



The Inkwell

The newsletter of the Bradford Landmark Society
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Well, its that time of year again. Graduations, reunions, and even weddings. This year, my oldest daughter, Cara, graduated from Bradford High School on June 1. There were about 200 students in the graduating class this year. The Landmark started a project last year listing the number of students graduated each year since the Bradford School system was started. People always seem to boast that "their class was the largest one ever graduated from Bradford High School" so we decided to find out once and for all. Of course, as you can imagine, the largest class size is comprised of the baby boomer generation, and so far, it looks like the Class of 1971 or 1972 will take the honors. I graduated in 1971, and we had about 435 students. We had so many students that we were each allowed just two tickets for our parents to attend. The rest of our family was herded to the cafeteria, where they could sit and watch us graduate via an interschool television. And we weren't allowed to go on stage and get our diplomas, either - when our name was announced, we had to stand, turn around so that the television camera could see us, hold up our fake rolled diplomas, and smile for the crowd in the cafeteria. Then we sat back down. It still seemed to take hours.

A nice program that Bradford High School participates each year on graduation night is "Operation Recognition", in which honorably discharged veterans who would have graduated between 1941 and 1950 but left high school for military service instead are granted high school diplomas. Signed into law in June 2001, Bradford High School has so far granted diplomas to eleven vets who would have graduated from Bradford High, but were unable to do so. Three such men were honored this year. If you are such a veteran, further information can be found on the Internet or contact The Bradford Landmark. We congratulate all the members of the Class of 2006- young and old - and hope that you will make history yourself someday.

Hours of Operation: The Herbig Bakery, Monday, Wednesday, & Friday, from 11AM to 2PM, or by special appointment; Crook Farm by appointment only.

ARG Chosen as a Recipient of a PA State Historic Marker

Following months of wondering, the American Refining Group was finally notified recently that they had been chosen as one of this year's recipients of a Pennsylvania State Historic Marker. You probably have seen these throughout Pennsylvania, along roads or on buildings, usually stating some unique of historic fact about a place, person, or event. Harry Golubock, President of American Refining Group, thought that such recognition would be a fitting tribute to Bradford's refinery. Established in 1881, and operated for many years as Kendall Refinery, the refinery has the distinction of being the oldest continuously operating refinery *in the world!* It is quite an honor. Bradford has never had a historic marker and we feel that the refinery certainly deserves the honor of being the first such recipient.

Here is a short history behind the markers, as defined on the official Pennsylvania State Historical Commission website:

New markers are approved and placed along Pennsylvania highways and city streets each year. Most markers are dedicated in public events featuring public officials, local historians, community representatives, and others. Each dedication presents opportunities for Pennsylvanians to celebrate and understand their heritage.

From 1914 to 1933, the Pennsylvania Historical Commission, predecessor to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC), installed bronze plaques to commemorate significant individuals, events, and landmarks throughout the state. However, during the 1920s and 1930s, with accelerated automobile speeds, these plaques became impossible to read from a moving vehicle. For this reason, the PHMC, created by the state legislature in 1945, developed the modern style of historical marker. Currently, there are more than 2000 such markers scattered across Pennsylvania.

The guidelines formulated in the late 1970s require "that the person, event or site to be commemorated have had a meaningful impact on its times and be of statewide or national rather than only local significance." In December 1987, with the most recent revision of the program's guidelines, the agency adopted a standard urging "that significant subjects that have hitherto been given less attention by the Historical Marker Program receive more favorable consideration (other factors being equal) than subjects which have already had fuller coverage."

The state invites applications for such markers each year, with the deadline for the receipt of nominations each on December 15. Nominations are reviewed by a panel of independent historical experts from across the state in February, and their decision is announced in April.

The American Refining Group marker commemorates the founding of the refinery in 1881 by three independent oilmen, Robert Childs, Eli Loomis, and William Willis. From a beginning refinery capacity of 10 barrels of crude oil per day, today the refinery purchases in excess of three million barrels of crude annually, two thirds of which comes from within 100 miles of the refinery.

A PA State Historic Marker is a great way to show our pride in Bradford's own history making industry.

As summer approaches, Bradford gets a fair share of people returning to the old home town: maybe for a wedding, graduation, or class reunion. Did you ever leave Bradford for an extended period of time, and then return? What did you think? Well, the author of this poem, written in 1883 (yes, 123 years ago) did just that - left Bradford, and then returned for a visit. Here is what he had to say about his old home town.....

Bradford City

All hail to thee, old Bradford town!
Thou city of a world renown:
I left thee several years ago,
But now the place I'd scarcely know.
I could not tell it with the pen,
The magic change from now and then;
The hand, likewise the brain of man
Have shown their work since they began,
Which sped like swallows on the wing:
Hail, Bradford City, thou art King!

I see new faces on the street,
And quite content seem those I meet.
I miss the bustle and the din,
The surging mass when trains come in,
Yet note the change on every hand--
Where hovels were, now mansions stand.
Seek North, or South, or East, or West,
Thou art the envy of the rest.
For this to thee thy praise I sing -
Yes, Bradford City, thou art King!

Amongst the sights that please the eye,
I love the children passing by.
They seem so happy, light and gay,
As they return from school each day.
The ladies (bless them) dress so neat,
They smile (some flirt) and look so sweet.
All things have changed - I see the men
Wear better clothes than they did then:
This is the change that time did bring
To thee, for Bradford, thou art King!

I view thy derricks gray with age,
Which in thy history wrote their page:
I hear no sound of nail or drill,
Thy mountain sides, for aye, are still.
Majestically they all look down,
The glory of thy work to crown,
For enterprises, great and small,
(No, not like oil, to "rise and fall")
Are springing up on every side,
Thy paths of commerce open wide:
And all around new ventures spring,
To herald Bradford, thou art King!

Yes, years ago upon the street,
Excitement ran to fever heat.
And drunkards, reeling by the score,
It made one chill the way they swore,
The refuse scum of all mankind,
Had centered here, their homes to find.
These things of evil could not last,
Those days have gone, those times are past;
So let the watchword loudly ring-
Yes, Bradford City, thou art King!

One thing I missed when here before,
And which I see now by the score -
These baby carriages (on wheels)
Well loaded (with familiar squeals).
Now you may smile, it humors you;
So does it me - for I have *two*.
And when the coil of years rolls round,
And we're all planted underground,
Posterity will likewise sing
That Bradford City, thou art King!

*Does being able to drive make you smarter?
So claimed educators in 1924, as the automobile gained in popularity...*

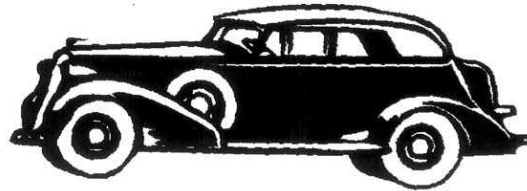
Automobiles are Raising the Average Level of Intelligence

Or so car manufacturers claimed in early 1924. An article in The Bradford Era of January 1924 puts forth the argument - and I have to admit, its a convincing one - that operating a motor vehicle will make you smarter. Quoting judges, teachers, motor vehicle officers, and even policemen, it stated that, "if it were not for a constant trend toward higher type of mentality among drivers, the number of traffic and highway accidents would be overwhelming". In 1924, about one seventh of the country's population could drive.

It was reasoned that constant practice in steering, stopping, accelerating, turning, backing, and avoiding danger developed a type of judgement which could not be gained in so short a time by any other methods.

The article even gives "proof" - or as they say, outstanding evidence - that general intelligence is rising due to the ability to drive a car:

- 1) Approximately one-seventh of the entire population in the country has learned the high points about an intricate mechanism which are necessary for its proper operation.
- 2) An equal number of people know, through experience, an elaborate set of road rules, the drivers of some states being required to read or be taught the fundamentals as well as the details of the motor vehicle law.
- 3) 63,560 service stations and repair shops are training thousands of young men to become skilled workmen on a wide variety of cars, the most standardized type of which is not regarded as being completely mastered by anyone.
- 4) Complexity of traffic regulations, in addition to the radical increase in the complications and demands of traffic itself, has forced the millions who drive cars to learn to adjust themselves at a moment's notice to varying conditions, customs, laws, and regulation.
- 5) Virtually one half of the population is benefiting through the convenience of traveling as offered by the motor car. The exchange of ideas, customs, and points of view has reached a new height due to the popularity of the automobile. The effect is recorded in the broadening of the average man's point of view.
- 6) More is learned about American's topography, geography, industry, customs and climates, by means of the automobile, that is taught by the schools of the country.
- 7) Motorists have been forced to absorb the details of the mechanisms they operate, and many thousands of people who are not naturally of a mechanical turn of mind, are finding themselves developing their mentality to a point where they comprehend the most intricate and modern theories and practices in engineering.



- 8) The country has been flooded with educational literature covering the design, construction, and care of the automobile. At no other time in the world's history has engineering and mechanics been brought so close to home.
- 9) Each of the 253, 104 employees of the motor vehicle manufacturing industry has the advantage of the most modern methods of production to spur him on to more efficient uses of his abilities and to broaden his interest in invention.

And if these nine reasons weren't enough, claimed the article, there are other, less evident but just as important side effects of driving a car. "The greatest advantage of the automobile to public intelligence, however, is its value in developing keener senses and sharpening the wits. It has been frequently noted by psychologists that automobile drivers rapidly acquire a sort of sixth sense, which is nothing more or less than a higher development of the normal five senses...He automatically sharpens his sense of sight or feeling to a point where he seems to 'hear' anyway. Many drivers claim that they know when there is a car behind them without actually seeing it through the rear-view mirror".

"One physician has urged drivers to practice exercising the eyeball as a means of assuring safety through keener vision, which is just another evidence that the automobile, in developing the physiological functions of the average person, automatically strengthens the foundations for a stronger mentality".



It has already been recognized that until one has driven a car, or been privileged to know intimately the demands placed upon the driver of a motor vehicle, conceptions of distance, speed, acceleration, and deceleration are not properly developed.

And finally, the article sums it all up: "in this way, the automobile is believed to be making a valuable contribution to posterity at this time when the stupendous problems of the times call for the highest possible type of national intelligence".

The automobile manufacturers may have believed that driving made people smarter back in 1924, but then again, there weren't radios, CD players, cell phones, air conditioning, seat belts, air bags, electric windows and locks, antilock brakes, gas at nearly \$3.00 a gallon, DVD TV screens for the kids, computerized direction systems, and satellite roadside assistance. And with the improvements to Rte. 219 going on this summer, it will take all the intelligence we can muster to navigate those highway dividers, flag men, and lane changes.

Yes, if they thought that just driving made everyone more intelligent way back in 1924, when all we had to do was basically steer the car, we must all be nearly geniuses by now!