

STOUTVILLE

COMMENT

Someone's looking out for us

We must have someone somewhere looking out for us.

For the second time this summer, this area has been grazed by vicious storms.

Aside from power outages, some trees being uprooted or broken, a few shingles lost to the wind and some gardens tussled, we escaped the worst of the damage.

Other areas in Ontario were not so lucky.

Just to the north, near Fenelon Falls, motorists who travelled a particular route in 20 minutes to Lindsay, took more than one hour because of fallen trees blocking the road.

In Peterborough, a lightning strike stopped a man's heart who

Our View

was standing nearby, killing him.

An elderly woman had a heart attack and died when lightning struck her family home.

In London, flooding and backed-up sewers caused havoc.

Across the province, at least three twisters were seen, but they caused little damage.

And while we may have spent the weekend picking up sticks from the yard and righting the spilled flower pots, we should now pause and thank those who spent a very long weekend ensuring we continued to have phone service, electricity and safe roads.

Crews were out in the immediate

moments following Friday's celestial display.

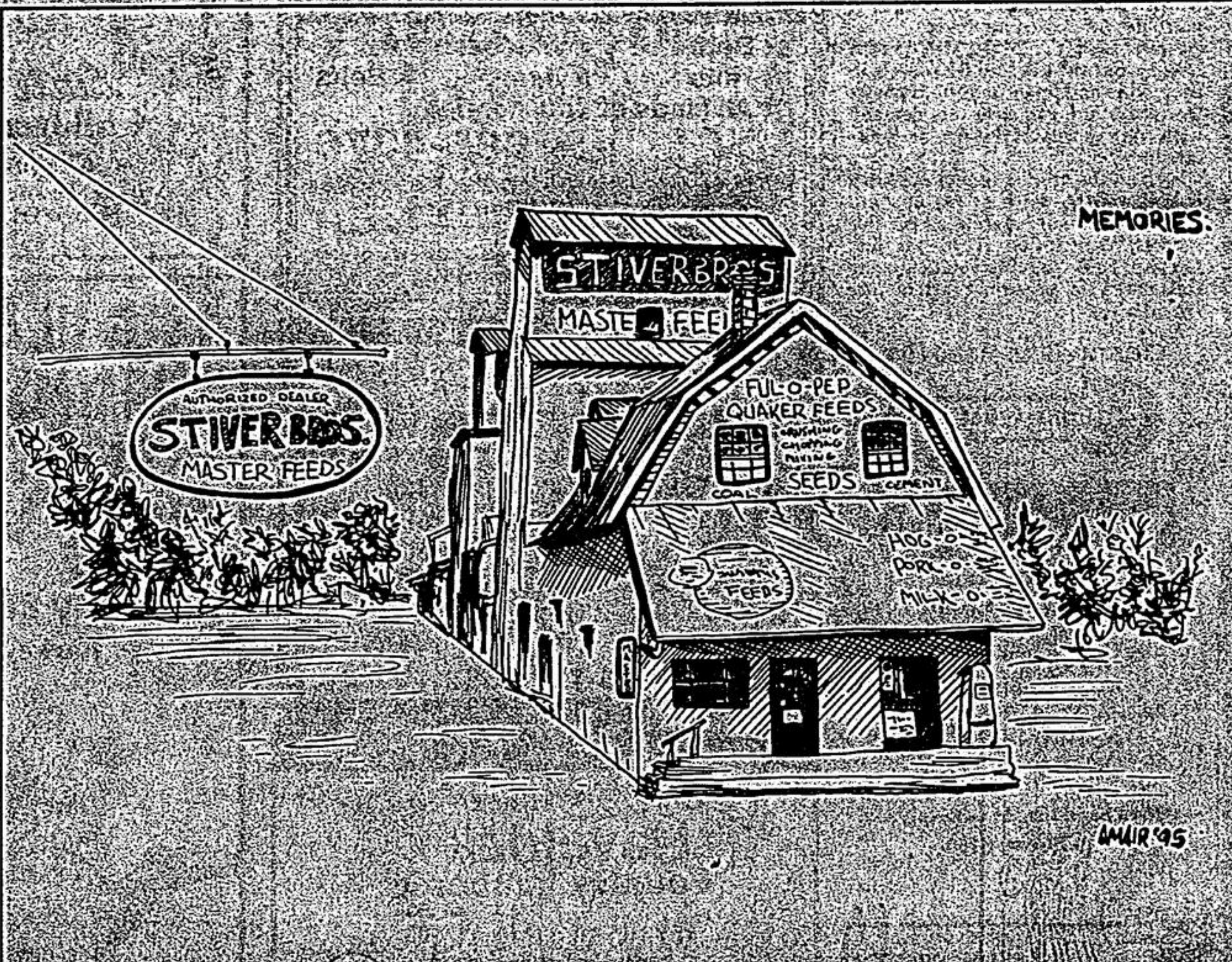
Trees had to be cut down, power lines re-strung, transformers fixed and phone lines re-attached.

Tree removal companies worked most of the night and all day Saturday to pull down dangerous branches and haul away giant trees that endangered pedestrians, motorists and power lines.

Municipal crews were out clearing debris and tree limbs.

Hydro crews worked for more than 12 hours in some locales to restore service.

Hats off to these men and women. It is comforting to know that in a real emergency, these people will be standing at the ready.



MEMORIES.

Opera the best replacement for photo radar

Now that photo radar has gone the way of the tea dance and the hula hoop, let's hear it for parked cars and ski racks.

Few things are more effective at deterring speeding drivers than a tantalizing glimpse of white metal, semi-submerged behind a hedgerow on a country road, which, once you have burned major rubber executing a pretty impressive set of skid marks, turns out not to be a police car after all.

Instead it transpires you have been caught out in a criminal act by a clapped-out Escort with one of those day-glo pink For Sale signs Scotch-taped to the windshield. It's a seasonal deterrent, on account of our glorious, rust-producing winters, but fortunately for the forces of law and order, it has its foul-weather counterpart in the ski rack.

Starting around the middle of December, police cruisers appear to be all over the

highways like a rash. This is because ski racks on white cars look uncannily like roof lights on a police vehicle, especially when viewed from a guilty speeder's rear view mirror (or so my friends tell me).

Of course, the one time you throw caution to the winds and put your foot down, you get the one in a hundred that is, in fact, a police cruiser. In my case, however, although I was once photographed during photo radar's brief reign, I have only actually been booked for speeding once.

I was on my way to a business function Mr. Wallethead and I were obliged to attend; if

he wanted to go on providing the family with sustenance, which involved being subjected to an evening of operatic arias at Roy Thomson Hall.

It was an event I was looking forward to eagerly, because the sooner it arrived, the sooner it would be over.

Perhaps it was reluctance on my part to subject myself to the piercing noises I associate with female opera singers, but I was late leaving and in something of a hurry as I exited the Don Valley.

There, waiting to greet me as I negotiated the ramp, was my friendly OPP officer.

"Do you know what speed you were doing?" he inquired politely. "More than I should have been?" I hazarded, not having the foggiest idea.

Then he asked for my licence. In all the years I'd been driving, I'd never got into the

car without my licence, until that day, when I'd switched purses and left my wallet in the one with the frayed edges and moth-eaten handles.

I had to sit through 10 minutes of agony while he ascertained whether I was an escaped drug dealer from Colombia or, as I claimed, an innocent matron from beyond the tree line.

By the time he'd cleared me of any known wrongdoing, I was seriously flustered and \$18 worse off.

I arrived at my destination late enough to cause a disturbance among the opera buffs, but not late enough, alas, to escape the vocal pyrotechnics of a statuesque soprano with an ear-shattering repertoire.

Forget photo radar, just sentence speeding drivers to a mandatory night at the opera. Trust me, it's the ultimate deterrent.

KATE'S CORNER featuring a photo of Kate Gilderale. The text includes her name and a small bio.

Advertisement for 'Connections' featuring a photo of a woman and the text 'A dating column for today's successful singles'.

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