

CASTOR COMMENT

Backtrack



Russell residents, who are looking with apprehension toward the day when streets are torn up to make way for sewers, may be better off than they know. This shot shows the quagmire condition of Concession Street as our forefathers saw it each spring. The photo was taken in front of the house now owned by Michael Gloss, 425 Concession. — Photo courtesy Edgar Loucks.

On the spot

We seem to recollect Russell Reeve Gaston Patenaude saying he would resign if paving of the North Road wasn't completed this year.

Well, Prescott-Russell council has set aside \$73,700 for reconstruction of the remaining section of road but the work won't include paving.

What do you say now Gaston?

Thanks Doc

Someone once said no man is an island. Somehow, the saying seems to pale when one considers Frank Kinnaird, M.D.

Frank Kinnaird is a man alone, not in the friendless sense, no, because those who would give him their shirts are countless. Alone in the sense of apart, different.

Yes, in a day and age when money, speed and selfishness have caught up with all of us. Frank Kinnaird is indeed alone. He is an island.

Over 40 years, with the unflagging assistance of his nurse, Tina Campbell, Dr. Kinnaird has tended Russell and the area's sick with a devotion and dedication, a fragility which can only make the devotion of us feel like humblers.

Believe us, Dr. Kinnaird, we are proud of you. Naming an arena in your honor is the least we could do.

Short-lived freedom

This country is concerned and justly about Soviet and Cuban espionage and subversive activities. While these are being inquired into, the authorities might usefully turn their attention to the strange case of Sascha, a defector who decided to stay in Canada and met his death on a lonely Laurentian Highway two years ago.

Nor was his the only case. Another defector whose name made headlines after he swam for four hours from a Russian ship to seek asylum of the shores of British Columbia was found dead a few months later in a California motel, a bullet in his head. The girl he was with said he had gone to investigate a noise. She heard a shot. That was it.

The case of Sascha, while similar in many ways, was closer to home and more shocking. Sascha had a prominent position on a Soviet cruise ship, S. S. Pushkin, which carries holiday makers up and down the Saguenay and occasionally in the Caribbean. When he defected, he moved into a flat in Montreal, bought a second hand car and comported himself like a Canadian citizen. Soviet authorities allowed his mother to visit him in Canada, presumably in an attempt to change his mind. She returned to Russia, disappointed.

A few months later, a dying man was admitted to Montreal Jewish Hospital. Severe brain injuries brought death in the early morning hours. The man was Sascha.

Driving with friends, two men and a girl, the car went off the road on the Laurentian Autoroute. Only Sascha was hurt.

Whether by accident or design, the way of Soviet defectors is short-lived and sudden.

CASTOR REVIEW

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Correspondence

Dear Sir,

Just a note to thank you for the money and the book "The Chief", I received for my winning essay. I couldn't have received a more interesting book.

The Castor Review is a very interesting community paper enjoyed by young and old. At our place we are as anxious to read the paper as our parents.

Good luck and thanks again.

Sincerely,
Karen Bekkers
Russell

Dear Sir,

I have just read your Castor Review for the first time I enjoyed it very much.

Our neighbor brought it over to show us a picture of our daughter, Miss Debbie Loubert, 1st Princess of the Metcalfe Carnival.

Your articles are right to the point which we enjoy. Keep up the good work.

Mrs. L. Loubert
R.R. 1, Metcalfe

Please, Professor, Please

A Professor at McMaster has appealed to a Parliamentary Committee to recommend that no one be allowed to have children who is not properly qualified. That is, they must have a license and pass stringent mental and physical tests. Let us remark in passing that if there is anything in heredity, the Professor is fortunate that such a law was not being applied when his parents decided to bring him into the world.

May we add that we are struck once again by the apparent inability of academics to look back beyond their own time. The system advocated by the Professor, or one very much like it, existed for many hundreds of years. It was called marriage. Since this has now gone by the boards in many cases, it appears that too many people are bringing children into the world without being qualified to do so. The academic community apparently, would like to step into the breach and lay down rules of conduct for the rest of us, a role once enjoyed by the church.

The only problem is, who will decide what the qualifications for bringing children into the world are; and who will apply them?

The spectacle of primitive societies falling apart when they lose their traditions and rituals is one familiar to sociologists and anthropologists. We are in the unusual case of disintegrating from within as a result of the destructive efforts of our best and brightest minds. In this connection we would like to put forward our solution to the problem of abortion, which seems to be beyond the powers of politicians, philosophers and psychologists to deal with. As a result it has become a plaything of extremists. Our solution, then, is simple: Allow the child to attain the age of reason and let him or her make the choice.

Custer's last stand

by Thomas Van Dusen

I took my Walker hound into George's the other day. There was a goodly group, George, himself and Mort Marcellus, soon to be joined by Gord McDonald, the antiquarian, a recognized authority on hunting and hunting dogs.

"These dogs," Gord said, "to put it bluntly, lead a dog's life. The hunters gather them in packs and run the legs off them and after they've finished hunting, they just don't give a damn about the dogs any more. This isn't always the case, but it happens."

I acquired the Walker hound in a curious manner. It was at a party when we heard that friends had an animal they couldn't keep, because they already had a Doberman. The hound was found sitting outside a log cabin where he'd obviously been for four or five days, in dead winter. He'd worn down the snow around the cabin and was just skin and bones. Fortunately, he'd had sense enough to stay there and fortunately, my friend went up to do some mid-winter skiing. They took the hound home and fattened him up for a couple of weeks and then dropped him at our place.

Well, the trouble was he wasn't house broken. He seemed about eight or ten months old, a flop-eared dog, tan and white with a curly tail, like the dogs in the old fox-hunting prints.

"No doubt about it," Gord McDonald said. "He's a Walker hound."

My neighbour, Bob Campbell, who's also knowledgeable about hounds, told me the same thing, so it seemed undeniable. The trouble was, he wouldn't stay around. When he was let out, he put his nose down and started running. Usually, he didn't stop until he ran out of gas and that could take a long time.

One night a Doberman chased him along the river ice and there was no way that Doberman could catch up. Of course, the Doberman was sinking in the snow and the Walker hound, whom my wife named Custer, was skimming along the top like a bunny rabbit.

Before the panel of experts in George Eastman's shop, Custer was on his best behaviour. George kept feeding him chunks of beef from behind the counter. I stood there with my hand out, but I didn't get any.

"Does he chew at all, or just bolt it down?" George asked in wonderment.

"These Walker hounds have a distinct smell about them," Gord McDonald said. "You see, they have a lot of oil under their skin. That's what enables them to keep going in the coldest weather. You smell that dog's feet, or around the ankles and you'll get my point."

Everyone waited expectantly and when I made no move to smell the dog's feet, not wishing to embarrass him in front of strangers, Gord leaned forward and sniffed the dog's coat. "He hasn't got much of a smell," he admitted.

When neither George nor Mort made a move, Gord went on. "A dog like that has to be kept outside. I usually keep my hound tied up. Two hours out, two hours in. After a while, they get on to the routine."

Mort, who had been looking thoughtful and not saying much, nodded in agreement. "Gotta train 'em," he said sagely.

"Take the dog out in the woods," Gord McDonald said. "He'll pick up a trail quick enough."

"I'll never see him again," I said.

"He'll probably get back, sooner or later."

The dog was staring at the cans of dog food on George's shelves. The least I could do was buy a couple.

I had been on the point of giving up on the dog. He seemed aimless, feckless, noodle-headed creature, and breathless - when he even bothered to come back, that is.

The opinion of the panel was reassuring. They seemed to see something in this animal that had not been apparent to me, amateur dog lover that I am. Perhaps it was his bright, inquiring gaze, head tilted on one side, as though to ask, "What do you want me to do? Just ask, and if it's in my power, I'll do it."

Before the cool, impartial opinion of the experts, I found myself helpless. I resolved to give Custer another chance; to try to bring out that native intelligence which all of us sensed lurking in his bright gaze.

I went home and, following Gord McDonald's instructions to the letter, I tied Custer to an old tree in the yard, leaving exactly six yards of rope for him to move around without constriction. In exactly ten minutes he had the rope in a hopeless tangle and was on the verge of strangling himself. I would gladly have assisted.

I straightened the rope and went in the house to cook one of George's T-bones. When I came out again, the damn dog was gone. I walked up and down the road, whistling loudly. When your lips are frozen it is difficult to pucker.

After twenty minutes of this I turned around and the dog was walking along behind me. Apparently, he had been in the barn, inspecting the arrangements.

I may be a sucker, but I have decided to go on with him for a while longer. One of us will end up getting educated. It may be Custer or it may be me. I hate to go against the experts.

Stumps vs. blocks

You could tell something was bothering Gord Beeton.

"Ya know," he finally said, "I've been meaning to tell you about that Sidewalk Talk on splittin' stumps."

"It wasn't stumps you were splittin', it was blocks. Stumps

are what you leave in the ground after the tree is cut. The part of the tree that you cut up and then split is called blocks. You were splittin' blocks," he concluded.

"Ya mean stumps is stumps and blocks is blocks?" I asked. "That's right," he laughed.