



Amherst Island Beacon



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in his family life and he found happiness on his farm with his wife Brenda at his side.

David John Kerr was born on Amherst Island on Labor Day Sept. 4, 1950 the first child of John Kerr and Madlyn Kerr. David's sister Suzanne arrived three years later. The Kerr family lived on Front Road where Peter and Suzanne live today. David and Suzanne attended the relatively new Amherst Island Public School where their dad, John Kerr, was the first principal.

In 1959, when David was nine years old, his father became principal of a school on the mainland and the family moved to Cataraqui. Their Island home became a cottage where the family spent the summer months.

David was versatile. He had a broad range of interests and showed leadership abilities at an early age. In high school he excelled in hockey, football and baseball. He enjoyed country and western music and played the guitar and the piano.

David was a very social person. He loved a good party and there are many stories attesting to that. He loved to fish and hunt and was happiest when he was outdoors.

David attended St. Lawrence College and graduated as a Methods Engineer. Shortly thereafter, he began a twenty-year career with Northern Telecom and Nortel in Kingston. He was a well-liked and respected supervisor.

David had a wish list. He had always wanted a sugar bush and in the 1980s this wish came true when he bought a farm with a sugar bush on Palace Road just east of Napanee.

It was about this time that David crossed paths with his childhood sweetheart Brenda. They had many things in common, including a love of farming. In 1989 they were married at Maple Lim Farm surrounded by family and friends. It was a perfect match.

The farm that began with a few liters of maple syrup kept growing. David and Brenda have raised and sold beef cattle, chickens, turkeys, and meat rabbits (hundreds of rabbits!). They sold eggs, award winning home preserves, baking, fresh garden vegetables and homemade foods.

They spent summer weekends together at local farmers markets. More recently, David served as the founding Treasurer of the new Memorial Centre Farmers' Market in Kingston. David and Brenda built a business to be proud of.

David was always learning. He was very curious about how things worked and on the farm he fixed everything



DAVID JOHN KERR
September 4, 1950 – March 20, 2014

-Laurie Kilpatrick

David Kerr lived life to the fullest. He found happiness

himself. Curiosity about how things worked was a trait David shared with his father.

Peter Wemp tells the story of how David's father, John Kerr bought a lawnmower and immediately began taking it apart to see how it worked. There were a few bolts and bits left over after he reassembled it. A return to the dealer was in order.

Much later, David bought a 20 horsepower mercury outboard and he took it apart piece by piece to see how it worked before it ever touched the lake. A return to the dealer was in order as there were a few pesky pieces that didn't fit properly.

David was a solid, steady influence in my life. I admired him greatly. I will always remember his ready smile and kind nature. Our hearts go out especially to Brenda, to his dear mother Madlyn, and to his loving sister Suzanne.

David always had time for the children in his life and he took great pleasure in showing them how things worked and grew on the farm. He was a loving father to Tracy and David, a cherished grandfather of Jersey, Lucas, Isaac and Makayla and well loved by his many nephews and nieces.

He also earned the affection of Elena, a nine-year old neighbor, who was always keen to go with her dad to see who she called "Farmer Dave".

Elena wrote a poem for Brenda and in closing we would like to share it with you...

As I watch the clouds roll by
I think why did he have to die?
He was so kind, so nice to me
Why oh why did it have to be

It isn't fair we know that is so
But when it's time for us to go
God decides which one to call
And we are left sad, one and all.

NEIGHBOURHOOD

- Lynn Fleming

Get Well wishes this month to Marie Ward, Jeff Jones, Kevin Varette, and Mary-Kay Steele.

Our condolences to Lorna Willis, on the recent passing of her father.

Our sympathy to Brenda Kerr, Madlyn Kerr and Suzanne Wemp (Peter), and families, following the sudden passing of their husband, son and brother, David Kerr. Condolences also to his Island extended family and friends.

Condolences also this month to Tara Kennedy (Dave Meikle) and family, whose father passed away quietly at home.

Lots of travelers this time of year, and after this long winter, it seems most are trying to find somewhere warm.

Earl and Donna Willard made their annual trip to Florida's southwest coast.

Eric and Linda Welbanks went from one extreme to another; after spending a couple of weeks in Mexico, they were off to Maine for some skiing.

Alex and Debbie Scott headed to Florida with their daughters for March Break.

Kim and Duncan Ashley and family visited Duncan's parents in Alabama over the Break.

Noa and Lucie Amson spent their March Break visiting their dad and family in France and Italy.

Leah Murray and Carl McCrosky have returned home after a year of sailing on the Atlantic Ocean.

I spent 8 days in Costa Rica with Pam McCormick and Robin Robbs for my March Break. We visited volcanoes, rain forests, hot springs, took a river cruise and still managed to get some R&R by the Pacific. Costa Rica is a beautiful country, with wonderful people.

Gary and Susan Filson headed to Florida after the March Break, to visit friends and family.

Larry Jensen has been doing some sailing in preparation for summer - if ever it arrives. In February, he took part in the 6th annual Antigua Yacht Club race - 600 miles around 11 Caribbean islands. One of 63 boats, from 11 countries, and representing Canada, Larry was a crew member on the "Spirit of Adventure", owned by Derek Hatfield of Lunenburg, Nova Scotia.

In March, Larry joined 4 sailing friends, from Bronte Harbour Yacht Club, Oakville, to deliver a brand new Dufour 45' sailboat. Sailing from Lisbon, Portugal, 904 miles due west to the town of Horta, in the Azores, they travelled 774 miles non-stop in 4.5 days, then one more day on to Horta. Once delivered, they spent the next week as land tourists, visiting 4 of the 9 islands of the archipelago, enjoying dinner cooked by a volcano, and a soak in the hot Sulphur Springs.

Winter just seems to go on and on and on. We have been teased with a few days above freezing, and some sunny days that have been slowly melting the snow. We have continued to get regular snow right through the end of March! The ice is so thick this year, it might not melt before May! The ice breakers went through in late March to break up the ice, so maybe it will soon be gone. I can't remember the lake being frozen as far as you can see for several months before, but it is finally starting to clear now in late March.

WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

- Mary Kay Steel

The March 2014 regular meeting was held on Wednesday the 19th at the home of Nancy Dunn,

commencing at 7pm. Nine members were in attendance, a number reflecting the habit of Islanders to seek warmer climates in the winter, I suppose. President Liz Harrison was in the chair. Minutes of the January meeting were approved, and a motion to pay small bills was carried. Various committee reports were received, including Elsie Willard's on Good Cheer, who reported on Islanders or their families who have been sent greetings, best wishes or condolences in the past two months. We were delighted to hear of former member and President in 1935-36, Vera Hogeboom, recently celebrating her 103rd birthday!! Joyce Haines advised us of the upcoming Area Annual meeting in October, to be organized and hosted by our district – Lennox and Addington. Our branch's program of Warm Winter Walking held each Monday pm at the Community Centre, has been well received, and will conclude at the end of March.

We then moved on to complete our list of donations for this fiscal year, and agreed to donate \$150 to the Seniors Outreach Services (SOS), earmarking it for programming in the new Loyalist/Amherstview office located at the corner of Taylor Kidd and County Rd. 6. As well we are donating \$400 to an international effort to train teachers in Afghanistan, known as the Lantern Fund.

After discussion of a few other business issues, we turned to our meeting program. The inspiration of Marilyn Pilon and Judy Greer, we had great fun pouring over a large table of "accessories", items brought in by members to share with each other. Some of us went home with new jewels, bags and scarves; others were pleased they had cleaned out their cupboards in advance of spring. A couple of members couldn't be tempted to pick anything to take home, can you imagine such restraint? A social hour and marvelous lunch was then enjoyed. And then we had our Brown Bag auction, ably led by Joyce Haines. The Brown Bag auction consists of putting treasures in bags, then auctioning them off, contents unknown, for a few dollars; the surprises discovered are usually a source of mirth and/or pleasure. The funds raised go to our international level organization (Association of Country Women of the World) for its administration and programs. This organization has Official advisory status with some United Nations programs.

We were reminded of the next meeting to take place at the home of Leslie Gavlas on April 16, 7pm. It will be our branch's annual general meeting at which we will install a new slate of executive officers.

CJAI UPDATE TO OUR ISLAND RADIO LISTENERS AND SUPPORTERS.

-Dayle Gowan

April 1st is coming up, and it is the eighth birthday for this tiny community radio station. Who would have believed eight years ago that we would still be going strong?

2014 is a special year as well because we are awaiting our license renewal approval from CRTC. Our application for renewal was submitted at the end of October last year, and our current license expires in August. We will keep you posted on the status of our application.

Over the last several months the technical support staff at CJAI (Greg Latiak, Wayne Gulden, Bruce Burnett, Bill Barrett, David Pickering and Eric Tremblay) have been very busy with a number of significant upgrades to the radio station. The station computer hardware and software systems have been upgraded. We have completed the improvements and upgrades in Studio 2, and will be completing work on Studio 1 this spring. In addition, we are planning improvements to the Main Studio sound systems for our guest entertainers.

Our website has been improved and we now have a Twitter and Facebook presence.

We have also recently changed (and improved) our internet streaming, so if you have experienced any problems, you may have to change your book mark in your web browser. Check the links on the CJAI website (www.cjai.ca) Please let us know if you have any problems.

A big "Thank You" to all our show hosts and their guests who managed to keep their shows on air during this long cold winter, especially those who did extra duty to fill in for some of us who were fortunate enough to be able to head south for a bit of sun and warmth.

A reminder to all our loyal supporters - our annual week long, on-air fund raiser is coming up. The date hasn't been decided just yet, but it will likely be the week of May 18-24.

If you would like to help out by donating your time during the week, or goodies, or gifts for prizes please let us know. Email or voice mail would be fine, or drop in at the station. We appreciate whatever you can do to help.

Also, Shannon Myra, Derek Wagar and Eric Tremblay are planning an Island Radio Benefit Rock Concert for early May.

It is still in the idea stage, so stay tuned as more details will be available soon!

Stay tuned to CJAI and check our website for upcoming events.



FOND MEMORIES - Gord Miller

Fond memories filled my head when I saw the picture submitted by Lyn Fleming of the winter school transit, in the March Beacon.

The school sleigh and horses belonged to my father, Doug Miller.

I recall helping Dad every year mount the structure, which dad built, onto a set of bob sleighs ready for the winter.

Dad sat out front with a sheepskin coat on and a buffalo rug covering his knees and legs. All of us kids were inside out of the weather. The horses' names were Jack and Curly. They did farm work all year round, but drew the school sleigh in winter to get overtime. Ha ha.

In good weather Dad drove a regular school bus, but in winter he, along with other Islanders, would deliver kids to school by sleigh. Other men who drove kids were, Wilfred Miller, Bruce Caughey, Eddie Reid and Hugh Wemp. Dad's route was the front road from the head to the school.

In the picture, dad is sitting in front of Wes Browns blacksmith shop. On days when it was too hard on the horses because of depth of snow, Dad would spend the day helping Mr. Brown, thus saving horses an extra trip.

I recall some of us kids would open the back door, hang onto the sleigh and drag along in the snow. I realize now why Dad would be upset, that was hard on the horses, but we just thought it was fun.

Our family also used the sleigh in winter to travel around Island. I remember many a trip through the fields to Grandma Miller's house on the Third Concession, where Donald and Judy Miller live today. I can still hear the crunch of the sleigh runners on the snow as we travelled along, with the bells which hung on the horse harness.

Thanks Lyn for the picture and the great memories

On the 21st of February, Peter Large and Margaret Maloney gave a talk in the backroom of the Neilson Museum. They gave a wonderful talk about their trip to Africa in October of 2013. For three weeks they were on the 'dark continent' with time in South Africa and side safaris into Namibia.



Margaret Maloney talks of Africa



Peter Large gives his part

Both Photos by Brian Little



Based on sketches done in Africa, Peter Large created the beautiful card on the left.

JANET'S JOTTINGS

- Janet Scott

Signs of spring

As I write this article it does not look or feel like spring but it is on the way. We have had such a snowy and windy winter that one felt more like Spring only in the last week of March when temperatures finally climbed above zero. The rain on Friday reduced the snow rapidly and crews here and on the mainland were busy clearing culverts and restoring drainage ditches to combat the rapid Spring thaw.

The world of Nature is however geared for the changes in light and already we can see signs of spring in the neat little corners of our Island paradise. We have had reports of a Garter Snake coming out in spite of the snow. These creatures are so happy here with an abundance of stone walls to give them shelter and lots of voles, earthworms, frogs and grasshoppers to satisfy their appetites. Since they are reptiles and therefore cold-blooded, they require the warmth of the sun on stones to give them body heat so when they first emerge in the spring they are lethargic and very slow moving. Their coats are dull until they moult and then exhibit the sharp contrast of yellow and green stripes. The Eastern Ribbon Snake and the Eastern Garter Snake are both found on Amherst Island and are very similar. The lateral stripe that is found on the side of the snake is on the second and third rows of scales on the Garter Snake and on the third and fourth rows on the Ribbon Snake. Both snakes have a dorsal and two lateral yellow stripes and attain a length of about thirty inches but the Ribbon Snake has a larger eye than the Garter Snake with a bright spot in front of the eye. The Garter Snake is found all over Ontario as far north as James Bay while the Ribbon Snake is found only as far north as Muskoka. When a snake sticks its tongue out at you, it is not being rude or threatening you, it's just trying to smell you. Try and enjoy the snake. Here on Amherst Island they are very prolific and you need to learn to accept them. That's just how it is!

The Spring Chorus of birds has begun with the Red-winged Blackbirds return and after a few days of rest they began to join the resident Robins with all the chirps and hallelujahs of a joyful morning. The Starlings are telling us that spring is coming! Their beaks are turning yellow; they are changing their dull spotted coats for the iridescent blue black and purple of summer. If you listen in the morning they are making all kinds of warbles and trills. The Starling is related to the Myna bird and can mimic many other birds. We had one on the South Shore that mimicked a loon call and had you wondering how a loon could be calling from a tree. Some of the robins never really left but now they are becoming more visible as they come out of the cedars where they have been

sheltering and now sit prominently on the tip top of trees singing their morning songs. Migrating male Robins have joined the locals and are singing and then scolding the minute Jazz, the cat, tries to enjoy a bit of sunshine on the deck. I also heard a Cardinal whistling its long clear notes in the early morning as birdlife welcomes the dawn. The Red-tailed Hawks have moved on to breeding territory and one pair has already begun to incubate eggs. Bonnie Livingstone reports a flock of mixed ducks including several Redheads, a rather showy duck with dark red head, light gray back, not as light as a Canvasback, and black breast and tail. Their heads are more rounded than the Canvasback which has a flat forehead sliding into its black beak. You will often see both in the same flock. A Hooded Merganser was hanging out at the Stella Dock and enjoying the rain on Friday. The Goldeneyes have begun their rather acrobatic courting moves as they twist and throw their heads back. The Canada Geese are pairing up and choosing nesting sites in every field and near every puddle on the Island. Our geese will already have nests and may even have young by the time the wild migrating flocks pass high overhead as they honk their way north with slow, strong wing beats and v-shaped flocks.

The Northern Harriers are doing their courtship flights across our fallow fields. The American Kestrels are paired on the wires and have probably picked out nesting cavities, either natural ones or even in man-made buildings. Watch and listen for all these signs of spring and watch Amherst Island celebrate its Irish roots as it turns from brown to green.

COUNCIL GLEANINGS

- Ian Murray

From 4th Session of Council, March 10

Emergency First Response Team for Amherst Island: 27 call-outs in 2013, 47 in 2012; for the 3-year period ending Dec31/13, the average response time for the 107 call-outs was 11.2 minutes with an average of 8.53 responders.

AIMS Meeting March 18, at 8 AM

- David Pickering

Breakfast: Jane McGinn and Lorie Leblue (with a couple of younger helpers) prepared us a wonderful breakfast. Thank you very much to that crew.

Attendance: 12 members.

Chair: David Pickering

Agenda

1. Presentation: The life and career of Dr Brian Grace

Dr Brian Grace was kind enough to provide us with a window into his fascinating life and career.

It started a very long time ago in Scotland with lessons in what constitutes friendship and what deserves a punch in the nose; all over attendance at a rugby game. Who knew that med school was so valuable?

Fast forward to a train wreck – and yes we mean a literal train wreck – when a young doctor got a trial by fire as the casualties kept pouring in.

Of course – it wasn't all blood and glory. Sometimes it was pee and unhygienic hijinks. Best not talk too much about that since we want to finish the talk while still maintaining a degree of respect for the good doctor.

Leaving behind juvenile pursuits, the young doctor joined the Royal Canadian Air Force – a highly intelligent choice when compared to the Royal Army. He served in Trenton, Winnipeg and St John.

Somewhere around here, he was seconded into France to participate in the building of a hospital and to participate in the delivery of a baby. (He used this term because, in his words, “the prospective mother was a trained midwife, and she knew a LOT more about the process than I did.”)

After a stint back in Canada, during which he got his surgical credentials at McGill, he returned to Europe. This time, it was Germany – during which time he met the love of his life. That was 42 years ago, and Janet is still with him. (Congrats to you both.)

The two returned to Canada and came to Kingston, where Brian became the Chief of Surgery at the military hospital in Kingston. (The building still exists on the Base, though it has long since lost its hospital status.) At that time, the military hospital also provided medical support to five prisons in the local area. This provided its own set of challenges. Brian regaled us with accounts of removing items from the gullets of ‘swallowers’ and the story of the individual who escaped – in hospital gown and slippers – in February.

I once heard it said that being a military doctor is boring – since MOST military people are dismally healthy. This might be what gave Brian the opportunity to branch out. He described the development of laser tattoo removal – and the line-ups of individuals who were eager for his services, including one lady who was no longer feeling as ‘welcoming’ now as she had been in her youth.

His work even extended into the field of politics, due to his having the Governor General as a patient. The gentleman was very ill, which delayed the transfer of power from Joe Clark to Pierre Trudeau. Brian insisted that the man be given at least two more days to recover before the new cabinet could be sworn in. When the Rt Hon PET stated that he was delaying the establishment of a Liberal government by more than two days, Brian had the good graces not to say (out loud at least), “It’s a good start.”

Through it all, Brian continued to help people; sometimes physically, and sometimes emotionally. Talk to him some time about the transition from alcohol to mink coat.

But still – it was a long career – so Brian retired – for the first time.

Somehow, not too long afterwards, he was in the Saudi desert, establishing a trauma centre and casualty evacuation hospital with 48 doctors and 700 beds. They ended up with one patient – a gentleman who shot his toe off. (Did I mention that military people are dismally healthy?)

So – when a camel ate his hat – he took it as a valid reason to retire again.

This, of course, meant moving to yet another part of the world, and yet another hospital.

This one was in Saipan – 100 miles N of Guam – which is about half way between Hawaii and the Philippines.

It’s not surprising that, upon return to Kingston, Brian was on the Board of Directors for KGH. So there you have it. Doctor, surgeon, military officer, globe traveler and hospital director. The only constants in his life are Janet and that thick Scottish accent.

Thank you Brian – for a fascinating talk.

2. Minutes of the last meeting were approved.

3. Treasurer’s Report.

It was a day to balance the books and make the budget. Business was quickly dealt with.

The annual membership dues of \$20 were approved. This is the same as last year’s.

A donation to Ameriks was approved. As per last year, this is \$500 which goes into a fund which helps Island students who need assistance with continuing education.

A direct donation to AIPS was approved. As per last year, we will be donating \$250.

Last year’s and this year’s rental costs to the church was approved. We will continue to hold breakfast meetings there. Should we elect to have a meeting elsewhere, such as the café, the extra will be a direct donation to the church.

Discussions were made about additional donations to the Sand Bay purchase and to the school graduate award. Both had the support of members, but payment will be deferred until we see our income flow once the market season starts up and the auction is done.

Ross Haines was contacted regarding our ongoing support to the hanging flower baskets. He felt that \$500 would likely cover this year’s support, and this has been budgeted for.

4. Old Business

The membership list has been twice checked and all e-mail addresses have been confirmed. The chair will forward the list to all members on the list.

5. New Business

Ken Albertan stated that the Island co-operative is going forward. Gardner McBride has indicated that there is money coming in and a professional in this field will likely be hired to assist. More to follow at next meeting.

Mark Raymond informed the membership of an initiative that he and Anders Bennick are planning. They propose a wine tour through Prince Edward County. A bathroom equipped highway coach will leave the Millhaven dock at 9:30 AM on Saturday, May 24th for a day of samples and shopping. Snack will be included. Expected return will make the 5:30 PM boat. Cost per person is expected to be \$55. More to follow.

6. Next chair

Bill Barrette has said he will chair the next meeting.

7. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at ~10:00

SUNSHINE by -Deb Kimmett

My daughter Sunshine Brady (seen below) wrote the play, is performing the play, and now is raising money so she can produce her "Early Retirement" play in London at the Fringe. Crazy Proud of her! If you feel like seeing what the kid is up to: <http://www.gofundme.com/7ryurc>.



Sunshine Brady – photo courtesy of Deb Kimmett

WINNING THE LOTTERY

-Zander of DUNN INN

I've never won a lottery prize. My wife tells me that's because I've never bought a ticket. She claims you have to buy a ticket to win the lottery. People who buy lottery tickets often annoy me. I have to wait in line behind them while they purchase their tickets at the Information booths or at the gas stations. Twice waiting for purchasers of lottery tickets has made me miss the ferry.

My wife says I'm too cheap to buy a lottery ticket. Because I know the odds are 40 million to 1 against me I refuse to buck the odds. And yet, somebody always wins so I can understand why many people take a chance. Besides, the government encourages us to get into the game and put our money on the line.

Recently I read a book by Richard Wagamese entitled, "Ragged Company" which is about four homeless characters who live on the street. One day one of them picks up off the street a pack of cigarettes three quarters full. That's a real find! Then he notices, behind the foil, three \$20 bills. Sixty dollars makes him a rich man! On further inspection he discovers a lottery ticket tucked away in the cardboard cigarette box. He figures the lottery ticket is worthless because he knows the odds and he's scored enough already.

But you never know, and for a lark, he takes the ticket into a Chinese grocery store and asks the proprietor to check it out for him. The store owner gets all excited and starts yelling "Winnipeg." The owner's son comes in response to the noise and tells everybody that his father is really saying, "Winna big." How big? The son determines that the ticket is worth \$13.5 million - that big!

The rest of the book is all about the choices the winner and his friends make.

I don't buy lottery tickets but I fantasize about what I would do if I won \$50 million in the lottery. (You should know that I'd share some of it with everybody on the Island).

The first choice the finder of the ticket makes is to share his winnings equally with his three friends. They are his family and they have always supported and loved him. He wants them to join him in his good fortune.

Then he and his friends have to decide how they'll acquire the money. They don't have identification. So they decide to ask a "square" friend to help them. This "square" man is pleased to do so but he informs them that they will need the services of a lawyer. The four decide to accept his advice and go with the lawyer he recommends.

The lawyer arranges for the money to be given to the four of them by the Lottery Corporation and they start to make choices about how to spend the money. They all

choose to buy expensive new clothes and to rent high class hotel rooms.

There are many more choices to be made and the rest of the book concerns those choices and how they lead to success or failure, to riches or poverty, to life or death.

It's a great story of "from rags to riches," but it's also a mirror. I see myself in all the characters and I see the choices they make as the choices I would make in the same situation. Or not! I am sure I would consider doing what they did, but I am also sure that I would do some things differently.

They have to decide whether to use the money only for themselves or for others as well. They have to decide how much to use for various purposes.

The lives of the characters in this book are changed by money. When they had no money they lived simply, frugally, obsessively. They had very few choices to make. Now that they have money they have to devote much of their time to choosing how to live, how to spend, whom to support, whom to help, what to do with their time, let alone their money. Let it also be noted that the choices the characters in the book make are influenced greatly by their histories. How they lived and thought before they gained money makes a big difference in how they choose to use money.

God has put us here to make choices. Some of us have very little money with which to work. Others of us have so much money we must spend much time trying to decide how to spend it, to whom or to what to give it, how to invest it. Some of us have major talents and outstanding abilities. We have to choose how to use those gifts - to benefit ourselves and/or to uphold others.

Life is full of choices. If we win the lottery we simply have more choices to make. Winning the lottery can make life more complicated. Of course it can also enable the winner to do more and be more helpful to others.

If you choose to buy a lottery ticket and that ticket wins you the lottery, beware: you'll have to make many more choices than you ever imagined. I hope your choices will be inspired by God's love for everyone, not just for winners.

UNPOPULAR BIRDS: THE CORMORANT

-Carl McCrosky

This article is the first in a series about unpopular birds. Cormorants are a good place to start, because they are commonly despised.



Some of the following reasons for their unpopularity are:

- 1) they have taken over the Brothers Islands,
- 2) they are ugly, or
- 3) they are believed to be an invasive species, rapidly growing in numbers and probably eating all the fish.

Let's learn a little about this generally unloved bird, and then revisit these three issues.

In case you are unaware, the Cormorant is the common large black swimming bird which surrounds our Island in the summer. They are about 32" in length, The adults are black except for a yellowish orange throat pouch. They have a long, strong, hooked beak. Their tails are short. Their wings are large and strong. Their full common name is Double Crested Cormorant. The "double crest" is almost never seen. It shows up on their heads briefly just before their breeding season, and is undoubtedly used to attract mates.

Double Crested Cormorants are found on all the non-arctic coasts and many of the larger rivers and lakes of North America. Hence we find them on Lake Ontario. They have occupied this range for at least as long as man has occupied North American, so at least 10,000 years. There are several other North American Cormorant species: Neotropic Cormorant (Texas Gulf), Great Cormorant (Down East), Pelagic Cormorant (West Coast), and Brandt's Cormorant (West Coast). Other Cormorant (and related) species live right around the world.

Cormorants live by catching and eating fish, eels, and other small aquatic animals. They dive underwater from a floating position, and then find, chase, and catch their prey as they swim underwater. They use both their feet and their wings to swim. They use their viscous hooked beaks to catch their prey, which they swallow whole.

Unlike most swimming birds, Cormorants have not evolved an effective water-proofing oil coating for their

feathers. Consequently, their feathers get wet when they seek their daily food. Wet feathers are extremely unpleasant for a bird. The feathers lose their insulative property and the birds get cold. Also they cannot fly as well. So when they are done fishing, Cormorants head for some safe sunny perch to spread their wings and dry their feathers in the sun. I suppose they're also busy digesting their last meal.

We now know a bit about the Double Crested Cormorant. Let's look again at the three reasons why many people seem to hate them.

1) They have taken over the Brothers Islands (and killed all vegetation there with their excrement). As we've seen, Cormorants need to dry their feathers after fishing. They need a safe, sunny place to do so. So they look for a place with lots of sun, and no humans, dogs or other potential predators. Take a mental trip around Amherst Island and the surrounding area. How many places can you think of that would be suitable safe sunny perches for Cormorants? Not many! Other than the Brothers, virtually every bit of dry land has large shading trees, humans, and/or dogs. So in our locale, Cormorants make use of the few suitable safe islands they have available.

2) They are ugly. Well, beauty is in the eye of the beholder. We live in a world created by evolution or by God (it doesn't matter which for our purposes here). This world was apparently made for reasons other than pleasing our perceptions of beauty. So get over it. We may think the Cormorant is ugly, but if we can cope with the ugliness of the Thorny Hawthorn or the Little Brown Bat, we can certainly cope with Cormorants.

3) They are an invasive threat to our ecosystem. Hogwash. They have been here longer than us. They undoubtedly have periods of growth and decline, but don't worry, their growth will be limited by some natural factor (like human destruction of their habitat). If you've ever swum in the waters around our Island, you'll know that there are enormous numbers of small fish. This is undoubtedly why Cormorants like our waters. I can't comment intelligently on the population dynamics involving Cormorants and fish stocks, but I can tell you that the Cormorants are doing a spectacularly poor job of wiping out our little fishes.

Cormorants tend to be numerous in habitats that suit them. Cormorants are probably the most common bird in the tidewater regions of Virginia down to Georgia. It should not be surprising that they do well in Lake Ontario too. We should take their numerous presence as a sign of general ecological health.

I think we've neutralized the second and third issues (ugliness and invasive threat). But more should be said about the first issue. The Brothers Islands are far from dead, but admittedly, Cormorants have seriously limited

the number of species living there. We might ask, "are Cormorants worth this cost to the Brothers Islands?" My reaction to this question is one of amazement. For Homo sapiens who have massively, destructively transformed most of the surface of the planet to question whether a fellow species has the right to transform a couple small islands in Lake Ontario seems to me to be the height of arrogance.

Instead, I suggest that we relax about the Cormorants. Let the Cormorants live their lives and fulfill their natural role in our biosphere. Let them dominate a few little islands in Lake Ontario. We should turn our attention to fostering a better human presence in our beautiful, complex, fascinating, and life supporting natural world.

So head out there in the waters around our lovely Island, find a Cormorant, and kiss it on its lovely Double Crested little head.

LOVING SPOONFUL

- Sally Bowen

Fresh food is sorely needed by the emergency food programs, shelters and pantries in Kingston. Loving Spoonful encourages community and school gardens, recovers food that would otherwise be wasted, runs a winter greenhouse project, preserves food in the late summer/fall when it is available in abundance, and runs the Grow A Row program.

Grow A Row is an appeal to anyone who grows a flower garden, to put in a few vegetable seeds or for those who grow veg already, to grow an extra row to donate. Last year Amherst Island donated 713 lb of produce.

Cary Allen and Mary White will again gather produce one evening a week on their front porch (Jean Tugwell's former home in the village) and will deliver to the appropriate collectors. Food taken from the Island in the mornings last year was often consumed the same day by people in need of healthy food at 20 agencies like Interval House, Martha's Table, Lunch by George, and the Kingston Youth Shelter.

A new offer – farmers are eligible to receive a 25% Ontario tax credit for their donations thanks to the Local Food Act. Call Mara at 613-546-4291 x1871 with questions.

If you have any wooden stakes, plywood or outdoor paint to donate for the school fencing, please contact Sally: 613 389-3444.

PETER LARGE IN THE COUNTY

– Terry Culbert



Molly Stroyman and Peter Large – photo: Terry Culbert

Peter Large SCA, OSA, Amherst Island's resident artist, has become a full-time member of Arts on Main Gallery, Prince Edward County's leading arts co-operative. Peter becomes the first non-County artist to become a member in the seven year history of the gallery.

The award winning artist is a member of the Canadian Society of Artists, the Ontario Society of Artists and past President of the Arts & Letters Club of Toronto. Two of Peter's drawings are in the Province of Ontario's permanent Archival Collection. His work is mainly the drawn image, using graphite, ink, coloured pencil and water-colour.



Peter now joins his friends and former Amherst Islanders Barb Hogenauer and Terry Culbert at this prestigious gallery. (Barb and Peggie are seen in the photo to the left, but Terry is taking the picture.)

Many Amherst Islanders attended the spring show opening reception on March 8th titled 'Swept Away'. Those islanders included Margaret Maloney, Molly Stroyman, Victoria and Ben Cuyler, Peggie Coulter, Stanley Burke, Brian and Eva Little.



Brian & Eva Little – photo: Terry Culbert

Located at 223 Main Street opposite the Regent Theatre in downtown Picton, Arts on Main gallery is open seven days a week - www.artsonmaingallery.ca

VISITING TOPSY FARMS

-Sharen English

I found myself on the way to Topsy Farms.

I look forward to seeing Sally Bowen's smiling face and experiencing her happy personae.

Ian is a very interesting fellow too.

They are both very learned.

I buy some soap, garlic that Kyle (their younger son) grew, and an olive coloured blanket for a single bed.

One of their dogs is loose and running down the road with a wood stick attached to a chain around its neck. The dog seems happy.

The land beside the Jenney's house has the beginnings of a wooden structure on it. I wonder who is building what.

It is a cold December day, but it is sunny.

I feel happy.

I see Jocelyne Leyton walking quickly down Front Road.

I stop my car, park it and join her for a walk and a chat. I get my exercise in. Jocelyne is intelligent, kind and a

positive person.
 I get back in my car, drop off the wine bottle and two pop cans I have at Freda's house and I hear Sting bark at me. I love Sting.
 I see Doug Lamb beginning his walk.
 I walk a bit with him.
 I decide that I like the island when I see a horse next to Freda's house.
 I see sheep at the Allen/Ritchie Farm.
 Toronto is not like this.
 I could not walk with two friends by chance in T.O.
 I could not see horses and cows and sheep in T.O.
 Perhaps you are sick of hearing about how lovely Amherst Island is.
 Perhaps you are not.

THANK YOU NOTES

Friends, family and neighbours rallied to prop me up practically and emotionally when I broke my knee. I'm

grateful for all phone calls and cards, for Mikey running for help and Anne driving me to the hospital when family was unavailable, and for visits, and outings, and loans of crutches, cane, walker, and good messages.

Thanks to all.
 Sally Bowen

WANTED

Kayak
 Seeking to purchase (or borrow!) basic single or double kayak for weekenders to use during the summer season.
 Contact Mary Kay 613.634.9772

Looking for Old Wooden Windows

If you happen to have any old wood framed windows with glass still intact I would love to take them off your hands. Would prefer 6, 4 or 2 pane windows with glass still intact.

Please contact at Karen Fleming at 613-389-9869



Replacement of the Amherst Island Beacon – March 2014

Photo by Jacob Murray

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COUNCIL REPORT FOR APRIL 3RD

-Chris Kennedy

All members of Council attended. The meeting was called to order, and the minutes of last month's meeting adopted.

On March 14th Council had met in special session to meet with the petitioners for the Miller drain who were concerned about the delay in the appeal. To summarize, the costs are charged usually to the loser or the party that withdraws. The case can be taken to the next higher court

if one party appeals. No new evidence can be introduced at the appeal. It is merely a review of previously presented evidence. The probable reason for the delay is that the courts are clogged, but every effort will be made to expedite matters. More details can be seen in the minutes at the Township office.

Rick Bedford asked for agreement in principle to sever part of his property. The portion retained will be very much smaller than that allowed by the zoning bylaw. In a recorded vote, Larry Fleming, Chester Tugwell and Ian Murray were in favour of the severance, Norman Allison and Ted Welbanks against.

The building inspector presented his report. The Reeve pointed out to Ed Chadband that the Reeve would not look at the plans for a residence until the Health Department had approved a septic system permit. Three permits were granted, to Topsy Farms for a workshop, to M.T.C. for an extension to the compression building on the Stella dock, and to Bruce Caughey Sr. for some siding.

The Reeve outlined his activities for the past month. He had attended three drainage meetings. He had met the School Board to try to reduce the School Board levy. Part of the high cost is that the provincial grants to the School Board are only paid when the income tax is collected so in the first part of the year, \$100,000 in interest has to be paid on bridging loans. Teachers are a major expense for the School Board.

The Township is still fighting over berthage fees for the ferry. I forget which round this is.

The Council starts negotiations with the union on May 2nd for a new contract. The Reeve, Ted Welbanks and Diane Pearce will represent the Township.

Present wages range from a Captain at \$25,000 to a Deckhand at \$15,800, with temporary help at \$8.60 per hour. Toilets will be placed on the docks again, and an attempt made to keep them cleaner.

Under roads, the Road Superintendent's salary was paired to that of a senior deckhand.

Diane Gavlas attended while the moving of the library was discussed. The Library Board is not in favour of it, as it does not fit in with their policy guidelines. People may use the Council Chambers as a reading room when the Council isn't using them, but it may not be heated. Council said they would consider the library when improvements to the Council building are decided on.

There will be a short Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (C.P.R.) course held on Friday evening, May 11th, and a longer session the next day. Interested people should contact Rick Tait at 389-3444. Council will pay for firemen to attend if the Workmen's Compensation Board won't.

Council decided to erect a garbage proof fence along the east side of the dump.

The Recreation Committee will hold the annual spring dance on May 19th. Tickets - \$15.00 per couple. Because alcohol will be served, minors cannot attend.

The changes in the electoral boundaries for provincial elections were considered. We will be joined to Prince Edward County. There will be a discussion of the matter at the Kingston Court House on May 7th if anyone is interested in attending.

Repairs and alterations to the streetlights in Stella are to be done.

Council then went into closed session to discuss, among other things, the Council's position for the upcoming ferry union negotiations. . . . When Council is in closed session, the press (me) is not allowed to attend, but Council announces to the public its conclusions and resolutions at the end of the closed session.

Shortly after 11 p.m., Council adjourned.

COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES UPDATE – April 12, 1984

Cemetery: Henry Hitchins; A. Bruce Caughey, Secretary ; W. Bruce Caughey; Earle Tugwell; James Neilson; Brian Ward; Chester Tugwell.

Sheep Evaluators: Ralph Wemp; Christopher Kennedy; Neil Babcock (substitute).

Committee of Adjustment: David Vrooman; Heather Welbanks; Jacqueline Sylvester.

Ferry Committee: Eldon Willard; Ted Welbanks; Diane Pearce; Norman Allison, Manager.

Roads: Ian Murray; Chester Tugwell.

Finance: Ted Welbanks; Ian Murray.

Recreation: Chester Tugwell; Heather Welbanks, Sec.; Elizabeth Silver; Barbara Wemp; Betty Wemp; Jack Forester; Darrell Miller; Richard Bedford; Larry Fleming; Jack Kerr; Doug Shurtliffe.

Fence Viewers: Art Ackerman; Lloyd Clare; Garry Hitchins.

Pound Keepers: Topsy Farms.

Sanitation Parks & Property: Larry Fleming; Chester Tugwell.

Fire Protection: Larry Fleming; Ted Welbanks

AMHERST ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL NEWS March-April

-Leah Murray, Donnie Miller

The month of March was really busy, and April promises to be even more so. March 5-9 was exam week for the Senior room. The entire week of March 12-19 was the Spring Break. We all had fun. Unfortunately, April Fool's Day occurred on a Sunday, so no tricks were played at school. Watch out, 1985!

On March 19th, Mr. Flanigan broke his left leg playing hockey. He has a lengthy cast and is recovering rapidly.

The Student's Council held a rummage sale on March 27th. They raised \$21.48 which will be donated to the Kidney Foundation.

On the 27th, Kit Chubb, owner of the Avian Care Research Foundation (A "Bird Hospital") visited the island. She brought along a snowy owl which she banded and released. Then the junior room took apart pellets (the indigestible parts of an owl's diet). The seniors saw a film about the Foundation. Thanks for a great day, Kit! (By the way, the event was even worthy of a column in the Whig!)

After school, Rick Tait and Mrs. McDonald are holding classes for the senior room. Last term we did soccer, volleyball and basketball, while we are currently doing gymnastics. It's lots of fun and good practice.

Thank you, Rick and Mrs. McDonald!

I.S.L.E. Annual "Fun Night"

Thanks to the many people of all ages who turned out for an evening of Euchre and Bingo at I.S.L.E.'s now annual "Fun Night".

Here is a list of our many winners:

Euchre:

1st Place- Men's - David Horth

1st Place for ladies was a tie between Karen McGinn and Mrs. Minerva Drumgoole. Mrs. Drumgoole won the tie breaking draw.

Consolation prizes for lowest scores went to Bill Bustard for the men and Mrs. Myrtle Veech for the ladies.

Bingo prizes went to:

Game #1 - Steven Viau, 2 - Steven Ward and Bill Neill

3 - Rick Welbanks, 4 - Jamie Miller, 5 - Monte Neill

6 - Steven Ward and Tom Mille, 7 - Beatrice Wemp

8 - Diane Gavlas, 9 - Steven Ward, 10 - Jamie Miller

11 - Jesse Yule, 12 - Noreen Welbanks, 13 - Jean Tugwell

14 - Steven Viau

Thanks again to everyone who came out!

LIBRARY NEWS

- Diane Gavlas

A reminder of the Loyalist Diary by Russell Waller on April 30th, 8 P.M. at the School.

Acting in period dress as a great-great-great-great grandfather (Sam Wyatt), Mr. Waller reads the diary of his daughter tracing family experiences during bitter days in 1783.

Mr. Waller's acting career dates back 35 years. This 40 minute presentation is well worth coming out for and I hope to see many faces as I'm sure Mr. Waller will too.

AT THE MUSEUM

- Randi Kennedy

The Loyal Americans, a bicentennial exhibition assembled and circulated by the Canadian War Museum to commemorate the contribution of the military Loyalists to Canada, will be at the County Museum (97 Thomas Street, Napanee) during the month of April.

The Loyal Americans were those men and women who supported the royal cause. Some did so because they had been taught to "Fear God and Honour the King." Others were motivated by a genuine belief in the superiority of British institutions and the wisdom of preserving the "Unity of the Empire". Still others were persuaded to follow charismatic Loyalist leaders like Sir John Johnson in the Mohawk Valley of Upper New York."

".....Although raised initially for local defence, the demands of war soon necessitated their use in areas far from home. The British recognized that "the assistance of the loyal inhabitants (was) essential to the success of all operations within the land.

Re: Bicentennial Project

Those of you who attended the Amherst Island exhibition last year at the County Museum can affirm that the staff produces an exceptional quality of displays, photographic work, historical documentation and restoration. Those of you who have met or worked with Jane Foster or Sue Madden and the rest of the staff, know how interested they are in Amherst Island, and how keen they have been to involve the Island people in the Museum. Their presentation of Daniel Fowler and Shirley Miller, two Island artists, along with the quilts of Amherst Island, was beautifully executed and many people went back two or three times to see it.

This Museum is extremely valuable to us all whether we've lived here all our lives or are just passing through. I urge everyone to support the Museum by visiting it and donating to the Bicentennial project.

OPEN BARN

Topsy Farms is having an "Open Barn" on Sunday April 15, April 22 and April 29 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at our barn at the west end of the Front Road. The spring lambing flock consists of over 300 ewes so there should be lots of lambs to see.

CARDS OF THANKS

A very sincere thank you to my relatives, friends and neighbours who have sent cards, visited me and brought treats while in hospital and since returning home. I have greatly appreciated the visits from the ACW, the PCW and the help and company from my Red Cross Homemaker, Thelma Howard.

Nessie Welbanks

A sincere thank you to all the firemen who came so quickly after a call for help. Thank you also to our friends and neighbours and to Dale, Irene, and Barbara who alerted the firemen.

Genevieve Fleming

I would like to express my thanks to the firemen and our neighbours who responded so quickly to my grass fire on April the second.

Syke Fleming

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our family, friends and neighbours for visits, cards and gifts to our new son Brennan Kilpatrick.

Your thoughtfulness was gratefully appreciated.

Laurene and Warren

The family of the late Lulu May Strain wish to express a very sincere thank you to all the relatives, friends and neighbours who sent flowers, cards, food and memorial donations to various charities at her passing.

A special thank you to Rev. E. Carne and Rev. C. Babcock for conducting the service, to Barbara Reid, Dorothy Kilpatrick, Rita Miller, Gayle Willard, Jean Tugwell, Dorothy and Karen McGinn and all the ladies who helped with and provided the lovely lunch; to her nephews Garry, Ross and Arthur Hitchins and James, Kevin and Stephen Glenn for acting as pallbearers.

Our sincere appreciation to the ambulance attendants and Napanee OPP officer who answered our call for their help and consideration, and to Graham A Stein for his guidance.

It has been comforting to realize that our Mother was so well liked and thought of by the island. All this kindness and thoughtfulness has eased a very trying time.

Thank you.

The Strain Family

I wish to express my thanks to the many friends for their cards and expressions of sympathy at the time of Lulu's death.

Anna Hitchins

The Island Beacon would like to express its appreciation for the work of the late Lulu Strain as treasurer and a very dedicated volunteer.

Lyn Fleming has volunteered to take over the treasurer duties as well as continue to process subscriptions.

Staff

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BEACON NOTES

-Don Tubb

I'm back, having survived a March where everyone in the whole world bought a house in Kingston. It seems like the little bump in the interest rates at the end of February made people realize that the good times were over for now. That prompted all those out there casually looking to jump in and find a house to buy. And, you know, despite the subsequent sharp rise in interest rates, my business hasn't dropped off much. Oh well, to tie this into the Beacon, I would like to thank everyone for covering for me. If Ian hadn't told you something was up, would you have known? I think that last month's issue was sort of a 1980's 'leaner and meaner' version but we'll return again to the 'post kinder-gentler' or 'the neo-sensitive awareness' version.

A lot of changes in the weather since last month when we were still gripped by winter. Yesterday (the 15th), we had an all-time high temperature of 23 degrees Centigrade. Today, as I write this, there is a solid mass of broken ice moving by the house at a quick walking speed. And, there is some open water coming!

It is amazing how powerful this ice is which at our end of the Island has tipped over the top concrete section of McMullen's shore well.

We have the usual cornucopia of literary delights for your discerning mind and so, without further ado, we begin with the Regular Council Report.

COUNCIL REPORT

April 5, 1994

- Don Tubb

Chris had just finished two very long hard days of shearing our sheep and so he reluctantly decided not to attend this meeting of Council. I, on the other hand had no excuse as good so I became the designated reporter for the evening.

All members of Council were present for this Regular Council meeting plus the Clerk-treasurer, this reporter, one delegation of two people, and one interested member of the public.

A delegation (Gary Filson and Susan Sedore) discussed with Council a possible zone exception for a piece of property they might have an interest in. After some general discussion, Council was not asked to take, nor took, any action on the matter.

As usual there was a review of the business arising from the minutes or unfinished business. Two items of interest were mentioned:

- First, the Back Beach agreement is still with the lawyers. The Clerk-treasurer was asked to find out its status (ie try to prompt them back into action if possible).

- Second, the Public Works Superintendent was given the go-ahead to get more electrical outlets installed in the library. This will make possible the installation of a computer for the library.

Council continues to exchange letters with the Coast Guard (Harbours and Ports) as to what we should be paying in berthage fees. They want more than we think fair.

Council has directed that a letter be written to the Coast Guard reminding them that it has been a longstanding policy for them not to break the ice in the channel. On March 28, an ice breaker went up the channel which could have made the ice pack unstable potentially blocking the ferry track. Our ferry could not have broken its way through the reported 2 1/2' thick ice.

A meeting is being set up between us, the Coast Guard and MTO to figure out who has jurisdiction over what on the boat. Apparently there are over-lapping authorities which Council would like to see straightened out.

On to the landfill site... Members of Council had a copy of the 'Synopsis Of The Supplementary Hydrogeological Investigation Of The Waste Disposal Site'. This document was not released to the public but was discussed in open session of Council so what follows is strictly hear-say having no documentation to refer. The Reeve took the lead in the discussion saying that there wasn't enough good information in the document to 'hang a cat', let alone for Council to make decisions. Other speakers were not as harsh but nothing positive was said about the document. A meeting with the consultants is being set up in the near future

Council then wrestled with the Infrastructure Program. One proposal was to apply for a grant to construct a new fire hall replacing the existing one which is falling down. A second option will be studied which is to construct a new fire hall on the new site of the Township Public Works building and the possibility

of selling the land now used in the village. In the end, the Township will apply for the full amount available

13!!

Wendy's a teenager!

Happy Birthday!!

Lots of Hugs & Kisses

Auntie Lyn

(Gotcha)

TOWNSHIP OF AMHERST ISLAND

-DonTubb

The Emergency Health Services Branch of the Ontario Government has sent us \$10,000 to be used to construct a heliport. There is an approved site across from the new Public Works Garage but apparently the Public Works Superintendent thinks it better to have the site nearer the equipment building. This will be investigated.

Amherst Island will, within 12 months, have the Enhanced 911 system in place. Council authorized the Reeve and Clerk to sign the agreement to get this done. This system will be able to automatically locate the source of a call thus making it far more effective during an emergency. The 1994 budget was approved with Amherst Island's share being \$1546.64 or 0.35% of the total. The enhanced system will be charged on your telephone bill (\$0.32 per line per month).

Two requests were made to Council for severance approval in principle. One was granted to Tom and Patricia deHaan for a severance on Part Lot 65, Concession 2. Ken Albertan's for Part Lot 23, Concession 1 was also granted. Both of these will be subject to the new lot levy as a condition of the approval in principle meaning 5% of the land value must be paid to the Township before the approval is official. This money will be used to reduce the expenses of the Back Beach.

Councillor Tugwell tried unsuccessfully to have the lot levy condition taken off the first severance application. She proposed an amendment to that end and, in a recorded vote, only she voted in favour with Councillors Caughey, Woods and Murray along with Reeve Willard voting against.

Having made her point - not approving of a lot levy- she did not propose an amendment on the second severance application.

A few other items briefly occupied Council's attention. Council finally adjourned at 10:50 p.m. some 1 1/2 hours longer than the Reeve predicted just before the meeting began.

25TH WEDDING CELEBRATION

You are invited to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of Bob and Bernadette Filson on May 7th, 1994 at the Landsdowne Community Building, Landsdowne.

Social time: 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Dance: 9:00 p.m. - 1:00 a.m.

Everyone Welcome

Best Wishes Only

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

March 22, 1994

- Don Tubb

All members of Council except Councillor Murray were present for this Special Meeting of Council. Also present were the Clerk-treasurer and this reporter.

A long resolution was passed which directed that a letter be written to the Minister of Transportation with a copy to MPP Gary Wilson. This letter was to point out the inequity of Amherst Islander ferry users paying more than the ferry users on Wolfe Island. Also the resolution pointed out that Council would be ready to start negotiations on our new ferry agreement once the fares were being charged on the Wolfe and Glenora runs.

A draft policy detailing 'progressive discipline' for Township employees was approved in principle. This will be sent to the Ferry Committee and the Public Works Superintendent for their consideration.

There was some discussion about the on-going bills from our Back Beach legal advisors. In the end, these bills will not be approved for payment without a separate resolution from Council. A recorded vote was called for which showed all members of Council to be in agreement with this position.

Due to the extreme weather conditions this winter, work on the Municipal Garage will not be completed on time. Haegele Enterprises and the Greer Galloway Group requested an extension to March 31 which was approved by Council.

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

- Annette

Best wishes to Ralph Wemp, recovering at home after a stay in the hospital, and to Coralie Marshall who had surgery last month. Best wishes also to Beth Forrester who is just over pneumonia; to June McGinn who broke her wrist; and to Bill Brown who was in hospital last month.

Also, missed last month was congratulations to Lindsay and Jean McIntyre on their 40th wedding anniversary. Earl and Helen Smith are also celebrating a 40th this month.

Congratulations to Roger and Susan (Hall) Banting on the birth of their second daughter, Meghan Emily in Toronto last month. Meghan is a fifth grandchild for Mary Hall.

Lots of snowbirds returning to the Island this month, welcome home to Ralph and Bea Wemp, and Don and Chris Gregg. I hear the rest are getting ready to come home.

AMHERST ISLAND WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

-Jean E. S. McIntyre

The March meeting was held at the home of Mrs. Irene Glenn. The meeting was open with the Ode and collect and the singing of O Canada. After a short business meeting the Election of Officers took place.

President Mrs Jean Baker

1st Vice Pres Mrs Jackie Sylvester

Secretary Mrs Leslie Gavlas

Treasurer Mrs Irene Glenn

The Installation of Officers was conducted by Mrs Anna Hitchins.

May Meeting:- May 18th at 8 p.m. at the home of Mrs Helen Lamb. Speaker:- The Dairy Educator (previously known as the Dairy Princess, and now either male or female.)

THE McMULLEN FAMILY OF AMHERST ISLAND

- Tom Sylvester

The John McMullen family was one of the founding households of the early community of Amherst Isle. Their family history includes a prince, a murderer, a spy, Island constables, land speculation, mortgage lenders, elopements and other details long forgotten.

The McMullen legacy and contribution to the community is the subject of a book I have nearly completed. It is fortunate the McMullen genealogy has been extensively researched by Catherine McMullen, Elizabeth V Schiller and H C Burleigh.

By 1794, John's family had settled on Lots 2, 3, 5, 6 and very likely 4, Concession I. His six generations of descendents have demonstrated a remarkable legacy of kinship. Many of the successive generations of Islanders, particularly within the "west end" of the Island, can be traced to John McMullen.

The John McMullen family were Roman Catholic Highland Scots. The early Kingston area records of Roman Catholics were meagre since the Anglican Church had an exclusive monopoly on marriages until 1798, and the Roman Catholic Church Registers only start circa 1813. The recorded marital relations of the McMullen family constitutes the only documentation of

the Roman Catholic early Island residents, including a significant portion of French Canadians.

Most historical generalizations of the early Amherst Isle residents and indeed, Loyalists, were plagued with inaccuracies. The John McMullen family were distinctive and yet their record confirmed some common experiences. Apparently, the McMullens were the first Island residents, of what later became a stream of emigrants, from County Down, Ireland.

John McMullen was a tenant of Sir John Johnson, in the Mohawk Valley, New York province on the eve of the American Revolution. The McMullens actively chose to settle as tenants on Amherst Island, yet received 1,600 acres from the Crown. John's sons treated these, and parcels bought, as a financial commodity. They demonstrated the brief success of the dynasty by building two magnificent stone houses and lending 12 mortgages totaling 1126 pounds. Still some In-laws found it was easier to acquire wealth through marriage, perhaps even murder.

The McMullen Islanders who chose to move on participated in the western migration to the American mid-west. Their destination was strongly influenced by McMullen kinship. Further, the "leavers" remembered they were Islanders and some McMullens returned to their community even generations later.

John McMullen's known 389 descendants & their spouses are identified and indexed. Beacon readers are encouraged to assist with additions or corrections to the genealogy.

THANK YOU NOTES

To the ladies of the PCW and ACW, our thanks for your kind expressions of sympathy to Betty, Jean and Leslie for their most enjoyable visits and everyone else who offered their kind condolences on the recent death of Peter's brother.

Joyce & Peter Morgan and Family

I wish to thank my family and friends for all the kindness extended to me while in hospital for hip joint replacement (not knee surgery as reported last month) and also all that has been done for me since coming home.

A special Thank You to the family for getting my house in good shape for me. Thanks for all the flowers, cards, gifts and visits from so many people. I really appreciate the visits from the Ladies of the A.C.W. and the P.C.W. and the lovely treats they brought.

I've done extremely well and its all because of all the wonderful help I have received from Doctors, Nurses, Therapists, V.O.N.'s, Homemakers, Family and Friends.

Nessie Welbanks

We would like to thank all the people who bought tickets on the vacation package. We were very fortunate to win it. We went to Las Vegas for a week. We stayed at the Imperial Palace on the Strip.

It was like stepping into another world. There was so much to see and do; beautiful hotels, casinos, and activities.

We did lots of walking and we went on two bus trips. One trip was to the California state line. There were two large hotels and casinos there connected by a monorail. The other trip was to Laughlin at the Arizona state line. It was a new resort lake and eight large hotels and casinos.

We even got up early. Ray was ready for the casinos at 6 a.m. (Usually he gets up a 9 a.m.). We won and lost all week, mostly lost.

We had a wonderful time and highly recommend the place. It was fascinating. We would love to go there again.

Ray & Zelma Koenders

MIXED SLOW PITCH LEAGUE

It is time again to start organizing for our new season of slow pitch softball.

Our league is a mixed league with ages starting from fourteen and is open to all people over that age. Last year we had three teams and played twice a week on Wednesday and Sunday nights at 8:00 p.m. We started with three teams last year and then switched to four and ran into trouble getting a team late in the season so we probably will start with three teams this year.

Again this year we will use last years team lists to form this years teams and add or delete as people indicate whether they want to play this year or not. New players: either sign your name to the list in Glenn's Store or phone Brian Ward at 389-5767. If you played last year but cannot play this year, please let me know as well.

BEACON AWARDS

The Lifetime Achievement Award goes to Marty McSorley who has made a career (or most of one) of being Wayne's big brother. It's only fitting that he assisted on Wayne's record-breaking goal. (Wayne still has a way to go for career goals - at least according to Gordie who counts his WHA and playoff goals too.)

A LETTER HOME

-Don Tubb

The big news is that ice went out on the 16th of this month after a very strong and steady wind down the Reach for at least a day. Up here at the Head, the ice was really moving - a fast walk. The sound of the waves returns is one of the nicest days of the year.

We've been busy on the farm having now finished the early lambing - that's the easy one as the ewes lambing are all old hands at this. It's the next lambing that is real work. Not only are there a lot more ewes to lamb but there are a lot of first-time lambers. These sheep are just as likely to get up after having their lambs and either run for the hills or not realize what they've done. There's lots of fun matching these mama's up with their babies. These sheep are fast, agile, built-low to the ground and with 4 wheel drive. I know I can go round and round the barn a few times before snaring them with the crook.

On a more general note... The roads are in fairly good condition this spring - at least a lot better than last when they had walls down the middle from the cars and trucks squishing up the soft dirt. Right now the paved part of the Front Road is really taking the worst beating with lots of pot holes. The Public Works Garage is finished and apparently Stuart will be holding an Open Garage some time. It looks pretty good from the outside but it's awful wind-swept without many trees around.

I don't remember if it was mentioned elsewhere but the Fire Department got a great deal on a used pumper a couple months ago. They seem pleased which is good. It's really nice to see the Department continue to haul itself up by its own boot straps. Since I've been here it's become a Department which can do more than save the building next door. That's not to put down the people on it before but when the equipment is one pickup truck with 3 - 45 gallon cans as a tanker and 14 buckets, it's hard to have a lot of confidence in their capacity.

Also on the good news front, there have been several ships into the cement plant - two in one day. This, was before the ice was out which was unusual. This may speak well for the continuing end to the recession.

Most of the hawks and owls seemed to have moved on but there was one with a catch down on the ice the other day. It seemed to be just guarding it as there was a gull in the wings waiting.

Finally, I have been promising to get back to the telephone list and I fully intended to get it into this issue. But (you knew there was a 'but' didn't you) when I went to get it from my data base, I at first couldn't even get into the program and then couldn't find any sign of the files. After half an hour, I managed to locate them but cannot get the program to recognize them. I am at a complete loss now and don't know what to do.

This isn't just the telephone list but also the subscriber list, plus a file with all my business clients. Having to reassemble these files is a very, very, very daunting thought - that's got to be a week's work.

You know that sinking feeling in the pit of your stomach...

Well I've got to go and make some phone calls about the computer and put this baby to bed. Bye for now. Before I do, I leave you with an actual picture on my computer repair person - he knows how to deal with technology.

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HELP STILL NEEDED We need the following items for the Lennox and Addington S.P.C.A. Used towels and linens, paper towels and cleaning supplies, pet food, kitty litter, dog and cat toys are always in demand, Canadian Tire coupons and pop cans. There is a large container in my porch for the pop cans and any other items can be left in my porch as well. Thank you for helping to support our animal shelter. Further information needed? Call Freda Youell - 613 384-4135.

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Ice Dog - photo by Matt Herrington

Spring is about transition and reflection. We move from the cold and ice to the renewal of the planet. With that theme, we present two articles, which span that change.

ICE FISHING

- Sally with Keith and Dan

Commercial Fishermen have fished through the ice in winter for generations. Howard Welbanks used to do so regularly. But Keith Miller says there was no tradition at all for ice fishing just for the pleasure of it.

When he and Dan Simpson went out this February, it was the first time he'd ever tried it. After a couple of more outings he's been hooked. They plan to go out sooner and more often next year.

The first trip they just walked out on the ice from Dan's, carrying their stuff in a pail (which then served as a seat) and an ice auger, big enough to drill one hole each - about 6" in diameter. (They weren't after fat fish.) Dan just had a sturdy stick with line; Keith had a short rod and reel. The next couple of trips they took Keith's Kubota, an enclosed 2 seater which could act as a windbreak too. The

next time they tried off Fish Point - a good outing but no fish. Their third trip was off the lighthouse, towards the cement plant and they were luckier.

Dan said the ice off Fish Point was about 30" thick; off the Beacon lighthouse the ice was about 18" deep over about 68 ft of water.

Rick Bedford's window supplier was out fishing and he gave them some useful help. He had a fish finder with a screen - they could actually see the fish approaching the bait. He also had an app on his phone that could determine the depth of the water. Apparently one lowers the bait until it touches the mud bottom, then raise it a little. He was using live minnows as bait. Two lake trout were reeled in, and made a fine meal the same day.

Each man was deeply enthused about the experience. Dan said "need to do something in winter. It was so beautiful to see the birds out, experience stuff." Keith said that he really enjoyed the companionship; the entirely new perspective of the Island from the ice with no leaves on trees blocking the view.

They both came in "as high as kites".



Keith and Dan, Ice Fishing – photo by Sherri Jensen

Earth Day will be coming on 22 Apr 2014: a suitable time for year to celebrate and think about the planet we call home – and which sustains us. Find below an article which readers of Sally's Blog might find familiar.

REUSE ... OR RIDICULOUS?

Our parents were kids during the Depression, and the examples they set fit right in to today's philosophy of recycle and reuse and don't waste.



Jake – loaded for recycling deliver

Sometimes that's on a fairly large scale. Our men were offered the job of taking down the two story grain elevator in Emerald in exchange for the wood. Since it had been built flat board on flat board (instead of edge on edge) we gleaned something like six MILES of mainly useable boards. We re-floored the second story of our barn, and then built a very useful shearing area. Mezzanines were built which immediately filled with 'stuff that will come in useful someday'. The shearing area is storage for our Wool Shed products 360 days/year, and emptied for those frantic 5 days of shearing.

Our boys learned basic carpentry skills using the broken or too-short pieces building tree forts and platforms.

When Jake rebuilt the barn this spring, there was not one significant purchase needed. Virtually everything was scrounged.

A portable saw mill was hired to cut our own logs into boards for our use. The off-cuts make effective compost containment, turning dead plants, weeds and roots into great compost to feed the garden.

A horse-drawn milk wagon became a tow-able warm-up shack for construction (with an old pizza oven for warmth). Parked in our back yard it was used as a duck brooder, a boys' clubhouse, then rebuilt into a sauna with

scrounged cedar wood lining and another reused wood stove.



Recycled wood for compost enclosure

Our Wool Shed was once a milk/ice house, then was farm storage, candle production shed, ATV shed, boys' music room, and now a neat little outlet shop.



The very familiar Wool Shed

Our water wagon was once the body of a neighbour's dump truck. (We haul a huge tank by tractor to the field where it is needed.)

One loader tractor is an amalgamation of two elderly tractors. We are now scavenging an ATV and another tractor for parts.

Scrap bits of metal have been stored for years, and then found to be just the thing for some patch job, welded on. The pole for our Purple Martin house was made out of a grain auger tube.



But sometimes we get ridiculous. Each bale of yarn for the Wool Shed is wrapped with double thicknesses of string. For some years, we've painstakingly saved those, wrapping them in a knot-filled ball, used for tying newspapers, tomato plants, bundling herbs etc.

Our Depression-era parents would be proud.

Happy Earth Day to us all.



Second Concession, west from Stella Forty Foot

Photo by Brian Little

