



WHERE'D IT GO?: From the highway it looks like the Eramosa River has suddenly found a new channel. Not so, say the owners of the old Rockwood mill. They opened the dam to repair the building. - Frances Niblock photo

Where did the river go?

BY MAGGIE PETRUSHEVSKY

The New Tanner

Water leaking into the Rapp residence from the Eramosa River forced the owners of the old Rockwood mill to temporarily divert the river into the head race.

Orville Gates, property manager for M.H. Rapp, a Toronto resident who purchased and converted the mill to his weekend retreat in the early 1970s, said normally the river flows over the falls at the dam. To effect the repairs, however, they had to lower the flow of water and that meant opening the dam and draining the mill pond west of Highway 7.

Gates agreed the dry pond and apparently huge reduction in the flow of the river create quite an impression for passing motorists. From the road it looked as if the river suddenly disappeared somewhere under the bridge.

"There are a couple of sink holes under there where the water just disappears and we

have no idea where it goes," Gates said. "But that's not what's going on. We opened the dam to fix the leak."

From Rapp's driveway it's apparent the river's main channel travels away from the dam and through the head race beside the mill.

That was the river's original channel into the gorge, Gates said, when the mill's builders harnessed it about 150 years ago.

Unless they can seal the head race completely, which is "nearly impossible," they must lower the water to pour a new wall. They had expected to do that in the past few days because in a normal year this is the low flow season. This year, however, the water levels are "almost as bad as in the spring," Gates said.

Gates said they have closed the dam again temporarily to improve the appearance so the mill pond is refilling and slowing the river's flow. But they will have to empty it again in a few days to finish the repair they started.

Ministry of Natural Resources and Grand River Conservation Authority staff inspected the site with Gates and concluded the diversion did not damage the river's aquatic life.

Brad Dixon, superintendent of the GRCA's Rockwood Conservation Area

said authorities are satisfied Gates is "doing what he can do" to minimize any fish kill. Under old laws which give mill owners special rights there is little authorities can do about Rapp's control of the river.

Gates keeps in touch with GRCA staff, Dixon said, so they usually know what's going on and are prepared for any changes in water flow since they are downstream of the old mill.

Obituary

Dave Shannon's courage positive attitude praised

Dave Shannon will be remembered for his courage, his positive attitude and for the way he loved his family.

"Dave fought awful hard and he got a lot of respect from people for that," his wife Judi recalled of his attitude towards his illness.

Mr. Shannon was a respected volunteer firefighter in Acton for 26 years and a valued Town employee for two decades. He was proudly committed to his wife Judi, their daughter Kelly, 25 and son Michael, 27, who is also a volunteer firefighter.

Mr. Shannon died July 31 at McMaster Medical Centre. Shannon was a boy of seven when his family moved to Crewson's Corners from New Brunswick. He attended Acton schools and married his high-school sweetheart, Judy Doby, in 1968.

In 1974, the Shannons settled in Acton and raised their family. Mr. Shannon worked at the Beardmore tannery and Rockwell in Milton, before joining the Town works department in 1980.

Bryan Shynal, the Town's director of recreation and parks remembered Shannon as an exemplary employee - a man who always took the positive side of things.

"Not to say he didn't identify problems and bring them forward, often with solutions. Dave was a team player, who realized that attitude was half the game, or most of the game," Shynal said. Mr. Shannon worked in the recreation and parks department for the past 10 years. He also ran his own lawn care and maintenance company - his main clients being seniors no longer able to care for their properties.

In the funeral eulogy at Trinity United Church, fellow firefighter and best friend Dave Ford described David,



Dave Shannon

as a country boy who never lost his taste for red potatoes, fiddle heads, brook trout and apple pie.

"David was a lover of life. He wanted no more than a simple enjoyable life," Ford said, adding he wasn't materialistic and didn't measure people by what they owned.

"David was a lover of the kids and family... the family ties meant everything to David, family meals on the weekends were a ritual," Ford said, drawing smiles and tears from the capacity crowd that included 40 uniformed firefighters, family, friends and co-workers, as he recounted how David loved butter-scotch and then striped mint candies and the sounds David loved - birds singing, rain and thunder and, although he was a Ford man, dual exhausts on a hot Chevy engine.

Ford called David a lover, not a fighter, whose one and only fight was a long six-year battle with cancer that he fought through five operations with dignity and courage.

Following the service a funeral procession, including a fire department pumper, escorted Mr. Shannon's remains

to Fairview Cemetery for interment.

Mr. Shannon's 20-year Exemplary Service, provincial 25-year Long Service medals, his hat and dress gloves and were presented to Judi following a graveside service.

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Vandalism in town!

There have recently been an unusually high number of vandalism incidents in town. Most locals believe these incidents have been caused by area youths. To those who are causing the damage, here is what you are doing for your community. The local merchants and town taxes pay to have the damage you cause repaired, taking away from other projects, such as the upcoming skateboard rink. This may not sound like it affects you but it does. Here's how:

You or your parents pay either rent or property tax. If you pay property tax, it will increase to reflect the costs of the town to operate, including the clean up. If you pay rent, the rent will go up to reflect the increase in property tax incurred by your landlord. Other projects that you are hoping for, like the youth centre and the skateboard rink, don't get funded, or even built.

There's more too. Many of you attend school or are on local teams, or perhaps you are a skateboarder, hoping for the skateboard rink to open in the next year or so. School teams and local teams rely heavily on being sponsored by local merchants, as do school trips, and that skateboard rink so many of you are looking forward to. Looking at what has been happening recently, how much do you really think you will get in sponsorship from local merchants and citizens. Do you really believe that they will give their money to those who they believe are irresponsible enough to willfully damage property just for entertainment, particularly if they have had their property damaged and had to pay to repair it? So for those of you who do things like this all the while saying "There's nothing to do" remember, the only reason there's nothing to do is because of what you have already done. Stop blaming everyone else, the only person you have to blame is you.

For those of you who are not responsible for the damage, if you know of someone who is, please report them to the police. This is the only way that the people responsible for the damage can be forced to pay for it themselves. Don't let someone so juvenile and irresponsible take away your school trips, your skateboard rink, your local teams and your money. Put the blame where it belongs, on those who did the damage.

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LEGION NEWS BRANCH No. 197 By Joyce Buchanan Br. 197 secretary

Well, I know some of you read this column because I certainly heard the Legion Masters is not on the weekend. It is on September 9. Still a shotgun start and dinner will still be served between 3 and 4 p.m. at the Branch. Sorry about the mistake. You still have time to get down and register.

Can you believe the Exhibition will be starting and that always spells the end of summer? All the stores are ready for back to school. They also have the fall and winter clothes on display. I'm still hoping for summer.

There are still a limited number of free tickets available for the CNE Warriors' Day parade this weekend. Ask at the Bar.

If you are on vacation, have a safe and happy holiday. If you are ill, we wish you a speedy recovery.

Don't forget bridge and euchre at the Branch.