

The Essex Free Press is an independent weekly newspaper, locally owned and operated by The Essex Free Press Limited

The Essex Free Press is published every Wednesday from
16 Centre Street, Essex, ON N8M 1N9
Tel.: (519) 776-4268 Fax: (519) 776-4014
Email: essexfreepress@on.aibn.com
Website: <http://essexfreepress.reinvented.net>

Publisher: Laurie A. Brett



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Tim Hortons prerogative

Have you ever noticed there are unwritten rules about entering and exiting a Tim Hortons parking lot?

If a driver is running on empty (the fuel implied here is caffeine), that driver automatically has the right of way to enter the Tim Hortons parking lot, regardless of the traffic conditions and anyone else's level of caffeine depletion. Polite waves and courteous nods of the head by those drivers ceding right

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of way are expected.

Once in the parking lot, the caffeine-seeking driver has the right to proceed at breakneck

editorial

laurie brett

speed into the drive-through lane without regard for vehicles attempting to back up, pedestrian traffic or the positioning of delivery trucks at the building's back door. It is not safe at this time to be a Tim Hortons employee dutifully removing debris from the parking lot with a broom and dustpan.

These rules are the foundation of the "Tim Hortons prerogative." It's not a law yet but it might as well be. And, if and when it comes before the legislature, our elected representatives should also consider enshrining our right to a Tim Hortons on every third street corner in every Canadian town and village. That's really what we want – protection from corporate owners who might try to interfere with our right of access.

For a variety of reasons, the decision to close the Southland Plaza Tim Hortons is causing quite a stir. After a 12-year presence in the downtown core, the owner has determined that three stores in the same community are too many. So much for a Tim Hortons on every third street corner! While rumblings about loss of employment have been heard, the overwhelming complaint seems to focus on downtown access for people who can't walk or drive down Talbot Street South to visit one of the other two locations. Where will they go to socialize and imbibe?

No one likes change and we especially don't like change to our coffee routine. While it's certainly not good news that yet one more commercial property may be left vacant in the downtown core, some merchants have to be happy about the prospect of customers migrating to their establishments. Every diner in the downtown core would love new business, even if it's just for a cup of coffee. And Essex's newest coffee house, The Daily Grind, is well positioned to fill the void.

Before you start making plans to carpool to Maidstone Avenue, consider the alternatives. Your new caffeine hangout could be just as convenient to reach and relatively free of parking lot perils.



During a lifetime you meet many people. They come into your life for a certain amount of time and then fade away. It's always sad when the conclusion is final.

For myself, Ted Brock was one of those people. Radio and TV stations employ representative firms, mainly in Toronto but also in other Canadian and U.S. centres, to sell advertising for them at the agency level to national clients.

McDermott Broadcast Sales was Canada's original rep firm, as we called them, and one of the most famous. Founded by Andy McDermott in the years following the Second World War, his company represented more Canadian and American stations than any other. Our company, Group One Radio, merged with McDermott in 1980 and that's how I met Ted Brock. Over the next number of years he and I worked together several days each month in Toronto so I got to know Ted well. No one knew the Toronto media scene better.

Ted was a graduate of Ryerson's radio-television arts program and when he joined McDermott in the early 1960s he was one of the youngest reps on the street. The son of a patrician Toronto family, Ted loved that city. His greeting when picking me up at Union Station was general-



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ly "Welcome to Hogtown!" He retained his connection with Ryerson and for 30 years served as the don of O'Keefe House, shepherding hundreds of young students through their first years away from home. His radio career was auspicious and resulted in the high regard his clients had for him. One of the last things I did for Rogers before moving on to Maclean Hunter was to convince Rogers

President Jim Sward to hire Ted Brock for CFMT-TV, a multicultural station that Ted Rogers had recently purchased.

After that I only saw Ted a few more times, the most recent about five years ago when we met for breakfast in downtown Toronto.

In London last Friday the hotel gave me a complimentary Globe and Mail. Unable to sleep I found myself looking over the obituaries and there was Ted Brock's name. I can't get over the coincidence. Had I not seen that paper that day, years could have gone by and I would never have known my friend had died!

The notice was well written and covered Ted's after-work interests that included an association with Taylor-Statten camps alumni, his interest in genealogy and his summers at the 95-year-old Brock family cottage northwest of Toronto.

Local historian Bill Sherk likes to say, "The best antiques are old friends." If you have been blessed with a few good friends, like me, you are indeed fortunate.



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Subscriptions
Canada: \$37.10
U.S.: \$80.00
(Prices include GST)
Payable in advance to
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Friday at 4:30 pm

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We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada, through the Publications Assistance Program (PAP), towards our mailing costs. Second Class Mail Registration No. 1495.