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Amherst Island Beacon

Issue 461

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December 2016



From the Editor's Desk

- Terry McGinn

It's that time of year again: the time where we all look around confused at where the months have gone. I've only just gotten good at writing 2016 and now it's over. It will take me another eleven months to learn where to find the 7 on my keyboard.

This is, I think, going to be a short blurb from me this month. The December Beacon is a rather straight-forward thing with all the usual great contributions.

I have been truly enjoying Sharen English's new,

unexpected and wonderful submissions "Our Life at 20 Front Road", reading Daniel Little's letters from the Yukon are always a treat, and of course it's wonderful to have the venerable bird lady herself, Janet Scott, back in writing form and contributing to the Beacon.

November is a month for thanks, but in December, when it often seems like there's barely a spare minute for it, it's nice to take a little time to reflect on what makes us happy.

I enjoy this thing we all work to create. I hope you do, too.

Happy December, in whatever form it takes.

Issue 461

Amherst Island Beacon

December 2016

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613-888-3702
<http://www.amherstislandbeacon.com>

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Neighbourhood

- Lynn Fleming

Get Well wishes to Sheila Whiting, and continued get well wishes to Tom Miller, Leslie Gavlas.

Garry and Susan Filson were off to the Dominican Republic with family and friends, for daughter Kristi’s wedding.

Karen Miller and Ted Welbanks spent 3 weeks in Romania, touring and visiting Ted’s son John and family.

The annual Remembrance Day Service hosted by A.I.P.S. students, was well attended by the community once again. The entire service is led by students, as well as the wreath laying, in a respectful and moving way.

Grade 3 students took part in the annual Swim to Survive program offered by the Lifesaving Society. Each year grade 3 students attend 3 classes, where they learn to ROLL into deep water; TREAD water for 1 minute; SWIM 50 metres. The Lifesaving Society believes this is an important step to helping keep children safe around water.

St. Paul’s Bazaar and the Amherst Island Christmas Shopping Day was a great success on November 19th, with balmy weather, as temperatures reached 15C!

Winter arrived on November 20th with a snow storm that started mid morning and continued for the next 30 or more hours, with almost non-stop snow and high winds. Ten days later we are once again looking at a high today of 10C.

Wishing everyone a happy, and restful holiday season, with lots of time with family and friends and safe travels. Merry Christmas!

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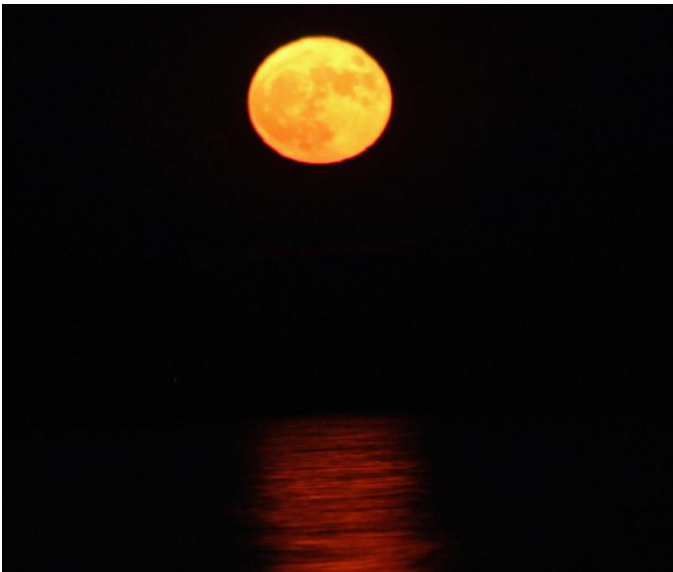
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Beautiful Moon, by Brian Little



*Ian and Kyle Murray outside the Wool Shed,
by Brian Little*

AIMS Report

- Nathan Townend

Anthony spoke passionately to AIMS about the contemporary challenges presented by an aging population. The specific challenge Anthony cited was the need to address looming shortfalls in adequate and affordable accommodation, and he discussed existing frameworks for retirement living, addressing both their successes and inadequacies. After providing a broad contextual foundation Anthony elucidated his own vision for retirement living, where he argues that there should be more “communal” retirement facilities made available. Anthony extolled the social and physiological health benefits, as well as the cost saving benefits, to be gained by such arrangements; he stressed however that these should complement numerous other models in order to offer elderly citizens real choice in selecting the right location for their twilight years. In short, Anthony put forward an innovative and creative model for retirement living that as yet is not more widely considered, and in his view, should be.

David explained that Hubert Groot transferred financial responsibility to him, and David’s initial assessment indicates AIMS’ finances are

in good order. David believes this will see AIMS through the rest of the financial year.

David stated that Don Pepper had taken 5 trips, and David had taken 3 last month. David also confirmed that the standard practice is for AIMS members to drive the person’s vehicle whom they are assisting, and for the individual to cover costs for gas and ferry tickets.

Robert stated that he had contacted both Mulroney and KimCo about scrap iron. The former refused and the latter affirmed they would come, but only under the condition they were able to make one trip, and that the iron was already previously assembled in one place. KimCo would pay \$50.00 per metric tonne. The meeting determined that the general outlook was not very economical at the present time. Allen Caughey vocalized that iron prices do fluctuate considerably and that prices would be set to rise again in the future. However in the meantime Robert was further commissioned to consult Loyalist Township about the possibility of granting amnesty on a given week or month, for Islanders to bring their scrap metal to the municipal dump; for removal by the Township contractors.

The meeting discussed a questionnaire distributed by Loyalist Township which asks local organizations to provide information about what recreational facilities they might wish to see, sponsor, and financially support, throughout the Township. The executive previously thought of tennis courts, the library project, and “pickle ball” at the school gym, as initial ideas. Harold Redekopp further suggested public washrooms be added at locations to be determined, in order to service cyclists and other tourists who travel the Island.



Chilly rememberers, by Brian Little

Foreign Correspondent

- Elena Moffatt

It's almost Christmas! Over here in the Netherlands, the weather is still at a beautiful temperature and there's no signs of snow yet. In my experience, when it snows here it lasts for maybe an hour or two before it melts away again. Although snow is definitely a go-to sign indicating Christmas, I'm loving not having to throw quite as many layers on. One of my favourite traditions is the Christmas markets here. In 2014, I had the pleasure of going to a Christmas market in Berlin and trying glühwein (hot mulled red wine) for the first time – yum! I haven't had the opportunity to go to a Christmas market just quite yet this year, but I'm hoping I'll be able to before I head home for the holidays.

The Dutch equivalent of Santa Claus is Sinterklaas and gifts are given on the night before Sinterklaas, December 5th, or on the

morning of. I'm not entirely sure about all the details of Sinterklaas, but from what I understand he arrives at a new Dutch town every year on the first Saturday after November 11th. Arriving on a boat, supposedly from Spain, he is greeted by kids singing Sinterklaas songs. Along with him is his helper Zwarte Piet who throws gingerbread-like cookies to the crowd (kruidnoten or pepernoten).

From Sinterklaas's arrival up until December 5th, he visits all kinds of places like schools, hospitals, and shopping centres to spread holiday cheer. Typically, on December 5th, Sinterklaas has prepared all the presents for the children and Zwarte Piet will deliver them house by house along with a note explaining the gift.

This year I'll be participating in a Sinterklaas gift exchange with some of the other international students in the area. We each wrote our names on a paper with a wish for our Sinterklaas to grant (keeping in mind with a €10 price limit). On December 2nd, we'll have a potluck dinner and exchange presents!

Getting to know the other international students has been tons of fun. A few weeks ago, there was an event in Amsterdam called Turn on the Lights. I invited one of my classmates and my German housemate to join me in the Dam Square. Unfortunately, as soon as it started my phone died (so no pictures, unfortunately) and it started to rain. The Cirque du Soleil type performance, along with the beautiful lights and ending with fireworks made for a great evening, despite the rain.

All in all, it's been a pretty busy month and I can't believe it's already December. Christmas is in the air, and soon I will be too! Counting the days until I'm home, and I'm super excited to come back to the Island to visit!

Draft Operations Plan

-Ian Murray

I have just re-read the 6 page letter that Loyalist Townships CAO, Robert Maddocks, wrote to Algonquin Power.

As someone who has been willing to give the benefit of doubt to the wind generator project, I am very disappointed to see, point-by-point, the failure of Algonquin Power to live up to its commitments to both Island residents and Loyalist Township.

Neilson Store Museum

- Terry McGinn

Have you been to the museum on the island? If you haven't you really should go! Okay, wait a little bit because it's closed for the season right now, but when it's open again in the spring you really should go.

My first trip the Neilson Store Museum and Cultural Centre was about three or four years ago. It had been open for some time at that point. It's one of those things where when it's in your own community you just take it for granted that it's there and you'll do it the next time you've got a few minutes – which never seems to happens.

Kind of like how I lived in Ottawa for five years before I visited Parliament.

Maybe it's just me.

My first trip to the museum on the island just dazzled me. I'm not sure what I was expecting, maybe just a room with some stuff in it, like some sort of well-annotated rummage sale, but that is not at all the reality of our island museum.

The work that has gone in to the place is immense, and it shows. The displays and exhibits are exquisite and oh, so professional.

The storyboards and descriptions give you a real connection to the island and its history with all the relevant facts, but also great details that really bring the stories alive – even if you don't know all of the names.

And, of course, the building itself stands as its own grand exhibit, as well.

After my first visit I was hooked. I visited several more times over the successive years and have enjoyed the exhibits, the changing artifacts, and the wealth of information, knowledge, and understanding of the island's history and culture that you can get from just being in the museum. It's especially fun when a few islanders get together because each perspective helps bring together the fullness of the story of not only our existing shared history, but the one that we're creating every day.

Though the museum is much more than just a collection of old things I have always had a passion for old things, and their stories.

At the fall AGM of the Neilson Store Museum I was fortunate enough to be elected to its board. At my first board meeting this November I was, after a good eight minutes to sip coffee and get my feet wet with the process, selected to be the chair of the exhibits committee.

No big deal, right?



Some lids made by Lynn, courtesy Lynn Wyminga



Chilled calendula, by Dave Ratray

Here I thought us first-timers on the board would be the underlings to the members who had served more time: uh, nope.

Of course as with all Amherst Island projects it is a team effort. And the museum and its exhibits committee I'm sure are no different. I've been told that there are a great number of excellent individual in the community who regularly contribute to the exhibits for the museum, and a wealth of knowledge and ideas to be drawn upon.

And I can't wait.

In that way, to me, the museum on the island is a great reflection of this community, not only in its exhibition of our shared history and the culture that creates it, but also in a more real sense. The museum that visitors see is the tip of the iceberg of what is contained in the museum. There is a wonderful, vast collection of artifacts that are rotated through the main floor exhibition room of the museum and into the display cases year after year, but only a fraction is visible at any given time.

So, too, the island, beautiful and complex and wonderful to enjoy is so much deeper than most people can know in any one visit, or through any one experience. The island's history and culture are as vast and wonderful and worth exploring in as much details as you can.

So, yes, visit the museum; again if you already have. It's a treasure within a treasure and we're lucky to have it.

Janet's Jottings

- Janet Scott

Red-bellied Woodpecker

While watching the feeder today I was quite intrigued by the Red-bellied Woodpecker's behaviour. She would descend the Poplar in short little hops checking the bark crevices as she went. I was not sure what she was looking for but wondered if like the Blue Jay she was retrieving sunflower seeds that the Black-capped Chickadees had already cached. When she reached a large hollow, left by a branch which had broken off a long time ago and which had left a scarred area in the trunk, she retrieved something and took off. When I checked that area I saw a tunnel type of hole and some sawdust so she must have found the larva of some insect as the thing she had carried was dark, oblong and bigger than the black sunflower seeds. I know that she prefers the

seed blocks that I purchase from Willow's Feeds to any of the other food that I put out.

From the Cornell Lab of Ornithology I learned that a Red-bellied Woodpecker can stick out its tongue nearly 2 inches past the end of its beak. The tip is barbed and the bird's spit is sticky, making it easier to snatch prey from deep crevices. Males have longer, wider-tipped tongues than females, possibly allowing a breeding pair to find food in slightly different places on their territory and maximize their use of available food.

When I began birding I never saw a Red-bellied Woodpecker. Like the Carolina Wren this was a bird of the Carolina forests and not expected to be seen north of the Great Lakes but during the last couple of decades both these species have pushed their range north and are year-round residents here on Amherst Island and in our extended circle of the Kingston birding area. The bird is common in Florida and the southern states but east of the Mississippi. The southern species has less white on its rump while our bird is larger and has a speckled rump patch. While walking in the Owl Woods on a summer's day you will probably hear its loud and raucous laughing call, similar to the Northern Flicker.

Paul and Gwen Lauret have a male this year frequenting their feeder while the one here at the Flemingisle Farm seems to be a female. We may have to set up a dating service. The red on the head is much brighter than a Red-headed Woodpecker. It almost glows like the fluorescent vests of an Emergency Worker. The male's red stripe extends from his beak to his nape while her red cap begins on her forehead and extends to her nape. Their backs are barred black and white while the smaller Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers although barred have white central stripes and only the males have red caps. Only once I got to see the actual red belly and

that was at a friend's home in Shallow Lake. The Woodpecker grabbed on to the patio door and I could see the red belly against the glass as a pinkish tone to the lower belly.

Watch for our local Red-bellied Woodpeckers who are about 9 inches in length and also Keith Miller has reported a Pileated Woodpecker on the Second Concession near his home. At 16 and 1/2 inches this is our largest Woodpecker with crested head similar to the cartoon character Woody Woodpecker. Listen for the tapping and watch for the red flash.

Good birding everyone,

Janet Scott



Sherri Miller keeps her eye on the ball, by Brian Little



Crafty crafters, courtesy Judy Greer

CJAI Report

- Larry Jensen

"FRIDAY MORNING SHOW"

The Friday morning show is the longest running Show on CJAI, with over ten years of continuous airplay. In January of 2013, Larry Jensen took over as host of the Friday morning Show, from Terry Culbert. At the time Larry had just recently retired from a sales marketing career in Transportation and Logistics. Larry grew up in the Guildwood village of Scarborough, Ontario and had spent the past 20 years in Oakville along with his wife Sherri, and their two daughters Dawn and Jane. Larry's passions are Sailing, Music, and Amherst Island. Larry and Sherri enjoy sailing a C&C 35, named "Rock & Roll". But they also have others named, "Pop", "Classical", "Folk", "Celtic", "Alternative", "Blues" and "Salsa".

For your entertainment and listening enjoyment Larry tries to bring you Folk, Rock, and Alternative music genres. Highlights of the Friday Morning Show include Marine Weather,

Lake Levels, Island Weekend Activities, and weekly interviews with Don Ley, President of the Amherstview Jets Hockey Club.

Larry Jensen, Living the dream!

Listen to the FRIDAY MORNING SHOW from 7:00 am to 10:00 am each Friday morning, and repeated 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm Friday afternoons.

The Friday morning show is proudly sponsored by Loyalist Cove Marina. Like and share Loyalist Cove Marina on Facebook or visit their website at <https://loyalistcovemarina.com/>



What a super moon!, by Brian Little



One of the stones used in the reconstruction of the Front Road, by Sally Bowen

My Problem at Christmas

- Anthony Gifford

I love Christmas. I look forward to our many family gatherings: The 'Bierma' happenings, the family and friends in Ottawa, and the many family and friends in Toronto. And of course, all our dear friends here on the Island and Kingston. Rarely does a year go by when I don't see 'Miracle On 34th Street' and even 'The Grinch'. I love the 'Christmas Spirit' and truly hope that it lasts longer each and every year. Even with the rampant commercialism, I look forward to it. There's a real needed place for nostalgia and good times shared with family and friends. What's not to like?

My problem is that it has absolutely nothing to do with Jesus of Nazareth. Since I base my life on his, and because of all the lip-service to him I hear, I'm torn.

In each of the gospels Matthew and Luke we have a story that introduces and 'sets up' the body of the text. Both tell of the reality of slavery, deception, oppression and poverty. Those in power are the enemy. God is not welcomed or recognized except by the poor or the outsider. There is no good new in this for any that might be deemed 'establishment', like us, and what we aspire to be. There is 'good news' only for those who would change and see

a new kind of reality. These are scary stories. It's no wonder that we choose to make them cute, cuddly and nostalgic, year after year. If we're going to give them a chance to be heard, we truly need another time, one that will be largely ignored by most, but never-the-less, will be there to be observed. The Birth Narratives have lost to Santa Clause in the Christmas Season.

But again, it is MY problem. I'll give Santa his due and enjoy what is offered. It's all good stuff. But I wonder how many others share my problem.

Thanks for letting me share.



A lot more of them, by Sally Bowen

Recreation Master Plan

- Terry McGinn

In November I was invited by the township to attend a focus group discussing the upcoming Recreation Master Plan review and edit. The focus group to which I was invited was specifically targeted toward history, arts, and culture on the island, but the topics of discussion were not limited to that scope.

At the same focus group were three other islanders who had similarly been invited.

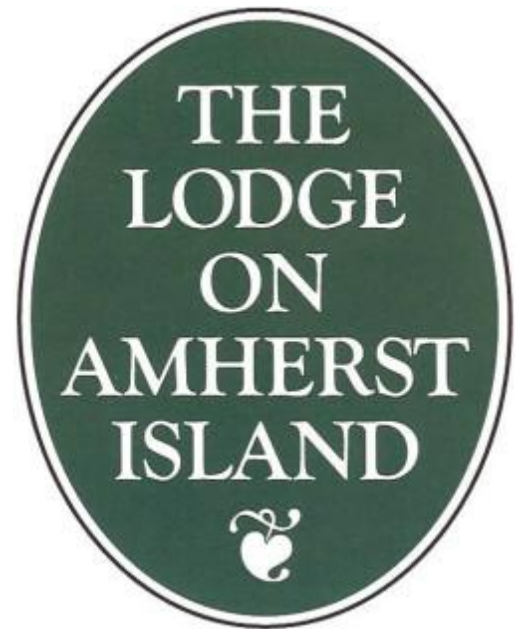
The discussion was, I felt, a good one. There were a lot of niche suggestions and requests, as one would expect when one goes to such a meeting, but there were also a few participants who offered good solutions to issues that were highlighted by the group.

I had asked for input from members of the community before attending the meeting and I took those along with me and presented them to the group, these included, but were not limited to: access to washroom facilities in Centennial Park, better access and use of Centennial Park, swimming lessons at the Sand Beach, and a personal favourite of mine signs for “Stella” and “Emerald” that acknowledge their existence and, perhaps, tell a bit of the history (“Welcome to Historic Emerald” for instance, would be wonderful).

One of the other things that was discussed at the focus group was the facilities that are available across the township and a relative lack of knowledge of their existence. I suggested that township could do more to promote itself to itself, because it seemed like many of the issues that came up several times was the mention of lacking a space for something in, say, Bath, only to have someone else say they have that thing in Wilton.

One of the best takeaways for me – at least one that made me proudest of this community – is our ability, or determination, to get something done without waiting for the township or another level of government to do it. I heard from members of the focus group, and then later from the consultants, a number of things that were mentioned as deficiencies – not having space for book clubs, or writing and art classes, etc – that we here on the island handle in our living rooms.

I think that speaks to the strength of this community. It would be nice – and it is vital – to have more public spaces and more facilities to use for community events and programs, but it’s nice to know that in the meanwhile, when we want to do something, we don’t wait; we *do*.



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Early Winter Storm

- Terry McGinn

I wanted to write something about the early snowfall, the early winter storm that we had this year. At least my notes say I wanted to write something about it, but I can't imagine why.

Just now I'd rather forget it. So, that's what I'm gonna do.

Dan of the North

- Daniel Little

I have now been in the Yukon for two months. The territory has been good to me. I have gotten to see the seasons change from fall to winter and then winter turn into super winter. I have gathered a new appreciation for the Earth's axis and its relationship to the sun and day light. I have also learned the importance of giving yourself enough time to dress appropriately for the weather before going out. I have seen bears, heard cougars, watched bald eagles catch fish, and saw caribou stampede. I have visited a Grizzly bear sanctuary, paid my respects at a Gold Miners cemetery, and set foot in the Pacific Ocean. To make a short story long, my eyes have been opened by the Yukon!

However, as amazing as it is I have also learned how harsh the Yukon can be. It gives no quarter. As I write this i stare out the window at the current snowstorm that is expected to cause food delays at local grocery stores because the trucks that deliver food are snowed in. The sky is not light until after 10:30am and we are still losing 30 minutes of sunlight a week. Everyday I chop wood for fire to heat our cabin and fill our 2 gallon water jugs from a local well. I depend on my roommates and they depend on me for making sure that our little cabin life runs smoothly in this challenging place. As the honeymoon period of my time in the Yukon has ended and the "For Fox Lake! I'm Freezing and

Need a job" period begins I have had to draw on the people skills I learned growing up on the island and the formal communication skills I learned while at university to be able to tackle the Klondike. Luckily it seems that I have been able to find gainful employment at the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce and will be starting In December on a sixth month contract. Sure it's not the most rugged Yukon career but hey, Robert Service worked at a bank!

So now with a more stable position and a source of income I will be able to witness the coming changes the Yukon had to offer as winter grows deeper and the North further reveals her true face. I will be returning East (via bus ☺) for a few weeks at Christmas so that I can share my new pioneering wisdom, before i return back to the Klondike. I am very excited for what the future has to offer and I hope everyone back home is well.

Stay warm.



Daniel Little on a Bridge, courtesy Daniel Little

25th Anniversary Celebration

Please join Kim & Duncan Ashley as they celebrate
their wedding anniversary

Saturday, December 10th, 2016

Celebration at Amherst Island Community Centre

Dance

7pm – 1am

Light lunch at 10pm

Cash Bar

Best Wishes Only

Our Life at 20 Front Road

- Sharen English

The weather is warm and we just walked Kevin, the Chihuahua.

We are having warm squash and chicken soup for supper.

I give thanks for my island friends who welcome and care for me.

I join in the Christmas festivities. It feels a bit strange, as I have never celebrated Christmas. It is however, so much fun to attend so many parties.

I love living here.

I enjoy the two blue coloured sunsets.

I enjoy seeing the swans.

I enjoy the quiet and rural beauty of our island.

I enjoy seeing Father Don and his wife Elaine. They are so kind and friendly.

The Anglicans welcome me with open arms when I visit.

I feel my spiritual needs are met without having to go to the mainland.

I treasure my friend Jocelyne who has helped me so often.

Amherst Island is full of life, love, art, culture and beauty.

Sigh.

What Hasn't Changed (Much)

-Ian Murray

Last month I wrote about some of the changes that I've seen during my time on our beautiful island. Sally suggested that I should write about some of the things that haven't changed.

Most people still wave when meeting another vehicle.

If you have a flat tire on the road or spend some time in the hospital, there will always be people willing to help.

There is still a market for rumours – some true and others not so much.

Our public school endures – helped by community volunteers.

Volunteerism continues in various forms. The WI has been invigorated by women who have moved here. The church women continue to help those in need. AIMS has provided an outlet for men who wish to improve the Island. The Back Kitchen has thrived from many volunteer hours. Volunteers keep the Beacon and CJA going. The Neilson Museum, Waterside, Harvest Fest and Emerald Music Festival all benefit from volunteer help. And so on.

The ferry crews, the road crew and the first responders continue to provide competent and courteous service to us all.

Almost all the Island land that was farmed 50 years ago is still producing food.

This is a very good place to live.



Performers at The Lodge, by Brian Little



Charles and Elsie Densem, courtesy Shirley Miller

Charles and Elsie Densem

- Shirley Miller

A visit to Bruce and Carrie Sudds on the occasion of Bruce's birthday brought back memories of the many visits to their house when Charles (Denny) and Elsie lived there. Denny was a choir master in Toronto so he was away much of the time but each Christmas he would endeavor to teach all who wanted to take part in the Community Carol Service a new anthem especially for the occasion. I don't sing very well so I told him that I couldn't read music to which he questioned "some can"? Elsie who preferred the country life was usually home and ready to share a good gossip and a glass of sherry.

She was a strong minded lady and I think this photo describes her well. She was a voracious reader, knitter and an excellent seamstress. She hosted a sewing group in later years and prided in the purchases from Value Village, many of which were passed on or turned into something new.

Since then it was the home of Jean and John Baker and their Basset hound Charlie who could clear anything edible off the coffee table when no one was looking. The Bakers added the sunroom and turned the skeleton of the old carriage house into a work shop for John. Next

the Finlay's, Carol and Bryan lived there so there have been many changes and try as I might I could not put it back together in my mind. The two north room seem much the same with those lovely deep window wells and the old fire places in each room.

It truly is a modern home now and the fires burning, the Christmas tree lights glowing and a house full of friends and neighbors partying was so nice to be a part of.



Elsie Densem, courtesy Shirley Miller

A Tale of Two Islands

- Anders Bennick

Many people on Amherst Island enjoy the company provided by purple martins. Putting up houses for purple martins not only assures the presence of these delightful and sociable birds, but it also provides housing for a species that is in serious decline.

Raising houses for these birds in April is an annual ritual for me, and in turn I am rewarded with their never ending song and elegant aerial display that go on to the middle of August, when they all take their leave and fly south for the winter; but where exactly do they go?

While it was known that purple martins wintered in Brazil, it was not until a few years ago that their route to and from their roosting site in the Amazon region was established. To

fly this distance of about 7000 km takes 6 weeks in the fall, but incredibly only 3 weeks in the spring, meaning that the birds fly at least 300km per day.

Tracing the birds became possible with the invention of a geolocator, which is so small that it can be carried as a backpack by the birds. From the geolocator records, the time of sunrise and sunset each day can be determined, and this in turn allows determination of the approximate daily location of the bird and the mapping of their migration route. A disadvantage of the geolocator is that it cannot pinpoint exactly where the bird is. Such information is needed if you want to know the precise location and nature of the roosting site, whether there are other roosting sites and which birds roost together.

About two years ago (August 2014) I wrote in "The Beacon" about my participation in a continent wide study of purple martins that involves centres in Alberta, Minnesota, Texas, Pennsylvania, Florida and Ontario. One of the aims of this study is to trace the migration route of the birds and determine the exact location of their roosting sites in Brazil. It is hoped that this information will help to understand the decline in the purple martin population, and determine what remedies can be applied to halt this decline.

In the early summer of 2014 a team organized by Nature Canada, York University and Kingston Field Naturalists arrived at our house and outfitted 12 birds with geolocators and another 20 birds with GPS (global positioning system) devices. The data obtained are stored in the devices, necessitating the recapture of the birds when they return to our colony the following year, so that the stored data can be retrieved. The advantage of the GPS units is that they can pinpoint the location of the bird within a few

metres, but the disadvantage is that a maximum of only 10 data points can be obtained. The GPS units were programmed to record every 15 days starting on October 30.

So now we waited with baited breath all fall, winter and spring for the return of the purple martins. Knowing that we could expect the birds to arrive by mid April, my son Peter helped me putting up our six purple martin houses on April 11. It had been a cold and long winter, there was still snow on the ground and the lake was frozen; but as we were raising the last house, we looked back at the house we had just put up, and to our amazement there was a purple martin sitting and waiting for the tardy landlords to get the apartments ready for rental (Fig 1).

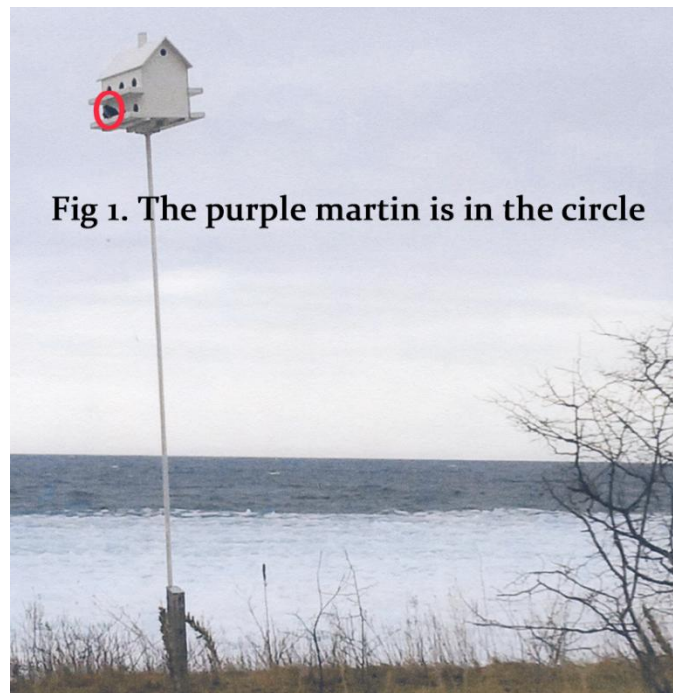


Fig 1. The purple martin is in the circle

With all the snow and cold weather I was concerned that there would be nothing for the birds to eat. I voiced my concern to Megan Macintosh, coordinator of the study for Ontario, and she told me, tongue in cheek I am sure, that some landlords threw scrambled eggs up in the air! I was not prepared to do that, so instead I made a raised feeder and placed some freeze-dried mealworms on it. I have no idea if

the martins ate them, but they must have found something to eat, for soon more and more birds appeared and once again we were enjoying their company. The next question was if any of them were carrying the recording devices, but thanks to the observations of Kurt Hennige of the Kingston Field Naturalists (KFN), two of the birds could be seen carrying a GPS and another two had the geolocators.

Several unsuccessful attempts to recapture these birds were made by KFN in June, partly due to the fact that the nestlings were older than expected and some had already fledged. At this stage, adults rarely enter the nest box, making capture difficult. Never the less in July two researchers from York University were able to retrieve two GPS devices.

With the data obtained from these devices, as well as others retrieved from birds recaptured at other study locations in Alberta, Minnesota, Texas, Pennsylvania and Florida, it was now possible for the researchers to analyze the data and draw conclusions on the location and nature of the roosting sites.

This has now been accomplished and resulted in an article that is about to be published in "Journal of Avian Biology" (1).

From the data a remarkable result appeared. It turned out that purple martins from Texas, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Florida and Ontario, being separated by 400-2300 kilometers in the summer, all roosted together in the middle of December on the tip of a tiny island in the Madeira River, a major tributary in the Amazon River basin, near the town of Humaitá (Fig 2). Because of the precision of the GPS data it was clear that these birds roosted within 30 metres of each other.

The birds do not stay put in one place during the winter, but move around to other roosting sites in the Amazon region, many of them

located on small vegetated islands in rivers, perhaps because there are fewer predators at such sites. So the purple martins in our colony share a love of island life with their landlord and other Humans on Amherst Island to such an extent that they move from one island in Canada to another in Brazil. Based on results of this study, as well as other available data, the authors estimate that the roosting site near Humaitá may be visited by 36% of the global population of purple martins or more than 2.5 million adult birds; if confirmed, this would be an extraordinary finding.

It is satisfying to know where the birds from Amherst Island spend their winters, and who knows, maybe one day I will visit them in Brazil. Meanwhile I will be busy repairing and disinfecting their apartments in time for the return next spring.

1. K.C. Fraser, A. Shave, A. Savage, A. Ritchie, K. Bell, J. Siegrist, J.D. Ray, K., Applegate, M. Pearman (2016). Determining fine-scale migratory connectivity and habitat selection for a migratory songbird by using new GPS technology. *Journal of Avian Biology*, In Press.

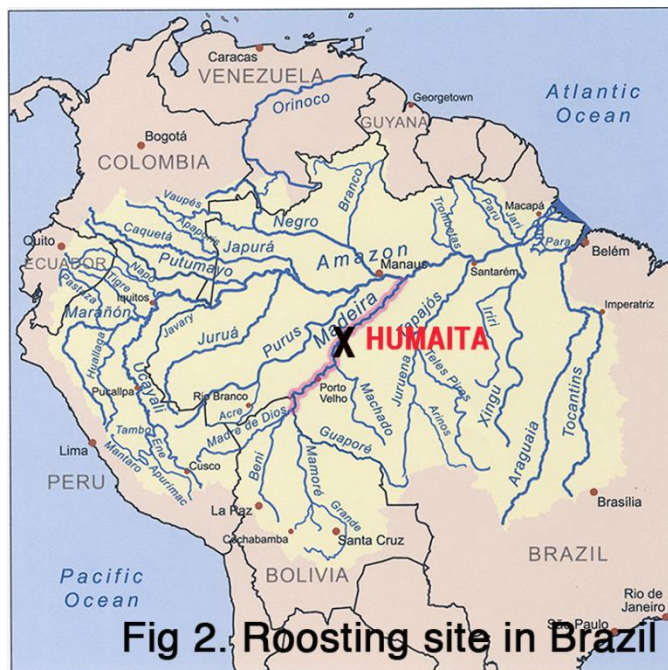


Fig 2. Roosting site in Brazil

Courtesy Ander Bennick



A single big rock, by Brian Little

Council Gleanings

- Ian Murray

From the 20th SESSION of COUNCIL, Nov 14

MTO is planning to improve Hwy 33 from Bath to Collins Bay Road. Loyalist is also planning to do some concurrent work in Amherstview.

“Moved by Deputy Mayor Bresee and Seconded by Councillor Porter that the Assistant to the Clerk’s report dated November 8, 2016 be received and that each of the following applicants receives \$838.18 of the donations and interest accrued from the joint funds:

1. Ben Whitton - Selkirk College
2. Gavin Ashley - Queen's University
3. Noa Amson - University of Northern British Columbia

[Councillor Ashley declared a conflict of interest on this matter.]

Motion carried.”

“Mayor Lowry sent out congratulations to the MacKinnon Brothers Brewing Co., Bath who are one of the recipients of the 2016 Premier’s

Award for Agri-Food Innovation Excellence. Recipients were recognized for their contributions to boosting economic growth in Ontario by creating new products that help to support job creation, add value to existing products and support a sustainable environment.”

[The MacKinnon brothers’ grandfather, Peter, was a frequent visitor to Amherst Island until his death several years ago.]

Christmas Comes Again

- Shirley Miller

Every now and again at Christmas time I like to make a Clove Orange. They look nice and smell like Christmas. All you need is an orange (apples work as well) and some whole cloves. A wooden tooth pick will make the holes. Some attach ribbon and hang them up.

After a few weeks or months they will look like the one on the right. Totally mummified.

I put them in with my orchids hoping to keep bugs away.

I wonder if we humans are like the cloves sucking the juice out of our planet.



Clove orange, by Shirley Miller



A river of sheep, courtesy Salley Bowen

Poetry

- Bruce Suds

Little Tree

By E. Cummings

little tree

little silent Christmas tree

you are so little

you are more like a flower

who found you in the green forest

and were you very sorry to come away?

see i will comfort you

because you smell so sweetly

i will kiss your cool bark

and hug you safe and tight

just as your mother would,

only don't be afraid

look the spangles

that sleep all the year in a dark box

dreaming of being taken out and allowed to
shine,

the balls the chains red and gold the fluffy
threads,

put up your little arms

and i'll give them all to you to hold

every finger shall have its ring

and there won't be a single place dark or
unhappy

then when you're quite dressed

you'll stand in the window for everyone to see

and how they'll stare!

oh but you'll be very proud

and my little sister and i will take hands

and looking up at our beautiful tree

we'll dance and sing

"Noel Noel"

Amherst Island Ferry Docks

- MTO News Release

Ontario Improving Ferry Connections to Amherst Island

Province Upgrading Ferry Docks, Creating Jobs and Improving Operations

November 23, 2016 12:00 P.M.

Ontario is improving access to Amherst Island by reconstructing the docks for the island's ferry service, creating jobs and improving service for local residents and visitors.

The province is converting existing side-loading ramps to end-loading ramps to accommodate the Frontenac II and the new Amherst Island ferry. This will allow for easier access to and from the island, improve the overall efficiency of ferry operations and accommodate the increasing number of large commercial trucks and farm equipment which use the service. The docks will also be designed so that the Wolfe Island ferry can readily service Amherst Island, if needed.

Additional improvements include:

- A newly paved parking area that will accommodate more vehicles and will be equipped with sidewalks
- New bubbler systems for winter ice control
- New passenger and staff facilities that include restrooms and waiting areas at Millhaven and on Amherst Island at Stella.

The new docks are scheduled to be completed in summer 2019. Ferry service should not be impacted by the project.

Ontario is making the largest investment in public infrastructure in the province's history -- about \$160 billion over 12 years, which is supporting 110,000 jobs every year across the province, with projects such as hospitals, schools, roads, bridges and transit. Since 2015,

the province has announced support for more than 475 projects that will keep people and goods moving, connect communities and improve quality of life. To learn more about infrastructure projects in your community, go to Ontario.ca/BuildON.

Improving transportation connections is part of our plan to create jobs, grow our economy and help people in their everyday lives.

"Converting these docks will create jobs and will improve the overall efficiency of ferry operations. It's great news for the community. This project is another step in the government's commitment to improve the quality of life for Ontarians."

- Steven Del Duca, Minister of Transportation

"Loyalist Township Council is excited for the award of the design-build ferry dock project for Stella and Millhaven. We look forward to the upgrade of the docks' infrastructure for the residents of Amherst Island and all users of the Amherst Island ferry service." - Bill Lowry, Mayor of Loyalist Township

Quick Facts:

- Rankin Construction Inc. of St. Catharines was awarded the \$51.7 million contract.
- The Amherst Island ferry is owned by the Ministry of Transportation and operated by Loyalist Township. It makes 20 trips per day between Millhaven on the mainland and Stella on the island.
- In 2016/17, Ontario is committing over \$27 million to repair and expand ferry services across Ontario.
- A request for qualifications is currently underway to build a new ferry at Amherst Island and a new ferry at Wolfe Island. The new ferry at Amherst Island is scheduled to be delivered at the end of 2019.

Amherst Island Community Centre

**Come and help us bring in the New Year!!
December 31st from 7:00pm to 1:00am**

Music by: Country Rhythm

Lite lunch

Cash Bar

Door Prizes

\$20 per person

Advance tickets only/ Deadline December 20th, 2016

For Tickets please call:	Betty Wemp	613-389-7907
	Linda Welbanks	613-389-4143
	Carol Glenn	613-384-7480



Jacob Murray showing his moves, by Brian Little

AIWI Report

- Judy Greer

November Meeting

The November meeting was held Wed. Nov. 16/16 at the home of Norma Lynn Cole with 13 members and 1 guest present. Correspondence was received noting with congratulations that this year's recipients of the Ameriks scholarships were Ben Cuyler, Noa Bonham-Carter, and Gavin Ashley. The Program Committee noted that the Junestown W.I. (near Mallorytown) is interested in coming for a visit in summer 2017. Norma Lynn and Joyce H.

Received certificates from FWIO to recognize their efforts in recruiting new members. Anne Henderson reported that she has had no government response re: our letters about Basic Income Guarantee and about the possibility of reopening the prison farms. On Jan. 9th a public consultation meeting will be held in Kingston about BIG. Hugh Segal of Kingston has been working on initiating Pilot Projects for the Basic Income Guarantee.

Our members who are working on our Project to celebrate Canada's 150th, a new Island Telephone Directory, report the printing is on track for spring 2017. Our interest in having island library services is on hold until we hear from the Student Advisory Committee. A consultants report on Library Services in Lennox-Addington has been presented to County Council with recommendations. Thursday morning coffee for WI members has been discontinued until spring. Joyce presented our WI reponse to the Loyalist Township Proposed Recreation Master Plan. Andrea and Judy B. Have volunteered for the Township Recreation Committee. Liz has recruited several WI volunteers for the fall roadside cleanup on County Rd.4. Ann Adams is working on getting a Christmas Season lights display at the ferry dock.

The November meeting is an annual craft night and the members each made a Christmas Wreath with direction from Marianne Mercer and Sherri Jensen. A photo was taken to document the evening. Thanks to Marianne and Sherri. We enjoyed delicious refreshments thanks to Joyce and Mary Kay.

Our December gathering will be our Christmas Pot Luck, Dec. 7th at 6pm at Liz's house (please let her know what you plan to bring). And please bring an unwrapped toy valued at about \$10 to be donated.



Chilly doves, by Terry McGinn

Thank You

I want to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for all the many get well thoughts received during my illness. Thanks to you all my relations, friends, neighbours and other acquaintances for the beautiful cards, tasty tidbits, and visits which cheered my long hospital stay. My illness left me physically exhausted and mentally confused, I am most fortunate that my daughter, Sally, her husband, Ron took me into their home to recover. I am doing well, and hope to eventually be able return to Amherst Island and thank the people in person. I especially want to thank Rev. Don Bailey for visit, and Communion. And the many other friends whose cards I have received here recently. **LESLIE GAVLAS**

I would like to thank all my market and farm customers, also all those who ordered baked goods through the winter.

My gardens were a failure but I hope we have a better summer next year.

I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy New Year.

P.S. I will take orders for pies, tarts, and loaves again this winter

As Ever, Barb Reid

The Christmas Bazaar Committee of St. Paul's wishes to thank all those who went above and beyond to make this year's Christmas Bazaar such a resounding success. So many people in this wonderful community helped, worked, and supported us. We had amazing help from the other venues and amazing advertising, thanks to Woody. The support from people across the Bay was phenomenal. You must have told all your friends and acquaintances!

Thank-you Amherst Island.

I would like to thank the firemen for quick response the day of my fire.

I would also like to thank Dave Vrooman who saw it and called the fireman. I really appreciate everyone's efforts.

Thank you again, Barb Reid

A "Thank You" from the Leeders

A huge, belated thank you to family, friends and neighbours who reminded us this summer about how special a place Amherst Island is. The sense of community that we felt when Laird was in the hospital this summer was overwhelming. Thank you to all of you who expressed your concern, sent messages of encouragement, provided care for J.P., sent food and cards, picked up groceries, and offered to help. A very special thank you to the dedicated team of family and friends who fed chickens, cows and horses, watered gardens, cut fields, delivered cattle and took over all of Laird's many jobs during a time that was also very busy for you. You truly kept us on our feet through every thoughtful action performed through the months of August and September. Many thanks also to Amherst Island Emergency Services for the excellent care, Father Don Bailey for his

visits in hospital and to CCAC for their professional and supportive assistance when Laird returned home. It truly is a very special place in which we live. Thank you everyone.

Notices

Correction - re: Thanks to John Harrison and other AIMS volunteers - Please note that John Harrison corrected my error in the November Beacon about the flower garden at the Neilson Store Museum. John's efforts were on behalf of AIMS and supported by a grant from Loyalist Township to purchase plants and fertilizer. I apologize for this error. Diane Pearce

Dear Counters and Faithful Supporters of Amherst Island's Christmas Bird Count,

You won't be surprised to be hearing from us at this time of year - just wanted to let you know that Janet Scott and I want you to book your calendar for the Amherst Island Christmas Bird Count!

Our count will be held on Friday, 30 December 2016. We'll meet at the Amherst Island Public School at 8 am and plan on sending you out in groups on routes around the Island by 8:15. We will have coffee and muffins available at the school before you set out on your route, with a free lunch around 12 noon (soup, chili and rolls). The ferry costs \$9 per vehicle for the round trip and you catch it on the mainland (at Millhaven) at 7:30 am.

If you're planning to join the Amherst Island bird count, please e-mail me or Janet. Or if you have any questions, don't hesitate to call me at 613-389-8516 or Janet at 613-389-4608.

All the best for the coming season. Hope to see you the day before New Year's Eve (it's only a month away)!

Janet Scott & Bonnie Livingstone

To the Community of Amherst Island

Advent Children's Party

We are planning a children's afternoon at St. Paul's on Saturday, December 10th from 1:00 until 4:00. We are hoping that your little ones can come. Crafts, games, snack and music. We are going to fit costumes and practise our parts in the Nativity play that will be part of the Community Carol Service to be held on Sunday, December 11th. If you have friends or relatives that want to join in, please tell them that all are welcome.

Blessings,

Janet



Gotta work for it, by Brian Little

Community Carol Service

Sunday, December 11th, 2016 - 2:00 PM

at St. Paul's

Light refreshments to follow.

Carols, Readings and Nativity Play.

Have you ever wanted to be a shepherd,
wise man or an angel? Do you have
Grandkids who want to be in the play?
Would you like to read or sing or play an
instrument? This is your chance!

If you wish to take part call
Janet 613-389-4608

Advertisements

NOTICE: Advertisements can be placed here by sending an email to editor@amherstislandbeacon.com, unless otherwise directed advertisements will appear for a maximum of 3 months before needing to be "renewed" by contacting the Beacon. This is to prevent stale ads from lingering. Thank you...

Free, floor T.V.

About 45 inches, heavy. Call 613 384 6535.

WANTED:

Excellent quality queen mattress; good quality double bed mattress; small dog or large cat carrying cage (sufficient for 2 smallish lambs). Call Sally 613-389-3444

WANTED: SEEDLING TRAYS

If you have any unwanted but reusable seedling trays I would be glad to have them, please. I can pick them up or I am at the AIMS Farmers' Market on Saturdays. Thank you. Terry McGinn - 613-888-3702, or terry@maplemarsh.ca

WANTED: 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

TOPSY FARMS

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

BETTY'S HOME COOKING

My Market Goodies are available! Plus if you want a full meal to go... a few days notice and your cooking for company is over. Call Betty 613-389-7907

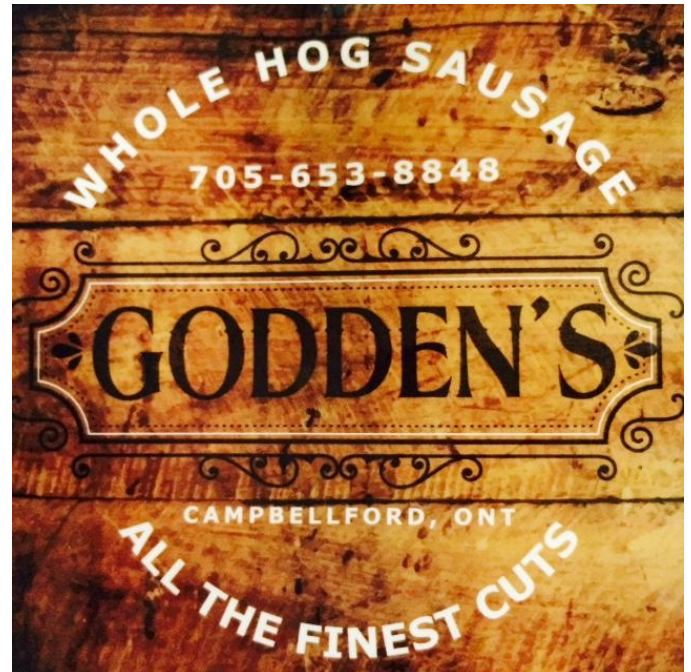
TOPSY FARMS WOOL SHED

Wool and sheepskin products including yarn, blankets, crafts, and individual photos, books and booklets by Don Tubb. Open weekends and most weekday mornings. 613-389-3444

RAWLEIGH PRODUCTS FOR SALE

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

GODDEN WHOLE HOT SAUSAGE



MANY THANKS to our island customers for choosing Godden's Whole Hog Sausages for your BBQ needs this summer! Particular thanks to The Back Kitchen for including our product on your menu! We are freshly stocked at Poplar Dell with 5 lb. cases of both BBQ Sausages (Salt & Pepper, Honey & Garlic, Hot Italian, Sundried Tomato & Oregano, Sweet Chili & Lime) and Breakfast Sausages (Salt & Pepper, Maple). All cases \$35.



Mine!, by Brian Little

ISLAND BOOKKEEPING

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

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT LOAN

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

COMPUTER REPAIR/UPGRADES

New installs, virus/Malware removal. Island References. Bruce MacCrimmon – 613-453-0505 or bruce.maccrimmon@hotmail.com

ISLAND GOLD 100% PURE RAW ONTARIO HONEY

Please call Perry at 613-371-8118 or email islandgold@rogers.com

ISLAND YOGA

Call Taggett for more information at 613-888-5156

AMHERST ISLAND CHIROPRACTIC

10650 Front Rd. Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

For appointments call 613-328-8892

PAINTINGS, PRINTS & ART CLASSES

Shirley Miller 613-389-2588

HARTIN'S PUMPING SERVICE

Septic Pumping & Inspection 613-379-5672

FOOTFLATS FARM ACCOMMODATION

Goodman House (waterfront) - 4 bedrooms, 3 bath - available year round.
<http://www.footflats.com> 613-634-1212

HOUSE IN THE VILLAGE FOR RENT

by the week or weekend.

Contact Jan Sydorko at 519-451-1197 or email michael.sydorko@sympatico.ca

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



The Back Kitchen Silent Auction table from Christmas Shopping on Amherst Island, by Terry McGinn

From the Archives

December 1986 - Issue 107

Ms Know it All

Dear Ms KIA

I am taking Driver Education at school and am learning the rules of the road. I have noticed that some drivers on the Island do not obey the four way stop in Stella. Are there different rules over here?

Signed 'Every Which Way But Legal'

Dear 'Every Which Way But Legal'

In theory the 'rules of the road' are the same on the Mainland and on the Island. However, with the absence of any authority (ie police), some drivers take a more interpretative attitude towards the rules which sometimes resemble a 'free fire zone' (like in Vietnam where anything that moved was an enemy and could be hit). Stop signs seem to mean 'Slow down and look'; Yield signs seem to mean, 'look for other traffic if you want while proceeding at normal speed'; Unmarked corners seem to mean 'proceed as if there is no intersection'; and an open road seems to mean 'proceed as fast as possible ignoring all other traffic'.

Of course you should obey the rules that you have been taught! Knowing that others are careless drivers, you must drive both correctly and defensively.

There are many situations where you will bear some of the

responsibility for an accident even, if you think you are obeying the law. I have heard it said that the only time you will not bear any responsibility for an accident is: you are stopped at a red light and you are hit from behind. Even if you have the right-of-way, you cannot deliberately run into someone rolling through a stop sign (as satisfying as that might be).

December 1996 - Issue 227

A Letter Home

I'm sitting at the kitchen table looking out at one more grey day. If the sun ever shines again, I promise I won't take it for granted. The mild weather we've been experiencing has been a blessing for some and a curse for others. The farmers are finding it difficult slipping around in the mud with their tractors and I'm sure the livestock don't like slopping through the goo. We're trying to keep everyone high and dry until the ground freezes. However, I'm sure the Township snow removal budget must be smiling.

We took a drive down the front road last night and enjoyed looking at all the Christmas lights. It seems there's more than ever and such a cheery sight. I'd like to see the lights stay on at least until the end of winter when they can usher in spring.

The farm is busy, as usual. The rams are finally getting ready for their big date. We've had two lovelorn rams standing all day

long looking over the fence at the ewes. There also happens to be two ewes looking back happily wagging their tails and patiently waiting. The sheep will have to be divided into seven different smaller flocks with their prospective dates. The shepherd will cross his fingers and hope all goes well. The results not known until next May. It will all mean that chores will take longer and all the extra things like machinery maintenance and repair will get pushed further back into the afternoon.

We have a new guard dog. He is a large white Akbash who at eleven months weighs 106 pounds. He seems to have settled in with the sheep and we hope this

will make the coyotes think twice before deciding on lamb chops for supper.

Have you been reading the "Inspirational Thoughts" which

have begun to appear in the Beacon? There is much speculation as to the source but we really have no idea who the secret sender is. I hope you have enjoyed reading them as much as I have.

My Christmas shopping is done. When you live on the Island, Christmas seems to come in more gently. There's no carols constantly playing in Glenn's store

and the cash registers are not ringing to the tune of 'Here Comes Santa Claus'. I was reading something in the paper the other day reminding us that the name of the holiday is Christmas and not Giftmas. An interesting thought. However, it is a wonderful time for families and friends to get together and I wish you could be here.

Best Wishes in 1997.



Concert at The Lodge, by Brian Little