

Getting Drilled

It seems that well drillers are operating around Ontario with authorities looking over their shoulders only when a situation such as the one in Russell's Heritage Road subdivision comes to light.

The existing procedure calls for a driller to fill out a Ministry of Environment form attesting that he installed a well according to prescribed requirements and that grouting and steel casing meet specifications.

A driller is free to do whatever he wants, to ignore guidelines completely — as was apparently done along Heritage Road — knowing that his report to the ministry is only a formality and that chances of him being taken to task are remote.

We're not suggesting that all well drillers are men of questionable character but clearly, as in any other trade, there are those who would cut corners with little regard to the consequences for unsuspecting homeowners.

Much closer monitoring by the ministry of new well installations is obviously needed. As the procedure now stands, the ministry finds out when a driller is incompetent, delinquent, or both, only when it's too late.

There's much more to the Heritage Road fiasco. One septic system approved by the Eastern Ontario Health Unit was later unearthed and found to be in a shambles, pipes broken, tiles in disarray. It was obviously not doing the job it was intended to do.

What happened here? Did someone fall down on the job or is the health unit inspection procedure inadequate?

Perhaps the best remedy for this sordid state of affairs is to install municipal water in the subdivisions and perhaps throughout Russell Village as is about to be done in Embrun. It would appear that only with municipal service can a new home buyer be guaranteed of good water and know exactly who to blame if something goes awry.

As to the question of responsibility in the case at hand, the Castor Review certainly does not intend to point the finger at this stage. There's already enough buck passing going on and it's not helping to resolve a very serious problem. People are getting sick and something tragic could happen.

The problem has to be rectified now and it shouldn't cost residents a cent.

Bouquets

To the municipal authorities for erecting new guard rails on the Russell Village bridge.

To authorities responsible for erecting signs on the North Russell road indicating the direction to Russell Village, which better might as well have been some remote hamlet in the Gobi Desert.

To the authorities responsible for surfacing the North Russell road. Now, if the job could only be finished right to Boundary Road, then those using this road to reach 417 would feel that they had once more rejoined the human race.

A Fatal Blow

The most serious blow struck at Ireland's hopes for peace and freedom since Cromwell was the murder of Lord Louis Mountbatten, the Queen's cousin, wartime supreme commander and one of the most respected and admired Britons of his age.

The revulsion expressed by civilized people, regardless of nationality, has done immense damage to Ireland, whose guest Mountbatten was and within the protection of whose government he was living.

Mountbatten's murder was a blow at Ireland, delivered by those who knew precisely what the effect would be and who will not rest until they secure full-scale war between the two traditional enemies, Ireland and England.

In the long history of terrorist assassinations, Lord Mountbatten's is not one which the free world can afford to forget.

And above all, it is the Government of the Republic of Ireland which must now proceed to justify its pretensions by rooting out the maniacal murderers who have for too long found freedom within its boundaries.

Incredible Situation

We are now suddenly faced with the incredible situation where Canadian weekly newspaper publishers are unable to obtain Canadian newsprint to publish their papers. Why? Because our newsprint has to go to the United States to help publish newspapers down there.

How can this happen? Very simple, Virginia. Most of the firms producing newsprint in Eastern Canada are British or American-owned. Those which are American-owned feel it is their duty to make sure American publishers are supplied with newsprint. What about the right of Canadians to the products of their own forests? American-owned firms couldn't care less.

If ever there was a case where federal intervention is warranted in the form of an embargo on the shipment of newsprint to the United States, this is it.

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CASTOR COMMENT

Correspondence

Editor Castor Review:

Please allow me as a Scotch-Irish French Canadian with a little Dutch thrown in to reply to Johan Cowling and others who I feel certain, consider me both bigoted and unfriendly to "New Canadians".

First of all, I myself am married to a Yugoslav immigrant and far from decrying the folklore and customs of others, we have adopted many of them in our own home. We bought our land from Dutch people with whom we became good friends, our newest neighbour is from the Far East and we are most happy when he drops in for a chat and a cup of coffee.

I would, as Mr. Wyss himself stated, be most lacking in sensitivity if I were unable to appreciate the musical quality of his cow bells. I too have heard and enjoyed visiting Swiss bell ringers, but it isn't a treat I'd care to experience twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Both the Chaloux and Lukaces enjoy the bells from a distance, as we know Mr. Wyss does, but at no time do the bells get as close to his house as they do to our bedroom window. By actual measurement we are about 25 yards from them, while the cornfield, outbuildings,

silos, swimming pool, driveway, machines and barns are between Mr. Wyss' house and the cows, acting as a sound barrier.

Now the good farmers in this area know perfectly well that cows really do not sleep all night. Even lying down chewing their cud the movement causes the bells to ring and one night in despair I called the O.P.P. The policeman and I sat in his patrol car in our driveway at 3 a.m. listening to the unbelievable sound of football-sized bells clanging and he, poor man, tried to calm my whimpering near hysteria while I took yet another blood pressure pill and he wrote his name and number as a witness to the fact that the cows were indeed wide awake and the large bells were at that point far from musical!

All we really want and feel we are entitled to as our right as Canadians is a peaceful night's sleep. We do not, naturally, include the sound of farm machinery which from time to time during harvest, work far into the night. That, we know is necessary as it is for our benefit — the harvest must be brought in safely at all costs.

Can you picture in your mind's eye all the bells in Russell ringing continuously day after day with

the occasional halt while the bell-ringers pause for a quick bite? At 12:30 a.m. last night I swallowed my reluctance and at the risk of a further rebuff phoned Mr. Wyss to beg him to take off the largest of the bells for the night, but after 102 rings I came to the conclusion that perhaps his hearing is not as acute as formerly.

We do wish for an amicable solution, as in the end we must all "shake down" together, surely one could be worked out to everyone's satisfaction. We feel that to achieve our ends a neutral party is necessary. Any volunteers?

Hopefully,
Mary Lukace
Marionville

Editor, Castor Review:

Poor, poor Mr. Wyss. I am so sorry to have abused you by complaining about your musical bells. You see I didn't understand that it was music that was keeping me awake all night; how foolish of me to object to a little thing like that. After all, what is sleep compared to music and your right to serenade us all night? We should get ten lashes with one of your "musical instruments".

Yours sincerely,
Mrs. A. Chaloux
Marionville



Sidewalk Talk

By Mark Van Dusen

Tripping with People

The success of any trip to a foreign country depends on the people you meet.

Sure, you can visit the monuments, shrines, cathedrals, historic sites — all the trappings of tourism — but what have you really learned of a country if you haven't met the people in their own backyards, so to speak?

By "people" I mean the average Joes, the common folk like you and I who, in the final analysis, are what gives any country its heartbeat, its identity. It is they, we, who are the country.

My wife Joan, brother Tom and his wife Lorie and I toured France and Spain in August and, if not for some special spontaneous encounters with the people of those countries, our visit would have added to no more than a three-week series of pretty postcard pit stops.

The Eiffel Tower, Champs Elysees, Arche de Triomphe, cathedral of Notre Dame de Chartres, vast vineyards of Bordeaux, medieval city of Carcassonne, Pyrenees, sunflower fields of Seville, lush olive fields of Castille, Madrid's Jose Antonio Boulevard, Costa Brava beaches were all breathtaking to see but, in years to come, will remain glossy memories in a photo album.

Not so chance encounters like that with Damian Diez Sedano and his wife Eloisa whose San Antonio hotel in Palencia looked like heaven to us after hours of driving through some of the most hair-raising mountain roads ever built.

The handful of hotels we had checked in the past few hundred kilometres had been full and we were entertaining visions of another contortion-full night trying to sleep in the car when the San Antonio's sign beckoned just after midnight.

The bar was immediately reopened for our arrival and over bottles of Aguila Imperial beer which, we soon discovered, packs at least twice as much punch as Canadian beer, our hosts informed us of the current state of the country that was the dominant force in the world only a few short

centuries ago.

We were told that, at the time of his death, Franco was respected by the majority of Spaniards after more than 35 years of dictatorship and that "he always gave more to Spain than he took."

And, while wrestling with a depressed economy and high unemployment, there was a feeling that regional hostilities — except for the Basque problem — had been buried and that a strong, unified, democratic Spain was on the near horizon.

Damian and Eloisa had placed all their hopes in their little hotel, they said, and so far things were going well for them. Ironically, they built the hotel with the help of money Damian earned on the docks in Maritime Canada.

These things we learned despite our broken Spanish and their broken English and French.

Then there was the bottle of excellent Spanish bubbly that mysteriously arrived at our table in a Catalyud restaurant which, like the rest of the town, was rollicking in celebration of the annual fiesta.

It turned out the gift came from the merrymakers at the next table for no other reason than we, the only tourists in the place, obviously enjoyed the singing and shenanigans. We reciprocated with a gift of cigars from Canada. They couldn't speak English, we couldn't speak Spanish. It didn't matter.

Next day, same town, we were given a private tour of a Spanish bullring by the caretaker who saw us outside looking at the building and waved us inside.

We were marched to the centre of the dusty, empty ring and shown a series of wild movements which we construed to be bullfighting techniques. This was followed by a look at the big, black bulls awaiting the next day's fight and a privileged visit to the room containing artifacts of the ring.

We were given free posters of the upcoming fight and a snort of the caretaker's homemade wine (one sip made bullfighting seem

simple). We were even allowed to try on a matador's vest. No money was asked for but the caretaker graciously accepted our offer of a few pesetas to buy himself a "cerveza."

And how about the little old lady in Madrid who walked us six blocks out of her way in answer to our request for directions and even scolded us for daring to step one foot off the curb on a red light?

Not to forget the French waiter in the dingy restaurant in Perpignan who vowed that our Canadian French was much preferred to the local version because it was not laced with Anglicisms (and here, growing up in French schools, we'd always been told exactly the contrary). No one was going to argue with the man who served a coq au vin that turned out to be the best meal of the trip.

And the rural bar owner who, although he didn't serve food, said it would be nothing for us to go across the street to the grocery store and bring back some cheese and bread with which to enjoy a glass of wine at his table.

All this to suggest that most people are the same everywhere, that they are basically open-hearted and accommodating with or without the convenience of a common language.

It is the little acts of generosity and kindness, the sharing of knowledge, the reassurance that simple comfort and peace of mind are common goals world-wide that you treasure most about a trip to a foreign country.

When people ask me what I remember most about our trip, I sure don't say the Eiffel Tower.

