



## Bill Smiley



Last week's column mentioned that unspeakable species, the readaholic. That reminded me of a speech I made about Good Reading Habits to a group of honour students. So I dug up the speech and propose this week to pass along some of the more worthwhile points in it.

It's not primarily for students, but if you're not interested, you can go and cry over your post-Christmas bills.

I became a readaholic shortly after I learned to read. My mother would moan, as she tore the flashlight out of my hot little hand about 2 a.m. "Billy Smiley, you'll be blind by the time you're fifteen if you don't stop reading in dark corners and cubby-holes."

Well I've been reading in dark corners and bright ones, on planes and trains, in the bathroom and in bed, in revolving doors and on escalators, ever since, and I'm not blind yet. I don't even wear glasses.

But I don't want you to think I just ignored my mom's admonition. I have never since read in a cubby-hole. In fact, you can scarcely get your hands on a cubby-hole these days. They seem to have gone the way of spats and straw hats.

I had trouble with that speech to the kids. The principal had suggested the topic, Good Reading Habits, and who was I to tell him it was a dull and stupid topic?

When I sat down to write the speech, I could think of only one good reading habit. Many years ago, when I was in public school, they taught us in health classes that you should always read with the light coming over your left shoulder. I don't know why. They're still teaching it.

This good reading habit is rather useless if your left shoulder is higher than your right one, as is sometimes the case. And of

thunk, but I got to get a book," before hurrying off.

I heard later that the aged lady was his mother, and he was on his way to the slave market. I understand he got \$19 for her. Or, in readaholic terms, about twenty-two paperbacks.

Oh, I put the fear into those honour students. But then I tried to soften the blow. Told them of some of the great discoveries for which readaholism had been responsible.

Newton, reading under an apple tree. The old story is that he was sleeping, but the truth is that he had just picked up a copy of the recently published "Fanny Hill" and was definitely reading. Apple fell, hit him on the head, and we had the Law of Gravity, without which we'd be in very grave shape.

And there was the Greek, Archimedes. He climbed into the bath one day for a quiet read. Immediately he opened his book, he knew something was wrong. He leaped out of the tub, crying, "Paprika!" Somebody had put paprika instead of bath salts in his water. And thus was discovered Archimedes Principle, a very important law in the study of physics.

I don't know much about the Principle, but I think it's something like, "Half a bath is better than none."

This anecdote brought me toward my peroration. It reminded me that I knew of another Good Reading Habit. This made two. A Good Reading Habit is to read in the bath-tub.

Someone once said that the ideal learning situation was a boy sitting on one end of a log, and Mark Van Doren, the great U.S. educator, sitting on the other.

My notion of the ideal learning situation would be a classroom with thirty-five bath-tubs instead of desks. And up at the front, a super-tub, preferably in pink mother-of-pearl, for Mr. Smiley.

It might be a little expensive, but think of the special effects we could get when teaching The Spanish Armada in history, or Old Man and the Sea, in English.

Perhaps I should add that we'd be wearing swim-suits.

### Commenting briefly

The comet Kahoutek has been visible at about 5 p.m. these days. This one isn't a U.F.O.—it's well documented! Those who see it are surprised at how low it appears in the sky and how fast it moves across its arc before sinking again.

It appears that the Outers club from the high school will continue to collect glass and newspapers regularly. Knowing another collection will be coming soon should help encourage people to save all they have for this energetic group.

They are expecting to buy canoes with profits.

The young people must check through all the newspapers to take out magazines and all other publications on shiny paper. Newspapers only is what they can sell.

Thanks to the many people who sent us cards at Christmas. The kind words of thanks are much appreciated.

+ + +

Don't itch for something that you are not willing to scratch for.

+ + +

A Happier New Year to Acton's popular fire chief Mick Holmes, who has been a pawn in the brand new game of regional government. The storm that followed his recommendation as fire chief centred in Georgetown, of course. Actonians seemed mainly confused, and the area councillors-to-be wouldn't speak for publication.

We don't know Georgetown's fire chief; we just know we have always had greatest faith in our own and will continue to have.

**THE ACTON FREE PRESS**

PHONE 853-2010

Business and Editorial Office

**CNA**

FOUNDED IN 1915 AND PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY AT 17 WILLOW ST. ACTON, ONTARIO. MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATION OF CANADIAN COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS.

Advertisement Rates: Single copy 15 cents. Second class mail registration number 0033. Advertising accepted on condition that portion of the advertisement will be paid for at the applicable rate in the event of a typographical error or printing error. Advertising is not to be sold at a special price. Quoted rates are for one insertion and may be withdrawn at any time.

Printed and Published by David H. Ditts, Publisher.

Editor: Harry H. Coles.

Advertising Manager: Don Ryder.

Copyright 1973

## Common objectives are vital

An auspicious occasion... a historic event... an opportunity to break the mould of restrictive parochialism... new ground... an obligation to get together and work.

They were the words and phrases with which speakers introduced the new Halton Hills during that council's inaugural last week. They were words of promise we hope, not empty platitudes.

The merging of three historically established municipalities and several communities into a single one is certainly a historic event. Two decades ago local rivalries would never have allowed it and local loyalties would have bitterly opposed it. Today it is a legislative fact and despite the yards of stories written about it the average citizen will find the impact only in the days ahead as his life is touched in some way by the new form of government.

"An opportunity to break the mould of restrictive parochialism", Rev. H. Llewellyn said. And in this brief phrase he summed up the very real crunch that the politicians and people face. Each is now required to think on a broader scale. Statistics reveal something of the dimensions—35,000 people spread over 120 square miles. Thoughts of "our" town or township will not be broadened overnight to encompass the area that includes most of north Halton. It will take time and the attitudes of Halton Hills politicians will provide much of the evidence as to whether or not "the mould of restrictive parochialism" is broken during the years ahead.

That there is new ground to be broken as Halton Hills enters the opening of a new form of government, is obvious. A realignment and merging of municipal staff, a readjustment of personal loyalties, a new communications arrangement so people may remain in contact with their government without undue difficulty, a varied arrangement of responsibilities between the local and regional councils—the new ground is extensive.

Tom Hill said it—"an obligation

of the people to get together and work... we must all be willing to give of our time, energy and concern." Undoubtedly that sums up the need. And of course working together doesn't mean that social and service organizations must merge to accomplish their objectives. Cooperation is possible and the miles of Esqueping that lie between Georgetown and Acton must serve as a bridge.

It is not necessary for local traditions to be abandoned nor is it necessary for a mass induction of citizens to become blood brothers. The importance is in the collective objectives... objectives to make Halton Hills, despite its size, a viable, efficient and pleasant community in which to live with responsive and responsible elected officials.

If common objectives are visible, the inaugural meeting of Halton Hills council last week will indeed be recorded in future history books as an auspicious occasion.

## Free Press Editorial Page

### A broader issue

Acton doesn't need any additional off street parking accommodation, according to a recent traffic study, part of the text of which has been reproduced in the last two weeks in the Free Press.

That conclusion surprises and astonishes us. Perhaps, as often happens, some statistics can be assembled to prove that thesis if one looks only at cars, numbers, parking spaces, and ignores the other deep-rooted problems which go beyond traffic itself.

The town's core area has been changing over the years and more and more service stores as compared with retail stores have been locating there. The result has been that less and less parking may be required. However, it is akin to the

chicken and egg conundrum that has stumped generations. Would more retail outlets have located in the downtown core if there had been more adequate off-street parking? We suspect this might easily have happened.

The rosy-hued traffic survey is being turned over to the new Halton Hills Council and since it indicates all is well in Acton, little more can be expected to be heard on the subject. Perhaps what is really needed is some kind of local study, perhaps even by local people who are knowledgeable, to determine the future of the town's downtown core. Earlier attempts unfortunately didn't get too far but if the core area is important to the town for shopping and as a point of central focus, it will require local

attention rather than more experts.

Parking lots at St. Alban's, the United and Knox churches are fine for downtown employees who want to leave their car for a day but for the shopper lugging groceries or purchases, they are not very accommodating.

Mill street is definitely on the narrow side and someday the province will spell out parking on one side only. When that happens the rosy parking picture presented in the report will have changed considerably and shopping centres and malls will develop increased attraction for the frustrated driver.

If the town's core area is important it is worth a broader look than seems to have been given in the traffic report.

### "Sound off" in type

The temptation is always to tell it to someone rather than write it. That's why editors and reporters often get told about a person's agreement or disagreement with a public action, an editorial viewpoint, or a public attitude. It is interesting, but far more effective would be a letter to the editor outlining that strongly held view.

Sometimes we're criticized because we don't suddenly take up the cudgels for a point of view that is expressed to us. Bear in mind that issues are pressing in from many sides and our space for comment is limited. A simple, brief, straightforward letter to the editor with your name signed to it can be even more effective than more

comment from us.

Next time you're inclined to "sound off" to us put it in a letter that we can print. That will get your point of view across and you may even feel better after having written it. We urge, of course, that you state your case fairly and without malice. Freedom of speech still requires some responsibility too.

## Back Issues of The Free Press

<p>20 years ago</p> <p>Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, January 7, 1954</p> <p>R. J. Hargrave has been appointed as examiner of applicants for motor vehicle drivers' licenses in Acton. For some time there has been no examiner in Acton and applicants have had to go to other centres. He is a former reeve and presently a member of Acton council.</p> <p>First 1954 motor vehicle license number issued in Acton this year was R4701. Arthur Padbury of Nassagaweya, who was leaving for a trip south Saturday morning, was on hand when J. K. Gardiner opened his office and the plates were attached.</p> <p>E. S. Cooper was installed as W.M. of Walker Lodge by installing Master H. L. Ritchie and Past Masters.</p> <p>Acton council, short one member who will be elected, if necessary, following the town's third nomination meeting Friday, held its inaugural session Monday when in little more than two and a half hours councillors dispensed with the motions, resolutions and committee designations necessary at the year's first meeting. Prior to Mayor Tyler's initial remarks, Rev. E. A. Currey charged the members to fulfill the function of their office.</p> <p>G. A. Dills, who has been sole owner of the Acton Free Press and Canadian Champion, Milton, has taken into partnership his two sons David R. and James A. Skating at the arena was enjoyed for the first time this season on Saturday morning.</p> <p>Richard Harris of Rockwood starts his 30th year as correspondent for the Free Press. He was engaged by H. P. Moore in Dec. 1924.</p> <p>Mr. and Mrs. Martin Kelly celebrated their golden wedding anniversary at the home of a son, Henry Kelly of R.R. 2, Campbellville. They have lived most of their married life at Acton and Campbellville.</p>	<p>50 years ago</p> <p>Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, January 10, 1924</p> <p>That Acton is progressing is very manifestly proven by the numbers of electric light and waterworks connections which are being installed every week. The number of electric users is now nearly 600. The number of waterworks installations is now between 400 and 500 and the plumbers in town are still busily engaged in putting in additional services every week.</p> <p>Rarely in the history of Knox church has there been a quarterly communion service fraught with such impressiveness and interest as that of last Sunday. As a result of the faithful and continued personal effort on the part of the minister the Rev. A. C. Stewart and his session 35 persons were received into membership. They were mostly young men and maidens.</p> <p>Mr. A. H. Bishop, gardener, Fairview Ave., is adding another greenhouse to his plant. He feels there is a splendid field in Acton for potted plants and cut flowers.</p> <p>Col. G. O. Brown's term as Commanding Major Officer of the 20th Halton Rifles expires this month but he has been asked to remain for another six months.</p> <p>Smoking is now to be permitted in the first car of passenger trains.</p> <p>Mr. William Plank and family enjoyed a turkey feast to them from west of Edmonton by son Fred.</p> <p>The skating rink opened for the season Friday. The management was generous and allowed everyone free access.</p> <p>The Aeolian Concert Co. will render a high-class concert in the town hall tomorrow evening.</p> <p>The manufacture of radio receiving sets is developing into a profitable industry. Acton and vicinity has a very fair share of enthusiastic radio users.</p>	<p>75 years ago</p> <p>Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, January 3, 1899</p> <p>District roads have been in almost impassable condition.</p> <p>The men who aid largely in assuring successful and profitable operations to all large manufacturing concerns are the energetic commercial travellers. The staff of travellers for the Canada Glove Works left for their various outside fields - W. T. Smyth to British Columbia; J. C. Broddy and Anson Smith to Manitoba and the Northwest; A. E. Nicklin to Nova Scotia; T. E. M. Secord to New Brunswick; and J. A. Murray to Prince Edward Island. Messrs. W. H. Storey and Son anticipate a large trade this season.</p> <p>It has become an established family tradition for the children and grandchildren of Mr. Christopher Swackhamer of Churchill to gather at his home and on the 26th inst. his four boys and five girls with their families enjoying the freedom of the home. After partaking of an oyster supper a programme of songs, recitations and speeches was gone through in which nearly all took part. Not many families are so circumstanced that they can assemble together even once a year.</p> <p>Owing to the prevalence of measles attendance at the public school is reduced by a half.</p> <p>Modern desks and seats will be installed in Bannockburn school.</p> <p>A carnival was held on the ice at Rockwood New Year's night. There were some good character costumes.</p> <p>The event of the season for Crewsons Corners took place at the home of Mr. John Walker in the form of a social dance. Between 50 and 60 young people were present.</p> <p>Leslie's school, Erin, is closed since the teacher Miss E. C. Currie is confined to her home with diphtheria. We are pleased to state she is recovering.</p>
---	--	--