

Free Press Editorial Page

Put aside blame and anger

Eleven tragic deaths in motor vehicle accidents in the past month have involved Acton and district people - a terrible toll in lost young lives and enduring sorrow for their survivors. Quick on the heels of the terrible two-car crash that took seven lives came the accidental deaths of John Van Oosten, Allen Walma, Kenneth Bouclair and Lynn Jones.

The explanations - if any - for each accident are different and it seems there is no use trying to figure out "why." Why them, why there, and why just then.

The town is without them, now, and will remain so.

The jury investigating the crash early in March which claimed seven young lives must be commended for their decisions. They have tried to foresee how

such an accident could be prevented in the future by recommending car key rulings, improved radio communication, police pursuit policy.

They didn't find it necessary to remind anyone about the basic rule against theft. That's an age-old tenet.

Another point readers should remember, when reading about the recommendations, is the simple fact that a driver followed by a police cruiser should stop at once if signalled. That is no doubt what the policeman expected.

But the anger and blame resulting from all 11 deaths will bring nothing but festering bitterness if they are harboured for long. Feelings that could poison the future of survivors must be put aside, replaced by gratitude for the happy young years these people did have.



JOGGING MADE EASY! Michelle and Lori Jones enjoy a jaunt in the sun with Star, a Shetland stallion owned by Scott Masales. The beautiful weather this past weekend made outdoor activities a must.

Here comes the dinosaur

Toronto subscribers to the Free Press tell us they were surprised to receive two papers the same day a week ago. One Free Press was delivered over a week late while the other one was surprisingly early. Both came on a Friday.

Meanwhile the post office is advertising "First class surface mail to the USA is now history" saying air service will be used

instead. Newspapers will go their old same overland route.

The symbol of a dinosaur on their advertisements seems apt to newspaper publishers struggling with the problems of delivery and increasing costs. The post office service that was once speedy, efficient and reliable seems to be going the way of the dinosaur, alright.

You've slipped, baby

For all those starry-eyed souls who say of women—"you've come a long way baby;" here are the facts. Montreal economist Dian Cohen finds from the Women's Bureau that women workers are slipping—in the amount of pay they take home, as compared with men.

Although more women than ever are in the labor force, one out of every three women are bearing more of the over-all burden of unemployment in the past. In the clerical field where more than a million women work, men earn 57 per cent more than women, averaging \$7,769 yearly to a woman's \$4,962. The salary difference for men here is INCREASING. In the service sector men made 157 per cent more than women in 1972. Back in 1967 men service workers earned only 121 per cent more than women. Again the gap is INCREASING for men.

In the sales field things are going from rotten to worse. In 1967 salesmen averaged \$6,096—women \$2,292. Six years later in 1972 salesmen were up to \$9,567 while sales women made a whopping \$3,771.

But the gap is narrowing in favor of women in the professions. In 1967 male professionals earned 87 per cent more than women. By 1972 they earned only 72 per cent more than women professionals.

In the clerical field where 97 per cent of all secretaries and stenographers are women—male secretaries earn between \$2,300 and \$12,000 more than women.

Even babysitting is not sacred. The average 60-year-old male full-time sitter made \$5,536 yearly—compared to the woman sitter's \$2,099!

When men are outstripping women at such traditional work as looking after the baby all that can be said for the women of Canada is "you've slipped a long way baby."

The effect may affect!

"Effect and "affect"—two words which are often improperly used.

But in the past three weeks, two people have mentioned to us that they have seen them wrongly used right here, in the newspaper. Ouch! We like to think we're very picky about spelling, although we know only too well how many mistakes creep into type.

The people who mentioned our errors are both old enough to have gone to school in the days of rules and drilling. Even with rules, "effect" and "affect" aren't the easiest to handle.

Nothing as simple as the rule for "practice" and "practise"—"c"

for the noun, "s" for the verb. (That applies to "license", too.)

So one of our sharp critics wrote us a little critique to help us remember. A lot of people, including teachers, may find it helpful!

She writes: "Perhaps the following, from the Oxford Dictionary, will effect a solution to the problem of the use of the words AFFECT/EFFECT and the effect may affect the quality of future articles!"

"AFFECT (v.t.) produce an effect on, move, touch the feelings."

"EFFECT (n) result, consequence, impression. (v.t.) bring about, accomplish."

April drips and drops

Spring clean-up time is soon followed by summer sit-out time. Again this year ARC Industries at Hornby is making a business of re-webbing lawn chairs. It's been a good project for the people who work there, and they're looking for chairs, to repair.

Gail Beerman says people could phone her if getting their chairs down to Hornby is a problem.

The Sunday before last was picked by population analysts as the day the world's population reached four billion. This very significant event was pushed off

the front pages of the dailies by the usual tragedies and troubles.

But maybe that person's birth isn't anything special to celebrate, anyway. Who can assure that little baby girl or boy of enough food, enough room, enough work, enough years to achieve something?

Isn't it good to see more stores opening up and modernizing?

March came in like a lion, and didn't go out like a lamb, either.



Sugar and Spice by Bill Smiley

When I was a boy, I used to have occasionally what were known in those days as "bilious attacks." They included a splitting headache and a stomach so jittery it would accept nothing but hot lemonade and lady fingers of toast.

They would last two or three days, during which I would withdraw from the world into whooping and pain and darkness.

Today, of course, I would be sent first to a specialist, who would diagnose migraines. If they persisted, I would then probably go to a physiatrist, who would decide that I was too sensitive for the world and put me on tranquilizers. At age 10, I'd probably be an addict.

We've come a long way. In those days, my mother would spend hours stroking her fingers through my hair, and gently rubbing my scalp. And I would emerge, re-join the world, and ravenously gorge the senses that had been starved for a day or two.

I haven't had one of those attacks since I was a kid, though a bad hangover, if I had ever chanced to have one, would probably have been a reasonable parallel. Maybe I'm not too sensitive for the world any more.

But I have been feeling rather bilious, occasionally, in the last year or two. And ever the curious observer, I have looked around to find what was causing the problem.

Finally I zeroed in on it. The nausea is caused by the whining of university professors concerning the communicative skills of today's students.

They'd never put it so simply. But what they mean is that two-thirds of the people they accept into university can't write a decent sentence, let alone a paragraph, and can't express themselves orally in standard English.

It's perfectly true, of course. But why do they whimper about it? Why do they try to blame the high schools? Why do they accept these students in the first place, if they're not up to scratch?

I'll tell you why. It's because they are so hard up for money, they'll accept anything that can pronounce its own name and isn't walking on all fours.

The universities have lowered their own standards, even the best of them, and proliferated their courses, and introduced "Mickey Mouse" courses and highly flexible guidelines in the desperate effort to get living corpses onto their campuses.

They are body snatchers of the 20th century, in the scramble for government grants.

A dozen years ago, if you failed a subject in your graduating year in high school, you failed your year, and repeated it. Nowadays you would graduate, even though your over-all average was 56, and some third rate university called Sir Wilfred McDonald University of the Fine Arts would sweep you into its folds with little squeals of delight.

And six months later, the head of the English Department at good old (five years) Sir Wilfred would bemoan in the newspapers that the college had to set up a course in remedial English, because it

wasn't being taught properly in the high schools, and the Head of Math would say the same thing.

It would never occur to them to look at the high school marks of Joe, who, with many peers, is giving them the headaches.

They would find that Joe actually got 47 in English, and was given 50 as a gift, so as not to "hold him back". A mark of 50, to anyone in the know, means a failure. They would find, on inquiring, that Joe had received 42 in math, but the guidance department talked his math teacher into giving him a 50, because he had promised he would never take math again. So he enrolls in architecture.

I have taught under both the old and new systems of education. The old was ridiculous, a formula of rote learning.

The new is just as silly. It is so muddled that no one, least of all the students, knows what is going on. Such words as effort, challenge, excellence, have been thrown out like stale dishwasher. They have been

replaced by flexibility, individual choice, a good learning situation, and the creativity of the child.

What poppycock. What it means is that everything is twice as easy as it was, the chance of failure is remote, and the students are being shoe-horned into an alien world that is as different from school as Dracula is from Anne of Green Gables.

But all is not lost. What the university people, and those who would revert to the old days of lock-step, regimented education, fail to realize is that today the high schools are, at least, giving some insight into the human spirit, compassion, dignity, and what life is really about, to thousands of young people who, a decade ago, would have been turfed into the factories and dead end jobs at age 16, grade 10.

Maybe that's one of the good things about high unemployment. There's no room for this generation, so they stay in school. They learn something.

OUR READERS WRITE:

Fibres can be dangerous

In the March 17 issue of the Free Press was an article making reference to a new company involved in the manufacturing of wall coatings coming to our town. Initially I was pleased to see we had attracted a new company, but as I finished reading the article I became quite apprehensive. The reason for my apprehension was the list of ingredients used in the manufacture of this coating, to be more precise the use of asbestos and fibreglass. What I specifically want to know is what are the precautions taken by this company to insure that these fibres are contained and not allowed to escape into the atmosphere of our town. It has been proven conclusively that these two ingredients are highly dangerous carcinogens (cancer causing agents).

Recently I attended a lecture given by Dr. Irving Selkoff, North America's foremost expert on industrial health and hygiene, and amongst the many carcinogens he mentioned, asbestos and fibreglass were given special attention.

Asbestos fibres are virtually indestructible. They float in the air like a vapour and one cubic inch contains millions of these fibres, fibres so minute that the mucus and hairs that line our air passages cannot trap

them. They have a very serious effect on body cells turning cancerous. They not only affect the lungs but also the digestive tract including the liver. I further point out the effects do not surface for a twenty to twenty-five year period. Lung X-rays will not disclose the presence of asbestos, and the X-rays can be quite clear and show an apparently healthy lung. To be affected, one does not have to be working directly with these compounds. Anyone in the area where this dust floats in the air can and probably will be significantly affected.

I now pose this question, what, if any, are the modifications that have been made to the antiquated building that this company is going to occupy, to insure that our children and in fact all the residents of Acton are guaranteed the air we breathe will be free and clear of any fibres and or gases that this company may employ in the manufacture of their products?

I am not being an alarmist. I think the citizens of Acton are entitled to be made aware of the effects of these fibres, should they escape into the air we breathe. Sincerely, Wm. I. Johnson, 47 Rosemary Rd., Acton.

Two sets of driving rules?

I was wondering if it was possible that there are one set of driving rules for John Q. Public and another for a police officer?

When I noticed a cruiser parked wrong way on Mill St. in the downtown area the other day, I watched to see what was about to happen. The officer on duty came out of the Municipal Office to have another taxpayer shake her finger at him and scold him in a "motherly fashion" only to get a big laugh from him in return.

I thought surely he will back around onto the side street and pull away in his proper

lane as he also was parked between the "2 hour parking sign" and the corner. No way! He pulled right out across the line of traffic in front of an oncoming truck.

Now if you or I had been guilty of the same action there would have been three charges against us.

I was always taught "Actions speak louder than words."

I have paid taxes to this town for over 25 years and sometimes wonder what value I am getting for my dollar.

An I. Rate Taxpayer.

The Free Press Back Issues

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Free Press April 5, 1956. Acton's oldest citizen, W. H. Mainprize added another milestone to his full life on Saturday when he celebrated his 99th birthday. After receiving a succession of visitors, he is looking forward to more next year when he turns 100 years of age.

Roads about town are in terrible condition and of course those in the new subdivisions are in the worst condition. Even in the older sections of town big chunks of road surface have been lifted and holes left that are treacherous. If you're walking, the proper footwear in many sections is rubber boots. Yes, it's bad this spring! But old-timers who can remember back to the days when sewers were installed five or six years ago, can laugh it off as a mere nothing. Every road in town in those days was bad. Why this spring is nothing to the conditions we had in 1950 and 1951. Yes, it's bad, but it's been worse!

Rev. R. H. Armstrong, pastor of Knox Presbyterian Church here for the past seven years, will leave later this spring to take over a Hamilton charge.

A trailer used by workers for the Lakeview subdivision contractor came close to destruction by fire on Monday night when fog was so thick it couldn't be distinguished from smoke. Firemen were called to douse the smouldering insulating straw under the trailer. Mud at the subdivision is so heavy the fire truck could not enter. Instead the pumper was driven in behind Toth's garage and a hose line run through back yards.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Free Press Thursday, April 4, 1926. Notwithstanding that the outdoor aspect had more of winter than of spring this in no wise dispelled the Easter spirit of joy and gladness and attendance at all the churches on Easter Sunday was large.

The demand for the excellent goods manufactured by the Mason Knitting Works requires a larger output than the equipment was possible to accomplish. Therefore Mr. Mason has purchased a new outfit of machinery at Utica N.Y.

A meeting was held in the Canadian Military Institute, Toronto, at which representatives from nearly all the veterans' organizations in the province were present. Purpose of the meeting was to form a provincial section of the Legion to amalgamate all veterans' organizations.

A new type of electric car, the last word in radial equipment, has been placed on the line of the Canadian National Railway between Toronto and Guelph. The motor can haul five regular passenger coaches and can maintain a high rate of speed.

Farmers are busy these days attending their neighbours' sawing bees.

The farmers have been hustling in the turnips while the sleighing lasted. There is no more popular Canadian writer than Louisa M. Montgomery, author of Anne of Green Gables, and now Halton is honored to have this popular writer as a resident. She is none other than the matron of the manse of the Presbyterian church in Norval. She spoke to Knox Presbyterian young people last week.

100 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Free Press of Thursday, March 30, 1876. It seems there is some doubt this year if the proper day has been selected for Easter Sunday.

Mr. Hertzog, an evangelist of the Disciples, is holding religious services in Matthews Hall each evening this week.

Ninety-eight loads of saw-logs were delivered at Brown and Hall's saw mill one day last week, making an aggregate of 74,500 feet of lumber. One load of hemlock logs measured 1301 feet. This does not much look like a winding up of the lumber business in Acton.

The following were the accounts paid by Acton council: H. Moore, for registration of births, deaths and marriages \$1.90; D. Galloway, bread for D. Minot \$3.05.

The reeve reported that money placed in his hands for charitable causes was about exhausted, that a large portion of the \$20 had been doled out to "tramps". As the winter was now nearly over he thought there would not be such a demand on the funds.

The April Cattle Fair will be held next Thursday, the 6th prox. Several buyers from Toronto and elsewhere have signified they will be present.

The roof of the driving sheds at Marshall's livery stables, Milton, was crushed in on Saturday by snow completely destroying six buggies and four cutters.

A woman was found dead in the snow near Oshawa. She turns out to be an old vagrant of the vicinity.

A convention of base ballers is to be held in Toronto when a plan will be set on foot for forming a Dominion Association.

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Business and Editorial Office

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