

Property owners protest building of dam

By Lorraine
 What is considered by James S. Bauer of Waterloo, the Grand Valley Authority chairman, "One of the most ambitious projects ever undertaken by the Authority" has provoked general concern and apprehension amongst the property owners involved. Many of them are farmers whose homes and lands have been in their families for some 130 years and others, who within the last 10 or 12 years have moved into the area and spent considerable quantities of money, building, restoring, and making additions on homes which they had intended to live out their lives in.

The meeting held recently at Marden public school auditorium was one to which property owners were invited to discuss the future and probabilities of such a project, turned out to be a cut and dried explanation of what and where. Although many of those present were prepared to present opinions of dissent at the government proposal, and were allowed an opportunity to vocally oppose, they were given little hope that anything could intercede less than a motion by the provincial cabinet.

Can it be stopped?
 "All we want to know is, can this plan be stopped?" asked one of the property owners present, of chairman James Bauer. "Anything can be stopped. That's the kind of system we have" said Mr. Bauer. He made reference to the Spadina Expressway but indicated that only major pressures would stand in the way of the Grand River Conservation Authority's \$7.7 million Speed River dam and reservoir project which would absorb 3,800 acres of some of Ontario's best farm lands located in Guelph and Eramosa Townships.

Details of the Authority's Guelph Water Management Project were described for property owners and interested spectators. The owners heard of negotiation procedures the Authority will follow in acquiring the land needed for the project. It was a marvellously descriptive presentation of an 1,100 acre reservoir which will be about two miles long and a half mile wide at its widest point. "The reservoir will hold 17,000 acre-feet of water or about twice the 9,000 acre-foot capacity of a site previously considered just

above Woodlawn Road," said the chairman. "The Authority plans to begin construction by late summer of 1972. The objective is to fill the reservoir during the 1974 spring run-off."

A beautiful park dream with plans for reforestation areas, nature trails, wildlife and water-fowl sanctuaries, picnic and beach facilities, where only sail boating and canoeing will be allowed. Camping areas, fishing, horseback riding, with provisions for an authority operated lodge or some type of summer residence that could be rented by vacationers.

No consolation
 Those attending the meeting found little consolation in the chairman's descriptive visions of natural beauty. Many of them had been living with such aesthetics for their entire lifetime and had mental visions of other such great engineering dam projects which supposedly, would revolutionize flood control and protect valley lands and natural resources in other areas.

"Look at the Aswan dam in Egypt on the Nile" said one well informed University of Guelph doctor; "Remember the Bennet Dam in British Columbia which has changed the entire environment with its delta at the north going dry."

The Conestoga Dam and Bellwood dams were all mentally envisioned. One Pollution Probe member asked if when the water was let out would there be extensions of mud flats and would the beautiful valley land become a depressed area similar to that of Bellwood?

"How can the Government justify taking hundreds of acres of rich fertile farm land and deluge it with water for a recreational area," said Mrs. Steven Lewis, a resident of Highway 24. The chairman agreed with Mrs. Lewis and said to dissenters, "Go ahead, give me hell, I would do the same thing if I was in your position." But, Mr. Bauer said that such planning should have begun 50 years ago and today we wouldn't be having problems of pollution and water shortages.

Farmers holler
 Many residents whose land will be inundated cannot see how the water in the dam can remain constant as, said one conscientious objector, "This year

was a good year and the river running through my property was constantly high. But, ordinarily, sometime through the summer months it is completely dry and we can walk across it without getting feet muddy or

wet. If they think they can let the water out only five feet, as the Authority has claimed is the least amount they will release, then farmers further down stream will eventually holler and they'll have to let it out then and, during a dry

spell there will have to be mud flats. Then we will look like Bellwood."
 Consternation, disapproval, was balanced on the other hand by residents of nearby Guelph who are delighted at the prospect

of a new park which will attract tourists and visitors for miles. The provincial government has sanctioned the project and has already released some money with a commitment of grants which will pay about 60 percent of the preliminary estimated cost of \$7 million.

Some of the homes which have been built during the past ten years were built with the understanding that they would not be affected by the proposed project. In some cases \$100,000 homes will be pulled down and scrapped which, besides hitting the home owners dream and lifetime plans, will also hit the taxpayer when he has to pay for buying back the land and purchasing an expensive building the construction of which should have been deterred in the first place. Then, when the entire project is completed, they must pay back the Authority by entrance fees into the park, for the privilege of utilizing a recreation area which he has bought in the beginning.

Huge trees
Common sense?
 The area which the Authority is planning to use has on some of its farm lands trees which are two and a half feet in diameter. Pines, maples, oaks, a paradise of recreation area as they stand today. Many of these trees will be cut down and new ones planted as reforestation areas.
 "It takes 50 years to grow a tree to any sizeable growth" said one local farmer, and yet these guys are moving in to pull down some of our most beautiful ones. If that's progress well, I hate to see what they call regression!"

Some farmers who have lived in the vicinity of family homesteads recognize the necessity of conservation and feel that they don't want to stand in the way of progress if that's what is required. Having tramped over their own property for years however, they feel that it is already recreational area land which doesn't need improving. "Why not a series of dams" said one resident. "Instead of one huge lake why not a number of swimming areas which would go along with the theme of nature and horseback riding trails with perfect hiking and picnicking conditions?"

According to the chairman at the Marden meeting, the project plans have been reviewed by the GRCA Executive Committee and its water conservation advisory board. The councils of Guelph and Eramosa townships have also been advised with additional

public meetings to be held if required. The Guelph project is only one of the multi-purpose dams and reservoirs the authority feels should be built throughout the Grand River Valley. In February an interim report of a provincial water management study of the valley suggested priority be given the Guelph project.

Planning of the other dams will depend on what is revealed in the completed provincial study which is to be released on November 4th.

Surprise site
 The site, situated just east of Victoria Rd. at the 6th Concession sideroad and stretches east to just beyond the Eramosa-Guelph Township line, came as a surprise to most of the property owners located upstream of the dam site since it had been assumed for many years a dam on the Speed River would be located at Woodlawn Rd. GRCA General Manager G.M. Coutts admits that shifting the dam site about a mile upstream from the city was first considered only about a month ago.

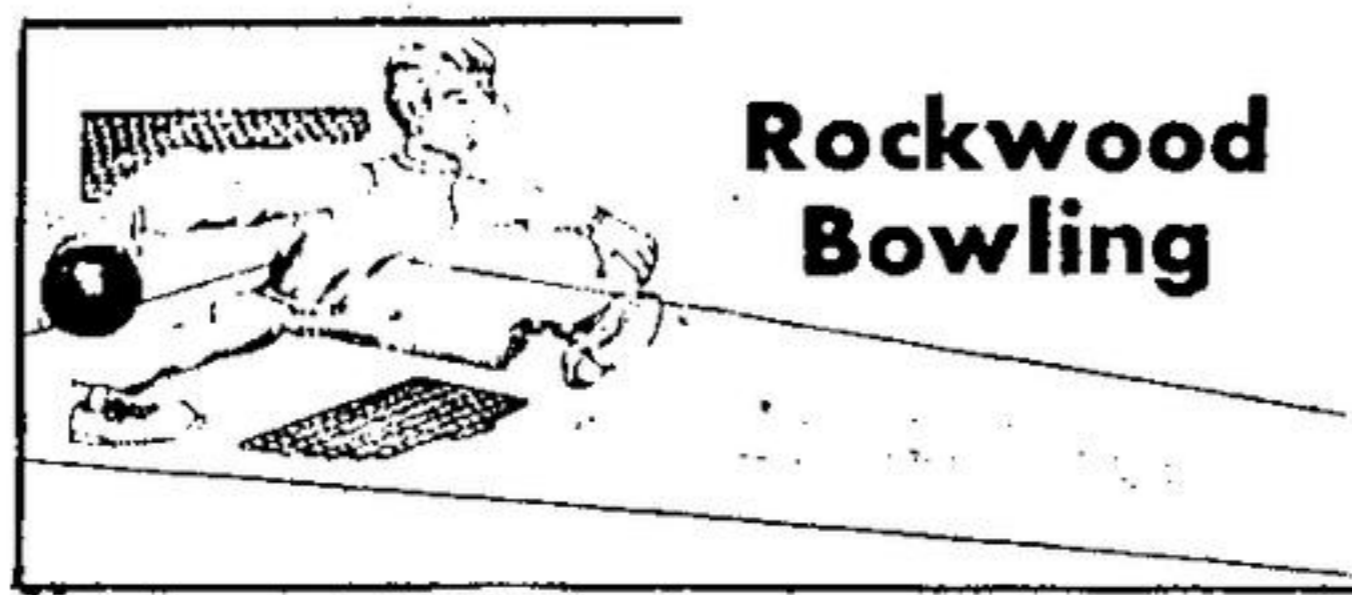
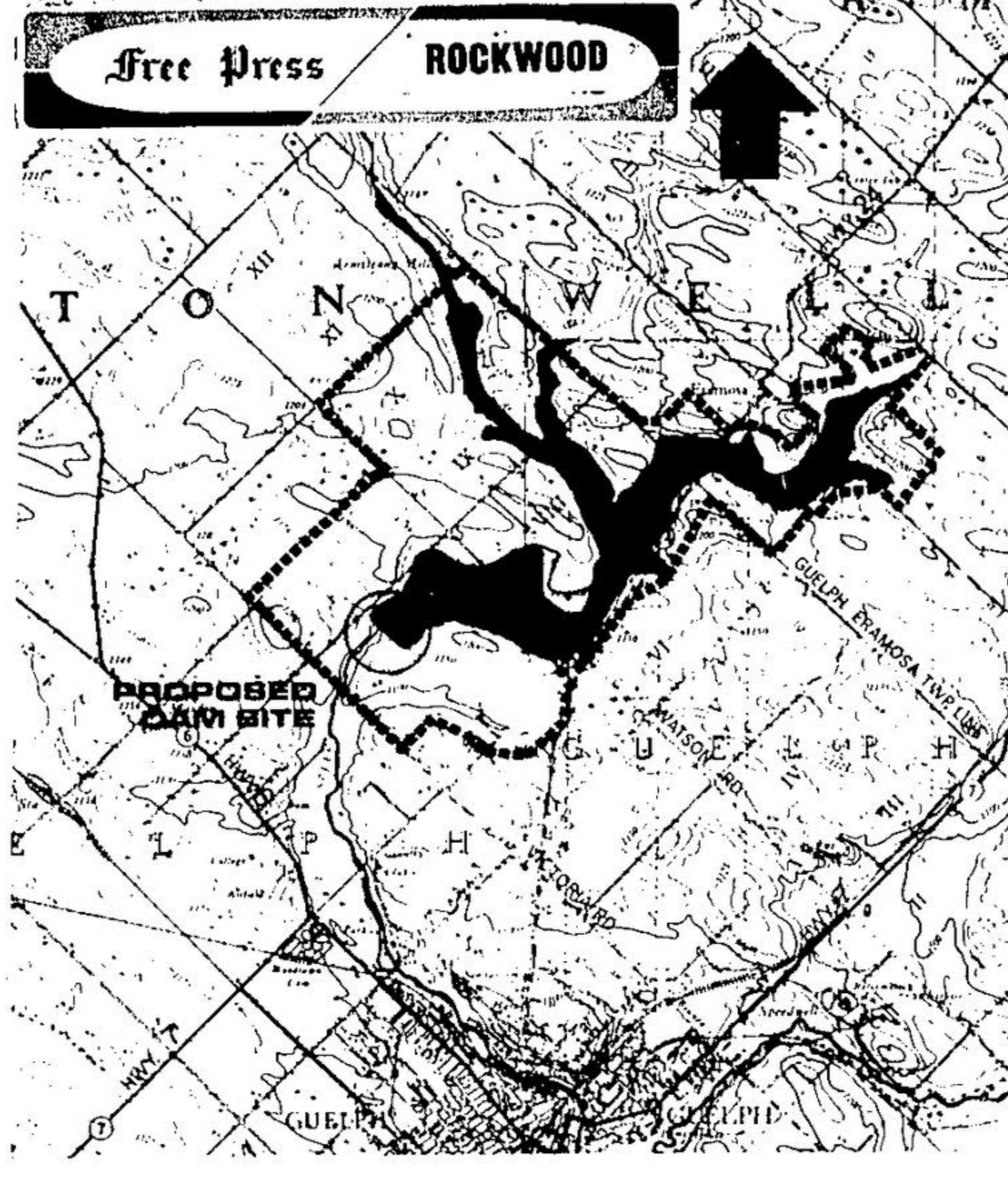
"The decision to go with the Victoria Rd. location" he said, was based on a Kibborn Engineering study which estimated that a reservoir located between Victoria Rd. and the Township Line could hold double the volume in about the same surface area as a dam built across the flatter topography immediately north of Woodlawn Rd."

Home and farm loss, plus the questionable necessity of possible detrimental environmental repercussions of the 1,100 acre reservoir creation; These are the mental and vocal concerns of the approximately 90 property owners involved and the feeling that other sites should have been more thoroughly investigated.

"I believe that the G.R.C.A. simply put an advertisement in the paper and asked for an engineer", said one resident. "The engineer moved in on the job, drew up his plans and didn't stop to consider environmental changes or whether other areas would be more appropriate."

There is a general hope that when the new governmental Pollution Control and Investigation Department gets into operation they will investigate the feasibility of the present project. Meantime Chairman James Bauer confirmed that negotiations cannot halt the dam and reservoir building and that each property owner will be considered individually with only their special problems possibly altering the boundaries of the land required.

Approximately 125 signed letters outlining resident concerns and objections to the Grand River Conservation Authority's proposed dam has been sent to local political representatives and George Kerr as "the one step to take at this stage" said a property owner spokesman.



Bridges also of the losing scorers made a 194 single.

Low Ramblers
 The Guelphites made a 3 to 2 point score against the Ouprinke Ramblers and, for the scoring team, Bill Scott made a 240 single, Don Archibald a 241, 231 and 184 to triple 679 as Gerry Parks made a 272, 250, 170 to triple 682 score. The Ramblers were low men despite the efforts of Bob Auld with his 199 single, Nan Auld with her 193 single and Doris Jestin with a 180 single score.

The Pacers made 5 points against the Lucky Clover's 2 points and Doug Cross ran up a 209 and 259 set of singles, Ann McCormack 208 and 214. Mike Martin a 298 single and Doug Hiltz a 289 single score as the unlucky Lucky Clovers showed Harv Jestin with a 281 single, Lois Jestin with a 245 single, Doug Carney a 193 single, and Janet Nightingale a 188 single score.

The Newcomers came through in great style to capture 7 points straight from the Optimists as Peter Bosch made a 214 single and Martin Dupuis a 179 single score. Ross Ferguson made a 198 single and Ward Bruce a 122 single score.

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Comin's and Goin's

Hey, it's congratulations to Ebba and Gunner Allerellie. Ten years of marital bliss and four children later the happy couple celebrated at the Inn on the Park on Saturday night. Nice going, folks, we're glad you're Rockwood citizens; you're great for the community. Ebba also celebrated her 11th year in Canada, having come here from her native Denmark. So it's a double commemoration for the pretty young mother.

along with Millie Smith and Anna Marie Bell to help celebrate the combined birthday party of two residents, Mrs. Robinson and Mr. Harrison. Heading up the committee was Betty Lou Clark assisted by Flossie McMinn and Ebba Allerellie. It was bingo, noise, and prizes and the residents had a jolly time as well as their entertainers. Happy Birthday residents and many more of the same, from your Rockwood friends.

Well now, Thursday's the day but the "Over 60 Sunshine Club" executive requests that members attend this week's first meeting slightly earlier than the scheduled 2:00 p.m. opening as it will take time to sign in members and give out membership cards before the program begins. A sing-song, progressive euchre, croquinoie, and, if someone wants to bring checkers and a board, checkers, will be the schedule of the first fun meeting to which every eligible citizen in Eramosa will be welcomed. So call on President, Rev. R. Williams on Guelph Street if it's a ride you need, and go along to the Rockwood Town Hall for the premiere meeting of the newest social club in town. "You" are expected!

It was dining time for the guests of Mr. and Mrs. Max Milne of Guelph Street last weekend when Mr. and Mrs. Robert Barnett visited from Arkell and Mr. and Mrs. John Milne came up from Moffat.

Mrs. Alex McNabb received great laud and ovation after her Sunday's performance at the Rockwood Presbyterian Church when she gave an account of her attendance at the Congress last July. Humorously and with natural assurance she presented her findings on what Christianity really is about and how it can be attained without too much ceremony. Her talk was on Sunday, the telephones buzzed on Monday, and, probably by Friday, if vocal reports are indicative, she'll be the most popular guest speaker in Rockwood this winter. Nice going.

Eden House had a fun time last Thursday when members from St. John's Anglican Church were on hand

THANKS
 I want to thank my workers for their efforts during the Campaign.
 I want to thank the electors in Wellington Dufferin for their vote of confidence.
 In the days that lie ahead I will make every effort to justify their confidence.
 John Root.

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