



Historically Speaking

VOLUME 3

WINTER 2024

NO. 1

ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY AND POWER PROJECT CELEBRATES 65 YEARS HOW IT CHANGED WADDINGTON

70 years ago, Waddington became part of a billion dollar project that lasted 5 years and ultimately changed its shoreline forever. Many stories would be written by newspaper reporters covering the events that were taking place along the 28-mile stretch of riverfront that resulted in the formation of Lake St. Lawrence when all was said and done. In order to bring our newsletters up to date, the next three issues of the quarterly will be dedicated to this time of change in Waddington in preparation for the "Celebration of History" in October which will focus on this era. We feel first-hand information written during this time is the best way to tell the story. We apologize for our tardiness in delivering these newsletters and promise to do better in the future.

We are starting with a 3-part series written by William E. Pearson, Watertown Daily Times reporter in May 1954 that explains the prospective impact of the St. Lawrence Seaway and power project on the village and town of Waddington.

WADDINGTON WILL UNDERGO BIG CHANGES FROM SEAWAY

Waddington, May 28 - Waddington is more hopeful than confident that the St. Lawrence seaway will bring it great things.

Even before a shovelful of earth has been turned for the \$705,000,000 navigation improvement and power development program, not a few of its 819 residents are already nostalgic for "the old days."

"I kinda like to see the river stay as it is," comments 72-year-old (he'll be 73 Memorial Day) Elton Jardine.

But the St. Lawrence is not going to "stay as it is" and at no community on the American side will the changes be more apparent, or have greater impact, than in this village.

No one here can foretell exactly what the "new" Waddington will be like, but neither does anyone doubt that it will be different physically and perhaps otherwise. In any event, this is the only community of the American side where there will be substantial inundation as a result of the backup from the Long Sault dam and the Barnhart island powerhouses.

Waddington is situated at the approximate mid-point of the 40-mile-long international rapids section, roughly half way between Ogdensburg on the west and Massena on the east.

At the western extremity of the town of Waddington (population 1,745) is Point Rockaway, which is the site of the American anchor of the project's Iroquois control dam. Twenty miles eastward is Barnhart island, where the big Long Sault dam and the world's longest powerhouse are scheduled to be built.

Waddington thus is "ground center" of the impact area and, in the case of some individuals anyway, is already referring to itself as "Seaway Village." It resents it, incidentally, that Ogdensburg and Massena have "hogged" the seaway publicity.

Feelings about the project here are mixed. Generally, the older people are not particularly happy about the prospective changes — even though they acknowledge to a



man that "we've been waiting for it for 50 years." The younger residents, by and large, welcome what they think will be opportunity.

But no one is certain. Always there are "ifs" and "buts" in Main Street conversations related to the seaway.

Mayor Dale A. Harper sees it this way: "There will be a vast change. We live in hopes that it will be for the best."

What changes will take place in Waddington?

Once again, no one knows precisely but the "guestimate" of Main street is that, because of flooding, the village will lose:

1. Either all or a substantial part of the north side of St. Lawrence avenue, the main east-west artery on which there are a half dozen business places and a score of residences.

2. The plant of the Waddington Milk company, which, employing 50, is the community's industrial mainstay.

3. The terminal and perhaps two miles of the 20-mile right-of-way of the Norwood & St. Lawrence railroad, the wood-hauling line of the St. Regis Paper company.

4. The 146-year-old Ogden mansion on Ogden island and 200 of the 800 acres of the island. (The island, owned by the Crapser and Howard family, is 3 1/2 miles long and a mile wide. It will not be entirely engulfed but rather will become four or five small islands.

Continued on next page

WADDINGTON WILL UNDERGO CHANGES... CONTINUED

5. More than \$100,000 of the total village assessed valuation of \$475,000.

6. The water and sewer systems, at least in part.

As distinguished from the village, the town of Waddington, which includes the village, figures to give up:

1 From 27 to 30 percent of its area, embracing what Supervisor Joel M. Howard says is as good farm land as there is in northern New York.

2 From 40 percent of the total town assessment of \$1,500,000.

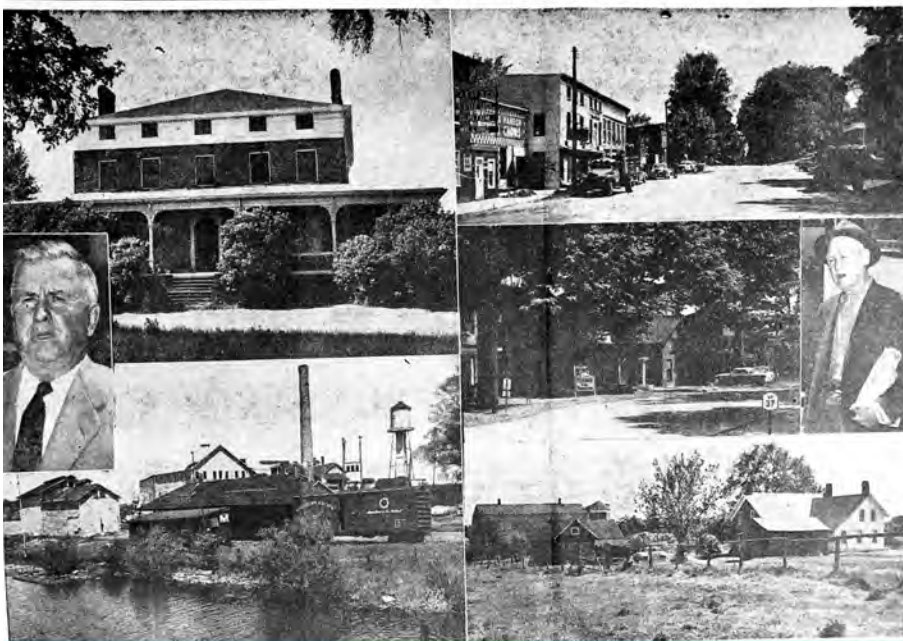
For these sacrifices, what do the village and the town figure to get in return?

The answer to this question is even more speculative than that on the estimate of loss. There is the promise of new industry -- such as a Solvay Process plant on a 183-acre tract which Allied Chemical & Dye corporation has acquired west of here. But no work to this end has been done, and there are no plans for any immediate action.

There is also the likelihood that the New York Power authority will reimburse the owners of land taken as a result of the project's construction. This land is said to include everything below elevation 249 feet above mean sea level.

Presumably the recompense will be fair, but the authority as yet has talked terms with no one, as nearly as can be found out here. When it starts to, it will find a populace willing to cooperate in speeding the project on its way but at the same time averse to being pushed around. (Next: Some Specific Problems)

WATERTOWN DAILY TIMES.



"These are photographs taken at Waddington, which is the only community on the American side which will be substantially affected by flooding as a result of the St. Lawrence Seaway and hydroelectric power project.

At the upper left is the Ogden mansion on Crapser's Island, built in 1808 and due to be raised because of inundation. At the upper right is a view of St. Lawrence Avenue, the main east-west artery. The business places and residences on the north side (left) are likely to be flooded out. At the lower left is the Saint Regis Paper Company's Norwood & St. Lawrence Railroad terminal and in the background, the Waddington Milk Plant, both scheduled to go.

At the middle right are some of the St. Lawrence Avenue residences which reportedly are doomed and at the bottom right is the Porteous farm on Crapser's Island, which will also will be washed out. The inserts are of Mayor Dale A. Harper, left, who hopes the vast changes will be for the best, and of Elton Jardine, 72, a fishing guide who would just as soon see the St. Lawrence "stay as it is."

RIVER WORK TO CAUSE CROWDING AT SCHOOL, VILLAGE WATER CRISIS

Waddington Officials Want More Accurate Information on Seaway Program to Make Plans

Waddington, May 29 -- School conditions in Waddington, already bad, will worsen with the start of construction of the St. Lawrence seaway and power project.

This is the considered opinion of Dallas K. Martin, principal of the Waddington Union Free School and of James Desmond, clerk of the board of education as well as postmaster.

The present school building is 25 years old and is not adequate to house the current enrollment of 250 students. With the influx of seaway workers and their families, the pressure will burst the system.

Mr. Martin, now in his first year as principal here, looks at it this way:

"If 1,500 people move into the Waddington vicinity and one-third of them have families, it will mean that from 1,000 to 1,400 children will have to be absorbed by the schools of the area.

"How many will hit us, we don't know, but if we get no more than our fair share, our situation -- without a building program -- would still be impossible."

And such a building program seems equally out of the question for two reasons:

1. Prospective loss of assessed valuation from flooding substantially reduces the tax base, and
2. Centralization with special state aid for construction is forbidden to Waddington under the Rupp-Coudert master plan. (There is no sentiment here for joining an existing central district such as nearby Madrid's. Waddington wants to maintain its school district identity.

The one ray of immediate hope is that the New York Power authority, recognizing an emergency case, might subsidize Waddington school expansion. Thus Waddington waits impatiently for the authority to make known its plans. Continued on next page

RIVER WORK... CONTINUED

A long-term prospect is that new industry will be attracted to Waddington by the power and transportation advantages of the St. Lawrence projects and that these will enlarge the realty tax possibilities.

Waddington, incidentally, has the only union free elementary and secondary system which will be affected by the influx. Massena and Ogdensburg have village and city superintendencies; Madrid and Lisbon are central schools, and Louisville has common districts. This leaves only Louisville as a possibility for absorption into a Waddington central district, were the latter a likelihood.

Mr. Desmond is thoroughly in accord with the views of Mr. Martin, although he believes the seaway-power project value to support a Waddington central school.

Other than for the problems it creates with respect to education, Mr. Desmond is very much for the St. Lawrence development. Mr. Martin is not against it, but he wishes it had not come so precipitately. He would like to have had more than a year as principal to prepare for it.

Aside from the loss of tax base and the school situation it will create, what other municipal problems does the seaway-power project hold for Waddington?

One is that its municipal water supply will be seriously affected. Another is that its sewer system will have to be substantially changed. Where will the money come from? Again, Waddington looks to the Power Authority.

"They're the cause of it; they ought to pay for it," says Mayor Dale A. Harper.

Wells are the source of the water supply, and they are situated in the ravine on the eastern side of the village. This point is well below elevation 242 feet above sea level, the maximum flow line of the lake to be created by the downstream Long Sault dam and Barnhart island powerhouses.

Similarly, the sewers in St. Lawrence avenue, the main east-west artery of the village, are below flood level.

Wallave McCaffrey, who operates a tavern on the south side of St. Lawrence Avenue, thinks much of the damage presumably to be sustained by Waddington from flooding could be averted. His preventive is a seawall or extensive diking north of St. Lawrence Avenue. He doubts it would cost much more than the indemnification figure.

Carlton B. Olds, a retired district superintendent of schools and one of the community's most respected citizens, would welcome some accurate information on what Waddington may expect and, therefore, prepare to counter.

"To date," he says, "most of our information is no more than what someone thinks. The result is that some of us are pessimistic and some optimistic."

Not a few Waddingtonians are critical of the Power authority on this score.

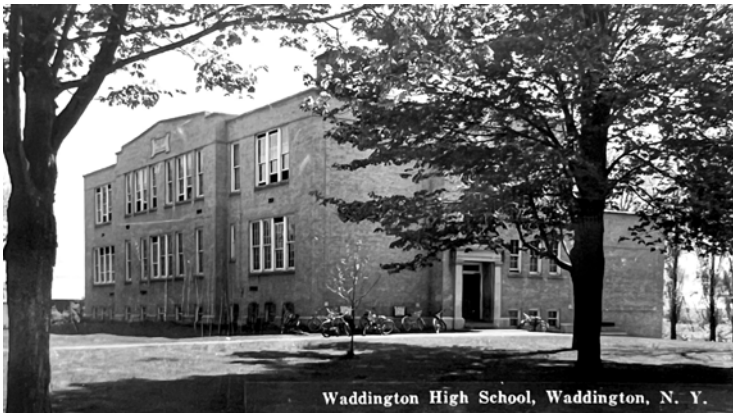
"Why can't they (the authority) do the kind of a public information job that Ontario Hydro is doing on the other side?" they inquire.

And more specifically, they ask why authority Chairman Robert Moses continues to sit on the ancillary works recommendations prepared by the Watertown architectural firm of Sargent, Webster, Crenshaw & Folley.

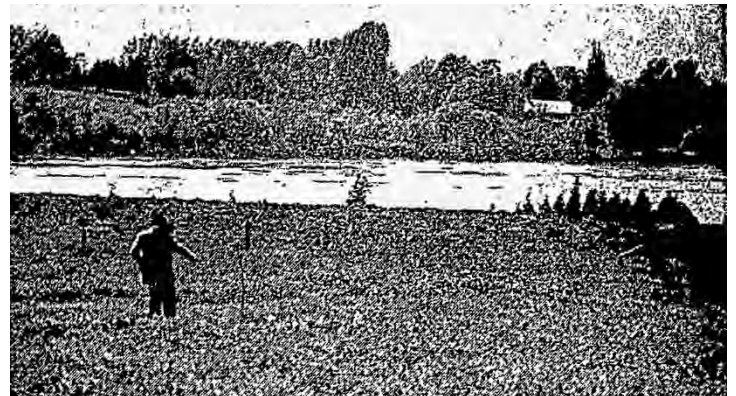
The architectural firm report supposedly contains suggestions for lessening the shock of \$705,000,000 seaway and power projects on such communities such as this.

Waddington village and Waddington town have their planning boards and they are doing what they can in the way of drafting ordinances and zoning restrictions on trailer camps and other potential eyesores. But neither has the resources to go farther than that.

Next: Conclusion



WADDINGTON SCHOOL -- This is the Waddington Union Free district school building. Its classrooms are already bulging with enrollment. Seaway workers and families could create a school emergency.



IROQUOIS DAM SITE -- This is the site of the Iroquois dam of the St. Lawrence power project. At Point Rockaway, the western edge of the town of Waddington, this is one of the narrowest crossings of the entire St. Lawrence river. The figure in distance points to stake set by engineers to make the site.

SEAWAY PROSPERITY TO HAVE MANY SIDES FOR NEW WADDINGTON

Residents Will Welcome Area Payroll Increase, New Industry, Resort Status on "Lake".

Herewith is presented the final installment of a series on the prospective impact of the St. Lawrence seaway and power project on the village and town of Waddington, St. Lawrence county.

Waddington, June 1 -- For all the apparent problems it will bring to Waddington, the seaway-power project is obviously not without presumed advantages for this village.

Situated as it is in the double-impact area - between the Iroquois dam upstream and the Long Sault dam and Barnhart island powerhouses downstream - Waddington figures to reflect the employment boom of each.

And Waddington merchants, or at least those whose premises are above the flood line, are almost certain to cash in on the business resulting from increased payroll during the 5-7 year construction period.

For that period, too, there is the prospect of lucrative creative endeavor. Opportunity exists for private enterprise housing. In fact, Harold House, manager of the Waddington Milk plant which will be inundated, has made some overtures in this direction but thus far without success because of water and sewer difficulties.

Secondly, there is the possibility that with the seaway and power projects a fact, new industry will settle here. The case of Allied Chemical & Dye, which has acquired a plant site just west of Waddington, seems to be in point.

One the industrial side, the St. Regis Paper company appears to be advantageously situated.

Its Norwood and St. Lawrence railroad is the only rail carrier that comes in here and, considering the tonnage of material and machinery to be moved, this facility almost certainly will find utilization.

To be sure, the right-of-way in Waddington village will have to be relocated eventually because of flooding, and perhaps the rails to the junction point with the New York Central and Rutland railroads at Norwood - 20 miles away - will have to be strengthened.

Still the fact remains that the Norwood & St. Lawrence, now used principally for pulpwood hauling, appears to be very much an asset.

And the St. Regis docks and lands, at the east side of the village, would seem to have inestimable value for industrial plant development.

Except for the railroad right-of-way which skirts the riverfront at this point, the land is high-bluffed. This means that most of it will survive the washout. The result will be extensive acreage fronting on deep water and well within the bus-bar rate of St. Lawrence-developed power.

St. Regis has no known plans for developing the site, but it certainly cannot escape company officials that the potential is there.

Over and above the construction, employment and industrial development possibilities, a further advantage seems likely to accrue to Waddington from the \$705,000,000 power and seaway projects. This is the vacation realm.

When the water level of the St. Lawrence is raised 80 feet at Barnhart Island, the back-up will result in the formation of a 30-mile-long lake. Waddington is the only existing American community of consequence that will have a "lake front."

Ogdensburg will be just above the "lake" and Massena (not on the St. Lawrence River) will be to the south and east of it.

Waddington is already tourist-conscious, considering itself to be principally a summer resort village. It recounts with pride it was once the summer home of Actor Macklyn Arbuckle and of the Corriganes of steel fame.

With the "lake" and with the dam and powerhouses tourist attractions in themselves, Waddingtonians will not overlook this bet. Thaddeus Zagrobelny, a World War II and Korean war veteran, has already developed a sizeable tourist accommodations business. His present property will be washed out, but his fellow townsmen think he'll be spurred on to bigger achievements.

William J. Heverly owns a super-market on Waddington's Main street. He also does some river guiding for fishing parties.

Prone to look at the advantages rather than the disadvantages, Mr. Heverly expects Waddington to boom.

He is all for erecting signs at the corporation lines describing Waddington as the "Seaway Village." He is also expanding facilities at his super-market to take care of the increased business he expects.

As for fishing, here is Mr. Heverly's view:

"It's good now, but it will be better. Right now we are pretty much limited to bass, pike, and muscallonge; the sturgeon have been fished out. When they change the water level, there will be more kinds of fish, maybe lake trout, for instance. Changes will come but I think they will be for the better."

Austin Martin could be bitter about the pending changes because the south anchor of the Iroquois dam and the seaway canal at the point are likely to take the farm he has worked so hard to develop.

But he is not; in truth, he is giving generously of his time and efforts to see that the village and town benefit as much as possible from the St. Lawrence projects. He serves as chairman of the town planning commission.

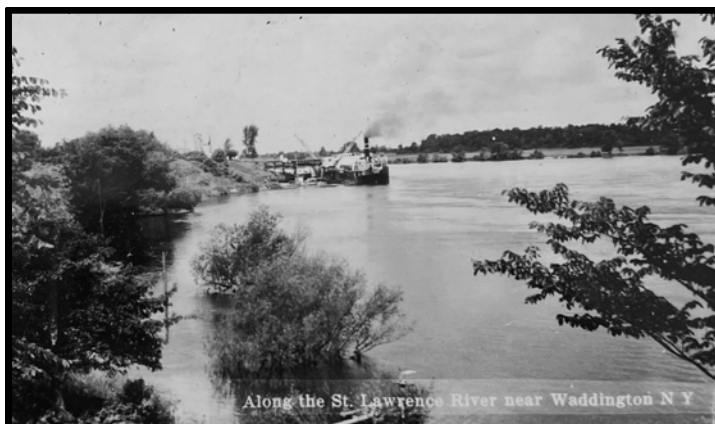
But whether the optimists or the pessimists are in the majority as to what the seaway power projects spells for Waddington, the development is evidently inescapable.

It is as Frank L. Oshier, barber-philosopher, describes it:

"We've been talking about it for 50 years. This time we can't dodge it."

(The End)

WADDINGTON: PRE-SEAWAY PHOTOS... "THOSE WERE THE DAYS"



MORE PRE-SEAWAY PHOTOS OF WADDINGTON



Main-Street, Waddington



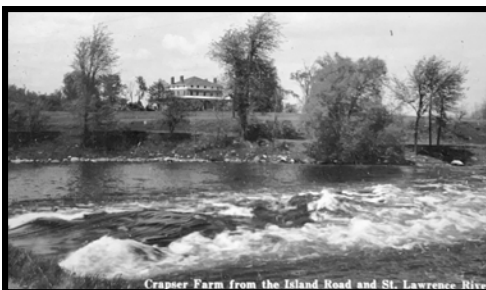
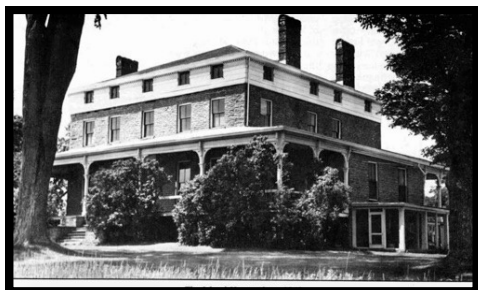
MAIN ST. LOOKING SOUTH
WADDINGTON, N. Y.



WADDINGTON MILK CO.
WADDINGTON, N. Y.



WADDINGTON FERRY
WADDINGTON, N. Y.



Crupper Farm from the Island Road and St. Lawrence River



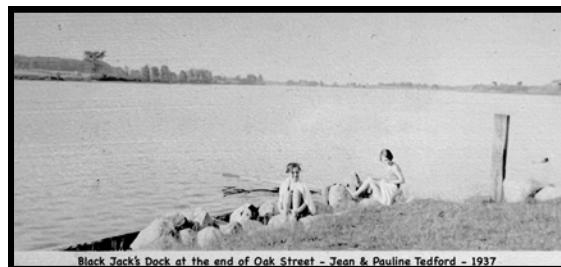
Along the St. Lawrence River near Waddington N. Y.



LITTLE SUGAR BROOK
NEAR COLLESCREEK
WADDINGTON, N. Y.



COLLESCREEK
WADDINGTON, N. Y.



Black Jack's Dock at the end of Oak Street - Jean & Pauline Tedford - 1937

"Historically Speaking" is our way of sharing information about Waddington's rich history with those who have supported us with annual memberships. In addition to quarterly newsletters members also receive early notice of upcoming events and an invitation to our Celebration of History in October.

WHA's MISSION: *"To be the caretakers of our community's history for present and future generations"*

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WHA Committee Members and
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VanPatten, Ashlee Dumas, Tracey
Putney, Jean Denison, Mary
Loomis, April Sharlow

WHA Meetings: 4th Tuesdays
6:30 PM - Town Hall Museum
on Main Street
All are welcome

UPCOMING WHA EVENTS



**HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION'S
HARMONY & HISTORY
CONCERT SERIES**

6:30-8:00 PM
St. Paul's Village Venue on
Lincoln Ave in Waddington

Concerts are Free to the Public
Donations accepted for future concerts



FIREFLY
Friday
October 11

FIREFLY is a four-piece folk/pop cover band from Potsdam. The band consists of Jennifer Kessler (vocals/violin), Mark Seymour (percussion), Ryan Deuel (bass/guitar) and Matt Bullwinkel (keys). The group is inspired by Friday night fire sitting and artists like Madison Cunningham, Rufus Wainwright and Bonnie Raitt.

"The Concert Series is dedicated to the memory of Kathy Hubbard, former MWCS music teacher"

This project is made possible with funds from the Statewide Community Regrants Program, a regrant program of the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature and administered by the St. Lawrence County Arts Council.



**IT'S ANOTHER
TRIVIA
NIGHT
FUNDRAISER**

**BENEFIT OF THE
WADDINGTON
HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION**

**FRIDAY
Oct. 11**
AMERICAN LEGION
FENTON STREET
WADDINGTON

**\$50
PER TEAM
UP TO SIX
MEMBERS**
LIMITED TO
15 TEAMS

**PRIZES -
CASH BAR AVAILABLE**
6:30 PM - REGISTRATION OPENS
7:30 PM - TRIVIA STARTS

Questions or Further Information:
info@waddingtonhistory.com

WADDINGTON
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
PO BOX 221
WADDINGTON, NY 13694

POSTAGE

1 CENT

You are cordially invited to the Waddington Historical Association's
CELEBRATION OF HISTORY 2024
on **SUNDAY, October 20th** from **2:00-4:00 PM**
in the **Old Town Hall on Main Street.**

Please join us as we revisit a piece of history that started 70 years ago
and changed the landscape of Waddington forever.

Our Guest Speaker, Jim Brownell, is a wealth of information on the changes that
occurred across from us on the Canadian side and the villages that were lost to the
St. Lawrence Seaway and Power Project completed in 1959.

This free event is open to the public. Please bring your friends.

There will be exhibits of Waddington memorabilia to look over and reminence.

The event will be live-streamed on our Facebook page:

Waddington Museum and Historical Association

Waddington Historical Association's
ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF HISTORY

Presents

THE LOST VILLAGES REVISITED

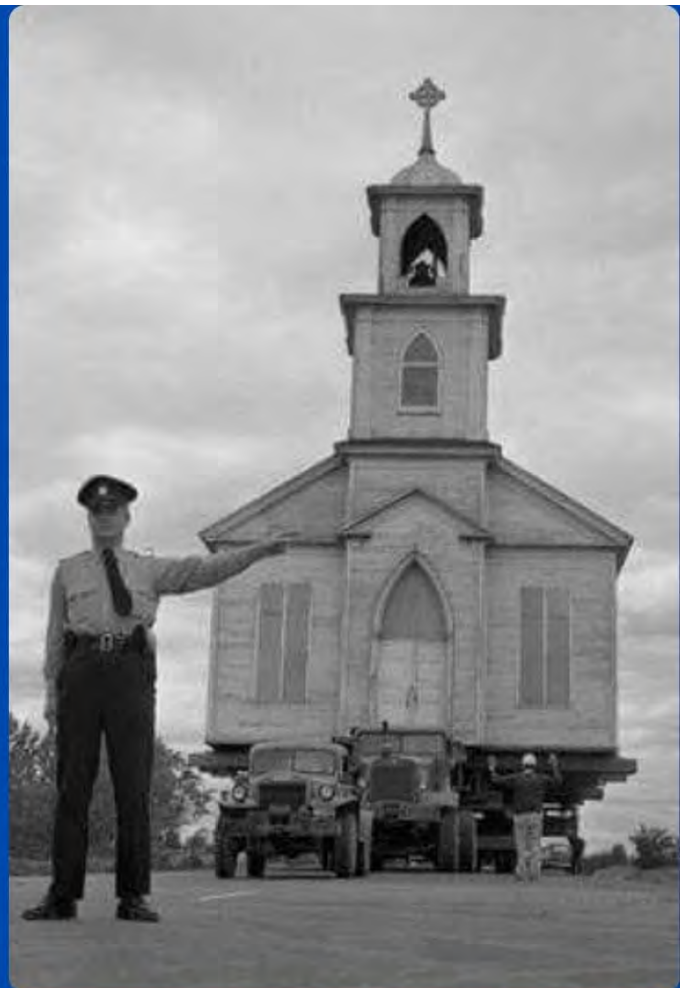
SUNDAY - OCTOBER 20

2:00 - 4:00 PM

WADDINGTON TOWN HALL

*Jim Brownell, author of
"Through the Lands of the Lost Villages"
will share his presentation featuring
archival images of the Canadian
villages and hamlets that stood in
the way of the Hydro and Seaway
projects of the 1950s.*

EVENT IS FREE TO THE PUBLIC



Event will also include an exhibit showcasing
"How the Seaway Changed Waddington"

Event will be livestreamed on the
Waddington Museum and Historical
Association's Facebook Page

