

**Thursday, 20 May 2004**

The Attawapiskat River is flooding -- and rising -- and getting crazy. The Village started evacuation yesterday. The rising water has already cut off access to the dump.

There still is ice up-river yet to break up. And, in addition to all of that, yesterday brought rain and strong winds. Part of the danger in this kind of situation is that things can happen so fast that even canoes at the ready are not enough. If the final flush that floods out the village is accompanied with sufficient ice, EVERYTHING (canoes included) goes. This happened in Peanuck (formerly Winisk) some years ago, and there was loss of life. It could easily happen, now, any day -- or any hour -- in Attawapiskat. In the old days, when situations like this developed in the spring, families would just load up the canoe and head for high ground in the bush -- somewhere inland. Now, of course, many families do not have the equipment (and/or possibly skills) to do that.

**Friday, 21 May 2004**

The CBC reports this morning that 800 people have been evacuated from Attawapiskat already. A special train will run from Moosonee to Cochrane today in order to bring some of the folks south. Moosonee already is over-crowded.

The big worry last night was that there were still too many people in the village -- if things got nasty quickly. Once the water gets high enough, the air strip gets flooded. When that happens, there are a lot fewer options.

**Saturday, 19 June 2004**

Yes, it's been about a month.... Attawapsikat is back together. The temperature early this evening (6:30 PM) is 75\* Fahrenheit. up to last week we were getting a frost now and then. Today, however, we have had some warmth. With a little luck, by next Sunday -- 27 June, Fathers' Day -- we'll be back in the Old Church. I, however, will be on vacation by then -- until the end of July.

Earlier this week we finally got word as to how much it might cost to restore -- rescue, in fact -- the Old Church.

The building is sinking into the mud. (We're like Venice in more ways than one.) The only way to really stop the sinking -- for more than ten years -- is to put a concrete footing under the Church. That will cost. The first estimates of the cost are coming in at around \$800,000 -- which I think will turn out to be low. St. Thomas', itself, will probably have to raise about \$200,000; we have a good shot at grant money for the rest. We have some land to sell. After that it's brownies and moccasin sales and begging. But I think it just might be done. It definitely is worth the fight. It will be a fight; there are only about 100 of us Anglicans who remain consistently active on The Island. But the Old Church is precious -- to everyone.