

Comment

Hydro rate rip-off

The differential between rural and urban hydro rates is still there but a bill proposed in the Ontario Legislature will at least help to rectify an injustice. For years, rural hydro users have been paying a higher rate per kilowatt hour than those in cities like Toronto, Hamilton and Ottawa.

The reasoning seems to have been that because half a million people use electricity in a city like Ottawa, they should get it cheaper than, say, twenty-five thousand people in a rural area. This makes as much sense as saying because half a million people eat eggs in a city, their eggs, ought to be cheaper.

There is more to the question than the issue of how many persons are using the service in a given area. There is also the question, from a social and policy viewpoint, of what the service is used for.

In rural Ontario, hydro is used for essential services and in many cases, services that are beneficial to society as a whole, such as dairy production and food production, heating, lighting and so on. The people in rural areas, paying a higher rate per kilowatt hour, have been subsidising the heated swimming pools, the air conditioned apartments, the heated garages, the colour televisions, the humidifiers and other luxuries of residents of Etobicoke and Don Mills far too long.

These frills could disappear overnight and the world would not be poorer. but eliminate the dairy farms of Ontario and then, brothers and sisters, we are in trouble.

Charlie

A good old yellow dog named Charlie met his end on Russell Village's Craig Street a few weeks ago. It was nobody's fault.

The driver of the car said she didn't have a chance. Charlie darted right out in front of her. A passing vet stopped to help but Charlie didn't make it to the Navan animal clinic.

While Charlie's death was unavoidable, Craig is still a dangerous street. Exiting the village towards Metcalfe most cars and the massive trucks that use the street are doing 50 mph. Coming from Metcalfe, they're going just as fast despite 30 mph speed limit signs and a "Slow School" sign. Signs obviously don't work. It's time for flashing lights — at least.

Gastor Earl

Everything's fallin'

I sure do like this time of year. It's that little nip in the air that really gets to me. It makes a body set up and take notice.

The leaves are fallin' off the trees, the trees are fallin' off the banks of the Castor...well, not quite yet but I'm a bit worried about that happenin' some day, I can tell you. You see, my ol' cabin sits smack on the river bank, so close that you can only get around back of it by turnin' sideways, kissin' the wall, and holdin' your breath. Whenever somebody I don't want to see like a bill collector comes around, I send him around to the back. There's a scream, a splash, and I'm never pestered by him again. Fact is, nobody ever sees him again.

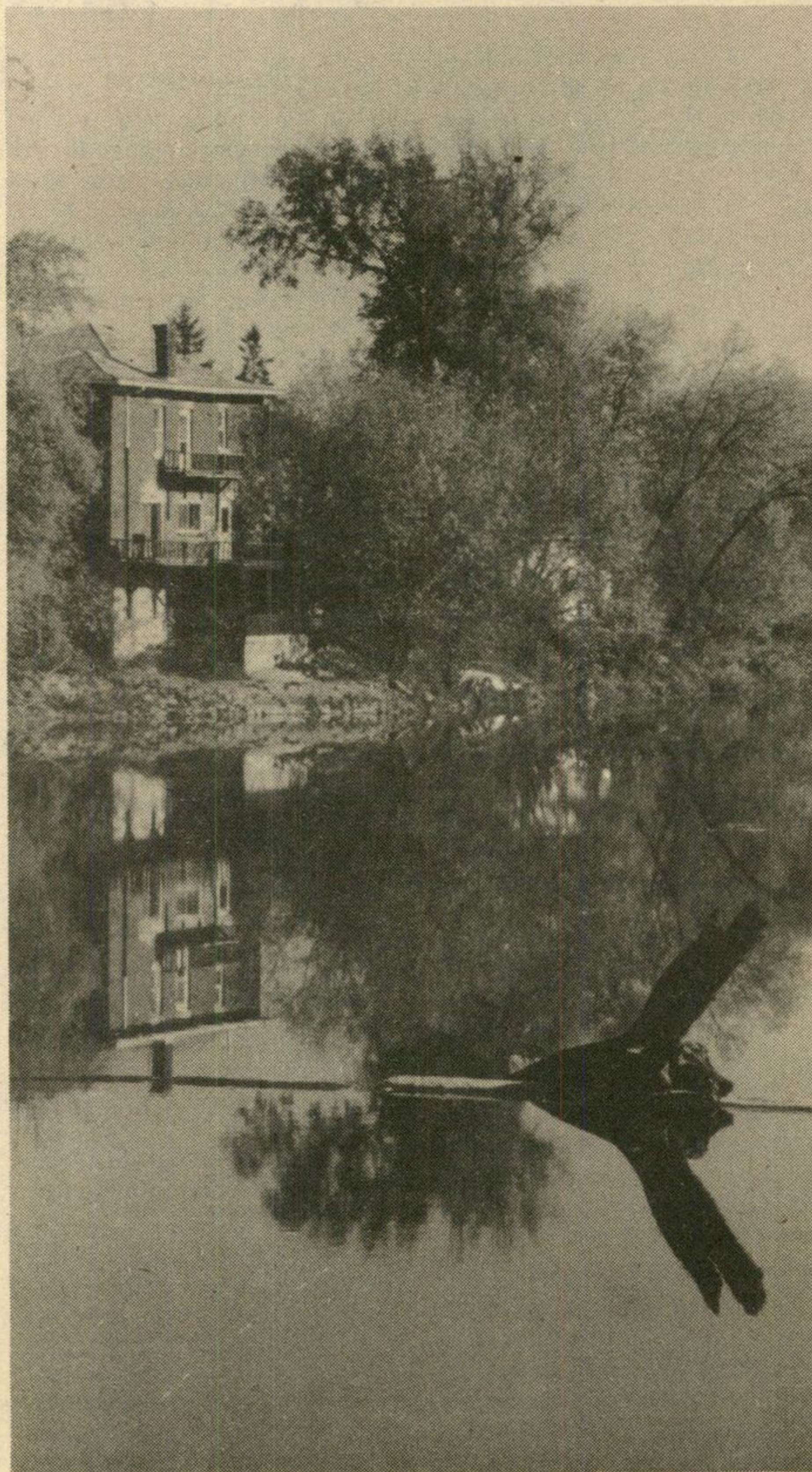
But I'm worried the dang house may tumble down the bank and into the river someday. So far, she ain't showin' no ill effects. Nothin' in the place is cracked, except ol' Earl of course. But who knows; she may slide someday and take me and everythin' with 'er.

My, my, but it is nice out there. The little sugar maple went all yellow, then orange, and now she's naked as a jaybird. It must be embarrassin'. I know it was for me the time I was walkin' in the woods and...no, I better not mention the rest of that story.

I put the bike away, and the lawnmower that didn't get a heck of a lot of use, and put up the storm windows, and patched the broken putty and...phew, I'm all tuckered just writin' about it.

I fired up the furance and the next thing I'd like to fire is the oil man. Ever notice all the folks switchin' to wood or electricity. I figure oil prices are goin' to have to come down in a few years because nobody is going to want the dang stuff.

I filled the bird feeder. Maybe it'll get more attention than it usually does. Most winters, the birds ignore it en masse. That's French for the whole dang crowd of them.



The silent Castor winds smoothly toward the Russell dam. But a reflected log reminds us that only a few weeks before this passive scene, a swollen river rushed the remains of the massive tree downstream to lodge it midstream and await the next high water. (Dennis McGann photo)

Beaver Bob

Great blue resident

The Castor, that winding, turbid stream which rises somewhere in the marshes of Osgoode and comes together placidly above Russell in the river which we know so well, meandering casually through the village like a friendly pup, has worn a different guise this season.

It has been a rushing, thrusting, turbulent stream, swollen by unusually heavy rains. What generally is a placid ripple above the iron bridge on the main street has become quite a respectable rapid, powerful enough to upset an unwary canoeist.

Instead of the inconsequential trickle to which our favourite stream was reduced in previous years, it has maintained a volume of water through the summer bidding fair to give competition to the majestic Rideau.

Perhaps because of high water, perhaps because of the installation of sewage, there are now reports of fish in the Castor. Certainly there are green frogs, lizzards and turtles; and perhaps it is the presence of these amphibians which has attracted an unusual number of Great Blue Herons which have made the Castor at Russell their summer habitat.

These are perhaps the largest and most spectacular birds of our eastern waterways. The heron differs from the stork in that he flies with his neck tucked into his shoulders in an S-shape, while the stork flies with his neck straight out. We are reliably informed that the Great Blue Heron stands better than three feet in height and that, in these waters is a majestic bird.

We have seen at least one of these birds which haunts a stretch of the river within the village, standing motionless in the weeds, getting his scimitar-like bill in position for an unwary frog or lizzard.

Others have seen a number of these noble birds and one pair at least is reputed to have paid us the compliment of nesting in our midst.

Russell can take satisfaction and pride in being one of the few villages in the area to have a Resident Great Blue Heron.

These birds, like a number of other area residents, take off for Florida in the winter, so the leisurely spectacle of one of these creatures floating on enormously extended wings over the placid reaches of the river, will not be ours much longer.

Meanwhile, it is hoped that Russell will continue to make the Great Blue Herons welcome until such time as they take off for the south, and that we will welcome them back in the spring as a permanent part of our riverine landscape.

Letters

Reunion was great fun

For the past few years, the Review has kept me up-to-date with happenings in my old home and has brought me a great deal of pleasure. I regret that it was impossible for me to attend the homecoming after reading of it in the paper.

The discussion, in earlier issues, of the origins of the name 'Russell' for village, township and county interested me.

There is a book on the origins of the Loucks family written by J.M. McBrier (one of the founders of the F.W. Woolworth stores in New York state and married to a Carrie Loucks). In his book, he traces her line and just mentions those of the family who came to Canada as United Empire Loyalists.

The salient point here is that those who came to Canada lived in Russell township and some lived on Russell Road at Stone Arabia, Schoharie District in the Mohawk Valley. (In this area there were many familiar names such as Dillabough, Rombough, Pillar, Helmer, etc.)

I submit that there is a possibility that Russell County and township at least owe their name to the old home of the Loyalist settlers who came to our area. I do not know exactly when the names were applied to the area but Belden's Atlas, Toronto 1879, indicates that the post office, township and county were 'Russell' as early as 1827.

Perhaps Wendell Stanley has information in the Registry Office that would indicate when and by whom the name Russell was first used.

Margaret (Loucks) Wolfe
428 Olivia Crescent
Trail, B.C.

Newspaper is a pleasure

As former residents of Russell we have relived many times our delightful day with all our 'old' friends in Russell at the Reunion on June 27th.

So many people greeted us and made us feel so very welcome that when the time came to return to Prince Edward Island we were overflowing with nostalgia.

We shared our day with our daughter Nancy in Whitehorse, Yukon via telephone. How she would have enjoyed being with us!

We would like to congratulate all the people who put that weekend together and made it such a roaring success. Could we say a special thanks to Dorothy Marquette who wrote to us a year ago telling us about the plans and to Harold and Mable Gamble for taking us under their wings that day.

May Russell have another Reunion soon.

Sincerely,
Wolcott, Flo and Donald
MacPherson,
R.R. 1, Cardigan,
P.E.I.

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Here slump your loyal slaves, back of Bruno's, with warm thoughts of a giant blue heron who has settled in for the winter... we welcome Ian Darragh to our pages this month — and the wise words of Maria Darragh from the kitchen table... Emerald Miller joined our ad sales crew... we publish with apologies to Bruno Santilli who makes great pizza but found his Beefs omitted (sorry, Bruno)... remember, we do it all for you (and that's not hamburger talk)... Our office manager is Jude McGann (445-3108)...

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Emerald Miller: 445-5362

And the rest of the gang — Marc Belanger on news (445-3252); Jack McLaren, sports (445-2131); Garey Ris (out west); Margo McCallum, (Cupboards 445-5635); Dorothy Marquette, visiting (445-2168); Greg Rokosh, Recreation (445-2874)... and the other elves: Tom and Tommy Van Dusen along with Michael the shutterbug; Gillian Rokosh on circulation, Connie Belanger on the paste up tables; and the great blue heron... ah, ah, time to say gd'nite...

Next meeting: Nov. 5th
Next deadline: Nov. 11th
Next issue: November 20th