

# Opinion

## Take a moment Monday to say thank you

Monday is Remembrance Day. Something we should all be very aware of.

I heard on the radio earlier this week that there are less than 2,000 First World War veterans still alive in Canada.

What that number excludes is the thousands who died during that first of two "wars to end all wars" in some of the most horrific battles the world had ever seen.

I wonder what it will be like when there are no survivors of that war still living.

Will we simply forget it ever happened, and let it fade into an obscure memory



Viewpoint

Alan Shackleton

like the Boer War? To do such a thing would be a tragedy, and a terrible mistake.

It's important not to glorify war. Most who have fought in one want people to remember what they were like in order to avoid another.

Remembrance Day is not a

celebration of fighting, but what it should be from the citizens of this country is a thank you to those who sacrificed for our freedom.

Here are some facts to remember when 11 a.m. comes around on Monday.

According to the Royal Canadian Legion, 66,573 Canadians died and 138,166 were wounded in the First World War.

The number of Canadian soldiers killed in that war was more than 10 per cent of our entire armed forces.

In the Second World War, 44,927 Canadian soldiers were killed, along with another 1,146 merchant sea-

men, and 53,145 were taken prisoner.

In the Korean War, 516 Canadians died and 1,558 were wounded.

Surely it is not asking too much for people to spend a few moments one day a year recognizing those who gave so much.

Too often we take what we have in this country for granted.

Our freedoms are precious things, and we need only look at many other countries in the world to realize how lucky we are.

A moment to say thank you on Monday morning would be in order.

## The Tribune

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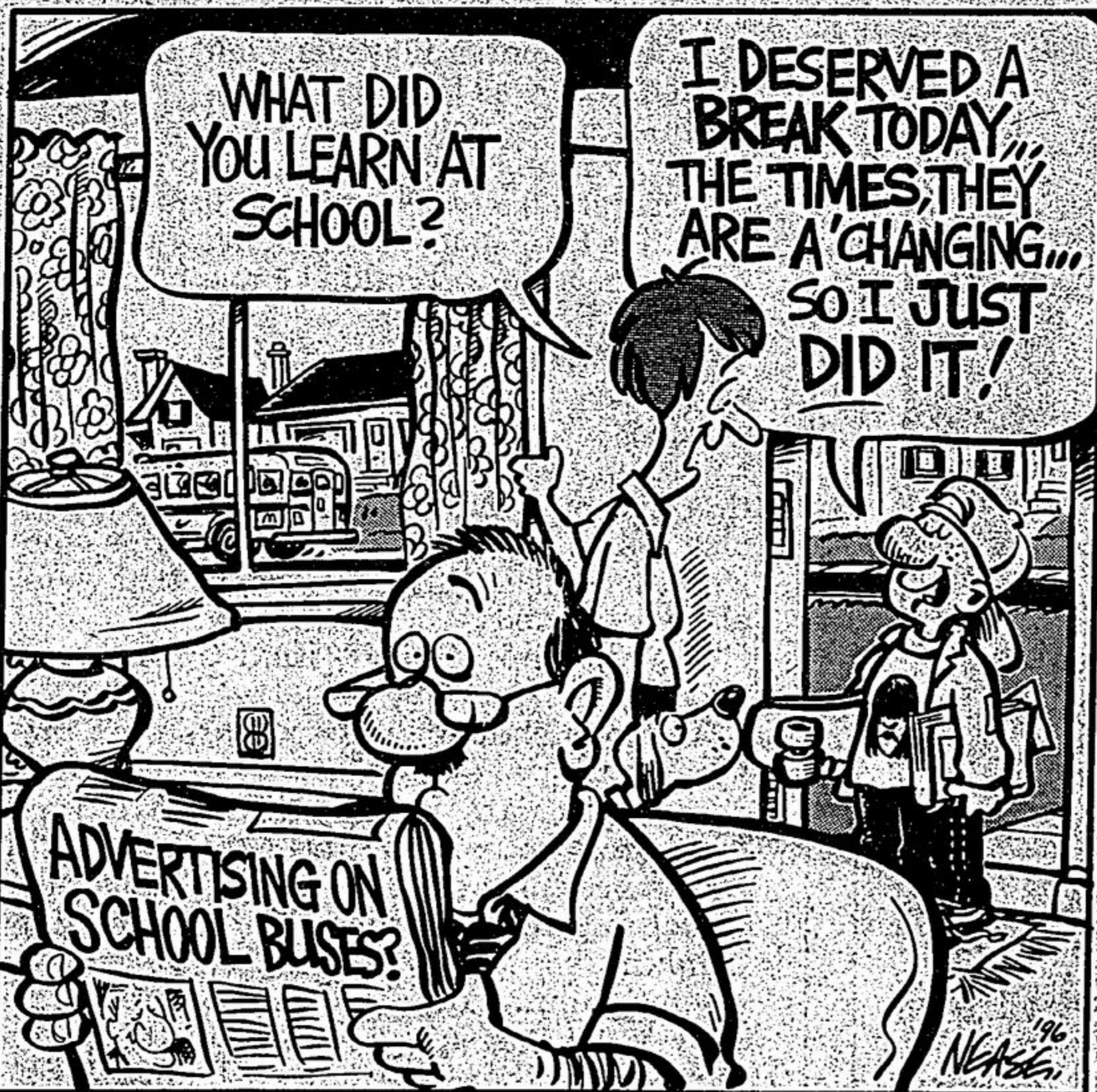
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## The Powder Room's a forum

Don't you just love to ponder The Great Mysteries? Like women's washrooms. What the hell are women doing in those washrooms?

Here's a scenario, chum: you and your lady are out for dinner at a restaurant with another couple — let's say they're good friends of yours. The food is fine, the service is dandy, the conversation around the table sparkles and shines. After dessert, the coffee is served and inevitably one of the two women at the table excuses herself to "visit the powder room."

And immediately — immediately — the other woman rises, saying, "I'll come with you."

And off they go! Together! To the wash-room!

To the male mind, it is an utter bafflement. The very last thing a man wants to do is to share the bathroom experience with anyone, much less another male.

We guys are all business in there. In and out. No lollygagging. The chat, if any, is

kept to an absolute minimum and is confined to the shallow end of the conversational pool.

"You see that football game last night?"

"Brutal."

That's an articulate conversation for a male washroom. Actually, guys get uncomfortable and vaguely suspicious anytime discourse-at-the-urinals gets beyond primal grunts or manly chuckles.

Women, as has been noted in other contexts, are different. And thanks to a Canadian filmmaker named Ann Kennard, we menfolk are beginning to realize just how different.

The National Film Board recently released a documentary by Ms. Kennard entitled *The Powder Room*. To make that documentary, she spent two years in women's washrooms around the world with her microphones open and her cameras running.

Now if you tried that in a men's washroom, the clientele would have kept everything zipped up — including their lips. But in *The Powder Room*, the women waiting to use the cubicles dribble like leaky faucets.

They talk about everything — the pain of childbirth, the hell of dieting, the knuckleheadedness of their men — and they do it spontaneously, without a shred of self-consciousness.

Kennard hits a real cross-section. There are aging Jewish yentas discussing bygone loves and goofy gangs of teenage girls taking a break from a high school prom. Kennard takes us through the hallowed portals marked "Women" on several continents and through various cultures.

We visit a honky-tonk toilet in West Texas; a trendy loo in a Manhattan night club; a graffiti-pocked washroom in a Toronto high school and a swanky sauna in suburban Copenhagen.

And we learn that women, God bless 'em, have turned a humdrum, slightly uncomfortable biological ritual into a meaningful opportunity to connect with other women.

But the irony is, men are to thank for it. Male architects to be precise. "They're the ones responsible for putting in too few stalls," says Kennard, "thus making for long lineups and much talk."

It's tough to admit, but I have to say that as a man I feel jealous. I realize after seeing Kennard's film that women have managed to turn their powder room into a forum. Thanks to macho stupidity male washrooms will never follow suit.

You'll never see men's rest rooms become a meeting ground of peers. Or should that be pee-ers?



Basic Black

Arthur Black

### Editor's mail

## WW1 researcher seeks local information

To the Editor,

Last year in this week of Remembrance Day I asked your readers, especially those who are long time residents, for their help with a project at Markham District High School concerning students of the school who served in World War One and appeared on our 1916 Honour Roll.

As a result I got several responses which enabled me to add to the existing information obtained from the Honour Roll, and from the National Archives in Ottawa.

This has been collated and is now deposited in the Markham Museum with a copy at MDHS. Since then I have been researching several more names of MDHS students and would like once again to ask for anyone who has information to contact me. The men are:

Herbert Bilbrough, Matthew Rae, Eddie Sanderson, Henry Lawrence Major and Victor Frederick Gamble.

I would also be interested to hear from anyone who had a relative at MDHS just before World War One that might have served in the armed forces.

In addition I am trying to locate the medals of Max Reesor and James Campbell Baird, both of whom

were awarded the Military Medal for bravery in the field in 1918.

If you have any information about any of the above items, please contact me at Markham District High School 294-1886.

David Harris  
Teacher  
MDHS

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