

Amherst Island BEACON

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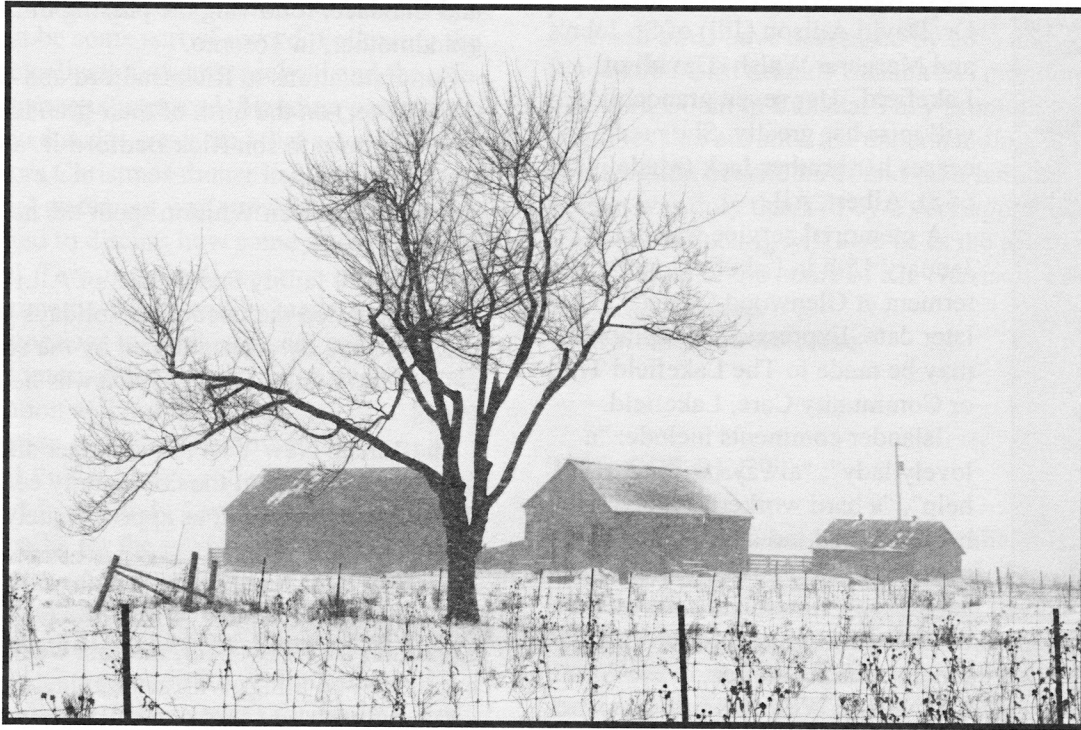
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February 2011

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The Amherst Island Beacon is published monthly with assistance from the Amherst Island Men's Society



Quinte Community Pasture in January 2011.

PHOTO BY TERRY CULBERT

THIS ISSUE

- Ian Murray, editor

I have quite enjoyed reading the old Beacons for CJAI. These old Beacons remind me what a tight-knit community it was when I moved here 40 years ago. The great majority of Island residents were from families who had been here for a long time or were married to someone who was. Now, probably about a third of our residents are "old Island" and a good many of them spend the working part of their lives on the mainland. Island residents 40 years ago interacted at the 2 general stores, the 2 coffee shops, the baseball diamond, the Royal Bank, the cheese factory, and so on. They had grown up together and there were a lot of family ties – some going back for centuries to the Ards Peninsula and perhaps even back to Scotland.

Of course, a lot of the writing in the Beacons from the

early 1970's would not go over very well today.

I was told emphatically when I re-started the Beacon in the fall of 1978, after a lapse of over 5 years, that the community would not support an outspoken Beacon. And, with the odd slipup the Beacon has tried to stick to "good news ok, sad news ok, bad news NOT ok". The bad news has been left for the Whig or just unreported.

We are hereby reinstating a dead-line for Beacon material of the 25th of each month. There have been too many mistakes made when I send Sue anything after I the initial edited copy is e-mailed to her. If there's something REALLY important, we'll consider it; otherwise the next issue will have to do.



The Amherst Island Beacon

Issue 392
February 2011

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MARY GEORGINA BOOTH (C1920 – 2011)

Georgie (Booth) Allison was born in Edmonton, Alberta, lived in many communities including Amherst Island and Kingston, and died in Lakefield on January 12th, in her 91st year. She was married to Norman Allison, minister in our Presbyterian Church for many years, and reeve for 2 terms. Her children are Dr. David Allison (Jill) of St. John's and Margaret Walsh (David) of Lakefield. Her seven grandchildren will miss her greatly. She predeceases her brother Jack (Madeline) of St. Albert, AB.

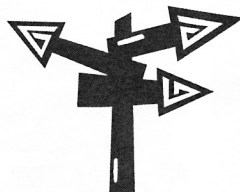
A memorial service was held January 15th in Lakefield, with interment at Glenwood Cemetery at a later date. Expressions of sympathy may be made to The Lakefield Trail or Community Care, Lakefield.

Islander comments include: "a lovely lady"; "always willing to help"; "a hard worker"; "a gracious hostess", "a kind and supportive member of St. Paul's. Georgie Allison made a significant contribution to St. Paul's Church, to the Presbyterian Church Women, to the Amherst Island Women's Institute, and to the community as a whole.

HERE & THERE

- Ian Murray

There has been a lot of self-congratulations from our Big Banks about how our superior banking system saved us from the excesses of much of the rest of the Western World. Perhaps my memory is faulty – and it well could be – but I believe that it is not that many years ago that our Big Banks were lobbying our representatives in Ottawa to have the same relaxed regulations enjoyed by the USA banks.



NEIGHBOURHOOD

- Lyn Fleming

Get Well wishes to Marion Glenn, Mary Kay Steel, and David Willard.

Condolences to Lynann and Ben Whitton, and daughters Sarah (Alberta), Beth and Jeannie (NC) and Catrina (Toronto) and their families, following the loss of their husband and father, Jim Whitton, in November. Jim was an integral part of the Island community and will be missed by many.

Our sympathy to Laurie Youell and daughters Shannnon and Candace, following the passing of their mom & grandmother, in Toronto.

Congratulations to Rick Bedford and Debbie Miller (Phil Silver) on the birth of their granddaughter. Kennedy Ann was born to son Rick Bedford Jr. and Erin Tysick in mid December.

Lynann and Ben Whitton spent the holidays in Australia visiting family.

About 120 family and friends of A.I.P.S. students and staff celebrated the upcoming holidays with a turkey dinner, followed by entertainment by the students.

The Community Carol service was held this year at St. Paul's.

The annual New Year's Eve dinner and dance was a sold out event this year at the community centre. It was still a full house at midnight, as approximately 180 people rang in the New Year.

The snow birds have headed south and the rest of us have settled in for the winter. While it was a grey and mild Christmas and New Year, the first week of January has brightened up things with several inches of snow!

The bus ride was tricky this morning, even tho' the road crew was out in force trying to get us all where we needed (or wanted) to go. Thanks also to our great boat crews (& ferry clerk) who also work in all kinds of weather and conditions to get us away and back.

Looking out of the school office window this week has been a bird watchers delight. Along with the usual ducks, geese, hawks and assorted birds, we have had a bald eagle and several days with swans in the bay. While we haven't seen the Village fox go by, his tracks are there and we have seen several of his friends around the Island.

Happy New Year to all of our readers.

WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

- Nancy Dunn

The regular meeting of the Amherst Island Women's Institute was held at the home of Kirsten Bennick on



Wed. 19 Jan. at 3 p.m. - the day light hour being a concession to the possibility of nasty winter weather at this time of the year. There were 15 members in attendance including Norma Lynn Coulson who travelled from Ottawa to be with us which must be some sort of record. Following the ode and collect the collections were received and the minutes of the last two meetings passed. Standing committee reports were received and it was noted that several thank-you's for the Seniors Christmas dinner had been received.

After the financial statement was received there was a committee appointed to discuss how some of our funds might be dispersed. This group will report to the next meeting at which time decisions will be made. A.I.W.I. regularly makes donations to local, regional and sometimes national and international organizations concerned with family, education and health issues.

Related to education is our concern over the return of the Amherst Island Public library and we were encouraged by the recent report from Cindy Lawson who is in charge of recreation and parks for the township that there are efforts being made to re-open our library. We have circulated a petition asking that this be done as soon as possible and will present it to the appropriate authorities.

Appreciation was expressed to Bruce Burnett for his handling of our Audio System, requests for which sometimes happen on very short notice. Methods of making his work easier were discussed and implemented.

The "Warm Winter Walking" committee has finalized plans to use the community centre for indoor walking in the cold weather. It will take place every Mon. afternoon at 4 p.m. and everyone is invited to come and get some exercise by walking at whatever pace you can manage through the gym and halls of the building. There is no charge and you can stay up to an hour. Make sure you bring clean, dry indoor shoes. The plan is to continue this until the week before Easter i.e. April 19th. After the weather improves we will perhaps organize some walks outside once a week or more.

Following a delicious lunch prepared by Jackie Sylvester and Kirsten Bennick we were pleased to welcome Janet Scott who provided a history of bird-counts and an insight into how they are conducted. She informed us that the Christmas bird count is the longest running citizen scientific survey in the world and was started by American Frank Chapman in 1900 because he was concerned to change the "side-hunt", an annual Christmas count of all

the game you could shoot, to counting the birds alive. He organized 27 people to do the live bird count and they are said to have wondered if their ranks would ever reach 100. Five years later he was instrumental in forming the National Audubon Society.

By 2010 the Christmas Bird Count included 2160 counts across North, South and Central America, the Caribbean and even the Pacific Islands. The total number of participants was over 60 thousand including over 9,000 feeder watchers. In Canada a total of 382 counts are reported from the districts into which the country is divided. The data gathered by civilians is used to evaluate trends in population numbers. Over the last 40 years 20 of our most common birds have decreased by 50% and some by 80%. Since 2000 Bird Studies Canada has monitored the Christmas Bird Count in Canada. They promote research programmes that advance the understanding, appreciation and conservation of wild birds and their habitats.

Janet was duly thanked by a very appreciative audience.

The next meeting will also be in the afternoon: 16 February at 2 p.m. at the home of Liz Harrison. Favourite recipes will be shared.

All women are welcome.

THE COLLECT

-Nancy Dunn

As the current Secretary of the Amherst Island Women's Institute I usually note in my minutes that our meeting started with the ode and the collect. Leaving the ode for another time I thought it would be interesting to find out the source of this particular collect - a collect being a short prayer used regularly in certain churches; it is often assigned to a particular day or season.

The collect we say in unison at the beginning of our meetings is known as the Mary Stewart Collect and was written in 1904 specifically for opening or closing ceremonies of women's clubs in the U.S.A. by Mary Stewart who, at the time of writing, was principal of Longmont High School in Colorado. Its use spread to Canada and Great Britain and to many other English-speaking countries of the world. It was titled "Collect for Club Women" when it first appeared in an obscure corner of a well known American magazine. Mary declared she wrote it because "she felt that women working together with wide interests for large ends was a new thing under the sun and that perhaps, they had need for a special petition and meditation of their own".

It began to be reprinted frequently and sometime later, when Mary was visiting a Canadian woman, Mrs. Alfred Watt, then living in England, Mary expressed a concern that some changes and errors had crept into the various printings of the prayer. The two of them corrected these and with the help of Mrs. Watt's son Robin who was an

(Continued from page 3)

artist, supervised his copying out of a hand-written official version - the version which we use today, printed below.

It has certainly never been the exclusive prayer of Women's Institutes as the collect was officially adopted by the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs meeting at their second convention in 1920 in St. Paul, Minnesota and was no doubt used by countless women's groups. It was read into the printed records of the congress of the USA by Senator Tobey of New Hampshire at the closing session of 1949. I couldn't ascertain when it began to be used regularly by Women's Institutes but I am sure it was long before Mrs. Watt returned to Canada from England in 1939 to attend and speak at the eleventh biennial conference of the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada in Edmonton. It was she who had carried the Women's Institute idea which had originated in Canada, to Britain, and she later became president of the Associated Country Women of the World.

As for Mary Stewart, she held a number of special teaching posts in Colorado and Montana. In 1921 she became a junior guidance and placement officer in the pioneer period of U.S. employment services. She continued to write for American newspapers and magazines. Her Alma Mater, the University of Colorado, in 1927 conferred upon her an honorary degree in recognition of her distinguished work in education, social and civic service.

As we recited the collect at our last meeting I was struck by how appropriate it is for groups of people (not just women but maybe especially women!) working together in organizations, committees or friendly "bees" even today - 107 years later.

The Mary Stewart Collect

Keep us, O Lord from pettiness; let us be large in thought, in word and deed.

Let us be done with fault finding and leave off self seeking.

May we put away all pretence and meet each other face to face, without self pity and

without prejudice.

May we never be hasty in judgment and always generous.

Let us take time for all things; make us grow calm, serene, gentle.

Teach us to put into action our better impulses straight forward and unafraid.

Grant that we may realize that it is the little things that create differences; that in the big things of life we are one.

And may we strive to touch and know the great human heart common to us all, and O Lord God let us not forget to be kind.

(I am indebted to the web-site of the Women's Institute of Prince Edward Island for the history of the Mary Stewart Collect.)

THE SCHOOL HERITAGE FAIR

-Janet Scott.

Heritage Fair will be held on Tuesday, February 15th. The community is invited to view the projects from 1 p.m. until 2:30 p.m. in the gym. The Neilson Store Museum and Cultural Centre will provide judges and monetary prizes. During the morning, the students will make Stone Soup which teaches that sharing a little food from each student will feed us all. Every child will be asked to bring one thing for the soup e.g. a carrot, onion or potato, a handful of rice or a cup of broth. We will also use Betty Wemp's traditional tea biscuit recipe and bake tea biscuits to have with our soup for lunch. The Primary class will make butter as part of their pioneer studies and the Senior class will try felting, an ancient craft. Ellis Wolfreys will demonstrate some oldtime music and Paul Cuyler will talk about the work of a blacksmith and demonstrate some old tools. If you are on the Island on February 15th, please consider dropping in to join in the festivities.

2010: HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR YEAR

-Erika and Hans Krauklis

Last December we moved into our new home - a somewhat older traditional Mexican house - in the La Floresta section of Ajijic.

In mid-January, as usual, we took our motorhome to the beach at Boca de Iguanas and stayed there well into March.

We then had our roof repaired and sealed prior to the start of the rainy season. A major job!

At the start of May we left by motorhome for Ontario, slightly apprehensive because of the insecure situation at the border with the USA. We visited family and friends, and jumped through the logistical and bureaucratic hoops to ship our belongings from Kingston to Ajijic. We raced the shipment in mid-June back to Mexico and made it in time.

The rainy season - our first - started in June and lasted until mid-September. We were told that it was heavier than usual - good for Lake Chapala! But our garden got soaked!

In November we flew to Buenos Aires to embark on a cruise around Cape Horn, flying back from Santiago de Chile.

Last week we left our house again and are now living in our motor-home at Chimulco Spa. After New Year's it will be back to the beach in what seems to be our annual migration.

Happy New Year!

JANET'S JOTTINGS: JANUARY 14TH, 2011

- Janet Scott

Winter Fireflies

The rumbling bus drove down the road
Through the last shreds of night
The day still dark, the air was cold
All tunnelled by the light.

Suddenly appeared before my eyes
On every bush and weed
The tiny Sparkling fireflies.
That danced about with speed.

Winking so brightly high and low
On every post and tree
These glowing lights intrigued me so
My soul was flying free.

By now the sun was just awake
And broke out through the clouds.
It shattered pink on the eastern break
And scattered silken bonds.

The purple clouds were shoved away
and now the sky was blue.
The world around broke out with joy
Clothed all in frothy hue.

The stately oaks and tall White Pine
As if decked for a ball.
Diamond bright tiaras wore,
The frost had covered all.

A Rough-legged Hawk appeared
Out from low lying frost
He lifted from the lacy field.
So like a cloud 'twas tossed.

To soar and float above that scene
And see the world below
Would be so wonderful a gift
The heart could hardly know.

The finale was the soccer net
All draped with frothy lace
Our journey's done, I'll not forget
That morning in this place

For all those Islanders who enjoyed that rare frosty morn-
ing when the sea fog coated everything!

COUNCIL GLEANINGS

- Ian Murray

From Council Agenda for Third Session – Jan10/11

A note from David Thompson, Director of Engineering Services to Diane Pearce, CAO:

“The reality is that the Municipality is not in a position to provide a hard surface on the majority of the Township’s gravel roads.

With the low traffic counts, it is difficult to develop a realistic policy for prioritizing the hard surfacing of existing gravel roads.

Appendix “E” is a portion of the Township’s Financial Information Report. A quick review indicates an approximate savings of \$1,700 - \$1,800 for road maintenance costs when a road is hard surfaced. This level of savings does not support the significant capital expense required to improve a typical Township gravel road to a surface treated road.

Many people living in the rural environment do not understand that those people living in an urban environment have paid for urban servicing and paved roads when they purchased their urban home and the road improvement costs are included in the home cost.

Township staff can only improve conditions by more frequent grading and/or application of calcium chloride. Unfortunately, wet weather can cause the gravel surfaces to deteriorate quickly. Adding calcium in this scenario does not help. If the road is too dry when graded it becomes dusty. The result is that it is very difficult to always have these roads in good condition.”

[Mr. Thompson indicates elsewhere that a full reconstruction of a gravel road to a properly drained surface treated road is over \$400 thousand per kilometre with about \$30,000/km for surface treatment. To do a full reconstruction of a gravel road to an asphalt surface is over \$600 thousand per kilometre.]

Those interested in more information can access the “Road Priority Ratings” report in the above noted Agenda.

Council and the Amherst Island Agricultural Society are still working towards a lease agreement.

HELP

To help with a project to neuter feral cats contact:
Cheryl Lepine at cheryl.lepine@sympatico.ca or
Linda Graham at 613-354-1954.

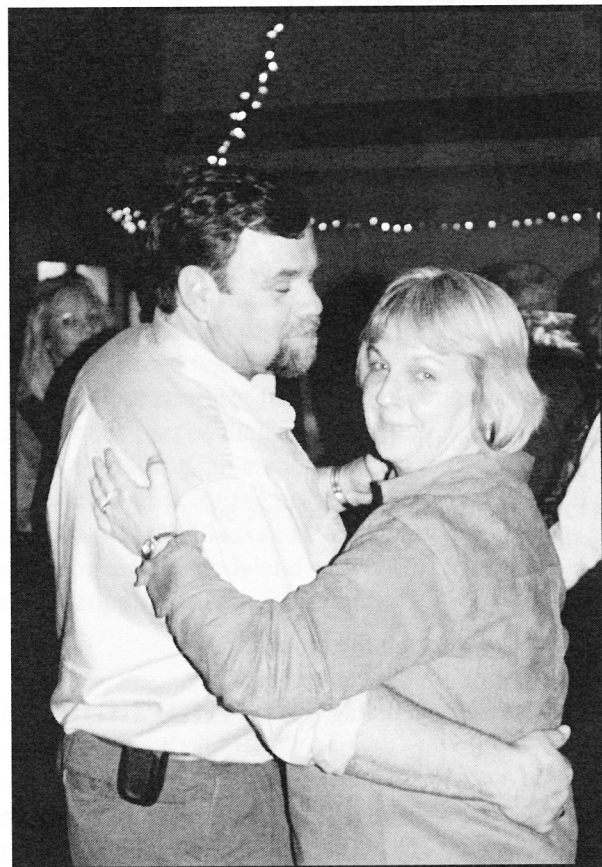
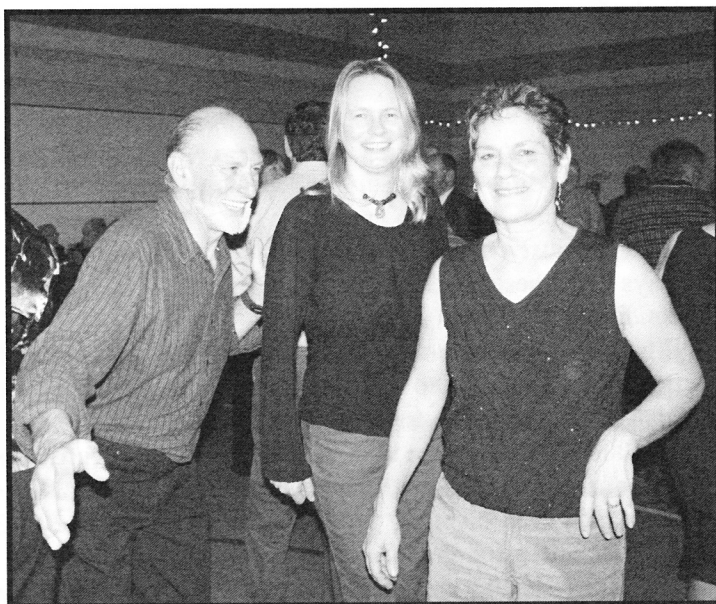
NEW YEARS ON AMHERST ISLAND



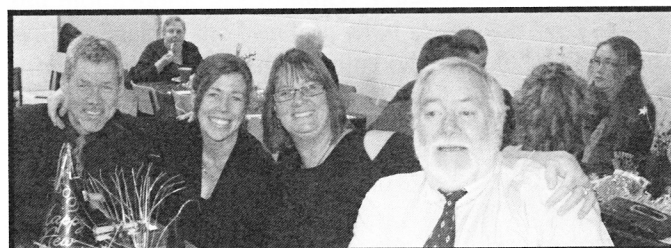
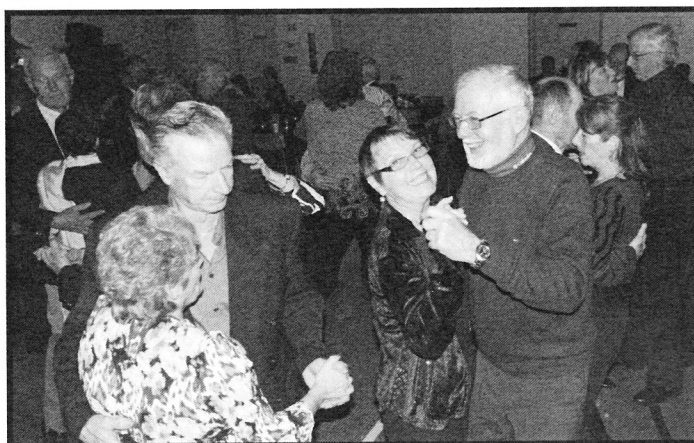
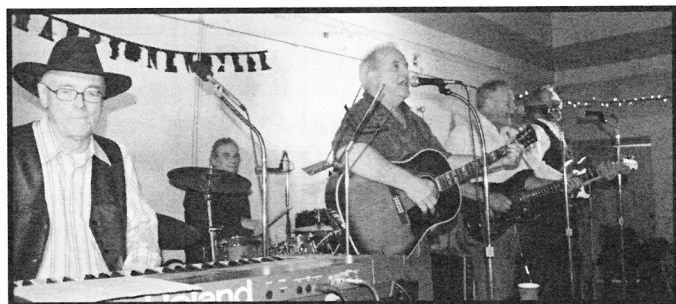
Laura Welbanks receives her draw price from MC Caughey and her father-in-law Ted Welbanks.

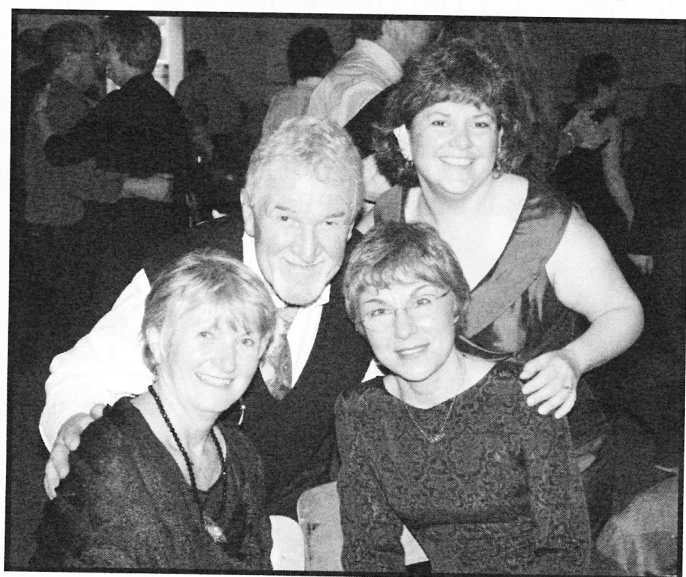
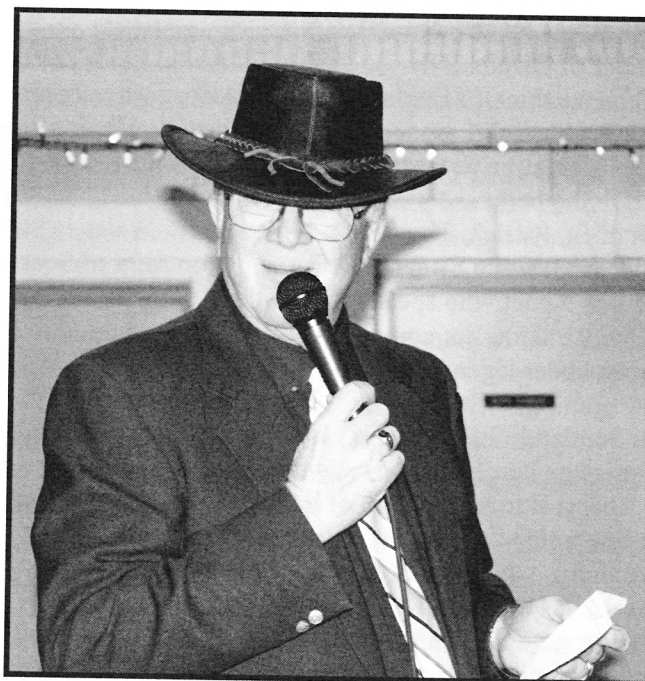
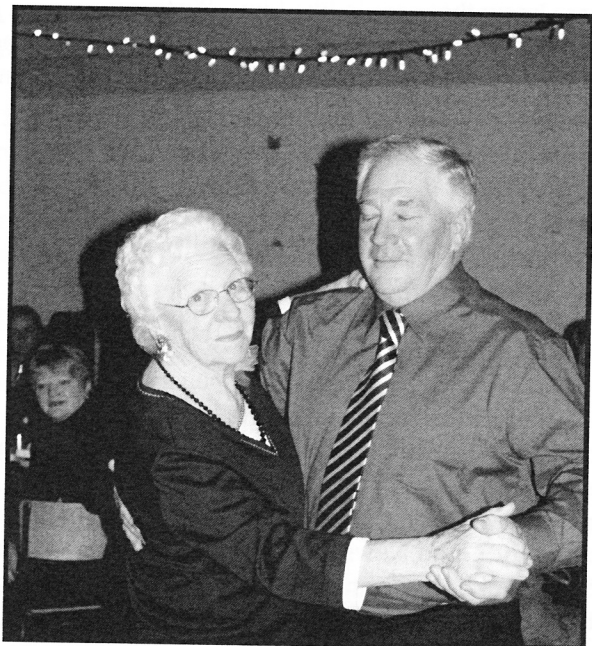
ALL PHOTOS BY TERRY CULBERT

Below: "Who wants to dance with me?" Keith McIlwaine, Peggy Edwards and Alison MacKeen

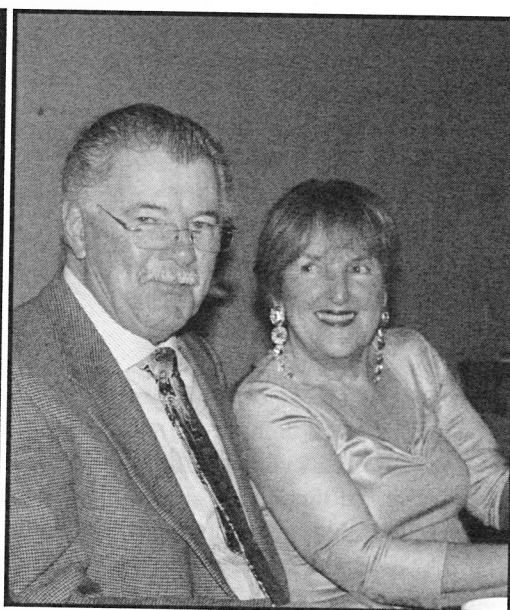
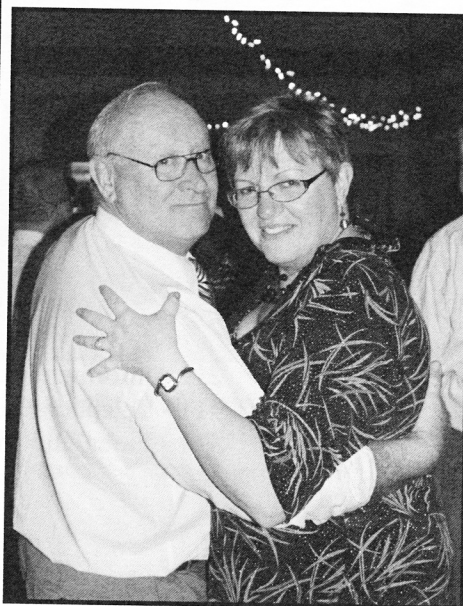
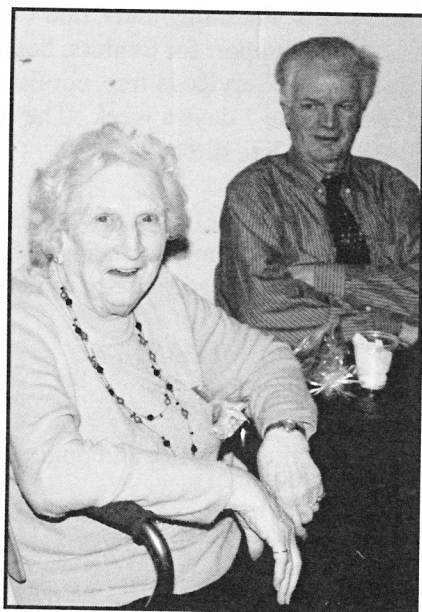


Above: Jim and Sandra Reid, Below: Dancing up a storm, left to right Garry and Anne-Marie Hitchins, and Eloise and Dayle Gowan. Bottom left: The group Shylo. Bottom Right: left to right: Laird Leeder, Julie Leeder, Saskie Wagemans and Geoff Jones.





Top left: Barb and her son, Garry Filson., Top Right: Master of Ceremonies Allen Caughey, Middle: Barb Hogenauer, Terry Culbert, Ula Steif, and Eva Little, Bottom Left: Anna Hitchins and her son Arthur, Bottom CenterL Ted Welbanks and Karen Miller, Bottom Right: Jim and Judi Gould.



GOD AND ROBERT BURNS

- Zander of DUNN INN

When we think of England, it is St. George who comes to mind, although I am told some consider St. Alban a better representative because he was a peaceful man, compared to the bellicose St. George. Mention Ireland, and we think of St. Patrick. The saint who stands for Wales is St. David. And, while St. Andrew is the patron saint of Scotland, it is a poet who speaks for Scotland best.

All those saints are comparatively unknown, buried in the past under legends and stories. In fact, most of us know nothing of St. David; St. Patrick went to Ireland from Scotland; St. George is claimed by so many other countries he hardly can be considered special or unique. But Robert Burns, the pride of Scotland, whose birthday was celebrated on January 25, speaks to the world about those things which are of most importance.

Burns was the son of a farmer and spent much of his early life farming. Unfortunately, he was not financially successful and became an excise man whose duties took him to all parts of the country where he made many friends, attended many parties and frequently imbibed alcohol to excess.

He was also much enamoured of beautiful women about whom he wrote and came to know intimately. All these aspects of his life were reflected in his poems which made him famous. In other words, he was a down-to-earth man who knew all aspects of life. Some tried to dismiss Burns for all his faults but his poetry spoke the truth to the hearts of his countrymen. His poetry also reflected his connection with God.

Burns was often put off by the church of his day because of the judgmental attitude the clergy and the pious showed toward the poor. In his poem, Holy Willie's Prayer, he tells about the damnation the church considered would be his lot.

When from my mither's womb I fell,
Thou might hae plung'd me deep in Hell,
To gnash my gooms and weep and wail,
In burning lakes,
Whare damned devils roar and yell,
Chain'd to their stakes.

But Burns was a better theologian than the clergy because he knew God loved sinners and would not condemn them to hell. Burns had a concern for the men and women he loved and assured them that God was not being well served by the harsh views of the church.

Burns mocked the wealthy and the aristocrats because they pretended to be better than they really were. He saw through them and compared them to the common folk of his time who worked hard, did their best and sought to be independent of those in high places. He argued that God had made all humans equal and the inequalities men tried to promote would never overcome the brotherhood of all mankind.

Burns knew that people like himself often go astray, make terrible mistakes and do horrible things, but he believed and proclaimed that God would forgive, not condemn.

In a conversation with God, Burns put it this way:
Where with intention I have err'd,
No other plea I have,
But, Thou art good; and Goodness still
Delighteth to forgive.

Robert Burns knew God better than many churchmen because he considered God to be Love. The Church, with its rigid rules and requirements, its negative views of humanity and its fearsome attitudes towards God, scared people away. Burns knew that God understood the problems of poverty and disease and understood the hearts of the men and women God had made. Burns felt called to proclaim the Good News the church had forgotten; that God cares for each creature, great or small and seeks only the best for men and women. The people of Scotland, and the people all over the world, warmed to Burns, as he expressed himself in his poems and rejoiced in the God he celebrated.

No wonder the birthday of Robert Burns is celebrated all over the world, not only where Scots gather, but wherever people of good will seek the best for others and can rejoice that God is good and loves all creation.

A NEW SERVICE: 211

Untangle Life's Challenges - Dial 211.

If you don't know where to go for the information you need, call 211. This connects you to a full range of non-emergency community, social, governmental and health services.

Issues may include: Emotional Health, Family Recreation Programs, Coping with Disabilities, Stress and Bereavement, Employment skills, Parenting and Child Care, Citizenship, Financial Issues, Support for Seniors, Sexuality, Education and more... The Service is free, confidential, multilingual and is available 7 days a week. The service is complimented by an on-line directory:

www.211ontario.ca

Why call 211? Everyone benefits - from individuals, families and professionals to community agencies and people facing barriers due to languages, poverty or personal difficulty.

DO NOT CONFUSE THESE NUMBERS.

211 - Information and referral service

411 - Telephone and directory listings

911 - Emergency number for medical, fire and police assistance.

SALLY'S BOOKS

-Sally Bowen

CJAI has a wide variety of programming. If you tune in on Saturday at 8 a.m., Sunday at 10 a.m., or Monday at 2 p.m., you'll hear excerpts I read from a range of books. They are chosen because the book is popular - or it appealed to me, and I hope, to you. I list author and publisher as well as title information at the beginning and end, hoping that some listeners will be entranced by the story segment, and will chose to either buy or borrow the book. The 10 to 15 pages I select are intended to represent the style and 'feeling' of the book, to stand as a comprehensible segment, and to entertain.

Many of the books are by such Canadian authors as Alastair MacLeod, Lawrence Hill, Joseph Boyden, Ian Tamberlyn, Margaret Lawrence, Elizabeth Hay, and our own Terry Culbert.

Others are award winners, or best sellers, like "Sweetness in the Belly"; "The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Society"; "The Summer of My Amazing Luck"; "Eat, Pray, Love".

Historical or biographical book excerpts include "The Russlanders"; "The Cellist of Sarajevo"; "People of the Book"; "John A.: The Man who Made Us"; "Burleigh Tales" and "The Plains of Passage".

There are rollicking 'good reads' by Bryce Courtney, Diana Gabaldon, Ken Follett, Bernard Cornwell, Jack Whyte, and others.

The classics are represented by "To Kill a Mockingbird"; "Anne of Green Gables"; "The Secret Garden"; "The Wind in the Willows" and others.

Social or political or health issues are also explored in such books as "Animal's Story"; "The Ape House"; "The Way the Crow Flies"; and "Bloodletting and Other Miraculous Cures".

There are deeply personal sagas such as "My Stroke of Insight"; and "Still Alice".

There are joyful books like "Cannery Row", "The Dog who Wouldn't Be" and "Water for Elephants".

There are books that simply moved me, including "The Secret Life of Bees"; "The Help".

Some books relate to the arts: "Luncheon of the Boating Party" and "The Film Club."

I also included a few personal favorites: "A Town Called Alice"; "Cry the Beloved Country"; "The Good Earth" and "People of the Book".

There are close to 100 segments now recorded, so you aren't too likely to hear a repeat. If you wish to relax and have someone read you a story and if you have time, do listen.



Piano soloist Inka Brockhausen played with Orchestra Kingston at the Salvation Arm Citadel on January 29th. She played Wolfgang A. Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 20 in D.

PHOTO BY TERRY CULBERT

AIMS: JANUARY 8TH MEETING

- Dave Meikle

Twenty-three members sat down to a welcome breakfast prepared by Rosemary and Kira Richmond, and Eva, Brian, Jack and Angus Little.

President Greg Latiak called the meeting to order.

The meeting opened with treasurer Paul Lauret's report on the New Years Dinner and Dance followed by the January 2011 financial report. The New Year's Dinner and Dance made a profit. AIMS is in good financial standing.

AIMS received two service requests in the past month. The first was a request by Sally Bowen for weekly assistance picking up her health care needs while Hugh Jenney is in Mexico. Brian Little will do it.

The second service request was Laurie Youell asking for aid picking up the weekly shipment of bottled water for the general store -- John Schutzbach was available.

Discussion and review of the 2010 New Year's Dance followed. There was general agreement in the membership that the event was an overall success. The membership agreed that we should strive to get the same caterer and band back for next year if possible.

Ross Haines complimented Greg on the new table layout. He did an impromptu survey of the guests at the bar and found all were happy with the table arrangement. This layout was necessary in order to accommodate more people than the old layout allowed.

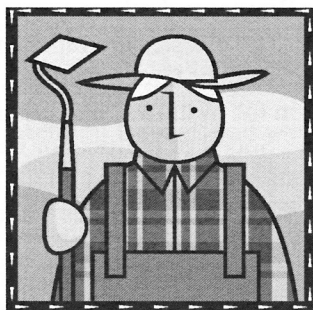
Peter Large suggested we develop a pre-plan time-line rather than have the organizers having to recreate the process each year. Greg responded that he was distilling his experience from the last two years into such a project plan.

Ross Haines recommended that the event be broken up with several separate committees, such as bar, caterer, band, auction/raffle and set up/ clean up, all organized under one guiding chair. The membership supported this idea.

There were extensive discussions about ticket prices. This year the ticket cost was a bit short of covering the band and caterer. The shortfall was offset by raffle and bar sales. We may not be this fortunate next year but until the major costs for 2011 are known it is premature to establish ticket prices.

Neil Johnston asked if the organizers got any negative feedback over the tickets being sold out before being advertised as available. In the end this did not seem to be a problem.

Ross Haines returned the discussion to the organizational structure of the event. Dayle Gowan and Paul Lauret offered to form the Bar committee. Allen Caughey



volunteered to chair the event.

Recommendations from this event for next year were discussed.

Beer should be dispensed in plastic cups as used to be done. This would help ensure that all empty bottles could be returned and reduce cleanup issues.

The committee needs to budget funds for post-party cleanup and trash disposal and ensure that there is clarity on what is required. This year there were differences between what some folks had been told, what was posted by the school and what was done. Also, the school billed AIMS for post-event cleanup, a first.

The bar needs to be ready to open immediately when the doors are opened.

Brian Little suggested we discontinue the silent auction as there seems to be very little interest in it.

Ralph Woods thought a raffle ticket drum would both add to the entertainment of the draw and make the draw appear more random.

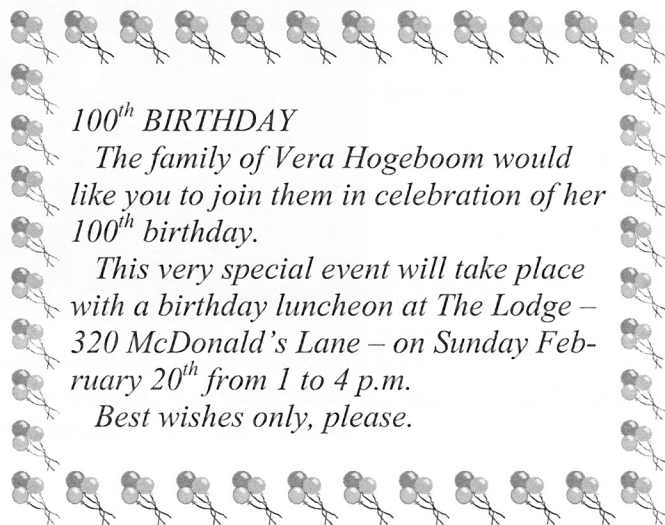
Allen Caughey noted that some of the raffle and auction donors did not attend and should be thanked directly.

Greg Latiak suggested that for raffle items that were not physically delivered at the party, it might be helpful to have written instructions on how the winner could collect their prize rather than keeping track of who won.

Paul Lauret said that the Exec would have recommendations for annual donations for the membership to vote on for the next meeting.

Ross Haines recommended that AIMS might consider helping Janet Scott, who runs the Amherst Island portion of the annual bird count. He suggested we make a donation to offset her expenses but had not discussed this with Janet. Another idea he had was that AIMS might want to fund a web cam to monitor the AIPS osprey nest. He added that he will investigate the costs.

The next meeting is Feb 12 2011. The guest speaker will be Peter Large talking on his trip to China.



100th BIRTHDAY

The family of Vera Hogeboom would like you to join them in celebration of her 100th birthday.

This very special event will take place with a birthday luncheon at The Lodge – 320 McDonald's Lane – on Sunday February 20th from 1 to 4 p.m.

Best wishes only, please.

FROM THE ARCHIVES: ISSUE 5, FEB.1, 1979**MORE THAN YOU EVER WANTED TO****KNOW ABOUT VOLES**

-Marnie Matthews Amherst Wildlife Foundation

Commonly referred to as moles or mice, the hungry little devils that live in the hayfields and pastures are actually meadow voles (*Microtus pennsylvanicus*). They are more closely to mice and rats than moles. These wide ranging grassland rodents inhabit all of North America from the Southern Central States north to the Arctic Ocean and from the Atlantic to the Pacific coasts. So you see we are not the only ones to face their ravages.

Their appetites are prodigious. Devouring grasses and sedges, voles eat over half their weight daily. This is matched by their incredible ability to reproduce. The female vole gives birth to one to nine naked, blind, little voles after a gestation period of 21 days. A mere two weeks later the young are weaned and on their own. By 25 days the young females are ready to breed. The old lady, meanwhile, is cranking out another batch, up to 17 litters a year under ideal conditions. Luckily the average life span is less than one year.

The population is prone to violent fluctuations, peaking about every four years. During high population years they go around digging runways, procreating madly, eating themselves out of house and home, girdling any tree they can get their teeth on, and dying off in enormous numbers. From a high of over 150 per acre, the population crashes to a low of 2 or 3 per acre, and we cease to notice them. Then with a surplus of food and suitable habitat they procreate madly, digging runways, stuffing themselves, building up numbers until they run out of room, become a plague, and crash again.

Why are Amherst Island's peek numbers worse than those on the mainland? Here the vole population is an explosion contained. On the mainland the peak populations spread out to surrounding areas of low population and seldom reach the same numbers per acre. This has had quite an effect on the Island.

People often wonder why the abandoned farms have not gone back to trees as quickly as those across the bay. The answer lies in the fact that every 3 or 4 years young trees get their bark chewed off, killing most of them. This combined with the heavy sod that prevents tree seedlings from growing means that only a few young seedlings make it through 2 or 3 peak populations of voles to get to the sapling stage. Only a few species of trees have managed to succeed. The red ash overcomes the obstacles by blitzing the area with hundreds of seedlings on the chance that some may survive, and by the ability to grow in wet areas where the grass sod is weaker. Red cedar manages to beat the vole by tasting foul. The little rodents also play havoc with the hay fields as the farmer knows. The other notable

effect of the high population of voles is the large number of hawks and owls attracted here to dine on them. Voles provide more food for all manner of predators, like hawks, owls, snakes, foxes, coyotes and weasels, than any other rodent. As someone said, "The whole island is laid out like a buffet." These predators cannot control the prolific little beasts though, only changing the habitat can. Disturbing the sod, either temporarily by plowing and spraying like a cornfield, or permanently by planting trees, can control the rodent populations. Cutting or grazing grasslands to prevent thatch build-up will also discourage the vole, but as long as there is grass, there will be voles.

Young trees can be protected individually by wrapping the trunks with spiral plastic protectors or hardware cloth cylinders. To be effective in high population years the protectors should be buried 3 or 4 inches below the soil to prevent damage from burrowing voles. Some success can also be had by stomping the snow around the trunks of the trees after each snowfall, discouraging the rodents from digging by a layer of hard packed snow. Larger numbers of trees can best be protected by eliminating the grass (through cultivation or spray) from a sizable area around the trees. This will be necessary until the bark is thick enough to protect the young saplings.

A GREAT GRAY OWL ON AMHERST ISLAND

- Betty Hughes January 20, 1979, Kingston Field Naturalists

Nessie Welbanks found a Great Gray Owl near her house on Jan. 20th. Other observers from Kingston were able to see it and identify it on Jan 23rd. This is the biggest owl we have in Canada, its length being 25 to 33 in. It has rather small golden eyes and no ear-tufts and a very long tail, 12 inches. They nest in evergreen forests to the north in abandoned hawks' nests. They very seldom come south except when their food is scarce in their breeding range. This year there is a great number of small rodents in the fields on Amherst Island (Meadow Voles). Many Snowy Owls and Rough-Legged Hawks and Red-Tailed Hawks are feeding here too this winter.

These large birds will not attack domestic animals such as dogs or cats. The Meadow Voles feed on the roots and shoots of the wild weeds under the snow cover. Their cycle is of 3 to 4 years. Some years their population will peak on Wolfe Island and the Hawks and Owls will be found there. This year it is Amherst Island.

We bird watchers are very fond of Amherst Island, not only for the birding there, but for its many other attractions, to say nothing of the hospitable and kindly people and the expanses of water seen from its shores.

Only one Great Gray Owl in any given year has been seen in our area up until now, the last one being five years ago. This year so far has brought four into our area. We may see more! "Good Birding"

ISLAND RADIO NEWS

Tara Kennedy and Dave Meikle have worked hard at producing a weekly Community Calendar on Island Radio heard a number of times throughout our broadcast day,. If you, your club or organization would like to announce an upcoming event, get in touch with Tara at 613-484-6622 or email: tara.kennedy@live.com.

Dayle Gowan, host of the Udder Morning Show is going on a holiday, Susan Filson will take over as host while he's away. The Udder Morning Show is heard Mondays from 6 to 9am and repeated 3 to 6pm. Terry Culbert, host of The Friday Morning Show will be away as well an stepping in to host his show will be Adam Miller and Ross Haines. Dayle Gowan will do a couple of these shows when he returns. The Friday Morning Show airs from 6 to 9am with repeat 2 to 5pm.

Top Photo: CJA1 Director Peter Large takes suggestions from the Board for a new Island Radio Logo.

Left to right: John Schutzbach, Dave Meikle, Marylou Wolfreys, and Michele Lelay.

Bottom Left: On January 28th Friday Morning Show, Barb Hogenauer filled in for Peter Larg's art report.

Ula Steif did her weekly sports update and beauty tips.

Bottom right: Keith Miller and Ian Murray were guests on the Friday Morning Show, January 28th. They reminisced and read from the forty year old Beacon edition about the March Snow Storm of 1971.

