

Bad Water Turns Stomachs

The Evans' of Heritage Road moved to Russell Village two years ago and are still longing for the day they'll be able to enjoy living in the community.

During an interview with the

Castor Review, Tom and Esther Evans outlined their long struggle to get clean water in their spacious, new home — a struggle that residents throughout the subdivision have now joined.

Tests conducted by the Eastern Ontario Health Unit and the Ministry of Environment have uncovered widespread fecal contamination in Heritage Road subdivision wells. Several cases of flu-like sickness, which residents blame on the water, have been reported during the past year.

There's evidence that wells were improperly installed and that septic systems are not functioning the way they're supposed to.

Mr. Evans believes that the two upper aquifers — water levels — in the subdivision are polluted and that sewage is seeping into the third, deeper aquifer.

Tom Evans sits back on his living room sofa and sighs. He and other residents, grouped together as the Heritage Road Homeowners Association, have been trying for 18 months to get someone to accept responsibility for the situation and correct it.

So far, they've enjoyed only limited success. The Ministry of Environment has agreed to pay for a study which could lead to implementation of corrective measures.

The ministry would finance 75 per cent of the cost of improvements recommended following the study and residents would have to pay the remaining 25 per cent.

This doesn't sit well with Mr. Evans and other homeowners. He points out that when he purchased his home from Chantal Developments, he naturally assumed he was getting a good water supply as part of the deal.

For this reason, he says, Chantal should be required to pay the homeowners' portion of any

corrective measures required, Mr. Evans says.

He estimates it will cost somewhere around \$200,000 to complete the study and repair or replace wells and septic systems on 35 properties in the subdivision.

As a stop-gap measure, Mr. Evans would like to see the Ministry of Environment provide each home with a water sterilizing system.

The Evans' have purchased a sterilizer for their own home which uses ultra-violet rays to rid their water of poisonous impurities. After water has passed through the sterilizer, the bacteria count is nil.

The device cost about \$170. However, in order for it to function properly, a \$400 conditioner was needed to clean iron from the water. So the total package would cost close to \$600 per home, Mr. Evans says.

He suggests that the ultimate solution to the Heritage Road water fiasco may be the provision of a municipal services in the subdivision. The water could be drawn from the same township well that is supposed to feed the proposed Embrun waterworks, he says.

Shortly after they moved to Russell, the Evans' discovered that their water had turned an inky-black. Testing revealed high concentrations of contamination.

Mr. Evans says the well was only about 12 feet deep and was improperly sealed and lined. A second well was installed by the same driller; everything was fine for a while but then the water turned black and sampling showed it to be severely polluted.

Both times the wells failed, the

Evans' dishwasher and clothes-washer broke down after they clogged up with sediment.

A third well was drilled to a depth of 103 feet, grouted and lined according to Ministry of Environment specifications. That well has produced clear, but highly contaminated water.

The second and third wells were provided by the developer at no cost to the Evans'.

More than anything now, the Evans' are worried about the health of their two children, daughter Chantal, 3, and son Braden, 2.

The children have been sick off and on for a year. Only when they've been away from home for extended periods has their health been normal.

Mrs. Evans took them to her family home in New Brunswick for close to four months this spring and summer and the children showed no signs of the vomiting and diarrhea that has plagued them in Russell.

Only a few weeks after their return, they were sick again.

"We can't keep the kids in a locked room," Mr. Evans observes. "They come into contact with the water in their swimming pool and at neighbours."

Mrs. Evans suggests that all Russell residents test their water regularly. She notes that one sample doesn't give a true picture because water quality can fluctuate. She recommends testing everyday for three weeks.

"We want this thing solved so we can get on with living," Tom Evans says, watching Braden and Chantal scamper through the living room.



REGISTRY ADDITION UNDERWAY

Wendell Stanley, Russell County Registrar, and Claude Gauthier, Brule Construction foreman, were snapped by our photographer as they surveyed progress on construction of the new addition to the historic Russell registry office. The Ottawa firm is expected to complete the addition at the beginning of October. It will be followed by renovation to the old structure. Price tag is \$200,000 for the work. (Photo by Rowsell).

Metcalfe Fair Set to Roll

The 123rd Metcalfe Fair, last big fair of the season in the Castor area, is set to go Sept. 28-30.

If it's the last, it certainly isn't the least, said organizer Ida Craig in announcing at least five new attractions at this year's fair and a record prize purse of more than \$20,000.

Among the new events are a heavy horse pulling contest on the final day, replacing the tractor pull which, Mrs. Craig said, was taking too big a chunk of the fair's budget to organize. By returning to the traditional horse pull, she said more money would be free for prizes.

Also for the first time are a variety and amateur talent show (Friday, 7:30 p.m.), a fashion show

(Sunday, 1:30 p.m.) and a disco dance (actually a prelude to the fair, Thursday night).

"We're filling a bit of a gap with the disco dance in providing something concrete for the teenagers. In the past there wasn't always that much for them to do after touring the midway. Disco is the latest thing and we thought we'd give it a try," said Mrs. Craig, stressing that there would be no bar at the dance.

Metcalfe Music and Sound's Phil McVey will be spinning the latest disco hits at the dance. The fashion show will feature the latest styles from the Jo-Anne Shoppe and Country Boy stores in Winchester.

The fair has also expanded its quarter horse program this year with two shows (Saturday and Sunday, 9 a.m.) instead of one as in past years.

"The quarter horse show has always been popular and has grown so much in recent years that we just had to make more room for it," she said.

The fair will again include other proven attractions such as the Western horse show (Thursday, 8 p.m.), cattle shows (black and

white, Ayrshires on Friday, beef classes on Saturday), ladies' exhibits and craft show (displays Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m.-7 p.m.; Sunday, noon to 4 p.m.), Mutt and Pet show (Friday noon), big dance (Saturday, 9 p.m.) and the finale Barbecue (Sunday evening).

All events will be held at the Metcalfe Agricultural Society fairgrounds. Ottawa Valley shows will again supply the midway and meals in the main dining hall will again be served by Porteous of Vernon.

Fairgoers will have to dig a little deeper to attend this year's event. The admission price has been increased by \$1 to \$2 Friday and \$3 Saturday and Sunday. Children 12 years and under, free.

"We had to raise the admission price to help offset the increase in prize money," she said. "We feel that the higher prize money will make for better competition. The public will be getting more for their money one way or the other."

There will be a charge for special events in the evening when the gate charge is dropped.

Full details of the fair are advertised elsewhere in this issue.

Belanger will fight

Prescott-Russell MLA Albert Belanger does not plan to resign his seat after being accused of contravening the Bankruptcy Act. "I don't feel guilty in any way," Mr. Belanger said from his Sarsfield home. "But there might be some technicality that I'm not aware of."

Russell Township's representative at Queen's Park said he has advised Premier William Davis of the charge brought against him by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

"The premier has not requested my resignation," the 57-year-old politician said.

The charge, laid earlier this month, alleges that the MLA filed a false proof of claim after a cement company at Curran went bankrupt two years ago. Angeline Belanger, the member's wife, is also charged.

Under existing legislation, owners and directors of a firm which declares bankruptcy can't recover any money until all

investors and creditors have been paid.

Mr. Belanger told the Castor Review that, while he invested fairly heavily in ABC Cement at Curran, he was neither an owner or director when the firm went bankrupt.

His day in court is Sept. 28 when he plans to plead not guilty. Mrs. Belanger will do the same.

"We'll fight this all the way," he said.

The cement company was headed by Pierre Charbonneau, who is related to Mrs. Belanger. Mr. Charbonneau declared personal bankruptcy when the company went under.

Mr. Belanger, who has held Prescott-Russell for the Conservatives since 1967, was quite willing to discuss the case.

The couple began investing in ABC about six years ago and eventually held two mortgages on the company, one for \$30,000 and one for \$161,000. The latter amount constituted the proceeds

from the sale of his Sarsfield cheese factory, he explained.

During Bankruptcy proceedings, the Belangers' filed claims against the company's remaining assets. The member said, that as an investor, he felt entitled to do so.

He insisted that he never held a position with the company. In fact, ABC was never really set up as a formal company, he added.

Mr. Belanger eventually took over ABC and now operates under the name of Curran Cement.

The member said he has known since the beginning of the summer that charges would be laid and he is worried about the affect on his political future.

However, he's received several calls of support from constituents.

"They tell me that they've known me too long to believe that I could be guilty of something like this."

He promised to continue devoting his full attention to riding affairs despite the burden of the court case.



FINDING THE WAY

Motorists using Highway 417 until recently had to rely on chance to find their way to Russell. The task has been greatly simplified since new signs sprouted at strategic points to direct them the right way.