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Amherst Island Beacon

Issue 465

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April 2017



From the Editor's Desk

- Terry McGinn

Amherst Island really seems to come alive in the spring - from the greening grass and budding trees, to the return of the folks who winter elsewhere, to the new life arriving daily in the farm pastures - it's a beautiful sort of renewal to witness that never gets old.

Returning with spring is the hustle and bustle of Island life, which competes for the limited resource of time of which there never seems to be enough. It's nice to be busy and I can't imagine any better place for it.

Loyalist Township Fire Department Anniversaries

- Terry McGinn

On April 1st Loyalist Township Fire Department recognized the dedication and commitment of its members including several members from the Amherst Island Station.

Among the honourees were Maureen McGinn being recognized for 25 years of service, Mike Walhout with 10 years of service, Alex Scott with 25 years of service, and Jacob Murray Gary McDonald and John Mayman are also pictured above.

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Neighbourhood

- Lynn Fleming

Get Well wishes to Mr. Plank and Don Pepper.

Condolences to Mary McGinn following the sudden passing of her husband Andy McGinn. Sympathy also to children, Lenny (Angie), Lori (Nick), Lawrence (Tammy), Luc (Sierra) and Lance (Christine), and their families. Dear brother of Bonnie Baker, Russell (Jane), Cheryl Hutchings (Myles), Gail Haggett and Dan (Glenda Lambert), and many extended family.

Condolences also to the family of Hilda Mills (nee McGinn) on her passing in her 101st year.

Barb and Allan Miller spent a couple of weeks visiting Adam down east in Fredrickton, where he was working.

Kevin and Finn Varette were off to Costa Rica in late February, early March.

Eric and Janice McGinn joined friends on a cruise out of New Orleans to the southern Caribbean.

Alex and Debbie Scott and girls spent March Break in Central Florida.

Dayle and Elly Gowan and Diane Pearce and Michelle Lelay made their annual trek to Mexico, to enjoy some warm weather. I'm sure they were hoping to return to Spring weather and are probably wishing they were still there.

Those who didn't head for warmer climates for March Break, were treated to another 24 hour snow storm and cold temperatures. Our road crews have been busy dealing with Spring roads – all winter, so a good freeze allowed them to get some grading done.

The Bay froze across for a second time on March 11th, but just between Millhaven/Bath and the Island. It was open water west of Emerald and at Amherstview. It seemed to just be some drift ice by the 26th again.



Brian Little

PHOTOGRAPHY

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• Portraits	• Landscapes	1355—2nd Concession Stella, ON, KOH ZSO Gallery visits by chance or by appointment.
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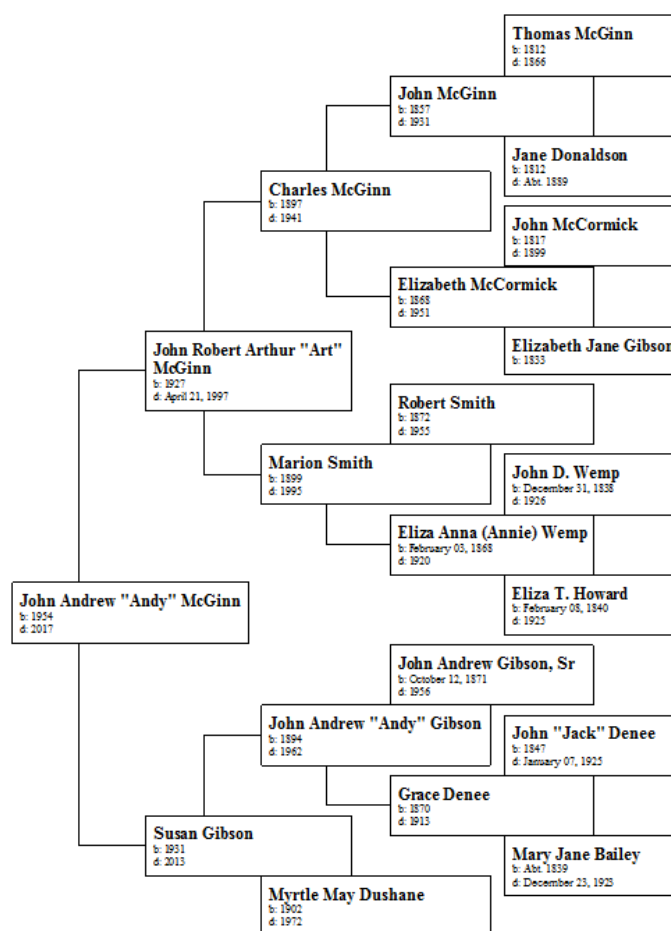


Andy McGinn, courtesy Mary McGinn

Andrew John McGinn

Suddenly at home on Saturday, March 4, 2017, one day prior to his 63rd birthday. Beloved husband of Mary (née LaRocque) and devoted and loving father of Lenny (Angie), Lori (Nick), Lawrence (Tammy), Luc (Sierra) and Lance (Christine). Cherished grandfather of Matthew, Kelsey, Kurtis, Andrew, Dana, Stephan, Nicolette, Paige, Carson, L.J., Hayden, Hank, Taylor, Colton and expected baby McGinn and great-grandfather of Anna and Logan. Dear brother of Bonnie Baker, Russell (Jane), Cheryl Hutchings (Myles), Gail Haggett and Dan (Glenda Lambert). Predeceased by his parents Arthur and Susan (née Gibson), his brother William and sisters Grace and Dale. Fondly remembered by his aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews and extended family.

Ancestors of John Andrew "Andy" McGinn



*Andy McGinn, pictured with Luc and Lance,
courtesy Mary McGinn*



Hilda Mills, courtesy Mary Mills

Hilda Grace (McGinn) Mills

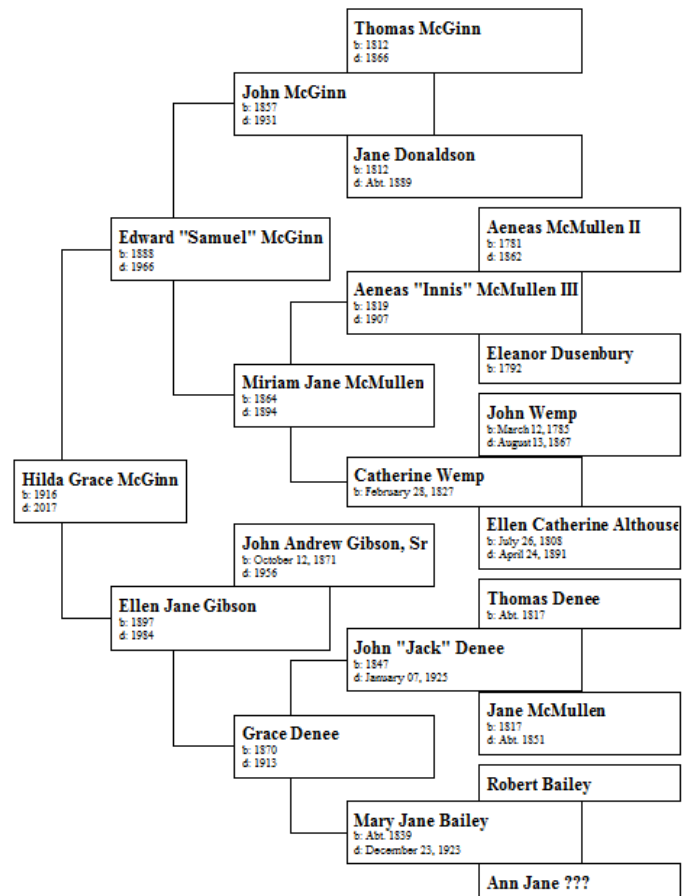
Peacefully at her daughter's home in Cardinal on Friday, March 24, 2017, at age 100. Beloved wife of the late Edward Mills. Dear and loving mother of Les Mills (Bertha) of Kingston, Beatrice Landon (Steve) of Cardinal, Mary Mills (Terry Smith) of Kingston, the late Stanley Mills (Irene of Kingston) and the late Paul Mills. Sadly missed by her 16 grandchildren, 26 great-grandchildren and 11 great-great-grandchildren. Predeceased by her siblings, Iona, Edna, Leslie, Laura, Nora, Keith and Kaye. Survived by her sister-in-law Cora McGinn and fondly remembered by many nieces and nephews and their families.

Eulogy

To begin, thanks to each of you for attending the celebration of Hilda's life today.

Additionally - Mary, Les and their families would like to give recognition and a very special

Ancestors of Hilda Grace McGinn



Hilda and Ed Mills, courtesy Cora McGinn

thanks to Beatrice and Steve, who have taken such good care of Mom for the past six years.

Knowing she has been in such good hands over this time has let us all rest easier as the years have passed.

Some of you would have known her simply as Hilda. And many more of us would have known her as Mom. Or Nan. Or Grandma.

No matter which of those names we best knew her as, she was a very special lady who cherished her family.

Even her “extended” family – the many borders that she took in and cared for over the years as if they were her own.

Hilda was a homemaker that was kept busy raising five children – a true testament of faith and love in itself!

And the fact that no one ever left her home hungry kept us all going!

Although she has had to deal with many losses over the years, she always maintained a special strength for her family.

And her great sense of humor was rather contagious – no doubt many of us have memories or pictures that make us still chuckle to ourselves.

So although this is a time of mourning, it’s also an opportunity for us to celebrate her life – living into her 101st year was a true gift for all of us.

Imagine... 100 years. That means that Hilda actually may have seen the Maple Leafs win a Stanley Cup! Not something that many of us can say!!

In closing, many of us considered Hilda to be an “angel” during her lifetime. Now is her time to truly take that role watching over us.



Deer through a window, courtesy Ross Stuart

rossland d

- Ross Stuart

When I was asked by Terry if I might consider adding something to the Beacon, I said: “Thank you, I’ll give it some thought!” which meant “yes!”

So I wrote out the first thing that came to my head, printed it and retyped it into an e-mail. Full of errors so I sent another e-mail and said: “Jayzus! It’s full of typos, I can redo it!”

Terry very kindly made the corrections. I did not think to say that ‘rossland’ and ‘d’ were not typos, although they might appear to be, and this requires some explanation: ‘ross’ is not a word used very often anymore. It is a word used almost exclusively as a name, as in ‘Ross Stuart’ which is myself. ‘rossland’ is not ‘Rossland’. Two very different things: Ross is my name whereas ‘ross’ is an old Scottish word (I know this for a fact because I looked it up when I was a boy in my Old Oxford English dictionary although I cannot find a resource reference for it now) - for a wilderness area, a wide open, untamed place or a marshland. A ross. (It is also an old Gaelic and German Teutonic word for a horse). ‘rossland’ when I moved in had been uninhabited to the extent that it became part of the local animal habitat: a wild, untamed place, a wilderness. And there is a boggy marshy strip

down at the bottom of the hill too, so rossland had it all.

'd' is not a letter typically used, in its lower case, to designate a person's name. 'Dee' would be more appropriate — or even just 'D'; however 'd.' is the name of my partner. It is short for 'Darlene'.

There was a time when 'd.' was utilized to be clandestine. It was an abbreviation designed to assuage association, to detract from the notion there might be a person attached to the letter, that the letter was not a proper noun. This was the time, not such a distant past, when I was afraid to leave the toolshed workshop where I plied my trade and go inside the house I rebuilt and raised my children in. It was the time of great alienation, of death and subsequent rebirth - and the one, the person that brought me back into the world, was designated in clandestine correspondence with the letter 'd'. It was she who brought to fruition, in actuality, the ancient dictionary description of the word 'ross' to my destiny; that I have carried all my life. Now the Ross and the rossland are becoming one.

There was an American Kestrel (sparrowhawk) living in the partition between the kitchen and the woodshed when I first moved in. I would see it come blasting out of a hole in the wall in the morning and it would fly around and around in the sky, going in and out of the trees. If I was outside though and it could see me, it wouldn't come back, just swooping over the house, afraid to return to its home. After a few months it was gone. I was sorry.

One evening, late, probably around 11pm, I went over to the sliding door of the workshop, and as it was stiff, gave it a great heave, greater than really necessary. It flew open. It was March of last year and snow was swirling down. I opened the door to take a piss outside before bedtime.

Clouds were low in the sky and the single electric LED outdoor light gave contrast to the white, grey and black of winter. Directly outside the door, approximately twenty feet away, was a young deer. We stared at each other. The deer's front legs splayed out as it sagged backwards at the sudden violent vision and sound of the door coming open. Then it whirled around and sped off, but it didn't go far: it stopped, turned around and trotted back. It came right up, fifteen feet away and looked at me. It tipped its head to one side and I could see it plainly thinking: "Yes! The side of the house really did open up! Yes! That is a human standing there!" It could not believe its eyes at first. Then it turned around, without haste and trotted away again.

As the sun went down, a few days later, I stood beside the woodshed watching the winter sun sinking behind the trees. Far away a dog began to bark, benign whoo whoo whoo, lazy, without effort or intent. Then my nervous system spiked with an electric zap as another animal answered the dog. It was a long mournful howl, deep throated and not more than one hundred feet away, right in the deepening shadows of the first line of trees. It was wild, it was primeval: a magic archetypical fear. The howl felt to erupt from right beside where I stood and commanded absolute attention.

The invisible Beast said: "Shut up dog. This is night. This belongs to me." I backed up the hill slowly, not taking my eyes off the treeline shadow, all the way to inside the woodshed door and pulled it closed. Then I dropped the big hand forged iron hook down through the eye. It went in with a clank. It felt good. A lot of hands have raised and lowered that hook. More than a century of hands. Let the Beast have the night.

[Editor's note: whoops.]



Sheep waiting to be sheared at Topsy Farms, by Terry McGinn

Coming Soon: Shearing at Topsy Farms

- Terry McGinn

I had intended to write up a story about shearing at Topsy Farms, which I attended for the first time ever last month in March but time ran short. Instead I've started a piece that will go in May's Beacon. Pictures from March's shearing session can be found in this month's Beacon, and anyone interested in watching the shearing in action will have another chance this month on the 22nd and 23rd of April when shearers again return to the farm.

Contact Sally for more information and to set up a time to visit: 613-389-3444.

Council Gleanings

- Ian Murray

From The Agenda of the 5th Session of Council, March 27.

---The cost overrun for the re-alignment of Front Road west of Emerald is estimated to be

\$110,000. This money is to come from several planned road projects.

The Heritage Committee sent a recommendation to Council that a heritage permit be approved to "conserve, restore and stabilize" the stone wall in front of Dan and Joan Simpson's farmhouse.



Signs of spring, by Terry McGinn

From the North

- Thomas McWhinnie

With thanks to Daniel Little for permitting me to step in for this month's edition of From the Yukon.

Not many days go by that I don't think about Amherst Island in some form or another. Be it a happy memory of an early morning sheep drive, or reminiscing about one of Jake Murray's famous bluffs parties. Amherst Island and the community there have left a permanent affect on me and I am grateful to have had the chance to have visited such a special place.

When I arrived at the ferry dock for the first time back in 2015 I was filled with a mix of excitement and trepidation. After four days on a Greyhound bus from Victoria to Ottawa I had seen the Rocky Mountains give way to the vast parries which in turn gave way to the Canadian Shield and was presently waiting on the ferry to come to my final stopping point.

Anything I had been feeling was put on the back burner as I became enlisted into helping toss wool, it was shearing day at Topsy Farms and any available hands were needed. Funny I can't say I woke up that morning thinking I would soon be pulling sheep dung from freshly shorn wool. I had thus fallen into the fold, my short life on the island had begun.

My five months on Amherst seemed to go by so fast, as do many carefree summers, and I was once again filled with a mix of excitement and sadness. The open road beckoned to me once more and I had to bid farewell to Amherst Island. If I could go back and tell myself what this place would later mean to me I think I would have lingered a little longer on the docks as I waved my final goodbye. I would have taken in one more sunset and really let the sensation of sitting by the water wash over me and I

would have lost myself for a little longer in the charm of the island. Most of all I would have done my best to thank everyone who allowed me to share a piece of their homes with me.

I was, therefore, very happy to have a piece of Amherst Island follow me home to Yukon in the form of one Daniel Little. As I'm sure he has written here before Yukon winters have their shares of ups and downs. But summer is just around the corner and with summer comes endless daylight which seems to give the people a limitless well of energy.

The Spell of the Yukon is a magnetizing force no matter how far I roam I can't seem to stay away for too long. I find myself yearning for her broad mountain vistas and vast open wilderness teeming with hardy northern vegetation and creatures. A common theme here is for a 3 month vacation to become a 30 year stay. I apologize in advance to Mr. Little's family should he follow this trend.

In summary thanks to all of Amherst Island for your hospitality, I hope to visit again sometime in the future. I'm glad to have Daniel here and I hope you are all getting a kick out of his stories from up north.

Paul Cuyler's Found Metal Sculptures



Thursday May 11th, 5pm -10pm
Friday May 12th, 4pm - 9pm
918 Bathurst Street, Toronto, Canada



M Conchita, courtesy Lynn Fleming

The Saga of the Amherst Islander Continues

- Lynn Fleming

Recently, Rosie MacMillan (sister of Keith Miller) spent a week on Roatan visiting her son, Jason Chambers, and his family. During their stay, they had been searching for the *M Conchita* (formerly the *Amherst Islander*). Rosie had really hoped to catch a glimpse of it, to no avail. Like most islanders, she has a soft spot for the *Amherst Islander* and remembers when it went in to service here. Following her return, she got the following email and photos from her son, Jason Chambers.

“Hey Mom, I thought I would give you an update on our hunt for the *Islander*. We have stopped in to almost every shipping dock on the island at one point or another, as well as sat at many sea side restaurants, and had many cervezas hoping to spot the old ship. We even

met a couple who live on the water in the French Harbor area, who have their own boat and took us out touring and diving. With all our efforts we hadn't seen or heard anything until yesterday. I was chatting with a local guy with prominent family ties here, and he told me the ship had been sold shortly after it arrived here. After the sale there was a dispute about the condition of the old *Islander* and its capabilities, and it was returned to the first owner to avoid a lawsuit. The ship then went into dry dock here and underwent some heavy modifications. After the modifications it was then returned to the buyer for the new price of \$250,000 US (ish).

When I first heard that the *Islander* was now the *M Conchita*, I didn't believe it. Looking at pictures side by side of the old *Islander* and the *M Conchita*, I thought there was no way they would change it that much. The entire



*Showing the changed superstructure,
courtesy Lynn Fleming*

superstructure would have been removed, and a new one built, with the bridge aft of the original.

We were in Coxen Hole yesterday, after my chat with the local guy, and I drove down to the closest dock to the grocery stores, and there she was, the *M Conchita*. We had been there several times before but hadn't seen her. I went and had a close look at her, still doubting it was the same ship, until I saw the IMO number. It is a match for the old *Amherst Islander*. So, there she sits! There must have been 20 guys unloading loose boxes by hand, and I see they added a deck crane. The bow sits higher in the water now that they moved all the weight to the stern. I attached some pictures, have a look!"

Thanks Jason for persevering and for the update and photos of the elusive *M Conchita*!



A close-up, courtesy Lynn Fleming

"Wild Goose" Jack

- Ian Murray

The one-room public school house that I went to – SS#10 Trafalgar Township – had 2 greenish painted 4' shelves of books that meant a lot to me. When a student completed the task at hand, it was okay to get a book and read.

One of the books was, I think, called "Wild Goose" Jack and was about Jack Miner who perhaps did the most to build up the population of Canada Geese. I had the impression that he rescued the species from extinction but, according to Wikipedia, that is not true.

He was certainly one of the first to band geese and was a great publicist for the preservation of geese and other wildlife. Interestingly, he hated birds of prey.

Jack Miner was deeply religious and believed that, although mankind was given dominion over nature, that dominion included "responsibility for conserving".

A week ago Sunday, Sally and I watched as a very large number of geese flew from the south and wheeled west towards the bluffs just over our heads.

I had 3 thoughts: don't open your mouth while looking-up; Jack Miner would have been proud to see this; and, I'm sure glad that we don't have any winter wheat growing.

AIMS Minutes – March

- Nathan Townend

The March AIMS meeting took place on the 11th at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church. Nathan Townend welcomed everyone to the meeting, thanked ISLE for providing breakfast, and was the featured speaker for the morning.

Nathan spoke to members about his background, and included mainly biographical information such as growing up as an army brat,

and where he completed his education. Most importantly Nathan provided a narrative for his coming to Amherst Island, and how he and his wife Anna came to settle here.

Don Pepper thanked Nathan for speaking.

During the Treasure's Report David had nothing substantial, new to report other than to cite the current account balance.

For the Transportation Report David stated that Don Pepper had taken 4 trips, and David had also taken 4 last month.

There were no new updates regarding the Auction.

It was mentioned that Waterside Summer Concert Series intends to approach AIMS and inquire about whether we would like to financially support and patronize the series. This issue will be raised again at April's meeting by which time AIMS expects to have received an official request from the board or the artistic director.

David McGinn offered to host recycling bins at the General Store for the purpose of recycling CFL bulbs. David will update us on this at April's meeting.

St. Paul's is hosting an "East Coast" music event starring Jeanette Arsenault on the 25th of March. Cost for the concert and a clam chowder is fifteen dollars, and there are two meal sittings at 5pm and 6pm, followed by the concert. All members are welcomed and encouraged to attend, and all proceeds will benefit the maintenance of St. Paul's Church.

Anders Bennick raised the question of what AIMS intends to do as far as celebrations for Canada's sesquicentennial is concerned. This issue will be revisited for the purposes of having a linger discussion, at April's meeting.



Growing seedlings in the basement, by Terry McGinn

Poetry

- Bruce Suds

Like many, I think North American poetry begins with Whitman. He was the first to write in the language of the US and Canada with a form for this growing place in the 19th century. As Ezra Pound wrote about Whitman, "It was you that broke the new wood / Now is a time for carving." This section from his epic poem, *Song of Myself* is my favourite bit of writing by Whitman. It seems as relevant today as it did nearly 200 years ago.

from Song of Myself
by Walt Whitman

I know I have the best of time and space, and
was never measured and never will be
measured.

I tramp a perpetual journey, (come listen all!)
My signs are a rain-proof coat, good shoes, and
a staff cut from the woods,
No friend of mine takes his ease in my chair,
I have no chair, no church, no philosophy,
I lead no man to a dinner-table, library,
exchange,
But each man and each woman of you I lead
upon a knoll,
My left hand hooking you round the waist,
My right hand pointing to landscapes of
continents and the public road.

Not I, not any one else can travel that road for
you,
You must travel it for yourself.

It is not far, it is within reach,
 Perhaps you have been on it since you were
 born and did not know,
 Perhaps it is everywhere on water and on land.
 Shoulder your duds dear son, and I will mine,
 and let us hasten forth,
 Wonderful cities and free nations we shall fetch
 as we go.

If you tire, give me both burdens, and rest the
 chuff of your hand on my hip,
 And in due time you shall repay the same
 service to me,
 For after we start we never lie by again.

This day before dawn I ascended a hill and
 look'd at the crowded heaven,
 And I said to my spirit

*When we become the enfolders of those
 orbs, and the pleasure and knowledge of
 every thing in
 them, shall we be fill'd and satisfied then?*

And my spirit said

No, we but level that lift to pass and
 continue

beyond.

You are also asking me questions and I hear
 you,
 I answer that I cannot answer, you must find
 out for yourself.

Sit a while dear son,
 Here are biscuits to eat and here is milk to
 drink,
 But as soon as you sleep and renew yourself in
 sweet clothes, I
 kiss you with a good-by kiss and open
 the gate for your egress hence.

Long enough have you dream'd contemptible
 dreams,
 Now I wash the gum from your eyes,
 You must habit yourself to the dazzle of the
 light and of every moment of your life.

Long have you timidly waded holding a plank
 by the shore,
 Now I will you to be a bold swimmer,
 To jump off in the midst of the sea, rise again,
 nod to me, shout, and laughingly dash with
 your hair.



*Drawing by Peter Large, offered in March as a fundraiser for the Neilson Store Museum,
 picture by Terry McGinn*

Hummingbird Formula

- *Cornell Lab of Ornithology*

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology tells us, there is absolutely no reason to add red dyes to hummingbird nectar. Natural flower nectar is clear. Hummingbird feeders have colorful parts that attract hummingbird regardless the color of nectar inside. There are several flowers and bushes that are known to attract hummingbirds, too! Learn more about feeding hummingbirds from The Cornell Lab.

We recommend clear sugarwater nectar.

As long as we have red-dropping rehab cases, we will warn against the use of red nectar. Please join us. Together, we can make a difference.

Clear Sugarwater Nectar

A healthy hummingbird feeder recipe.

Boil 4 cups water for 3 minutes

Stir in 1 cup pure granulated sugar

Cool to room temperature

Store remaining mix in fridge for 7 to 10 days.

Do not substitute sugar. Do not add red nectar, red dye, honey or anything else.

Boiling water not only kills most bacteria and viruses, it also removes many other microorganisms and some chemicals.

If you choose to use non-boiled water, please discard all nectar after 24 hours.

Great Loyalist Cleanup

- *Loyalist Township*

On April 22, 2017 the Great Loyalist Cleanup Day will take place in Loyalist Township. This event was created to recognize Earth Day and to promote environmental protection within our Communities.

For liability reasons the Township is not sanctioning collection of waste within our Public roadways. This event is restricted to Loyalist Township Parks only.

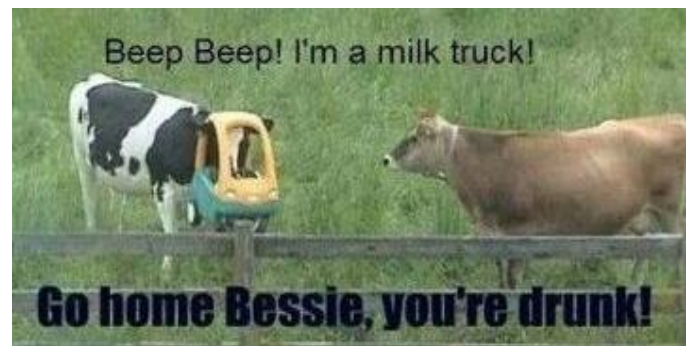
Information can also be found on our website at: <http://www.loyalist.ca/go/cleanup>

Each location will be receiving hard copies of the attached flyer, registration form and volunteer safety guidelines, shortly. Please ask those who wish to register for the event to fill out the registration form. Please provide the registrant a copy of the Volunteer Safety Guidelines and the appropriate number of gloves and garbage bags – the maximum amount of gloves for each participant is three, and the maximum amount of clear garbage bags for each group is five.

Each location will be provided gloves and bags prior to April 18, 2017. Please place the completed registration forms in a folder. Someone from Recreation Services or Public Works will collect the folder on Monday, April 24, 2017.

Registration will take place at the following locations between April 18 and April 22, 2017. Only those locations that are open to the public on April 22, 2017 will be available for registration:

Odessa Municipal Office
Leisure & Activity Centre
Free Flow Gas Bar
Amherst Island Ferry Office



Choosing Between Freedom and Slavery

- Anthony Gifford

Being Human is not easy. On one hand, we're basically lazing, yet on the other hand we're always striving for more. We often chose to evade responsibility and yet bridle and complain when we don't get our own way.

The myths of the ancients, those old stories that tell of universal truths, remind us of these conflicting forces that are within us. The biblical stories tell of this struggle. At first, the ancient Hebrews (Jews) had no king (unlike all other peoples around them), only Yahweh. They were free to figure out things for themselves. They couldn't pass on responsibility to any other. But, eventually, they chose to choose a king. From then on, they could blame all their problems on that figure.

Jesus plainly thought of himself as a child of God, a teacher, not an authority figure in any way, not one who longed for or sought power or control. Many around him were searching and longing for a messiah, a king to lead them in a revolution against Roman occupation. He declined, time and time again. He couldn't have been more plain and direct.

Yet, even in his death, he was re-created as a risen Messiah, and came to be thought of as being even as part of God by later Greek-thinking followers. The churches still proclaim him as such. The only responsibility Christians have is to 'believe'. All else is the Will of God. We PRAY. God DOES. Such a shame. And completely against all that Jesus said, lived and died for. (You can see why Good Friday is not my favourite time.)

Each of us lives in this dilemma. We want to be free, whatever that means to us. And yet we'd much rather leave the 'heavy lifting' in most

areas to others. When these two forces meet within us, we feel much discomfort. We are well aware of the great powers that influence our lives, powers that we can do little about. Yet we usually do little in those areas we CAN affect. Few of us are active in any real political way but we rarely hesitate to complain about those exact same areas. Many of us are still 'going to church', listening to 'priests' of one stripe or another who 'tell us like it is' from an official point of view, but we rarely share spiritually with each other or take the risk of questioning, learning and growing like Jesus of Nazareth urged us. Leave the 'spirit stuff' to the paid/trained staff.

In other words, we're just human. That's both a hope and a curse. It's up to each of us, and us together, to chose which force will be given the most power. If we believe in the kind of God that Jesus knew, we'll know that we've got to do it ourselves. LOVE shares that responsibility. The slavery and powerlessness that we might feel is self imposed, although traditional. It is still chosen. Let's not waste our time, but choose for freedom. It might be costly (the Cross demonstrates that fact), but it's worth it.

Again, thank you for your time and thoughts.

Anthony



The Emerald Forty Foot gets wet, by Rick Vanstone



A miserable morning to be born, by Terry McGinn

April Showers Bring Wet Calves

- Terry McGinn

It never fails, when the weather turns nasty at least a cow or two in the herd will decide it's a good day to bring a new life into the world.

Some of them are at least somewhat smart about it; they go out of their way to find high ground or some shelter, but just as many seem to end up in the deepest, coldest mud puddle for miles around.

Such was the case a couple of weeks ago when we had a deluge. That was the day that Ellie joined our family.

It never fails; each year there is a calf or two that becomes the story of the season. Bella and Buster were farm-famous three years ago, Buster for being born with two broken legs – which we splinted and healed after weeks and weeks of doctoring – and Bella for being an orphan cow who thinks she's people. They were both pail fed doted on, and Bella has never forgotten it.

Then there was Casper, the first snow-white calf to be born on the farm.

And last year we had Dudley and Deedee, twins – but not each other's – whose mothers chose the other sibling instead.

This year (so far?) it's Ellie; born in a mud puddle on a day that we received more than 2.5 inches of rain. This by itself isn't always a nightmare. Dudley and his sister were born during a miserable blizzard, but I was able to get to them (driving her and pulling him in a sled) to the barn so they could warm up. Ellie wasn't so fortunate.

Ellie's mother, as it happens, is not a fan of people coming near her calf. I didn't know this when I first went out to check on her in the field. I approached the calf and knelt down in the mud to make sure she was okay and see if she was cold – it was a concern that she didn't pop up on my approach.

But what I wasn't prepared for was for Ellie's mother, Daisy, to whack me in the shoulder with her head.

I leapt back, startled more than anything. I hadn't brought a cane with me – for stability on uneven ground, and self defense if necessary – so I retreated quickly. In hindsight I'm not sure this was the best strategy because it seemed to embolden Daisy and led to a long seven-hours of me in the rain trying to figure out how to get a calf (and cow, ideally) into the barn.

I could get close enough to the calf to keep her head out of the muck and mud by grabbing her legs and flipping her over when her mother turned the other way – it was at least somewhat helpful that Daisy dislikes other cows as much as she disliked me (assist Bella) – but I couldn't get her away long enough to really get my hands on the calf.

I would try, and she would charge – and she wasn't backing down at first. As time wore on I could get closer, either she was growing tired, or my presence seemed less threatening... or she was just giving up on the calf.

I had finally decided to get a rope, loop it around her back legs and pull her out of the field through the fence and take her to the barn when I got word that help would be coming on the next boat. So I waited.

Together my uncle and I got Ellie into the sled and I hauled her step-by-step, foot-by-foot to the barn through the mud and the muck. The sleds are made for snow. Mud is not snow.

She didn't look good when we got her to the barn, her eyes rolled back into her head; she was very, very cold and shivering. We took her to the garage, which is heated, and laid her there to let her dry and warm up.

We "tubed" some warm food into her (through a feeding tube down her throat) and waited. If

she survived the night things would look much better.

The following morning on my way to the garage I heard a plaintive "moo" from inside and I smiled in spite of it. She was still alive.

From that point on she hasn't looked back. We tried putting her back with her mother, and her mother owned her, but Ellie had already gotten used to the pail and wouldn't go to her mother. And I may have previously touched on Mom's disposition enough that it's needless to say there was no working with her to teach baby to feed.

So, another year, another farm-famous baby; born wet and cold, and too cute to let go.



Ellie at the pail, by Terry McGinn

Amherst Island Beacon

Whether every month or only once in a while

The Beacon is looking for contributors!

Have a submission, idea, or other content? Send it to:
editor@amherstislandbeacon.com

<http://www.amherstislandbeacon.com>

Neilson Store Museum and Cultural Centre

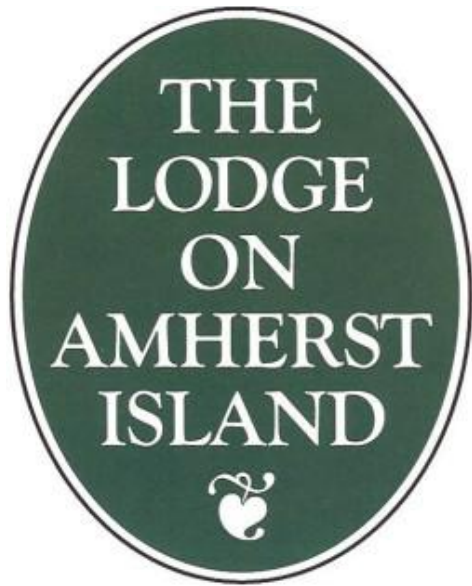
In celebration of Canada's 150th year
the Neilson Store Museum is looking for 150 depictions
of life and history on Amherst Island.

Photographs, drawings, documents; all are welcome.

Your original will be scanned for use and
you will retain your original.

We are looking hoping to get as wide a variety of submissions as
possible, from architecture, to events;
from portraits, to landscapes.

Contact Terry McGinn to submit: ttmcginn@gmail.com



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AIMS Minutes – April

- Nathan Townend

The April AIMS meeting took place Saturday, April 8th, at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church.

Brian Little welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked ISLE for providing breakfast.

Lorna Willis spoke to members about The Back Kitchen, both in terms of how last year went and what plans there are for this year. Lorna offered details about how the restaurant has done financially, and what lessons can be learned from their particular managing of people, time, and money. This year there are a number of changes that reflect what has been learned; additionally there are a number of capital projects to advance the efficiency, and ultimately the revenue this year, these mainly include the purchase of new equipment for the kitchen and food preparation area. Lorna spoke

with a great deal of knowledge, passion and clarity; members were inspired by the remarkable success the restaurant enjoyed in its first year.

Brian thanked Lorna for speaking.

In the Treasurer's Report David Pickering had nothing substantial, new to report other than to cite the current account balance.

For the Transportation Report David stated that Don Pepper is incapable of performing his driving duties at the present time, due to some personal, health related matters. This has meant that more assistance is and will be needed to take Doug Lamb into town, which Don Pepper was mainly responsible for doing. Moreover it is likely Don himself will need to be assisted in this way. Any volunteers to help fill the gap are warmly welcomed by David.

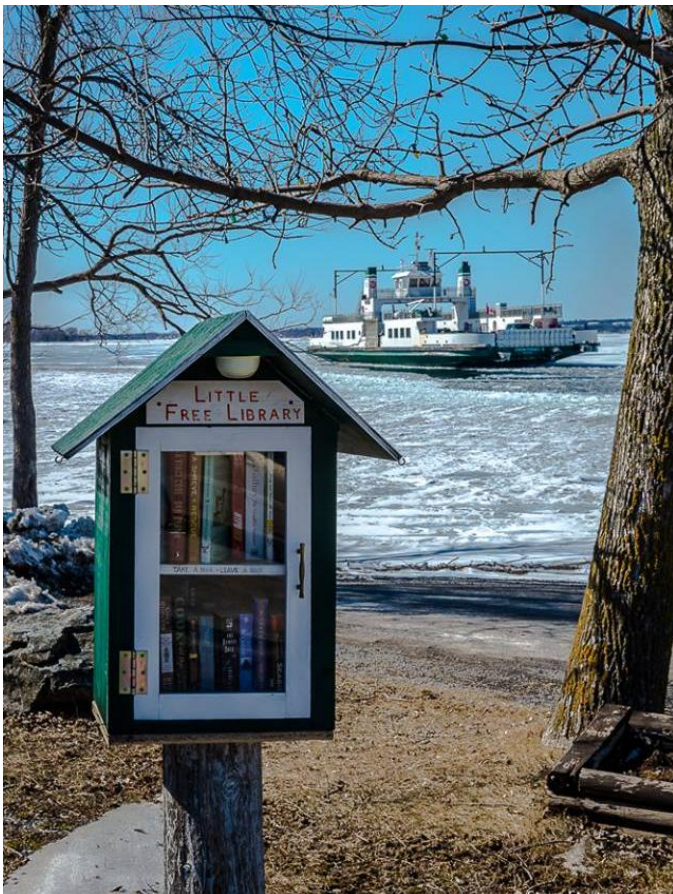
There were no updates regarding the Auction.

Brian Little raised the issue of contributing financially to support the Back Kitchen this year. Brian initially proposed someone put a motion on the floor to donate \$750.00 which would purchase an industrial toaster, which The Back Kitchen greatly desires in order to serve breakfast optimally. Brian felt that as AIMS patronizes The Back Kitchen for breakfast during the summer, that this recommendation was to everyone's benefit. Anthony Gifford put forward the motion which was seconded by Bruce Burnett. Then Carl McCrosky introduced a friendly amendment to raise the amount to \$1000.00. The motion was put again, as amended, and passed unanimously.

It was mentioned last meeting that Waterside Summer Concert Series intended to approach AIMS and inquire about whether we would like to financially support and patronize the series. The artistic director, Beverly Harris penned a letter to the members at large which was read

out. Initially it was decided that Brian Little would follow up with Beverly personally to discuss what contributions she may be looking for. However Anders Bennick proposed a motion that AIMS simply donate to Waterside in the amount of \$500.00 which had been our contribution the previous year. That motion was seconded by Carl McCrosky and passed unanimously.

Last meeting Anders Bennick raised the question of what AIMS intends to do as far as celebrations for Canada's sesquicentennial is concerned. Anders suggested that perhaps AIMS could commission our local blacksmith Paul Cuyler to create a sculpture to commemorate the 150th, such as a bench or like object that would be able to stand for posterity. It was concluded that Brian Little would assume responsibility and discuss the matter with Paul Cuyler and report back at our next meeting.



*The Little Library with Frontenac II docking,
by Steve Sturtz*



Perennial visitors on the lawn, by Terry McGinn

Poem

- Daniel Little

I bought a roadster in a snowstorm in a land
where the cops
drink the day away and no one gets stopped

Where the winds comes down heavy off the
borderline

And the air feels like spring in the heart of
winter time

Where a wail's just a whisper in this land left
alone

You are so far away - yes you're so far from
home

Where the Sun sets both early and never at all
Where the mountains grow wide and the drunk
tales grow tall

Where your eyes become emeralds and your lips
are sapphire

Where you'd climb in a furnace cuz the weather
was nicer

Where you bleed through your teeth in the
blood freezing cold
Just to spite your damn self and its worship of
gold

But in spite of yourself you are left just a man
Who can decide for himself and form his own
plan

The Back Kitchen

-- Amherst Island --

Amherst Island Community Café, operating as **The Back Kitchen**, will open for its second season on May 13th, 2017, to welcome and serve great food to Islanders and visitors.

AICC's mandate is to serve excellent food, support local growers, hire and train local students and to support other volunteers, businesses and tourism on Amherst Island.

A key component of this unique community operation is the shared effort and camaraderie of paid staff and volunteers working together, responsibly and respectfully, to achieve our mandate.

Back Kitchen Volunteers – Questions and Answers

Q -What would a volunteer-led community café be without volunteers?

A - CLOSED!

Q- What would Amherst Island be without The Back Kitchen?

A – A long way from a cup of coffee or an ice cream cone!

Q – What do we need to keep The Back Kitchen open?

A – YOU!

AICC is so appreciative of the many volunteers who supported The Back Kitchen (under Amherst Island Community Café) in its first year of operation. Through your initial work on committees to the more 'hands-on' work of cleaning, gardening, renovating, washing dishes, food preparation and serving, picking up food orders from suppliers, special dinners, dump duty, and after hours clean-up – and providing musical entertainment – our first season was a resounding success. It would not have happened without your help!

Q – Are you ready to volunteer at the Back Kitchen again this year?

A – Only you can answer that question! Please send an email to backkitchenai@gmail.com to let us know. Or, you could call Margaret Maloney (Volunteer Coordinator/Liaison) (613) 384-7925

or talk to any of the other Board Members listed below:

Diane Pearce

Blair Anderson

Lorna Willis

Ian Murray

WI Report

- Mary Kay Steel

Our March meeting was held at the home of Kirsten Bennick on Wednesday, March 15th at 7pm. Joyce Haines, President, was in the chair, and there were ten members present and three guests. We got off to a fun start with the introduction of Town Crier Bill McKee, who with his wife, Liz, now lives in the Dunns' former home on the island. Liz has already joined the WI. Bill was in full costume with his loud bell and gave us a demonstration of his "job"; he represents the towns of Uxbridge, Scougog, Port Perry and Oshawa in eastern Ontario. He is a member of the Ontario Guild of Town Criers which has 48 members, one of the largest guilds in Canada. His beautiful costume and hat were made by his wife. They often travel abroad to participate in various town crier competitions. While really a hobby or avocation, he does get paid a small sum by some of his clients, but travel is out of his own pocket. I am sure our island community will hear from him again!

Bill's presentation was followed by a fine social hour with refreshments provided by Anne Henderson and Liz Harrison. And there was a delicious birthday cake for member Mary Kay.

The President called the business part of the meeting to order and we went through several of our routine reports and items of business. We decided to invite the Junetown, Ontario, branch for a picnic lunch in June, as a component of our June meeting. Speaking of picnics, we hope to host a Community Picnic the first long weekend in August as a celebration of Canada's 150th birthday. A committee was struck to get this idea developed. Guest Susie Caughey spoke to us about the school's need for support with its hot lunch program, next winter. As well, she

explained that she is trying to establish a group under the 4-H program, of island young people and that financial help would be welcomed this spring if she is successful. Our branch assured her that we would do our best to give these initiatives our support. On another subject, it was reported that progress towards completing the new Island Phone Directory is advancing well and that it should be available this spring. We dealt with a few more business items, then closed the meeting with a reminder that it is time to elect a new or renewed executive and that members need to consider whether they can stand for office.

Our next meeting will take place on Wednesday April 19, 7pm, at the home of Ann Adams. It will also be our annual general meeting: a time to vote on a new executive and to pay membership fees. Guests are welcome.



Bill McKee, courtesy Mary Kay Steele

Thank Yous

Heartfelt thank you to the ferry crew, Bonnie Livingstone and the wonderful community we live in.

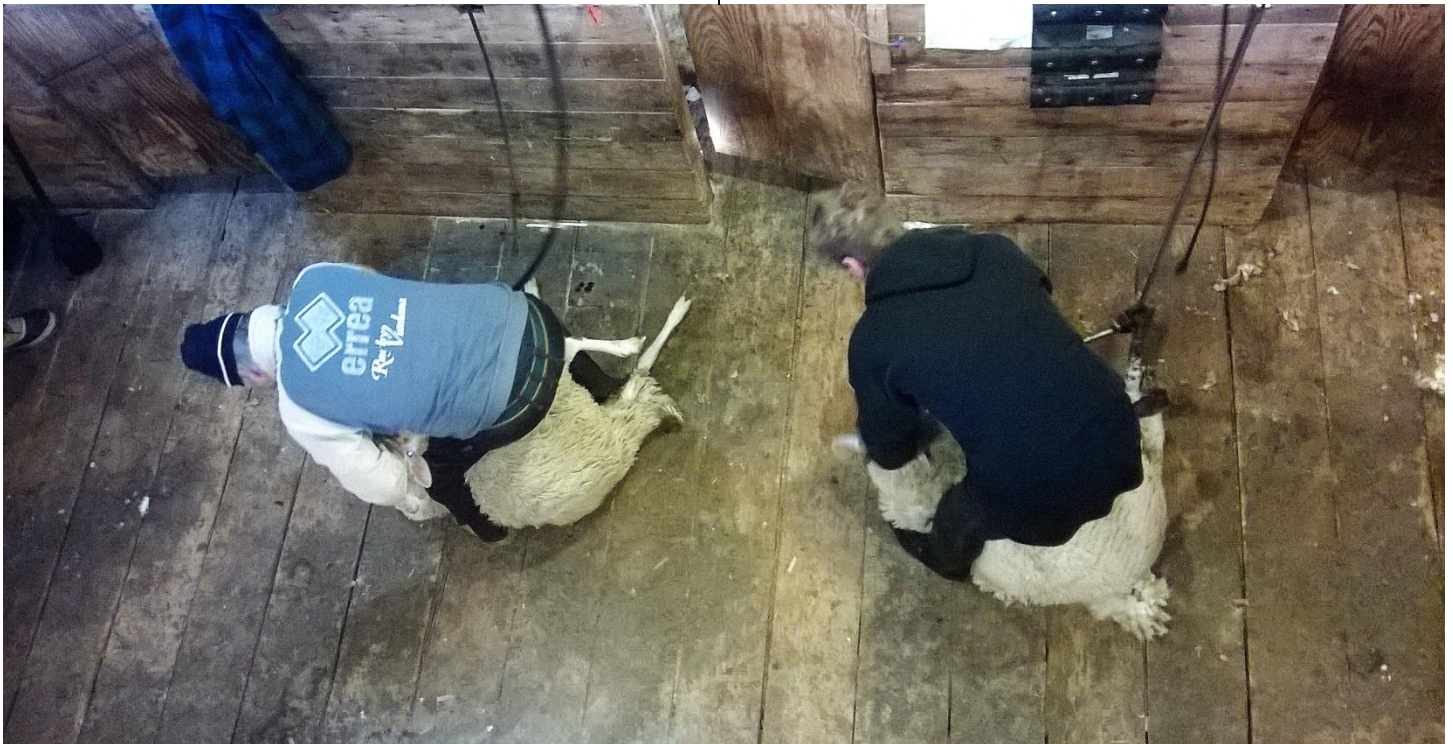
The donations to Alzheimer Society in my brother's memory are very much appreciated.

All the cards, hugs and calls and caring are Amherst Island.

Kindest regards,
Ida Gavlas and family



This makes all the work worthwhile, by Terry McGinn



Shearing gets underway, by Terry McGinn



Many more to go, by Terry McGinn



Sheep on stand-by, by Terry McGinn

Advertisements

MICROWAVE

White microwave, turn table, it's a good size. Like new. Bob Filson.

LOST: One Hairdresser

FOUND: One Hairdresser

If you have been looking for JOAN (formerly with "Changes"), she is now working from her home. She is located north on Speers Blvd. to the FIRST STOP SIGN, left on Kildare (to the fourth house), 160 Kildare. Her phone number is 613-540-1467.

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

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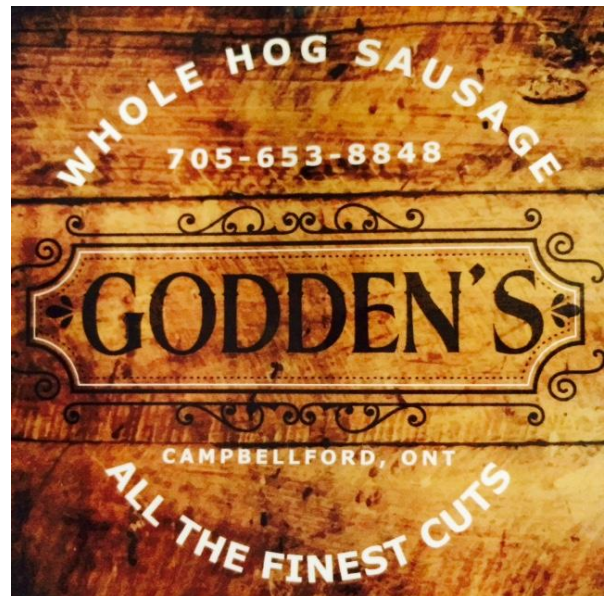
TOPSY FARMS WOOL SHED

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.

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

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Upcoming Events

Worship at St. Alban's – Sundays 10:30am

Worship at St. Paul's – Sundays 11:00am

Amherst Island Farmers' Market

Saturdays starting May 20 – 9:00am to Noon
Centennial Park, 5437 Front Road

Loaves & Fishes

Wednesdays 12:00pm – 2:00pm, through the end of April

350 3rd Concession Road

Internet Cafe

Tuesdays 9:00am – 2:00pm

Neilson Store Museum and Cultural Centre

ISLE Cheese Orders Due

May 12, 2017 at the school

Amherst Island Walling Workshop

Simpson Farm, 12675 Front Road

<http://www.drystonecanada.com/>

Lambing at Topsy Farms

Begins May 14, carries on throughout May

<http://www.topsyfarms.com/>

Women's Institute Meeting

May 17 – 7:00pm to 9:00pm

Women's Institute Bake Sale

In front of the General Store

May 19 – 3:45pm to 4:00pm

Great Amherst Island Yard Sale

May 27 – 8:00am to 3:00pm

Island-wide!

NOTICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRE

Design Build for Amherst Island Ferry Dock Improvements Millhaven and Amherst Island, Loyalist Township DB 2015-4199

THE PROJECT

Rankin Construction Inc. (RCI) and their design consultant Morrison Hershfield (MH) have been selected by the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) to undertake the Detail Design Study and construct the Amherst Island ferry dock improvements (see Key Plan, below).

The project includes converting the existing side-loading ramps to end-loading, in order 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 to better accommodate the increasing number of large commercial trucks and farm equipment. The ferry service improvements will include: end-loading ramps; a larger paved parking area to accommodate more vehicles; sidewalks; an upgraded bubbler system for winter ice control; and new terminal buildings with public restrooms, bike racks, and staff offices.

THE PROCESS

The study will follow the approved planning process for a Group 'B' project in accordance with the *Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Transportation Facilities (2000)* with the opportunity for public input throughout the study. The recommended plan was determined during a Preliminary Design and Environmental Assessment Study which was completed and documented in a Transportation Environmental Study Report in January 2014. A Design and Construction Report (DCR) will be prepared and made available for review and comment upon completion of the study. The DCR public review period will be announced in this newspaper at a later date and on the project website: www.amherstislandferrydocks.ca.



Help us share updates: Follow us on Twitter @A_L_ferrydocks

PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRE

The public is invited to attend a Public Information Centre (PIC) for this study, which will present and receive input on the study process, the recommended plan, construction staging and proposed mitigation strategies. The PIC will be held on:

Amherst Island
Tuesday, April 25, 2017
3:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
St. Paul's Presbyterian Church
2045 Stella 40 Foot Road, Stella

Millhaven
Wednesday, April 26, 2017
4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Royal Canadian Legion
120 County Road 4, Millhaven

This PIC will be an informal drop-in centre. Representatives from the MTO and the Study's Design-Build team will be available to answer questions, receive comments and discuss the next steps in the study. You are encouraged to attend the PIC and provide your views and comments so that they can be considered as the study progresses.

COMMENTS

We are interested in hearing any comments or concerns that you may have with the study. For further information or to be added to the project mailing list, please visit the website or contact:

Craig Copping
Project Manager
Rankin Construction Inc.
222 Martindale Rd., P.O. Box 1116
St. Catharines, ON L2R 7A3
tel: 613-483-2161
fax: 905-684-2260
e-mail: ccopping@rankinconstruction.ca

Nancy Elliott
Senior Project Engineer
Planning and Design Section, Eastern Region
1355 John Counter Blvd.
Kingston, ON K7L 5A3
tel: 613-545-4662
fax: 613-540-5108
e-mail: Nancy.Elliott@ontario.ca

Information will be collected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. With the exception of personal information, all comments will become part of the public record.

If you have any accessibility requirements in order to participate in this project, please contact one of the Project Team members listed above.





*Sally said she was impressed with the quality of the fleece for such young animals, and here's why,
photo by Terry McGinn*

Archives

April 1987 - Issue 111

School Meeting

- Sally Bowen

About fifty adults and many young people attended a meeting at the school Tuesday night to discuss their concerns about proposed school staffing cutbacks and the inevitable loss in quality of learning. The meeting was organized by Ann-Marie Hitchins and run by the committee organized

in similar circumstances a few years ago.

The community is concerned that this is the first step towards closing the school. It was generally acknowledged that the School Board is under considerable pressure to cut education costs. However, we believe that with our active participation a more mutually acceptable decision can be reached.

Many useful suggestions were made during the evening:

- send two community representatives to all Board meetings
- consider a pre-kindergarten class to increase school numbers
- realize that children with special learning needs are allocated grants greater than for an average child: we may have the equivalent of more than 33 pupils
- consider schemes to bring extra money to the school, such as adult education classes, or becoming a nature study resource centre for the county.

An Association was formed to represent the community to the School Board. An executive was elected by ballot. The new committee members are

Debby Bedford, Sally Bowen, Bruce Caughey Jr., Jack Kerr, and Judy Miller.

After lively and informative discussion, a series of alternative proposals were developed to present to the Board.

The Chairman, Bruce Caughey Jr., stressed the negative example of the Camden East School closure.

The committee feels strongly that a low-key nonconfrontational approach to the Board is essential.

A new committee was elected. The members are Bruce Caughey Jr., Debby Bedford, Jack Kerr, Judy Miller and Sally Bowen. They will represent the community association, and report to it.

The meeting would not have happened without the outstanding organizing efforts of Anne-Marie Hitchins.

Warm thanks also to Tracy, Chad, Jesse and Amy who provided excellent child care, keeping the little ones happy despite the late hour, and enabling their parents to participate.

The Cook's Corner

- *Dianne Marshall*

What's for dessert?

Somehow the perfect meal never seems complete without the pleasure of a dessert afterwards. Why, even at my age, I have been known to eat my supper just so I could have dessert. This month's recipe comes from Laurene Kilpatrick who feels that desserts are one of specialties. Having had the pleasure of tasting a few of them, I would heartily agree. Laurene believes that the perfect cake depends more on a good recipe than great culinary skill and recommends the following recipe for beginners as well as the

practiced cook. Our many thanks to Laurene for the following recipe.

Creole Chocolate Cake Some occasions call for a very special cake, and what could be more spectacular than this chocolate cake that would be downright sinful if it didn't taste so divine. It's irresistibly rich by layering it with a filling of dates, raisins and nuts, spread with whipped cream, and then lavishing on a silly sour-cream icing.

Cake:

2 cups unsifted all purpose flour

1 teaspoon baking soda

1/2 cup butter

3 squares unsweetened chocolate

2 cups sugar

2 eggs beaten

1/2 cup sour milk (Place 1 1/2 teaspoons vinegar in a

1 cup measure, fill with milk to make 1/2 cup)

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Filling:

1 can evaporated milk

3/4 cup sugar

1/4 cup chopped seedless raisins

1/2 cup chopped dates

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1/2 cup chilled heavy cream

Frosting:

1 pkg (6 oz) semisweet chocolate pieces

1/2 cup sour cream

dash salt

1) Preheat oven to 350 F. Sift flour with soda into a large bowl. Grease and flour two 8 by 8 by 2 inch square cake pans. In small saucepan, combine butter, oil and chocolate; stir over low heat to melt chocolate.

Add 1 cup water. Cool 15 minutes.

2) To flour mixture, add 2 cups sugar, the eggs, sour milk and 1 teaspoon vanilla, mix with wooden spoon.

Stir in cooled chocolate just to combine. Quickly turn into prepared pans, bake 30 to 35 minutes, until surface springs back when pressed with finger.

3) Cool in pans 5 minutes. Carefully loosen sides with spatula. Turn out on racks; cool. Make filling; in a small saucepan, combine milk, sugar and 1/4 cup water.

Cook over medium heat, stirring to dissolve sugar. Add raisins and dates. Stir with wooden spoon.

4) Cook, stirring, until mixture is thickened - about 5 minutes. Add vanilla and nuts. Cool completely. In small bowl, beat cream with mixer just until stiff. On plate, place layer tops side down; spread with filling, then whipped cream. Top with second layer.

5) Frosting: Melt chocolate pieces in top of double boiler over hot water. Remove top of the double boiler from hot water. Stir in sour cream and salt. With wooden spoon, beat until smooth. Cool 5 minutes, until frosting is spreading consistency.

6) Frost top of cake, swirling decoratively; use rest of frosting to cover sides. Refrigerate on hour before serving. To Serve: With sharp knife, mark top of cake into four quarters; then cut each quarter into four slices.

Makes 16 servings. Super good!!!

April, 1997 - Issue 231

A Letter Home

- Sally Bowen

The ice is gone! A sure sign of spring. Each year there is great speculation as to when and how the ice between the Island and mainland will leave. This year it left with a whimper. The warm rains rotted the ice right through and when the right wind came along, the moat around the Island was once again in evidence. Some will breath a sigh of relief at being isolated from the rest of the world and others will picture the Little Ferry bobbing around in wind driven waves no longer protected by the ice. The Big Boat continues to sail back and forth oblivious to it all.

The farm is getting geared up for May lambing. 1000 ewes will give birth in approximately 21 days. My calculations makes that 47.61 new mothers plus lambs per day. If only the girls would co operate and spread it out evenly. However, there is always the possibility they may conspire to lamb many, many more on any given day. So be it, we'll be prepared. I keep telling myself this while sitting here still sane.

In preparation for lambing we had the ewes shorn. When the hot weather comes this will make them much more comfortable. The April shearing was planned months in advance. What could possibly go wrong? The night before one Rowsie (picks up, skirts, and packs the wool) called to say they couldn't make it. The day of, we had a driving wet snowstorm. One shearer didn't feel well and ended up having an emergency appendectomy. There were also a number of minor bumps and scrapes. This left two shearers with a thousand sheep to shear in two days. Needless to say 800 sheep have lost their wool with 200 to be done sometime in the future. The shepherd has a few more gray hairs from all this but the job did get done.

Enough of the trials and tribulations of farming. I'm putting on my shoes and heading out the door to further enjoy the sights and sounds of spring.

We hope to visit after lambing is over!

April 2007 - Issue 349

Tales From The Past - The Blizzard of '71

-Susan Frizzell

As we see winter coming to an end for yet another year, surely many Islanders remember the Blizzard of March 1971 when during a twelve-day period, Amherst Island saw several feet of snow which crippled virtually all Island activity. It was a combination of wind, snow, and mechanical upsets

which left islanders with little to do but sit and wait.

It all began on Thursday, March 4th and Friday, March 5th, with the first heavy onslaught of snow. With the large (10ft) banks that already lined the roads, the snow just filled in the gap between them. The best snow removal machine, at the time was the grader, which unfortunately was stuck on the 3rd Concession with a flat tire. While residents waited, and farmers scrambled to figure out ways of getting their milk to the mainland, the grader tire was taken to and from Kingston by snow machine.

On Saturday, March 6th, after repairing the tire, it was discovered that the steering assembly was also out of commission.

And then, to add insult to injury, the entire road crew resigned!

This resignation was apparently related to wage negotiations from earlier in the week. In an emergency meeting of Council, called by Reeve Vince Aitken, Bert Glenn was appointed as temporary road superintendent. It was decided that the plow truck would be commissioned to do as much as possible. Two front-end tractor loaders came to assist, with hopes of clearing a path to the disabled grader, so that the steering assembly could be welded by Clinton Kilpatrick. Some farmers managed to use their own equipment to clear snow and get their milk picked up.

A new storm blasted the Island on Monday, March 8th and effectively put a halt to all road clearing activities, while the road crew waited for parts for the grader to arrive. By Friday, March 12th, the grader had been repaired, but at this point, so much snow had fallen, that it quickly became clear that the grader was buried in far too much snow to be cleared by the loaders and plow truck.

Saturday, March 13th, nine days after the initial onslaught of snow, a 3,500lb, \$6,500 snow blower arrived on the Island. Although the blower was in fine working order, it immediately became apparent that the tractor needed more weight on the back end before the blower could perform at full capacity. Clinton Kilpatrick took care of adding this weight to

the tractor, and finally at 1:30p.m. on Sunday, March 14th, the blower had begun its long chore of clearing the roads. Unfortunately, due to the sun, and the rain that had begun to fall, the snow was heavy and clumpy, and very difficult to clear. By the time the blower had reached Bruce Caughey's farm, on the 3rd concession, the chain and alternator had given out, thus again putting a hold on snow clearing efforts. It was not until Tuesday, March 16th, that a light was seen at the end of the snow banks, as the grader was repaired and resumed its duties.

Dates and details obtained from The Amherst Island Beacon, March 18th, 1971, 25th Edition, Amherst Island. G.F.Sheil.



That's a lot of petunias, by Terry McGinn



For those of us with green thumbs, finding the best materials and tools to tend to our gardens can be a high priority. While top fertilizers, seeds, and weeding strategies can be debating at length, it is also critical to recognize the importance of quality water when considering how to care for your garden.

Making sure your plants are predominantly watered by rain can require some advance planning, especially in places with dry seasons. Plant lovers can ensure that their gardens have the best, most natural water source by using a rain barrel.

On March 22, World Water Day, the Amherstview Lions Club will kick off their rain barrel sale, a fundraising venture they are undertaking for the first time in 2017, in partnership with Loyalist Township.

Bill Matier, co-chair of the campaign for the Amherstview Lions Club, is enthusiastic about the benefits of watering with rain barrels. “Our area is known for hard water. When you combine that with the chemicals used in water treatment, tap water isn’t ideal for watering vegetable and flower gardens. Rain water is soft water, it’s already at the right temperature. It’s a healthier option for plants.”

Katie Amey, an administrative assistant for Loyalist Township who has been assisting the Lions with promotion and logistics of the campaign, adds that when residents use rain barrels, both they and the municipality benefit. “The Township will see a reduced demand on our water treatment plants, as well as diverting some flows from storm sewers and ditches during heavy rains. For residents, collecting rain water in a barrel helps keep it away from their home’s foundation, and anyone on municipal services will certainly see the difference in their water & sewer bill when they use rain water instead of tap water for outdoor watering.”

While Loyalist Township is assisting the Lions in promoting and organizing the campaign, Matier stresses, “This fundraiser isn’t limited to Loyalist residents. Anyone can participate, as long as they can be in Amherstview on April 29 to pick up their rain barrel.”

A variety of styles and colours are being offered, along with accessories to help users adapt the barrel to their needs. The typical style has a 220L capacity (55 gallons) and comes with a leaf/mosquito screen, a spigot, and hose, for \$55 including HST. The supplier, Rainbarrel.ca, reclaims food grade barrels and repurposes them as rain barrels, partnering with various non-profit organizations to stage fundraisers. \$10 from every barrel sold in this campaign will go to the Amherstview Lions Club.

Anyone interested in ordering can visit the Loyalist Township website at www.loyalist.ca/go/rainbarrel to see the available barrels and accessories. Ordering can be done online, or in person at the Odessa Municipal Office or the W.J. Henderson Recreation Centre in Amherstview. Orders will be accepted until April 21, and must be picked up at the W.J. Henderson Recreation Centre on Saturday, April 29, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

For more information, please visit the Loyalist Township website or call 613-386-7351, ext. 103.

Bath Pharmasave



We provide prescription deliveries to Amherst Island as well as we are close to the ferry terminal.

We are open Monday to Friday 9 am to 6 pm, Saturday - 10 am to 3 pm.

We provide following services:

- Full Prescription Services
- Compliance packaging or Blister Packaging of your medications at no extra cost
- Foot Care Clinic by Advanced Foot Care nurse \$25.00 for half an hour appointment
- Free Flu shots during Flu season (November to Mid February); no appointment necessary
- Travel Vaccines administration at Pharmacy
- Competitive Pricing
- Free prescription delivery to Amherst Island twice a week

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