



THE STEVENS FAMILY have run Limehouse Store for ten years. On a busy Saturday Vi Stevens gets assistance from daughter Laura and son Peter.



SHORTILL'S GENERAL STORE and Tack Shop is situated at Ballinacross roads.



SPEYSIDE STORE is the family business of Jim, Heather and Roy Knapton. Betty Knapton was too busy to get in the picture.

# Country stores survive as friendly oases

by Jennifer Barr  
It's a wonder how the little corner store survives. International chains of supermarkets owned by vast monopolies vie for our food dollar, cutting prices and offering loss leaders to induce us into their colossal caverns. Yet, the number of tiny independently-owned general stores situated at country cross roads remains stable. They haven't been swallowed up and their owners still seem to be able to make a living out of them, even in these days of galloping inflation.

with their powerful buying ability. When this reporter visited several of the surrounding country stores recently, the common denominator of them all was a slow, easy friendliness. Neighbours popped in, rapped a little; exchanged news; had their health and that of the family, inquired after; gathered a few groceries, the newspaper, a couple of bolts for the manure spreader, some candies for the kids; and sauntered out. Is this the secret? A return to personal service where you feel like somebody instead of number three in the check out lineup is it the fact that somebody cares why you're buying the aspirin? Perhaps.

The Knapton family at Speyside have run their store and gas bar for three years and are proud they deal in general service of all kinds. This is quite true. In the tiny L-shaped store you can get groceries, gift items, jewelry, fishing hooks, mouse traps, ice-cream cones, hardware, gasoline and oil, and dog licenses. Betty and Roy Knapton run the store with the help of their children Heather and Jim. Fran Guhl also looks after the store in order to give the Knaptons some needed time off, although Jim says they "rarely get a chance to get away."

get many holidays. Limehouse General Store is a 19th century building and has always been a general store. Vi Turner says it used to be a "real general store" of the old-fashioned kind and she can still smell the coal oil at the back. The Turners have learned what people want, "it's strictly convenience—something to tide them over" and don't try to compete with the big stores. Matt and Vi Turner assisted by children Laura and Peter and Mary Turner keep the store open from 8 a.m. till 9 p.m.—noon to six on Sunday—and have owned the store for ten years. The Limehouse Post Office is housed in the store and the walls are awash with colour-

ful posters and community notices forming a background for the rows of neat groceries. The Turners don't get away very much either but seem to enjoy the variety of people popping in and out. One of the largest corner stores is Shortill's at Ballinacross. The store, dating back to 1909, has been in the Shortill family for nine years and has been run by Morley Shortill for the past eight years. He's assisted by his mother Viola, Marie Cocklin, Jeannie Levesque and Maureen Bustin. Not only is Shortill's a regular general store with groceries, gifts, magazines, farm foods, hardware and post office, but a recently opened tack centre for

equestrians is upping the sales nicely. Shortill's has always been noted for carrying items not found in more elaborate "modern" stores. Items such as farm overalls, serviceable gloves, heavy boots, snaps and bolts, teapots, and inexpensive halters tucked behind the cookies. Now with a picturesque equestrian supply centre, the Shortill's reputation for providing excellent service at minimum price is being proven all over the countryside. The store is open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Saturday; from 9 a.m. till 9 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday; and from 1 to 5 p.m. Sunday.

and Donna Manes, well-known Actonites who have bought a wee store, house, and gas bar south of Brookville. Tom, formerly with the Acton I.G.A. moved into "Manes Country Mart" three months ago with Donna, sons Bill, Brad, Barry and baby daughter Janice who brightens up the store with her chatter and antics. Tom has expansion ideas for the little grocery store. He wants to get "a little bit of everything." He says he'd like to get into more hardware and farm clothing. He's waiting for a consignment of magazines and would like to convert the big freezer locker to a cooler. Right now, his store seems to have "a little bit of everything" - from axes to penny candy, from cards to overcoats, from toys to lettuce. The Manes enjoy the store so far and have no help yet to keep it open from 7 a.m. till 9 p.m. daily (10 to 9 Sundays and holidays). "It's a lot of hours but I enjoy it," says Tom, "I missed the people at the I.G.A."



BROOKVILLE store is run by the DesRoches and Hien families and boasts all the original woodwork from 130 years ago.

Brookville General Store is 130 years old and has been owned by Peter DesRoches for the past year. His mother-in-law Ellie Hien runs the store while wife Giselle assists. Father-in-law Alfred runs the garden centre in the summer. "It's family, we all help each other," says Mrs. Hien. Dave Midell runs the gas pumps and Howard Baynton leases the service garage out back. The store boasts original woodwork including cupboards, drawers, counters and floors all in soft well-rubbed pine and the owners don't intend to change it. Bright animal posters frame gifts and crafts in the window with hanging plants gracing the opposite window. Groceries, penny candy, cigarettes, nick-nacks, are displayed sparsely on the old racks and counters. Macrame and crafts are made by nearby Brookville school and are offered for sale. The store even had an old fashioned Christmas tree with handmade ornaments at Christmas. Being open daily from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. keeps Ellie Hien hopping and she commutes daily from Oakville.

Cecile and George Crocker have run Ospringe store and garage for the past two years. It had previously been known as Robertsons for many years. The Crockers have added a snack bar to the grocery store and are pleased with the results. The gas pumps are closed now but George is still busy with car maintenance and towing—especially towing. The main feature of the store is "Susie", the friendly little miniature collie who greets everyone at the door with a wag of her tail. Ospringe store is open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily and 9 to 6 on Sundays.

law Dick Dupuis for many years. The name "Stratton's" is still up there but it's owned by Penny and Ed Griffin who love it. They used to have a larger store with a staff of six in Hamilton but like the slower pace of life here. "We're the only store around with hardware, that's open Sundays," comments Mrs. Griffin proudly. "That bolt rack is a lifesaver the farmers say."

Mrs. Griffin likes the people who come into the store—"Nobody says 'gimme, gimme, gimme'"—and shows it by the friendly banter offered every customer. "If we can't supply something I tell the customer 'we carry everything but we're out of it'". Perhaps that's the secret of the country stores - willingness to help. Maybe it's just a nice change of pace from the battle of the supermarket. Whatever it is, it works—and how nice that it still does.

The most recent family of corner store owners are Tom

At Stratton's corners on Highway 24 north of Rockwood, the store was run by Ken Stratton and his son-in-

THE SIGN SAYS STRATTON'S but the new owners are Penny and Ed Griffin. The store caters to customers north of Rockwood on Highway 24.

## O.P.P. Decrease in crime — co-operation

There was a slight decrease in crime within the Ontario Provincial Police jurisdictions in 1977, according to Commissioner H.H. Graham. "In recent years, crime has increased at the rate of ten per cent per year," he said in a press release. "A downward trend was evident in 1976 when criminal offences increased by less than one per cent."

Mr. Graham contributed this reduction in part to the "excellent cooperation" and assistance the police officers have received from the public and the media. He also pointed out there has been a detachment planning program which has been implemented. With this program, field members study local trends in criminal activity and develop methods of manpower deployment to effectively cope with problems in high crime areas. The report stated there were 30 murders handled by the OPP in 1977, compared with 42 in 1976. However, attempted murders were up some five per cent from 1976, to 24.

Traffic accidents increased on highways. There was 75,846 in 1977 compared with 73,461 the year before. However, in spite of this increase, 94 fewer people were killed last year. "Personal injury accidents increased by seven per cent during the same period and 33,080 persons were injured," the report said. "During 1977, 254,971 drivers received summonses for speeding violations from the OPP and 30,563 charges were laid for seat belt violations. "Legislation and enforcement alone will not reduce accidents on our highways," the commissioner noted. "Lower speed limits and mandatory wearing of seat belts will save many from serious injury or death. The most positive way to attack the problem of traffic accidents is for everyone to be attentive, considerate and drive defensively."

# Rockwood hydro rate same expected hike too high for AIB

by Barb Wynneck  
The three Rockwood village trustees, Audrey Bilton, Betty Eastwood and Tony Reid and the Secretary Len Hockey were present at the monthly business meeting held January 23. Hydro rates will not be increasing as expected on March 1 - the rate will be the same as last year's. This was the surprise news brought to the meeting by Elton Phillips

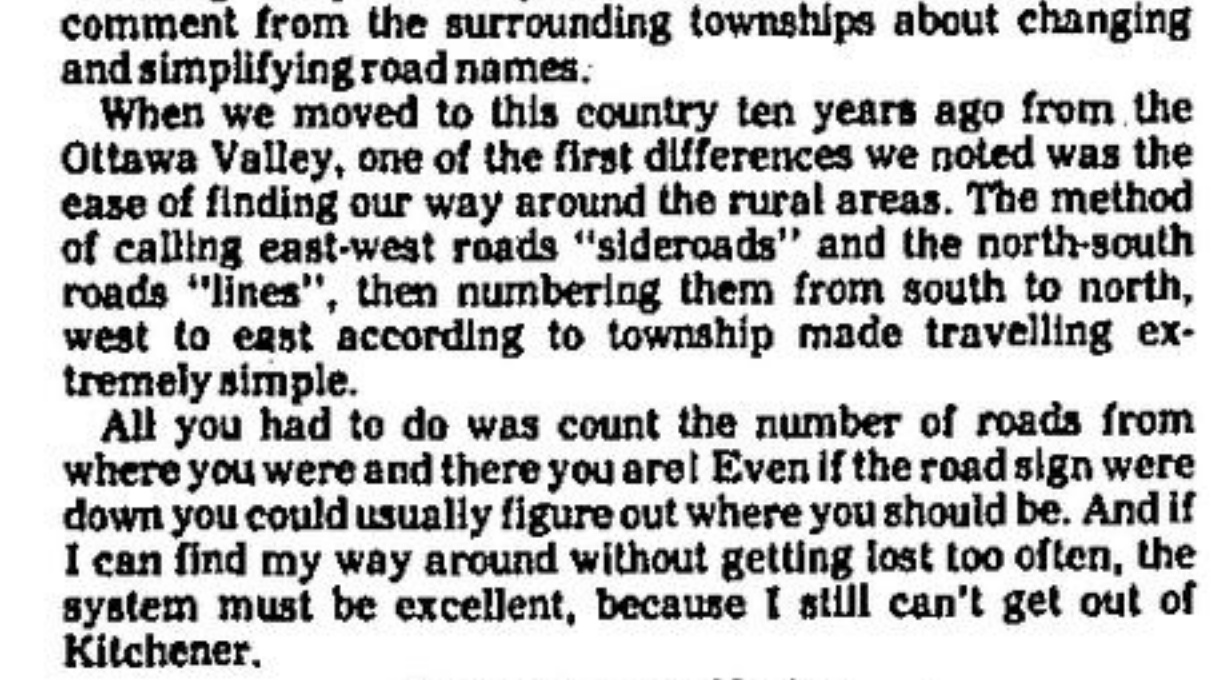
of Ontario Hydro. The rate increase which Mr. Phillips had proposed to the trustees in December and which they had adopted, was too high and did not conform to the Anti-Inflation Board guidelines. Year end 1977 Rockwood statistics were not available when Mr. Phillips did his 1978 forecast. However, Ontario Hydro's provincial estimate for 1979's rate increase is 12 per cent. The secretary and the trustees questioned Mr. Phillips as to whether the rate could be increased some now, so that the rate jump would be cushioned in 1979. Ontario Hydro's answer is "No".

Trustee Reid requested that Mr. Phillips return to Rockwood in July, assess the six month audit and evaluate whether his 1978 estimates are in line. Rate adjustments could be made at that time, rather than having Rockwood Hydro running in the red at the year's end. Mr. Phillips agreed. Len Hockey's reaction to the news was, "The villagers will think we're crazy, they'll wonder what we're doing!" This is the third notice that consumers will have received regarding a 1978 Hydro rate change. Betty Eastwood's comment was, "We can do what we want, provided Ontario Hydro approves."

The trustees directed the secretary to draw up terms of reference for a village by-law regarding snow plow routes. Trustee Reid appeals to the villagers to please remove their street parked cars for snow removal. It is imperative that the roadways be kept clear for emergency vehicles such as ambulances, fire trucks and the volunteer firemen. The cost of snow removal to the taxpayer rises when the road crew has to go back to clear areas which have been obstructed by parked cars. Town hall heating bills have been extremely high, averaging \$7 a day, during the last six weeks. Plans were made to set the thermostat so that it can be raised to no higher than 72 degrees F. Trustees recommended to township council that the water and sewer charges be

computed on the same bill as the hydro charges. There is space on the present bills to accommodate this and the costs involved is the price of programing the computer and the fee which the village will charge for their book-keeping service. This will be considered by council. The Department of Health reported to the trustees that there was a leakage in the Rockwood Hotel's sewage holding tank. Deadline for repair is January 23, or charges will be laid by the health department. A break in the pipe of the Rockwood Plaza's sewage holding tank has caused leakage. This has been proved with the use of dye by the health department. Deadline for repair is January 24, or charges will be laid by the health department. A letter was received from the health unit regarding the town hall. It recommended first that self closing devices be installed on the outside washroom doors and secondly, that the fire chief proposed the installation of a bar handle on the front doors, rather than the present turn knob and bolt system. Fire Chief Carl Meadows will be asked to look into the matter of the front fire door. Trustee Reid requested that a letter be sent to the health unit for clarification regarding item number one. The Trustees received pamphlets from the Ontario Ministry of Housing regarding housing for senior citizens. In the future the possibility of such accommodation in Rockwood may be investigated by the trustees. A letter to the Ontario Ministry of Transportation and Communication will be sent by the trustees, requesting a sidewalk on the east side of

Highway 7, from Harris Street to the bridge, to be installed when the road crews are in the village this spring. Villager Peg Dyer pointed out the need for a safe crossing place, away from the brow of the hill, where the highway is narrow, and where traffic can be seen coming in both directions. Her request was backed by a letter from principal Grant MacRae. Betty Eastwood expressed her wishes that the trustees form a definite policy regarding planning in the village of Rockwood. This would be presented at the future combined meeting of the planning board, township council, village trustees and the Ontario Municipal Board. The trustees will compile a list of the number of lots which can be severed within the village, for the purpose of "in filling." Under the new by-law a lot must have a minimum frontage of 66 feet and maximum of 7,500 square feet, according to Tony Reid. There are three areas where new housing is being proposed according to Mrs. Eastwood; the Scarle property at Jackson and Queet St.; the area mapped out on existing village plans, bounded by the extended Frederick St., the extended Carroll St. and the yet to be constructed Henry St.; and the area of the old Rockwood Lime Company, east of the end of Jackson St. Guelph and Suburban Planning board have proposed that secondary planning be done in Rockwood. Trustee Eastwood feels that this would be a great expense to the local taxpayers. The trustees will acquire a copy of these proposals and research them. There will be a further discussion of planning at a future meeting.



During the past two years there has been considerable comment from the surrounding townships about changing and simplifying road names. When we moved to this country ten years ago from the Ottawa Valley, one of the first differences we noted was the ease of finding our way around the rural areas. The method of calling east-west roads "sideroads" and the north-south roads "lines", then numbering them from south to north, west to east according to township made travelling extremely simple. All you had to do was count the number of roads from where you were and there you are! Even if the road sign were down you could usually figure out where you should be. And if I can find my way around without getting lost too often, the system must be excellent, because I still can't get out of Kitchener. Historical names add colour. However, it's nice to have the colloquial names for each road and corner, too. If townships want to spend money on new signs, why don't they dig out the historical names and put them on the road sign under the line number. I love living on the "Peacock Sideroad". Apparently, this road was called so by residents after the school at the Trafalgar end. It had a beautiful stained glass window above the door in the shape of a peacock and was always called the "Peacock School", so I'm told. However, I'm not too crazy about living so close to "Starvation Corners". The corner of Five Sideroad and Second Line (now Highway 25) was nicknamed thus when an old man starved to death in the winter some time ago. His cabin no longer exists, but apparently was situated on the north west corner. Halton Road—what? When Wendy and Gord Thomson still lived here I used to envy their address—they got a charge out of telling people to turn left on the Nassagaweya-Esqueving town line. Run that round your tongue a few times. Isn't it delightful? Wonder why Halton messed up the old system of naming by renaming some roads as county roads? Come to think of it, so did Wellington. I imagine the purpose was to simplify identification of the roads the counties were responsible for. (If I were them, I wouldn't brag about it). But, it is confusing when a friend says, "We live on the Twenty Five Sideroad but it's labelled Halton Road something-or-other." Why do we always change something just because it's old? If it works, what's wrong with it? Is modernization necessarily better? But that's a whole argument in itself. In the meantime let's leave the naming of our rural road system along.

Rockwood Plaza's sewage holding tank has caused leakage. This has been proved with the use of dye by the health department. Deadline for repair is January 24, or charges will be laid by the health department. A letter was received from the health unit regarding the town hall. It recommended first that self closing devices be installed on the outside washroom doors and secondly, that the fire chief proposed the installation of a bar handle on the front doors, rather than the present turn knob and bolt system. Fire Chief Carl Meadows will be asked to look into the matter of the front fire door. Trustee Reid requested that a letter be sent to the health unit for clarification regarding item number one. The Trustees received pamphlets from the Ontario Ministry of Housing regarding housing for senior citizens. In the future the possibility of such accommodation in Rockwood may be investigated by the trustees. A letter to the Ontario Ministry of Transportation and Communication will be sent by the trustees, requesting a sidewalk on the east side of

Rockmosa 100 "Rockmosa 100" Snowmobile Rally is this Sunday, January 29. It starts between 8 and 10 a.m. at the Rockmosa Community Centre. Lunches will be available. Sponsors are the Rockwood and District Lions Club. Pledge sheets can be picked up at Petty's Garage, Rockwood Hardware, Royal Bank, Rockwood, R. & M. Shopette, Winter's Esso, Stratton's or Country Mart.

Many ice jams Grand River Conservation Authority river control system is firmly in winter conditions. As of January 11, 1978, approximately 95 percent of the capacity of Shand, Conestogo and Guelph reservoirs was available for the impoundment of flood waters. The first snow survey of the season was run on January 3, 1978. The results show approximately 3.30 inches of water above Shand Dam and 3.07 inches above the Conestogo Dam. This compares with the past five year average of 2.44 inches and 2.57 inches above Shand and Conestogo respectively. A notable feature of this winter has been ice jams. Many farms formed in early December. Officials were able to influence their removal during a thaw prior to Christmas by the release of stored water. Jams reformed between Christmas and New Years. On December 27, 1977, an advisory was given to the Region of Waterloo Police concerning a jam at West Montrose. It was felt that the rapid changes in level warranted special attention until the situation stabilized. The jam is still in place, along with many other jams throughout the system. This is affecting most gauge readings throughout the watershed.