

Amherst Island Beacon



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Beautiful Ice
Photo by Vicki Keith

The Amherst Island BEACON Issue 453, Apr 2016

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Editorial

A.I. Beacon

14775 Front Rd. Stella, ON

K0H 2S0 (613)389-3444

E-Mail: aibeacon@topsyfarms.com

Editor: Ian Murray c/o aibeacon@topsyfarms.com

Production: David Pickering

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Provided via: amherstisland.on.ca/Beacon and its webmaster Alex Scott

NEIGHBOURHOOD

- Lynn Fleming

Condolences to Patrick deHaan, Gemma Boden & Harrison on the devastating loss of their infant daughter, Violet Lynn. Our sympathy also to Papas Tom and Gord, and extended family.

Congratulations to Keith and Shirley Miller on the arrival of their 7th great-grandchild, Miller Dawn. Miller was born to granddaughter Sarah and John Stickland.

CJAI, 92.1 Island Radio celebrated their 10th anniversary on April 1st, with a Video Dance at the

Community Centre kicking off a six-week celebration leading up to the fund raising drive.

Larry and Sherry Jensen spent a couple of weeks in Kissimmee, FL getting some R&R and doing some bird watching.

Bonnie Livingston and Gord Forbes was also in the Kissimmee area doing some bird watching.

Alex and Debbie Scott and girls took a road trip to Miami to board a cruise ship and visited ports in Jamaica, Caymen Islands and Mexico over March Break.

I spent 10 days in Orlando with my kids and grandkids, visiting my sister and nephews and their families and belatedly celebrating my mom's 90th birthday. Weather was sunny and 28-29C all week!



Kay Wolfreys at 90, with great grandchildren

R-LtoR: Brantley Brown, Braden Fleming,

Tia Fleming, Cassady Bailey

F-LtoR: Cooper Wartman, Hudson Wartman &

Jasper Chamberlain (who is now two)

As I write this, we are in the midst of an all-day ice storm to lead into the Easter weekend!

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WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

-Mary Kay Steel

Our March regular monthly meeting took place on the 16th, at 7pm, at the inviting home of Janet Scott, with member Judy Bierma playing the hostess. Attendance was small, probably due to several members still resting in warmer climes. The meeting was chaired by President Joyce Haines. We were delighted to welcome a new member, Kathy Filson, whose family has a long association with our island.

We went through our routine items, including looking at correspondence and approving the treasurer's reports for January and February. We noted that in spite of Judy Bierma's efforts, attendance this year at our free indoor walking program was down, possibly because Wednesday wasn't as convenient a day as our usual Mondays. The program is adjourned now till next winter.

Our normal pattern of having four bake sales each year in front of the Post Office was discussed; we may change the pattern but will wait till more members can voice their opinions and advice.

We all were delighted to hear that member Andrea Cross received a prestigious award from the Ontario Lieutenant-Governor for her work in planning the International Stone Fence Festival here last fall.

The program for the meeting was an introduction to and presentation of the Tweedsmuir Books our branch has prepared over the years. A great deal of the work was done by Leslie Gavlas and the current Tweedsmuir curator is Mary Kay Steel. We have completed five volumes and Joyce Haines was delighted to report that the originals are at this time being digitized for assured preservation.

The Tweedsmuir books are informal histories of our community and the WI prepared by WI members, and are so-named after Lady Tweedsmuir, wife of the Governor General of Canada, 1935-40. She was an avid supporter of the WI, both in Canada and in the UK. Photocopies of the volumes are available for research right here on the island.

The branch's next meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 20, at the home of Leslie Gavlas, at 7pm. At that time there will be a regular monthly meeting and our Annual General Meeting with election of a new slate of officers.

Guests are welcome.

JANET'S JOTTINGS

Baltimore finds Love on Amherst Island



Janet Scott at CJAI
Photo by Terry Culbert

Getting interested in Project SNOWstorm has led me to a new respect for the Snowy Owl. It has also taught me a great deal about the hunting and sleeping habits of a Bird of Prey that after 32 years living on the Island, I had become rather complacent about. We have all seen Snowies on interesting perches, like the very top of the radio tower at the Fire Hall or on the seat of a hay rake on Front Road. We have seen them on roofs, on the ground, on the top of telephone poles or as on one occasion on the top of our TV aerial as feathers floated lazily down as the owl plucked one of Sarah Salter's white hens (looked like a Ptarmigan to him). Members of the Ferry Crews from years of observation know far more about the habits of a Snowy Owls than most researchers ever do, as they have seen them fishing and hunting ducks on the ice as the ferry pushed its ponderous way through the chunks of ice on its frequent winter crossings.

Project SNOWstorm has allowed the scientists to get a look at the world of the Snowy Owl that we never see. The transmitter storing data from the times spent in remote areas in the dark and cold Arctic have opened up an exciting vista into the secret life of the Snowy owl. We know that Baltimore, our named owl of CJAI fame (See February's Beacon) spent part of his time on the ice of Nunavut and part of his last year's summer in Ungava but since December 19th he has chosen Stella as his favourite perching site. He watches the pigeons at Vince Eves' barn and rests by the hay bales and farm wagons on the hill south of the farm. He watches the ducks in the ferry channel from both the CJAI silo and from the ice. He consistently perches in the dead tree just west of Amherst Island Public School or spends the night on the school's roof. We have been watching his flights and fancies from the warmth and comfort of our own homes.

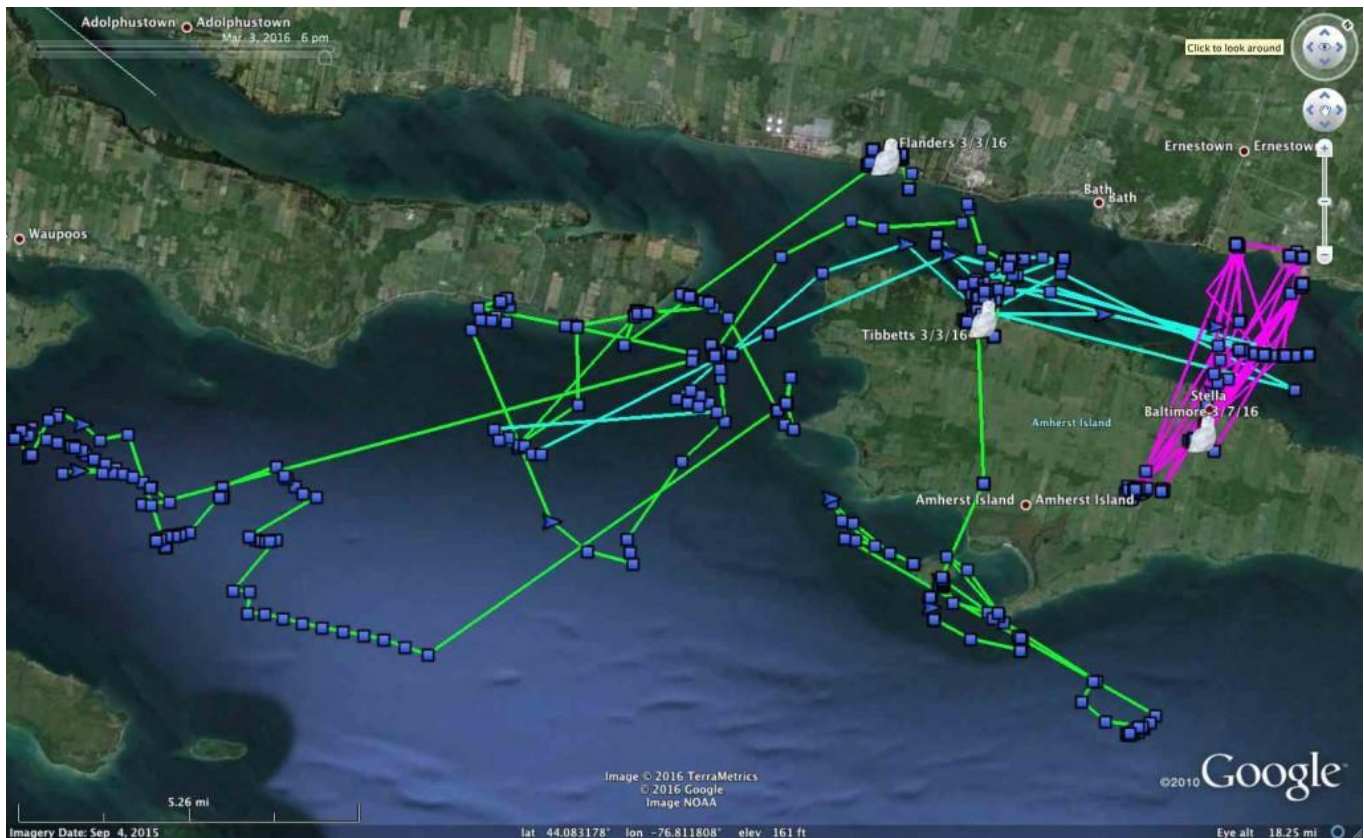
Last month Dayle was contacted by a journalist from the Science Desk at the Public Radio Network in Washington D.C., inquiring about the story of Baltimore. Dayle was away at the time so forwarded the message on to me. I got to know Adam Cole first by exchanging messages by e-mail as he filled me in on Baltimore's story. Adam had done a feature on Project SNOWstorm in 2014 when it first began. Baltimore had been banded that year but was too small to carry a transmitter. When he was recaptured in 2015 he was fitted with a transmitter and began to send messages to Scott Weidensaul, whenever the owl was near a cell phone tower. These messages bounce off a Japanese satellite and are received back in the Eastern United States. Adam wanted to follow Baltimore's travels and create a documentary about the places he visited. Adam and his producer Ryan drove to Amherst Island, nine hours driving and arrived here on Saturday, March 19th, late in the evening. What followed were several days of intense birding, talking, recording eating and generally learning more about Snowy Owls. As usual Amherst Island opened their arms to these visitors and we got to know two very, very nice young men from our neighbouring United States. They toured the Island hoping to film Baltimore, the hero of the story, but the boys were interested in filming the other Snowies that we saw on our tours as well.

On Sunday afternoon about 4 PM we finally spotted a very white, compact Snowy Owl in the field adjacent to the Road's Garage. Now Ida Gavlas, our intrepid Ferry Office manager has been

keeping tabs on a beautiful female owl that hangs out by her office. This female has even begun talking to Ida when she appears outside the office so we have dubbed her “Ida”. On this Sunday afternoon as we pulled in by the Ferry Office Ida was enjoying some late afternoon sun on a fence post directly behind the office. She was snoozing and relaxing. While Adam and Ryan filmed her she did a complete manicure, checking and scraping each of those beautiful talons and then proceeded to buff them on her snowy breast. Suddenly from behind us a large female Snowy came charging over the roof and dive bombed beautiful Ida. Ida let out a scream and in came our hero Baltimore to save the day. The extra female flew over to a further fence line and

settled her ruffled feathers while Baltimore and Ida exchanged a few words and he proceeded to sit on a nearby post. I truly believe that our Baltimore of international fame has found love on Amherst Island.

Adam and Ryan left Amherst Island on Wednesday to beat the forecasted ice storm and headed south hoping to film and interview people at other stops that Baltimore made. One stop is a high rise in Manhattan and another is a lighthouse on the east coast. When the documentary is finished we will know a lot more about Baltimore, the little owl that visited Stella during the winter 2015-2016.



Above: Baltimore (purple), Tibbetts (blue) and Flanders (green) are tracked constantly while in the region.

Photo courtesy of Project SNOWstorm
Snowy owls aren't the only dramatic birds that grace our fine island. This little confrontation occurred just off the north shore, with a bald eagle defending its dinner from three gulls.

Photo by David Pickering

SKATING ON THE ISLAND

-Judy Bierma, The Cheesemaker's Daughter

There was a Skating Party on Stella Bay in February. It brought back good memories, so I decided to ask some Islanders about their skating experiences on the Island.

I took pictures of the skaters and reminisced about skating on the Bay when we lived right there in the Cheesemaker's house. Because we were little we couldn't shovel the snow off the ice well but I remember Raymond Wemp and some other teenage boys, maybe Brucie Caughey, would shovel the snow off the ice so they could play hockey and then we: Joyce, Joan, Robert, probably the McCormicks - Paul, Anne, Jackie, Peter, Michael - and the Nielson's - Patty-Jo, Freddie and Lisa - could skate on the area where they had shoveled.



Above: Devin Forrester, Finn, Nathan Murray, Mike Murray, JP Leeders and Susan Forester Photo by Judy Bierma

Left: Clear Ice – Watching for fish. Photo by Sally Bowen

Sometimes the wind blew the snow off so the ice was clear and smooth and you could lie down on it and look waaaaay down and see bubbles and cracks and sometimes a leaf frozen in the ice. It was a magical time. I loved growing up on the Island. I never skated anywhere else on the Island but Stella Bay.

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Below: Kim Ashley, Laura and Rick Welbanks Photo by Judy Bierma

Janet Scott described skating on the quarry by Shantz's on the Front Road. There wasn't a house there then and when it froze smoothly it was great for skating. Her daughter, Sarah, could do her jumps on the outdoor ice with her \$500 skates (but her coach reprimanded her for that.) Reg Hitchins, Jamie Scott, Jamie Thornhill, Jeff de Haan, Ruth Scott and Hughie Filson would play hockey. Janet would take her big '72 Caprice that had belonged to one of the Bulch boys, Ida's brother, with her kids and the goal nets in the car and they'd meet others at the Quarry across from Wolfreyville. Another time the field across from Earl and Donna Willard's house froze briefly, clear and smooth and all the kids from the village went skating on it before it thawed.

**





Left: Ian helps Mike; Nathan is self-sufficient. Photo by Sally Bowan

Helen McCormick said she didn't have skates. Her sister was four years older and she skated down in front of Hieatt's home. The boys would skate on Kerr Bay and play hockey. Her kids would skate on Stella Bay with the Biermas and other village kids.

**

Tom Sylvester said that he had heard about someone on the South Shore in the early 1900's who skated all the way to Pigeon Island and back. Tom skated along the South Shore to Blenkinsops and as he was going the ice was breaking up behind him. That's a very long way. Anyway he dried out at Blenkinsop's and Jackie came to pick him up. He wasn't going to try to

skate back. (An aside - Tom has bicycled 2,500 km on Island roads.)

**



north"

... I said to Keith: "I don't think I remember the Mud House and yet I spent a lot of time at the Eves when I was young because Gay and I were good friends."

. "You have to remember I'm 20 years ahead of you." Keith said.

Shirley said, "The Henderson kids and my kids and I skated down on the farm where the pond is on the south side of the house. Then I got a chicken and some potatoes and we roasted them in the fire. That was with the Henderson girls and my kids. We had a good time.

"I know some place there are pictures of Jane and Glenn Miller (not Island Millers). They lived down where Peter and Suzanne Wemp live. Steve and Lorna would go skating down there too. I have pictures of burrs covered with ice that I took then. Adam was there skating too." Shirley said.

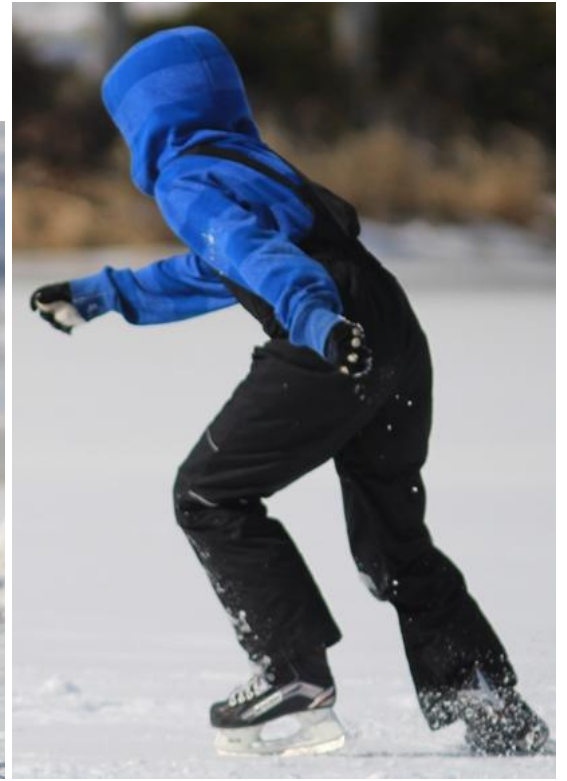
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I asked my mom, Helena Bierma, where we skated. She said, "You used to skate in that little grove (Stella Bay). Dad used to nail a board to a handle and you kids would push it around and you used to toboggan over to the point. One day I jumped on the toboggan and Michael McCormick jumped on behind and when we got to the bottom, Michael said, 'Mrs. Bierma, what are you doing on the toboggan?' I never let you kids out to play on your own".

Left: Devin Forrester

Right: JP Leeder

**Below: Mike Murray
and Nathan Murray**



“Did the teenagers play hockey on the ice?”

“No there weren’t enough of them.”

“Did you skate?”

“Yup, and George, your dad did too. He bought himself a striped shirt and ran as ref for Steven and Michael (his grandsons) later when we lived in Newburgh.”

**

I talked to Joyce (Taylor) Brown about when she was a kid and skating on the Island. Her grandfather was Robert Glenn and her grandmother, Ella Wemp. Joyce said, “I didn’t skate on the Island as a kid but my Grandmother’s brother Norman Wemp would skate on Wemp’s Bay (near Back Beach). He would do jumps and twirls and Grandmother said if there had been Olympics he would have been in them.”

**

I went to Mary and Dan Claus’ home to talk to Mary (Wemp) Claus about her memories of skating on the Island.

“We gathered all the wood from the church shed, where VanAlstyne’s live now in Emerald. Boys from the school built the big rink there. That would be a long time ago now. Let’s see I would have been 12. I was born in 44. I was here when the Amherst Islander came, that was ‘55, I would say late or middle 50’s. Jack Kerr was the teacher. We used to skate on that rink at the school.”

“Did you have lights?”

“No, turned the school lights on.”

“Where was the rink?”

“It was on the east side of the school where the parking lot is. The boys liked it because they got time out of school to flood it. Jack Kerr had to be the teacher - I still call him Mr. Kerr - and Miss Christian. I think her name was Beatrice. I missed Rutherford. She was a holy roller. She used to beat the kids, slam them into the wall.”

“Did you ever skate on Stella Bay or Kerr Bay?”

“No, we skated on the lake in Emerald. Marilyn (Miller) Eves used to skate with me to Bath and she had to haul me back because I skated on my ankles. When I was a little kid they had hockey games across from Doug Miller’s, where Streets are now. I wrote a poem about skating. I don’t know how old I was. Hugh Drumgoole was the goalie - Art’s brother. He lived up where Kyle Murray lives now. He was my uncle. There was Hugh, Cal and Dennis McGinn. Dennis had a brother Mitchel, and they played hockey. Hugh had a shovel as a hockey stick. We used to be able to skate out there on Christmas Day. Mom had to watch - she used to be giving them hell. They rode the ice cakes on skates when the ice was breaking up. I was too scared of water to do that. I never learned to swim any farther than across this room. I was always afraid of snakes in the water. We would skate up there and build a little rink. I couldn’t have been very big when those guys played hockey. Cal Drumgoole had an iceboat. He was my first cousin. His mother was my mother’s sister. We used to start at the creek in Emerald and skate way up the fields behind where Dan and Joan live maybe farther. We would go out on moonlit nights and never complained about the cold back then”.

**

I asked Jake Murray about the most recent Skating Party on Stella Bay.

“It was Jeff Forester’s idea, just an open call on Facebook; modern social media to do an old fashioned party.”

“Who came?”

“The Welbanks family, the Leeders, Foresters, Murrays and Ashleys and various other kids came. Finn Varette was there. They had shoveled most of it before I got there. Everyone brought skates, a shovel and a hockey stick. We were doing the Zamboni-manboni thing at half time. A fun old fashioned thing.”

“Where else have you skated on the Island?”

“A tradition is to skate across to the mainland and back - kind of a rite of passage. Dad took Kyle and me when we were young, towing a toboggan just in case. Then last year and this, he took the boys (Nathan and Mike Murray). You don’t need the Rideau Canal when you have the North Channel. “

We are all looking forward to having a Skating Party on Stella Bay again next year.”

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I would like to have interviewed many other Island people but I ran out of time. Another day. Hope you enjoyed the stories. Please contact me if you want to share a story. judybierma@gmail.com or 613-985-1029.



**Sally Bowen and Ian Murray and
Lake Trout thanks to Nick and
Stephan McGinn
Photo by Nick McGinn**

LOCAL ARTIST PREPARES FOR SHOW

- David Pickering

Paul Cuyler is an interesting man. As an engineer on one of the ferry crews, this Islander gets many of us to work in the morning and home at night. He is responsible for keeping the ferry moving – ensuring our vital link to the mainland.

He is also a husband and father, with the build of a blacksmith and the soul of an artist – not surprising since he is all of those things.

Paul sat with me for awhile this week, discussing what's going on in his life. The biggest thing right now is his upcoming one-man art show at The Lodge, scheduled for the 21st of May from 2 to 5.

Paul hopes to have about 40 pieces ready, from small table-top owls to 2 metre abstracts. Many of them will be one-of-a-kind, though some will have duplicates if you want to build a 'family unit,' or just avoid a fight with a neighbour who also wants it.

He says, "I'm trying to do more kinetic items. Either stuff that is moving, or that LOOKS like it is moving even if it is not. The sculpture thing is neat, and I'm having a lot of fun with it. I'm exploring shapes, letting the natural forms lead the way for me." Certainly Paul's work is fun. He likes to use 'found stuff,' from garden implements to old castings. When he finds a shape, he lets him remind him of something – then builds it.



An Owl and A Woodpecker
Photos by Victoria Cuyler

While Paul has worked in metal all his life, it's only recently that he has had a chance to return to his artistic leanings. Such 'experimentation' doesn't guarantee a living income, and so he spent a lot of years doing commissions and custom metalwork. He says he started early.

"I was running a coal forge when I was 14. My dad's a master rigger. He splices and braids wire rope by hand for cranes, sailboats, helicopters and so on. He did the cables that the Sikorskis used to haul stuff to the top of the CN tower. I remember, when I was a wee lad; him unspooling the heavy braided cable along the sidewalk in Toronto to measure it. He worked for a blacksmith himself when he was a kid, and he got me started. I've been doing it a LONG time."

We talked about other stuff he has worked on. He's been a bladesmith, forging seven-fold laminated Japanese blades. He's done Damascus steel, and steel cable where you actually heat the cable in a forge and weld it into a block under a hammer, before shaping it into a blade. That was when he was 20 – almost 30 years ago.

He did years of traditional blacksmith stuff, and one of his most treasured possessions is his 185 lb

anvil. Forged in 1823 in Sheffield, England, it's made of tool steel and is very rare. (Still, I really doubt that anyone is going to steal it. Ask Adam Miller about moving an anvil.)

I know, when I go to the show next month, I'm going to be looking for one of his sundials. He said he has one piece made using a gear from an old horse-drawn wagon. "It's a drive gear with pointed teeth. I used square nails to make the roman numerals. It has a big Massey Harris logo on it. I have enough material to make two of them. They can even be used to keep time. I'm setting them up for our latitude of 44.2 degrees. The pointer has to look at the north star. They won't work right in Arizona unless I make them adjustable. Sundials have such interesting shapes to start with, it's easy to make art out of them."

Paul isn't only naturally talented; he's professionally trained. His portfolio was impressive enough to grant him entry into the Ontario College of Art. He also attended George Brown College for graphic sign design. He worked at that for a while, doing brush lettering, truck painting, windows and so forth. When computers came in, he learned the new skills associated with those. I remember a few years ago swapping out the monitor on the computer that controlled his plasma cutter in his shop. He doesn't only swing an eight-pound hammer.

When I visited Paul at his shop on Tuesday past, I saw that he had three works in progress. He's touching up his Model A hotrod. He's working on a '30 Chev four-door convertible, and finishing up on a body build for a car owned by Gian Frontini. He says, for the Chev, that he's putting the body and sub-frame together. It will probably be sold to some hot-rodder who will make their own car out of it. For Gian, it's a total body build from scratch. Hopefully you'll see Gian tooling around the island in it by summer.

Paul's also has pieces of a 1974 motorcycle. I asked when we could expect to see that on the road, and he says he has no idea. Even if he builds it, that doesn't mean he's going to keep it. It's just the joy of working with the metal that he loves.

Speaking of love, he says he and Victoria love the island. Life is good, and the commute (for either of them) is really great. Also, "people here seem to really appreciate hand-made things. Where I came from, the Durham region, people always seemed so rushed. They wanted to run out and get it at WalMart. I love the fact that I can bang and crash

around and not bother anyone. Here, I have people who like and appreciate my work. It makes me want to push myself a little bit further."



Hen and chicks
Photo by Victoria Cuyler

LOYALIST BUDGET

-Press Release, March 17

At the March 14, 2016 Council Meeting, Loyalist Township Council approved the 2016 Operating and Capital budgets as follows:

- General Rate 2016 Operating Budget of \$12.6 million, Capital of \$3.7 million
- Water 2016 Operating Budget \$3.8 million, Capital of \$1 million
- Sewer 2016 Operating Budget \$3.3 million, Capital of \$1.3 million
- Amherst Island Ferry 2016 Budget of \$2.8 million
- Transit Service Area 2016 Budget of \$720,500, Capital of \$20,000

The 2016 budget was developed to align with Loyalist Township's Mission and Vision Statements as well as the Strategic Plan Action Items identified by Council in the Township Strategic Plan. The other main driver in the 2016 budget is a focused approach to funding capital requirements.

The budget incorporates an increase of \$1 million to transfers to capital from operating. Approximately half of the increase is in the general rate municipal budget and half of the increase is in the utilities budget. The Township is contemplating additional debt in the amount of \$8 million in 2016 to fund budgeted capital as well as to fund the Unfinanced Capital Outlay balance (UFCO). The UFCO balance is the accumulation of capital projects completed in

prior years that have not yet been funded. The estimated balance at December 31, 2015 for both general rate and utilities UFCO is between \$6 million and \$7 million. The 2016 budget includes a preliminary plan that will substantially fund this balance by 2020.

The proposed new debt will result in an increase of \$243,000 in debt payments in the general rate budget and an increase of \$232,000 in the utilities budget. The rest of the 2016 operating budget generally reflects a continuation of existing levels of service as compared to 2015 operations.

Staff and Council deliberated over the 2016 budget at several meetings to arrive at an increase in the Loyalist Township portion of the tax rate of 2.3% and a projected total tax rate increase of 0.7% which includes the Lennox and Addington County and Education portions.

The total assessment as determined by MPAC, is

5% higher for 2016 as compared to 2015 and the increase represents a combination of growth together with the 4th year of the four-year phase in. Assessment increases between the most recent valuation date of January 1, 2012 and the previous valuation date of January 1, 2008 are phased in over the four years from 2013 to 2016 ...

The budget process is a challenging balancing act; to maintain, and where possible, enhance municipal services and plan for capital funding requirements while maintaining prudent property tax rate levels. Council faces increased budgetary pressures due to decreases in government funding, significant capital infrastructure requirements, increases in levels of debt financing costs and increases in operational costs such as energy costs.

News Release dated March 17, 2016

For more information, please see the Township website at www.loyalist.ca/go/budget.



Above, John Bland (project designer) and Andre Lemieux (President DSC) – Photo by Brian Little

During March, Dry Stone Canada held their Annual General Meeting at The Lodge on Amherst Island. Attendees took some time to inspect the sun portal erected in September last year. Of note – the sun alignment works twice a year – first when the sun is passing north to the summer solstice, and second when it is going south. Optimum alignment is 89 days on either side of 21 June.

COUNCIL GLEANINGS

- Ian Murray

From 3rd Meeting of Council, Feb8th

Moved by Deputy Mayor Bresee and Seconded by Councillor Daniliunas that the report from the Project Supervisor, January 29, 2016 re: Tender 2016-01 - Front Road Reconstruction, be received and the following be adopted:

1. That Council give pre-budget approval for the additional funding contribution of \$440,000 in 2016;
2. That Morven Construction Limited be awarded Loyalist Township Tender 2016-01 Front Road Reconstruction at a cost of \$1,051,126.00 including HST; and
3. That By-law 2016-011, being a by-law to authorize an agreement with Morven Construction for the reconstruction of the westerly end of Front Road on Amherst Island, be approved.

Enacted and Passed this 8th day of February, 2016.

AIMS

- David Pickering

The April AIMS meeting took place on the 2nd Saturday (March 12th) in the church hall at St Paul's. Breakfast was served at 8 AM, and Jay Brennan, the new minister at St. Paul's, was our guest speaker. Eleven members attended.

Jay gave a little bit of his background and interests. He's still getting to know the Island and the people. He frequently goes out for walks, and enjoys when people stop to chat. You can recognize him by his funny hat.

He was born in '62 (fast math – approx. 54). He was baptized and confirmed as Roman Catholic in Toronto, but moved to Protestant as the result of attending a youth group there. He attended Knox College on Bay St, studying theology but also business. He became a Mortgage Broker, a Realtor, a Business Broker, etc. (Keep him in mind if you need advice on starting a business.) Currently, he is on the Island half the time, with the other half in Toronto. He still has business interests there, and is studying philanthropy.

Jay has been on the Island since July, and he thinks it's just GREAT. The events, socializing, and meetings are wonderfully helpful for a new person. He loves nature – and spends time in the Owl

Woods. His eleven-year-old (John) has already gotten involved in birding, and is entirely enjoying the binoculars he's been gifted with. Mind you ... it is difficult to convince his classmates in Toronto that he has actually seen an eagle.

Regarding his Ministry, Jay says he does a lot of work with men and boys. He has worked in Penal institutions, mental health institutions and with Boy Scouts. Bath is trying to recruit him for their troop. He does a lot of weddings – more than 40 last year alone. He says many men and boys are unprepared for them. Same thing with death. At a funeral, it becomes apparent that many have not prepared. The media, video games, public school – all leave a young man ill-prepared to assume his role in our society. This is something he wants to help with. Also – he reminds everyone that he does maintain confidentiality with any conversations he has. Please, let people know he is available. Stop by the Church and chat.

After Jay's talk, the meeting proceeded with the Treasurer's report, the Transportation Report, discussions on possible charities we might support, and brainstorming on ways to deal with declining membership. Watch for a recruitment drive over the summer.

Is Marc prescient? While discussing what the Island can do to support its businesses and artists, he made mention of Fogo Island. "This is what we should be doing. Go and Google it." I had never heard of it – didn't even know what country it was in, so I did. Turns out it is in Newfoundland, 100 km north of Gander. Oh, and guess where the Prime Minister took his wife and family for Easter? I would say they are doing something right.

Now, what can Amherst Island do? If you want to get involved with this, please contact Marc Raymond.

The next meeting will be held on Saturday April 9th.

MARCUS BERMANN IN CHINA

-Christopher Kennedy

I went to an interesting Back Room Talk from another Amherst Island traveller. Marcus Bermann, (married to Amy Caughey) spent six weeks in China as a student studying Chinese economics at Fudan University, in Shanghai.

He had many pictures showing the amazing changes in China in the last thirty years. Gone are the uniform blue work clothes and Chairman Mao's

Little Red Book. From a dour Communist society, it has turned into a modern economic capitalist power house, but with the Communist Party keeping a tight control on freedom of dissent, and the press.

He showed the contrast between the skyscrapers and dazzling modern architecture in Shanghai, the multitude of security cameras and the police waiting in vans in Tiananmen Square for anyone stepping out of line. He also talked about the lack of freedom for the rural population to move from their home villages, and the difference in prosperity between the cities and the rural areas.

Several of his photos showed another cost of this breakneck development, the thick fog of air pollution in the cities.

It will be interesting to see where China will be in another ten years. Perhaps Marcus can bring back another report then.



Doreen Wolfries with Hudson Wartman, Lynn and Larry's grandson - photo by Lynn Fleming

Lynn Fleming reported a visit to Leonard and

Doreen Wolfreys. Hudson (with Doreen) and Cooper (with Leonard) Wartman visited with their great, great uncle and aunt at their new home in Kingston. Leonard and Doreen are former Island residents. Cooper and Hudson are the sons of Jeff and Stephanie (Fleming) Wartman

CJAI ANNIVERSARY PARTY

- Cathy Jane Christmas, Vice-President of CJAI



Cake created by Lynn Fleming

I have never worked so hard on a day off in all my life!

Thanks to my partner-in-crime Erin Merry, we managed to accomplish a small miracle yesterday. I would also like to thank Lynn Fleming (the cake was delish and the hunky bartenders were delightful) Larry & Sherri Jensen for ALL their hard work....the video dance party idea was an amazing concept and worked perfectly!!

The lasagna dinner for 'staff' was very much appreciated as well;)

The sound was phenomenal and for this I would like to give a HUGE shout out to Bobbie N Buck Roswell from Roswell Rehearsals. Your expertise and patience was very much appreciated! Thank You!!

To all of those who worked tirelessly behind the scenes, you certainly have shown this mainland girl what the Island community is all about. The gym was packed with young and old, and as far as I could see, everyone had a great time!

CJAI has certainly grown in leaps and bounds over the past ten years and it's because of YOU. Thanks for all your support!

CJAI ANNIVERSARY PARTY

-Eric Tremblay

Amherst Island Radio celebrated its 10th Anniversary at the Community Centre on Friday April 1st. Over 200 people streamed in and out during the FREE 5-hour dance party with sound expertly provided by Trevor and Anita from Roswell Rehearsals.

It included great snacks, amazing sandwiches, homemade pies and delicious cake! Definitely something for everyone. Expert bartenders included Lynn & Larry Fleming, and Rick Bedford. Rick and Larry are seen below. Lynn is taking the picture.



Several door prizes were given out including season tickets to the Amherstview Jets, camouflage sunglasses, gift certificates (Papa Pete's, Cora's, Royal Canadian Legion, Doug's Barber Shop), an Island print of Stella from past resident Terry Culbert, Loyalist Cove Marina and Topsy Farms swag. Topsy Farms also generously donated a keg of MacKinnon Brothers beer.

There were several special people in attendance and Rosemarie Cooke (formerly Richmond) was on hand to tell us a story of what it felt like 10 years

ago when the station first started broadcasting.

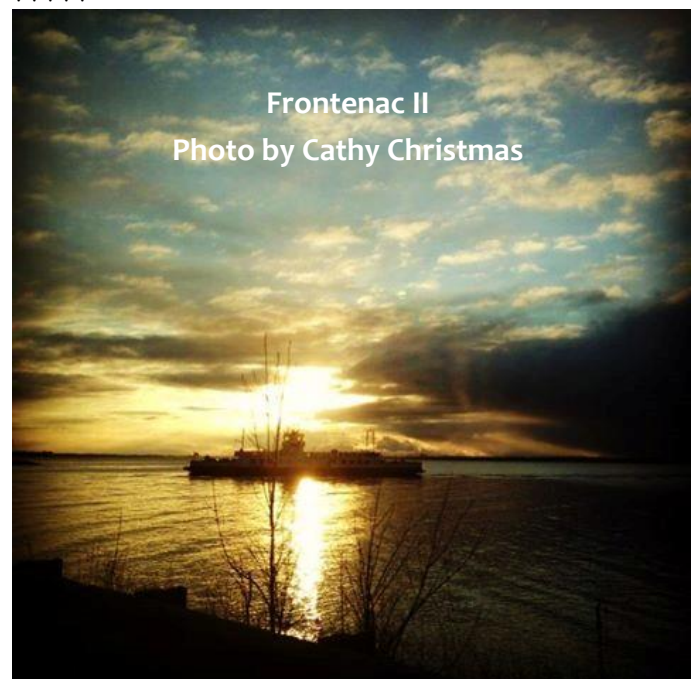
The celebration organizing committee included Lynn Fleming, Larry Jensen, Cathy Christmas and Erin Merry. They promise that the celebration will continue as the next 7 weeks at the station will involve a series of on-air giveaways, such as gift certificates to places such as the Keg, Fast Freddy's Free Flow Petroleum, Schell's Groceries, one night's stay at Poplar Dell Bed & Breakfast Bed and the Final Grand Prize (generously donated by Lafarge Inc.) which includes a trip for two to Quebec City Business Class Via One with a GIANT pre-paid Visa Card!

Stay tuned to 92.1 FM for more details!

Happy Birthday Amherst Island Radio!



Radio station alumni Peter Trueman and Michèle LeLay at CJAI. Photo by Terry Culbert

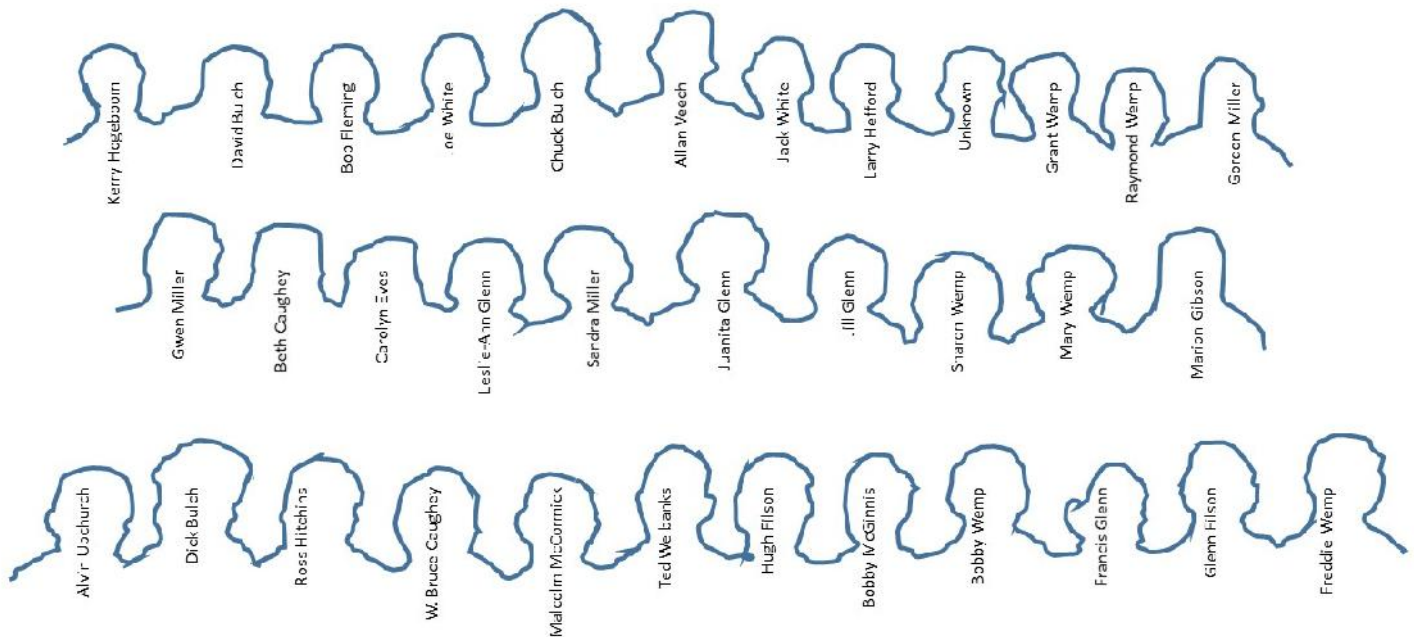


**Frontenac II
Photo by Cathy Christmas**

Amherst Island School Photo Challenge



Thank you for feedback on last month's school picture. The 'unknown' student was identified as Bobby Wemp. This month's photo has two challenges. What year was it taken, and who is the unknown? Send your replies to aibeacon@topsyfarms.com





**Dry Stone Canada Presents:
Amherst Island Stone Carving Workshop
SPRING 2016**

Featuring: Karin Sprague & Tracy Mahaffey

Where: The Lodge on Amherst Island
320 McDonalds Lane
Stella, Ontario

Cost: \$350

At the end of the 2-day course you will have a stone carving to take home

Preparation: Select a word or two to carve as your project stone

All tools and stone will be provided

Saturday, April 23rd check in at The Lodge between 9 am – 9:45 Class runs from 10 am to 4pm
(snack, lunch & dinner provided)

Sunday, April 24th from 10 am to 4 pm (snack and lunch provided)

Space is limited to only 18 students and will be allocated on first come basis based upon payment

Full payment must be made ahead

Accommodation options are available upon request.

To register email: drystonecanada@yahoo.ca

or

Andrea Cross at: andrea@meriton.ca

**Topsy Farms invites our neighbours
to come watch shearing on:**

Sat, Apr 23 (8 am to 6 pm), or

Sun, Apr 24 (8 am to 3 pm).

These are free events.

**Please phone us at 613-389-3444 or
e-mail info@topsyfarms.com to book
a time or for more information.**



**Right: Val Wolfries, explaining shearing to
visitors at Topsy Farms - photo by Brian Little**

EVENTS

The Lodge on Amherst Island

April

Stone Carving Workshop
Fri, April 22-Sun, April 24

May

Art Show
Saturday, May 21 2pm-5pm
Paul Cuyler Blacksmith
Private Booking
Fri, May 27-Sun, May 29
Doug Mays Workshop
Sun, May 29-Thursday, June 2

June

Private Booking
Thurs, June 2-Sun, June 4
Private Booking
Sun, June 12-Sat, June 18
Private Booking
Fri, June 24-Sun, June 26
Margot Miller Floor Cloths
Sun, June 26-Wed, June 29

July

Art Show
July 2, 2016 2pm-5pm
Waterside
Sat, July 2-Mon, July 4
Waterside
Sat, July 9-Mon, July 11
Norman Haddow Workshop
Fri, July 15-Sun, July 17
Dry Stone Certification Course
Wed, July 13-Fri, July 22
Dry Stone Wall Event
Mon, July 25-Fri, July 28
Waterside
Fri, July 29-Sun, July 31

August

Waterside
Fri, August 5-Sun, August 7
Waterside
Mon, August 15-Wed August 17
Private Booking
Thurs, August 25-Sun, August 28
Private Booking

Sept

Art Show
September 1, 2016 2pm-5pm

Oct

All Island Art Show
October 8, 2016 2pm-5pm
Stone Carving Workshop
Fri, Oct, 21-Sunday, Oct 23

Sept

For information on these events
or to book rooms
call

613.634.1388

email

thelodgeonamherstisland@gmail.com

Contact



Information

The Lodge has 6 rooms, 5 with 2 beds and 1 with a double only, we also have 2 cottages, one 2 bedroom cottage and one bedroom studio cottage. The Lodge has well appointed main rooms, large kitchen/family room, living room, dining room and screen porch. All bathrooms are shared. Please call or email for pricing.

Host Molly Stroyman
The Lodge on Amherst Island
320 McDonalds Lane
Stella ON K0H 2S0

www.thelodgeonamherstisland.com
thelodgeonamherstisland@gmail.com



RUMMAGE SALE!

Saturday April 30 11am-2pm

Bake Sale - BBQ - Rummage Sale



Please attend and support Amherst Island Public School!
Funds raised will go toward the senior class trip to Ottawa and the milk program!



**GET YOUR
RID OF
STUFF**

Donations of household goods can be dropped off
at the school on April 29th, 3pm-6pm.
Can't get your donation to the school?
No problem! Let us pick it up!
For pick up on that day, or enquiries, call Mike Walhout.
Cell # 613-561-1333

STUDENT JOBS

Join our team at Eastern Ontario's newest start-up, The Back Kitchen, a community venture.

Are you looking for a rewarding work experience this summer? We are hiring a Manager, a Team Lead/Cook and two Kitchen Staff/Servers. The Manager will be registered in a post-secondary food services or hospitality program with some restaurant and/or management experience. The Team Lead/Cook is first, and foremost, a great cook willing to lead the Team when the Manager is off shift and registered in a post-secondary food services, hospitality or related program. The two Staffers are likely in secondary school or college preferably with some experience working in kitchens and serving in a restaurant.

Please request detailed job descriptions from dpearce@kos.net.

We are seeking team players who are self-motivated and absolutely committed to customer service. To succeed you will need to demonstrate a flexible approach and problem-solving ability. You are ready to learn, ready to lead, and ready to lend a hand whenever and wherever it is needed from garbage detail, to scooping ice cream, to cooking dinner for 50. You are a people-person who remembers details, who approaches tasks with skills and enthusiasm, whose positive attitude is obvious to customers and coworkers alike. You enjoy working with volunteers and serving customers.

If this sounds like a great fit, we want to hear from you!

Please send your résumé to dpearce@kos.net and specify the job you're interested in, your qualifications, and what skills you believe you can bring to the Back Kitchen.

Please also include a cover letter (max one page) that answers the following question:

"What makes you a great candidate to work at the Back Kitchen?"

The Back Kitchen is on Amherst Island within easy walking distance to the ferry from Millhaven.

Please think about where you would stay before you apply.

Deadline for submission is April 15th, 2016, so get that résumé and letter in!

THE BACK KITCHEN UPDATE

- Lorna Willis

Much has happened since January 9th when more than fifty brave volunteers gathered at the Community Centre to discuss the dream of turning the Stella's Café into a volunteer-led community enterprise. Working groups have been meeting to plan, organize, and move things forward. The groups include: Administration; Menu; Facility; Marketing; Staffing; Training; and, Opening and Service. Everyone is working with great enthusiasm and optimism.

Thanks to everyone who participated in our Facebook poll, we now have a name. By renaming the Café "The Back Kitchen", we are tipping our hats to history and tradition – maintaining Judy and Anthony's tradition of making the Stella's Café a fun, welcoming spot and aspiring to serve great, home-style food as everyone remembers from Garry and Susan's Back Kitchen - of course, we can't even try to duplicate Barbara Filson's delicious home-baked pies!

We are officially incorporated as a not-for-profit organization. This has allowed us to apply for a Canada Student Jobs grant and we are awaiting word on this.

We have received a start-up grant from the Napanee District Community Foundation. We are reaching out to island groups and businesses that may also be able to provide support. We are grateful to Topsy Farms, our first local business supporter.

We have a great menu that focuses on scratch cooking and features many local suppliers. The menus cover breakfast, lunch, and dinner with feature dinner specials on weekends. What's really exciting are the baked in-house signature desserts and ice cream!

We are connected. Check out menu details on the Back Kitchen website (Thanks to Terry McGinn)

www.thebackkitchen.com. Follow us on social media: Facebook – The Back Kitchen; Twitter and Instagram @BackKitchen_AI.

A number of special events are planned, including Friday Night Sing-a-Longs.

Peggy Edwards and Ali MacKeen are planning a Spring Cleaning – email us if you would like to help out. (amherstislandcafe@gmail.com)

The Back Kitchen will accept cash, debit, and credit cards.

Mark your calendars for our Grand Opening on Friday, May 20th.

Regular Hours of Operation will be:	May 20 to June 30	Thurs – Sun	8 AM – 8 PM
	Mon 23 May	Victoria Day	8 AM – 8 PM
	Jul 1 to Labour Day	7 Days a Week	8 AM - 8 PM

Hours may change based on business levels

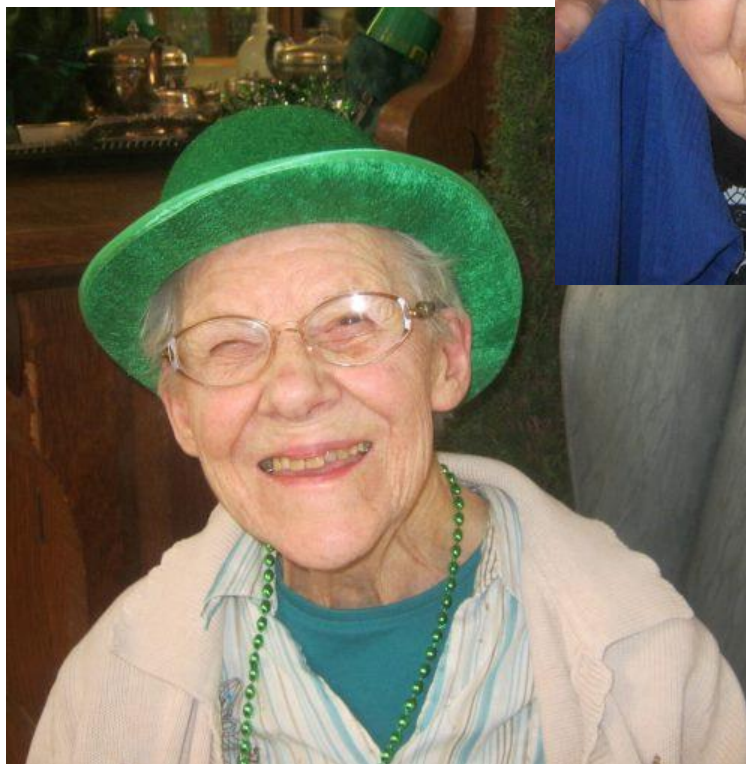
Service between Labour Day and Thanksgiving is to be determined.

Interested in volunteering? The staffing committee has a sign-up site at <http://vols.pt/8mhtv6> or email amherstislandcafe@gmail.com. We are currently hiring student staff.

There is much to do between now and the Grand Opening but many hands are making light work.

We hope to see you all on the 20th!

**Doris Henderson and Judy Bierma
at the St Patrick's Day Party
Helen Henderson Home
Selfie – by Judy**



**Left: Jean Tugwell
at the same event.
Photo by Judy Bierma**

ISLAND BOOKKEEPING

Simple bookkeeping, payroll, and tax preparation needs at very competitive prices. Call Renée for more information and free quotes at 613 929-4545.

I am looking for unwanted house paint. I can use any leftover 1/2 cans for painting bee boxes. Strong colours are preferred but any would be welcome. Dave Meikle 613 328-8892

SPRING DANCE & FISH FRY

(Please note DATE CHANGE for this year)

The annual Spring Dance and Fish Fry will be held on Saturday, May 14th this year.

Tickets are \$13 per person. Children under 10, \$6 Please reserve your tickets from Rick Bedford, 389-8434 or Larry & Lynn Fleming, 634-2509.

HOUSE IN THE VILLAGE FOR RENT by the week or weekend. Contact Jan Sydorko at 519-451-1197 or email michael.sydorko@sympatico.ca

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.

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

SHIRLEY MILLER

Paintings, Prints & Art Classes
613-389-2588

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

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

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 packages 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.

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

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.

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

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

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.

RAWLEIGH PRODUCTS FOR SALE

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



**Steve Kennedy with
daughter Ainsley at the
CJAI 10th Anniversary
party.
Photo by Cathy Christmas**

FROM THE ARCHIVES:

From AI BEACON: April 1986 - Vol 4 Issue 99

EDITORIAL

-Ian Murray

When I first moved to the Island 16 years ago, several things about the community impressed me. The lack of vandalism was remarkable: houses abandoned for several years still had all windows intact. Many residents, permanent and seasonal, never locked a door - on building or vehicle.

This has changed over the years. Windows are smashed, cars are willfully damaged, street signs are defaced, and individuals are harassed on one pretext or another. There have been break-ins to seasonal residences over the past few months with alcohol and other goods stolen.

These doings are not unique to Amherst Island. For a host of reasons, there is an epidemic of petty (and not so petty) lawlessness in our society. Having said that, I will say that the vandalism, the thefts and the bullying are a disgrace to this community.

Last fall, Council requested police action to halt certain actions in the village. Things did quiet down - perhaps as much due to the cold weather as anything - and most people, I suspect, were relieved. However, the only way that the property and personal rights will be safe in the long run is for each of us to act as responsible citizens. If you see wrong doing, do something about it: call the police, or the Reeve, if necessary. Be a witness - don't turn away.

COUNCIL REPORT FOR APRIL 1, 1986

-Christopher Kennedy

The minutes of the meetings in March were adopted. In addition to the regular meeting, there was a Finance Committee meeting on March 18, followed by a special council meeting on the budget, and a meeting of the Ferry Agreement Negotiating Committee on March 20.

The Building Inspector said no permits were issued in March.

Bill Blum, Municipal Engineer for M.T.C. reported on the Ferry Transportation Study. A long report has been issued, which will be condensed before the public meeting. He explained that M.T.C. has commissioned the report because the docks require extensive repair and they wished to examine the alternatives before spending a lot of money.

Totten, Sims, Hubicki, a Kingston engineering firm, prepared the study. They recommended leaving the location of the docks unchanged, but replacing the Amherst Islander with an end loader when the Amherst Islander retires in about 15 years. A bridge was prohibitively expensive. The study said that there would be no great increase in usage in the next few years. The study cost about \$20,000. Council talked about the possibility of using the Charlevoix during the summer, but it is a very much heavier boat and may seriously damage the docks.

The Reeve reported on his activities for the month. At County Council the High School teachers came to put their case, but had met a somewhat frosty reception. The Gypsy Moth spraying programme has started, using Bacillus Thuringerrius, not the chemical Sevin. County Council is trying to keep the budget increase below 4%. The Council Councillors are still unhappy with the way the Health Unit is being run.

The Ferry Subsidy Agreement was finally passed, though Council is still arguing with M.T.C. about whether the lawyer hired for labour negotiations is an allowable expense. The Ferry manager has discussed the issue of overtime scheduling with the Union rep., Doug Shurtliffe.

The Roads Committee has applied for some supplementary subsidies. Council wants more information about the auto extrication programme (jaws-of-life) which are meant to be available.

Council admitted that it has no right to prevent the dumping of fence wire or large appliances at the dump. The fence wire must have all parts removed, be rolled up and placed in the right area. Old cars and dead animals, or parts of cars or animals, may not be dumped.

Morven Construction is still not happy about the payment for the drain. Graham Engineering has not replied to the letters sent on to them.

Council has received four letters on dog control, however, kept its tail firmly between its legs and decided to wait for more input before making a decision. Perhaps people will express their opinions at the open meeting on April 21st. Ian will draw up a possible by-law, and find out the costs of hiring a dog catcher.

There were various resolutions before Council. They decided not to support cost benefit analysis for drains, supported protecting agriculture against trade, and decided not to boost the N.D.S.S. band.

Before they adjourned, they sensibly decided that a school bus full of kids has priority on the ferry.

COMMENT

- Ian Murray

I realize that Chris is only poking fun at Council for not making a quicker decision on dog control. In Council's (and my own) defense, I will say that we are very reluctant to pass any by-law that is as restrictive as a dog control by-law must be. To proceed from the present situation in which a by-law enforcement officer is empowered to not only catch a dog, but to kill it if he is unable to catch it, should require a lot of deliberation.

I believe that dogs should be controlled but I am hesitant to vote in such a by-law. I suspect that the members of Council hope that dog owners will voluntarily keep their dogs on their own property so that the problem will go away. Otherwise, I think that we have to proceed with a by-law.

4-H NEWS

- Julie Forester

The theme of this session of 4-H Homemaking was "Milk Makes It". Our leaders were Phyllis Strain and Marion Glenn. Members included Trudi Strain, Shannon Eves, Sarah McDonald, Sherry Ward, Leah Murray and myself.

Our main purpose was to discover different ways to prepare and serve dairy products and why our body needs them.

Our club began this session in late February, and will conclude it on this Thursday in Napanee at Achievement Night. On this occasion, we will set up a display board on "From the Cow to You - the Journey Along the Milky Way". A commentary will be presented on how milk gets from the cow to the dairy store.

Our thanks are extended with heartfelt appreciation to the Women's Institute for their financial assistance for the session, and all others!

4-H is for anyone between 12 and 21. Come and join 4-h - the rewards are limitless!

JUMP-ROPE-FOR-HEART

-Beth Forester

Do you remember March 7th? It was blustery, snowy winter day on which you welcomed home from school, your youngster - and welcomed the beginning of March Break! For 120 minutes that afternoon, 39 of the school children were very

actively participating in a skip-a-thon. It was a most successful event. The students at the school raised \$728.00, which has been given to the Heart and Stroke Foundation. Contributors of \$5.00 and above should have received receipts. A special thank you to the skippers, the sponsors who gave generously, the mothers who came to help with the event, and to those who contributed cookies and juice. Your willingness and co-operation is appreciated.

DAIRY PRINCESS' VISIT

The following is a co-operative story written by the students of the Primary class following a visit of the Lennox and Addington, and the Ontario Dairy Princess':

"Caroline Kelderman is the Dairy Princess for Lennox and Addington. Allison Hagerman is Dairy Princess for Ontario. We learned that after a heifer has a baby, it can give milk. They told us the names of cattle. A baby girl is called a calf. A baby boy is called a bull calf. Teenagers are 1 and 2 year olds. They are called heifers. There are many kinds of cattle. There are Holsteins, Jerseys, Guernseys, and Ayrshires.

The Dairy Princess' eat good food. They live on a Dairy farm. They had to milk a cow to be a Dairy princess. They wear sash and a tierra. They are pretty. They like their job."

"Dairy Days" are held on this Saturday - April 19th - at three different farms in our county.

PUBLIC SPEAKING

-Hugh Filson and Jamie Scott

On March 21st, Amherst Island Public School held the finals for speeches. The finalists from the junior room were: Jeff Forester who did his speech on Airplanes; Amy Caughey who did hers on Halley's Comet; Lori Caughey who talked about milk; Chad Miller who did his speech on Sayings; and, Laura Wemp who spoke about First Aid.

From the senior room the finalists were Hugh Filson with a speech on Motorcycles, Adam Miller with the Marysburgh Triangle, Sherry Ward who did here speech on Alcoholism, Jamie Miller with a speech on Orangutans and Shannon Eves who did a speech on Babysitting.

The judges had a hard time deciding on the winners because all the speeches were very well written and presented. Finally, the judges decided. Chad Miller would advance on to Napanee and Adam Miller was chosen as runner-up.

SUMMER HELP

- Staff

The Beacon will, over the next few months, publish the names of those people looking for summer work. Please provide us with your name, age, phone number, type(s) of work that you are interested in, and your work experience.

Perhaps those looking for help will write in as well.

I.S.L.E.

-Annette

The I.S.L.E. Committee wishes to thank all the mothers who have so kindly helped us with our hot lunch program this year.

We wish to convey special thanks to Judy Miller for her record-keeping and her tremendous assistance with the milk program.

In upcoming events: I.S.L.E.'s Bingo and Euchre night has been rescheduled for Thursday, May 1, 7:30 to 9:30.

Also, keep Wednesday, April 30 clear, for Amherst Island Public School will be have Open House as part fo Education Week.

The students of Amherst Island are currently preparing for a Giant Garage Sale, Saturday, April 26 at Henderson Arena. Any donations of baking, crafts or collectibles would be greatly appreciated.

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

- Annette

Congratulations to Wayne Fleming and Karen Gilbert, the first couple to lead off the procession of weddings this summer. Wayne and Karen are to be married April 19 at St. Paul's. Best wishes also to Sandra Bernier and Scott Topping, who have an August wedding date, and to John Glenn (believe it or not) and Maureen Nesbitt who are planning on September 20.

Our sympathy to Mary Robinson on the loss of her husband and to Vera Hogeboom, whose sister recently passed away.

It appears all our winter sun-seekers have arrived back, well and all accounted for. Welcome home to Ray and Ethel Duncan, John and Mary Hall, Jack and Madelyn Kerr, Vince and Marg Aitken and also to Jean Johnstone who wasn't away south, but didn't dare spend the winter on Amherst Island. Welcome back also to Mr. Downey who spent a brief time in hospital.

A reminder that the Recreation Committee's Annual Spring Dance is coming up May 17. Music by Houston: tickets will be on sale shortly from Annette (at the store) and Betty Wemp.

Amherst Island has seen some good dogs and some bad dogs, but seldom have we seen a more noteworthy dog than Max. He will long be remembered for eating Doug's house and home; for eating the seat belt out of Doug's brand-new truck; for eating his way through the fence. We shall all remember Max for the many months of entertainment he gave us through this column, and well we should, for Max is no more. Max has gone to live with a nice family in the country; one with no small children and one with cast-iron furniture. Good-bye Max, it's been nice knowing you. (Anyone with suggestions to fill this space contact me immediately.)

AMHERST ISLAND WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

-Diane Gavlas

The Amherst Island W.I. is again collecting for the Cancer Society. This is being done door-to-door in the month of April. Your support will be appreciated.

Highlights from the W.I.'s past year: An 85th Anniversary was celebrated with a Tea. Three members were presented with life membership badges for their continued support and work. They are Mrs. Marion Glenn, Mrs. Anna Hitchings and Mrs. Thelma Howard.

Fund-raising included a raffle for an afghan and a Ham Dinner on Mother's Day.

We served a diner to the Blind Friendship Club, and were pleased to once again have the Christmas Party for Senior Citizens.

The District President was invited to a meeting and we had a pot luck supper. The W.I. was also asked to canvass for the Blind, Heart and Cancer Societies. Thank you again for your support in these.

Two 4-H clubs were sponsored and a donation given to the ball teams.

The April meeting is on the 16th of April, 8:00 p.m. at Mrs. Irene Glenn's. This is our annual meeting and election of officers. New members are invited to join now or anytime throughout the year.

The May meeting will be on May 21st, 8 p.m. at Mrs. Marion Glenn's. Roll Call is How to improve communications in a family.

Thank you for your continued support at Women's Institute functions. We hope to have another good year with our community.

GIRL GUIDES AND BROWNIES

On Monday April 7th, parents and friends were invited to our International Night.

Special guest was Mrs. Bernice Watson, our Divisional Commissioner who presented badges to the following girls:

Brownies:

Jill Caughey - Golden Bar, Skier, World Friendship
Angela Fleming - Golden Bar, Skier, World Friendship
Jessica Gavlus - Golden Bar, Skier, World Friendship
Heidi Hitchins - Golden Bar, Skier, World Friendship
Ruth Scott - Golden Bar, Skier

Guides:

Amy Caughey - Hostess, World Trefoil Skier, Cook's Badge
Lori Caughey - Dairy Worker, World Trefoil Skier, Collector
Tracy Hitchins - World Trefoil Skier, Cook's Badge
Sarah Scott - Dancer on Ice, World Trefoil Skier, Cook's Badge

An international meal was served afterwards. Special thanks to all those mothers who helped clean up afterwards.

Please remember we'll be selling Girl Guide cookies at the end of April and the early part of May at \$2.00 a box. Give your orders to any Guide or Brownie or leave your name at the store. A carton contains 12 boxes.

FOR SALE

-Ian Murray

A considerable amount of this Island is for sale. There are For Sale signs and Sorry Its Sold signs in some abundance. To satisfy my curiosity I contacted the real estate companies on the listed properties to see what the asking prices are on some of the properties.

A) A water-front lot on Front Road owned by Bert Nesbit and listed by Royal LePage: \$44,900, 7.2 acres, 604' of water frontage.

B) A water-front lot east of Stella listed by Bowes & Cox: \$25,900, 229' of water frontage with a partially blasted rock slip.

C) A block of land at the South-East corner of the Island list by Bowes & Cox: \$350/acre (\$192,500).

D) A water-front lot west of Stella owned by Albert Emericks listed by Omni (Tracy Mangan): \$50,000, with 10.4 acres, 550' water-frontage with a house and barn.

E) Vacant lot on the south side of the road to "D":

\$30,000, 92 acres, 550' road frontage.

F) A water-front lot on the 3rd Concession looking across to Nut Island, owned by Albert Emericks and listed by Omni (Tracy Mangan): \$30,000, 7 acres, 600' water frontage.

G) Property west of Stella on Front Road owned by Bill Neil and listed by Pratt & Murray: \$49,500, 105 acres south of the road and 6 acres with a garage on the water side, 800' road frontage (more than 800' water frontage).

H) The former store and grain elevator in Emerald listed by Snider (Tracy McGinn): \$35,000, a water-lot is included with the elevator.

I) A lot at the south end of the Stella Forty Foot listed by Snider (Tracy McGinn): \$23,900.

THANK YOU NOTES

I would like to say thanks to all those people especially my relatives and family who helped make my birthday on becoming a senior citizen such a memorable occasion and special thanks to Juanita and Marion Glenn for sponsoring it.

We sure all enjoyed the pot luck dinner and thanks to Gordon and Juanita also for opening their home for the occasion and thanks everyone for all the nice gifts and cards I received. Thank you one and all.

Also thanks to my neighbours Anne-Marie, Garry and family, Reginald, Tracy and Heidi for dropping in one evening with a lovely birthday cake and we all enjoyed the cake and ice cream.

Thelma Howard

I wish to extend many thanks to my kind friends and neighbours for their food and cards during my recent illness.

Special thanks to Tom Miller, Lloyd Wolfreys and ferry crew for coming to the house. Also to Caroline Yull and Wendy Shurtliffe who stayed with me until Shirley got home.

Thanks also to the ambulance attendants.
Marjorie Brown

A special thank you to those people concerned in making a rush trip to Kingston General Hospital for emergency treatment Sunday evening, March 9th.

First to my thoughtful and caring neighbours, Henry and Barbara Filson, to my husband Ross, for taking super care of me and keeping his 'head on straight' over the past year, and finally to the crew

on duty that evening making sure the trip to the city was carried out at utmost speed and concern for my comfort.

To the ladies of the Church and the Women's Institute for their good wishes, and a special thank you to Mr. Allison who always seemed to be at hand when you needed him.

To others who have enquired as to my progress I am pleased to say the doctors and staff at KGH have stabilized my condition and hopefully it won't be too long before I can be healthy enough to repay your many kindnesses.

Your numbers may be small but when it comes to hearts you've got more than your share, and I'm pleased to be one of you.

Thanks Again.

Lois Evans

I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you very much to the Boat Crew that were working on the evening of Feb. 24 when my mom had to be taken to the hospital by ambulance.

Thank you to Caroline and Wendy for going to the house until I arrived, and to Lloyd and Tommy for coming behind me. Mom would like to thank the A.C.W., Women's Institute, friends and neighbours who sent food, cards or offered to help in any way they could. (David also says thank you.)

Shirley Brown

(This note was received last month but was misplaced.)

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From AI BEACON: April 15, 1996 - Vol 4 Issue 219
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING Tuesday, March 19
-Don Tubb

All members of Council were present for this meeting to continue discussions on the budget plus some consideration of ferry matters including a closed session on the collective agreement. Also at the meeting were Diane Pearce (Clerk-treasurer), Fred Mahood (delegation), three members of the public and this reporter.

The first item of business was a presentation by Fred Mahood. He is trying to mount a summer stock musical production this summer and wanted Council to waive the walk-on ferry fares for the cast and crew. This would have amounted to roughly \$7-800 for about 50 people coming over for 7 rehearsals and 9 performances. He said that this extra cost would make it impossible to hold this

production on the Island. Council was supportive but said that waiving these fares would be inappropriate considering the state of our ferry finances but did think that something might be worked out through the Recreation Committee. Mr Mahood seemed satisfied with that and, hopefully, will have an answer within a few days as he has to finalize location soon.

Councillor Woods proposed that Council send a letter of thanks to the Amherst Island Ratepayer's Association for holding its meeting (reported in the March Beacon) and its 'professional manner'. This was passed.

Next, it was decided to send a delegation to Toronto composed of the Reeve, one Councillor and two people representing the A.I. Ratepayer's Association. Using area provincial representatives, this group would try to meet with relevant Ministers. Relatively quick action is required because the provincial budget will be finalized soon. [Bye-the-bye... the Clerk said that MTO is calling the reduction in ferry subsidy a 'hold-back' and a 'temporary measure'. She did not get the impression that these words suggested that it would be restored.]

In a house keeping measure, Council amended the recent by-law so that the 6 a.m. ferry trip could be reinstated.

The budget was next on the agenda and, having just started into it, the power went out on the Island. After sitting in the dark for a few minutes, Council decided to adjourn to the fire hall which has a generator. So, after a 15-minute recess, Council re-adjourned.

First up was a look at the Building permit fees as compared to surrounding municipalities. Amherst Island looks to be the highest but a direct comparison is difficult because each municipality has a different schedule of fees. So Council decided to let ours stand as they are.

Next, two budget scenarios were presented which were explained in some detail by the Clerk. Both showed the cuts that have been made to various departments but one had a larger Working Capital Reserve. The Clerk said that a letter had come from the auditors suggesting that we build up our reserves. Last year the reserve was \$2,000 which isn't a whole lot of money for a million-dollar budget. To achieve a zero percent tax rise, the reserve could be as high as \$10,200. If Council wanted to have a modest 2% increase, then the reserve could rise to \$13,500. [Of course, these are for the Township portion of overall tax bill -

excluding school and county portions!] The balanced one is based on a 1.77% increase in spending being offset by a 1.78% increase in assessment over last year.

There are several points worth noting about the budget:

- the Township has completed the land acquisition for the landfill site expansion so is now eligible for the last of the grants with the bottom line being that we will spend \$34,000 to purchase the land and \$31,400 for waste management studies (totalling \$65,400) of which the province will give us \$36,818 in grants - the bottom line is that this is a major expenditure of \$28,582 or 17% of the total 1996 amount to be raised.
- in the draft budgets presented, the following departments have been cut (these are my calculations which may not be completely correct):
 - Planning from \$1000 to \$800 (20% cut),
 - Cemetery from \$6,600 to \$6,000 (9% cut),
 - Back Beach from \$10,000 to \$5,000 (50% cut),
 - Emergency Planning from \$5,750 to \$5,200 (10% cut)... defibrillator removed as it has been paid for,
 - Animal Control from \$3,500 to \$1,000 (71% cut),
 - Building Inspection from \$4,000 to \$3,200 (20%),
 - Council Honoraria & General Administration from \$30,200 to \$24,160 (20% cut),
 - Roadways from \$240,500 to \$221,800 (8% cut).
- the following departments stayed the same or increased:
 - Reserve for Working Capital from \$2,000 to \$14,540 (627% increase which includes Fire Department repayment for fire hall),
 - Recreation from \$7,700 to \$7,700 (0% cut),
 - Fire (operating) from \$20,000 to \$20,660 (3% increase)... the capital portion of this department's budget has been removed as it only confuses things with the new fire hall costs and repayments,
 - Street Lighting from \$1,500 to \$1,500 (0% cut),
 - Environmental Concerns from \$16,500 to \$71,400 (333% increase but becomes only 210% once grants are applied).
- Ferry has not been included as it is financed exclusively from fares and not through general taxation.

I am no expert on municipal budgets but it is clear that Council is a long ways towards achieving a zero or modest tax increase. What is not so clear is how some of the proposed budget cuts will be implemented like Interest and Banking Charges over which we have no control, or what effects the reduced budgets will have on services such as: the landfill site not being kept as clean; or the

Township office being closed one day a week. And, the new budgetary restraints imposed by the province will need new thinking, for example, in the area of purchase or repairs road graders, dump trucks, front end loaders, etc. These are no longer being paid for by MTO so Council may have to start saving or considering other options such as renting equipment.

EFR Team Pancake Brunch
Sunday April 28 - 11 am to 2 pm
A.I. Community Centre
13 and up - \$5
6 to 12 - \$3
5 and under Free

The EFR Team is thrilled to present the Defib on display at our Pancake Brunch!! Brunch proceeds to purchase mannequin and assorted supplies for Defib.

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING - Don Tubb

This meeting held on April 2nd was the best attended Regular Meeting since perhaps the last one held the night before an eclipse. Council members Ashley, Scott, Woods and Whitton were on hand plus the Clerk/treasurer (Pearce), eight members of the interested public and two, count'em two, reporters (Phillips and Tubb). Chris Kennedy was given the night off as Topsy Farms was shearing that day.

The first significant item of business was a delegation of two (Alan Glenn and Bruce Caughey) from the Amherst Island Ratepayers Association. They reported on meetings they and two other members had with MPP's Garry Fox, John Garretsen and John Galt plus Joan Stern (an MTO liaison). They expressed the Island's concerns over the ferry subsidy and unfairness with respect to the Wolfe Island ferry. They said that they were well received. They thought that Council should be non-confrontational in their dealings with the Province and MTO but that they should keep this issue before their eyes. [Council has had no response to their request for a meeting and will try again as time is quickly approaching when the Provincial budget will be finalized.]

An interesting item cropped up when someone discovered that the Stella and Millhaven docks fall under the designation of 'remote docks', at least according to the National Marine Policy definition, and therefore should continue to be owned by

Transport Canada. A joint letter (Twps of Amherst Island and Ernestown) to that effect will be sent to Harbours and Ports. Other information gathered through various sources suggests th the Province would end up with the docks rather than the municipalities so we can breathe a little easier on that point. By the way, the Long Point dock is under the jurisdiction of Fisheries and Oceans and so is not, at this time at least, to be unowned by the Feds.

Several other ferry matters were raised by various parties during the discussions:

- A couple of visitors to Poplar Dell B&B were given no exchange on their American money when they bought their ferry tickets. Council has not had a policy on this but decided that an exchange rate of \$1.25 will be implemented....

A scheduled closed session was opened up and turned out to be the most interesting part of the meeting. This change was at the request of the Beacon. The subject was an update on efforts to reduce the crew size. The resolution passed was that 'Council continue to investigate the possibility of reducing the ferry crew complement to four by requesting MTO to consider financing the necessary modifications to the Amherst Islander to facilitate Coast Guard approval'. A recorded vote was called with Council members Ashley, Whitton and Woods voting 'yes' and Scott voting 'no'.

Apparently MTO and the Senior Captain think that the boat can be safely handled with a crew of four but the Coast Guard doesn't. They think that five is under-staffed because br a fire emergency, they want: someone in the wheelhouse, someone in the engine room, someone lowering the lifeboat, someone on the upper-most level getting the life rafts in the water, and two someones fighting a fire. This doesn't take into account any crew to shepherd the 145 passengers the ferry is licensed to the boats.

Now for some reason they seem happy enough with 5 and are willing to look at reassessing a change to 4 if a pump is installed for firefighting - that's the modification Council wants MTO to do. [Now it gets really weird... The Coast Guard which gives the approval for any change in crew size will not tell us what we actually have to do to get that approval. Go figure.. eh! The above was just a hint at what we might do but not an official requirement.]

Getting the 911 Enhanced system operational continues to crawl towards implementation with the 2nd quarter of 1997 being the earliest target

date. This means Island properties will not be getting their new emergency signs this year.

A householder mail-out will be made by Council to document efforts made to have the ferry subsidy restored. This will not only include Council's efforts but those of other Island residents and organizations. This is to counter what several Councillors felt was a general impression held by the public that they hadn't done anything or very little.

In other business, Council did the following:

- \$800 will be spent by the Cemetery Committee to trim trees.
- Malroz Engineering's bill will be paid in full for their landfill site studies.
- The Fire Department draft by-law will be tabled until Councillor Scott has time to deal with the necessary changes.
- The group insurance policy will remain with London Life at least until a new collective agreement is negotiated.
- Talks will continue with Ernestown on shared services and that Bath/South Fredericksburg invitation not be taken up.
- The Township will investigate its liability at the Community Centre for non-Township events (ie those not sponsored directly by the Township or the Recreation Committee or similar group).

Council adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

The Neighbourhood

- Annette

Our sympathy to the family of Tom French, who passed away suddenly earlier this month, and to Ralph and Beulah Woods on the death of her sister. Former South Shore resident Edmund Bongard also died this month.

Anne Marie Hitchins is recovering at home after a few days in the hospital. Jim Bowman is also recuperating after a fall left him with some broken bones. Best Wishes.

Congratulations to Alison McDonald, who took third place in the Lions Club Provincial Public Speaking Contest in Peterborough. Alison, Shawna Phillips and Bonnie Marshall all competed in the Local Public Speaking Contest in Bath last month. Alison and Shawna also participated in the Legion Zone Competition held in Tamworth in February.

AMHERST ISLAND WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

- Freda Youell

At the March meeting at the home of Audrey Miller we began with the Ode, Collect and National Anthem followed by the Roll Call which was "When our family came to Amherst Island and why".

After the regular business had been dealt with plans for the Mother's Day Ham dinner to be held on May 11th were discussed, then Anna Hitchins gave her report of the District Women's Institute Executive meeting which was held on March 6th. April is the month that a member of the W.I. knocks on your door and asks for donations for the Cancer Society so if we haven't managed to find you at home yet be assured we shall be around before the end of the month. Led by our Team Leader, Helen Lamb, we are aiming to meet or surpass our 1995 total and if our neighbours are as generous as they have been in previous years we are positive we can reach that goal.

No guest was planned for this meeting so, after our hostess had served us a tasty lunch we spent some time chatting about future projects and generally socializing, something we don't usually have time for when we have guest speakers.

On April 17th at 8 p.m. we shall be holding our General Meeting and Election of Officers at the home of Jean Baker.

The May 22nd 8 p.m. meeting at the Home of Helen Lamb will have a Roll Call "Current Hobby" and following the Annual Meeting there will be a plant exchange.

We need guests and gardeners with cuttings and plants plus advice on the best care for them so we hope to see you at Helen's on the 22nd.

4-H NEWS

- Brent McGinn

The 4-H project is Animal Friends. Our club name is Animal Crackers and we are learning proper care for our pets.

There are twelve members in our Club. The Leaders are Mrs Susan Caughey and Mrs Freda Youell. Youth Leaders are Heidi Hitchins and Jill Caughey. Officers are;

President Sara Pollock

Vice President Bonnie Marshall

Co-Secretaries

Shannon Youell

Andrew McDonald

Treasurer Alison McDonald

Reporters

Mindy Fleming

Brent McGinn

Recreation

Jessica McGinn

Ashley Filson

Shawna Phillips

Phone Convenors

Helen Bell-Smith

Samantha Pollock

At our second meeting Connie Mallory of the Napanee Humane Society was our guest speaker on "Pets are a responsibility". Pat Graham and Pat Ljungh brought four dogs to our third meeting to show us how to obedience train your pet.

More 4-H News

- Mindy Fleming

At another meeting Ardis Shurtliffe came and groomed one of Freda Youell's dogs and told us how they were made ready for Dog Shows. We went on a tour and saw Samantha Pollock's horse Kermit and Jessica McGinn's calf, Cinnamon, then went to Mr Caughey's farm to see the dairy cows and calves and learned how the milking was done. Our last trip will be to the Napanee Animal Shelter after that we will get our Project Bars on Achievement Day.

ISLAND HISTORY

-A. Bruce Caughey...

As we Islanders anxiously watch each day's weather, especially the velocity and direction of the winds and their possible effect on the shifting of the ice in the channel. We oldsters remember with vivid recollections the days when the Tug Salvage Prince was a part of our lives.

With the arrival of the first winter weather following the July 1929 arrival of the first Amherst Islander, with the formation of ice in the Stella harbour and the necessity of the ferry breaking her way from the overnight tie-up area at "the cove" on Stella Point to the Neilsen Dock on the south side of the harbour.

Time after time a bracket on the wheel (propeller) would suffer breakage in the ice - a phone call to Pyke Salvage in Kingston would bring the Salvage Prince to the rescue and the Islander would be towed out of the ice to Kingston Shipbuilding Co, placed in the dock there, the wheel replaced and she would be returned to

service. (I will have much more to say about this in my book, when finished).

Later, in the years before the bubble system, the *Salvage Prince* was called upon to break a channel from Stella (the present dock site) to Millhaven dock, to enable the ferry service to be resumed, then one year, perhaps more, the service of the *Prince* was enlisted to run several trips per day to and from the mainland, there being a lot of sickness on the Island that year. We enjoyed our associations with the crew members on these occasions.

Grant Pyke was a skilful Captain and he made a trip to the British Isles when he contracted with British Shipbuilders for the construction of this tug. Upon completion she was sailed across the Atlantic and up the St. Lawrence to her home port of Kingston where the history of her life time would make interesting reading.

At the termination of her long life, much to my disappointment, instead of her becoming a show piece in Kingston, as was the Toronto harbour tug *Ned Hanlon*, she was sold to Toronto interests and there where the purchaser proposed to convert her into living accommodations. Outside of stripping her of equipment, he never accomplished much and eventually she was purchased by a marina owner in the Town of Brighton.

In attempting to sail her into the shallow waters of Brighton harbour, she grounded on a sand bar, where she remained for several years. She was then towed back to Toronto where she has reached the end of her long career as follows: "Scrapped over the summer at the Toronto dry-dock was the venerable steam tug *Salvage Prince*. Built in 1924 at Selby, England, this 93 foot tug operated for many years out of Kingston for the Pyke Towing and Salvage Company, which became a part of the McAllister fleet during 1960's. "The *Salvage Prince* was best remembered for participating in many famous salvage operations as well as assisting many older lake vessels moving to overseas breakers".

One of these that comes to my mind occurred in 1928 when an Island resident's remains were being brought from Kingston to the Island in a motor launch when the motor failed and they were drifting out onto the open lake. An observant farm wife on the mainland shore phoned Grant Pyke, who hastened to the rescue with his *Salvage Prince*, saving several lives!

LOOKING FOR A NEW ADVENTURE?

Watercolours Etc. is moving to a new location in Stella, across from the library and within walking distance of the ferry. (No need to drive over from the mainland).

The new shop Weasel And Easel will be opening as early as possible in May and welcomes any talented people as members of contributors of goods on consignment.

Paintings, Island wool blankets, woodworking, honey, antiques, hand design T shirts, pottery and woollen goods are just some of the items that will be available for purchase.

Would you like to join us in our new venture with your own special craft?

For further information please direct enquiries to any of these numbers.

Shirley Miller - 389-2588

Eleanor Truman - 389-3548

Caroline Ackerman - 384-5606.

We are looking forward to hearing from you!

CUTBACKS SPREAD

- Alex and Janet Scott

Cutbacks are not confined to Ontario. The trend is apparently spreading across the Solar System and even the sun has been cutting back. Spring has been postponed and may be cancelled altogether. Accordingly our 'Spring Has Sprung' article has been put off for at least another month, and so we return to the Owls of Winter.

No cutback here as what began as a promising year suddenly exploded in February to become probably the most massive invasion of Owls on Record.

First the Boreal Owl. This is the small 8 - 10 inch owl that lives in the boreal forests. Slightly larger than our resident Saw-whet Owl, it rarely ventures south, and when it does is very difficult to find because it roosts in dense evergreens. Many birders have never seen one amid so it's on their most wanted list. Amherst Island is renowned in North America as being one of the few places one has any chance at all to see this owl. In fact, Amherst Island probably has more records for this owl than anywhere, at least in North America. Even so, we had never seen more than two at a time until this year when we had at least four for most of the winter, and an amazing seven from March 1 to 28. It is estimated that at least 21 were found passing through the east end of the island alone. The record last date for this owl until this year was April

5, 19 O. As of April 14 there were still four present. The only explanation we can think of is that there are so many of them that they think they are in the right place!

About once a decade we are treated to an invasion of our largest owl, the Great Gray Owl from north-west Canada. 1978-79 produced one such invasion and one could see as many as 35 of these owls in the woods just to the west of Eve's marsh on the south shore. That year produced an estimated 334 in eastern North America. 1983-84 produced an unprecedented invasion and it was estimated there were at least 407 different birds in Ontario alone. Strangely, that winter produced only one record on Amherst Island. 1995-96 will surpass even these records. Over 200 have been documented in the three counties around Peterborough with many more all along the north shore of Lake Ontario from Toronto east, and at least 35-40 on Amherst Island alone. Truly an amazing phenomenon.

We are particularly interested if you saw any Great Grays this winter; where, how many, and approximately when if you can remember.

Many thanks to those who reported sightings of these owls, and to those who called about the Bluebirds and Snow Geese in March. We are always interested to hear.

SPRING CLEANING OF KITCHEN AT A.I. PUBLIC SCHOOL

The staff at Amherst Island Public School are interested in organizing the many items on the kitchen shelves, determining who owns what, and removing unnecessary items.

OBITUARY, EDMUND BONGARD

At Lennox and Addington County General Hospital on Monday, April 1, 1996.

Edmund Bongard, husband of the late Lois McCormac, dear uncle of Kenneth and Bernice Reid, Franklin and Eleanor McCormac, George and Dorothy Bongard, Vera and Brian Knight.

The funeral service was held at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church on Amherst Island. The Reverend William Duffy officiating. Interment was at Glenwood Cemetery on the Island.

Thank You Notes

Many thanks to Roxanne Wolfreys, who single handedly organized, planned and guided the rest

of us through our very successful Bingo. (I happen to know she spent many hours worrying, fretting and not sleeping!)

We couldn't have done it without you Roxy!!

Lyn Fleming Sec./Tres.

Adam Miller Chairman

A.I.R.C members

AMHERST ISLAND RECREATION COMMITTEE

Well our Euchres are rolling along smoothly, and in fact are almost over for the season. The last Euchre will be held on April 26, at 7:30 p.m. Come and join us for an evening of fun & cards. We'd again like to thank everyone for their support! If you can play Euchre, we'd love to have you.

Results from the last 2 Euchres were as follows...

March 29, 1996

Men - 1st prize - Garnet Willard

2nd prize - Keith McGinn

Ladies - 1st prize - Susan (Mrs Art) McGinn

2nd prize - Cora McGinn

Door Prize - Rob Wemp

April 12, 1996

Men - 1st prize - Wilbert Willard

2nd prize - Harry Filson

Ladies - 1st prize - Zelma Koenders

2nd prize - Yvonne McGinn

Door Prize - Ida Gavlas

On April 13th, we held our 1st "Binbo" {Bingo} in many years, (the last 1 or 2 held in Victoria Hall as fund raisers to build a Community Centre!). The equipment has been sitting in the way gathering dust since then! So we dug it out, dusted (& scrubbed) it off, and thanks to Roxanne Wolfreys' expert guidance, held a very successful Bingo!

48 people came out to help us kick off our 1st Bingo night. Ten games were played with prizes of \$25.00. The 11th & final game was for \$100.00. Because of the positive response, this will definitely not be our last Bingo. We are hoping to hold monthly Bingos through the summer months & possibly more next winter.

Thanks to Rick Bedford (Jr.), Jason Fleming, Jen McHennon, Ray & Zelma Koenders, and Hayley deHann for all your help setting up, cleaning up & everything in between!

Watch your mail & the Beacon for info on future Bingos.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Alison MacDonald who won first prize in the Bath Lyon's Club Effective Speaking Contest. Alison, who is in grade 6, was chosen the top speaker among grades 4 to 8 contestants from Sandhurst, Bath and Amherst Island Public Schools.

She continued on to a regional competition in Peterborough with her speech on "The Life and Times of 'Patch' the Gerbil". It is with pride that we announce that she won third prize in that competition.

FERRY CUE?

- Thomas Sylvester -

An unusual sight greeted ferry commuters April 2, three hundred and sixty four days until April Fools'. The Union Jack was flying from behind the captain's bridge, evidently substituted for a missing Ontario flag. The bold colours and strong graphic design stirred me awake from my position in the ferry queue - my maternal British ancestors would have been proud of me.

But the story gets far more interesting because it was not the current Union Jack, rather one that was replaced in 1801. A bit of Boy Scout trivia had resurfaced from some archaic ROM. When the Union Jack is flown upside down, it is subtler to recognize the inversion than for instance, our Canadian flag. Now, do not think for a minute, I remember which way was correct. The surprise was that the flag flying from our ferry was symmetrical, there was no up or down. It was missing the red diagonals.

Pears' Cyclopedia explained the omission, "The present Union Jack is composed of three heraldic crosses, viz., the cross of St Andrew, forming the blue and white basis; upon which lies the red and white cross of St Patrick; and upon the whole rests the red and white cross of St George, dividing the flag vertically and horizontally. The original Union Jack combined only the St George and St Andrew crosses, and was adopted on the accession of James VI of Scotland to the throne of England under the title of James I in 1603. No further alteration was made in the flag until January 1st, 1801, when the Irish Parliament was dissolved and the Act of Union came into force."

I will not attempt to guess the Island Irish sentiments to the original Union Jack. I will speculate that the source of the unique flag flown from our ferry was a belated jest of the late Rev.

Norman Allison, a native son of Scotland and ferry manager.

A LETTER HOME

It's now April the 13th and we're choring in full winter gear... long underwear, snowsuits, hats and gloves. I can't believe it. Each February I think I can't wait until April... warm sunshine, spring flowers and green grass. I suppose I will just have to be patient a little longer.

We now have hundreds of cute month old lambs running around. On the days when the sun is shining, they lay with their faces lifted towards the sun soaking in the warmth and dreaming about lush green grass. It's one of my favourite times on the farm.

We had the May lambers shorn at the beginning of April. I'm sure they felt a little silly and chilly for the first few days. However, they will thank us for their sleek new look when the hot weather finally arrives.

During the month of March we saw approximately 100 snowgeese out in the first pasture. At first glance I thought they were seagulls. After a quick check in the bird book I was soon set straight.

The ice is still in at Kerr's Bay and slush is clinging to the shores. The ice this year has gone out north, south, east and west. I understand there is an old farmers' tale which says if the ice goes out to the west that it will be a bad year for crops. With it going out every which way this year, who knows how the crops will do?

Still no news as to the fate of the Ferry subsidy. The provincial budget should tell all. The rates have gone up and the last night trip has been cancelled. Seeing as I'm always in bed by 9 p.m. I can't say I've missed it.

Our really good news is that the Back Kitchen is once again open for the season. Last year we celebrated several birthdays and an anniversary there. We're looking forward to dining out in downtown Stella. You'll have to try their pie on your next visit. Yum!

So much to tell you and so little space to do it in. I suppose it will just have to wait until next month.

Our very best to you all.