much of the time. The sentences will be in quotation marks. The comments will be whatever comes to mind.

"I am very annoyed that you have branded my son illiterate as this is a lie. I was married to his father a week before he was born." She didn't mean illiterate. She meant illegible.

"In answer to your letter, I have given birth to a boy weighing ten pounds. I hope this is satisfactory." Really, what could be more satisfactory?

"Unless I get my husband's money pretty soon, I will be forced to lead an immortal life." And good luck to you, Missus. There should be a lot more of that type of positive thinking in the world.

"Mrs. Jones has not had any clothes for a year and has been visited regularly by the Clergy." No comment.

"This is my eighth child, what are you going to do about it? What, indeed? It's certainly time somebody did something. Or stopped doing something."

"I am glad to report that my husband who was reported missing is dead." Now there

is a sentence of which Hemingway would be proud. Not a syllable too much or too little. The emotion is restrained. Note that she said "glad", not "delighted".

And here's one with the same theme, but a different twist. "Please find for certain if my husband is dead, the man I am living with can't eat or do anything until he finds out." There's drama for you, there's tragedy. Think of the poor devil, starving to death, unable to smoke or drink or pick his teeth or pull the fluff out of his billy-button.

Here's another that shows a nice respect for bureaucracy. "In accordance with your instructions, I have given birth to twins in the enclosed envelope." And they thought The Pill was a big deal!

Another Mom writes, "I cannot get sick pay. I have six children. Can you tell me why?" There's a beautiful logic there somewhere, if you could just put your finger on it.

"I haven't any children as yet as my husband is a bus driver and works day and night." But think of all that overtime!

And finally. It sounds like an old chestnut, but teachers actually got notes like this. "I want money as quick as I can get it. I have been in bed with the doctor for two weeks and he doesn't do me any good. If things don't improve, I will have to send for another doctor."

This is Medicare?

THE ACTON FREE PRESS. PHONE 853-2010. Business and Editorial Office. Includes a logo for the Acton Free Press and a small advertisement for the Canadian Writers' Guild.

Free Press back issues

20 years ago, 75 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Free Press of Thursday, January 8, 1948.

Taken from the issue of The Free Press of Thursday, January 12, 1903.

Citizens in every walk of life will regret to learn that Mr. and Mrs. J. M. McDonald are moving to take up residence in Toronto. A complimentary dinner was tendered Mr. McDonald by the officers and directors of Gearhart and Co. with whom he has been associated for many years. During the 25 years he resided here he served on School Board, Council, as Justice of the Peace of Halton County. He was president of the Legion, past master of Walker Lodge, an officer in the Legion of Honour, a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, a member of the Royal Canadian Legion, and a helper with sports. We know how Headquarters fell 25 years ago when they left there.

Business of Acton and vicinity have been considerably inconvenienced lately for the want of a dentist but this vacancy is now well filled. Rooms have been opened and comfortably furnished over the drug store and Dr. J. E. Wilkinson is "At Home" to any desiring his services.

The close of 1947 was not just closing for another year for Mr. W.K. Graham, manager of the Bank of Nova Scotia, Acton, Wednesday of last week Mr. Graham retired from the service of the bank and Mr. A. W. Hayden of Toronto assumed his duties. Mr. Graham was unique in that for 31 years he held the managership of the Acton branch. In those years he has become a part of the town and all are pleased it is his intention to continue to reside in Acton. He says 31 years ago bank managers were clerks at all the farm sales. There were just two industries, Beardmore and Co. and the Storey Glove Co., both going strong since 1844 and 1868 respectively.

The annual meeting of the congregation of Knox church was held with good attendance. The report of the session presented by Mr. John Lawson showed there was a gain in membership of eight.

Acton's first 1948 baby is David McMillan, son of Mr. and Mrs. Michael McMillan.

100 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Canadian Champion, Milton, January 9, 1918.

The Grammar School was resumed on Tuesday last by the Rev. Nelson Burns, and the attendance already gives promise of a full school. We trust that there will be a determined effort to sustain the exertions of Mr. Burns in his arduous undertaking of reconstituting the school, which has almost become extinct. We are sure that nothing will be left undone by the teacher, whom we can confidently recommend as in every respect qualified for his position. Mr. Burns is desirous of forming a class of pupils from 12 to 14 years of age, and while not neglecting the classics, by devoting great attention to their English branches, to enable them to pass the Inspector as Grammar School pupils, and in this manner pave the way for a good Grammar School, composed of a permanent class of pupils.

Officers of Walker Lodge installed by A. J. McKinnon include T. H. Cook, W. L. Mullin, J. Wildgust, W. J. Reid, W. M. Cooper, John Kenney, R. M. McDonald, Norman McLeod, Alexander Keen, John Lawson, L. G. King, H. A. Cox, N. P. McLam, W. R. Kenney.

A rousing reception was tendered on New Years for Gunner A. M. Smith who returned from France at Christmastide. He was surrounded on the platform with a remarkable group of men who have done their bit and returned incapacitated, Serg. W. J. Gould, Serg. Robert Hynds, Serg. W. F. Colus, Serg. Harry Harwood, Corp. A. W. Large, Pte. George Lantz and Pte. Buchan. He received the usual gold watch.

Messrs. Woodhall and Barber have been elected with Messrs. W. R. Kenney, J.P. and D. A. Henderson to bear the burdens of municipal government with rove Hynds. Members of the School Board, some of them new, are Robt. Scott, Robt. McPherson, John Kenney, C. C. Speight, James Ramshaw and D. C. Russell.

There was considerable excitement during the election in Nassagaweya. James W. Moffat was elected reeve.

Financial affairs were much more satisfactory than treasurer D. Henderson M. P. had been able to report for years and revenue for all purposes, misuses included, was \$2,400.

Free Press Church Notices

THE CHURCH OF ST. ALBAN THE MARYR ANGLICAN. Corner Willow St. and St. Alban's Drive. Rev. Ritchie McMurtry, M.A., S.T.B.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 14, 1968. Epiphany II. 9:00 a.m.—The Holy Eucharist. 10:30 a.m.—Church School. 10:30 a.m.—Morning Prayer.

BETH-EL CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH. Minister—Rev. P. Brouwer. Acton, Ontario.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 14, 1968. 10:00 a.m.—English Service. 11:10 a.m.—Sunday School. 2:30 p.m.—Alternating Dutch and English Service. Saturday—Bible Classes 10-12 a.m. Everyone Welcome.

MAPLE AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH. 81-Maple Ave., Georgetown. Pastor: Rev. Robert C. Lohnes.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 14, 1968. Here is our sincere invitation to the whole family to attend church. 9:45 a.m.—Sunday School. All ages. 11:00 a.m.—Morning Service. 7:00 p.m.—Evening Evangel. 7:45 p.m.—Wednesday prayer meeting. Acton 853-1956. Georgetown 877-6665.

EVANGEL PENTECOSTAL TABERNACLE. P.A.O.C. 33 Churchill Road. Rev. S. M. Thoman, Pastor, 853-2715.

Week of Prayer Services, Tuesday - Friday, January 9-12 inclusive. SUNDAY, JANUARY 14, 1968. 10:00 a.m.—Sunday School. 11:00 a.m.—Morning Worship. 7:00 p.m.—Evangelistic Service. Tuesday, 8 p.m.—Prayer service and Bible Study. Thursday, 8 p.m.—Christ Ambassadors. Friday, 7 p.m.—Crusaders.

TRINITY CHURCH (The United Church of Canada). Minister: Rev. Gordon B. Turner, B.A., B.D. Organist: Dr. George Elliott, M.A., Ph.D.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 14, 1968. 10:00 a.m.—Morning Worship (Nursery provided). The Sacrament of Holy Communion. SUNDAY SCHOOL. 10:00 a.m.—Junior School (to Gr. 4). 11:15 a.m.—Senior School (Gr. 5 to Gr. 8).

ACTON BAPTIST CHURCH. Founded 1842. Pastor: Rev. Stanley Gammon. Rev. 144 Indey Ave., Phone 853-1615.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 14, 1968. 10:00 a.m.—Sunday School Classes for all ages. 11:15 a.m.—Morning Worship "The Second Advent." 7:00 p.m.—Evening Service "Some Precious Things." Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.—Prayer. Bible Study. Thursday, 6:30 p.m.—Explorers. Thursday, 8 p.m.—Choir practice. Friday, 7 p.m.—B.H.P. Text: "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be at the coming of the Son of Man." Matt. 24: 37.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA KNOX CHURCH, ACTON. Minister: Mr. E. A. Hansen, B.A. Organist and Choir Master.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 14, 1968. 9:45 a.m.—Church School for ages 3 to 15 years. 9:45 a.m.—Minister's Church Membership Class for Teenagers. 11:00 a.m.—Public Worship of God. Sermon subject, "Changing the Target." 8:00 p.m.—Adult Study Group at 186 Tyler Ave. Everyone Most Welcome.