

Ruby and Floyd are back in the saddle again



The familiar faces of Floyd and Ruby Montour were back on the front line Tuesday at the Empire Estates construction site. After taking a few months off, they are recharged and ready to continue to fight against the destruction of what they believe to be Six Nations' land. (Photo by Al Sault)

By Al Sault
BRANTFORD

A couple from Six Nations that no longer need an introduction when developers see them are back in circulation.

Floyd and Ruby Montour, a couple that at one time claimed they were going to retire from being defenders of the land, were back at one of their old haunts on Tuesday.

They were spotted on Conklin Road in Brantford where Empire Homes workers had returned.

When asked why they came out of retirement, Ruby replied, "We just needed a rest for awhile, but there was still so much that needed to be done."

She also said that the Men's Fire were doing a good job and they had dropped by to say hello and to let them know they

were still involved.

The location is a familiar one to them. It wasn't long ago, the couple were in the same area hoping to convince the developer, Empire Homes, to consult with Six Nations. That was before the heavy equipment arrived and the trees disappeared. They don't recall whether or not that consultation ever took place.

Jump ahead to what took place Tuesday and you get

what Ruby called "their track record". When asked what the couple thought about the company's returning to work even though they had promised to shut down until after a rescheduled meeting at Six Nations had taken place on Wednesday. She said that is what has happened at every site they had been to. She said, "They say one thing and then do another, you can't take their word for nothing."

She said that they were just like the government who you can't believe either.

Mrs. Montour believes it is the government who should be stepping in to stop what has taken place, not them.

"They should be protecting our rights and our land so that there is a future for our grandchildren that are coming into this world," she said.

Floyd Montour, who stood within sight of a silt retainer that had clearly not been looked after, doubted the environment has been looked after either. He has questions on the whereabouts of an archaeological report that he also has doubts about. He believes that it should be looked into immediately.

He also wonders about what the future has in store, given that the developer had already been paid to complete 60 homes. Probably lawsuits.

"These people knew before they ever got to this stage of the development that we were

going to come," said Ruby. "It's not like this is just new and they just found out."

She said this was the third or fourth time she had been at the site and that they had talked to them (Empire Homes) and told them they had to consult with Six Nations. She said it was they who were personally responsible for those men not working.

"It's not our fault," she said. "If they had done the right thing at the very beginning, these people wouldn't be in the spot they are right now."

Mr. Montour speculates what he feels could be the stumbling block in reaching a decision both sides can agree upon.

"Our bottom line is that it is native land," he said. "We need input somehow and we need to talk to them to come to an agreement with us. We're not going to agree with them, they have to agree with us. It's our land."

He said as far as he was concerned, they were trespassing on native land.

Ruby also spoke of the taxes the city was collecting from home owners.

"That's extortion, wouldn't you think?," she said. "Why would they be paying taxes to somebody that doesn't own the land? This is ours."

She laid the blame squarely on the shoulders of city council for selling the land

to developers knowing full well it was Six Nations' land they were selling.

"They've done it over and over," she says. "We have talked to developers who said they didn't know they had Six Nations' land."

She recalls a meeting she went to where Brant County Mayor Ron Eddy was in attendance. She says she had asked whether or not he was telling the people (the developers) that we're going to come if they build on "our land"? It's alleged he said "no" to which she asked, why not? She says Eddy said it was up to them to find out.

Mr. Montour jumped back to the subject of taxes and said he understands \$650,000 in municipal taxes is being collected every year.

"We're not getting anything on our own land that rightfully belongs to us," he said. "We need to step up to the plate. Time is of the essence."

Will this be the last time Ruby and Floyd will be seen at this or other construction sites in Brant County? Don't count on it.

"We're here" said Ruby.

Floyd was a little less sure, "It's too big of an issue for us alone."

"The main thing right now is that the Men's Fire is taking the lead," Ruby interjected. "We're proud of them."