

New Year's resolutions...

New Year's resolutions used to be as much a part of the holiday season as turkey and mince pie, but in this era of "the organization man" they have gone out of fashion.

Amid committees, commissions, and the other social structures that engulf us, where 'they' do things rather than 'I', we tend to avoid responsibility, even for ourselves. While this anonymity may be comfortable, in a very short time it makes life meaningless.

This year let's bring back the personal resolution, if only as a gesture of defiance against the corporate lump that so depressingly sucks us under.

Here are a few for consideration: Resolve to be committed to something - be it ever so small - and see it through. It may be canvassing for some worthy cause; visiting a shut-in regularly, giving leadership to a group of youngsters.

Develop a healthy skepticism about what is on TV. Every shot of every situation does not automatically contain the truth;

photography can be as slanted and shallow as some verbal reporting. (Since you can go back and re-read what is in print, the newspaper doesn't 'hit-and-run' in the same devastating way.)

Refuse to be a slave of the 'newest' just because it makes the most noise, whether it be art, politics or morals. For every genuine insight there are ten sterile, blind alley bypasses whose misdirection has to be corrected before we can progress.

Will and Ariel Durant, who won the Nobel prize last year for their final volume of the History of Civilization wrote recently: "It is good that new ideas should be heard for the sake of the few that can be used; it is good also that new ideas should be compelled to go through the mill of opposition. This is the trial heat which innovations must survive before being allowed to enter the human race."

This year, do not shrug helplessly before every problem. Stand up and be counted.



Vacant house

Free Press back issues

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, January 6, 1949.

Spring like weather conditions on Tuesday brought rain during the night, making driving conditions very hazardous in the district. While highways were clear of snow, heavy ice deposits were found on the streets in town while county roads were turned into extended skating rinks.

Four teams will represent Acton in organized hockey this season. The O.H.A. Intermediate "B" entry will start its schedule tonight in the arena against Weston.

At the executive meeting on Tuesday of Guelph Presbyterian W.M.S., Mrs. Harry Mainprize was presented with an honorary life membership. Mrs. Mainprize has been the efficient corresponding secretary for the past five years.

Thanks to the generosity of many local organizations, Christmas this year was made a little brighter for many of the needy children of Halton County. The Children's Aid Society has received many donations of toys and clothing and these have been distributed where it was felt the need was greatest.

The Acton Girls' and Boys' Band presented a good financial report at the completion of another successful year.

Mr. C. W. Hall of the local branch of the Bank of Montreal has been transferred to the bank in Exeter. He is married to the former Olive Rookes of Acton. A farewell party was given for him at the home of bank manager W. H. Clayton and Mrs. Clayton.

75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, January 4, 1894.

Prohibition passed with a good majority at the polls Monday and now it is up to the government to pass a law which shows the obvious wisdom of the electorate.

Mrs. Frank Hamilton of the Station House met with a serious accident last Thursday evening. She was on the front verandah off the second storey when by some means she fell over the railing to the sidewalk below, sustaining a fracture of the left leg above the ankle.

Constable Graham found a full bottle of whiskey on a tramp who applied for permission to sleep on one of the downy couches in the cells the other night.

Owing to the breaking of a bit, Mr. R. G. Brown had a somewhat serious runaway while going to the funeral of the late Mr. McLaughlin on Sunday. The horse got away and ran with the cutter to the place of the funeral. Only the cutter was damaged.

Reeve Pearson has suggested the advisability of at once trimming the trees damaged by a recent storm and painting the wounded parts. A good idea.

In the prize list of the World's Fair, Beardmore and Co. are given first place for their exhibition of sole leather.

Ebbage's new skating rink on Henderson's pond will be opened this evening.

100 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Canadian Champion, Milton, Dec. 24, 1868.

We are indebted to John Easterbrook, Esq., Clerk of Nassagaweya, for an account of the Nomination proceedings in that Township, which we would have been happy to make use of, had we not already in type a similar account from a friend who was present. Mr. Easterbrook supplies the following motion omitted in the last minutes. He says:

"The following resolution was passed at the close of the last meeting of the Council, during my temporary absence from the council board which was the cause of its not appearing in the minutes... moved by Mr. Easterbrook seconded by Mr. Ramsay, that this council do tender their hearty thanks to Archibald Campbell, Esq., Reeve, for the courteous manner in which he has discharged his duty towards the members of this board, while presiding over their deliberations. This is the nineteenth time without interruption that Mr. Campbell has been elected as a member of the municipal council for this township.

The anniversary tea-meeting of the Peru Society will be held on the evening of Christmas Day, December 25. The Reverends Nugent, Haynes and others are expected to deliver addresses. Good music may be expected. Doors open at 6:30, tea served at 7:30 p.m. admission 25 cents.

Free Press Editorial Page

Predict mortgage hike...

Buying a house? You may have to pay close to 10 per cent for a conventional house mortgage if you undertake one early in the new year, according to an article in The Financial Post.

Conventional rates have already started to grow higher in anticipation of an increase in the National Housing Act mortgage ceiling January 1. Conventional rates are usually 1/2 per cent higher than NHA rates.

House buyers would be wise to buy early in the new year, the article says, because rates in February and March could be 1/4 per cent higher than those in January. However, there's always the possibility the mortgage men could be wrong. Even the most seasoned can't agree on what's going to happen in February and March.

If the conventional mortgage rates rise as some predict they could more than double the cost of a house.

For example, if a buyer borrows \$20,000 at 9 1/2 per cent on a \$20,000 house and pays it back in monthly instalments over 25 years, the total cost of the house will be \$62,680.

A home owner who took a \$20,000 loan two or three years ago at 7 1/4 per cent for 25 years is paying monthly instalments of \$143.20. The house owner who takes the same loan for the same period at 9 1/2 per cent will pay \$175.60 monthly.

Payments at this rate, of course, will just put the cost of housing further beyond the reach of the average wage earner. Those in the money market may benefit from the increase but it could mean the difference for some between ever owning a home and staying in rented places.

It could mean misery for others who must put up with inadequate housing because they can't afford a decent home.



Sugar and Spice

by Bill Smiley

And the same to you, Lang may your lum reek. And if you start the first-footin' it through the town on Hogmanay, you'll probably find yourself last-footin' it in the door at 6 a.m., your car in the garage with the lights left on, your wife already in the house with her lights blazing, and yourself burning with a clear, pure 10-watt illumination.

However, that's your headache, Buster. I expect to have my own.

Right now, I'm going to give a serious analysis of the coming year. As I see it, as we old soothsayers say, everything will be fine in '69. Usually, my prophecies are just on the nose, but I make the odd slip. So, right in case, you are invited to burn this after you've read it. Known as destroying the evidence.

Speaking of burn, I predict that this year students will not be threatening to burn the universities. The universities will start burning students. It would solve a lot of problems, like over-crowding and soaring costs.

The idea is simple. A mob of students starts a demonstration, invades the university buildings, and turns them into a pig-pen.

At this point, the president of the university, instead of cowering under his desk and promising no lectures, no exams, and instant degrees, merely calls out, loud and clear, "Burn them!"

From all sorts of broom closets will rush squads of square students, who will learn rather than burn. They will douse the activists with gasoline and toss each of them a match, lighted. This will be known as OPGAS. Several oil companies and a host of taxpayers are interested in contributing.

Some other forecasts. Jean-Jacques Rousseau or whatever they call our prime minister, will come up with a vibrant new name for his government's policies. It will be called the Bust Society. And will be more financial than physical.

You and I will become one year older, less wise and more crotchety. We'll have at least one more wrinkle, hang-up, chin, stomach, or whatever we run to.

Off the cuff...

Disabled adults want a helping hand, not a handout. The Rehabilitation Foundation for the Disabled (March of Dimes) provides that helping hand - with public support for their annual campaign in January.

A prudent person profits from personal experience - a wise one from the experience of others.

Joseph Collins, M.D.

Supermarket: Something that keeps most husbands from going into the stock market.

Canada will regain its once-eminent position in world affairs and will be listened to in international conferences with awe and admiration by Guatemala, Ceylon and Madagascar.

Hordes of God-fearing Canadians will get stoned every Saturday night, even though the price of booze will rise.

Parents who have spoiled their kids rotten will hold up their hands in horror and weep copiously over the activities of their rotten kids.

Australia will be towed by the combined fleets of the western world to a place of safety between Hawaii and California. But only after they have promised to throw overboard all their black aborigines.

Mini-skirts will go down. There's no place else to go. They'll probably drop as far as the upper thigh. Taxes will go up. There's nowhere else to go. They'll go up enough to infuriate the citizenry, but not quite enough to start a revolution.

The Russians will beat Canada in hockey. (You can bet on this one.) Husbands and wives will seriously consider strangling each other with their bare hands. They won't do it, but you can also bet on that one.

Golfers will continue to hook and slice. Curlers will go on missing that crucial shot. Anglers will continue to lie in their teeth, hands wide apart. Deer hunters will explain, for an hour and a half, why they missed that huge buck at point-blank range.

And we'll all go on playing that crazy, fascinating game known as life. But don't be disturbed, chaps. It's a lot more interesting than being dead.

So hang on for another 12 months, and give it everything you've got, if you have anything left.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, January 9, 1919.

During the Christmas holidays, the scholars of the Baptist Sunday School entered into a competition for essays on the life of Joseph. Three well prepared essays were handed to Rev. Mr. Jones last week. They were read and valued by a literary man in town and judged as follows: 1st, Leslie Martin; 2nd, Fred Warren; 3rd, Claude Precious.

The mercury descended to zero for the first time this winter on Saturday morning.

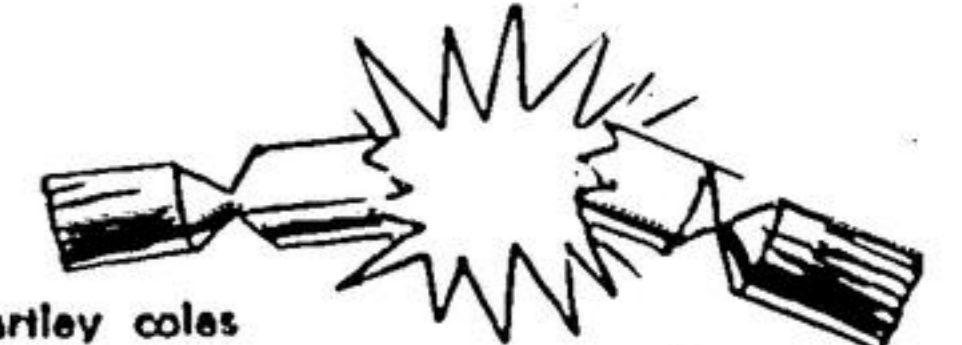
The watchnight service at the Methodist Parsonage on New Year's evening was most interesting. There were about 70 Epworth Leaguers and their friends present. Rev. and Mrs. Moyer proved themselves royal hosts.

Mr. John Watson has sold his farm at the corner of Acton crossroad and the fifth line to Mr. D. A. Henderson, lumberman, Acton. This farm was the homestead of the Watson family for some 70 years. Mr. Henderson has already commenced cutting off the fine original timber standing on the Watson farm.

A circular has been issued announcing that all government railway lines will be operated under the name Canadian National Railways - this includes the Canadian Northern Railway System and Canadian Government Railways.

Salt and Pepper

by Harley Coles



I trust you had a nice Christmas and are looking forward to the New Year festivities with something more soothing than a seltzer bottle.

I trust you also curbed your appetite, forgot about extra helpings and merely sniffed when someone suggested you have a second round of Christmas pudding. I didn't but it would be good to know there's someone out there with some willpower and a stomach which still digests without churning like an old wringer washer.

Christmas dinner at our house is usually preceded by a round of cracker cracking. That's where they set a Christmas cracker in front of your plate, you turn to the person in the next chair, proffer the cracker, and both pull!

When you pick yourself off the floor, remove your sleeve from the gravy and extract the end-of-your-tie out of the dressing, you end up with a paper hat too small for your head, a mini-toy, a cracker joke, and tattered ends of used cracker paper which nobody knows what to do with.

Some people place great faith in the printed slip of paper that flies out of the cracker and ends up in the carrots. Mine, for instance, after missing the carrots and landing in the peas, provided this startling bit of information:

"Give a pig and a boy everything they want and you'll get a good pig and a bad boy."

Try that on for size you juvenile delinquents who think you should have everything you want! Next time around it might be a good idea for parents to raise pigs instead of boys. Especially with the price of pork on the market. Boys don't sell for much.

It's no wonder! Who'd want them after reading the next piece of information which popped out of a cracker. It read:

"Indulgent Father - I'm sorry, Paul, you can't have the chauffeur and limousine

tomorrow. But Daddy, how will I get to school? Do the same as the other kids. Call a cab."

Fine advertising for the taxi boys but a little hard on we indulgent fathers who own limousines and hire chauffeurs. It's a good job we are few and far between. We might go after the cracker company for libel. The cracker company, in turn, might accuse us of going "crackers", which in case you haven't any friends from ole Blighty, means we are heading for the funny farm.

There's advice for everyone in these cylindrical-shaped gadgets. Even the little woman didn't escape the scathing remarks. If you catch her ogling another woman with a new fur coat, for instance, just recite this little bit of wisdom which fluttered out of another cracker:

"The mink in the closet is often responsible for the wolf at the door."

I tried that one out on my better half with startling results. First of all, was the reply, if she had a mink it wouldn't spend much time in the closet. Second, she wouldn't mind a few wolves at her door at all, provided they were the two-legged type.

What can you do with an answer like that. Stifle your impulse to slug her? Dive out the window? Old smoothie here merely pulled another gem out of the cracker barrel. It read:

"Some people believe the jawbone of an ass is just as dangerous a weapon as it was in Sampson's time."

That one was tantamount to declaring a cold war but due to the holiday season and the plenitude of good will, it was shrugged off with a smile. To assuage my guilt feelings, I remarked how well she looked under the holiday lights. The answer came out of a cracker:

"Flattery is soft soap and soft soap is 92 per cent lye."

Maybe we'll be talking by the new year.

Photos from the past



ACTON'S FIRST O.H.A. hockey team won group honors in the intermediate "B" group No. 5 during the 1929-30 season, the year the new arena was finished. Seated, front row, left to right, Russ Salmon, Joe Kentner, Frank Gibbons, Bill Holloway, G. Huffman, Bobby Anderson, Neil Gibbons. Standing, second row, Dr. A. J. Buchanan, trainer, W. Eccleshall, Jack Greer, Joe Woods, Harry Chew. Back row, John Mellon, club president Gordon Beardmore, manager N. H. Garden, J. M. McDonald and L. B. Shorey, members of the executive.

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ADVERTISING

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