

Traffic reporter talks about work

Henry Shannon, traffic reporter in CFRB Radio in Toronto since 1968, was guest speaker at a meeting in the Charles Hotel Bear Rug Room Thursday evening.

He spoke at length about his experiences watching, directing and "sorting out messes" in traffic from the skies and commented on city traffic conditions during his half-hour talk.

The occasion was the annual get-together of the Milton 820 Optimist Air Cadet Squadron and the sponsoring organization, the Optimist Club of Milton. Optimists hosted the dinner and the Air Cadet Squadron put on the program.

Steers people
"The whole point of traffic reporting," Mr. Shannon told the audience, "is reporting on the trouble spots and sorting out the messes—I try to steer people to other areas to avoid the problem roads and the traffic jams."

He added it takes "real courage" to drive the Don Valley Expressway, Highway 401 or the Gardiner Expressway during morning or afternoon rush hours—"I am far safer in the plane," he grinned.

The speaker said his work is extremely satisfying, as he gets a kick out of helping people avoid traffic jams. Besides, each day is different.

In the summer months he flies as far as MacTier, Huntsville and Burlington Skyway to help guide weekend holidayers home from the cottage country. From May 24 to Thanksgiving Day he does the weekend beat Sunday evenings (or holiday Mondays) in addition to his two hours of morning city traffic reporting and another two hours each weekday afternoon.

First in skies
CFRB, Canada's largest radio station, was the first in Canada to introduce traffic reporting from the skies, he pointed out. Today about nine radio stations in the Toronto area give air traffic reports.

At first helicopters were used but the high operating cost (\$150,000 for the ship and about \$100 an hour to operate it) forced the station into fixed-wing aircraft. In 1970 CFRB acquired a Piper Twin Engine Commanche which cruises at 140 to 180 mph. Mr. Shannon said he has two seasoned veteran pilots and could fly the plane himself, if necessary, as he is licenced.

Has he ever been scared? No, but he told the story of one near-miss involving his plane and a helicopter. After that scare, the pilots and traffic reporters got together and decided on set altitudes they would fly, to avoid future mishaps.

Reports to police
The reporter says he often spots accidents and reports them to the police, through his radio communications.

Hikes, singsongs

Close to 100 people hiked the Bruce Trail Sunday led by Milton Brownie and Guide Commissioner Barbara Howard. The four mile hike, open to the general public as well as the Guiding community, was a great success.

Although a few people got wet feet crossing swollen streams, nothing could really mar the beautiful day or the refreshing smells and sights of spring in the woods. It was the first of many such hikes.

Singsongs
The Second Milton Guide Company entertained residents of the Pettit House, Centennial Manor, March 31 with a spring singsong. The Guides and their leaders Mrs. M. Sandilands, entertained at the Manor at Christmas and enjoyed themselves so much, they decided to do it again. The 27 girls in full uniform sang Guide and action songs. The evening ended with everyone joining in the singing and having a wonderful time.

Plan ahead

Thinking ahead is the key to avoiding accidents, stresses the Industrial Accident Prevention Association. If this suggestion is put into practise by both drivers and pedestrians, we'll have fewer accidents on the streets.

Many pedestrians are killed while walking along the shoulders of roads because they were wearing dark clothes and were not visible to the driver.

So, to be safe, wear light colored clothing and also walk facing the traffic—it may save your life!

with the station. He feels the reduction in speed limits earlier this year has slowed the traffic down a bit, and says he sees less accidents since the speed was lowered.

His daily schedule is, up at 4.30, at the airport at 6, in the air by 7, and flying until 9. He repeats it each afternoon.

The city's air pollution picture is "better today than two years ago," he said. "It's getting better, but we still have a long way to go."

As for the future of traffic in Toronto, he predicted traffic would be "a very tough challenge for the city fathers. There is no one answer. We need a balance between public transportation and expressways."

He said he'd like to take Premier Bill Davis up over the city some Friday afternoon during rush hour, to "see everyone sitting still on the expressways."

Cadets honored
During the evening, the Air Cadet Squadron honored several cadets and some of the officers and staff members who have guided the squadron.

Most improved speaking awards went to LAC Donald Nisbet, Cpl. Rick Aselton and LAC Chris Arnold. Robin Hayden, the cadet who won both the local Optimist-sponsored speaking contest and the zone speak-off at Orangeville, gave her winning talk on hockey of the future. LAC Nisbet also gave a brief talk, thanking the Optimists for all they have done for the cadets.

Capt. Jim Anderson described the squadron "27 good cadets, all of them talented, respectfully... probably the best bunch of kids you'll find in this town."

Earns wings
He presented a certificate to Warrant Officer David Hadfield, who last summer qualified for his private pilot's wings. He also presented a range officer's certificate and commission scroll to Lt. Gus Olsthoorn who last year graduated from cadets but

came back as range instructor.

Certificates of appreciation went to Robert Drennan who has instructed the cadets in public speaking, and first aid instructors Mrs. Mary Gooch and Don Miller of the St. John Ambulance Brigade.

The squadron officers and staff were also introduced—Capt. Jim Anderson, Administrative Officer Lt. Gerry Gibson, Training Officer Lt. Jim Nisbet, Range Officer

Olsthoorn, Supplies Officer Mrs. Sheena Drennan, Hobbies Instructor Joe Lewin, Public Speaking Instructor Bob Drennan, First Aid

Instructors Mary Gooch and Don Miller, F/Sgt. Harold Dickert and W/Off David Hadfield, chairman of the Optimist sponsor committee Don Simmons.

During the meeting two new Optimists were inducted, Malcolm Manford and Terry Cole.



ROBIN HAYDEN of Milton Air Cadet Squadron, winner of the local oratorical contest sponsored by the Optimist Club of Milton, went on to the zone contest in Orangeville last week and emerged as top girl speaker. She'll enter the District semi-finals in Toronto, April 24. James Ricci of Milton, top boy in the local contest, was second in the zone speak-off.



HENRY SHANNON, the well known CFBR traffic reporter was guest speaker at a joint meeting of Milton 820 Optimist Air Cadet Squadron and the sponsoring optimist Club of Milton Thursday. He spoke about his experiences, reporting on Toronto's traffic conditions of Canada's largest radio audience. Pictured with him are Air Cadet Capt. Jim Anderson, left, and Optimist Club president Don Knight, right.



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FEE - \$10.00 per person
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