

Comment

Welcome, 1982

It's here, Christmas, 1981. We thought it would never come. The world waited a long time for this one. Christians, nearly two thousand years; Jews double that time; the Chinese seven or eight thousand. Mankind, perhaps thirty thousand years.

Well, what kind of a Christmas is it, now that it's here? Pierre has his Constitution that he wanted so badly. Nobody else seems greatly concerned, except Rene Levesque who didn't want to dance and then got mad because nobody asked him. This is the Constitution that makes women equal to men.

Meanwhile, the world is going on pretty much as it was when the star rose over the stable in Bethlehem. In those days, the Romans were worrying about their empire; terrorism and radicalism were on the increase; the barbarians were at the gates; strange eastern vices were creeping into western society; Augustus Caesar got fed up with welfare bums and cut 250,000 Romans off of the free corn list. What else is new?

Television brings the world to our living rooms. The dullest clot sitting in front of his TV knows more about what's going on than the most brilliant intellect of the Victorian era; and perhaps less than the meanest peasant, because he only knows what the camera shows him. That's Christmas, 1981.

Our impression is that the world has changed little in five or six thousand years. We mean the real world, not the one on the screen. Wickedness and evil, starvation and disease, death and terror, continue to ride rampant over the dreams of men.

In spite of the theologians and philosophers, the saints and martyrs and prophets, the moralizers and preachers, people continue to act pretty much like people; a curious amalgam of much that is good, much that is beautiful, much that is greedy and self-seeking and violent. But, we had all better get used to people, because, after all, what else is there? So, to all of the people at this time of goodness and decency, very best wishes for a happy holiday season.

Deep freeze

Our favourite stream has shown its many shades and hues this fall in a way to conjure up a vision of constantly changing charms.

As autumn turned into winter with the slow wheeling of the seasons, the water level dropped slowly, day by day. Rocks and snags not seen since early summer made their reappearance. The water assumed a dark, oily tinge, an almost leaden appearance as the land got ready for winter.

Every morning, frost tinted the fields and a long spider's loop, coated with frost had the appearance of a white rope of tiny pearls. The turtles disappeared from the scene, along with the frogs, seeking shelter at the bottom of the stream. The groundhog in the field above has been long underground and will not be seen until spring melts the icicles on the barn roof.

The great blue heron has vacated these regions for his summer home in Florida and the muskrat makes only rare appearances. Every morning there is a rim of ice along the shore, which day by day, moves a little farther into the stream. The Castor is preparing for its long winter hibernation.

From my kitchen window...

by Maria Darragh

As our children pass from the vegetative stage of infancy into plundering toddlerhood, we are being rudely faced with a perplexing problem in home decor.

On the one hand, we would like our house to reflect some of our tastes, attitudes and lifestyle. On the other hand, we would like to allow the children plenty of room to romp. This period of their development is so stressful for everyone there seems to be a need to reduce all aggravation.

At first we tried the family or playroom route. The livingroom, per se was out of bounds to the children. Gradually, however, we began to realize it was rather silly to have the nicest room with the most comfortable furniture closed off like a mausoleum while the family was crammed into a less desirable space. And, I guess, we got tired of fighting for the one comfortable chair.

So now our livingroom is open to sticky peanut butter fingers and energetic little bodies. Our furniture is draped in a motley array of protective slipcovers. And our most cherished treasures, (books,

family photos and knick-knacks) are hurriedly finding their way into the back of an out-of-harm's-way closet. (I only hope that like good wine they'll age well).

The decision to convert the livingroom from a funeral parlour into a room for living was not without acrimony. Admittedly the atmosphere is more relaxed — reminiscent of summer holidays at the cottage. But...the house looks just awful. At least as seen through eyes that recently perused through a tantalizing book put out by the *New Yorker* magazine, called *Beautiful Living*.

Glossy page after page of gleaming pine floors sparsely covered with brightly coloured Navajo and Persian rugs. Artistically arranged furniture. Early American antiques casually featured. Fine china highlighting end tables, coffee tables, odd tables. Beautiful living indeed!

Although we are not exactly resigned to the changes we've made in our home decor, we do get some consolation from the knowledge that we are not the first (nor will we be the last) parents to face this sticky problem.

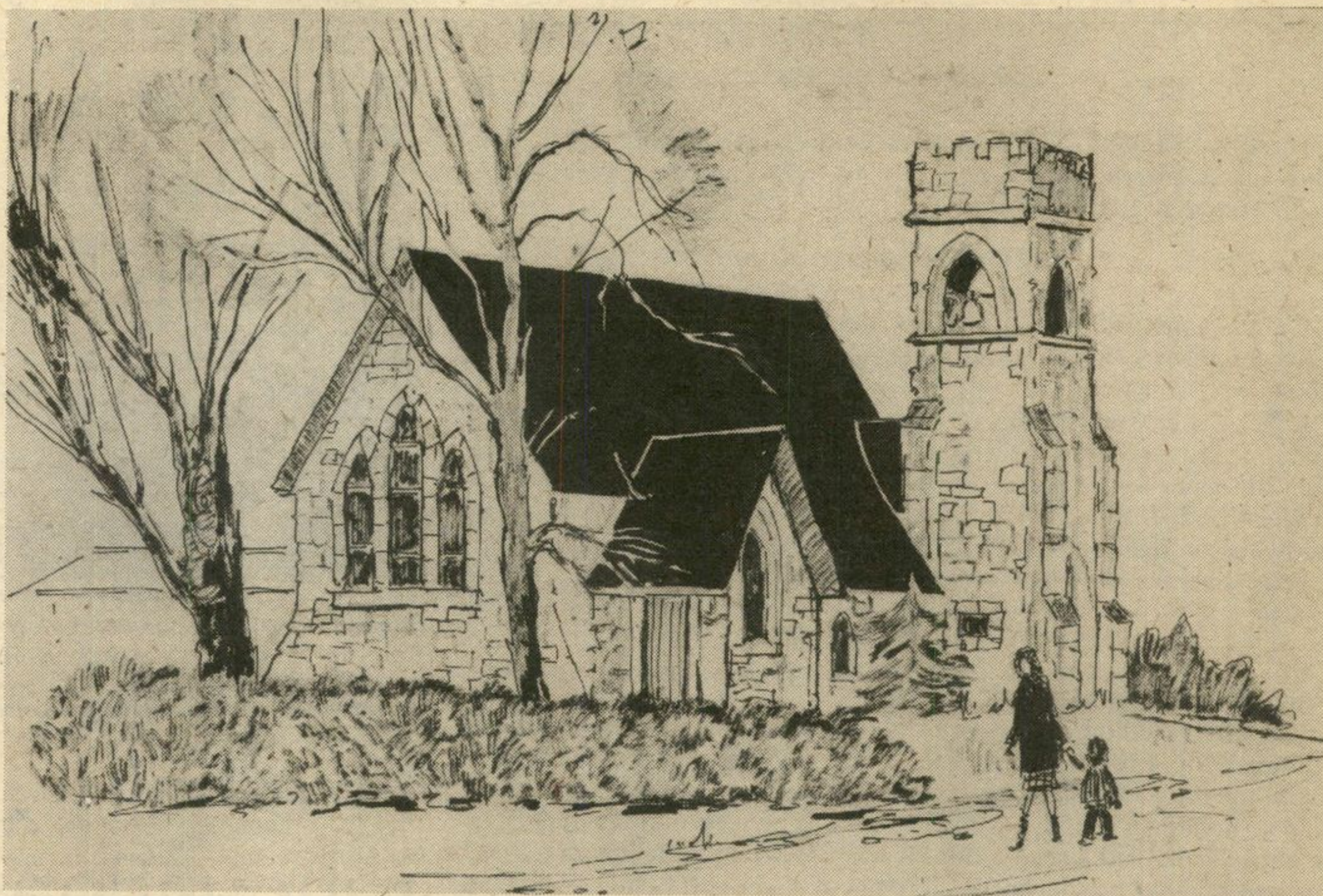


Illustration: Shirley Van Dusen

Beaver Bob

As one contemplates the slow, silent march of the Castor to its junction with the Nation; now that the frogs are stilled, the blue herons gone to Coral Gables, the clouds massed dully on the horizon, day after day with a threat of coming snow, the mind turns to the eternal verities.

We were struck with a comment by the Pope the other day when he stated that in the hereafter, we would all have bodies, they would be glorious and immortal and the children of the elect would not have wives, but the children of the world would.

It is not our habit in this column to deviate into theology or philosophy, although we indulge from time to time in day-dreaming; but we must admit that the concepts put forward by the Holy Father, were to say the least intriguing.

Naturally, what he said was derived from Holy Scriptures and it almost appears as though the Bible may have been pointing to an extended sojourn in space for all of us.

It is true that this old planet earth is getting overcrowded, polluted, contaminated, and just plain worn out because of the presence of many billions of humans who are busily exterminating other plant and animal life as fast as we can get on with it.

We are altering the environment, pumping tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, heating up the earth's blanket,

which will get hotter and hotter as it thickens and holds in the heat. We are thus in danger of exterminating ourselves on our own poisons, like so many rats within, say, two or three thousand years at the most.

We must do what we did three hundred years ago in Europe, get out. Imagine the situation if all those who left Europe to live in the United States were to return. Now, there is no place to go. The world is filling up with people. That leaves space. Perhaps, in an allegorical way, the Bible is foretelling the forthcoming migration of humanity among the stars.

It took another hundred years or so after the first tentative probes of the first explorers, Columbus, Verrazano, Vespucci, before the world began to see the possibilities of American settlement.

Events are now condensed. It will not take that long for the first settlers in space. In the same way as the first settlers in America, their wants will have to be supplied for many years from the homeland, even to food and air.

It is not hard to imagine cities floating in space, each with a million inhabitants, sealed in giant air bubbles, supplied with air and green food from earth until substitutes are found.

It is not difficult to imagine people flitting about, weightless, in space and the gradual adaptation of bodies to altered conditions and the emergence of new

paces very different from people as we know them now; with the disappearance of old institutions deemed so necessary on earth.

Perhaps the human race will take a great leap forward, once it is settled in space. Men and women may become angels. Let us hasten to add that this dream of future shock is not for the foreseeable future, but for the unforeseeable or dimly viewed future.

Perhaps this is the next great phase in evolutionary progress, an intellectual and spiritual evolution, which may even reconcile the clash between the evolutionists and creationists as their quarrel grows petty alongside the majestic and destined unfolding of the universe. We can dream, can't we?

Letters

Wouldn't it be a wonderful thing if the vacant lot at Metcalfe's main intersection could be made into a town park?

The lot, though zoned commercial at present, is an ideal park site. Situated on the corner of Victoria and Albert Streets. It has a grassy green area and the tree-lined banks of a tributary of the Middle Castor River.

With a stream-side path, park benches, an area for young fishermen, and a few swings, it could serve the young and the old of our community year-round. It is withing walking distance of the new senior citizen apartments and would add much to our already-attractive town.

Although the township council has received the idea favorably, it seems that financial restraints will prevent any prompt action. But if the Metcalfe area citizens and service organizations show support for the idea, maybe some priorities could be adjusted.

It would be a great shame if Metcalfe permitted this opportunity to make an important step for the future slip by — at a time when other cities and towns are belatedly realizing the great value of town parks at the heart of the community.

Sally and David Gray,
Metcalfe

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Editor: Dennis McGann

There's just gotta be something wrong here — nobody's falling over tired, eyes are not yet bloodshot, there's still beer in the fridge and the pizza is still in the oven — but we've put the paper to bed already ("Nighty, night little Review"... you'll notice a slightly higher advertising content this month — you're paying for all the ad-free pages you read last month (a newspaper is like bananas — there's no free bunch)... here begins the Review Rabbit Joke Series: What do you get when you pour hot water into a rabbit-hole? One hot, cross bunny... thanks this month to our newest volunteer, Eileen Hamelin, who's responsible for Calendar... and now that 1981 is about to bow out, bouquets to the many people who've held the paper together through highs and lows... by the bye, Kit Collins returned to the real world this month and is, in our eyes, far more important a being than is the Great Blue Heron (we love her for her mind — the heron, that is)...

Advertising Sales: Theresa Griffith: 445-2820, Emerald Miller: 445-5362
Office Manager: Jude McGann: 445-3108

Before the pizza arrives and we get everything covered in cheese, here, once again, is the gang Back o' Bruno's: Marc Belanger (news) 445-3252; Ian Darragh (news & photography) 445-3092; Jack McLaren (445-2131) and Garey Ris on sports; Margo McCallum (cupboards) 445-5365; Dorothy Marquette (visiting) 445-2168; Greg Rokosh (recreation) 445-2874; Gillian Rokosh (circulation)... On the paste-up tables: Tom Van Dusen, Elke Bietz, Connie Belanger, Joel Nordenstro, (who also draws pretty pictures)... the 'alldressed' is here, so gd'night and have a very happy holiday...

Next issue: January 22
Next deadline: January 13
Next meeting: January 6