

# Amherst Island BEACON



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Field of Dreams... Amherst Island Style: Skating on Stella Bay, off the Neilson Store dock, January 18, 2003. Alex Scott Jr. photo

## THIS ISSUE

- Ian Murray, Editor

Congratulations to us on our 300<sup>th</sup> Edition of the second coming of the Amherst Island Beacon.

The first run of the Beacon went from April 6, 1970 to October 15, 1971 and from November 4, 1971 to at least April 1972 in the Grindstone from Tamworth. There appear to be about 50 issues of the early Beacon.

The second run started in December 1, 1978, with the first 20 issues being semi-monthly. I was editor for a while and then Don Tubb took it over. I got the job back for Issue 280.

Jack and Madyn Kerr typed stencils and ran the Gestetner until October 1984 and then we at Headlands made the stencils, (first by typing and then by using a computer printer) and also ran the Gestetner. Then we decided to have the Beacon copied in Kingston after we did the layout. Tom Richmond now does the layout - since Issue 283 - and e-mails the result to KwikKopy in Kingston who do the printing and then deliver the copies to the ferry (unless some eager person picks it up).

The ferry service interruption a few weeks ago reminded me why I re-started

the Beacon. I had been working late on the mainland and got to the dock around 9 pm. No ferry appeared at the usual time and that was disconcerting. The only other person waiting was Denis McGinn and we sat together while we waited for the boat. At that time the nearest phone was in Bath and we didn't know who to call to find anything out and, in any case, we didn't want to risk missing the boat if it came while we were phoning. While waiting we discussed how ignorant we were about what was happening on the Island and I decided that it was time to get the Beacon going again. With help and support throughout the community, it is still a going concern.



Ice Truck in Stella Bay, many years ago. from Vera Hogeboom

Please remember to send written material to me and photos (with or without captions) to Tom Richmond. It helps a lot if we get submissions before the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month.

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Thanks to the number of submissions, this is the fullest Beacon ever.

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## NEIGHBOURHOOD

- Lyn Fleming

Get Well wishes this month to Dave Youell as he recovers from a recent car accident and Duncan Marshall who is in hospital.

Welcome to new Island residents Julie Kennedy and her family, who have recently moved to Emerald.

Congratulations to Peter and Pam McCormick, who celebrated their 25th anniversary at a party with family and friends. Congratulations also to Laurel Brady for placing 2nd in the local Canadian Legions Literary competition for Remembrance Day.

Jim Whitton recently visited friends in England. Zander and Nancy Dunn spent time in the Caribbean then travelled to B.C. to visit Zander's mom.

Dick and Puddy Dodds recently returned from Halifax, where they attended

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the World Jr. Hockey Championships. Puddy, I hear, got into the spirit, while rooting for Canada's team by painting her face, dressing in red and white and even dyeing her hair "flame red"! Too bad we don't have colour pictures in the Beacon. All the excitement and time spent in cold arenas caught up to her though as she returned with a cold, which then developed into pneumonia. Hope you are up and around soon Puddy. Dick has had surgery to fuse his right ankle, a problem that has bothered him since his foolish, hockey playing days. He will be on crutches for up to 3 months - Hope you're up and around in time for Spring and all the yard and garden work Dick!

The Frontenac II was laid up on a recent Sunday for the day, while repairs were made to the hull. Makes you wonder what was inspected while it was in for the 5 year inspection in the fall, doesn't it? We are hesitant to complain too loudly, as we are still happy to have the Frontenac II !!

AIMS sponsored the annual New Year's Eve Gala this year and enjoyed a sold out crowd.

## HUGH MELVILLE FILSON

- from the Filson Family

Born on Amherst Island October 28, 1921 - passed away at the Kingston General Hospital on December 28, 2002. His



parents Ernest and Clarice (Beaubien) Filson and his only brother Harris predeceased him.

Melville married Christena Wemp in 1944 and lived on the Island until 1973 when they moved to Kingston.

His wife Chris of 58 years, his son Hugh (Nancy), his daughter Sally Skene (Steve), three grandchildren, Tracey Filson (Graeme McDonald), Kerri

Ashurst (Scott) and Hughie Filson (Sandra); two great-grandchildren, Connor McDonald and Tanner Ashurst survive him. He is also survived by his nephew Glenn Filson (Sandra) and niece Lee Sudds (Clifford).

Cremation was followed by an afternoon and evening of visitation. A private family gathering was held at Glenwood Cemetery on Amherst Island the next afternoon where Mel and the ashes of his precious little dog Maggie were buried together.

Reverend Jim Mason (his nephew in law) conducted the service with his granddaughter Kerri Ashurst giving the eulogy.

[Staff: The Filsons farmed Lots 15 & 16 on the South Shore Road. Mr. Filson also worked on the Township road crew before moving off the Island.]

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## CARMAN ROSS McKEE

- Ian Murray

Carman McKee died at home on December 3, 2002, in his 72<sup>nd</sup> year. He is survived by his wife Shirley Lasher, his children Louise Crouse and Margo Cole, and his grandchild, Ross Cole. Brother of Robert, Ralph and Myrle McKee.

He was interred in Morven Cemetery.

Carman grew up on the family farm on the Second, where the Quinte Pasture office is now.

In the early 1960s, Jim Vanalstyne's grandfather Harold Vanalstyne hired on an Island crew to work in his construction busi-



Carman & Shirley McKee

ness. Carman McKee, Denis McGinn, Albert Henderson, Keith Miller and Stuart Miller crossed the channel in Carman's boat. The boat was a long narrow river boat with an in-board engine. The men rigged up a dock on James & Grace Eve's point - opposite where Hugh Filson lives now.

Carman worked in construction and wood-working all his life. Keith Miller says: "Carman was a good carpenter. A great man to work with. I can't say a bad thing about him."

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## LESLIE JOHN WEMP

- Ian Murray

Les Wemp, born June 5, 1915, died suddenly on December 30, 2002 at his home near Yarker. He was married to Laura McGinn, a sister of Keith and Kaye McGinn, for 60 years. Father of Sandra, Sharon, Betty, Fred & Jim. He also left 14 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren. Survived by his sisters, Gertrude McGinn and Lois Boutillier. Predeceased by his sisters, Mildred McGinnis and Mary MacCrimon, and by his brothers Edward, Fred, Henry and Daniel. He was interred at St. Luke's Cemetery, Camden East.

Before moving to the mainland, the Wemps farmed the land now owned by the Nut Island Shooting Club as well as the farm south of Emerald fronting on the Emerald 40' (Lot 12, Con 1). They would winter in Emerald and spend the summer at the west end of the Third.

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## MEMORIES OF MY DAD, PIET WITTIVEEN

- Syke Fleming

Dad was born in Holland on May 10<sup>th</sup>, 1904, the 3<sup>rd</sup> child of eight. He had 3 sisters and 4 brothers.

One of my earliest memories of our life in Holland, is with the beginning of World War 2, in May of 1940. As a 4 year old, standing in the front yard of our home, watching hundreds of German soldiers marching by with rifles on their backs. Some were on horseback, others riding on long wagons loaded down with machine guns and many just marching, looking ominous in their high boots and green uniforms. School during the war was many

times interrupted when groups of soldiers would decide to camp out in the classrooms for a day or two. Mother and Dad (Piet and Ytze Wittiveen) along with my brother and 2 sisters, lived on a small farm in the province of Friesland. Dad milked 8 or 10 cows and we had a few pigs and some chickens, so we were very fortunate and had enough to eat. Everything we produced was supposed to be sold and it mostly went to keeping the German army fed. Our milk went to a factory to make butter, but we never saw any of it. We had to buy a kind of spread, made out of "who knows what". We ate lots of potatoes and rolled oats as well as vegetables we grew. I remember one night waking up and finding Mother and Dad killing a pig. Everything had to be done in secret. We would smoke the pork and Mom would melt the fat and that was what we put on our potatoes. The last thing mother always told me before leaving for school was "if anyone asks where your father or brother are, tell them you don't know." One night, 2 soldiers came to the door, asking for milk. I can still see mother pouring the little she had, into their flasks.

We had a small radio and sometimes were able to find out some of what was happening. On a clear night, 100's of bombers and fighter planes would fill the night sky, headed for Germany and returning to England a few hours later, having bombed their targets.

It was a very happy time, when the war ended in May of 1945. I remember the Canadian soldiers giving us kids chewing gum - something we had never seen.

I recall Mother taking us to a big building with long tables just filled with all kinds of beautiful used clothing. All sent to the Dutch people from Canada and the U.S.

By that time life was a little better.

A year or so after the war was the first I remember Mother and Dad talking about immigrating to Canada. The immigration process was a long one. We needed to have all kinds of papers and character references and to have excellent health and able to work.

Finally, in June of 1948, we sailed for Canada. It was sad saying goodbye to family and friends, especially our grandparents. I often think of how much harder it

must have been for Mother and Dad. I shall never forget after the 3<sup>rd</sup> blast of the horn, the big boat being pulled away from shore by tug boats, headed for the Ocean. The trip from Rotterdam to Quebec City took 9 days. Most of us were pretty sea sick. After arriving in Quebec City, we boarded a train for Belleville, Ontario. Dad had an I.D. on his jacket identifying the Witteveen Family, and he had to find a man by the name of "Cummins", who was to meet us. This had all been arranged back in Holland. Dad worked on the Cummins farm in Corbyville for a little over a year, as did my brother. My older sister got a job at the Ontario School for the deaf in Belleville. I went to school and my younger sister was at home with Mother.

Those were very difficult times, especially



**The Wittiveen family immigration photo:  
L-R Willem, Swantze, Piet, Syke, Ytze, Yanke.**

for Mother, as she was home all day and was not able to speak the English language. As the Cummins family had 4 young children, we kids picked up English pretty quick and for me going to school was a big help. I had a wonderful teacher, who would spend hours with me to give me one on one help, after the other students had gone home.

In July of 1949, our family moved to Bath, I think Dad was offered \$50 more a month in pay. Dad's dream was to save enough money to have a little farm of his own. In April 1951 we moved to Amherst Island. We settled on the SouthShore for a time. Dad was able to borrow a few hundred dollars from the bank in Bath, which he used to buy 6 or 8 cows and 3 horses to break up the land. We planted several acres of tomatoes the next year, that we picked by hand, packed in crates and trucked to the canning factory in Bath, which I believe is now the Old Anchor Bar and Restaurant.

Our milk went to the Stella cheese factory in summer and in the winter we separated for cream that was picked up and taken to the Creamery in Kingston. Dad fed the skim milk to the pigs.

In 1951, Mother's nephew, Hans deHaan also immigrated from Holland and settled on the Island.

In the spring of 1954, Dad was able to buy his own farm, just east of the Village of Stella, Lot # 5. At that time the land belonged to the Department of Veterans Affairs and had been vacant for some time. Since Dad never drove, it was very handy for them to walk to the stores and the bank in the Village. Dad did purchase a Massey tractor that was used to put in hay and work the land. Together Mother and Dad milked 12-14 cows by hand. Dad did purchase a milking machine when Mother was no longer able to get down and help with the milking.

Dad retired from farming in the early 70's, when all the new regulations came about. He would have had to do extensive renovations to the old barn.

He continued to help on our farm when needed, and until a few years ago, drove up to our farm or the dump on his old tractor. Otherwise, he walked everywhere.

This time last year he was still out for daily walks, although not around the Foot of the Island and the South

Shore as he used to.

Mother passed away in the summer of 1989, after suffering for years with rheumatoid arthritis. In 1990, Dad and I and my sisters went back to Holland (my first trip back). Dad was back 5 times.

Dad lived alone and was very able to care for himself for many years. He would visit his children, but was always ready to go home before we thought he should. He loved his home and we had many happy reunions there over the years.

On May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2002, just days before his 98<sup>th</sup> birthday, Dad took sick and had to be hospitalized. He never returned to his beloved Island home. Dad passed away on December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2002 at the Lenadco Long Term Care Facility in Napanee, at the age of 98.



## JANET'S JOTTINGS

- Janet Scott

A Valentine in the Snow



The dusk has fallen soft and low  
On we mortals here below  
And soon beneath the window hear  
The sharp chip, chip of a Cardinal clear.

Early morning or late at night  
Our beautiful Cardinal is out of sight  
Hiding in shrubs the fence along  
He only appears when the light is gone.

But now February's here and see  
Out by the feeder in the lee  
Our brilliant Cardinal puts on a show  
A glowing Valentine against the snow.

One hundred years ago you would not have seen Cardinals on Amherst Island. They were a non-migratory bird of the woodlands, gardens and swamps along the eastern coast of the United States. During the last century they began to push their northern limit north and the first Cardinal nesting reported in Ontario was at Pelee in 1901 with subsequent nestings in Chatham in 1909, London in 1915 and Toronto in 1922. The first report of a Cardinal in Kingston was on Collingwood St. at a feeder in 1951.

They have continued to adapt and have been reported on every Christmas Count in the Kingston area since 1964. The spread of ornamental shrubs, the increase in feeding stations and the creation of edge habitat as forests were cleared has probably allowed their expansion into our area. I saw my first Cardinal nest in the early '80s in an area known as Clark's woods just west of my home in Henderson Place. (This wonderful area had nesting Great Horned Owls, Screech Owls and Barred Owls as well as Pileated Woodpeckers. Now it is a housing development around the Quarry near No Frills.)

We discovered a male Cardinal feeding a young one still in the nest, the ugliest baby you could ever imagine. It was olive green and brown with very few feathers and a kind of brush cut effect where the crest would eventually be. I wondered if a cuckoo had left a foster child but no, this ugly chick belonged to Mr. Elegance, The Cardinal. We found mother on a second

nest nearby sitting on eggs while father raised nestling number 1. She was so well hidden that only her red beak would sometimes show above the nest in a Hawthorne thicket.

The Cardinals will answer if you can whistle their high, clear purty, purty, purty and will come out to challenge what they perceive to be an interloper on their territory. Alex and Debbie had one in the village that insisted on fighting its image in their garage window.

Mother is duller with a bright red beak and the juvenile is dark with red tones and a dark beak.

Ann Marie Hitchins used to have a regular nester out her way and Leslie Gavlas and Shirley Miller have reported them at their feeders over the years. I have been blessed with three all winter at my feeder and until the recent snows they only appeared early morning or as the day faded but now they come on the sunniest days as soon as the feeder is replenished. Their red feathers absolutely glow against the snow. There are two males, one slightly darker than the dominant male so I assume it's a young one and a female as well. What a wonderful gift. A Valentine in the Snow. Happy Valentine's Day Good Birding



**Amherst Island Public School**

- Lyn Fleming

Everyone has come back from the Christmas break rested and ready to go, and it's a good thing, as the year is off to a busy start. On top of all the regular curriculum and homework, the students and staff are busy with a variety of extra curricular activities as well.



Ciara digging through

TR



First time on bob-skates: Rachel Scott with Whitney Fleming & Karen J. Fleming

Alex Scott Jr

-Students in grades 2, 4 and 5 took part in a Board-wide Writing Assessment earlier this month, and both teachers will spend a day at the Board office later this month marking assessments.

- Grade 8 students have had a presentation from an NDSS representative and attended Grade 8 day at ESS, as they make their decisions regarding high school selections.

- Students in both Primary and Senior Classes have begun noon hour intramurals, noon hour Chess Club has begun, and senior class students are working on basketball skills as well as continuing to train for track and field with Vicki Keith-Monro and John Monro.

- On February 12th, students will hold a Science Technology Fair, followed by a math information hour for students and their parents.

- Work has begun on this year's spring musical - "The Canada Goose".

Please mark April 16th on your calendar for an enjoyable evening of great acting and singing by the very talented students at A.I.P.S.

- We are very proud of grade 8 student Laurel Brady, who won 2nd place (out of more than 100 entries) in the area Canadian Legion's Remembrance Day literary competition in the fall. Representatives from the Bath Legion, came to the school and presented Laurel with a cheque.

- Dairy Day was held on Wed. January 22nd, to celebrate AIPS's 10th anniversary of participation in the school lunch milk program. A variety of dairy related activities were held throughout the day; students all dressed in black and white; Island dairy farmer Adam Miller did a presentation and answered questions and the

county Dairy Educator also did a presentation and handed out milk and pencil cases to students. It was a fun and informative day!



The first day of school for 2003 also saw a significant jump in school enrolment for AIPS. Rachel Scott (daughter of Alex and Debbie) started JK and Lisa, Sean and Kimberly Kennedy (gr.'s 5, 3 and 1) moved to the Island over the holidays and started classes as well. Our enrolment is now up to 35, with 6 in JK/SK; 10 in gr.'s 1-3 and 19 in gr.'s 4-8.

ISLE has begun the Wednesday Hot Lunch program again this winter, as well as Hot Dog Mondays for the students. ISLE has planned the menus and bought the food, but is always looking for volunteers to prepare and serve the Wednesday lunch. If you are interested, please call Lyn at the school (389-5945) or Sandra Reid (389-4484).

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## AIMS

The Amherst Island

Men's Society

- John Kuti



Meeting January 11th, 2003.

Chairman: David Hieatt .

Committee reports:

Jim Whitton reported the figures for the general fund as well as the people fund. He also reported that 21 memberships were renewed for the year.

The New Year's Dance Committee: Hugh Jenney gave the report of the New Year's Eve dinner and dance saying 150 people were in paid attendance with another 10 receiving a free dinner. He reported that there were a number of people who came after the dinner without tickets and there was no consensus on how to respond to the issue in further years. Hugh thanked everyone involved in making the event so successful and profitable. He thanked the decorating committee and those people involved in the food preparation. John Kuti asked to personally thank those people who helped him with food preparation as well as with the extensive responsibility for the cleanup involved after the



*There must be a LOT of snow, because Keith Miller has his 32 year-old vintage SNOWCRUISER in service.*

*Keith says it was his first snowmobile, and the first day he owned it (in the winter of 1971) he crossed over to Millhaven SEVEN TIMES.*

*On each trip, he went all the way from the farm on the Third Concession towing a sled containing FOUR eighty-pound cans of milk.*

*(picture and story by Adam Miller)*

dinner.

Hugh pointed out that there had been some rumour that children were not allowed to the dinner / dance because of the liquor license, but he said that this was not the case, children were welcomed, even though few in attendance. The liquor control board reassured him that such a banquet license was the same as one for a wedding celebration where children were allowed to be present, so long as they were not drinking.

Neil Johnson reported that 67 percent of the Windows CD's had been sold and they were into the third box of 100. He reported that Clayton McEwen had purchased 20 in order to promote the Township.

The Nielson Store Committee:

David Brady spoke and thanked Gian Frontini for preparing the addendum to the report for the Trillium grant. He said the report was exactly what they were looking for as a supplement to our grant application. He reported that he had also forwarded a copy to the Heritage Fund grant committee. He described how the report had broken down the prospective events and visitors of the Nielson Store Museum and Cultural Centre into graphs. The different activities that were planned for the facility were made into charts of the number of visitors expected to use the facility from each activity throughout the year. He gave the example of the day camp with the number of students visiting the museum and Island at different times of the year. He also spoke about the studio and café which

would be a part of the Cultural Centre in the program he was trying to produce for television that would use the studio facilities and pay rent to the organization. He described how his program would be devoted one-third to rural life, one-third to interviews, and one-third to agricultural issues. There was some discussion about what to do before the grant applications were approved. It was pointed out that there was enough money in the residual fund to do things like temporary roof repair to stop any small leaks. This issue was left to the engineering committee for further decisions. There was some discussion about how to accept and store donated artifacts for the museum. Heated storage was available in the building now, but it was decided that it would interfere with any construction that might begin in the spring. Renting heated storage was suggested and the idea would be explored. Mark Raymond also pointed out that there should be a policy or a booklet about what procedures for donations to the museum.... Transport Committee reported no requests Personal Care Committee reported no requests. Assistance Committee reported three calls.

Member Speaks:

John Munro said he was born on the fifteenth of February 1951 in Newmarket "at 2 ½ years of age." He said his mother



told him that he never stopped moving from the moment that he entered the world. He said that by the time he was a toddler they had to put an eight foot fence around the entire backyard to keep him from disappearing. By the time he was five, the fence could not hold him and he would take a streetcar to every part of the city. He said that today he probably would

have been called a hyperactive child, but there were different words for it then. He spoke about moving a number of times in Toronto and how he became a juvenile delinquent when he was five years old when his grandmother was out of strawberry jam and he was sent into the store. He found the jam and brought it to his grandmother, although he missed the small detail of paying for it. He realized that he was somehow exempt from this monetary detail and so he proceeded to use the local drugstore for his personal supplies of treats. This came to an abrupt end when the pharmacist presented his mother with a bill for every item that he had taken. He moved yet again. John told the story of how, at 5, he was fascinated by the local traffic policeman directing traffic in the middle of the street and how he would stand on the sidewalk and mimic every gesture. He said his hyperactivity did not improve when he went to school. He said he had trouble focussing his attention. He said watching 60 minutes would take him an hour and a half. He said that he had trouble in school because of his problem focussing his attention, until the day he saw a poster of a man on a motorcycle looking confident and proud in his uniform, and so he decided to join the Hell's Angels. This was a joke because the poster was a motorcycle policeman.

John join the Toronto police on July 15th 1969. He realized that if he was going to become a policeman he would have



***John Munro & Vicki Keith-Munro, our two newest recruits at Loyalist Township Emergency Services' A.I. Fire Station***

to learn to focus his attention and he did that so well that he stayed in the top 10 percent of his class for his entire training period. In 1976 he became a plain clothes detective. He told a number of stories in which he faced danger when arresting particular gang members. He said a number of



***Cheese Factory in the snow***

***DT Photo***

incidents and circumstances back then, if they had happened today, would surely have ended in his death. He told the story about establishing the presence of a gang member in a Jamaican gang house by phoning and asking for him using a Jamaican accent.

When the presence of the gang member was established on the phone John and his partner went to the house and arrested a man using the same accent as he had on the phone. John also worked on a particularly notorious case in Scarborough in the late 80's that gained quite a bit of attention.

John went on to describe how he and Vicki found Amherst Island when she searched the Internet looking for a place to retire. He described how they moved to the Island in April of 2000 and how they had been both been working with children with disabilities ever since. He told of having 20 students now on the swim team. He told of plans to try to open the pool at Beach Grove so the program could expand. He described his future plans for the summer in which he planned to swim Lakes Erie and Ontario both, 20 and 52 km tests of endurance. He hopes to raise \$72,000 for equipment for the swim team. Everyone expressed support and encouragement for his plans.

The chairman for February's meeting will be David Brady

The breakfast committee was John Munro, Neil Johnston and Michael Shaw Jim Whitton will speak.





# FLORENCE McCORMAC



- An Interview by  
Zander of DUNN INN

Florence (Brown) McCormac was born in Joyceville on April 15, 1911. She met her husband, Wilfred, an Islander, when he was working in the Joyceville area. They were married and came to Amherst Island in 1929.

They lived for several years in a farm below the Fishing Point on the South Shore. Her son, Franklin, was born there in 1933 but her daughter, Bernice, was born in Gananoque where Florence had gone to visit. Like most people the McCormacs grew most of their own vegetables but they seemed to grow more potatoes than anything else. Florence spent much of her time getting ready for winter - preserving, pickling, storing the produce of the garden.

From the South Shore the McCormacs came to live in what had been the United Church parsonage and is now Elsie Willard's home in Stella. From there they moved to Robert Glenn's house which is now where Doug Shurtcliffe and Helen Trotter live.

Because Wilfred didn't enjoy dancing they seldom went to any of the balls in the village.

Florence remembers a fruitless adventure when, at the beginning of a snow storm, she boarded the sleigh in which Bruce Caughey drove children to school. She was



on the way to visit with Wilfred's mother. Near Clifford Glenn's place, "The Gulf", on the hill, the sleigh over-turned.

After the sleigh was righted Florence sat up at the front with Bruce instead of at the back with the kids. The snow became so heavy Bruce had to stop the sleigh because he couldn't even see the heads of the horses. Florence had a brief visit with Wilfred's mother but on the way back the snow was again too thick to go on. Florence had to spend the night at the home of William McCormac. The next day William drove her home in his cutter. At Bray's corner a sheep on the side of the road startled the horse and Florence was

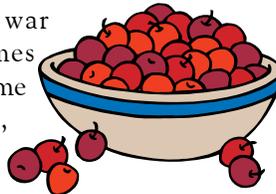
almost out on the road again. Florence says she might as well have stayed at home.

Wilfred, who farmed on a small piece of land, often did odd jobs to supplement the family income. One of his jobs was to tend the Glenwood Cemetery which involved, among other things, digging the graves. He often told about Ernest Wolfreys, who usually worked with him, being so sick on one occasion he remarked, "I wish I was digging my own grave."

Wilfred, for years, cut the grass at the cemetery with a push mower. It took him most of the day to cover the area. When he gave up the job the cemetery authority hired a younger person and purchased a power mower for him to use. "Of course," Florence says, "Wilfred always did everything the hard way."

Another way Wilfred made some extra money was to pick cranberries in the marsh. These he sold at the Hotel Dieu Hospital for 10 cents a quart.

Florence's most vivid memory of the war years was of James Eves returning home without his legs, which he had lost in action. She remembers, too, when grease on the stove in the Eves' home caught fire and of how James went into his burning home to rescue his legs from the flames.



Florence was there for the first Garden Party at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church - an annual event started by The Rev. R.K. Earls and some of The Miller girls. It was called a "Garden Party" because it was held on the lawn of the manse - except for the "Tea" which was held inside the manse. Jack Kerr and Maurice Hogeboom guarded the entrance to the Garden Party and made sure each person paid the 10 cents admission price. Florence helped at the fancy works table and often did the washing of dishes at the ice cream table. She, along with every other woman in the congregation, presented some baked goods for sale. On one occasion Florence made some buns which were a bit over-browned. When a

prospective buyer picked them up and sniffed them, Florence vowed, "You'll never smell my buns again." In spite of the mosquitoes everybody had a good time.

One story about Florence and the Garden Party is a classic. Florence had invited her sister, Ella Brown, to come to the Island to drive her to the Garden Party. After an enjoyable day the two of them, along with Reta Miller clutching a raspberry pie (made by Elsie Willard) in the back seat of the car, drove down to board the ferry. Ella, behind a car with a family in it, responded to the wave of a crew member to drive forward. The accelerator got stuck and Ella's car glanced off the family car in front, veered to the right and then went up and over the side into the water where it floated sedately for awhile until it began to sink. When Florence heard the children, in the car ahead, crying, and felt the car she was in slowly going down, she opened her door only to hear a voice say, "Shut the door." She promptly obeyed ... after her cane and white hat had escaped and floated away in the bay. The ferry crew rushed to their rescue, attached a line to the car and Ed McCormick pulled it onto terra firma in spite of the fact that Ella had put on the emergency brake. Ella ruined a pair of new shoes. Reta lost her raspberry pie and Florence waved goodbye to her hat and walking stick.

Some people remember that when two of her nephews went to help Reta Miller one of them - John Glenn - said, "Come, dear, we'll help you out of the car." She replied, "Don't call me 'Dear,' I'm your aunt!" The man in the car they had struck offered to take Florence, badly shaken by the experience, to the hospital along with his children who were still crying and possibly hurt. Florence accepted. After the hospital staff had pronounced them well the man drove Florence home. She offered to pay him for his kindness but warned him all her money was wet. When he declared he could not accept wet money, Florence presented him with a quart of berries she had purchased at the Garden Party as a token of her appreciation.

The Presbyterian Church also held Euchre parties in Victoria Hall and at the school. Big crowds thronged to those events - partly for the cards and partly for the wonderful "lunch" which was served after the games were over.

Another popular Presbyterian event was the annual Oyster Supper in the winter. What crowds!

Florence became a member of the Ladies' Aid of St. Paul's on the invitation of Nessie Welbanks. (This was the same Nessie Welbanks of whom somebody in the choir suggested, because she was so short, they could cut the cloth sideways to make her a gown and so get it for half price). Florence did not always agree with every decision the women of the group made, but she went along with the majority. She was, however, most impressed by the example of Helen Caughey, frequently outspoken, who, on one issue, voted alone against the majority. When asked to explain her action, Helen did so in some detail. So persuasive was her reasoning the women decided to reverse their decision. Florence learned the power of one.

As for crossing the ice, Florence was very careful not to cross when conditions were bad. The closest she ever came to disaster was this: the day after she crossed the channel with Bruce Caughey, the ice broke up. She remembers vividly how Fred Neilson often risked his life to cross the ice and Art Drumgoole, the mail carrier, let his horse warn him of any cracks in the ice or of any other troubles ahead.

Nessie Drumgoole, Ruth Glenn and Helen Caughey - The Marshall Girls - were always in the thick of it if anybody had an illness. They helped in so many different ways. Florence did not know what she would have done without them. Often they had to call Dr. Burleigh of Bath - a man with a big heart and a gruff manner. When Wilfred's mother lay dying, his sister, Lois Bongard, phoned Doctor Burleigh and said, "I don't suppose you'll come." To which he replied, "I haven't

been asked yet." When Florence herself got sick he bluntly inquired, "Who do you want to use the knife?" He had correctly diagnosed her gall bladder problem. The surgeon removed from her a gall stone as big as a chicken egg. When Lucille

Brown was sick with what she suspected was chicken pox she asked Dr. Burleigh how she'd know if it was chicken pox. His answer: "Give it five days and then you'll know."

Florence has many memories of the ferry crossings. One time a score of cattle, barricaded at the front of the ferry, broke out of their enclosure and roamed among the cars. Great consternation prevailed! Emily Tugwell confirms that Bob Tugwell and perhaps six other men would corral the cattle on the ferry for the crossing and then lead them on foot up the road to Ernestown and Odessa.

Florence also remembers a time when Bob Tugwell drove a truck load of pigs over the ice. The truck went through the ice and all the pigs drowned.

She also recalls that Helen McCormick's car caught fire while she was delivering the mail. Helen got her baby, Paul, out safely. When Florence's son, Franklin, who happened to be nearby, asked if he could help,



Helen told him to get the baby's sweater and then she went back to retrieve the mail. Helen had her priorities right.

Franklin has his own memories of strange events on the Island. When he was a school boy he was very small. How small was he? He was so small he remembers how, when his classmates were walking home from school, Eldon Willard, for a joke, picked him up and stuffed him into a mail box and closed the lid on him. Franklin had bad teeth. When he got them fixed he began to grow. Franklin also lost his hearing for a year. He was totally deaf. Avery Brown tested his hearing by hooting at him and shouting his name behind his back but Franklin heard nothing.

Two other images remain in Franklin's memory. During the war, the Air Force set

up buoys to mark a target range in the lake about a mile off the south shore. Somehow a stray bullet from an airplane went right through the boys' outhouse by the school on the south shore. Fortunately nobody was in the outhouse at the time. Islanders raised the issue with the authorities in the armed forces but, because nobody was injured or killed, the whole matter was eventually dropped.

The other image is of the lady music teacher who was flown to the Island once or twice a month. The aircraft landed on the road. Florence thinks it might have been a helicopter but whatever it was the boys were impressed with that way of travel. What did not impress them much was that the music teacher stood on the teacher's desk and tried to conduct the whole class in music from there.

Florence and Wilfred left the Island to live in Kingston 23 years ago. After three years Wilfred was admitted to St. Mary's on the Lake where he remained until his death three years later. Florence now resides in Providence Manor in room 447. She loves to receive visitors and to reminisce about life on Amherst Island which was so good to her.



*"It's wonderful,  
Everywhere, so white.  
The river has frozen over  
Not a soul on the ice,  
Only me, skating fast.  
I'm speeding past trees leaving  
Little lines in the ice,  
Cutting out little lines,  
In the ice, splitting, splitting sound,  
Silver heels spitting, spitting snow."*

*Kate Bush, 1985*

## The Pride of the South Shore



After many years of trying to produce a ram typical of traditional-looking Suffolks. Dave Willard thinks he has finally hit the “jackpot” with this large, meaty, square bodied, shorter legged 2 1/2 year-old animal raised from his own flock. And ... he didn't seem to object to a photo shoot with Charles Plank.



Recently arrived from Rosehaven Farm in Prince Edward County, this five-year-old Border-Cheviot ram was the 1997 Classic Grand Champion, beating all other lamb and yearling entries and placing first overall against all breeds. Border Cheviots are a smaller, compact breed used especially for mating with first-time mothers, resulting in easier birthing. Being new to the Island, he was not eager to pose with Dale Willard.



### WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

- Nancy Dunn

The Amherst Island Women's Institute members enjoyed a wonderful pot-luck and party on 11 December 2002 and opened the new year with a meeting on 15 January in the room behind the ferry office. Originally scheduled for the afternoon the time was changed to the evening to facilitate the showing of slides by Jean Baker. Eighteen members and guests were treated to a glimpse of life in the Antarctic by Jean, a former Islander and past president of the A.I.W.I., who travelled to the far south via a small Russian ship about this time last year. Though the ship and crew are Russian the tour is operated and staffed by Quark Expeditions, a well-respected and environmentally friendly organization out of the U.S.A. for which both of Bobbi and Michael Shaw's sons work. Through the slides and Jean's in-

formative talk we learned about ice (there is lots) and snow (there is little) and the chief inhabitants of the many islands and the waters surrounding the continent, namely: penguins of many types, several kinds of seals and a variety of whales. Scattered about there are a few colonies of humans of a number of nationalities. Although Jean's trip was during the southern summer it was still very cold and she brought a sample of the many layers of clothing she wore.

After being thanked by President Joyce Haines, Jean chatted with many as we enjoyed lunch provided by Helen Miller and Leslie Gavlas. Following the eats, members responded to the roll call in keeping with the theme by recounting a “cold experience”. We heard of everything from the indoor chills of life during the 1998 ice storm or in the Amherst Island schools during the winters of long ago to the outdoor frostiness on ski hills or in travelling by foot or cutter to said schools.

During the business portion of the meeting we had correspondence, financial reports and an account of the success of the sale of the “Island Sights” calendar which sold out very quickly. Reports were also re-

ceived about the Christmas dinner for Seniors and the food sale at the Antique Road Show sponsored by AIMS. We were reminded to “talk up” the August book sale and start setting aside books. Judy Harrower volunteered to pick up books (no texts or Reader's Digest Condensed, please) for anyone who has no way to get them to the storage space at Kirsten Bennick's.

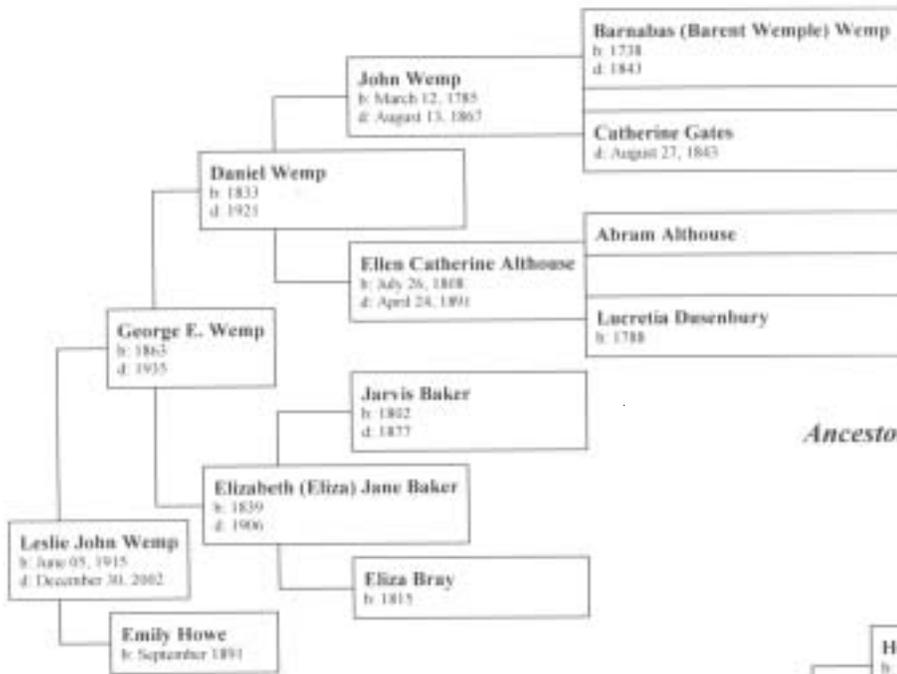
The usual opening and closing exercises were observed and collections taken.

There is no February meeting; the next meeting is Wed. 19 March at 7 p.m. at the ferry office back room. The topic will be “Aids to Memory”.

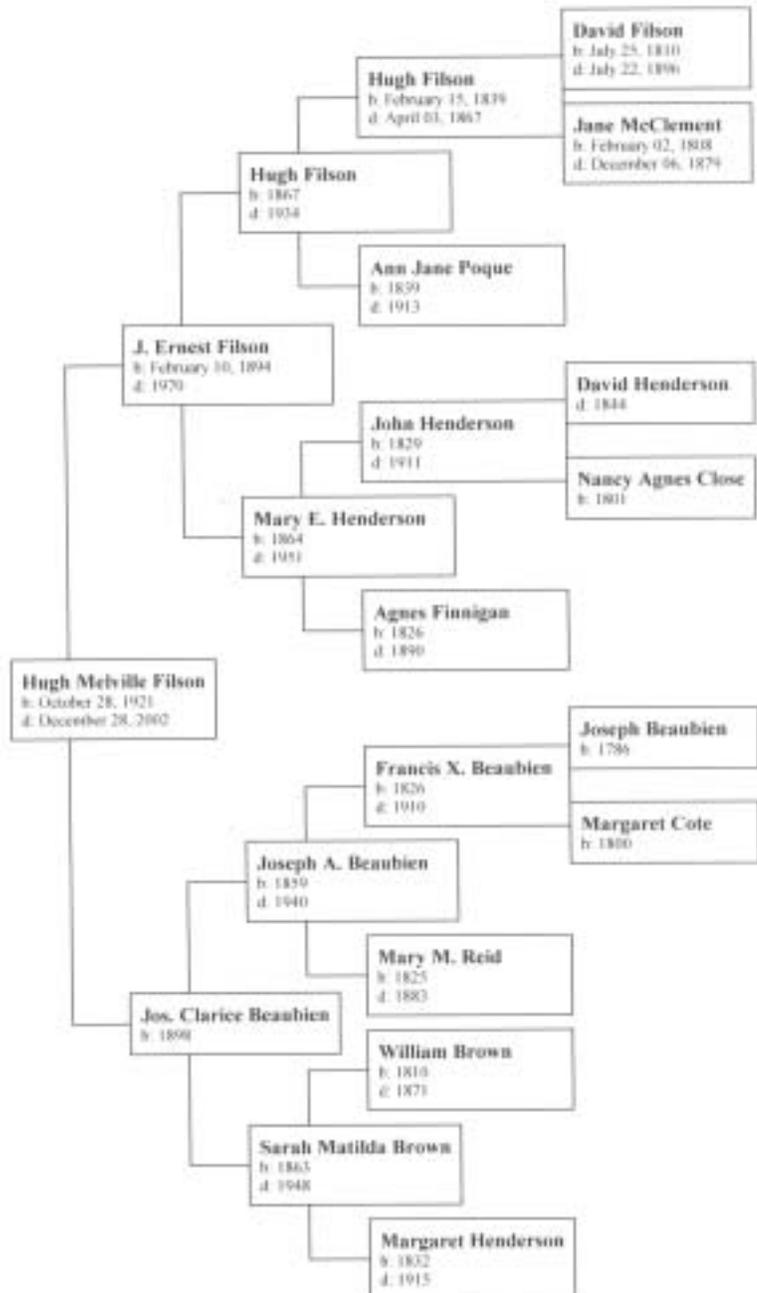
Guests are always welcome.

*“Look back at those junior-high school photos of yourself- no doubt you're wearing either a cowl-neck sweater, aviator glasses, and Farrah wings, or a Jack Daniels T-Shirt, a Scott Baio haircut, and painters pants. Like Patty Hearst, you probably weren't yourself in the 70's”*  
Pagan Kennedy, “Ring My Bell Bottoms,” in *The Village Voice Literary Supplement*

*Ancestors of Leslie John Wemp*



*Ancestors of Hugh Melville Filson*





*Line fence at Marshall F. Glenn's TR*

## COUNCIL GLEANINGS

- Ian Murray

Municipal Performance Measurement Program: each municipality in the province must submit data which may then be used to compare demands for services in comparable municipalities. For example, how does the "property crime/1000 persons" in Loyalist compare with that of other semi-rural municipalities of similar size in Ontario. If this ratio is relatively high or low, the search for reasons may turn up important information.

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New Procedural By-law: The previous by-law had to be up-dated to conform to the latest Municipal Act. This new by-law lays out in plain English the rules that Council must follow in all its deliberations and actions.

The rules relating to the secrecy of Closed Session meetings are quite detailed regarding reasons for meetings and the subsequent ban on disclosure of information by Council members. The public will have to rely on the honesty and integrity of elected members and bureaucrats to use Closed Session meetings properly.

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Ferry service interruption, Sunday, January 12: Jim Guest reported that the hole causing the water leak was about the size of his index finger; he called it "pock mark rusting". The ferry underwent a general inspection last fall and the next inspec-

tion - perhaps in 5 years - will be more thorough, including ultra-sounding the hull.

Many concerned would-be-travellers phoned the ferry office and listened to a recorded message relaying the most current information. Quite a few messages were left which Ida checked every half hour or so. Ferry information was also given to local radio stations.

I was one of those hoping to get on the 10:30 a.m. ferry. I certainly appreciated Darrell and Dianne informing those of us waiting as the situation developed. I am sure that those phoning were grateful that Ida kept the phone message updated and checked messages and helped when possible.

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OFA Letter: The L&A Branch of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture reminded Council that it represents over 400 farmers and farm businesses in this county. It is willing to "provide advice and information" to Council on agricultural matters. It also requested that the organization be notified "of any and all agricultural-related issues" in the municipality.

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Building statistics for Loyalist's first 5 years - 1998-2002: single residential units, 253; semi-detached residential units, 16; multiple residential units, 16; commercial building permits, 71, for \$6.7 million; and in-



*The charm still shows through on this Third Concession barn.*

*Terry Culbert*

dustrial building permits, 14, for \$5.3 million.

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New home starts on Amherst Island in 2002: 4.

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"Rosario Lindia, representing The Honourable W. J. Henderson was in attendance [at the 35<sup>th</sup> meeting of Council] to wish Council and staff a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year."

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## LETTER HOME

- Stan Burke

There is so much to say! I suppose I should begin by saying that our image of India was the Taj Mahal surrounded by misery but, although the tragedy-stricken exist, their numbers are diminish-



ing and they are surrounded by a vast panorama of colour, history, spirituality, hatred, and change. We have heard the Dalai Lama whose personality is truly radiant. He must be the only religious leader who can be simultaneously profound, relaxed, witty, and able to laugh at himself.

We have been blessed at the shrine where Buddha is buried; been under a descendant of the banyan tree where he found Enlightenment; and seen the erotic temple which is so beautifully done that even the Christian God must be pleased by it.

We have walked on a tropical beach just across the bay where Vasco de Gama landed and where he may also have walked. Vasco, however, came a mere 600 years ago while Chinese and Middle Eastern merchants came across these stormy seas to exchange goods at least 3000 years ago. Modern ships are sometimes damaged in crossing the Indian Ocean. Imagine what it was like in tiny coracles.

We have seen bodies being burned — quietly, in the belief that the soul has moved on and that the body is a husk to be disposed of with dignity. We have visited cathedrals, carved into mountain sides, so large that one required the re-

removal of 200,000 tons of rock, all cut by hand.

We of course visited the Taj Mahal, expecting to be disappointed because it would look like a postcard. In reality, its perfection can only be experienced to be understood. It has an indescribable radi-



ance. It was designed by a Moslem architect for the emperor's Moslem wife.

What a tragedy that this most-spiritual of all nations can not practice what all its prophets have taught. If India could recognize that Kashmiris have the right to run their own affairs then Pakistan would be forced to back off and look after its own crises. Literally billions of dollars would be freed up for investment to stimulate growth and help the helpless. The Hindus fear that relaxation on Kashmir would lead to the breakup of India — but India doesn't exist! It is an amalgam of peoples, languages, and history — 24 official languages and hundreds of dialects. It was only united by the British army and thus the Hindu majority is, in reality, perpetuating 'colonialism'. It would be laughable if it weren't so tragic.

All this is the subject of my book which is in the hands of an editor-friend. I have learned much in India and look forward to including this in the final manuscript.

We'll be Toronto-Amherst Island for a few days at the beginning of February then off to Vancouver for my 80<sup>th</sup>. Gods willing !



## LETTER HOME

- Chris Kennedy

I think we had all been lulled into complacency by the last two winters. There has been so much talk of global warming and then the channel didn't freeze last winter, so I wasn't expecting a January as cold as this one has been. Coldest since 1994

I heard on the radio. Then the dump of snow we had on Saturday night kept us all shovelling on Sunday. It was -27C last night in Kingston, and didn't warm up much today. We have had a lot of blue skies to go with the cold weather, but it has been brisk doing chores. This morning though I met our intrepid walkers, Eleanor and Sheila, striding boldly along.

The cold does not seem to bother the sheep at all, provided there is no wind. Down to about -10C they do not use any more energy to keep warm. Below that they need more feed so they have been getting about a pound of barley a day, and seem to be staying in good fettle. The guard dogs get a high fat dog food and thrive in the cold.

The channel froze a couple of weeks ago, and is now covered by snow. In the past the more adventurous would be getting ready to drive the ice, but the ferry service is now (usually) so reliable that I doubt anyone will bother. I haven't even seen the fishermen out on it yet. I am sure we are getting some new blood into the coyote population. I saw three out towards the lighthouse last week, and they are lovely to watch. If only they didn't like to eat lamb so much.

The temperature is meant to go up later in the week and I won't complain. I just hope we do not get a high wind while the snow is so light and powdery, as it will drift in very deep. A good time to go to the workshop and fix some machinery ready for next summer.



*Chris does a bit of winter feeding*

*DT Photo*

## from EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

- Paul Blair, L&A

### Economic Development

A recently completed medical facility has added a breath of fresh air to the medical services scene in Amherstview.

It is not only a wonderful piece of commercial architecture, but also a functional building that brings two new physicians to the community, incorporates an existing after-hours clinic and houses a laboratory for blood work and other tests.

Local architect Armando Sardinha designed a "dignified" building that has a stone exterior and, on the inside, maximizes the use of natural light. Doctors and other staff from the old facility were heavily involved in the design consultation to help maximize operating efficiency.

The new building is located within Loyalist Plaza owned by Taj and Ameena Jaffer. Over the years, the Jaffers have invested heavily into redevelopment of the site. Significant improvements in the last three years have included a new IGA and new plaza facing The Loyalist Parkway.

"In the time that we have owned the plaza we have brought about a lot of changes" states Ameena. "Steadily over the years we have replaced older buildings that were no longer viable with new buildings more in keeping with today's needs." \*\*\*

Is your business missing a growing segment of the marketplace? According to Richard Saxe, publisher of Tamworth-based "Complete Health Magazine", the complementary health scene is "burgeon-