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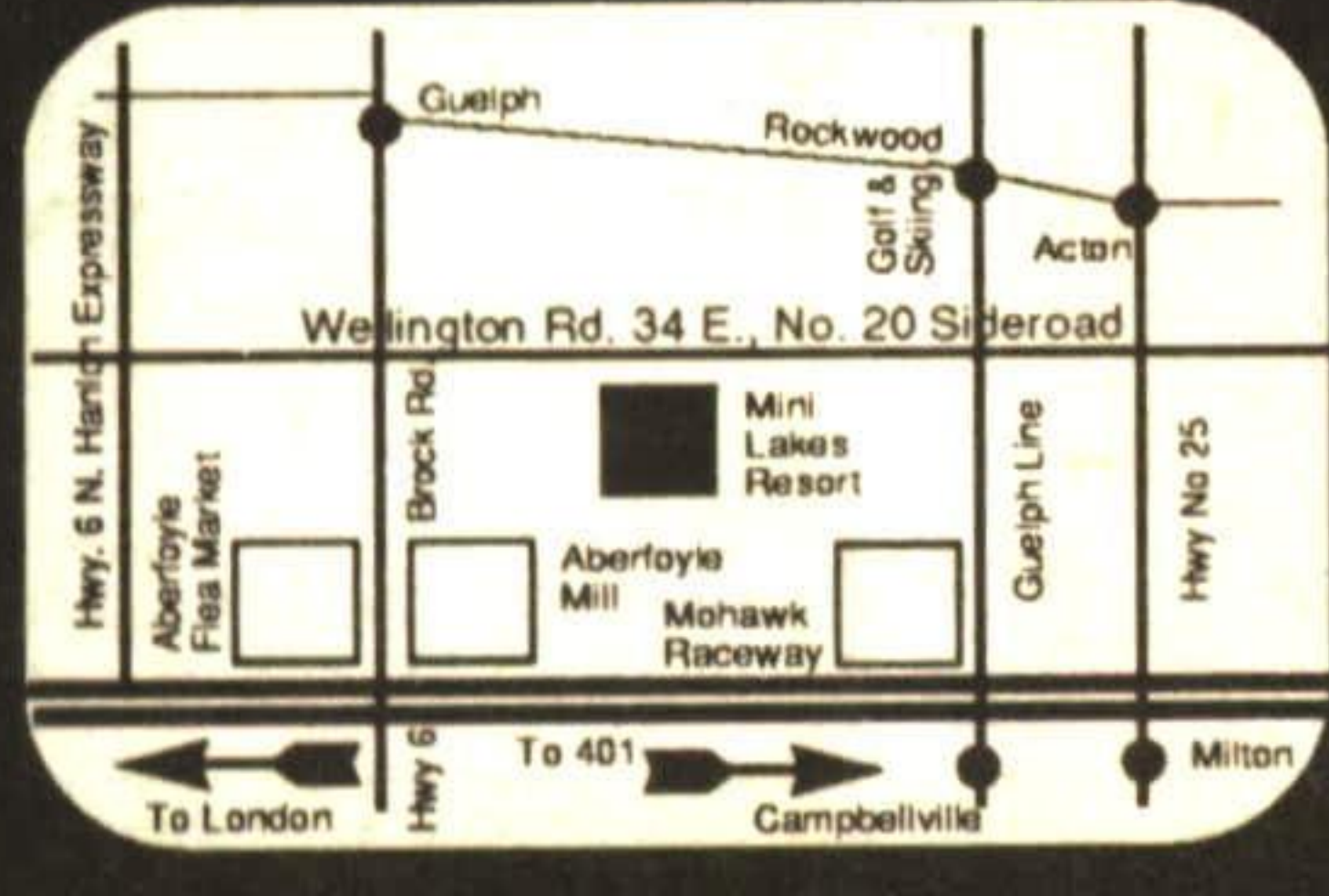


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## Former editor speaks at seniors' luncheon

By STEVE LeBLANC  
Staff writer

Georgetown seniors received a firsthand account on the life of a journalist, as well as reliving old memories, from a man who has made both reporting and reminiscing a major part of his life.

Acton resident Hartley Coles, former editor of the *Georgetown Independent/Acton Free Press*, was the guest speaker at the Georgetown and District Senior Association's monthly luncheon, held Thursday afternoon at the Georgetown Christian Church Hall.

A total of 126 local seniors listened, laughed and reminisced during Coles' half-hour talk, which included a detailed account into the life of a man who's spent nearly 50 years in the newspaper game.

"I'm not an expert public speaker, so I'll be using my trusty note pad," said Coles to start his talk.

A lifetime resident of the Halton Hills community, Coles sparked many fond memories in several of the local seniors in attendance, all of whom thoroughly enjoyed his talk.

Coles, who was born in Acton and finished up his reign as *Independent/Free Press* editor in 1991, began his journalism career in 1943 at the age of 17, in the days of hand-set type and during the height of World War II. At the time he thought this would be just a "stop gap" until he was old enough to enlist in the army.

"After a while, it (journalism) got into my veins. I've never wanted to do anything else," explained Coles.

Coles began as an office boy at The Acton Free Press, setting and cleaning type, and quickly moved up to the dual role of printer/reporter, which included a great deal of sports reporting — a field he was very interested in having played minor hockey and baseball in Halton Hills.

He recalls the fierce rivalry that

existed between the Acton and Georgetown sports teams back then and that competition between these two communities was always intense and newsworthy.

After his reporting days, he moved up to the editor's chair and when The Georgetown Independent opened its doors, he became the first editor of the publication.

He spoke to local seniors of how much newspaper journalism has changed, from the days of hand-set type in his early years to the age of computers in the 1960s, which totally revolutionized the newspaper scene.

Coles talked about the role of the editor in the newspaper and discussed the do's and don'ts of journalism — all with a high level of humor that kept the seniors laughing.

"First rule of journalism is that you never quote anybody word for word unless you want them to look like a jerk," joked Coles.

During his many years in journalism, Coles has met three different prime ministers, two Ontario premiers, and a host of MPs and MPPs. His involvement with The *Independent/Free Press* also landed him a bit part in a movie, alongside the bionic woman Lindsay Wagner.

Coles is now semi-retired and is the publisher of a newspaper in Tillsonburg.

Among the things he says he doesn't miss about working in the newsroom are: 50 to 60 hour work weeks, long meetings, fire calls in the middle of the night, and covering car crashes.

"Some things I do miss are the camaraderie that goes on in a newsroom, weekly gossip and an appreciation for town officials."

Another rewarding aspect of his involvement in journalism has been seeing newspapers grow and flourish.

"One thing I'll say about the newspaper game, it's never been dull."



HARTLEY COLES

## Police Blotter

### Vandalism

Police report a willful damage incident on Fourth Line in Halton Hills earlier this month. Sometime between midnight and 7 a.m. on March 19, unknown person(s) damaged five patio lights on the property. Damage is estimated at \$100.

### Wilful damage

Investigation continues following a willful damage incident on Five Sideroad in Halton Hills last week. According to police, sometime between 9 p.m. March 18 and 6:30 a.m. March 19, a Halton Hills woman parked a vehicle at the residence overnight and upon her return, discovered the sunroof glass and the rearview mirrors smashed. There was no damage to the other vehicles in the driveway. Damage to the vehicle totals \$2,000.

### Mailbox destroyed

A mailbox and post were destroyed during a hit and run incident on Tenth Line in Halton Hills overnight Monday. Police report that the owner of the residence discovered that sometime between 11:30 p.m. Monday and 6 a.m. Tuesday, his mailbox and post had been hit by an unknown vehicle. The damage totals \$100.

### Car lot damage

Police report property damage under \$1,000 at Capital Ford in Georgetown late last week. The complainant reports the daily inspection revealed that sometime between 1 a.m. March 18 and 10 a.m. March 19 a vehicle's right side door had been dented. The caused of the damage, estimated at \$500, is unknown.

### Tires stolen

Four tires and four rims were stolen from a vehicle on Mountainview Road in Georgetown early this week. Between 9 a.m. last Sunday and 10 a.m. Monday, unknown suspect(s) removed the tires and rims from a vehicle parked at a car dealership on Mountainview Road. Value is \$1,200.

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