

LIFESTYLES



Remembering...

Valerie Giles, Ph.D.

The Citizen newspaper's longest-serving editor was Harry G. Perry

Newspaperman Harry G. Perry moved to Prince George in 1912. He became editor for The Leader when it commenced publication in March 1921 and later for The Citizen (which absorbed The Leader two years later) - spanning a career of 28 years until his retirement in August 1948. In between, he was elected mayor for three years (1917, 1918 and 1920) and as the MLA for the riding of Fort George for two periods (1920 to 1928 and 1933 to 1946) which included appointment as minister of education in 1941. Perry's exit from provincial politics occurred when he was unseated by CCF candidate John McInnis in 1945.

Over his career, Perry saw major changes in the newspaper business. Most of those changes were driven by technology. With The Leader, he changed his publication day in 1922 from Friday to Thursday. The reasons were twofold, but reflected the establishment of regular railway service. Distribution of mail and newspapers was then by rail and the train schedule dictated delivery. With trains leaving on Friday or Saturday from Prince George, it became more expedient to ensure that the newspaper would be printed and on board. Also, advertisers - the lifeblood of every newspaper - appreciated that their weekend bargains got promoted in a timely fashion to attract customers. In December 1922, The Leader introduced home delivery.

It was a proud day for Perry as editor, publisher and owner when The Citizen took delivery of its new printing press in September 1947. The latest model - a V-50 Miehle Vertical printing press - was brought to town and installed in the newspaper's building on Quebec Street. The equipment represented the finest available in Canada, and was the first press of that model to be installed in British Columbia.

The equipment meant speed. The press was automatically oiled and pneumatically operated with a speed range of 3,000 to 5,000 sheets per hour. In 1947, that was the fastest press on the market. The capability for printing a range of page sizes also made The Citizen a pioneer in the printing business and expanded the range of advertising materials which could be produced. The new three-horse power Miehle machine weighed 2,850 pounds. It was capable of spitting out cards of 3 1/4 inch by 5 1/2 inch dimension to sheets measuring 14 by 20 inches.

A year later, editor Perry retired. In his final editorial he bade farewell to his readers and reflected on The Citizen's place as an institution in this community. He was satisfied that his newspaper had lived up to its mission - "upbuilding of Prince George and all communities comprising northern and central British Columbia."

Perry also took satisfaction in the expression of opinion - sometimes taking "strong sides on public matters" - which were noticed outside Prince George. "Our interest in provincial, dominion, commonwealth and world affairs has been expressed as frequently as the limitations of a weekly newspaper permitted. Our reward has been great in the quotations made elsewhere of our comment." Editors frequently borrowed the royal "we."

His closing comment, "We are grateful to all who have been associated with us in the past, as readers, advertisers, contributors and employees." With that, his ink ran out.

Perry had sold his newspaper the month before, and after treating The Citizen's staff to a banquet, he settled into retirement. He died eleven years later in December 1959.

Dr. Giles is a Prince George-based writer and researcher.

Canadian shops can't keep American Psycho top, picturing U.S. president in stock

by AMY CARMICHAEL

VANCOUVER (CP) — When the bombing in Iraq began, Naomi MacDougall dressed a mannequin in an American Psycho T-shirt emblazoned with a picture of George W. Bush and strategically positioned it in the window of her downtown shop.

Ever since, they've been selling in Canada like duct tape in the United States: fast.

"American Psycho, it pretty much sums up what's going on," said Scott Matthews, a clerk at Toronto's Exile where the shirt also has sold out several times in the last two weeks.

The \$10-decal, which can be ironed onto an array of clothing items, officially became the shop's hottest seller when Susan Sarandon sauntered in and bought one, he said.

"It was hype," Matthews said. "We didn't want to be lame and bug her. Everyone was very cool about the whole thing."

The top has been wildly popular among American tourists, the stores said, with people buying three and four at a time to bring home for friends.

"I don't think they're seeing a lot of this kind of stuff down south," MacDougall said. "They're all blown away; they think it's the coolest thing ever."

Fans of the shirt say it's their weapon of choice in the war on propaganda.

"It's cheeky," said Vancouver photographer Corey Stovin, as he paid for his shirt. "In a sense it's an instigator. Definitely gets people talking, which is the whole point."

He had the decal printed on a bright red top at MacDougall's Bang On, located in the heart of the city's Robson Street shopping district.

In fighting the pro-war message coming out of the United States, peace symbols (which are not available at Bang On) just don't do it any more, Stovin said.

"People have stereotypes about that," he said. "I wouldn't want to be written off as a pot-smoking hippie. You have to beat them (the U.S. government) at its own propaganda game."

Anti-war slogans seemed to be getting increasingly anti-American, with people going to everything from protests to the gym to trendy parties wearing tops that say Bush is a Terrorist or Twin Towers above pictures of Bush and Osama Bin Laden.

They are valid because they ignite discussion, said Metta Spencer, a peace and conflict professor at the University of Toronto.



Greetings from the wise and benevolent

