

Arthur Kesper

Retired builder crafts model houses

STOUFFVILLE — maxim of Arthur Kesper, a retired builder, he has made to his 74 years is to build his houses smaller — much smaller, in fact. His latest project is a beautiful miniature, complete in every detail, of the old Brillinger house on Main St. in Stouffville.



Arthur Kesper, a retired builder, still continues his craft, although on a much smaller scale. His latest project is a miniature of the Brillinger house on Main St. Mr.

Kesper's projects are much prized by collectors and often sell for \$600 and up. —Annegret Lamure.

Mr. Kesper, a Welshman, came to Canada seven years ago and now lives in Dan Mills, but he has a special interest in the older houses in Stouffville and plans to build miniatures of several other houses in town.

He first became interested in the Brillinger house when his daughter Pam showed him a picture of it in The Tribune. He was immediately intrigued and insisted on driving down for a closer look.

"The only problem was, there was about two feet of snow on it," he recalls, "I couldn't tell what colour the roof was."

Mr. Kesper then set to work making scale drawings of the front, back and side elevations. From these he made his detailed plans and patterns before proceeding with the actual building.

Like any good builder, Mr. Kesper starts with a firm foundation in this case 3/4 inch wood, before proceeding to erect the walls. The sides of the houses are made of hardboard and all openings, windows and doors are meticulously carved out with a chisel.

"I got nothing automatic," remarked Mr. Kesper. He also scorns ready-made trim and chisels out all the decorations himself.

"But the hardest job of the lot is the brickwork," he points out. It takes him ages to paint one wall.

Another painstaking job is the manufacture and laying down of the roof shingles. Mr. Kesper cuts them out of cardboard and then lays them in the 'rest professional manner' just the way a roofer would.

He also makes the roof detachable, so furniture can be placed inside, although he says most of his houses are not bought for children.

Many people have bought Mr. Kesper's houses, and many more are enchanted by his projects, but no one can agree on whether they are toys or works of art. At least of all Mr. Kesper himself. But everyone nodded agreement when one of his sons conceded that they were probably a bit of both.

Retirement The fourth quarter

By LESLIE HOLBROOK
There is nothing you can do about growing older in years. There is a lot you can do about growing old in mind and body — and in attitudes to life around you.

Last week we talked about bodily vitality into the retirement years. Now what about the mind?

Minds, as well as muscles grow flabby and inefficient with lack of exercise.

Hear what Ivor Feldstein, British doctor specializing in geriatric medicine, says about the aging of the brain: "Lack of use in a positive, active manner — by the solving of problems, the stimulus of cultural events, the ambition for achievements, for example, leads to a decline in the function of brain cells. Cells degenerate and are replaced by glial tissue which is non-functional — the so-called 'softening of the brain'."

And in "The Best Years of Your Life" Dr. Leopold Bellak says "experiments comparing the performance of people over 65 with those of 'middle age' and younger suggest that the ability to receive and retain information does not really decline with age."

As we grow older — if we keep the old bean active — we really have advantages over younger folk. We have a vast

amount of information, skills and experience catalogued away — an organized filing system.

Younger people, learning so much for the first time, have limited background "files" of related information. They may, just may, be able to absorb new material a little more quickly but your mind with years of experience in sorting and filing related data, can more than compensate — if you approach new mental challenges with confidence.

There is no good reason to lack confidence. Unless damaged by disease or accident the brain should not deteriorate with age. Countless men and women provide proof that this amazing machine functions beautifully well into the 90's. And take note: Less than one per cent of old people are likely to become demented or senile — less than the percentage of persons who go insane at earlier ages.

If you think your memory is failing, it probably just needs a work-out. All mental performances — like physical activities — improve with practice. Mental abilities wane at any age — even in your teens — if you avoid learning anything new and challenging.

You can keep on learning as long as you're around — without any further formal schooling.

But don't shy away from formal education in your senior years if that's what you feel like doing. And don't let the fear of failure intimidate you.

The initial attitude of younger students in a school or college course to an older person joining the class may be "let's be kind to the old fellow — or gal" — until they discover that the slow-moving senior tops the mid-term tests.

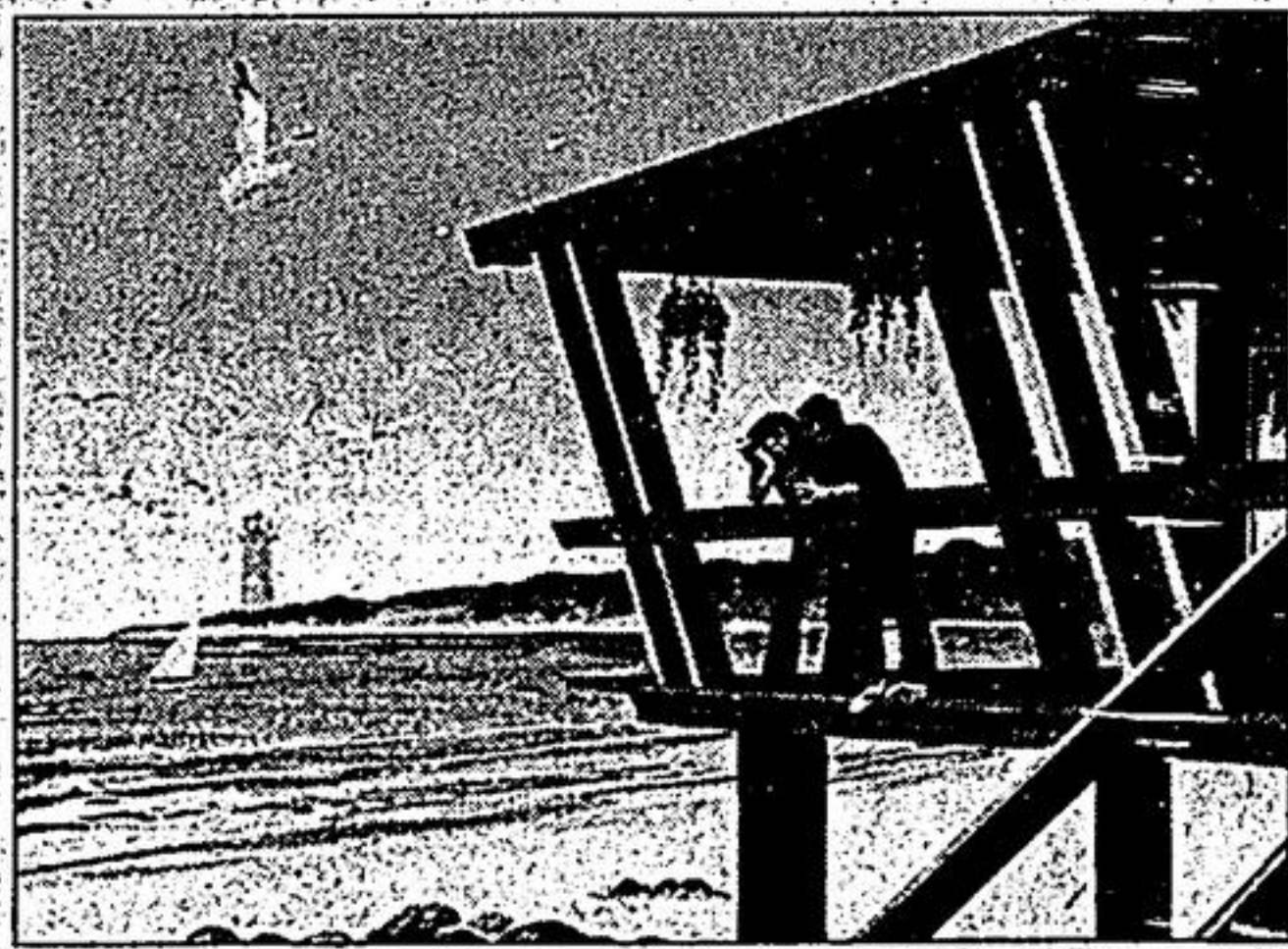
No, your brain is not wearing out. With interesting occupations and

sufficient stimulating social contacts you will find yourself perking up mentally in quite surprising fashion — and getting so very much more out of this fascinating business of living.

As Oliver Wendell Holmes put it: "To be 70 years young is far more cheerful and hopeful than to be 40 years old!"

Readers' questions and comments should be sent to The Tribune, c/o P.O. Box 1506, Guelph, Ont. N1H 6N9.

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