

# The Canadian Champion

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SECOND SECTION



THE LOG BURNING FIREPLACE was added to the mill by the Wrights when they renovated. The fireplace at the end of the 35 foot living room is stone with a barn beam for a mantel.



WENDY AND "DUFFY" are surrounded by early Canadian furniture artifacts. A butter churn and collection of old irons can be seen in the foreground while the raised dining area with its pine furnishings is in the background.



DOWN BY THE OLD MILL STREAM is the Wright home. Situated on eight acres of picturesque Lowville land, the mill pond runs through the middle of the house and continues down the Twelve Mile Creek.

## Beautiful home down by the old mill stream

Story and photos by Joyce Beaton

Norm and Evelyn Wright and their daughter Wendy live in a 140-year-old grist mill on eight acres of picturesque Lowville land. The mill pond water runs through the middle of the stone house and continues down the Twelve Mile Creek.

Norm is fascinated with water and when he saw the mill and stream for sale 10 years ago he couldn't resist the challenge. Evelyn was quite happy living where she was, but loved stone places. She became fascinated with Canadian history as a result of Upper Canada Village being built. Her collection of early Canadian furniture and artifacts looks right at home in their old mill setting.

The Wrights have set their interests and talents to making one of the most charming and interesting houses imaginable out of what was just the shell of an old mill.

Started in 1834

The land the mill sits on was originally 200 acres bought in 1822 from the Crown by James Buchanan MacCauley. A three storey mill was built between 1834 and 1837 by James Cleaver, a public land surveyor.

At the turn of the century the mill was operated as a feed and saw mill by the Tarswell family. In 1938 it was burned. A new water wheel had been installed in 1937 and this was the only thing inside the mill to escape the fire.

When the mill was restored the top storey was removed, lowering the height of the building by 12 feet. Previous to the fire the entrance was level with the top storey from the Guelph Line. This was to allow for easy access of horses and wagonloads of grain. It was operated as a grist mill until 1956 by Catharine and Norman Langton.

Cannot see sunsets

The mill today is set deep in the valley and can easily be missed from the top of the hill when driving south on the Guelph Line. Sunsets are hidden from the Wrights who are located just too low to appreciate them. As a matter of fact, the location of win-

dows for light was one of the big considerations when they were planning the inside architecture. The windows are either floor or sitting level and the Wrights have turned a problem into a very attractive feature of the house.

They tried as much as possible to leave the outside of the building as it was originally. With the exception of three dormers upstairs, a stone chimney for the fireplace, and the doors, it is much the same outside. The tin roof, the 30 to 40 inch stone walls, and the windows are all as they were when the building was used as a mill.

There is over 2,500 square feet of living space, not counting the lower level where the Wrights have installed a beautiful indoor shell-shaped swimming pool. As this was originally a grist mill the block walls in the basement pool area are designed to look like sheaves of wheat. This is also the area that before the fire was used as a saw mill. The original door and window on either side of the pool allowed for the logs to be brought in one side and the lumber to be taken out the other. The pool area, as is the rest of the house, is heated electrically.

Water turbine works

Also on the basement level is the laundry room, a bathroom, and a workshop. Under the workshop is the turbine which still works by water power. The fly wheel, which is seven feet in diameter, originally operated the grist mill by big flat belts.

A dam located on the property still controls the flow of water downhill which makes the power for the turbine. There is a drop of 19 feet from ground level under the dining room in the mill race to a lower level in the tail race under the workshop.

On main level the focal point of the 35 foot living room is the beautiful stone fireplace with a large barn beam for a mantel. The original plank floors have been replaced with oak ranch planks. Barn beams in the ceiling were added by the Wrights for

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SHELL-SHAPED SWIMMING POOL is one of the beautiful features of the Wright home. The centre column sprays water like a fountain. This room was originally the saw mill, the logs being brought in through a window on one side and taken out as lumber through the door.



"LOWVILLE FEED MILL" words cut into the convenient kitchen unit reflect Evelyn's sense of humor. Her compact kitchen is the "feed mill" for the family. The open shelves allow for light from the adjoining dining area.

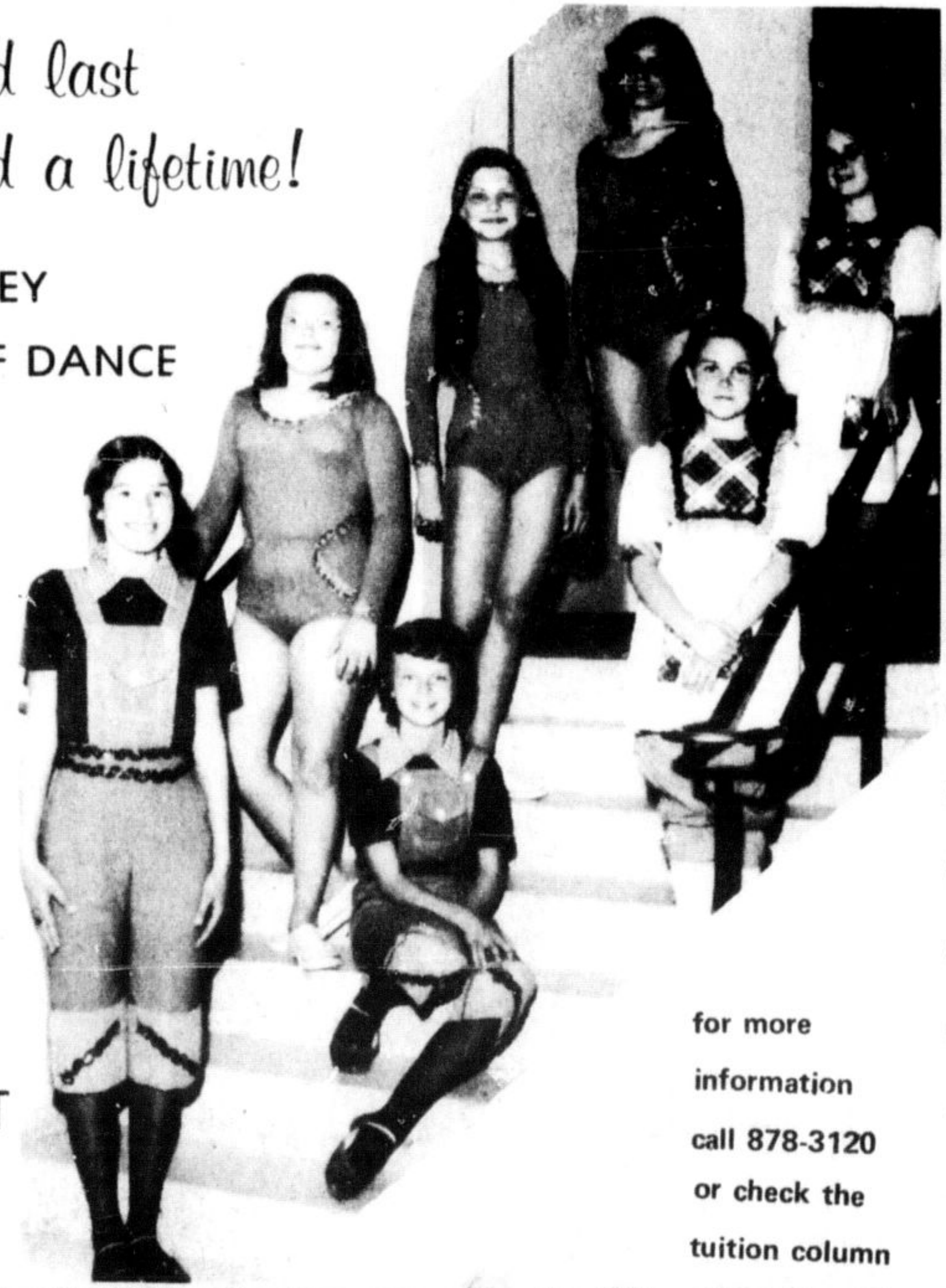
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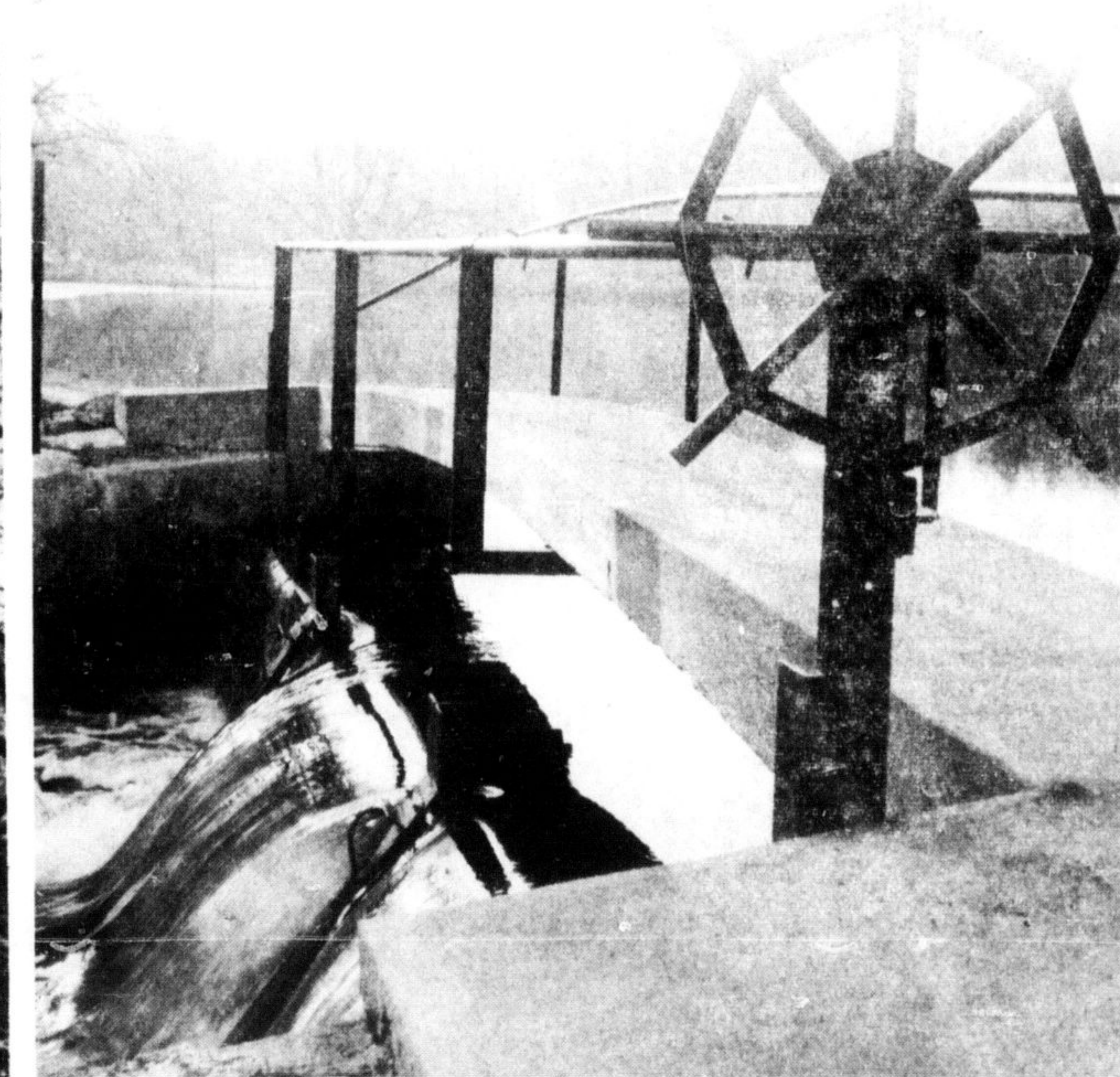


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NESTLED IN THE VALLEY, the outside structure of the mill is much the same as it has been since the turn of the century. About 140 years ago there was a third storey allowing for the grain to be brought in on a level with the Guelph Line.

(Photos by J. Beaton)



THE OLD MILL DAM still controls the flow of water downhill which makes the power for the turbine. Norm Wright bought the mill because of his love for water and has turned the historic building into a beautiful home.