

ASTOR COMMENT

Side-walk: get it?

A Russell Village resident was recently unloading groceries from his car when a snowmobile roared to a stop on the sidewalk behind him.

"Excuse me," hollered a helmeted kid above the hacking sled.

The resident, weighted with food bags, wheeled.

"No you excuse me. This is a sidewalk, not a racetrack," he fired.

The kid and his passenger — both about 18 — barrelled around their human obstacle and blasted off down the sidewalk.

Point is, the sidewalks in Russell and other villages along the Castor are for pedestrians and not for people in cars, trucks or on motorcycles or snowmobiles. Doesn't matter what time of year.

It's all in the word. Sidewalk: to walk on the side (of the street). Get it? If pedestrians can't feel safe on the sidewalk, then where can they?

Before all snowmobilers start taking this criticism personally, let us say we recognize most of them are responsible. They use village streets — not sidewalks — to get to outlying tracks and they do so at safe speeds. The Castor area has a number of well-organized and law-abiding snowmobile clubs.

But lately, a growing number of young snowmobilers have been using streets and sidewalks to go nowhere. They scream up and down and around disrupting the lives of residents who pay taxes for peace and quiet and for safe streets.

It's up to the parents to bring the youngsters into line, to teach them the rules of safe snowmobiling.

Save us

Here we are in a New Year. 1981. Nineteen years away from the Second Millennium. What will we make of it? Will it be a year that will ring down the annals of history, like 1492 or 1865 or 1914 or 1939, or the year men first walked on the moon? Will it be like last year, when disasters leaped into the headlines and dominated the media? Strange, bizarre killings, the incredible hostage drama, the strange, unfulfilled, and somehow threatening wars of Afghanistan and Iran? In 1980, the world seemed to stop and fall apart. The Premier of Italy was kidnapped and left dead in a car trunk by communist terrorists; terror stalked Italy and Spain, disciplined and subsidized by Moscow. A good an ineffectual man sat in the White House and uttered aphorisms of the playing field as the world collapsed around our ears. To top it all, Mount St. Helen gave the U.S. a volcano in its own backyard; while Canadians allowed themselves to be torn apart on the esoteric considerations of constitutional destiny.

The Jim Jones episode showed the horrors of religion gone mad and the Terry Fox saga caught the imagination of those who wanted to feel and believe. Closer to home, Russell Village got sewers and sidewalks after only a hundred years and the Castor flowed cleaner, sweeter on its winding journey to the Nation. If we have a prayer, it is this. Save us from another year like 1980.

CASTOR REVIEW

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STAFF MEETING

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Beaver Bob

That's some cold

Cold is the word for January. It was a cold that bit and chilled and froze and got into your innards and tied them in knots. It was so cold that if you stopped and thought about it, you froze. The railroad engines froze in the Montreal station. Every day there were cars pulled off 417 because they forgot to put Kleen-Flo in their tanks. Local garages sold more Kleen-Flo than Benny sold alcohol.

"I was wondering if they were drinking it," Harry Honey said.

To give you an idea how cold it was, the electricity froze in the wires and the town was blacked out one Sunday morning just at breakfast time. Man, that's cold.

Of course, there have been colder winters. Going back to the old days, Bill Loucks remembers plenty colder. One winter, was so cold that a horse froze on its way to Embrun and didn't thaw out until spring.

The old New York Central used to freeze up a lot. Everyone would

go out and chop it loose with axes. Those were the days.

It was so cold one year, you could walk across the Castor right up to August 15. One winter the smoke froze in the air over the houses and dropped down the chimneys putting out the fires. That was some cold.

They say a new Ice Age is coming. This year must have been the first year. Next year is supposed to be worse. People are making reservations in Florida now for next year's winter sports.

It gets tiresome hearing the weathermen on American TV blaming it all on Canada. Night after night, they come on and talk about cold masses of air coming down. How do they think it gets to Canada? Why it drifts over from Siberia, of course. Do they ever mention that? Not on your life. You'd think Canada had invented cold air.

Our Prime Minister had to get himself snowed in on a Bavarian mountain top thus confirming the

worst suspicions of the Americans. He went on to Brazil trailing clouds of ice-cold air.

We went to the mountains over New Years. We drove 150 miles and woke up in the morning to see a colossal snow-covered mountain peering in the window. By about ten o'clock this started to get tiresome. Who wants to be stared at by a mountain? It was too cold to go skiing. When the temperature sinks to a certain level, these plastic skis freeze and crinkle up like cellophane.

It was a relief to get back to Russell where there are no mountains. In fact, trail skiing looks pretty good in this weather. There were not too many skiers out in January because of the intense cold. Some got discouraged when the trails froze.

There was a rabbi around our place last week. He froze in mid-jump. He is still up there, silhouetted against the sky and probably won't come down until spring.

POETS OF THE... CASTOR

The Night They Blew Down The Hotel

A bunch of the boys were whooping it up

In the old Commercial Hotel
The kid that wields the billiard cue
Was playing like a bat out of Hell.
The joint was jumping on every side

People coming from far and wide,
When out of the night and into the light,
Dog dirty and loaded for bear,

Came a man from the Castor,
Drinkin' faster and faster,
He knew but he sure didn't care.

"Cut 'm off," Benny cried.

"Dump him outside.

"I run a high class joint.

"If he can dance on my stage.

"That will be the gauge

"Of whether he's drunk or sober."

With a whoop and a holler

And a new silver dollar,

The stranger leaped with a yell

He whirled and cavorted,

Jumped and snorted,

Like some weird creature from hell.

"Make him stop!" they all cried.

"Put him outside!"

"The man's mad, he's insane,
he's a nut."

No way he would stop,

Spun like a top,

'Til round with him they whirled

All at once,

"Stop him, you dunce,

"He'll bring down the house."

Too late. The deed was done.

The old hotel flew around,

And took off from the ground,
Bringing Benny, clients and all.

Never to this day,

Has it come back to stay

Just left a big hole in the ground

And a strange smell of brimstone

around.

—Thomas Van Dusen

Bruno Beefs

With Bruno Santilli

The ills of the nation are many; but in this respect we have one consolation, we are not alone.

In the past, we have turned a blind eye, I say that we can no longer afford to do this; no longer can we believe that our wealth and great size will balance the scales. Too long have we believed in the promises of our politicians which have been broken faster than they have been made.

I for one can no longer trust our leading political party; too often have they lied to us in order to retain power.

Just to refresh your memories, the campaign against Robert Stanfield, who was honest with the issues at hand, was victorious not because the Liberals had managed our affairs properly but because the Liberals banked on our natural revulsion of a control system. Our dream of no controls, however, was shortlived. The same is true of the last election.

What's wrong? Can we not see beyond tomorrow? No matter how, sooner or later, the bill must be paid! Let us take the bull by the horns and get on with re-establishing our credibility.

Before we can tackle this monumental problem, we (every person residing in Canada) must recognize that our strength lies in the firmness of our commitment as Canadian citizens.

Many great nations and empires have crumbled because of selfish and petty reasoning. Are we next? Or will we drop our false fronts, and stop confusing the realities of today so that we can create a great tomorrow!

Anyone wishing to comment or relate personal experiences, write to:

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Correspondence

Editor,

The Castor Review:

I want to thank you and your staff for the courtesy extended to me as the M.P. for Nepean-Carleton which has permitted me to keep in touch on a regular basis with the people I am privileged to represent in Parliament.

My mail attests to the importance of the Community Newspaper in that regard and I am grateful.

My wife joins me in extending our warmest good wish to you, your staff and your families for 1981.

Sincerely,
Walter Baker.

Editor,

The Castor Review:

Yesterday on the radio the name Castor Review was mentioned. It was the first time I heard that. It may be that you are in the process of producing a local newspaper. If I am correct, then why not send me a copy and I will likely promptly become another of your subscribers.

I am a member of the Osgoode Historical Society and your publication would likely give us some information about the Castor River. About all I know about it is that Colonel Archibald McDonell and his wife Catherine McDonell (King) went up that river in March 1827 with their family of eight to their new property, given by the Government of Canada in consideration of the services rendered by Col. Archibald during the war of 1812-1813-1814. They left this place by team and sleigh, east of Chesterville; they swung onto the Nation River and continued to where the Castor River flowed into the Nation.

Yours sincerely,
Edwin McDonald
St. Andrews West

Editor's Note

The Castor Review welcomes — nay, urges — contributions from its legions of loyal readers. Send along your comments even if they're positive. We especially encourage subscribers in the far-flung reaches of our mail circulation.