

Amherst Island Beacon



Issue 449 *BONA LIBENTER, TRISTIA MAESTITER, MALA NUMQUAM* **Dec 2015**

A NEIL JOHNSON EULOGY

- Candice Warren

Dad...

From teaching us how to ride a bike, he taught us how to drive a car.

He was always there to hold our hand when we were down, and pat us on the back when he was proud.

He taught us right from wrong and how to stand on our own.

Our fondest memories of Dad were at the family farm in Bethany and the Bay Lake cottage in Bancroft with our dear friends the Wilsons and the Brays.

The times at the Bethany farm with Dad taught us the importance of family and making time for family - it was Thanksgiving dinners, long hikes up the big hill, the search for the perfect Christmas tree on 168 acres, ski trips, and building the log cabin by the stream.

The times at the Bay Lake cottage with Dad taught us the importance of friends and friendship - it was campfires, canoeing, group pictures at Eagle's Nest and Chelsea buns!

Our Dad was a family man, and a terrific friend to all.

We are hoping you knew all along how much you meant to us.

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Another NEIL JOHNSON EULOGY

-Frank Wilson

My name is Frank Wilson and I've known Neil for over 60 years. I know that we all have favourite memories and stories about Neil and I consider it a high privilege to be able to relate a few from our early years together.

Neil was known by many nicknames: Bud, Buddy, Uncle Buddy (his daughters Candice and Leanne call me Uncle Fudge, but that's another story). Others were Bro., Stick and Neil Ingram as his mother called him when he was late for supper. But I shall always know him as Buddy.

And here's why. Neil was the first person I met when I moved to Mimico in the late 1940s. A kid on a bike came whizzing around the corner, stopped in front of me and said: "I'm Buddy, what's your name?" "Frank" I replied. Then another kid wheeled-up, didn't ask for my name; but did ask me if I had a bike. I said "Yes; but it's still on the moving van." This lanky kid was Willie Stephens, who became another life-long friend, said: "Good, when you get it, you'll be on Buddy's team" and off he sped. Wow, I was accepted even before I moved into our house – great!

Buddy and I attended John English Public School; but when we got to Mimico High School Buddy really shone. He was a social guy and liked talking to anyone who would listen, joined in school activities including the Social Club and the Dance Committee. He was editor of the school newsletter "Blue Monday" and a regular contributor to the weekly community newspaper, The Lakeshore Advertiser. He was our school representative to the Eaton's Department Store Collegiate Club. He was involved in Junior Football and a member of the Gamma Delta Psi Fraternity.

Buddy was also a Cub, a Scout and a Rover mate in his beloved 1st. Mimico Scout Troop.

During cottage days near Bancroft, Buddy would rise before anyone else and, with a coffee in one hand and a paddle in the other, he would take the

canoe out in the early morning mist. Upon his return, he would create his famous breakfasts for everyone. They were just as famous as his celebrated Key Lime Pie at the Victoria Hall Tea Room.

One weekend, the project was to build a big fire-pit with railway ties which were held together with steel strapping. Buddy snipped the straps and the entire pile of ties fell on his legs and badly injured an ankle. Another life-long friend Jim Bray and I stopped mixing drinks and hustled down to the beach to help Buddy. In the excitement, Tommy, the Johnston's Scottish Terrier, also known as laser breath, tumbled down the stairs and, wouldn't you know it, broke his tail which then hung straight down against his hind legs.

Jim and I took Buddy to the local hospital and while waiting for the on-call doctor to arrive, we put on hospital smocks, wheeled in a saline IV trolley and began tending to Buddy. At this point the physician arrived and told us to settle down. What we didn't realize, or notice, was that all the people sitting in the ER waiting room were quite amused by our antics, much to our great embarrassment. Other memories involve Johnston, Bray and Wilson family campfires, ghost stories, water activities (like paddling the same canoe in opposite directions), sailing the Styrofoam sailboat, distance swimming, sleeping on the veranda; but they are for another time.

When I graduated from the University of Toronto with a Diploma in Dental Public Health, I had planned a private dinner for my wife Anna and our daughter Laurel at a favourite restaurant The Old Mill, just off the Kingsway in Etobicoke – no one else knew of this plan, or so I thought. Just after we were seated, the wine steward approached and asked for me by name. I confirmed who I was and he presented us with a very fine bottle of champagne! In great surprise, I asked who had sent it and he replied: “A Mr. Neil Johnston, sir.” Buddy had his sources.

Buddy was also a teacher for me. He taught me the J-stroke to keep a canoe on a straight course. He taught me the finer points of growing and caring for Bonzai trees. He made some very good suggestions to help me promote a new dental plan for needy children sponsored by the Government of Ontario. He also tried to teach me how to water ski on one ski – that didn't go so well.

Buddy was always interested in what you were

doing, he listened to you and offered good advice when asked. There are many more tales; but suffice it to say that he was my very good friend for over 60 years and I shall miss him dearly.

In the Spring, with a coffee in one hand and a paddle in the other, I intend to take out the same old canoe for a paddle on Bay Lake to honour his memory and reminisce about the good ol' days. And yes, Buddy, I'll use the proper J-stroke.

Rest In Peace, my friend.

The Amherst Island BEACON Issue 449, Dec 2015

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Editorial

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NEIGHBOURHOOD

- Lynn Fleming

Get well wishes this month to Lynn Miller, Freda Youell, Judy Bierma, Leslie Gavlas, Debbie Barrett, and Anthony Gifford.



Deb Barrett, recovering – by Brian Little

Happy 90th Birthday to a special lady – Barbara Filson celebrated this milestone with family and friends.

Congratulations to Terry and Susan McGinn on the birth of their first grandchild, a boy. Lincon was born to daughter Jessica and her husband.

Wayne and Karen Fleming visited Las Vegas and the Grand Canyon in early November.



**Stanley Burke with helper; Anna Walhout, J.P. Leeder and Aryonna Wronski paying tribute.
photo by Brian Little**

The student led Community Remembrance Day Service, was well attended by Island residents. It is always nice to see the students put so much thought and feeling into this service each year.

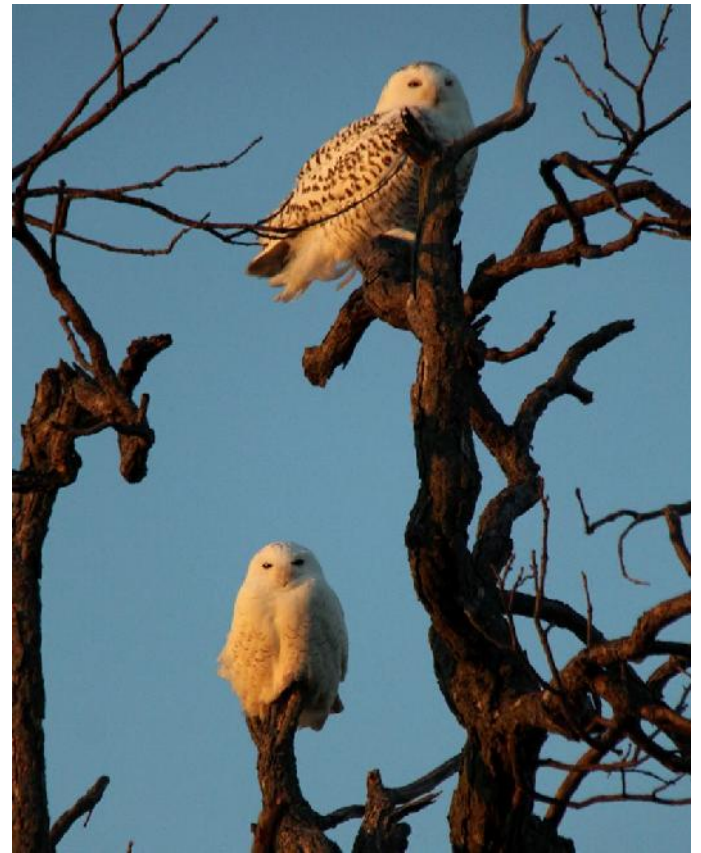


**Suzanne Wemp, John Moolenbeek, Laurie Kilpatrick at Remembrance Day
Photo by Brian Little**

Life has returned to normal on the Island following the return of the Frontenac II on November 8th, after a long 7 months. It came back clean and in good working order and was definitely a welcome sight on a sunny Sunday afternoon. I am sure there was an audible sigh of relief heard round the Island.

The cooler weather is settling in and the cottagers and summer people have left for the season. The snow birds are starting their migration south as well. We have had a few cooler days, and even a few flurries one day, but other than that, it has been a beautiful, mild fall. The grass is still green at the end of November and the temperature by Friday, November 27th is to be a balmy 12C !!

The snowy owls have returned to their winter home here on the Island. The silo star has been lit for the season to guide us home on the ferry. There is something comforting and reassuring, seeing the star in the dark as the ferry approaches the Island.



**Snowy Owls are back – Nov 24
Photo by Brian Little**

I'd like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Wishing you safe travels, and lots of time with family and friends at this special time of year!

STITCHES FOR SYRIANS

Kingston Stitches for Syrians is a network started by Topsy Farms and Knit Traders in Kingston. Asking all craftspeople to please donate handmade hats, mitts, scarves, child blankets for the refugees expected by early February. The Wool Shed at Topsy will gather donations from Islanders and will

ensure they get to the appropriate groups preparing for the arrivals.



WI President, Joyce Haines
Photo by Brian Little

WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

- Judy Greer

On November 18, fourteen members met at the home of Joyce Reid. The Business Meeting was preceded by an hour of crafts organized by Judy Bierma. Two guest instructors had us all making Christmas tree ornaments and it was great fun.

The Business Meeting started with correspondence from a ferry crew with thanks for the gift certificates recognizing their efforts during the time of the small ferry. Anne Henderson had also penned a thank you poem for them which had been forwarded to the Township.

The Financial Report was accepted and correspondence from FWIO was circulated. Items discussed were as follows: Tote bag sales are doing well. Plans for the Annual Seniors Christmas Dinner are progressing with Deb Barrett at the helm. Anne Adams and Denise Wolfe are working on a Christmas Light display at the ferry landing.

AIWI with Deb Barrett as coordinator is working towards producing an Island Directory for 2017, Canada's 150th birthday. Sherri Jensen has been awarded a RBC grant which AIWI will use to

purchase a bench for Centennial Park in Stella and a picnic table for Lands End Park on the South Shore.

Our representative on the Sand Beach Advisory Committee is Jackie Sylvester who gave an update on the plans. The committee is looking for individuals or groups who would be interested in monitoring the condition at the park related to conservancy, i.e. identifying damage or problems. After discussion the members agreed to express interest in that task.

Jackie also led a discussion about the flower planters AIWI has been maintaining at the ferry landing. One planter in particular is in poor condition but due to MTO plans for reconstruction the planter will be removed (following consultation with the Township) next spring and will not be replaced until the new dock is in place.

AIWI is focused on the Dec. 6th Seniors Christmas Dinner but their next get-together will be their annual Christmas Pot Luck on Wednesday Dec. 9th at the home of Sherri Jensen. Members will bring along kids toys for donation. Seasons Greetings to all.

COUNCIL GLEANINGS

- Ian Murray

From the 22nd Meeting, November 9th
Ameriks Fund

Moved by Deputy Mayor Bresee and Seconded by Councillor Gordon that the Assistant to the Clerk's report dated November 9, 2015 be received and that each of the following applicants receives \$495. 82 of the donations and interest accrued from the joint funds:

- . Ashley McGinn - Queen's University
- . Benjamin Whitton - University of Western Ontario
- . Gavin Ashley - Queen's University
- . Daniel Little - Carleton University
- . Noa Amson - University of Northern British Columbia

Motion carried.

**

St. Paul's Presbyterian Church (Amherst Island) -
Christmas Tea - Request for book of Ferry tickets

Moved by Deputy Mayor Bresee and Seconded by Councillor Porter that the correspondence received from the St. Paul's Presbyterian Church (Amherst Island), November 5, 2015 re: Request for a Book of Tickets for a Silent Auction at their Christmas Tea

and Sale, be received and approved by Council and that the donation of the book of Ferry tickets come from the Grant budget allotment.

Motion carried.

**

Mayor Lowry expressed a very sincere appreciation on behalf of Council, to the crew of the Amherst Island Ferry for their extraordinary service over the past 7 months. This was in recognition of the Ferry crews' efforts in coping with the secondment of the Frontenac II to Wolfe Island while the Wolfe Island Ferry was under a retrofit. The Mayor expressed his wish to recognize the crews via some sort of gesture of appreciation from the Mayor's discretionary fund. Members of Council were invited to provide the Mayor with their suggestions.



Ferry at Sunset
Photo by Brian Little

Condolences were extended, by Councillor Ashley, to the family of Bob Filson on the recent passing of his wife, Bernadette.

From the 23rd Meeting, November 23

“Unsafe Commuters Using Vehicles on the Amherst Island Ferry”: [passengers are now included in the policy.]



AIMS Executive Secretary – William Barrett
Photo by Brian Little

AIMS

- William Barrett

New arrival Bruce Sudds gave an introduction presentation on himself and his family. They are welcome additions to the Island.

Last meeting's minutes were approved. The Treasurer made his report. (Accepted.)

A final report was made on the Stone Wall Festival and the participants' potluck at the Lodge. Thank you was expressed to all concerned, and especially Andrea Cross who will be working on the 2016 Festival at Perth.

Transportation made their report. (Accepted)

The CFL light bulb disposal bin has been placed in the Post Office vestibule and is working.

The information material which will be used by the Welcoming Committee was out for review. If anyone knows of a new Island arrival – please tell Anthony Gifford.

The “Clarke’s on the Bay” dinner went very well. All members enjoyed the evening and future events are planned. Thanks Larry.

Note that a lunch at the Legion in Millhaven was organized and later took place. Again, thanks Larry.

A report was tabled on the Flu clinic. 90 Islanders got a flu shot, including children. Thank you to the Fire Hall for hosting it. The public health people were happy with the day. Next year, hours may be extended, but this time – the clinic closed because we exhausted their store of vaccine.

Michael Steeves will be speaking in December. Alex Scott will speak in January.

We will be going forward with Grant Application for garden funding from the Township. This will cover the 2016 hanging baskets and the museum garden.

Adjourned.

THANK YOU NOTES

The family of the late Anne-Marie Hitchins wish to express their deep appreciation to those who have offered such kindness, support and messages of sympathy and comfort in our bereavement.

We especially want to thank all the family, friends, neighbours and caregivers that have reached out to us in this difficult time and provided us with love and support.

Garry, Tracy, Heidi & Family

St. Paul's Presbyterian Church would like to thank the community for supporting our annual Christmas Bazaar. We wish everyone a very Merry Christmas!

**Below: Feasting at the Presbyterian lunch and
Island Sale
Photo by Brian Little**



To Amherst Islanders

Re Neil Johnston:

. Please know that Neil really enjoyed your many visits and cards while he was still at home; they truly lifted his spirits, as did the many visitors he received at the hospital.

My thanks to everyone for your kindness, time,

and assistance--and especially when we needed an extra pair of hands--your help was most appreciated. I have read and reread the many cards and notes sent to me after Neil's passing; they have been very comforting. Thank you for your support.

As Neil did so often in life, he continued to help others when he passed: We were advised that two people will have better vision because he was an

Organ Donor.

Things we take for granted: Many off-island friends and relatives came to Amherst Island to attend Neil's Memorial Service. They were very impressed because the flags were flying at half-mast. So to the Ferry and her Crew: Thank you for the final salute to Neil Johnston.

Very sincerely, Bernice Gould

St. Paul's Presbyterian Church would like to thank the community for supporting our annual Christmas Bazaar. We wish everyone a very Merry Christmas!

Most sincere thanks to David Pickering, William Barrett and the Internet Café for gallant, generous support with computer and web issues throughout the year.

Thanks for help that we have received during the year from the ferry crew and neighbours who visit our Wool Shed with their visitors.

Topsy Farms

Also, warm thanks to AIMS and to Hugh Jenney for kindly picking up and delivering my 'food' this spring/summer/fall.

Sally

I would like to thank my family, friends & neighbours for the cards, gifts, phone calls & best wishes on my 90th birthday. Of course, thank you to my family for a lovely dinner at my daughter Valerie's, Bob & granddaughter Ashley's on the day of my birthday & later a gathering at Garry & Susan's. A special thank you also to Lyn Fleming for the beautiful Birthday cake that she so kindly donated. We had a great dinner and a wonderful visit with all that were there. Again, thank you so much & a "Merry Christmas" to all.

Barbara Filson

Thank you to all Islanders who contributed fresh produce to the Loving Spoonful network in Kingston. Their newsletter reports "Thanks to your support, this year Loving Spoonful delivered over 30,000 lbs of fresh healthy produce directly to the Kingston community, donated by farmers, gardeners, and local workplaces through our Grow a Row program. That is twice the healthy fresh produce we delivered last year - making twice the healthy meals! The fresh food from grocery stores, caterers and others doubles that again, benefiting our neighbours at the 25 agencies we deliver to."



Island weekend sale at the Wool Shed – Ian Murry presiding.

Judy and Anthony want to keep the Café open for next season and give any profit back to the Amherst Island community!

They asked a group of volunteers to manage the Café on a one-year trial basis.
The Stella Café could become Amherst Island Community Café
but recruiting volunteers is the essential part of that vision!

If you love having a Café on Amherst Island during the summer and are looking for ways to make a positive contribution to the community,

please consider becoming a volunteer at the Amherst Island Community Café.

With a reliable team of trained volunteers, the Café will be able to operate on a regular schedule, offer high quality food using local produce when possible and provide paid employment for local students.

WANTED:

Enthusiastic people who are -

Excited about taking on this challenge;

Willing to pitch in with day-to-day tasks;

Would be able to volunteer for at least a few hours a week;

Willing to learn and be challenged.

NO EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

In addition to planning and start-up administration, the Café is looking for volunteers to:

- serve customers in the café;
- prepare food in the kitchen;
- work on the till;
- wash dishes
- talk to people who visit and (of course) washing up!
- do clerical tasks
- work on the Café maintenance, inside and out.

A **Volunteer JOB FAIR** and information session will be held on January 9, 2016 at 2pm at the Amherst Island Community Centre

Please consider joining the volunteer crew!



This picture is actually from the senior's XMAS dinner. Hope everyone had a wonderful time.
Photo by Brian Little

ADVERTISEMENTS

Please come and help us bring in the New Year 2016. Enjoy good music and fun.

Where: Amherst Island Community Center

Time: 7pm to 1am

Music by: Country Rhythm

Tickets: \$10.00 per person

Advance tickets only

Cutoff date for tickets: December 20th

Light lunch will be provided.

Cash bar by A.I.R.C.A.

For Tickets Call: Sherri Jensen 613-305-3451 or

Judy Bierma 613-985-1029

We Hope To See You There.

COMPUTER REPAIR/UPGRADES, new installs, virus/Malware removal. Island References. Bruce MacCrimmon – 613 453-0505

bruce.maccrimmon@hotmail.com

Island Gold 100% Pure Raw Ontario Honey. Please call Perry at 613-371-8118 or email Islandgold@rogers.com.

LOVING SPOONFUL sends thanks to all the Island gardeners who donated produce from their gardens for those in need in Kingston. Sally

Amherst Island Women's Institute Medical Equipment Loan Cupboard (walkers, canes, bath seats, commodes, raised toilet seats). Donations of used equipment in good condition also welcome. Call Sharen English (613)384-6535.

Topsy Farms has fall lamb frozen lamb cuts; great raw honey by bees (with help from Dave Meikle and Kyle Murray).

AMHERST ISLAND CHIROPRACTIC 10650 Front Rd. Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. For appointments call 613 328-8892

HARTIN'S PUMPING SERVICE: Septic Pumping & Inspection 613-379-5672

SHIRLEY MILLER

Paintings, Prints & Art Classes

613-389-2588



Shirley at Miller family feast.

BETTY'S HOME COOKING My Market Goodies are available! Plus, if you want a full meal to go... a few days' notice and your cooking for company is over. Call Betty 389-7907



From the Seniors' Dinner – by Brian Little

CHILDCARE Looking for a local reliable childcare professional? Recent Early Childhood Education graduate, Brooke Reid is available to look after your children whenever needed. Registered with the

College of Early Childhood Education, First Aid/
CPR certified. Contact Info: Home: 613-389-4484,
Cell: 613-484-9046

GODDEN'S WHOLE HOG SAUSAGE We would like to thank our faithful sausage customers on Amherst Island for their continued support of our product. Flavours now include: Salt & Pepper; Honey & Garlic; Sundried Tomato & Oregano; Hot Italian; Sweet Chili & Lime; Maple Breakfast; and Salt & Pepper Breakfast. Now selling pkg of 4 sausages!!

See more at thewholehogblog@blogspot.com;
Facebook, "Godden's Whole Hog Sausage"; or,
follow us on "Twitter @Godden Farms". Please call ahead for large orders, 705-653-5984. With Sincere Thanks, Lori Caughey & Family.

ISLAND YOGA Call Taggett for more information at 613 888-5156

HELP STILL NEEDED for the Lennox and Addington S.P.C.A. Used towels and linens, paper towels and cleaning supplies, pet food and toys, kitty litter, are always in demand; Canadian Tire coupons. We are glad to accept pop cans, beer and LCBO containers too. Thank you for helping to support our animal shelter. Further information needed? Call Freda Youell - 613 384-4135.



**3 Springers enjoy a visit to A.I.
Photo courtesy of Sarah Vanstone**

POPLAR DELL FARM BED & BREAKFAST
3190 FRONT ROAD, AMHERST ISLAND
Welcoming guests for over 30 years. Also, Cottage
Rentals and Godden Sausage sales. Call Susie @
613-389-2012

FOOTFLATS FARM ACCOMMODATION:
www.footflats.com (613 634-1212) Goodman House
(waterfront) - 4 bedrooms, 3 bath - available year
round

TOPSY FARMS WOOL SHED 613 389-3444 Wool
and sheepskin products including yarn, blankets,
crafts, and individual photos, books and booklets by
Don Tubb. Open weekends and most weekday
mornings. 2106 Calendar now available.

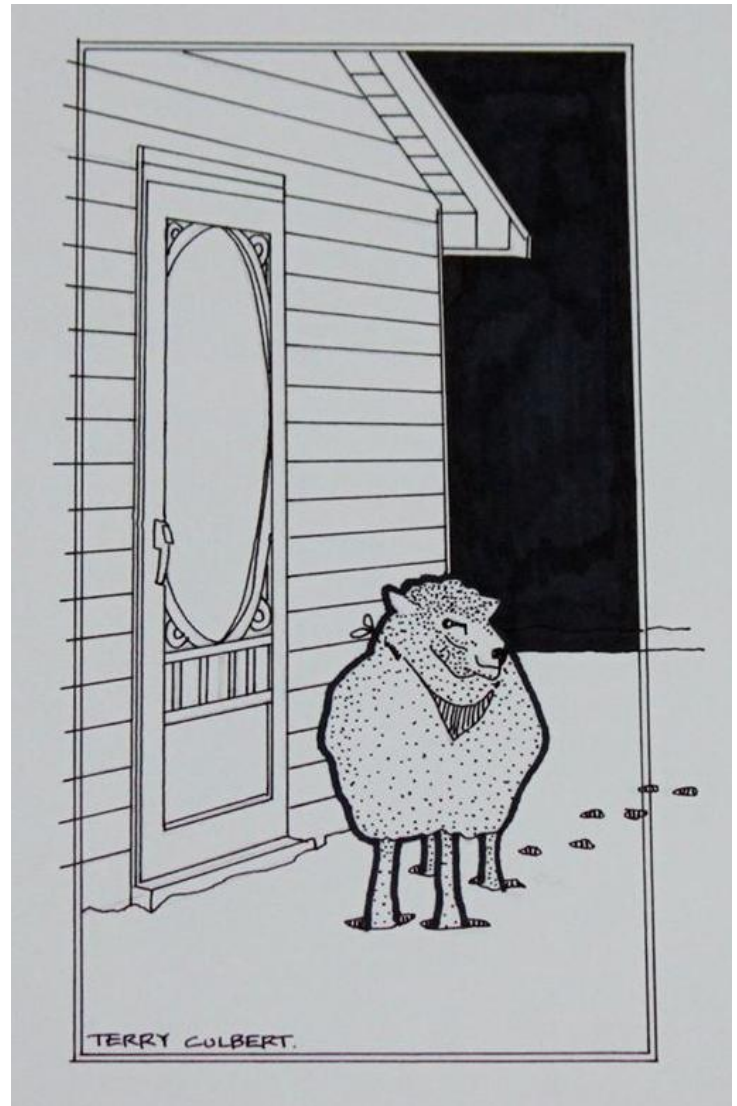


RAWLEIGH PRODUCTS FOR SALE

Catalogues available. To place an order call Marie
Ward at 613 389-5767 or email:
bandmward@xplornet.ca

ARCHIVES

*From AMHERST ISLAND BEACON: December 15,
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**The late 'Icycle.' Companion to the Laurets.
Pen and ink sketch for the Beacon
by Terry Culbert**

*INAUGURAL COUNCIL MEETING, Dec. 3/85
- Christopher Kennedy*

*This was the first meeting of the new Council.
Norman Allison remains Reeve, Chester Tugwell
and Ian Murray remain from the previous Council,
and Beth Forrester and Keith Miller are the new
Councillors. They all read the Declarations of
Office, promising to be honest, and an oath of
allegiance. Rev. McIntyre then said several prayers.
Altogether it made an impressive launching for the
new Council.*

*Council considered the list of appointments to
committees and other positions. This will be
included later in the Beacon when everything is
completed. Mr. Radley will continue as the
Township Solicitor and Thorne Riddell as the*

Auditor. The Building Inspector, Ed Chadband, listed three permits issued; one to Hitchins for a cattle shelter, to Strain for an addition and to Raymond for a garage. The Road Superintendent, Stuart Miller, said the crew was busy preparing for winter. Two mobile radios have been installed, in the dump truck and the grader, and a base station will be put in the Township shed. The Volunteer Fire Fighters Association have given one unit to the fire brigade and the fire budget supplied another. Bert Nesbitt was given agreement in principle to sever the field to the east of his present house. The Reeve discussed his activities in the last month. He had been to several meetings, including one with the Ferry Review Steering Committee for an update on the report on the long term plans for the Ferry. The County is still arguing with the local health unit about their increased demand for money.

The Ministry of the Environment sent a letter to Council praising the condition of the Township dump. Council briefly discussed the possibility of having this letter Framed. Volleyball starts on Tuesday, January 7th. The Clerk, Diane Pearce, presented the most recent budget figures. Details may be seen at the Township Office. Both the Ferry and the roads expenses are under budget at the moment, but Ferry revenue is less than expected as well.

Council adjourned at about 11 pm.

Beacon News

- Staff

We are grateful to Lyn Fleming for handling the subscriptions as well as acting as our Treasurer for the past few years. Good luck in the South, Lyn. Les Gavlas has agreed to take over from Lyn.

AMHERST ISLAND WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

- Diane Gavlas

The Senior Citizen Dinner on December 7th was well attended again this year. To those of you who couldn't make it we hope to see you next year. A special thank-you to the Amherst Island Youth Group for doing an excellent job of serving and cleaning up for the dinner. The teenagers of Amherst Island need special thanks for they are appreciated for the general good cheer and behaviour and willingness to pitch in and help others.

The Royal Canadian Legion Branch 539 and

Burleigh LOL 482 again were very generous helping the W.I. financially in sponsoring the Senior Citizens Dinner. A number of private donations were also received and with a continuous support such as this we feel the Amherst Island Women's Institute can keep up its objective of helping the home and community. The December meeting has been moved ahead to December 17th at the home of Mrs. Anna Hitchins. Roll Call will be an exchange of gifts.

Any people wishing to join the W.I. should tell any member and they will be glad to give you a ride to a meeting and tell you the aims and objectives of all Women's Institute members World Wide, Nationally and at home.

Once again the year is past and the Amherst Island Women's Institute wishes you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

AMHERST ISLAND YOUTH GROUP REPORT

- Steven Ward

The Youth Group met for the first time this fall on September 30, 1985. Judy Miller is once again the group's leader and Rita Brown is her assistant. Julie Forester was elected as the group's president, and Steven Ward was elected as the secretary for the group. The Youth Group is quite a bit larger this term than it has been in the past, and we have twenty-one members that attend regularly. We meet every Thursday night from 7:00 to 9:00 at Amherst Island Public School. Each meeting is started with a bible study which is done by Rev. Babcock and Rev. McIntyre. The Youth Group is working on making itself more visible to the community this fall. We attended the Anglican Church on November 17th, and we will be helping the Women's Institute with their Senior Citizens Dinner on December 7th at the school.

We have also done several events at our regular meetings. One of these events was tie-dying which Tracey Filson most patiently showed us how to do. Another event was that we had a cooking night during which we cooked ravioli. We also attended a dance in Kingston which was sponsored by the Kingscourt Youth Group. Suzie Caughey attended our meeting on November 7th, because Judy was unable to be there. We attended a volleyball tournament at Queens University on November 23rd. We won 3 out of 11 games and made it to the "B" division championships. We would also like to inform the community that we will be placing a box

at the back of each of the churches on the Island, which you may put your Christmas cards for fellow islanders in, and the Youth Group will deliver them for you for free. This will save you the amount of money that most people spend on postage stamps at Christmas.

In closing, we would like to thank the community for the support that they have given us in the past, and we will continue to try to help out in the community whenever we can in the future.

Thank You Notes

Belated thank you - The Anglican Church Women wish to thank the members of the parish and of the community who assisted in making our Annual Turkey Supper a real success.

Leslie Gavlas, Secretary A.C.W.

I would like to thank relatives, friends, neighbours for calls and cards. P.C.W. and A.C.W. for visits and gifts.

Special thanks to Dr. Alex Scott for care and concern. Thanks to Barbara and Helen for staying with me. To Rev. L. McIntyre and Mr. N. Allison for visits. Special thanks to Barbara and Stratton for having the lunch and ladies that helped after service. In the passing of a friend, the late Sam Reid.
Jennie McCormick

I wish to express my sincere thanks to; Nessie Welbanks, Lucille Brown and Helen Miller for their tremendous efforts, and in aiding me with their topics of discussion for my presentation, in class, at St. Lawrence College, on 19 November 1985. You were all really great!

Donna Chadband



**They call him Doctor Love.
Keith Miller spends time with the Federation of University Women
when they visited the Island gathering information.**

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

- Annette

It is with much regret that we say goodbye to Lyn and Larry, Jason and Stephanie. They will be greatly missed by all of us. Thanks to everyone who helped out with the surprise party Saturday night.

Thank you to the kind friends, neighbours and staff who helped out when Irene was taken to hospital. Special thanks to Bill and Helen Bulch, Maureen Nesbitt, Rev. McIntyre, Betty Wemp, Heather and Tracey and Helen McCormick. Irene had a badly bruised hip and will be home by the beginning of the week.

Congratulations to Rick Tate and Suzanne Bullock who were married in Kingston at the bride's home. They are currently honeymooning in Denbigh. Aerobics class will begin Monday January 6.

In order to solve his dilemma with Max and save his furniture, Doug Wilson has purchased a muzzle. This was a last resort after Max ate both the welding hose and part of the new bedroom carpet. The muzzle lasted approximately two days until Doug went out for the evening and Max ate the muzzle. Doug says he can't even find the buckles.

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COUNCIL REPORT December 5, 1995

- Chris Kennedy

All members of Council were present. The minutes of the previous month's meeting were approved. There was a special meeting on November 21, at which the old Fire Hall property was rezoned from Institutional to Commercial. Several other minor matters were considered.

Stuart Miller reported that the weather was hard on the roads last month. Council has received a tender for crushing gravel from Harvey Benn. Council accepted the tender, and expects the new gravel to be ready for spring. The township will be responsible for pumping the water out of the quarry.

Council has heard that there will be no major cuts to the ferry in this round of provincial budget cuts, but it will come up for review in the spring, when anything is possible. Council will purchase hand held radios for use on the ferry and in the life-boat. This will provide direct communication between the rescue boat and the ferry captain.

The new Fire Hall is officially opened. The work is almost finished, just the radio tower was not up on December 5th. The building came in almost exactly on budget, and seems to be most satisfactory. The exact figures are not yet in, but of the \$27,000 that is the Township's share about \$20,000 will be recovered from the sale of the old buildings, and the rest will come from the Fire Department's budget.

Council is going ahead with the advanced 911 system. This requires a standard numbering system for each property on the island. The County is ordering the new signs, and the township will put in its order at the same time. These will cost \$13 each, and this could be added to next year's tax bill. This will make it much easier for emergency vehicles and others to find any place on the island.

The Clerk/treasurer had a budget updated to October 31st., which held no nasty surprises. It seems certain, however, that there will be big changes to the Township in the next few years. For a start, there will be severe cuts to the Province's grants to the Roads budget. The exact figure will probably not be known until mid- January, but it may well be around 30%, so either the taxes go up or road repair and maintenance is drastically reduced, take your pick.

Another huge change possible will be caused by amalgamation. Hit-man Harris and his gang in Toronto have stated that they want to halve the number of municipalities in Ontario by the next election. Small municipalities will be forced to join together, or have their budgets slashed. At the moment the details are vague, and it is impossible to say how this will affect us, but I am sure we will not escape unscathed. Jim Whitton and Ralph Woods attended a meeting in Napanee where amalgamation was discussed, and I am sure they would be happy to answer questions as best they can.

Changes are coming, and the Beacon will try to keep you posted as we know more.

Council then went into closed session to discuss a personnel matter.

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

- Annette

Congratulations to Doug and Helen Lamb on the birth of their new granddaughter, still unnamed at press time.

While it makes for dry reading, I am pleased to report no island deaths or serious illnesses this month - what a nice prelude to Christmas!

Aside from the traditional 'Merry Christmas' greetings I would like to extend a thank you and a pat on the back to the folks at Headlands for another successful year publishing The Beacon. Caroline Ackerman has been a super addition to the Beacon team and has become quite proficient at hounding us columnists for copy. A community newspaper of this quality is hard to find any place - a good job guys, and thank you.

Merry Christmas and best wishes for a Happy New Year!

AMHERST ISLAND WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Our November 15th meeting held at the home of Leslie Gavlas was the day it decided to give us our first snow storm so our Program had to be cancelled. It was wisely decided that the driving was not safe for the Dairy Educator to make the trip. However, as there was no meeting in October, there was enough business to be dealt with to fill up the entire evening.

Welcoming another new member was a great start to the meeting and hopefully this upward trend in our membership will continue. Among the business items discussed was the value of our Island Tweedsmuir Book and it was decided to have a duplicate made to preserve the original.

Jean Baker gave a report on the Annual Convention and plans were made for the Seniors' Dinner to be held on December 8th.

The Roll Call was the "Importance of Milk in our Diet" and while it was almost unanimous that it was beneficial, especially for calcium, it was also pointed out that some of the diets that are fed to cows, specifically the Bovine Growth Hormone additive, may have detrimental effects on the quality

of the milk and beef, as well as the general health of the animals. Certainly this should be a real concern and should be carefully watched.

On December 5th our group will meet at the home of Anna Hitchins for our Christmas Dinner and gift exchange and the January 17th meeting to be held at the home of Irene Glenn will be at 1:30 p.m. Please note the different time. The Roll Call will be in the form of each member submitting a favourite Lamb Recipe and for the program Chris Kennedy will tell us about the Modern Practices in the Canadian Sheep Industry.

There will also be a Brown Bag Auction which is great fun, and the proceeds will be going to the Pennies for Friendship Fund. As always we would welcome anyone interested in being a member or visitor, so please join us.

A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to You All from the Women's Institute.

THE NEW FIRE HALL

- Chris Kennedy

The new fire hall was officially opened on December 2nd. All the equipment had been moved in over the previous two weeks, and was all polished up for the open house. Our MP, Peter Milliken, and our MPP John Gerretsen both came, and made very short speeches, as did the Reeve and Alex Scott, the Fire Chief. About fifty people came to see the new building and have cake and coffee. There was general satisfaction with the building, which should last the township many years.

Many people helped with the project. It was very generous of the tax-payers of Canada and Ontario to pick up two-thirds of the cost. The Road Crew put in a lot of volunteer hours on site preparation. I think special thanks are also due to Phil Silver, the previous Fire Chief, who did a lot of work to get the project started and supported by Council, and to Alex Scott, who has put in a lot of work overseeing the construction and organizing the new hall. I think that the Township is very fortunate to have a brand new Municipal Garage and Fire Hall, as that kind of money won't be around in the foreseeable future.



Photo by Brian Little

FIRE DEPARTMENT HISTORY

- Ian Murray

In recognition of the Department's 25th anniversary, I looked through some early Beacons to see what I could find that might interest our readers. This item appeared in the 29th edition, May 13, 1971.

OBSERVATIONS

- A. Bruce Caughey

As indicated in a recent issue of the 'Beacon', the conversion of the Township Hall to the purposes of a splendid fire hall has now been completed and it is certainly hoped that this will provide a very useful, although we hope a little used facility in the community. We wish Messrs. H. Filson and J.S. Neilson every success in their endeavours to mould into shape an excellent fire brigade. We hope also that those who have volunteered to serve in this most useful capacity will enter in to their duties with the same enthusiasm that the members of Council, who

have been responsible for this project did their part.

As of January 5th last, The Amherst Island Mutual Fire Insurance Company officially turned over to the newly formed brigade, the fire-fighting equipment that was owned by the company. This equipment which was purchased in 1953, at a cost of \$1,200, consisted of a McCullough Portable pump, which if close enough to the water supply was capable of handling two lines of hose, about 700 feet of hose plus a 'fog' nozzle and all was carried in an antiquated half ton truck. This equipment was purchased by the Insurance Company, in the hope that it would be added to during the years and might prove to be of some use in time of an emergency. No other organization ever did come forth with additional equipment and down through the years it was 'cursed' and it was 'blessed' - cursed when the air cooled engine was slow in starting with a fire raging and blessed when the welcome streams of water were at least able to save adjoining buildings at an outbreak.

When this equipment was purchased the late Estel J. Strain was appointed caretaker and operator and many times he did an admirable job under difficult circumstances. The drying of hose, particularly in winter weather was always a problem and I am sure we appreciate Mrs. Strain's tolerance in putting up with the hose draped around her kitchen range, times without number. At Mr. Strain's death, his son Lloyd became the caretaker and latterly another son Leslie. Many people owe this family a debt of gratitude for their co-operation and patience in providing this service over the past seventeen years.

When the one long ring on the old magneto telephone struck terror to the hearts of all those within hearing of it and they rushed to the telephone to inquire 'where is it?', one could be sure that before putting this fire call out over the individual telephone lines that the operator had already called the Strain residence and some member of the Strain family was already on their way with the equipment.

A number of fires come to mind which would have been very severe losses except for this bit of meager equipment. I remember a hot dry September day when the MacCrimmon barn, in close proximity to the house burst into flames, it was this equipment, with an adequate supply of water from the bay, which saved the house, as well as other surrounding buildings.

It played no small part in saving the Neilson Store from destruction one Spring morning when a

stubborn smouldering fire was prevented from bursting into a terrible conflagration by the lack of oxygen.

One of the cottages on Stella Point was saved when a grass fire got out of control, but probably the greatest 'save' to the credit of the equipment was just four years ago when Rossena's coffee shop, a large brick building was destroyed during the early morning, had it not been for the hundreds of gallons of water poured upon the nearby buildings by this much despised little pump, before the arrival of the Bath Fire Department by Ferry, the greater part of the upper part of the village could have fallen prey to the flames.

It is sincerely hoped that this additional equipment may prove of some value in the larger organization of which it may form a part.

The following three excerpt are from Marj. Aitken's "MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS" columns

First Edition, April 16, 1970:

Plans for some adequate fire protection for the township are going ahead under the leadership of Glenn Sheil. A tank truck has been bid on and this bid hopefully will be accepted, and money set aside to remodel the township hall to house it and other equipment. Glenn will also be forming a volunteer fire department. Your co-operation in this effort will be expected.

Second Edition, April 30, 1970

Council's bid on the fire tank truck was accepted, so the island now has to arrange for adequate housing of this much-needed equipment. Chairman of the fire protection committee, Glenn Sheil, is making plans for getting our new acquisition home and for progress on the following responsibilities: organizing a volunteer fire department, remodelling the town hall for a fire hall, and instruction on the use of the equipment, etc.

Third Edition, May 14, 1970

. . . an item of importance is the arrival to the island of the fire truck. Glenn Sheil picked it up from the Kingston Township Fire Station on Days Road on Saturday and drove it out to the ferry and across. Does this not conjure up a proud sight? One can almost picture Glenn, sou'wester, coat, hip-length rubber boots (turned down) and hatchet - rushing out highway 33, with sirens screaming, and hoses, swaying around each bend in the road!!... A small

amount of repairs to the body, a coat of paint and it will look the part. Meanwhile it is here and in working order.

[The members of Council at that time were: Reeve Vince Aitken, and, Councillors Clinton Kilpatrick, Keith Miller, Glenn Sheil and Ralph Wemp. Francis Welbanks was Clerk and Fred Neilson was Treasurer.] Reading through these early Beacons, one can track the progress of the Department: the conversion of the town hall to a fire hall; the selection of Harry Filson as the first Fire Chief with Jim Neilson as his Deputy; the signing on of the first volunteers; and, the first recorded call - a chimney fire at Alan Kidd's house.]

4-H News

- Andrew McDonald, Press Reporter

Our newest 4-H Club on the Island is the "Power of Produce."

We call ourselves the "Fruit Fritters" and our members include;

President - Bonnie Marshall

Vice President - Sara Pollock

Treasurer - Shannon Youell

Secretary - Shawna Phillips

Press Reporter - Andrew McDonald

Recreation Leader - Jessica McGinn

Phone Convenors - Alison McDonald & - Helen Bell-Smith.

Our Leader - Susan Caughey

Youth Leaders - Heidi Hitchins &- Jill Caughey

We meet at the school to cook up a storm with special recipes made from fruits and vegetables. Of course, we have a chance to eat what we make at the end of the meeting.

We would like to thank the Women's Institute for generously donating the money for this project.

THE ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION REMEMBRANCE DAY COMPETITION

I am happy to announce the results of the Remembrance Day Competition sponsored by the Amherst Island Branch of the Canadian Legion.

Junior - Grades 4, 5, & 6

Black and White Poster -

1. Shannon Youell, 2. Samantha Pollock

Only 2 entries in class

Coloured Poster -

1. Mindy Fleming, 2. Alison McDonald, 3. Ashley Filson

Essay -

1. Shannon Youell, 2. Samantha Pollock, 3. Alison McDonald

Poem

1. Brent McGinn, 2. Corey Hutchings, 3. Mindy Fleming

Intermediate - Grades 7 & 8

Black and White Poster -

*1. Jessica McGinn, 2. Andrew McDonald
Only 2 entries in class*

Coloured Poster -

1. Sarah Pollock, 2. Ryan McGinn, 3. Bonnie Marshall

Essay -

1. Sarah Pollock, 2. Helen Bell-Smith, 3. Bonnie Marshall

Poem-

1. Jessica McGinn, 2. Ryan McGinn, 3. Kyle Murray

Other participants - Tabytha Trotter, Shannon Baker and Shawna Phillips.

We were extremely pleased with the response received from the students of A.I.P.S. and from their teacher, Mrs. Keitha Smith. The judges were Mrs. Jean Campeau, Mr. Randy Campbell, and Mrs. Nancy Campbell, all from Branch 631 of the Canadian Legion. The calibre of the work was very high so that the judging, though very pleasurable, as also difficult. The first prize winners in all categories have been sent on to the Zone Competition.

LETTERS TO THE BEACON

The staff and students of grades 1-3 at Amherst Island Public School would like to express our gratitude to Deputy Fire Chief Fleming and Fire-fighters Murray and Kennedy for providing us with the opportunity of visiting the new Fire Hall. The hands-on approach made this a meaningful experience and the students came away very much enlightened about the services and equipment that this facility and the staff have made available for the community of Amherst Island. We appreciate you taking the time away from your own busy schedules. It is due to this kind of commitment that keeps the continuity of the volunteer programs alive. We would also like to thank Lyn Fleming and Freda

Youell for assisting in the transport of the students to the Fire Hall.

Thanks again to all for making this valuable outing possible!

A.I.P.S. Staff

DEAR BEACON:

At a recent "Nostalgia and Collectibles" show in the Ottawa area, I purchased two post cards originally mailed from Stella. The first card shows St. Paul's Church and carries a King Edward VII stamp. The postal cancellation shows only "Feb.10" but no year. The second shows a framed colour view of island shoreline with the phrase "It is always sunshine in Stella when you are with us". It has a King George V stamp and is dated by the writer "July 9th, 1914". Both are addressed to Mrs. James Murray, Fayetteville, New York.

Card #1 (King Edward stamp) reads: Aunt Sarah - Received your postal Saturday evening and was very glad to hear from you. I will write latter but this card will do for this time. All are well on Amherst Island. Everyone is busy now as I suppose you know the cause of the excitment [sic]. As ever, Rubie. Card #2 (King George V stamp) reads: Stella, July 9th, 1914. Hello Mrs. Murray: How was you these warm days? It aint too bad here so far but we want rain. Dad started his hay today. Mag was to town yesterday and got her teeth all out. Albert is getting along fine. If you come over this summer don't forget where I live. Hope all is well. As ever, Mollie. Perhaps some of your readers know who Aunt Sarah and James Murray, Rubie, Mag, Albert and Mollie are. What was the family name and what was the "excitement" Rubie mentions?

Sincerely

Barbara Hopper, U.E.

P.S. The stamps on the cards each cost one cent!!

A LETTER FROM A. BRUCE CAUGHEY

I am sure that many readers of the Napanee Beaver and The Whig-Standard daily scan the list of Deaths contained therein. I was shocked, on receipt of this week's edition of the Beaver, to read the death notice of a wonderful friend of mine, Carl Wright. I am sure that this name does not mean anything to Beacon Readers, but to me it brings back many fond memories of a friendship and respect that I have had for this person over the past

58 years.

It is 57 years since the residents of Amherst Island came to enjoy the pleasure and advantages of electricity in their homes and businesses, something that many of you do not know the background of.

The year was 1937, late summer, I do not know the exact date, but the Liberal Premier of the Province of Ontario, Mitchell L. Hepburn, who had been elected in 1934, decided to go to the country and seek re-election. One of the planks in his platform was "Rural Electrification". Being known as an Onion Farmer in that area between the City of London and the shores of Lake Erie, Highway #4, he well knew the benefits of electricity on the farm.

A well respected resident of Prince Edward County, Thomas Bowerman, had been chosen as the Liberal Candidate and a determined effort was being made to break the Conservative monopoly which had long existed in the Prince Edward-Lennox constituency. Premier Hepburn was brought down on a speaking tour with arrangements made for him to speak in Picton tonight and in Kingston tomorrow night. Some of our Amherst Island staunch Liberals saw the opportunity to have the Premier visit Amherst Island and an afternoon meeting was arranged for Victoria Hall. On his arrival on the Island, a group of Liberals arranged a tour of the Island and the late George Beggs, who was the owner of perhaps the latest model car on the Island, at that time, a 1935 Chevrolet, was the driver. Mitch soon recognized the absence of hydro poles and remarked "you boys do not have hydro over here," the reply was, "No we never expect to have it", why? because of that 3 miles strip of water between here and the mainland - Mitch said "If I am re-elected you will have hydro!" Well, Mitch, a prolific speaker, filled Victoria Hall to bulging and repeated his promise of Hydro to those gathered. I will never forget his flow of oratory as he stood on the platform in the old hall.

Well, Mitch won the election and that very fall, a resident of Wilton area, Harold Peters, was sent to the Island to canvass for prospective hydro users. I well remember him coming to our place and asking my father, who was then Reeve of the Township to sign an application for hydro service. My father who had known this man through County Council Associations said "Why me?" Peters replied "Well it will help me in my canvass if I can say "The Reeve has signed an application!"

At this time Ontario Hydro was not the top

heavy, money wasting organization that we know today.

Highly Unionized, etc.

Public Utilities Commissions in various areas were responsible for the extension of hydro service into rural areas. A very strong such commission existed in the Town of Napanee with the late Charles Walters as the Secretary-Manager. A member of a highly respected Napanee family, Charlie had assembled a staff of very competent hard working linesmen whose watchword was "keep the service operating". Among this group of young men was Carl Wright, who learned his trade right from the ground up and was one of the crew who erected the first hydro line on Amherst, erecting transformers and running the lines in to the farm services. It was in January of 1938 that I received a telephone call from Charles Walters saying "Bruce, how would you like to read meters?" I replied "I do not know how," Charlie replied, "Well you can learn" and I did, for the next many years, I carried out these duties, as well as changing meters and when an interruption of service occurred I was called and advised of same and I in turn called the office in Napanee and they usually depended on me to advise them of the nature of the problem and the location of the same.

No matter, the hour of the late afternoon when one called the office, there was never an answer such as, "I am sorry this is after hours, we will be over in the morning." The answer was always "we will be at Millhaven in half an hour, have Art meet us" (in winter with a horse and sleigh and in the summer with his boat, they knew that there was no ferry service to the Island after dusk). Once on this side they would load their equipment into Art's (Drumgoole) truck and go to the trouble spot. The repairs completed, their return was made - no grumbling, no complaints, it was all in service of the company.

It was in this era that I made the acquaintance of Carl Wright, he had started in service of hydro with the digging of pole holes and had gradually worked his way up the ladder, becoming a foreman of a gang of men, learned to climb poles and the many other skills associated with hydro service and he continued in the employ of Hydro for the rest of his working life, a very respected resident of the Town of Napanee, a respected and much loved member of the Masonic Fraternity and of his Church.

I will always remember Carl and his wife Reta as

some of our best friends and innumerable Amherst Island residents owe him a debt of gratitude for his devotion to his work in an era when Unions governed our every move and overtime was an unknown.

Yesterday I celebrated my eighty-fourth birthday so my Island friends of the same bracket are very few. It seems that every issue of the Beacon I receive has more names that are unfamiliar which makes me sad. It doesn't seem like my Island any more. That is probably hard for you to understand.

I do want to congratulate those of you who publish the Beacon every month. I think you do an excellent job and I wish you every success in the future.

Most sincerely,

Hazel Reynolds.

[Staff: Hazel Reynolds is an aunt of Dorothy Willard.]

ISLAND HISTORY

Historical Tid-Bits from the W.I. Tweedsmuir Book Amherst's Famous Mud House

Architecturally Beautiful, Naturally Insulated, Skillfully Constructed is This Historic Dwelling. Visit Amherst Island and you will soon hear talk of the famous Mud House. Imagination may see a primitive hut of some kind, but when curiosity seeks enlightenment we find that this is just one more fine example of the sort of dwelling in which millions of families have lived in many parts of the world since man began to build permanent habitations. Mud in this story means clay soil, wet for ease in handling. The adobe house of the south-west and the cottages of Ireland and many other traditional houses, including those of brick, all are built of clay.

In 1820 William Scott came from Scotland to Canada, settled on Amherst Island and wanted to build a good house. So he sent to Ireland for skilled builders - his wife being Irish and accustomed to the well-built houses of her own land. The men made the long journey, built the house, and returned to Ireland, leaving a fine house standing on a Knoll overlooking the North Channel. At the time this was called Quinte Bay and the house was named Quinte View. It is still owned by William A. Scott, son of the first William, and the fine farm is managed by the third William. A new house has been built, in 1929, and the old mud house is used for storage, but still is

in good condition and looks with dignity on a changing world.

Skill was needed to build such a house, and this was done by experts. Wet clay was mixed with straw; saplings were used for forms and are seen in a crumbling bit of back wall. When the clay hardened the structure might be compared to adobe or cement. Walls and partitions were two to two-and-one-half feet thick, giving perfect insulation the year round. That means deep, deep, window and door frames between rooms as well as in outer walls. Built in a cottage style best suited to the location, as well as to the material, the lines have dignity and the French windows lend a note of elegance. And for a century the house was a centre of hospitality and one hears many tales of the parties, the good times, the pleasant way of life, and the industry of this pioneer family.

Submitted by Morrison Scott, 1995

Pictures provided by Mrs. Mary Gunion.

(NB: Morrison Scott and Mary Gunion are brother and sister, and the great-grandchildren of the builder.)

[Editor, Dec/15: I hope someone will follow up on this article with photos and more over-view.]

THANK YOU NOTES

Queen Fae Charlotte wishes to thank all her loyal subjects for their kind visits, cards, gifts and good wishes since her ascension to the throne. The delicious baked goodies have certainly helped keep the peasants of the realm happy. Chief courtiers Caroline, Llew and Helen join with their royal tyrant in offering sincere thanks.

Thank you

I would like to extend my appreciation and heartfelt thanks to Amherst Island friends for the many cards, letters, calls and acts of kindness my family and I received during Norman's final illness and death on October 31, 1996.

Georgie Alison

To all of the wonderful people on Amherst Island who helped our daughter, Penny Coleman in so many ways over the last six months, we extend our grateful and heartfelt "Thank-you"

Joe and Joan Baxter

We would like to take advantage of this festive season to thank our many friends for all the support and help you have given us in the past 6 months.

Penny, Matthew, Benjamin and Katie

Special thanks to Kyle Murray for his special friendship.

Thanks to those hard-working Islanders responsible for the building of our community hall and gymnasium. I accompanied our volleyball team and coach to Enterprise, where they competed against 5 other 'C' division schools. Our kids were used to the luxury of full-length courts and high ceilings. Though the other schools are much larger, their players were more familiar with playing in cramped quarters.

Thanks for that gift to many young Islanders.

Sally Bowen

A LETTER HOME

Oh my, how the time slips away. Every year at the end of December I wonder what the New Year will bring. The old year seems to have passed away so quickly bringing many changes but somehow things still remain the same. I hope 1996 will bring good things to your home and family.

Our Big news item is (of course) the weather. We Canadians really do love to talk about the rain, the snow, the heat, the cold, the blizzards and ice storms etc. etc. Somehow it brings out the 'mankind struggling against the elements' in us all. When we go out our front doors we are prepared to do battle against the elements, and we usually win or retreat.

The Island, compared to many places, has received little snow. However, it is all very early and reminds us of the Olden Days when the snow was piled so high you couldn't see over it. We like to make sure our freezers and pantries are full just in case.

Almost all the lambs are off to market. We still have a hundred or so to ship after Christmas and then the cycle repeats itself with our first lambs hopefully arriving at the beginning of March. Lamb prices have been good this year but grain prices have also been up and so they tend to cancel each other out. Alas, such is the nature of farming but I wouldn't trade it.

Work has continued on the dock repairs. It has taken longer than planned but we're happy to have the Big ferry still here. Unfortunately, it looks like the Amherst Islander will be returning very soon. We will all have to relearn getting up earlier, backing up and sometimes getting left behind.

I believe it is now time for me to put on my 5 layers of clothing and take the dogs for a walk. Fortunately for them they already have their coats on and never seem to balk at what nature offers them. Perhaps we should take their example and happily wag our tails in anticipation of our outdoors excursions.

We wish you the best in the New Year and as always will be thinking of you in your little corner of the world. Merry Christmas.



On Dec 6th, the Women's Institute hosted more than 100 guests at their annual XMAS dinner for Seniors. Find below a collection of pictures from this event – all by Brian Little.









An end shot

Thanks to the Amherst Island Harvest Fest for supporting L & A county 4H clubs.

In November, Abby Godden showed an Amherst Island Holstein heifer

(from the farm of Bruce Caughey and Mike Walhout)

at the Royal Winter Fair in Toronto, competing against 4H members from across Canada.

Sponsors of 4H were listed on the L&A county display - including the Amherst Island Harvest Fest.

Thanks again for your support!