

# O.M.B. Hearing adjourns—unfinished

Two days were not enough for all the evidence to be presented to the Ontario Municipal Board regarding the controversial proposed Rockwood sewer and water systems. Chairman B. E. Smith adjourned the hearing Wednesday afternoon about 4.45 to a later date to be fixed by the O.M.B. when it looked like the Board would not be able to hear all the testimony and then sit for the sum-up by solicitors.

Testimony was heard from many Rockwood and area objectors to the scheme Wednesday with some witnesses appearing twice, the second time with additional evidence.

**Student survey**  
First witness called to the stand was John Grimason, who testified along with Clive Beardwood on behalf of the Wellington-Dufferin Health Unit. Mr. Grimason reviewed the survey 16 Ryerson students took in 1970 which took 182 samples of water. Tests showed 25 were satisfactory and 77 unsatisfactory, which Mr. Grimason said represented 42 per cent of the total.

Reports of the condition of individual wells were mailed out to the respective home owners who were requested to chlorinate or boil their water. Under cross-examination, he said it was his opinion some of the wells were unrecoverable and there was definitely a health problem in Rockwood with little chance of improvement. He noted that powers of the Health Unit could only be used to advise, not to prosecute those they felt had a health problem.

Chlorinated drilled wells, he informed Ratepayers counsel George Miller, did not recover. Tests varied from day to day. There was no plotting of contaminated wells but some on Main and Ballacava Sts. tested pure one time and then turned "doubtful."

Mr. Beardwood gave testimony next, and it was his opinion old lots were small and the septic tanks on them inadequate. He also felt people would be unable to cope with chlorinators. There is a definite health hazard, he said, noting under cross-examination that one well had remedial work done and still tested plus. It was over 10 years old.

**No by-law**  
Don Hiltz, chairman of the Rockwood village trustees, came out strongly for the sewer and

water projects. He said one house close to the post office had sewage running on the streets but trustees had not prosecuted land-owners with faulty sewage systems because there was no controlling by-law.

Eden Mills trustee Rodney Bell gave a brief to the hearing representing views of residents of that village opposing the Rockwood installations on the basis that Rockwood could not afford the systems, and in turn cost would have to be absorbed by Eramosa township. The brief opposed growth in Rockwood, charging the system could have a serious environmental effect on Eden Mills and because they were not consulted regarding it.

Although Rockwood trustee counsel Jerry Matthews opposed parts of the brief by the Rockwood and Area Residents and Ratepayers Association, it was accepted as evidence, as well as a survey prepared for the ratepayers by the Department of the Provincial secretary and Citizenship.

Professor Peter Chisholm of the University of Guelph, called by Mr. Miller, testified he did not feel water and sewers in Rockwood were justified, charging the planned system would have an efficiency less than 90 per cent. He charged pre-investigation standards were not adequate for the plant.

Referring to earlier evidence that the proposed water and sewers would not have been affected by an official plan, he said it was an incredible statement. He also felt residual phosphorous levels in effluent would be three seven times greater than the recommended

level. He said resultant algae would cause oxygen depletion which would in turn deplete the Eramosa River.

Hugh Witely, a hydrology engineer and a professor at the University of Guelph testified the proposed system was not justified. He suggested chlorinators and filter on individual wells would make water safe to drink and the cost would vary from \$150 to \$350. Rental units would cost only \$16.10 a month, he said, including full servicing.

**Lack of planning**  
Also speaking against the systems were Don Gordon and Trevor Dickinson, both with the University of Guelph.

Eramosa councillor Dick Strong gave his personal ideas on the program citing lack of planning and lack of information regarding cost as stumbling blocks to the water and sewer systems.

Most lengthy presentation came from Rockwood resident M. C. Schaller who objected to sewers and waters in Rockwood on four accounts, well documented in a 15 page brief.

Mr. Schaller said high cost, inadequate planning, poor communications and probable technical innovations should rule out installation at this time. He urged the O.M.B. to consider Rockwood an ideal pilot project in trying out some of the newer methods in use in the province, and suggested installation of water on a limited scale.

When chairman B. E. Smith asked for those who supported the application for sewers and water to come forward, Mrs. Diane Noble told the hearing she felt "we should have it." She said she had three babies at home who had a lot of problems with diarrhea, although she felt she was a good housekeeper. Although she had no tangible

proof the trouble could be traced to water, the evidence from the various health authorities was enough to convince her.

Mrs. Karl Grimstead also supported the installation of the projects, testifying she had to boil all her water now on a doctor's orders. John Clark opposed the installation saying he felt older citizens on fixed incomes would have to leave the village because of the cost. He also challenged the design of the plant, noting he felt all the alternatives had not been explored.

Harry Scholtz of Eden Mills listed cost as his main objection, comparing the projects to buying a suit six sizes too big and then eating sauerkraut and borscht to fill it.

Gunnar Allereille listed costs as his main objection stating he felt it would not cost more than \$60 a year for both sewers and waters. He recommended all the

village's septic tanks be cleaned, suggesting conditions then would clear up. He also objected to the cost for reconting the system around the conservation area, at the expense of the taxpayer.

John Hamilton, R.R. 3, Rockwood, told the hearing land he and another relation were developing as a campsite would certainly be affected by the dumping of effluent into the river. He suggested the effluent should be put in a lagoon, not the Eramosa River, where their campsite would be on the receiving end.

Dave Howe, a seven year resident of Rockwood, said he moved to the village for its rural atmosphere but the sewage system could alter the life-style and double taxes. He felt the subsidy granted for the work by the government was cancelled out by the rate of interest users would have to pay on the installation. He also criticized

the proposed conservation park by-pass.

Bob Leslie told the hearing the cost for water and sewers would be beyond his ability to pay and felt the look-up charges would deter all but the desperate. He said the board should also consider the business interruption installation of the projects would cause and resultant loss of business.

**Old lots**  
Frank Allsop said it was his impression most of the problems were on 60 foot lots and said the charges for service discriminated against those with larger lots who had no problems.

Mrs. W. Lawrence testified the river was too shallow at times of the year to accept effluent and asked consideration of the effect it would have on their property adjoining the river.

H. Arthur Harris also objected to the installation testifying costs would come to more than he and

his wife made in 1969-70. He asked that the same consideration be given to those residing on the river as has been given to the conservation park.

Ralph Kelly, a reporter from the Guelph Mercury who lives in Rockwood, also attacked the proposals on cost, suggesting there was too much emphasis on the pollution of wells and not enough on the pollution of the river. He said it would clean up one problem and create another.

Professor Chisholm testified again later in the hearing suggesting the O.W.R.C. was planning something for Rockwood which ignored the unique problems of a small rural community, equating them on the same basis as they did a large metropolitan centre such as Toronto. He said there had been tremendous changes in design for terrain similar to Rockwood's and it was his feeling this was all being ignored by the O.W.R.C.

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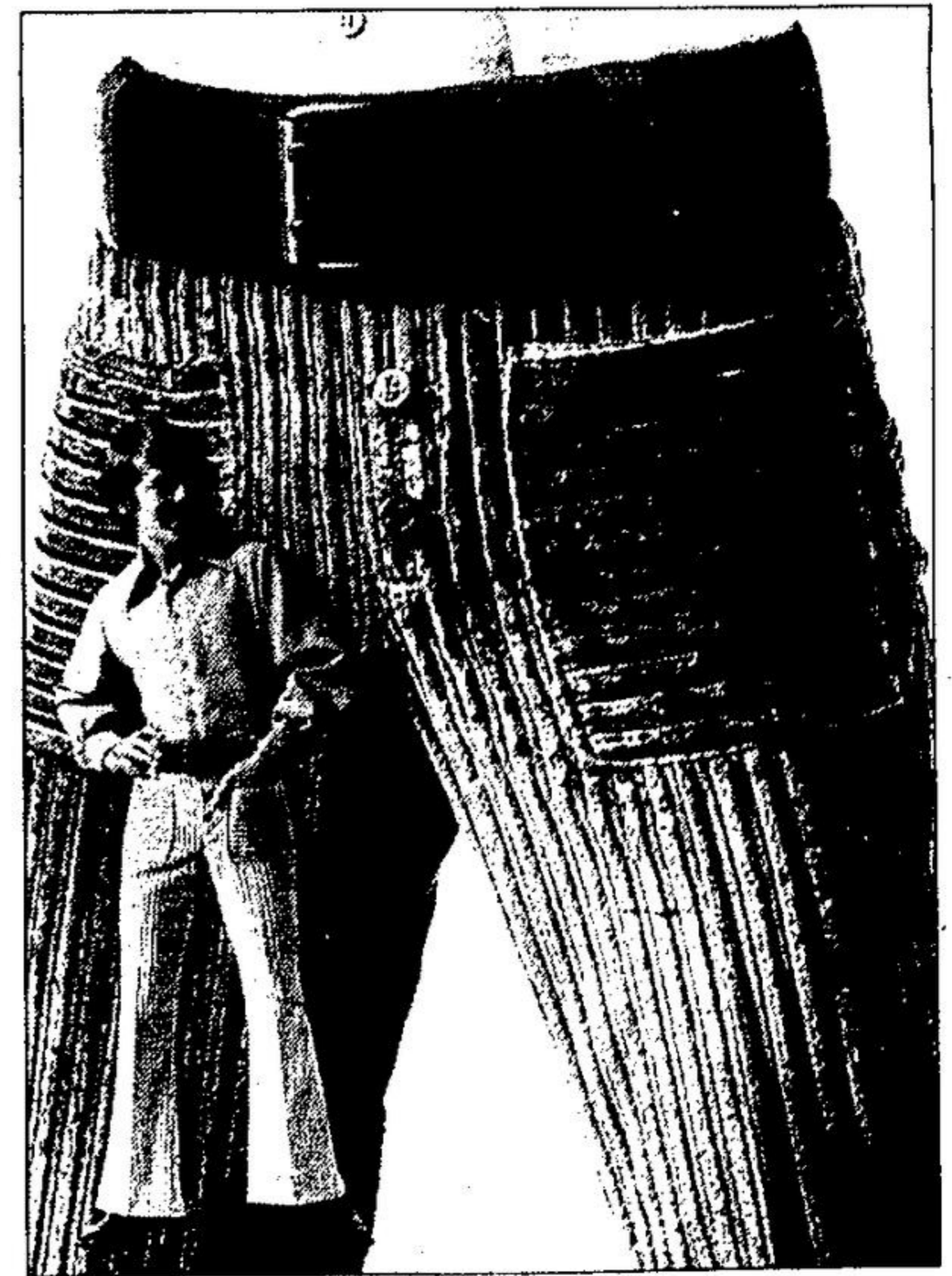
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YVETTE AND RINA BLAAKMAN were first prize winners at the Eden Mills Community Club Halloween party at the village hall. Barbara Marshall, a village teenager, organized the party which was hailed as one of the most successful ever held. —(Tony Vos Photo).

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