



Stone Fences of the Island

THIS ISSUE

- Ian Murray, editor

Many thanks to Leslie Gavlas for her years of looking after Beacon subscribers as well as being our treasurer. Her work is very much appreciated. However, as one can see by her 2 articles below, she remains a valuable contributor to this newsletter.

This is a full issue again with a wide variety of news, views & history.

NEIGHBOURHOOD

- Lyn Fleming

Get Well wishes this month to Barb Reid and Rick Morgan, who both made trips to the hospital this month.

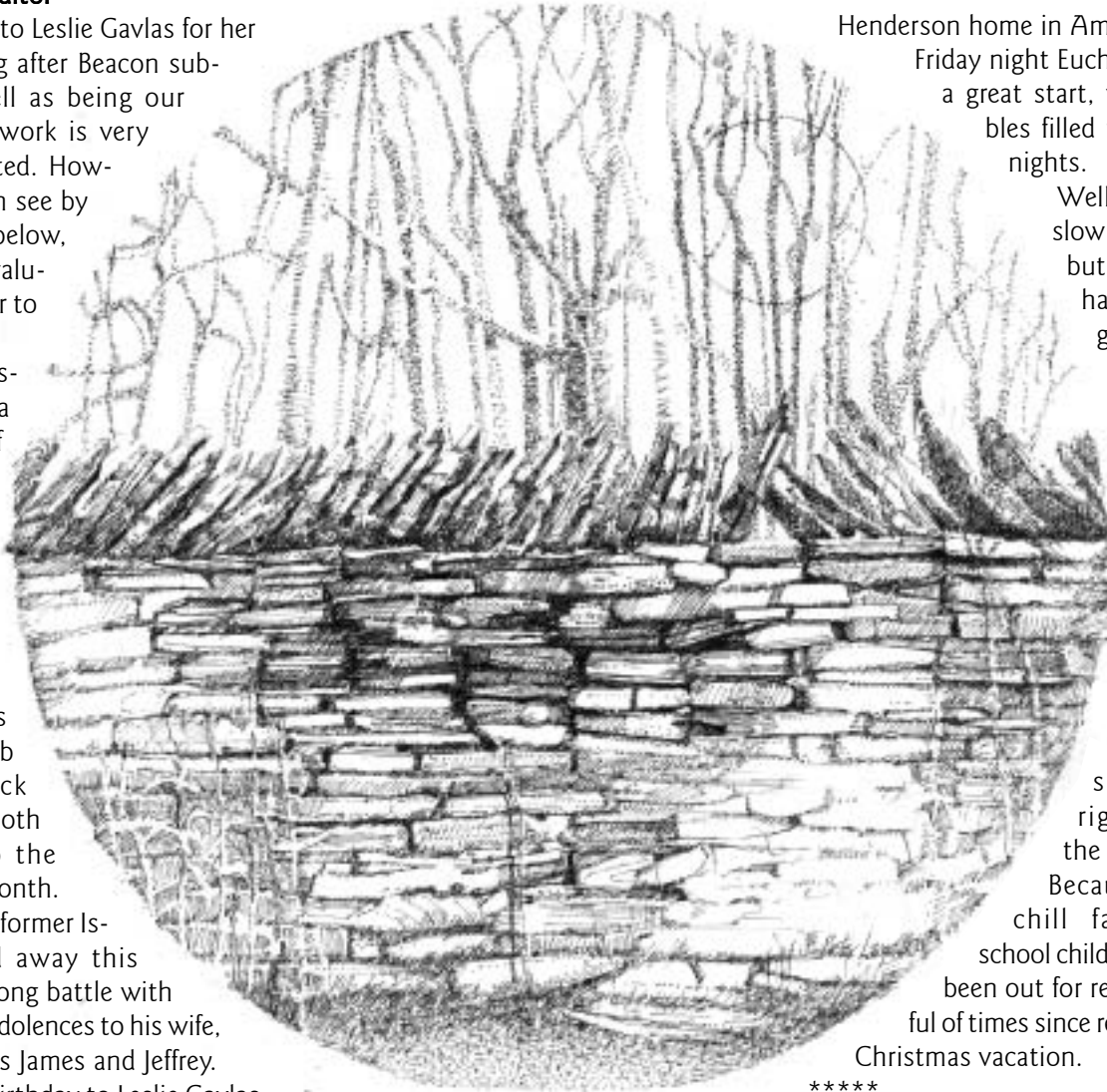
John Nixon, a former Islander, passed away this month after a long battle with cancer. Our condolences to his wife, Laurel, and sons James and Jeffrey.

Happy 80th Birthday to Leslie Gavlas. Leslie's children held a party for family and friends in her honour.

Elsie Willard and Molly Stroyman toured several African countries, stopping in Ethiopia to visit summer neighbours, John & Alena Schram.

Zander and Nancy Dunn also traveled to Africa and stopped to see John and Alena as well.

I believe our oldest Island resident has moved away this month. Elsie Densem



(97 years young) has given up her Island home and moved to the Helen Henderson home in Amherstview.

Friday night Euchres are off to a great start, with 5-6 tables filled the first two nights.

Well, winter was slow in finding us, but now that it has, I think it is going to hold on for a while. The cold since New Year's has been almost never ending for the month. It gets mild enough to snow, then right back to the deep freeze. Because of wind chill factors, the school children have only been out for recess a handful of times since returning from Christmas vacation.

Moon Rising, Second Concession
© Peter Large, SCA



More inside:

- a drive to preserve stone fences on the Island.
- tall fences, pg 24.
- will the Ferry office & Library be moving? pg 5.
- Ontario regs cause Township snow plowing changes, pg 22.



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14775 Front Rd
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K0H 2S0
Voice & Fax:
(613) 389-3802
E-mail:
topsyfarms@
on.aibn.com

Layout:

Tom Richmond
tantonr@
kingston.net

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Womens Institute



Leslie Gavlas

The January meeting of the Women's Institute was held at the home of Beth Forester on Jan. 21, 2004. The program was very interesting - Anna Hitchins, Marian Glenn, Helen Miller and Vera Hogeboom - lifelong Islanders, acted as a panel to respond to questions of the earlier life on the Island, asked by newcomers, who are Institute members. Following are the topics discussed:



Transportation - People travelled by horse drawn sleighs, using heavier clothing and "buffalo robes", or horse-hide robes for warmth in winter.

Ice Crossings - The ice was better before industry developed near the channel to the west of the Island. Horses and sleighs were used when the ice was considered safe, and there were several good crossing locations. Christmas trees were used to line safe routes. When the ice was not too good people walked, or

skated. Maurice Hogeboom had a boat fitted with runners which was propelled by 4 skaters. There were only a few deaths by drowning.

Joyce Brown - She told of one trip her mother, Pauline Glenn, made. She was 8 months pregnant, and it was decided she should go to Kingston as twins were expected. The horse, drawing the sleigh, was led by her husband, who used a big stick to test the ice. The horse broke through but the husband was able to hold the harness. He yelled to his wife to run for help! She reached the Millhaven Inn, run by Frank Wemp, and men came and saved the horse. The mother to be was sent to Kingston, where Joyce was born.

Schools - There were 5 schools, each with 35 - 40 pupils. Our panel attended three different ones, and walked to the school, summer and winter. They had no snow

shoes, but wore overshoes with front fasteners. Girls wore hand knit leggings and bloomers. Schools were only cancelled when a blizzard made it impossible for students and teachers to get to school. There were no telephones.



Hauling blocks of ice on Stella Bay

photo courtesy of Ida Gavlas



Winter school busses on the Island

photo courtesy of Ida Gavlas

The schools were heated by wood stoves and arrangements were made for fire-wood. The stoves were lit in the morning by the teacher, or a student. Some teachers came from off the Island, but some were local, and stayed longer. Mention was made of Clarence Hogeboom, the brother-in-law of Vera. When older students (grades 11 and 12) attended Continuation School, they went to the village at the "old brick" where the Back Kitchen now is. Horses bringing students to school were stabled in barns at the Fair Grounds (behind the park in the village). High school was held for a time at what is now Molly Stroymans* Lodge on Stella Point. Vera reported she often got a ride with Bruce Caughey, but sometimes had to walk all the way from the Third Concession. If the snow was deep, horses and sleighs travelled over the fields, and fences, as the roads were not ploughed.

Shopping - Farmers grew and produced their own food which was stored for the winter. Food was not bought from stores. Mother made the bread, usually double loaves. Single loaves were called

half loaves. Sometimes mothers sold eggs and butter to the stores to buy other things. Neilson*s stocked a great variety - dishes, etc.

Homes - The homes were heated with wood stoves. There was no electricity, so coal-oil lamps were used for light. Bedrooms were so cold that hot water bottles kicked out overnight were filled with ice in the morning. Vera said she was spoiled as her father built a new home with a furnace and modern washroom before she was born. Rain water was collected in cisterns for most purposes - well water was used for drinking, and all ladies said their homes had a good well.

Bathing - Generally sponge baths were the standard. Water had to be heated on the kitchen stove, then carried to the bedroom. Ladies reported their hair was washed in the kitchen sink, and sometimes set with rag curlers. Curling irons could be heated over the chimneys of lanterns.

Electricity came to parts of the Island in 1938.

Play - Children had little time for play after school as there were chores to do.

Girls cooked as well as their mothers by the age of 11 or 12. When free to play there was skating on frozen patches of ice. The skates were strapped on, though the big brothers had better skates. Skates were handed down in the family. There were hand sleds for sliding on the hills on the farms.

Social Events - There were house parties with the whole family involved, usually in the neighbourhood. For Christmas all the schools joined in a Concert at the Victoria Hall. Young men often had their own sleighs and horses, and took part in races on the ice off Stella Point, and this was followed by a dance. When the ice was good the Is-

land Orchestra, and parties of young people would travel to Bath for a Dance at the Masonic Hall. The next week a Dance was held on the Island, with parties from Bath attending. Parties were held at the Victoria Hall, or at the Emerald Dance Hall, now the home of Stella O*Byrne.

Churches - All families attended church regularly.

Trips to Town - Kingston was the usual destination. The boat travelled on Tues. and Friday, leaving at 11:00 A.M. and returning at 6:00 P.M. Islanders shopped in downtown Kingston, but were not interested in the Market. Later there was a bus from Picton which met the 9:00 A.M. ferry and returned from Kingston at 3:30 P.M. Prices were low, as compared to to-day. Women teachers were paid less than were men teachers.

Illness - In 1918 a diphtheria outbreak ravaged the Island. Vera remembers many deaths among the neighbours. Sick people were put to sleep in tents to protect others in the family. There was a house, situated in what is the Quinte Pasture, where 5 children died of tuberculosis. The



Hockey team on Stella Bay, c. 1932

photo courtesy of Ida Gavlas

house was burned, and the family white-washed the barn and lived there. Most farmers were exempted from war service, but returning servicemen brought the 1918 flu epidemic.

Vera stated that if we look at scattered clumps of lilac trees we will often find the sites where previous houses once existed. She said times were less stressful but the work was much harder for both the men and the women.

Refreshments followed this lively discussion, and then there was a short business meeting. We were brought up-to-date on sales of the Fowler prints. The original has been appraised between 3500 and 4000 dollars. It was decided that the permanent home will be the Museum, but in the interval some members will hang the original in their homes for short periods. It was decided to ar-

range the printing of 400 Hasti-Notes for use of the W.I. and for sale. The Fowler picture will be used for this. An update was given regarding progress with the new Telephone Directory.

Our President spoke of the response of AIMS to the proposal to repair the stone fence at the Pentland Cemetery, and stated she was planning further publicity for this project. Mary Kay Steele and Nancy Henshaw agreed to repair and replace Our Banner, in bad shape after use at the Farmers' Market.

Our next meeting will be on Feb. 18, 2004, at the home of Nancy Dunn. Our speaker will be Rachel Souch, who will speak on Tasmania. We are always open to visitors and new members.



JANET'S JOTTINGS
- Janet Scott



A Caring Community:

Thank-you, thank-you, thank-you to all those members of the community that covered jobs for me, sent goodies and phoned or sent cards. Amherst Island is a caring community and I'm so glad to be out of hospital and back among you.

I would especially like to thank Debbie Miller and Phil Silver, Tessa and John Mayman, Lesley McDonald and the staff at A.I.P.S. who stepped in and did an extra bit to get that dinner on the way when I decided to leave them in the lurch! Thanks to Lesley, Margo, and Lyn who saw me on my way to hospital in Alex's care.

Another job I was supposed to do was

the annual Christmas Bird Count on Dec. 21st. Bud Rowe, the past-president of the Kingston Field Naturalists stepped in with the able assistance of Bonnie Livingstone and my son, Alex. Thank-you to them for a job well done. They had a cold and blustery day to carry out the count but did manage to spot 54 species.

The most exciting bird of the day was a Black-legged Kittiwake spotted in the gravel bar area. This bird is a circum-polar nester and usually spends winters well out to sea. Welcome little fellow to Amherst Island.

For your interest I would like to list those species seen on December 21st.

Canada Goose, 823;

Ducks: Gadwall, 3; American Black Duck, 101; Mallard, 536; Redhead, 1; Ring-necked Duck, 5; Greater Scaup, 100; White-winged Scoter, 12; Black Scoter, 1; Long-tailed Duck, 14; Bufflehead, 38; Common Goldeneye, 709; Hooded Merganser, 1; Common Merganser, 105; Red-breasted Merganser, 3.

Northern Harrier, 14; Red-tailed hawk, 35; Rough-legged hawk, 77; American Kestrel, 3; Ring-necked Pheasant, 3; Bonaparte's Gull, 26; Ring-billed Gull, 11; Herring Gull, 129; Great Black-backed Gull, 33; Black-legged Kittiwake, 1; Rock Dove, 39; Mourning Dove, 107; Great Horned Owl, 12; Snowy Owl, 3; Long-eared Owl, 20; Northern Saw-whet Owl, 7; Downy Woodpecker, 11; Hairy Woodpecker, 7; Northern Flicker, 2; Northern Shrike, 2; Blue Jay, 57; American Crow, 15; Black-capped Chickadee, 102; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 1; White-breasted Nuthatch, 17; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 1; European Starling, 429; American Tree Sparrow, 118; Dark-eyed Junco, 14; Lapland Longspur, 1; Snow Bunting, 680; Northern Cardinal, 4; Red-winged Blackbird, 1; Common Grackle, 1; Brown-headed Cowbird, 10; House Finch, 68; Common Redpoll, 235; American Goldfinch, 20; House Sparrow, 210.

Carol Morgan reports Short-eared Owls in the fields near her house. She thinks maybe about 40 or so. Watch for them when you're out on the Second.

Good Birding.

Postscript: Bonnie Livingstone had a Bald Eagle in the tree that holds her birdfeeder so that sounds like a hard feeder list to beat - Long Point, January 17th.

COUNCIL GLEANINGS

- Ian Murray

Jacqueline Sylvester is now the Vice Chairperson of the Committee of Adjustment.

"MNR has given approval for the Township to repair the boat launch at the Amherst Island ferry dock. The Township has until March 2004 to complete the work."

Approval has been given "to investigate the viability of relocating the Ferry Office to the Amherst Island Works Garage and the Library to the Amherst Island Public School."

Approval was also given for construction of snow railing on the Ferry Office/Library at a cost of \$2400.

5 new homes were started on Amherst Island in 2003; including 3 last fall.

Murray Beckel, the Township planner, estimates that there are almost 200 building lots now on the Island.

The following motion was passed:

1. That Council give direction to commence removing the dead elms on unmaintained road sections and, in particular, Marshall Forty Foot and the Dump Road between the landfill and the Second Concession;

2. That Council reaffirm its position that Marshall Forty Foot between Front Road and South Shore Road and The Dump Road between Amherst Island Landfill and the Second Concession retain the status of unmaintained roads; and

3. That the Township prepare a by-law to unassume all of Marshall Forty Foot Road and that portion of Dump road between the Amherst Island Landfill and the Second Concession.

4. That the felled trees are to be left by the side of the road and not removed by Township staff at Township expense."

Mr Thompson explained to me that the "unassuming" of a road means that the municipality can spend some money on a roadway without also assuming the liability protection required on a properly maintained municipal road. This is a result of new legislation replacing the previous rule that if a municipality spent any money on a road it had to then assume full responsibility for that road and bring it up to the appropriate provincial standard. This meant that the only 2 options available to a municipality were to fully maintain a road or to legally close it.

The 2 roads mentioned above can now be maintained just enough for casual public access by foot or bicycle or slow moving vehicle.

The felled trees are available to the public on a first come/first served basis (except there is no service, you have to do the work yourself).

In his January 15 newsletter to the community, David Thompson, Director of Engineering Services, reported on "the facts surrounding the events of November 24th, 2003, and . . . some of the findings with respect to [the loss of power by the Quinte Loyalist] and initiatives underway with respect to future alternate ferries."

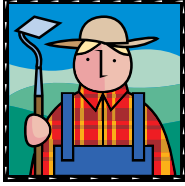
Mr. Thompson concludes his well-written report by stating that the Township "will be meeting with MTO to improve: temporary passenger lounges; anchoring devices; and, vessel 'change over' procedures."

I certainly appreciate Mr. Thompson making the effort to let us know what happened and that action is being taken to avoid future "change over" problems.



AIMS, January Meeting - John Kuti

Alan Kidd chaired the meeting in the absence of Zander Dunn.



The chairman reported that letters of invitation had gone out to various Island organizations and individuals who might be interested in the January 15th meeting to discuss the possibility of forming a committee to investigate the feasibility of having a health clinic on Amherst Island. He pointed out that this would not be an AIMS group, but would have to be a coordinated effort by the entire Island community.

The New Year's Committee: Neil Johnston reported on the highly successful event, which accomplished its goal of creating a social event all Islanders could enjoy, while raising some money for AIMS coffers. He presented a detailed, in-depth report, which next year's committee might use to effectively repeat the success of this year's program. He pointed out that such a committee should be struck very soon, as this year entailed a lot of last-minute work that might better be done with more lead time. Members thanked Neil and his committee for such a successful event.

Alan Kidd reported that there were two thank you letters from Alison McDonald and Shannon Youell for their inclusion in this year's AIMS bursary program.

There was some discussion about the Women's Institute's program to restore old stone fences on the Island. Volunteers were requested to do a half a day a week during the summer to help with such rebuilding after receiving training from Bill Hedges, an expert stonemason. Some questions were raised about fences on private land.

Volunteers were requested, and John Kuti, Alan Kidd, Ralph Woods and John Moolenbeek agreed to participate.

John Kuti spoke about the organization of the speakers program, and indicated that Brian Little would speak in February at the monthly meeting. He indicated that he had sent out requests for members to consider speaking later on some particular aspect of interest or expertise. He also pointed out that his request went to member's significant others who might have some area of interest or expertise they would like to share with AIMS. Alan Kidd indicated he would be willing to talk about astronomy and the Hubble telescope. Peter Large indicated that he would be willing to talk about the inspi-



Hat wreath on the South Shore

JH

rational vision behind a painter's sensibility.

John Kuti reported that he had prepared a letter to Minister of the Environment Leona Dombrowski, requesting her to come to speak to an open meeting of Island residents. Peter Trueman agreed this was a good idea, and suggested that one topic she might consider is the environmental plans of the government in the

next four years and how they affect Amherst Island. It was agreed the letter should be sent.

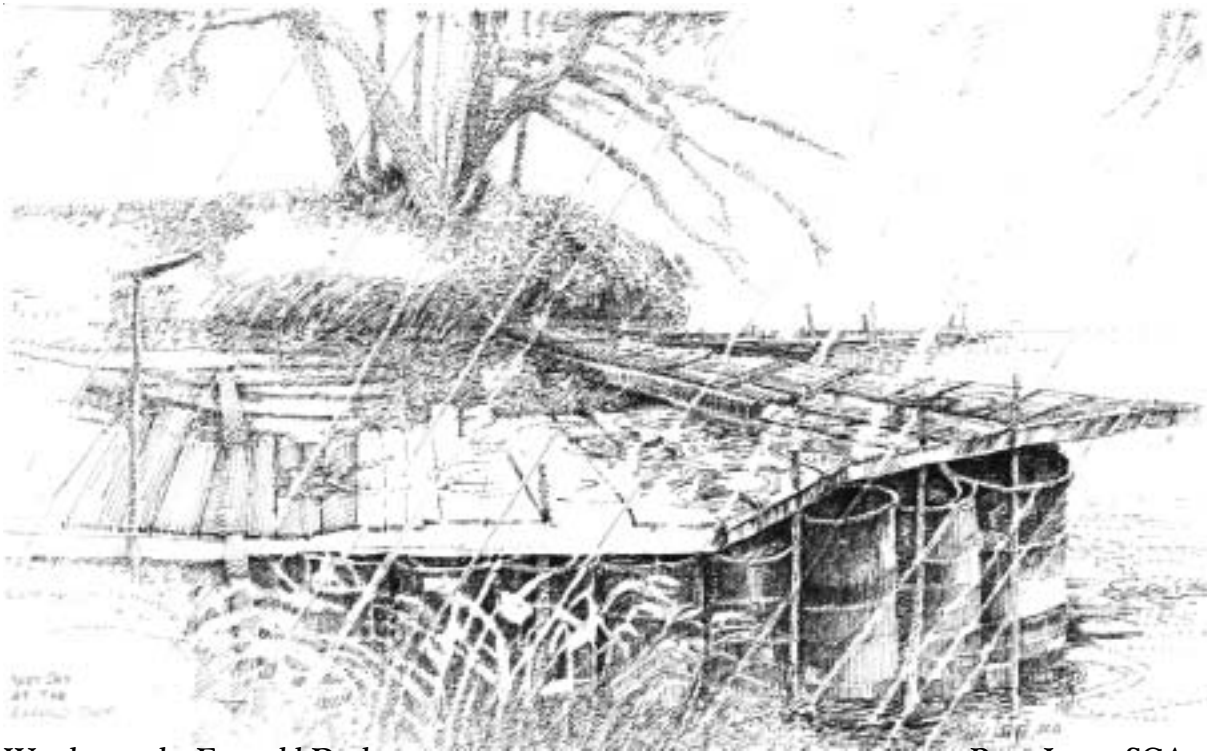
Peter Trueman offered to speak at an open meeting about his experiences in preparing The National Parks documentaries he narrated.

John Kuti then spoke about his unpublished book called "Thinking Like a Novelist (a cinematic course in awareness and imagination).

He spoke about how, after he finished his first novel, he tried to analyse the process by which a novel was created. He said that a novel was simply an infinitely complex system, and yet one with very fundamental rules that are difficult to articulate. He said his book sought to identify those rules by comparing the way the people involved in the creation of a movie collaborate to tell a story. He said that a novel was simply a movie told using language, instead of film stock. He said the novelist must simultaneously assume all the creative functions that are divided among many creative people who collaborate in making a movie. The director, the screenwriter, the actors, the editor, the set designer, the director of photography and others all bring their own creative imagination to a single project, and these imaginations are very different contributions to the movie as a whole. He said it was important to understand these differing imaginations and what they contribute to understand what a novelist does simultaneously with language.

He indicated that there were only two kinds of movies, two kinds of novels: one with a constructive approach in which a story has a beginning, a middle, and an end through which character development and plot actually leads to some resolution. The other approach is a deconstructive approach in which the movie or novel simply tries to re-create the world characters occupy, in order for the reader or viewer to understand it, and feel it in the way the novelist or director intends.

He explained that thinking like a director or novelist means consciously or un-



Wet day at the Emerald Dock

Peter Large SCA

consciously developing the ability to do a cosmic zoom into a particular situation. He explained that a cosmic zoom is looking from the widest possible angle then getting closer and closer to the particular characters involved in the story. A cosmic zoom into one country, into a particular region, into a particular class of people, into a particular age group, into a particular ethnic background, into a particular geographical location, into particular people on a particular street, is very different depending on where the cosmic zoom ultimately ends. He said the cosmic zoom into different countries completely changes a story, just as a cosmic zoom into the same story would be very different depending on which class of people, or race, or ethnic background individuals involved in the story come from.

He indicated that both the director and the screenwriter must consciously or unconsciously absorb such a cosmic zoom into the characters and the story. He said that the actors have the opposite task. They must to some degree find a way to express all those different aspects of culture and geography and background that make a person behave the way they do. A director and screenwriter must under-

stand and imagine through a story what an actor must transform into actual behaviour through character. Novelists must do the same thing as they create stories and characters. A novelist must initially be a director and a screenwriter, and then learn to become like the actors expressing those behavioural aspects of character.

He said that the movie editor changes the timing and focus of each scene, just as a novelist does in determining the length and focus of each narrative section.

He spoke about how a set designer and the director of photography create a mood that metaphorically expresses what the movie and each particular scene in it represents to the characters, and the Director.

Finally he spoke about the deeper meaning of a movie or novel. He said that the cosmic zoom of the director or screenwriter is really the cosmic zoom into the human unconscious, using their imaginations. He said that writing a novel or in making a movie employs the same process that actors use to make characters speak and move and respond to each other, as they express what a screenwriter and director imagine a story to be.

conscious world is really the one between imagination and awareness. He said before anything is created in the real world, it has to be imagined first. He said that we must imagine ourselves into being in order to be. We must imagine how we would love before we can love, and fictional characters help us identify and triangulate our own individual natures by helping us to imagine how we would want to express ourselves in reality. He said the same function is true with mortality, sexuality and understanding. He pointed out that, to his mind, it is the function of artists to help human beings become more skilled and practised using the imagination so people can find the awareness of how life might be expressed. He said the imagination is the key to everything human beings do and feel, and is not the frivolous, impractical thing it is often projected to be.

John thanked the members for their attention.

Next month's breakfast preparation will be done by the Girl Guides.

The meeting was then adjourned



STONE FENCES OF AMHERST ISLAND

- Anna Hitchins

Most of the stone fences on Amherst Island were built in the 1800's by a Mr. Crow, an Irishman, who built a rod a day and was paid \$1.00 per rod (16 1/2 feet).

The stone for the fence on Garry Hitchins property that runs along the road, around the corner and up over the hill was picked off the ridge. The stone fence around the Robert McMullen property on the Front Road is in as perfect condition as any stone fence on the Island. There are approximately six stone fences built in this era still remaining, and two fences built in the last ten years.

MORE STONE FENCES

- Leslie Gavlas

The Womens' Institute has recently undertaken to learn more about the stone fences dotting the Island, with a view to possible preservation and restoration.

These are typical "Irish" fences, built with field stone and without mortar, and are very durable when not encroached on by trees, bushes and vines. The institute has a particular interest in restoring the fence to the west of the Pentland cemetery, which is in very poor condition.

I started my research with the item by Anna Hitchins (see above) in the W.I. Tweedsmuir History. The 1851 Census shows a John Crow, Mason, born in Ireland, living on Amherst Island with a wife and a family of three, also born in Ireland, and two children, aged 5 and 3, born in Canada. This places the family here during the 1840's.

I then took photographs of the fences I could find. These are:

1. Pentland Cemetery, Lot 3, North Shore Concession - fence on the west side badly broken. A small section is also on the S.E. corner.

2. Caughey, 3190 Front Road - The fence in front of the house is in good condition and has been repaired by Bill Hedges. The fence extends along the road to the east, and is badly damaged by encroaching bushes.



Stone Fence at Hazel DeHaan's house

Leslie Gavlas

3. Caughey Gravel pit, Front Road - Along the south side of the gravel pit but not visible from the road is a long fence in excellent condition as it is in the open.

4. DeHaan, 6845 Front Road - This is the site of the first Anglican Church and Rectory, which burned. To the south of the house is a piece of fence in excellent condition. To the east a section is badly damaged by bushes, etc.

5. Hitchins, 6345 Second Concession - The piece in front of the house and on the corner of the Emerald Forty Foot is good, but as the fence extends to the east and south deterioration has set in.

6. Emerald Forty Foot - A long section of fence on the west side of the road is almost buried by growth of bushes, etc.

7. Dennis McGinn, 12375 Front Road. The fence on three sides of the house yard is not in good condition. Dennis tells me that this is part of a stone fence that ran from the Emerald Forty Foot to Steve Street's at 12945 Front Road. The rest of the fence was torn down when the road was widened.

8. Former Drumgoole house, 13555 Front Road - This fence is noticeable for the splendid round gate posts at the front of the yard. Again the fence surrounds the house yard with a long extension to the yard.

9. McMullen, 15095 Front Road - This fence is in good condition and surrounds the house yard. I'm told repairs were made by Neil McMullen, a son of Robert McMullen.

I believe other segments of such fences can be found here and there on the Island.

EVEN MORE STONE FENCES

- Ian Murray

Christopher and I were heading over to the 2nd Concession one day a few years ago. As we turned the corner by Hitchins, I remarked that I couldn't understand why the stone walls were leaning towards the road. I said that I understood that stone fences always leaned towards the south as the frost coming out on that side made the earth underneath weak and the weight of the fence would cause it to tip. I also said that I was sure that there wasn't enough soil on top of the ridge to cause the fence to tip.

Christopher said that it was probably the vibration from road traffic and that in England heavy trucks were prohibited in some areas because they would cause stones to shift.

This was a kind of eureka moment as I

suddenly realized why the fence along the road at Drumgoole's - No. 8 above - was shifting towards the north. I immediately suggested that we could straighten up the fence with our tractor loader; perhaps using heavy plywood to spread out the push from the tractor. A bit of discussion convinced us that probably wouldn't work very well. The logical answer was of course: Noel McCormick.

The next time Noel came up to do whatever, I got his help to straighten up the fence. I knew that if I gave accurate hand signals, Noel would do his part. I didn't screw up and in about half an hour the job was done. Kyle took some photos of this and I'd send one to Tom if I knew where they were.

My reward for doing this was Sally's reaction when I stopped the car in front of the fence and asked her if she noticed anything different.

**

The stone pillars that Leslie admires were rebuilt by Bill Hedges and an apprentice. Bill used an old mortaring technique that hasn't worked as well as hoped and a few of the smaller stones have fallen out. I wonder if this gate was used by horse and buggy. An ATV and trailer go through fine but there isn't room for even a small tractor to fit through.

Noel and I need to work on this fence again as several years of grain trucks, school buses and public works equipment have caused more shifting in the fence.

We suspect that there has been some pilfering of the stones along the top of the fence.

On my list of jobs to be - the vague (and somewhat long) wish list - is to cut the ash tree that is growing right beside the fence. This tree will eventually cause serious problems to the fence if it is not removed.

Before Sally bought this property from the Drumgoole family, she got a letter from the Township of Amherst Island that the stone fence would never be affected by road widening. We are confi-

dent that Loyalist Township will honour this pledge.

Like many others, I am in awe of the patient labour and the skill that built these stone fences.



Standing water on the Second

JH

DOWN TO EARTH - Judith Harrower

Several people have asked about vegetable gardens and if I would include them. Not having great experience in this type of gardening I have asked one of two well known Island gardeners to write something about vegetable gardening. Barbara Reid has graciously written the following.

**

In the fall you should plow your garden or spade it over, leaving it until spring. I didn't get that done last fall because of such heavy rains.

In January and February study your seed catalogues and select the seeds that best suit your family needs and your garden size. I buy new seed every year from Stokes Seeds. (There are several others but Stokes is very reliable).

Some vegetables take up more space than others such as tomatoes and all vine plants such as cucumbers, squash, melons or watermelons. (However you can plant these on the west side of the garden patch and let wander at will.)

There are a very few vegetables that can be planted early but peas and radishes are two of the earliest.

When the ground gets dry and warm enough it should be cultivated (turned

over) several times to get a fine seed bed. If it is a garden plowed out of sod it should not be planted but worked all summer about every two weeks. If this is not done then you might get cutworms and other grubs. This is an excellent method of eliminating many weeds as well.

I never plant my garden until the ground is at least 60 degrees F, which often is around the long May weekend. If the ground is damp and cold a lot of seeds will rot (or not germinate at all).

As your vegetable plants start to appear the garden should be hoed or cultivated every week. The only vegetables that I thin out are parsnips and turnips.

Happy Gardening.

**

If you decide to start a garden, start small as vegetable gardens are actually a lot more work than flower gardens. They require constant and large amounts of water especially if the summer is dry, otherwise you will have a poor harvest, disfigured or stunted vegetables.

Also you can plant annual flowers between your vegetables. This provides colour and some varieties will repel insects from eating your vegetables.

Always mark your rows - "peas", "corn" etc. - unless you have a great memory.

To have a long run on certain vegetables, don't plant all the seeds at once but plant a new batch a few weeks later, usually about 2-3 weeks. This way you will have later ones after the first have gone. Lettuce is especially easy to do.

Place tall vegetable plants such as tomatoes or corn to the east or north of your garden so that these taller plants don't overshadow your smaller ones.

Buy some different varieties of tomatoes, beans, peas, and corn to experiment and for different uses in cooking. Beef tomatoes are excellent but then so are Italian type and Tom Thumb (cherry) tomatoes in salads.

Lastly, plant sunflowers for colour and eventually for your bird friends in the winter.

WINTER CROSSING

- Terrence Patrick Culbert

Location: The Stella Dock

Date: January, 14th, 2004

Time: 17:50 (5:50pm)

Temperature: -23C. (-8F.)

Winds: 12-13 Knots from the northeast

With my woolly wind flaps pulled down on my sheepskin hat, I boarded the M.V. Frontenac II. Taking shelter near the ramp, I watched the cars and pickup trucks come off the ferry returning to the Island for the night. As a deckhand signalled the final vehicle onto the ferry for the trip to the mainland, 'the voice' penetrated the cold, dark, snow-filled night air:

"Welcome to the Frontenac II. In the event of an emergency, please proceed to the area marked muster station located next to the side ramp. Follow the directions of the Captain and Crew. Please note that life jackets and directions for their use are located in the side passenger compartments on both sides of the ferry. Children's jackets are on the ramp side of the ferry under the stairs leading to the wheelhouse. Life rafts are located on the ramp side upper deck. Thank you."

I opened the metal gate marked 'Crew only' and climbed the stairs to the bridge. In the wheelhouse, I introduced myself to Captain Earl Willard. Ida Gavlas of the Amherst Island Ferry office had forewarned the Captain of my coming. With ice building up in the North Channel, the 'bubbler system' kept the track open enabling Captain Willard to cross at regular speed. "The past few winters have been fairly mild," he said. "If I remember correctly, 1977-78 was our last severe winter."

Captain Willard, was an Island farm boy, fisherman and Stella cheese factory worker, all before the age of twenty-five. In October of 1965, he joined the ferry service full time. Within three years he'd been promoted from deckhand to captain. At the age of 28, he obtained his captain's ticket through the marine school at George Brown College in Toronto. "When I started working on the ferry, there were only ten employees and you got every other Sunday off," said Captain Willard. "The Sundays you worked were double shifts. Our schedules in those days were 13 days in a row."

While we chatted, I glanced around the wheelhouse.

"Where's the wheel?"



“We don’t use one,” the Captain replied, “we use a ‘joy stick’ . This amazing piece of technology does everything. It contains the steering, the clutch and the throttle, all in one. We have two radars, three compasses and two marine radios.”

Instead of a comfortable, leather captain’s chair, I was surprised to see a small, wooden, albeit stable four-legged stool. So much for my preconceived ideas of what a wheelhouse would look like. As we approached the Millhaven Dock, Captain Willard turned on the ship’s bright spotlights. The view from the bridge of the Frontenac II is impressive, especially at night with the lights reflecting off the shiny ice surface. From below the wheelhouse, the crew surfaced from the semi-warmth of their galley. Jim Reid, Kim Ashley and Jane McGinn were out on deck facing the freezing elements. Layered in warm clothing and their Loyalist Township uniforms including bright day-glow safety vests, the trio moved the vehicles off and onto the ship with great precision and speed. Once more we were underway, heading back towards the Island. At this point I visited the crew. The long, narrow galley was unbelievably noisy. The ice crashed and crunched against the steel hull. How did the crew bear up under these cold, severe conditions?

Jim Reid (First Mate): “It’s so cold tonight that the water in our galley froze. I get colder on the ship from being in and out, than I do spending an hour or two on my farm tractor.”

Kim Ashley (Purser): “In the warmth of the summer people often say that they’d love to have my job. This time of the year they tell me that I can keep it.”

Jane McGinn (Deckhand): “I haven’t a preference as to day or night shift, because when it comes to winter on the ferry, it’s cold.”

Kim and Jane are sisters, members of the de Haan family and both have their First Mate papers.

19:00 (7pm), we’ve just left the Stella Dock again and I’m heading below to the engine room. Opening a huge steel door, I proceed down the stairs and into the mechanical heart of the M.V.Frontenac II.

Length: 180 feet

Breadth: 45 feet

Depth: 14 feet 6 inches

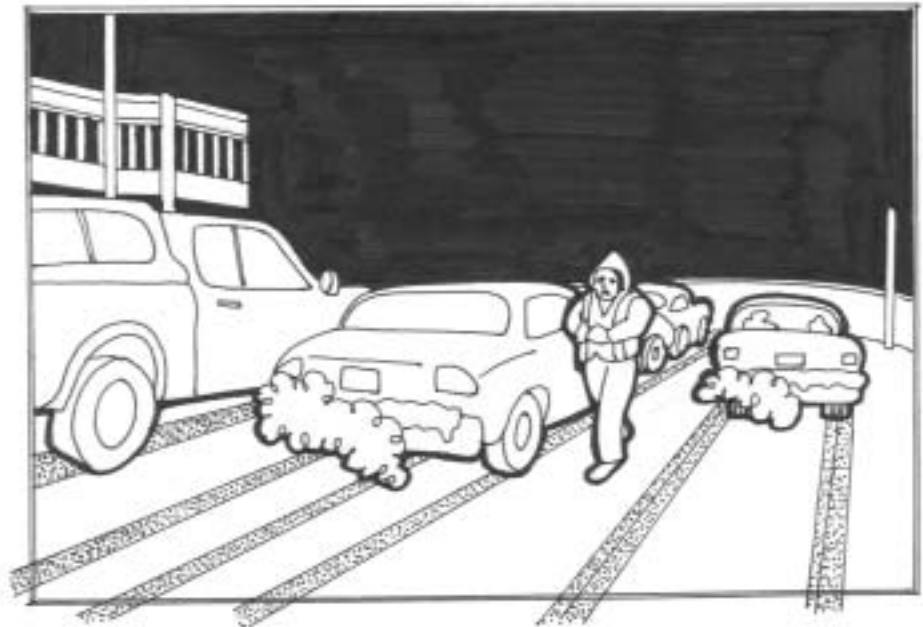
Gross Tonnage: 666.

Engines: (two) Caterpillar 3412, 12 cylinders, 600 hp.

Generators: (two) Caterpillar 3304. Each generator produces 75 kilowatts of power, running the lights, compressors, pumps and furnace.

Aquamaster Propulsion Units: (two). These enable the two propellers to turn 360 degrees.

Don Jones (Engineer): “In the winter



we maintain the compressors keeping the bubble line operational. There are three compressors on the Stella Dock and the same again on the Millhaven side. Even with the furnace running, we can get water pipes freezing in the washrooms and in the crew galley. We clear them with a propane torch. We've also put portable heaters in the washrooms to work along side the built in heaters. The main temperature problem stems from the ship being made totally of steel with no insulation."

Garry Hitchins, the chief engineer, was powering up the remaining four compressors, two at Millhaven and the other two on the Stella Dock. With all eight compressors up and running, 100 pounds of pressure is produced in the bubble line. The bubbler consists of a 4 inch steel pipe stretching the full width of the North Channel. A series of tiny holes running along the top of the pipe send air bubbles to the surface. Every 25-feet, a twelve foot long tentacle, the thickness of a pencil, rises from the steel pipe. The tentacles were added in the event that some of the holes in the 4 inch pipe become clogged with silt.

Garry explained: "The bubbler was originally put in on a trial basis. The driving force behind it was Syl Apps, Janet Grace's father. Syl was a Toronto Maple Leaf hockey player during the 1940's and a Member of the Provincial Parliament representing Kingston and the Islands at that time. He worked hard for us and the bubbler system was installed the summer of 1971. The bubbler has been very satisfactory. Winter is a tough time of the year; the equipment is cold and it's hard to get it going. We also use a lot more fuel. This season is hard on both man and machinery."

"Before we had the bubbler, the ferry would run until the ice became a foot thick. At that time we were no longer able to operate. If the ice remained thick, the ferry would be tied up at the Stella Dock until the first of March. Actually, till the 20th of March a number of times! When the ice was thick enough, they used to bush a road across the Channel with cedar trees. This tree line enabled

people to drive their vehicles to and from the mainland knowing exactly where the ice road was".

Back in the warmth of our house, I made a hot cup of tea. My thoughts were with the crew. Working the ferry during the summer months has almost a romantic appeal, but working the ferry during the months of rain, sleet, snow and biting gale force winds, would quickly loose its appeal.

Toques off to the men and women of the M.V. Frontenac II.



NEWSPAPER DELIVERY

I would like to introduce myself as your new newspaper carrier. My name is Angela Fleming - not to be confused with the Angela Fleming (David's daughter), that grew up on the Island. I recently married Jason Fleming, and we bought Jason's great grandfather Pete Wittiveen's house. I have taken over the papers from Jim and Sandra Reid, and would like to thank them for their patience and support while training me. Thank you also to my new customers for your patience and understanding while we make the transition!

If you have any questions or problems, please feel free to call me at 389-5828. Angela Fleming

P.S. Thanks to Dave Willard (and his bale of hay!) for recently coming to my rescue!

ONLY 6 TICKETS LEFT!

THE LODGE ON AMHERST

ISLAND PRESENTS

CANADIAN FOLK SINGER /

SONGWRITER

& BOREALIS RECORDING ARTIST

AENGUS FINNAN

In Concert-

Sunday March 7th, 2004.



Aengus has received support from the **CBC**, The **Canada Council** & the **Ontario Arts Council**. He has been interviewed by the **Globe and Mail**, and is heard regularly on **CBC Radio One**. He has several CD's out, and his latest

work appears on the **new Gordon Lightfoot tribute album**. He tours worldwide.

Doors open 6:30PM, Show begins at 7:30PM at **The Lodge, 320 McDonalds Lane**, located on Stella Point, Amherst Island, Ontario, a short walk from the ferry dock. All ticket sales in advance: **There is extremely Limited seating for this intimate concert**, and it WILL sell out quickly! \$20 per person. Snacks & Refreshments will be available.

Phone (613) 634-1855 to purchase your ticket today.



AN IMPORTANT NOTE TO BEACON

ILLUSTRATION SUBMITTERS:

Please indicate who you are on the photos, and any other info as you can- if it is not there we can't figure out what you intended when you sent it in. TNX! Tom R.
(The Beacon layout department)

INTERVIEW with ANNA HITCHINS

- Zander of DUNN INN

On March 29, 1926, Anna Glenn was delivered by Dr. Northmore of Bath, the doctor who served the whole Island in those days. She was born in the house where Syke Fleming now lives on the Third concession, the youngest daughter of William John (better known as "W.J.") Glenn and his wife, Georgia Fleming.

W.J. grew up on the farm where Allan and Cathy Glenn now reside and his wife was raised in the Francis and Nessie Welbanks house.

Anna's older siblings were, in order of birth: Lulu, her oldest sister (now deceased); Ruth, now Mrs. Lawson, who lives in Trillium Ridge in Kingston; Doug, who returned from the war to work for 31 years as a guard at Kingston Penitentiary before he died in 1991; and Helen who was eventually placed in a group home. Only Anna and Ruth are alive today.

Anna, who had a happy childhood, attended No. 5 Public School which was situated where Paul and Carol Glenn now live on the Third Concession. This was the second largest school on the island with 42 students who had to sit two to a desk. The large numbers, the proximity of the children and the natural exuberance of the students made for some rough sessions in the school yard and in the classroom. Some of the teachers, who had recently graduated from normal school, were not much older than their pupils. Anita Scott, Miss Burroughs and Gordon Osborne were new to their task but rose to the challenge. Some of the older boys were given the strap for their behaviour although this form of discipline was not required often.

Anna's other teachers included Norma



ZD

Scott, Rita Brown, Lulu Glenn, and Maude Dryden. Her classmates included the McCaugherty kids, Eddie Wemp, Joe Willard, John Morrow, George Wemp, Mary Neilson, Winnifred, Shirley, and Harry Fleming, Albert Henderson, Frank Fleming's boys, and Jean, Harold, Elaine and Tom Miller. For sport the kids played tag and ball games and then teased Bill Fleming's bull and the rams in other fields. There were no school trips to study geographical structures or historical sites although Anna can remember an outing she and some of her school mates took to Old Fort Henry. Usually the days not spent in the classroom involved cleaning up the school yard (Arbor Day) which was followed by going into the woods to pick May flowers.

Like every other child, Anna walked to school in good weather. In the winter her father and Ernest Fleming took turns taking the kids to school in the sleigh. Sometimes the Miller kids piled in too. When drivers were needed Doug often helped out before he left public school. When Lulu taught at the schoolshe often gave Anna and her chums a ride in her horse and buggy.

After Public School came Continuation School which convened in the brick building which stood where the Back Kitchen is now located. At first, in the winter, Anna traveled with Bill and Lucille Henderson in their cutter but later Anna moved with her family into town. Anna's father died in 1940 so her mother rented a house east of Laura Gartner's place where she took in winter borders. Marian (Reid) Glenn stayed with Anna and her mother in that house for several winters. Later they moved into the United Church manse (Elsie Willard's House).

Although everybody knew everybody on the Island and

children would meet one another at various functions, Anna first notice Henry Hitchins at a dance they both attended at the Emerald dance hall. It was natural for them to meet because Henry's father had been Anna's father's "best man" and they continued to be good friends. Henry was obviously an eligible young man because he, from a good farming family, had studied at Kemptville Agricultural College for two years. Anna had attended her sister, Helen, after her mother had fallen and broken a hip. Then she went to work for a year at the Y.W.C.A. in Kingston. She was ready for something new. It was not long before Henry and Anna were married.

They were married on September 29, 1945, in the United Church (which now houses the Library and Ferry Office). The student minister at the time, a Mr. Trill, was unable to perform marriages so The Rev. Gilmore from Kingston was called in to perform the nuptials. The reception, attended by 45 to 50 relatives (mostly aunts and uncles) was held at Anna's home. Her marriage brought to

an end Anna's involvement in The United Church. As was the custom at the time, she became a member of her husband's church - Christ Church, Anglican, in Emerald.

Anna has had a good relationship with The Anglican Church on Amherst Island. She became part of the Anglican Church Women (a union of The Guild and the Women's Auxiliary). After her children had grown up, she served as congregational treasurer for seven years and as parish treasurer (which included Bath) for ten years.

Anna remembers the Christ Church congregation in Emerald was larger than the St. Alban's congregation in Stella - even when the decision was made to close the Emerald building. The Christmas Eve mid-night services packed out the Christ Church building.

The most memorable minister for Anna was The Rev. Canon Williston who came to Amherst Island to work for fourteen years after serving twenty years as a missionary in China. Mr. Williston worked hard. He took the lead in everything, but seldom listened to his wardens. He was too busy accomplishing what he thought was important. But he was a good and faithful minister.

When Christ Church was closed (not during Williston's time) it was sold to an individual who tried to convert it into a family dwelling. All the furnishings were removed. Anna cannot remember where the pews were sent but she recalls the Synod advising the church to install the stained glass windows from Christ Church in St. Alban's in Stella. Rather than do this, members of Christ Church ensured the windows were delivered to a small congregation near Smith's Falls.

When the owner decided the build-

ing was not suitable as a house it was sold to The Roman Catholic Church whose building had burned down.

Henry and Anna Hitchins produced four children: Ross, born in July 1946; Garry, born in January, 1948; Roberta, born October 1949; and, Arthur, born January



A hayride picnic, 1919

state before coming north as United Empire Loyalists.

Busy as farm life was, there were always times of fun. Almost every Friday there was a dance at Victoria Hall in Stella. Every Church had a supper. In September the United Church put on a

photo courtesy of Ida Gavlas

1951. Four children in five years kept Anna busy. And then there were all the responsibilities and challenges of being a farmer's wife. Anna laughs when she recalls all she had to do and wonders how she survived!

At first the Hitchins raised dairy cows. Then came the Milk Marketing Board. They switched to beef cattle. But there was considerable land in the family and when Garry grew up he helped his father run two farms. There was a time when old Colonel John Hitchins' three sons ran farms across the road from where the Koenders live now. His three sons, Arthur, Willy and Richard each had a farm. Henry and Anna lived where Willy's farm was located. Richard's farm is south of where Gary McDonald lives. In other words, the Hitchins have farmed long on Amherst Island. The Hitchins family, originally from Cornwall, England, settled in New York

wiener meal (considered a great treat then). In October the Presbyterians presented their oyster feast. In November the Anglicans always offered a chicken supper. Not only were these suppers well attended, they were often followed by programs of singing, reciting, dancing and acrobatics. The schools and the churches also presented various plays for the edification of all on the Island.

The Anglican Church Women ran a series of Euchre parties. Some were held at the old Town Hall, Emerald Hall and Victoria Hall. The biggest of them, in Victoria Hall, often drew 25 tables - 100 people. Of course, food always followed - an array of foods, various foods, piles of foods.

If the Islanders weren't at dances or Church suppers they were involved in neighbourhood supper parties all over the

Island. People visited frequently and enjoyed food and conversation - that is before T.V. and before the ferry crossings were increased.

While Anna cannot remember any one incident of danger or terror while crossing the ice she does speak about how the ice seemed always to be shifting. The Glenn orchestra - Sterling, Les, Alex and Tena (Glenn) Filson - would often play in Bath as well as Stella and their devotees would cross the ice to dance to their music. But never was the way back the same as the way over. Pressure cracks, ice holes, ice mounds made the difference. But those who crossed over to the mainland always seemed to get back home safely. On the other hand, friends of Anna's daughter, Roberta, from Kemptville blithely drove over the old ferry track. Fortunately they did not go through the thin ice and were warned never to do that again.

Henry Hitchins suffered a heart attack in 1984. In 1995 he and Anna celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. In 1996 a stroke incapacitated Henry until he died in 2000. Bruce Caughey Sr., who was a good friend of Henry's, spoke highly of him as an Orangeman, as a member of the Township Council, as a director of the Amherst Island Mutual Fire Insurance Company, as a member of the School Board, as a representative to the Agricultural Society which arranged for Fairs, as a Church Warden and Treasurer. But above all, Henry was a man to whom one could speak and in whom one could confide. Anna knew him as a good husband and misses him greatly today.

Anna Hitchins has been very active within the Women's Institute

which she joined in 1958. She has worked particularly hard as the historian for her local branch on Amherst Island and also for the district. Both branch and district historians are compilers of Tweedsmuir History, so named after Lord Tweedsmuir who took a great interest in the work of the Women's Institute and the keeping of historical records. For her diligence, competence and service Anna was made a district life member of The Women's Institute.

Before this interview, I knew Anna best as a card shark. She plays with a group that enjoys the game Five Hundred as well as another group which is devoted to Euchre. She is the only member of both groups. I first encountered her in the Five Hundred group. I, as a novice, was unsure of myself. I was impressed, confused and overwhelmed when, after taking one trick, Anna spread all her cards on the table and announced, "I've got all the rest." Before I had a chance to check or figure it out the other players at the table had thrown in their cards. I did not say anything but sat in awe of this woman who could figure out a whole hand that quickly. Of course that took years of practice. Anna tells of how Roberta's three girls used to come to

spend the summer with her and attracted Garry's two girls to join them in their grandmother's house. Together they played cards. The girls learned from a veteran expert, a wily wizard, a veritable virtuoso.

Anna's eyes light up when she speaks of her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren whose pictures adorn her living room. Anna's son, Ross, now married to Ada, has one son, Brett, from a previous marriage.

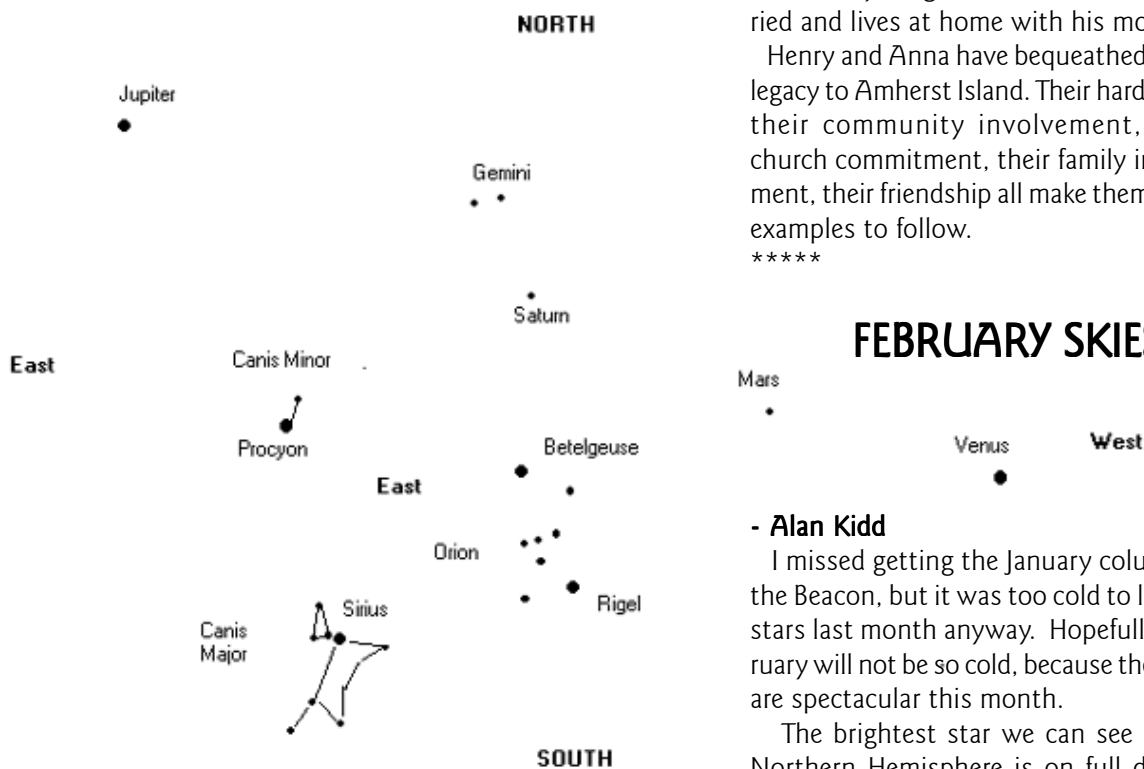
Anna's second son, Garry, is married to Anne-Marie. Their oldest son, Reg, died tragically last year. Garry and Anne-Marie's daughter, Tracy, is married to Craig Monk and are the parents of a boy, Cole and a girl, Reece. Garry and Anne-Marie's younger daughter, Heidi, is married to Terry Generaux and they have a son, Trent.

Anna's only daughter, Roberta, has twin girls, Cheryl and Vickie, another daughter, Heather, and a son, Jeff. Cheryl, is married to Randy Huyck. They have three sons: Matthew, Will and Thomas. Vickie and her husband, Michael Rowden, are parents of one son, Jacob. Heather and her husband, Dave Mason, have one daughter, Rachel. Jeff and his wife, Christa, have two girls - Alicia and Sommer.

Anna's youngest child, Art, is unmarried and lives at home with his mother.

Henry and Anna have bequeathed a rich legacy to Amherst Island. Their hard work, their community involvement, their church commitment, their family investment, their friendship all make them good examples to follow.

FEBRUARY SKIES



- Alan Kidd

I missed getting the January column in the Beacon, but it was too cold to look at stars last month anyway. Hopefully February will not be so cold, because the stars are spectacular this month.

The brightest star we can see in the Northern Hemisphere is on full display

this month. This is Sirius, also known as the Dog Star. (Now you Harry Potter fans know the reason for the name of Sirius Black, the magician who could turn into a black dog). Sirius is about four times as bright as any other star visible from Canada, largely because it is the closest star we can see in our skies. It is only 8.6 light years away, right in the neighbourhood. It also has 26 times the luminosity of our sun. Sirius is actually a double star, but its companion is so dim it can be seen only with a large telescope.

Sirius is part of the constellation of Canis Major, or the big dog. Canis Minor (the small dog) is a small constellation that also features a bright star, Procyon, that while dimmer than Sirius, is almost as bright as Rigel in Orion. Procyon is also a near neighbour, only 11.4 light years away. Canis Major and Minor are Orion's hunting dogs, and follow him around the winter skies. Canis Major has enough bright stars that a dog-like shape can actually be seen (looking rather like a Dachshund). A nice sight for binoculars, just to the south of Sirius in Canis Major, is the star cluster M41. This appears as a fuzzy patch to the unaided eye, but with binoculars or low power telescopes one of the best star clusters in the sky can be seen.

Venus now is the brightest object in the early evening sky. It will continue to brighten throughout February and on February 23 will make an impressive pair with the crescent Moon. Mars continues as a fairly bright object in the early night sky, but is now much further away from earth than last summer, and is 100 times dimmer than Venus. Saturn is now very well situated for observation, located just above Orion. Its Rings are in almost their best position for viewing and thus a spectacular sight with a small telescope. Jupiter now rises in the east before Venus sets in the West, and so the two can be compared; Jupiter is less brilliant than Venus but still impressive.

On the chart I've added Canis Major and Minor, as well as the positions of the planets.

HERE & THERE

- Ian Murray

While driving the ATV up to feed the sheep flock on Lot 64 a few weeks ago, Christopher saw 3 bald eagles - 2 adults and a young one. I was behind him in our cabled loader tractor. All I saw on the trip were 3 crows.

The deer are getting bolder each year. There is always some grain on the ground outside our barn on Lot 4 - spilled from the grain truck or during our loading grain to feed the sheep. In the late afternoon, one can see up to 4 deer eating there. Sometimes there is even a young deer there in mid-afternoon.

I was talking to a visitor at the end of our sidewalk yesterday - Jan. 24 - when a kestrel flew out of the door leading to our hens and landed almost above our heads. It was on sparrow patrol, I suspect, as there are always sparrows around. Unfortunately for the kestrel, the sparrows were probably on the hen side of the chicken wire and thus unavailable for a snack.

The kestrel has got to be one of the most beautiful of birds both in flight and at rest.

I was in a dark mood recently after reading a comment on the internet from a disgruntled farmer. He said that the advice from agricultural experts to farmers several years ago was: "get big or get out". Then the advice became: "get bigger or get out". Now, the farmer says, the message is: "get out".

Allen Caughey told me that when his father was a young man there were 110 farmers on this Island shipping milk to the 2 cheese factories. I figure that there are 16 Island-based farms here now: 3 dairy, 3 sheep and 10 beef. I seriously wonder if any of us will be farming here in 10 years, or twenty.

Jim and Sandra Reid have passed their paper delivery service over to Ange Fleming. The Reid's did a great job and it was a very rare occasion that there wasn't a Whig in our mail box early in the morning. And we always blamed the Whig.

Ange is married to Jason Fleming. I be-

lieve her introduction to the Island was as a back-up singer with former barn-band Drone. Good luck on the Island roads, Ange.

The discovery of the Fowler painting at the public school got a lot of coverage in the Whig. The photo of Anna with the painting in the Whig's Companion section of January 17 was quite magnificent.

MUSEUM EXHIBIT COMMITTEE - Bruce Burnett, Chair

This is the report to the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Neilson Store Museum & Cultural Centre (NSMCC).

The Exhibit Committee was created as a result of the AGM of 2002.

The process of the exhibit portion of a small museum was described at the NSMCC AGM of 2002 by Andrea Cross as the result of an advance request by the chair.

This process is typically managed by an Exhibit Committee which coordinates the work of a researcher, an interpretive planner, a writer and a designer within the stated exhibit goals.

Andrea and Bruce Burnett were asked to set up such a committee for the NSMCC. They agreed with the addition of help from Keith Miller. They stated that for a small project like this a typical cost for the required expertise could be in the range of \$20k. It was understood that there was not a budget of this size for this amount of outside help.

Andrea, Keith and Bruce met together and then asked a number of people they felt would be an asset to an Exhibit Committee. Five people agreed to join - Peter Trueman, Anna Hitchins, Dick Dodds, Dave Willard and Allen Caughey. An initial meeting was held to describe the tasks and share jobs. It was felt that there was enough enthusiasm in the community and the general membership for these five people



The Royal Hotel, now the Amherst Island General Store

to be able to draw on lots of help from others. The Committee asked Keith to remain on as a resource person and Andrea and Bruce to remain on as facilitators. All agreed.

After much discussion various members of the Committee agreed to take on the majority of the research with some of the writing and interpretive planning. This meant we could reduce costs but had to find a designer who could help with the writing and interpretive planning.

We reported to the Board of Directors with a job description for this person and were authorized to proceed with a maximum of \$10k available. This was to result in a workable design with all text and graphics on disc for production.

The committee defined 15 main themes with a number of stories under each theme. Various members chose various themes to work on and we se-

lected other people from the general membership or the community to ask for help where appropriate. We prepared a hand-out package describing the materials required and format to be followed for each story package. We are getting help but slowly.

In the meantime we found a designer that we had worked with before on similar historic community projects. He was interviewed, had a look at the building, met some of the people and agreed with our job description. He is John Travers of Travers & Associates.

We then prepared a letter of agreement with a complete description of the job with timing and payment details. This was signed by both parties in September and we are under way. We have received a guide for the preparation of the interior of the building and that is being worked on now. The first stage of a model has been produced to give everyone a better idea

of the layout planned and we have some ideas for display structure. We will be using the exhibit cases donated by the ROM last fall and brought here by some members.

Now we have to produce the content. We hope to get a lot of help from the community of Amherst Island. This is a community project - not just a place for the community to visit.

LETTER HOME

- Christopher Kennedy

It is difficult to decide if the weather or politics has been more important this month. The weather is of more immediate interest, so perhaps I should start with that. Since the beginning of January we have had some unusually cold days and nights, even for us. This morning when I listened to the forecast at 6.00 am it was -29C in Kingston, and we were just fortunate that there was

no wind. Some of the days have been lovely, with clear blue skies, and there is just enough snow around to cover up the mud from last fall. The deer are starting to come out of the bush, and I must have seen fifteen from the road between Emerald and home this evening as I came from visiting with Keith at the dump. I spend a couple of hours every morning on the ATV feeding the sheep, and it has been quite brisk at times. I have a beaver fur hat from Russia that makes all the difference on cold mornings. Fur may be out of fashion these days, but there is nothing as warm as fur, and I wear it without apology to the politically correct.

All the breeding sheep are wintering outside, and are thriving. I have upped their rations to help keep them warm, and they have the hay we roll out for them to lie on. Provided there is clean snow around, beef cattle and sheep do just as well eating snow as having cold water to drink.

The politics are not so cheerful. Before Christmas it looked as though the BSE problem might be improving. There was cautious optimism that the U.S. border might open to live cattle and sheep in the early part of 2004. Then on December 23rd a second cow, this time in the U.S., was diagnosed with BSE. This seems to have completely stopped the moves towards opening the border any time soon. It seems that sheep will continue to be included in the ban, with no scientific justification at all. Even when Britain had 186,000 cases of BSE in their cattle there was never a ban on sheep exports. The export of all U.S. cattle is now banned, and I cannot see them opening their borders to imports when they have just lost their export market.



Main Street, Emerald Ontario

Even the market for hogs has been dragged down in the general collapse of meat prices.

I have been attending meetings of the provincial Nutrient Management Advisory Committee. This is meant to finalize the rules for handling manure on Ontario farms. At the last meeting it was pointed out that it probably didn't matter what we decided because there wouldn't be many livestock farms left to regulate unless the markets improved soon, and those that were left wouldn't have any money to make improvements whatever we decided.

The Nutrient Management Act was meant to provide a uniform set of regulations for farms across the province, to replace the hodge-podge of local By-Laws, many of which seemed to take a Not-In-My-Back-Yard (NIMBY) attitude to animal agriculture. Now it appears that the province will introduce Source Water Protection legislation. At the moment the plan is that the local conservation authorities will appoint committees to draw up a source water protection plan for each conservation area, with rules to govern permitted land use. There are several prob-

lems with this that I can see. Members are appointed to Conservation authorities, and are not elected, so they, and the committees they might appoint, may not represent the general interests of the population. With each conservation authority drawing up its own plan we are liable to have the same NIMBY attitude that the Nutrient Management Act was designed to stop. Lastly the province has promised that they will not introduce Nutrient Management regulations without providing funding to help farmers comply. There is no guarantee that there will be the same commitment under the Source Water Protection legislation.

Farmers tend to be an optimistic bunch, always with the hope that next year will be better, but just lately optimism seems to be in short supply. However I still wouldn't want to not go out and feed the stock each morning.



AMHERST ISLAND NATURE RESERVE - Chris Grooms, Nature Network Co-ordinator

The KFN (Kingston Field Naturalists) owns a beautiful 200-acre property on the east end of Amherst Island in Lake Ontario. The habitats include shortgrass grassland, shallow wetland with mud flats, isolated gravel bars and rocky shoreline.

Several species of shorebirds congregate on the gravel bar, on the shore and on the mud flats in the wetland. Wilson's Phalaropes breed in the grass adjacent to the wetland, a pair of Osprey raises up to four young each summer from an artificial platform, and many species of grassland birds breed there. Including migrants, over 200 species are documented for the site.

The property is rented as cattle pasture. This maintains the open grassland habitat, pays the taxes, keeps the tax rate low (classified as agriculture) and helps offset the costs of maintaining the reserve. Until now, the cattle have had access to the wetland and the lake for drinking water. Acknowledging that this practice is not environmentally sound, the KFN has undertaken a project to fence the cattle out of these areas. This will require nearly two kilometres of fence to be built.

Cattle need water, so, in parallel with the fencing, an alternate water supply must be provided. This is not a simple task, as there is no pre-existing water supply other than the lake and wetland and no power supply to pump water. Taking water from the lake is also problematic due to heavy wave and ice action on the shore.

The solution chosen was to dig a shoreline well and pump the water with a solar and wind power system. The Lennox and Addington Stewardship Council have generously

donated most of this system. It will not only provide power to pump water but also act as a demonstration project to farmers, showing them an alternative to watering cattle directly in water bodies.

Some funding for the project was secured from the Healthy Watersheds Program and individual Club members. Additional funding is sought through the Environmental Farm Plan, the Habitat Enhancement Program and from Ducks Unlimited.

The project is proceeding in two phases. The first phase is nearly complete with a productive well nearly finished and a fence now up along the south shore of the western half of the property. Phase two will be completed before cattle are normally allowed access to the eastern half in July. This involves fencing off the remaining parts of the south shore and the wetland. The cattle corral in the southwest corner is now fenced outside the pasture and will be moved to the northwest corner. This will protect a seasonal creek running into the lake at the south shore. The area will be cleaned up and become the main access for club members.

Further enhancements to the reserve are being considered, including planting of

trees and shrubs outside the fence along the shore to provide cover and nesting sites for birds and wildlife and installation of bird boxes for Bluebirds and Purple Martins. When the project is finished in July 2004, the site will be in better environmental shape with improved water quality and will continue to provide important habitat for birds and wildlife. With the protection of the water and improvements to the property, the reserve should long continue to be valuable wildlife habitat and a place for the enjoyment of nature by the community.

A cautionary note: As much as the KFN would like to "share the wealth" of this Reserve, access is restricted to members of the Club due to liability issues. One must be accompanied by a member to gain access.

A CASE FOR MULDER AND SCULLY - Chris Kennedy

Many afternoons Dianne and I take the dogs for a walk out past the lighthouse and along to the Bluffs, to where the old gun batteries from the War of 1812 are meant to be. Last fall we found that something had been digging in the turf, right along the edge close to the water.



The "Land Rollers" referenced above by Chris Kennedy - more on pg 20



The sod had been sliced off in a layer about an inch deep and rolled back, in irregular patches up to a foot or more across. We could quite easily roll the turf back and fill in the holes, but who or what had done this?

In 30 years of walking the same path I have never seen this before. We looked for footprints or droppings, but couldn't see any. Several people have said that skunks will do this when looking for grubs, but of course we have no skunks on the Island. And why just along the edge of the Bluffs?

Has anyone seen this before or does anyone have an explanation?



FAREWELL TO ELSIE

- Peter Moes

Elsie Densem, a long-time resident of Amherst Island, has moved into a nursing home in Amherstview.

It was never her plan or wish to do that - she wanted to live out her life in the house she loved, on the Island she had become so attached to - but her age (97) and her health have ruled otherwise. She is resigned to that and knowing Elsie, her sense of humour will not fail her, while she makes the most of her new life at Helen Henderson.

We all wish her the very best, and her leaving the Island will not diminish the fond memories we have of her. Her many friends here will want to drop in on her now and then and she looks forward to that.

THANK YOU NOTES

Regarding The FOWLER PRINT

The Women's Institute would like to thank everyone for supporting this fundraiser. Sales are going very well. The following are details sleuthed by Thomas Sylvester about the Fowler Painting. "The setting of 'Dempster's Point-High Water' was at the western edge of Fowl-

er's place, immediately east of Don & Sherry Miller/Ward's driveway, 14175 Front Rd. Fowler's title was descriptive of his westerly view of his neighbours John and Eliza Dempster (1891 Census). They lived in a modest wooden one storey house. Indeed, Fowler featured in the painting fisherman Dempster's drying rack. "The facts get more interesting as to what Fowler witnessed. The painting's full, dense green foliage confirms the summer season and Fowler's title draws us to the water level. Lake Ontario was exceptionally high the summer of 1890 (a level reached for example only three more times in the next 50 years). I suggest Fowler was inspired by the change in his view, how Dempster's point morphed in front of his studio. His island changed and he painted it. "

From LESLIE GAVLAS

Regarding the Fowler Prints and sale as reported in the December Beacon, be advised that, although I did research "Dempster", I did NOT PROVIDE and do NOT AGREE with the information presented in the article.

NOTICES

STONE WORK

The Women's Institute is interested in the restoration of the stone fence at Pentland Cemetery in 2004. We hope to bring a master stone mason to the Island to pass on this craft to the next generations. We are looking for Island men, women and youth interested in learning this craft while working on the Pentland fence. Our fences are unique, let's work to restore them. We need your help. Please contact: Joyce Haines, Allan Kidd or Judie Harrower.

ISLAND HERITAGE

A committee of the Nielson Store Museum and Cultural Centre (NSMCC) is in the process of gathering stories and photos illustrating the history of Amherst Island. Anyone with any old photos is requested to contact Alan Glenn. Any photos donated to the mu-

seum will be copied and the originals returned to the owner. Please help in this effort to preserve the history of the Island and make it accessible to future generations.

MEDICAL CENTRE

As a follow up to the talk at AIMS last December by Dr. Brian Kane (reported in January's Beacon) a meeting was held on January 15 to discuss a possible Amherst Island community health care centre. Two alternatives, a clinic and a retirement home were discussed. The group came to an agreement that the first thing that should be done was to put out a survey of the island residents on the health care issue. Peter Large volunteered to help prepare the survey (with the aid of his son who is a market research professional). A follow-up meeting will be held at St. Paul's church on March 22nd to discuss the survey. Anyone interested is invited to attend. The survey should be ready to be sent out sometime in the spring of this year.

MORE ISLAND HERITAGE

The Neilson Store Museum & Cultural Centre is looking to locate old photos of Island stores as listed below. These will be scanned, duplicated and used in the Museum exhibits.

Emerald Store

Neilson's store

Glenn's store

Max's Ice Cream store

Ross and Tena Filson's store.

Photos from the early 1900's to mid 1900's would be appreciated and would be returned to the owner after scanning. Please contact either Allan Glenn or Paul Laurent.

LAST CHANCE

To place your ad in the Women's Institute's new 2004 A.I. Directory

Call: Kirsten Bennick: 389-0636

Jackie Sylvester: 389-1320

Nancy Henshaw: 384-0799

AMHERST ISLAND P.S. SENIOR CLASS FUNDRAISER

-Jennifer Van Dyke, Senior Class Teacher



As a means of raising funds to assist in our year-end trip to Toronto and as a means of raising our school's profile in the Kingston area, the students of the Senior Class are selling school sweatshirts. With the assistance of Primetime Marketing we have chosen a navy blue, hooded sweatshirt with white embroidered letters in the design below:

AMHERST ISLAND

~ The Wave ~

Each sweatshirt costs \$40, taxes included. The sweatshirts are available to all members of the community in hopes of demonstrating school and community spirit and are available in sizes - YS(6-8), YM (10-12), YL (14-16), AS, AM, AL, AXL, AXXL, and AXXXL. There are order forms and an Adult Large sample sweatshirt hanging at the General Store, if you would like to preview your purchase. All Senior Class students also have order forms or please feel free to contact the school with your order. Payment must accompany orders, please make cheques payable to "Amherst Island P.S.". All orders are due at the school by 3:00 on Friday, February 20th.

If you have any questions, please contact me at the school. Thank you for your continued support.

RAWLEIGH PRODUCTS

Rawleigh Products include delicious flavourings and extracts, household items for heavy-duty cleaning, home remedies which are well-known for their healing abilities, spices and seasonings that will make all the food you serve special and specialty foods that are convenient, versatile and taste like homemade without the hassle.

Herbal remedies and nutritional products are also available. To place your order or get further information call Marie Ward at 389-5767 or E-Mail: bmward@ihorizons.net

NOTICE

LOYALIST TOWNSHIP SNOW REMOVAL ON ROADS AND SIDEWALKS

The purpose of this notice is to advise that, effective immediately, Loyalist Township has altered its practices with respect to snow removal on the Township's roads and sidewalks and the maintenance of County roads within Loyalist Township. Recent legislation regarding maximum hours of work has necessitated this change in practice.

It is the Township's policy to meet the Provincial Minimum Maintenance Standards with respect to roadways. These standards do not apply to sidewalks. The Township practice normally will be to maintain snow removal crews, as required, on mainland roads between 5:00 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. throughout the week. Snow removal on sidewalks, along boulevards and on very low traffic volume roads will be normally restricted to regular working hours, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday. The level of snow plowing effort required on Saturdays, Sundays and statutory holidays will be modified on an event-by-event basis so that the Provincial Standards are met. Township residents may notice a slight reduction in the level of service on roadways during prolonged winter storms.

It will not be the Township's regular practice to plow sidewalks on the weekend or on statutory holidays. Minimal snowplowing of roads will occur outside of the hours of operation described above.

On Amherst Island, the hours of operation have been modified such that the Provincial Minimum Maintenance Standards can be maintained. Modification of hours may result in a reduced level of service during prolonged periods of blowing snow or such periods when there are successive snowfalls occurring over several days.

If roadways are snow or ice covered, we strongly suggest that you reduce your speed while travelling.

Should you have any questions on the change in practices, please contact Mr. Gabe Gagnier at 386-7351, Extension 117.

EUCHRE

Friday night euchres are once again under way.

Join us and your friends and neighbours for a few games of Euchre, a few laughs, prizes and light refreshments.

Admission -\$2.00

HELP WANTED

Lunchroom/Yard Duty Supervisor needed at Amherst Island P.S.

11:45 - 12:45.

2-3 days a week.

Paid position.

For more information call the school at 389-4582

TO RENT: Village Cottage for rent in Stella. Walk to the ferry. By the week or weekend, year round.

Call Jan at 519-451-1197.

FOR SALE: Antique Oak Dining Room Table with **6 chairs & 2 leaves**. Table is **40 x 70** full size. 389-2515

"Going away? You can leave without care and worry as I would be happy to look after your home and lavish love and affection on pets and plants. Am available beginning January 29th full time. Please call Judi Gould at 905-642-6729 or leave a message with Terry Culbert at 613-634-8217."

If you have more information on any of the older photographs appearing in this or any other issue of the Beacon, please write or phone us at our Global Headquarters.

*Ian's number is (613) 389-3802
Tom is at (613) 634-1855*

*-Who is in the photo?
-Where was it taken & by who?
-What was the occasion?*

Thank you! Your assistance is greatly appreciated!

NEWS FROM THE GENERAL STORE

We would like to thank everyone for your kind words, Christmas cards and goodies over the holidays. All were very much appreciated and very much enjoyed.

Just a reminder to everyone that postage increased as of January 12. New Rates: within Canada, \$0.49; USA, \$0.80; and, international, \$1.40.

New Releases available to rent: Johnny English - Rowan Atkinson Seabiscuit - Tobey Maguire, Jeff Bridges Alex & Emma - Kate Hudson, Luke Wilson

View from the Top - Gwyneth Paltrow

Freaky Friday - Jamie Lee Curtis

Dawg - Dennis Leary, Elizabeth Hurley

Open Range - Kevin Costner DVD:

The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen - Sean Connery

S.W.A.T. - Colin Farrel, Samuel L. Jackson

Anything Else - Jason Biggs, Christina Ricci

Biker Boyz - Laurence Fishburne, Kid Rock

The Third Wheel - Ben Affleck, Luke Wilson

Fax service available - to send local-1.00\$ for first page, 50¢ each for additional pages.

- long distance- 5.00\$
- to receive- 50¢ per page

Regular Store Hours: Mon.-Sat. 9 a.m.- 6 p.m. Sunday 10 a.m.- 5 p.m.

**VICTORIA HALL
CRAFTS & TEA ROOM**

-New winter hours for lunch afternoon teas and early dinners

Noon to Six Wednesdays to Sunday,

-New and improved menu includes Godden Pork and Willard Lamb

Sausages on homemade garlic and Parmesan cheese buns with Napa salad.

-Hot specials include homemade soups, lasagna, and smoked ham & cheesy macaroni.

-Hall available for private functions.

-Wednesdays are card days from 1:30-4:00 ...Call 389-5389 if you plan to attend.

Christmas Crafts Gift Suggestions:

- Tea Room Gift Certificates

- John Munro Y-Knot T-Shirts @ \$10.00 each

- Commemorative Swim

buttons @ \$3.00 each
- Shirley Miller cards and paintings

- Tole painted Island sap buckets & milk cans

- Topsy Farm wool products

- Quilts and throws by local quilters

- Local Authored Books

Tom Sylvester's Loyalist Roots Cycling Tours @ \$8.00

John Kuti's Archtypes of Self Esteem @ \$25.00

Nicole Florent's Walk, Hike or Jog Kingston @ \$20.00

Hans Krauklis Amherst Island Video @ \$16.95

For reservations call Bernice or Neil @ 389-5389

Babysitter available

-After school and weekends.

-Responsible.

-Red Cross Certified

-Call Whitney Fleming 389-9869

Babysitting

Red Cross Certified Babysitter.

Available early evenings & weekends. Torri Phillips: 389-0512

Babysitter

- Red Cross Babysitting & CPR certified - available after school, early evenings & weekends. Call Beth Albertan: 389-2662

Seasonal Winter Storage for Boats, etc., right in beautiful Downtown Stella! Indoor, reasonable rates. Dayle Gowan, 634-3815

Amherst Island Sweatshirts, Golf Shirts & T-shirts. Embroidered Logo. Wide Selection of colours & sizes. Now available at Victoria Hall Tea Room

The Lodge on Amherst Island

Rental available for special occasions. Call Molly at:

(613) 634-1388 or (416) 533-5997

www.amherstisland.on.ca/thelodge

2 & 1 BEDROOM COTTAGES

on Stella Point: By the week or weekend, April-October. Call Molly (416) 533-5997

NORTH SHORE COTTAGE

for rent year around. Private with

good swimming. By the week or weekend, May-October. Please phone 389-2012.

House for rent by the week or weekend- Call Cherry 634-1212

SOUTH SHORE COTTAGE

for rent on private, secluded peninsula. Over 2000ft of limestone shoreline. \$650 weekly. Call (613) 389-5536 for further information.

LAKESHORE RUBBER STAMP

I can provide business and art stamps, daters, signature and similar products. All stamps are custom made on the premises and can be ready in 24 hours.

Please call 389-8441 or fax 389-9770. Email: selc.welbanks@sympatico.ca

This is a home-based business and available most days. Linda Welbanks

Tim Hicks Plumbing and Heating

Water treatment, pumps, heating: in floor; radiant; forced air; solar. Kingston licensed plumber. Phone 545-3541

Frozen Meals Designed for Seniors

offered by Lennox and Addington Senior Outreach Services. Restricted and special diets can also be accommodated. Contact: Freda Youell at 384-4135 for menus, meal descriptions and prices.

FOR SALE: Tales of Amherst Island by Dr. H. C. Burleigh call 389-3943

I am collecting used stamps-any kind for the guide dogs, clean used clothing and books for the "Cat's Meow." Used towels, cleaning products, A&P tapes and 12" x 12" knitted squares may be left in my front porch or call for a pick-up. The animals really need our help. Freda Youell 384-4135

Mindfulness Meditation Workshop

Developing calmness, understanding, and richness of the present moment. Jocelyne Leyton, 384-6488, 9060C Front Road.

Complementary Health

Jocelyne Leyton, RPP, has a Cranial Osteopathic practice, a manual therapy to restore health and balance to improve the overall structure of the body. For information/appointment 384-6488

Topsy Farms:



To encourage knitting (and to increase sales), we have lowered the price of our natural pure wool yarn to \$3.25/4 oz. skein (was \$4.35). Dyed yarn is now \$3.75/skein (was \$5.22). We will mail an order, regardless of size, anywhere in Canada or the continental USA for \$10.

www.topsyfarms.com

(613) 389-3444

Ted Gow Painting, wallpapering, tiling, home maintenance and repairs. Free estimates. Island references. 634-5404

Thomas A. Richmond, Certified Electrician. Home, Farm & Commercial wiring and repairs, right here on the Island. Ontario Electrical Safety Authority Authorized Contractor Program. 634-1855

HAY BALES FOR SALE on the Island: 40-45lb bales. Wayne Fleming 389-9869



Bookkeeping, Property Oversight & Management Services Rosemary Richmond. Home, Farm, Cottage, Small Business. Island references. 634-1855

LAST CHANCE!

AIWI 2004 PHONE BOOK ADVERTISING-space available!

contact: Jackie Sylvester 389-1320 or Nancy Henshaw 384-0799

LANDFILL SITE HOURS

Wed 11-2; Sat 10-noon; Sun 2-4.

FERRY OFFICE HOURS

Mon, Wed, Fri: 9-noon & 1-4

Ferry fuel-up days are Tuesday and Friday (be prepared for a delay).

LIBRARY HOURS

Wednesday 10am-Noon

Friday 1-3pm

Tel # 389-9371

WINDBREAK FENCING

- Terrence Patrick Culbert

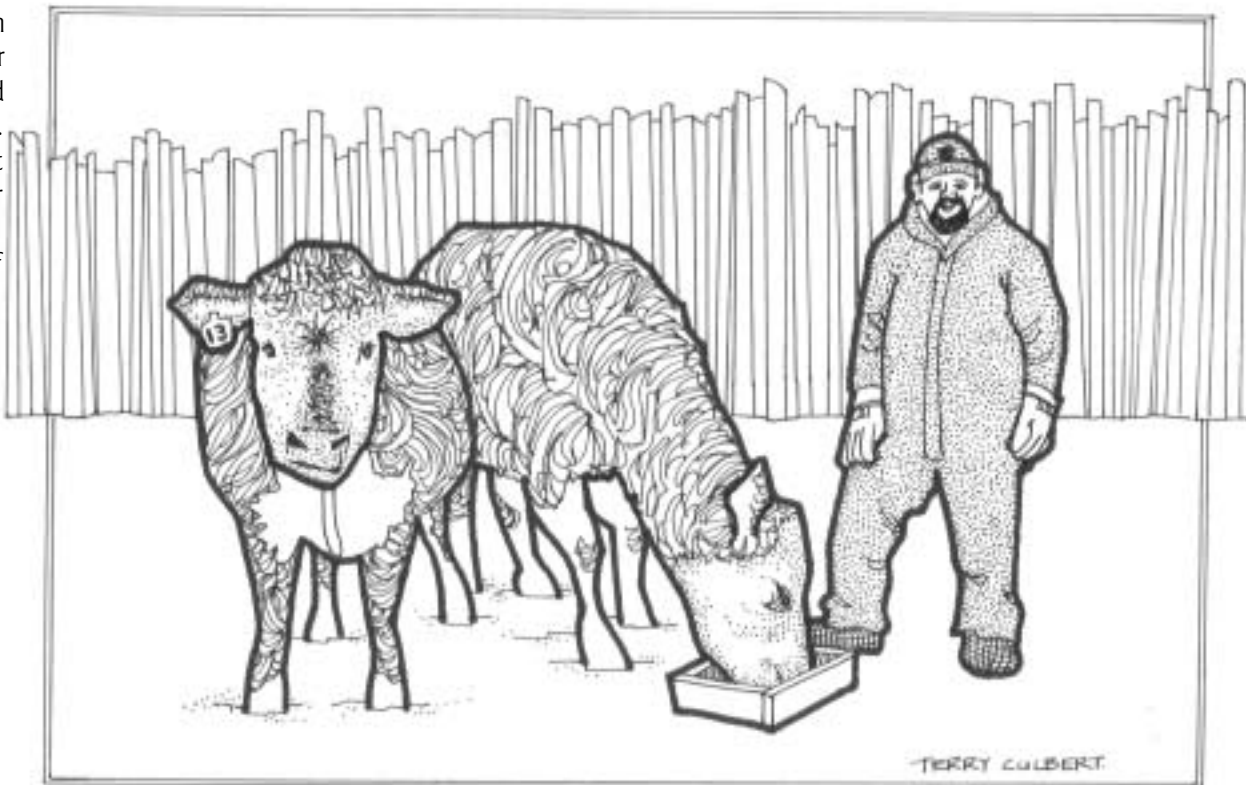
Unique fence structures can be found on two Amherst Island farms. The older of the two is on the Hitchins property on the Second Concession Road. The other is on Front Road at the Reid farm. The eight-foot high, cedar fences are windbreaks for beef cattle. This winter, they're proving their weight in gold.

The fences bring back childhood memories to me. Many of the old black and white cowboy movies showed a similar style protective structure surrounding their forts. They were called

stockades. West of London, Ontario stands a re-creation of an Iroquoian village called Ska-Nah-Doht, meaning 'a village stands again.' Surrounding the village longhouses are high wooden fences called the palisade. These walls are similar in design to the Amherst Island fencing, only much higher. The palisade not only protected the First Nation people from their enemies, but from dangerous animals and the high winds. The Amherst Island fencing was erected primarily to provide a windbreak from our icy, winter winds.

Garry Hitchins erected his fence nearly ten years ago. "I saw an article in the 'Canadian Cattlemen's Magazine and thought that type of fencing was a good idea!" said Garry. "It doesn't matter which way the wind is blowing, I can feed my cattle from either side of the fence. The only time my beef cattle are in the barn is for medication or for cow calving. A bit of advice if you're planning to build a windbreak: leave a one-inch space between each log enabling the wind to blow through. If you don't, there's a chance it may topple over in a heavy wind."

Garry's neighbour on the Second Concession Road is beef farmer Jim Reid. They're not only neighbours and friends, they also work for the Loyalist Township full-time on the



Frontenac II. Jim heard and saw first-hand how well Garry's windbreak was working and decided last fall to build one of his own. His wife Sandra trucked bundles of slab wood from Shannonville to the family farm on Front Road. There, Jim and his mother Barb erected a 160-foot L-shaped windbreak next to the barn. "Using the slab wood is an economical way to build a windbreak," said Jim. "The wood comes in 8-foot lengths and you can get a forty-foot run out of one bundle. A bundle will cost you about \$25.00."

Jim raises thirty Hereford X cows and five calves. He keeps his cows for breeding purposes and sells the calves. "Beef cattle prefer to be outdoors year round and they don't like the heat of the barn during the winter months. In the past we kept the herd protected from the wind in our red cedar bush out back. But if an animal became sick, it was difficult to move it, especially if the snow was deep. Our windbreak is the perfect solution. When the winter sun strikes the logs of the windbreak, it gives off warmth that seems to regenerate the cattle," Jim explained. "Best thing I've ever done, next to marrying Sandra."