

The Pioneer is published by the River John Community Action Society. It is a not-for-profit community-owned paper.

The Great Dock Rescue

by Joan MacLeod (with help from Cody Joudrie and Mary Beth Sutherland)

At 9 a.m. on the morning of September 24th, in the midst of Hurricane Fiona, our high tide was nine feet higher than usual. The sea surge caused the water to come to within a few feet of the bottom of the bridge over the John River. Roger's Landing was flooded.

Thanks to Fraser T Crane Services Limited, Co-



The water nearly up to the bottom of the bridge



Roger's Landing flooded



Brad Hayman and Cody Joudrie checking the docks during the storm

dy Joudrie, Chair of the River John Community Action Society and the Roger's Landing Committee and his group of volunteers had previously ensured that the floating docks had been removed from the water, and,

he thought, safely stored on high ground. Unfortunately the sea surge dislodged the docks and floated them a half a kilometre up the river where they became lodged in Perrin Creek, above Mary Beth and David Sutherland's property. When the water receded, the docks were away



The docks lodged in Perrin Creek

above the usual high tide line and too large and heavy for a team of men to move. So then the hunt was on to find an excavator, unfortunately few people were interested, so that's when Cody called his right-hand man, Steve Daling.

Cody and his crew again came to the rescue, with the use of an excavator from Van Veld Construction. They freed the docks from the mud and debris, floated them safely back down to Roger's Landing, towing them with his Sea-doo. The tide and the weather had to perfectly align for it to work and it did. And the best news of all is that the

docks sustained no damage! This operation was spearheaded by our hero, Cody, and all his hard-working friends. Cody would also like to thank Van Veld Construction as they donated all the excavation work for the rescue. They had also donated a load of rock to fix the slipway at Roger's Landing earlier in the year.



The excavator on the slipway lifting the docks back (this photo shows the height of the water at normal high tide)

Cody would like to thank all the volunteers this year for all their help and hard work to keep Roger's Landing going: Mike George, Steve Daling, Stewart Joudrie, Brandon Daling, Brad Hayman, Mike Weatherby, Patrick Mulholland, Josh Mulholland, Allan Redmond, Randy Redmond, Jaret Langille, Patrick Heighton, Blair Falconer, Josh Lucas, Terry Heighton and Donald MacGregor.



The excavator lifting the docks back into the water



Back in position for the winter

River John Remembers





Bride & Groom : Carlin Hart & John Heighton
 Bride's parents: Ron & Jori Hart
 Groom's parents: George & Gayle Heighton
 Date: August 20th, 2022
 Location: River John



Bride and Groom: Sara Dawn Langille and Dustin Langille
 Bride's Parents: Cynthia Bigney and Kenny Langille
 Groom's Parents: Tammy & Jimmy Langille
 Date: June 18th, 2022
 Location: Royal Canadian Legion, River John



Bride & Groom: Gillian McKenzie and Cody Joudrie
 Bride's parents: Kevin and Dianne McKenzie
 Groom's parents: Dad: Stewart Joudrie, Step Mom: Cindy Langille
 Date: July 16, 2022
 Location: River John



Proud parents Abbie Heighton and Bert MacDonald of Cape John are happy to announce the birth of their son Waylon Ernest MacDonald. Born on August 18, 2022. Waylon weighed 8 lb 11 oz. Grandparents are George and Gayle Heighton, River John, and Bert and Vickie MacDonald, Scotch Hill. Waylon's big sister Audrey is very happy regarding his arrival.



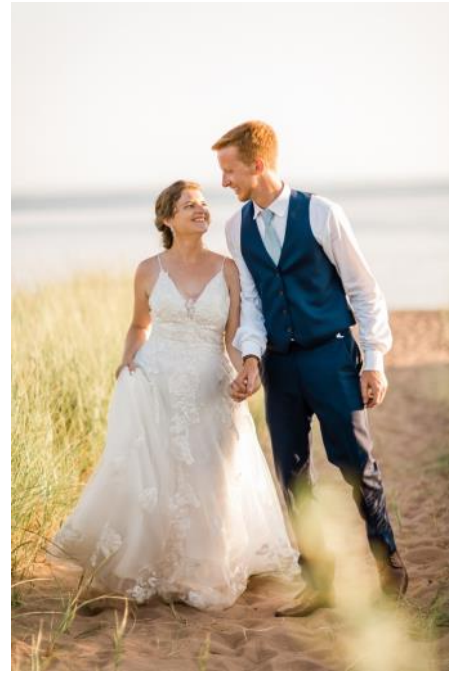
Bride and Groom: Leigha Acott and Joel Langille
 Bride's Parents: Dr. Phillip Acott and Wendy Acott
 Groom's Parents: Darren and Tammy Langille
 Date: July 30, 2022
 Location: Halifax, Nova Scotia



Bride & Groom: Julia Reid & Patrick Howell
 Bride's parents: Terry & Linda Reid (River John)
 Groom's parents: Randy & Margaret Howell (Waterloo, On)
 Date: August 12th, 2022
 Location: Pictou Lodge Beach Resort



Baby: Larkin Harlan Reid
 Born: October 3, 2022
 Weight: 7 lb 14 oz.
 Parents: Jay Reid and Arlette Langille
 Grandparents: Jack and Janet Reid; Valarie Langille and the late Harold (Har) Langille (Lan) (i.e. Harlan)
 Adored by brothers Jack (Junior) and Crewe



Bride & Groom: Ariel Ingemansen and Liam Cameron
 Bride's parents: Robert and Belinda Ingemansen
 Groom's parents : Mac and Patsi Cameron
 Date: July 23rd, 2022
 Location: Seafoam, NS



Baby: Forrest Wayne Manning
 Born: July 13, 2022
 Weight: 9 lbs 5 oz
 Parents: Ashley Langille & Robert Manning
 Grandparents: Sheila Ives & Dexter Langille; Late Nanny Lynn Manning ♥; Darrell Manning & Christina Hawboldt
 Big sister: Georgina-Lynn Manning



Hon. Karla MacFarlane
 MLA, Pictou West

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NS Government Services:

Health Information & Services...811
 Public Health...902-752-5151
 Need a Family Doctor Registry...855-893-1930
 Seniors Pharmacare...800-305-5026
 NS Road Conditions...511

Community Resources:

Public Works...844-696-7737
 NS Power Outage Information...877-428-6004
 Chignecto-Regional Central Centre for Education...800-770-0008
 Housing NS Switchboard...902-755-5065
 Senior's Outreach, Mary MacLellan...902-752-8400

Help Lines:

Mental Health Crisis Line...888-429-8167
 Kids Help Phone...800-668-6868
 Addictions Services...800-922-1122

Obituary of Sadie Craig

by Irma Legrow

Sarah Elliott Craig, 99, of River John, passed away in Shiretown Nursing Home, Pictou, in the early hours of Wednesday, July 27, 2022. Born March 28, 1923, at the family farm on Cape John, she was the eldest daughter of the late George and Hazel (Langille) MacGregor. She was known as "Sadie" to distinguish her from her cherished grandmother, Sarah Elliott MacGregor.

The focus of Sadie's life was family, church and community. Perhaps her Scottish heritage, of which she was so proud, provided her the ability to care for a large family while at the same time keeping the books balanced for Craig Fuels. Sadie appears in several "five generation" family photos. There were always enough hugs, sugar cookies and love to go around as the family grew.

Sadie filled many positions in her church and enthusiastically volunteered in several community organizations. As a dedicated member of Frazee Rebekah Lodge for over 75 years, she received the Decoration of Chivalry. She was a founding member of the River John Festival Days, an annual event that continues to this day.

Sadie is survived by her children James (Nancy), Pictou; Irma (Murray) LeGrow, River John; Brian (Maurita), Scotch Hill; Sandy (Alice), Lyons Brook; Elizabeth (David) Murray, Tatamagouche Mountain, and Heather (Sandy) Peddie, Ontario; also daughter-in-law Betty Craig, a multitude of grandchildren, sister Kathleen Baillie and brother-in-law Earl Johnson. She was predeceased by her husband Donald Craig, twin daughters and a son in infancy, son Douglas Craig, grandson Trevor Murray, brothers James and Robert MacGregor and sisters Grace Swantee, Christine Johnson, and Marie Park.

Her funeral service was held in Salem United Church on Monday, August 1st at 1:00 with Reverend Connie McNama-



ra officiating. Burial followed in Forest Hill Cemetery, Denmark.

Mum's family is grateful for the love, respect and support she received from so many people. Some of these are VON, Home Care and special friend and helper Linda Merton, the staff at Valley View Villa, Stellarton and, most recently, Shiretown Nursing Home.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to Salem United Church or a charity of choice.



Bride & Groom: Janie Craig and Greg Baillie

Bride's parents: Jamie and Liz Craig
Groom's parents: Paul Baillie and Sharon Murray. Date: August 20, 2022
Location: Dundee Golf Resort, Cape Breton



Baby: Kayleigh Brown
Born: August 31st 2022
Weight: 8 lbs 1.2 oz
Parents: Karen Mattatall and Jason Brown
Grandparents: Margaret Brown, River John; Herb and Kathryn Mattatall, Scotsburn
Big brother: Jayden Brown



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"Helping You Join Your Hands and Hearts"

Kyle Oliver

Mary Tothill, Cape John, is proud to announce the promotion of her grandson, Kyle Oliver, of Hampden, Maine, to Vice-President of Service and Strategic Initiatives for CUSO Home Lending, Maine, USA.

Kyle's academic achievements include Bachelor of Business Administration from the University of Southern Maine and a Master of Business Administration, Finance and Organizational Leadership from Southern New Hampshire University. He is actively pursuing a doctorate in business administration from Liberty University. Kyle is the son of Mary's daughter, Sheila, and spent his first 12 years in Stellarton before his family moved to Maine.



To our Wonderful Readers:

We really love to receive your articles and pictures, and appreciate the work you put into contributing to our newspaper. Thank you, all!

We would like to make a few small requests when you send these to us, which will make life a little easier for the little band of volunteers that puts the paper together:

(1) Please submit articles and photos (if any) all together at the same time. Articles should be in Word or WordPerfect format if possible (.docx, .doc, .wpd), and photos in .jpg format. Do not embed photos into the text document.

Caption(s) for photo(s) should be added below the article. Check the spelling of names in photos, we cannot make changes once the article is proof-read and sent to layout.

(2) Type the complete article, (including the title,) using a plain, basic font - no bold, large fonts, superscript, indents, etc. These have to be removed by proofer before going to layout. Our layout department will make your article look good anyway.

(3) Re-read your article before sending, for spelling or name errors.

(4) Keep on sending your articles, we love them, so do our readers!

Thank you.

Pioneer Editorial Team

Celebration of Life for Elaine Falconer (May 8, 1958 - April 29, 2022)

Over 200 family and friends gathered at the River John Fire Hall on October 22, 2022, to honour Elaine. The evening was as unique and special as Elaine was. Her family and friends honoured her with heartfelt speeches, poems, toasts and, of course, laughter and tears. At Elaine's request, her favourite band, Derailed, provided the music for the dance which followed. Her family, friends and community were elated and proud to learn of plans for her legacy. Elaine was a highly valued member of the "Cape to Cape" committee of the Pictou County Trails Association. She participated in all aspects of their activities. They have decided to create a Memorial Park in her memory at the summit of Fitzpatrick Mountain, a beautiful spot which overlooks most of Pictou County. Donations have been received from many hikers and, in the spring, it is their hope to complete this park. It will be available to hikers, snowshoers, motorized vehicle users or even automobile drivers looking for a beautiful picnic spot. As well, a donor who wishes to remain anonymous, has made a sizable donation in her name and this will be used to build a shelter on the Trail for overnight hikers. In Elaine's words, "Right on!"

Dire Straits

by John Crichton,
October, 2021

We apologize to you our children,
For the legacy we've left behind,
For the state of the world as it is today,
We watched it all happen, were not blind
From the plastic in the oceans and the garbage on land,
To the hole in our stratosphere's shield,
They are issues we did not understand,
Inexcusable stewardship revealed.

We have left you now in dire straits.

We plundered the seas for their riches,
To feed an insatiable demand,
From the carnage we caused we never paused,
As species disappeared out of hand.
We set fire to the world using oil and coal
And paid no heed to the harm,
Considering naught and very little thought,
Fouling air water and land.

Leaving you now in dire straits.

So my prayer now for you my children,
Is that you will discover in time
Answers to these problems,
Focus on solutions not the crime.
The situation is one of survival,
For you and your children too,
And I understand this apology,
Is of little comfort to you.

Leaving you now in dire straits.

The clock is ticking now and you're in dire straits.

Jeannie Langille's 75th Birthday

by Cindy Langille

We celebrated Jean Langille's 75th Birthday on Thanksgiving Day, October 10th, with good food and great company. Many friends dropped by in the afternoon with well wishes and wonderful conversation. We ended the day with a delicious meal made with love and shared with family. Many who weren't able to attend sent their birthday blessings from afar.

Happy Birthday Mom! We love you!



L-R Front row: William Cripps, Jean Langille, George Cripps

Middle Row: Joan Redmond, Cindy Langille, Chelsey Joudrie, Margaret Cripps

Back Row: Charlotte Cripps, MaryBeth Sutherland, Holly Langille, Janice Miller, Marge MacKenzie



Cindy (Daughter), Jeannie and Dwayne (son) Langille

River John 4-H Club

by Christine Heighton

The River John Club is in the process of registering members for another year. We welcome all between the ages of 7 and 21 years old as of January 1st, 2023. So far, we have 9 members, 6 leaders and 6 volunteers to begin our 2022-23 year. Projects include beef, crafts, scrapbooking, light horse, draft horse, market steer, great outdoors, goat, heritage, photography, woodworking, vet science and rabbit just to name a few.

General meetings are the first Monday evening at 7 pm at St. George's Church Hall in River John. Registration fee for the program is \$40 for the year, due on December 1st. Projects to start in December and carry on throughout the year. If you have any questions or would like more information about a great youth program, please email myself, Christine Heighton at heightonsc@gmail.com or Shar MacLean at sjolly-mac@gmail.com

Community Announcements



**Longest Night - Blue Christmas
Ecumenical Service**

at Salem United Church
Thursday December 22 at 7:00 p.m.

Please join us
for a time of reflection
on the longest night of the year,
as we seek to find hope
in the light that is to come,
and as we enjoy special music
by local musicians.

Come enjoy
St. John's Anglican Christmas Tea

Where: St. John's Anglican Hall
1917 Highway 6, River John

When: Wednesday, December 7, 2022

Time: 11:30 - 1:30

Price: \$10:00
sandwiches, sweets, pickles, cheese
tea, coffee, mulled cider
small take-home favour

Featuring harp music by Heather Forbes

Everyone welcome!



FIONA RESPONSE AND HELP CONTACTS

GOVERNMENT OF NOVA SCOTIA

Visit this website for more information on all these assistance options:

<https://novascotia.ca/hurricane-fiona-support/>

1. \$ 100 to cover spoiled food after 48 hours with no power.

2. Up to \$ 250 for tree removal.

3a. Those receiving the Seniors Care Grant of \$ 750 can receive an additional \$ 250 to help with repairs.

3b. The N.S. Seniors Care Grant helps low-income seniors with the cost of household services (like lawn care, snow removal, grocery delivery, transportation, small home repairs and phone service) and healthcare services (like physiotherapy and mental health support). Grants are up to \$500 for each household. You can also apply for a one-time Home Heating Grant of \$250.

3c. Eligibility - To qualify for the Seniors Care Grant, you need to be 65 or older by 31 March 2023 and meet all of the following criteria:

- have a household net income of \$37,500 or less
- live in your own home or apartment
- have your name on the property title, Land Titles Initiative Certificate of Claim
- have paid (or that you will pay) for household and healthcare services and home heating between 1 June 2022 and 31 March 2023 or residential lease agreement
- You need to apply by 31 March 2023 (only 1 person per household can apply).

3d. Property Tax Rebate for Seniors - When you apply for the Property Tax Rebate for Seniors, you can also opt in to receive the Seniors Care Grant. If you opt in through the Property Tax Rebate for Seniors application process, you don't need to apply again for the Seniors Care Grant (your grant is processed automatically). The Department of Service Nova Scotia and Internal Services also contacts you to see if you want to apply for a one-time Home Heating Grant.

3. \$150 for all current income assistance recipients including the Disability Support Program – no application needed.

4. People receiving the Essentials Allowance contact their housing support worker.

5. Residential property owners and tenants can apply for uninsured losses and damages online or call 211.

MUNICIPALITY OF PICTOU COUNTY

Call 902-485-4311

MLA PICTOU WEST

Karla MacFarlane - Office-Pictou

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Card of Thanks

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the "Read By The Sea" organization for choosing the River John Old School for their Authors Reception.

The donation was very much appreciated. Thank you!

Nick, Shelly and Leonard Bigney

Christmas Variety Show

A Christmas Variety Show will take place at the Betty Murray Theatre at the Grace Jollimore Centre in Tatamagouche.

Date: Saturday, December 17th at 7:00 p.m.

Theme: Christmas Around the World. Musical and other acts from around the region will perform. A trivia contest for all ages will be held. We are asking for monetary donations to the Neighbours Helping Neighbours Tatamagouche Food Bank .

CHRISTMAS CRAFT SALE

River John Old School Storage and Rental are having a Christmas Craft Sale

Sunday December 4, 2022 from 3 p.m. - 7 p.m.

Christmas Special: \$10.00 a table for vendors.

Free admission! Hot dogs, hamburgers and drinks for sale. Something for everyone, check it out, lots of gift ideas.

Thank You, River John

The Royal Canadian Legion, River John Branch #108, wishes to thank all the participants, helpers and those who donated to the operation of the River John Comfort Centre for eleven days following Hurricane Fiona. Particular mention goes out to the United Way of Pictou County, the River John Fire Hall, and Winmill Electric. The individual volunteers and anonymous donors are too many to mention here, but should know that it was their assistance that made it all happen. Thank you.

THANK YOU

River John Old School Storage and Rental would like to take this opportunity to let folks know we completed the installation of our large 20 x 16 ft. door for storage of larger size items.

Special thanks to our "roofer" friend Alley for all the repairs he made after Fiona, also as the year comes to an end, we appreciate all the support and encouragement from our community and visitors for another successful year.

Thank you, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Shelly Bigney

PICTOU COUNTY

MENTAL WELLNESS AND RESILIENCE TOOLKIT

WELLNESS IS WITHIN
YOUR REACH!

The Pictou County Mental Wellness and Resilience toolkit provides tools, guided reflections, and information that can be used to support ourselves and others.

TO LEARN MORE CONTACT:
Lynn Langille at
Lynn.Langille2@nshealth.ca

This guide is free and available in digital and hardcopy format at libraries throughout Pictou County.

The Pictou County Mental Wellness Roundtable has recently completed a Mental Wellness & Resilience Toolkit and Resource Guide for use by organizations in Pictou County. The development of the Toolkit and Resource Guide was funded by the Aberdeen Health Foundation. The resources were developed in collaboration with the Canadian Mental Health Association (NS Office), the Pictou West and Central/East Pictou Community Health Boards and community-based organizations across the County. The Toolkit was piloted with front line service agencies to ensure its relevance and usefulness. The Toolkit can be found at all libraries in Pictou County and will soon be available online.

The Family Business of Fishing

Reprinted by permission from the
Atlantic Fisherman, Friday, September 2, 1988

**by Greg Pritchard,
Cape John, N.S.**

The family that fishes together...

In some circles fishermen's wives who hold a commercial license and go in the boat with their husbands are considered the exception. This is not so in Cape John, along Nova Scotia's Northumberland shore, where no less than five of that community's 12 fishing boats are manned (staffed) by husband-and-wife teams. In some cases, other family members also serve on the crew.

One such family is Irving Dwyer, his wife Mary, and their 22-year-old son, David. Their 42 ft. Cape Islander "Amet Light" is presently fishing groundfish, but fishes lobster in season.

Mary, who holds a commercial fishing license, is a native of Waterside, Pictou County, and a fisherman's daughter. She first got into fishing after her husband suffered an injury and needed assistance.

She said she was seasick at first, but soon got over it and has never suffered since. When lobstering, she helps bait the traps and measures lobsters to make sure they go the size. When the "Amet Light" is ground fishing, Mary pitches in to provide a helping hand where she can.

"We don't think it is unusual here in Cape John for the women to work alongside their husbands," she modestly admits. Both Mary and her husband see it as a natural extension of their everyday life.

"Families of fishermen are nearly always talking fishing and usually the wife is deeply involved one way or another, so why not on the boat too?" said Irving, a veteran Cape John fisherman.

And having son David with them on the boat means that the family spends a lot of time together



Mary, Irving and David

and they see that as an advantage over many other families who go their separate ways to work each morning.

Being a licensed fisherman (the DFO makes no distinction based on sex) doesn't mean Mary escapes housework. "I've still got to do that. If I don't, nobody else will," she muses.

Working together means the whole family has a full understanding of the economics of fishing. "We all know when we are having a good or bad year, you don't have to tell anybody. During the good years we have to remember that next year it might not be so good and we have to be prepared," Irving says.

Report from Helping Hand Lodge #34 and Frazee Rebekah Lodge #33

by Jacob Leegwater

Firstly, winners of our lobster draw were M. Jay, Halifax, Sadie Tattrie, Tatamagouche and Donna Misner, River John. Thanks to everyone who bought tickets. During the summer break we served breakfast at River John Festival Days on July 28th.

Getting back in September we had visitors from Eastern Star Lodge #1 and Union Lodge #30. We also had our last night of nominations for officers for the coming term. Due to Hurricane Fiona, we were unable to meet for two weeks. At our October 10th meeting we had our installation led by Deputy District Grand Master, Bro. Mike MacKenzie. Installed were: Bro. Brian Emoff, Noble Grand; Bro. Patrick Heighton, Vice Grand; Bro. Jacob Leegwater, Recording Secretary; Bro. Steven Craib, Financial Secretary; Bro. Earl Johnson, Treasurer.

On September 22nd, we had an Odd Fellows funeral service for our oldest lodge member, Bro. Earl Holt. He was a 78-year member.

Due to Hurricane Fiona, our lodge building suffered some damage, which will be looked after. The Hamilton Cemetery suffered some damage also due to downed trees and our team quickly cleared this up.

The Odd Fellows are holding their 4th annual winter coat drive. Good quality, used winter coats of all sizes can be dropped off weekdays 12 - 4 p.m. until December 2nd. The Odd Fellows meet every Monday evening at 7:30 p.m.

The Rebekahs have been gifted a hand-made table to sell tickets on. This was made and donated by Raymond MacKenzie, a friend of the Odd Fellows. Ticket sales will be at Sobeys on November 5, 12, 19 and 26 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. or you can buy tickets from any Rebekah.

On October 28th, Sister Connie MacRae will lead the installation team to install our officers: Bro. Jacob Leegwater, Noble Grand; Bro. Dan Ferguson, Vice Grand; Sister Greta Langille, Recording Secretary; Sister Agnes Murray, Financial Secretary; Sister Marie Langille, Treasurer. Due to Remembrance Day, the Rebekahs will not be meeting on November 11th. Normally, meetings are on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of every month at 2 p.m.

Odd Fellows are still looking for any scrap metal and recyclables. Call Willis Langille at 902-897-3883.

Until next time, stay safe.

A New Coordinator for River John Meals on Wheels

by Melanie Cote

I would like to take a minute to introduce myself as I have taken over the volunteer position as Coordinator for River John Meals on Wheels. I'd also like to thank Joanne Wilkins for her many years of dedication to Meals on Wheels. We greatly appreciate the River John Legion for allowing us to use their facilities each week to prepare these nutritious meals, thank you! I am a mother, wife, and entrepreneur who loves to feed people. My husband and I decided four years ago to move our little family to the River John area to simplify life and of course to keep a better eye on my parents, Doddie and Lillian Mackenzie. During our spare time, you will most likely find us outside working at our little hobby farm or enjoying a hike in the woods. Recently I have found a love for the new sport in town, pickleball, which I hope you will give a try.

I am full of pride and gratitude as I write this. We are all witness to an extraordinary time of concern and uncertainty as River John, along with much of the Maritimes, continues to respond to the aftermath of Hurricane Fiona while still dealing with COVID-19. If there is one source of reassurance during these challenging times, it's the incredible way in which the community has come together, with people reaching out and caring for each other. That strong community spirit is at the core of everything we do at Meals on Wheels.

This year's River John Meals on Wheels program began October 19th, 2022, with meals being delivered Wednesdays at noon and will run until the end of March, 2023. I am thrilled to welcome back our cook, Sandra Patriquin, and the many volunteer drivers. If you are interested in volunteering to deliver meals please do not hesitate to reach out to me. Everyone involved in Meals on Wheels is doing their absolute very best to deliver nutritious hot meals to community members of the program. Currently, we are at our capacity of 40 meals per week but if you know of anyone who would like to be on our wait list please do not hesitate to reach out to me. In order to keep the program running next year I will be applying for funding through several organizations such as For The Good of Our Community Fund, the Wellness Fund, the Culture and Heritage Fund, Positive Aging for Seniors Fund and the United Way.

If you have any feedback or comments, please let me know either by email at riverjohn-mealsonwheels@gmail.com or by phone at (902) 899-6750.

John Hawkins IT Consulting COMPUTER SERVICE & REPAIR



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River John Legion Branch 108

by Mike Topley

Well, Fiona certainly hit us hard on September 24th but in true north shore fashion everyone stepped up. The Legion comfort centre opened immediately and provided water, power and a place to gather, compare notes and mobilize. The kitchen was the de facto command post, with over 400 meals prepared and then delivered by a small army of cooks, helpers and deliverers. And the 400 doesn't count for the many sandwiches, bowls of soup, coffee and sweets served on-site. A sincere "Well done" to Melanie Cote & Joanne Wilkins for really getting the initial meals and delivery service up and running. But let's backup; none of this would have happened had not the River John Fire Department offered their generator to provide full power to the site and helped connect the generator to our panel. Then there were gasoline runs, grocery runs, supply runs and delivery runs. Legion members and friends took turns on duty, being sure we were there first thing to provide coffee for Nova Scotia Power crews, and last thing to close up. In total, we had over 230 signed-in visitors during the ten days of operation. Many thanks to all who made them feel welcome. Finally, there were monetary donations small and large; too many to list here but mention and thanks must be made of donations from the United Way of Pictou County and Winmill Electric.

Once things settled down, the Legion got busy



Minister Sean Fraser speaking to the audience at the Remembrance Day banquet for River John Legion.

preparing for our Remembrance Day ceremony and dinner. The 11 o'clock ceremony was held under clear skies and warm weather. Many turned out to participate and lay wreaths, following which a service was held at the St George's Presbyterian Church, led by Reverend Connie McNamara. The evening saw The Honourable Sean Fraser MP, address a full house at our annual Remembrance Day banquet. Minister Fraser spoke of childhood memories with his grandfather at Remembrance Day, and of his respect for veterans, especially those who suffer from conflict trauma. He ended by reminding us of our responsibility to safeguard the freedoms they fought for... "Lest We Forget."

River John Community Action Society

by Mike George

The River John Community Action Society would like to thank everyone who donated to the Elaine Falconer Memorial Fund. A suitable memorial will be dedicated in 2023. Cards and names of people who donated will be forwarded to the family. We would also like to thank everyone who attended the Celebration of Life for Elaine, the many people of River John and area, friends and family. It was a wonderful tribute to Elaine.

The Action Society was busy this summer looking after Bissell Park, the washroom, staining the deck, repairing the benches, repairing the docks, and maintaining the community sign which is updated regularly with events. A special thanks to each of you who helped with the repairs and maintenance.

We also worked on a new sign for Roger's Landing, upgrading the slipway for low tide, installing and removing the docks, and recovering them after the hurricane.

The Action Society also made donations to several organizations in the River John area.

A student was hired to help with chores within the community, mowing grass, weeding, children's day camp, etc.

This year we will be working with the Lions Club and the Recreation Committee to decorate Bissell Park for Christmas. This will take place on Saturday, November 26th at 12 p.m. Everyone is welcome to help. Bring the kids, and let them help decorate. Tree lighting is Sunday 27th at 5 p.m.

The Action Society meets every 2nd Tuesday at 7 p.m. at the Lions Den in River John.

All community and surrounding area residents are welcome to attend. Your input would be greatly appreciated.

"With Respect ..."

by Rev Connie McNamara

It seems like it has been a long time since I wrote for "The Pioneer," while in reality it was only June. So, what has happened this past summer and early fall?

Well, I officiated at more weddings than I ever have before in the 25 years since my ordination - a whopping 15 of them, and while none of them were for the good people of River John and West Branch, they were joyous events in which I was blessed to participate. And sadly, I have also done more end of life services this year than ever before - I guess this has been a COVID catch up year!

On the River John West Branch Pastoral Charge, we saw Salem United Church take part in the "Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia - Virtual Doors Open for Churches" event. Many people "checked us out" online where we posted a bit about our church history and shared several photos of our beautiful sanctuary. We are scheduled to be part of the in-person event in the summer of 2023. On Sunday, October 9th, both River John West Branch PC and Three Harbours PC celebrated a combined World Communion and Thanksgiving worship service because Hurricane Fiona cancelled it the week before. We were all together in West Branch UC, and we shared not only in Communion and thanksgiving, but also in a wonderful time of food and fellowship following the service. Salem UC came through the encounter with Hurricane Fiona a bit the worse for wear with damage to our ramp and foyer and basement; so on November 11th the good people of St. George's Presbyterian Church graciously let Salem UC host the Remembrance Day service in their building.

We are still meeting in-person for worship at West Branch UC every second Sunday and at Salem UC each Sunday at 11.00 a.m., with lower attendance than usual, yet we are continuing to plan and persevere as we anticipate better days ahead, and to that end we have a couple of Christmas events on the horizon. We are holding a "Christmas Carol Sing" on Sunday November 27th at 7.00 p.m. with lots of favourite carols to be sung, special music by guest musicians, and cookies and cider to be enjoyed following the event. On Thursday December 22nd at 7.00 p.m. Salem UC will host an ecumenical "Longest Night - Blue Christmas Service" to assist with comfort and hope in a time of year when not everyone finds themselves in a joyous place. And finally, on December 24th, Christmas Eve worship will happen at Salem UC at 6.00 p.m. with special music and a re-telling of the age-old Christmas story.

May the coming months bring you peace as we continue to move forward in faith.

Blessings,

Connie McNamara therevconnie@gmail.com
902-890-9120



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Seasonal RV Campground
Located between River John and Tatamagouche

North Shore Senior Citizens Association

by John Morrell

Founded in 1973, the North Shore Senior Citizens Association has developed programs and social activities for seniors from the Tri-county area. We meet on the second Thursday of each month at Roach Hall at the Hills of New Annan, Tatamagouche.

Plans for the New Year include a CPR Training Course on Saturday, January 14, as well as monthly Nutritional Lunch Workshops at Roach Hall on the third Thursday of each month.

River John Residents include Kathy Morrell as the current President, John Morrell as Secretary and Margie Langille, Membership Chairperson. Contact any of us for more information about joining.

**NORTH SHORE
SENIOR
CITIZENS
ASSOCIATION**



Enjoying refreshments Jacob Leegwater and John and Florence Craib

River John Junior Rippers T-Ball

by Jay Reid

As we sit on the cusp of winter in Nova Scotia we change our tires, we dress in layers and we turn our collective attention to hockey. It's an inevitable side effect of our changing seasons. The hot hey-day of summer has almost disappeared from our rear view mirror, dwarfed by images of hurricanes and power trucks. But something happened this past summer. Something good. Something cool. Something pure. The T-Ball kids got to play a game. Our Jr Rippers. Not just one game, either. Two games. A double-header. Away from home. The little leaguers got to utilize skills they'd accumulated from two summers of - let's be honest - mediocre T-ball instruction. They got to play against kids they've never met in a place they've never been. So many firsts were being achieved by these kids all at once, together with their parents. If I wasn't so preoccupied with sizing up the uniforms, the swings and the size of the opposition, I might've shed a proud little tear for our youth. But there's no crying in baseball, and WE CAME HERE TO WIN! So let me tell you how we did that, sorta.

Despite my previous competitive outcry, we actually went there to have fun. And by there, I mean Stellarton. A little background before I expound on the fabulous exploits of the River John Junior Rippers. We ventured to Stellarton to play two games against their Red and Black teams, respectively. The children who participated ranged in age from 7-11 years. Our team consisted of athletes, animals and highly-qualified butterfly chasers. But on this day, they were all baseball players. They took to the field as a team, united in a singular focus. Fun. The other coaches and I went into this scenario with zero expectations of winning. We focused on making sure this was a fun learning experience for everyone involved. However, as the afternoon progressed, our kids proved that winning was definitely a goal within their reach.

The first game pitted the Rippers against Team Red. As their team warmed up with brand new bats and a limitless supply of baseballs, I momentarily was overcome with the feeling that we might be in over our heads. Then I glanced over at our kids warming up; despite the fact that three or four were hanging dangerously high off the dugout fence, a few were kicking rocks and another was aimlessly wandering the outfield, I liked our chances.

The game began with our kids at bat. Coach Pat pitched to our Jr. Rippers. He hung a couple of sliders and whistled a few fastballs high, but he found his groove and our kids started to pounce on his juicy change up. All of the kids swung the bat beautifully. Some got hits, some got out and others benefitted from the opposition's inaccurate arms, and reached base on errors. Bases were reached, plays were made and our kids proved themselves offensively capable baseball players. Lewis smashed an opposite field double that made everyone smile. And then Shayden got to bat. Most of the kids were mildly nervous but able to enjoy the moment for what it was. Shayden looked different. He was more than mildly nervous. He looked scared. But he nestled himself into the batter's box and swung mightily at the first pitch. The resounding "bop" that came from his bat was auditory confirmation that he connected perfectly. The ball went further than any of the kids had hit all summer. He blasted a double to centerfield and you could watch his nervous energy melt away as he bounced on second base. His luminous smile repre-

sented every reason we volunteer as coaches for these kids.

The game was a seesaw battle that was evenly fought until the last out. Keeping us in the game were Johnny and Lewis, and more importantly, Beckett. The defensive clinic these kids put on had the coaches on the other team asking me what drills I did at home to create such polished infielders. I just smiled because I knew I had very little to do with what was unfolding. Their talent was of their own doing, and they were now able to put it on display.



Cooper Allan in action against the Stellarton Red Team.

Lewis and Johnny played shortstop with shades of Derek Jeter, and Beckett stood his ground at first, snagging every throw that came into his orbit. Like his father before him, he used his long reach and huge glove to make sure most of the Stellarton Red players didn't get a chance to advance to first base with a hit. With the game on the line in the last inning, Johnny stretched out just beyond the pitcher's mound and snagged a hot grounder.

He spun and fired a laser to Beckett, who caught the ball with a backhanded ease that astounds me to this day. OUT! Game over. Coach Kelly reviewed the game sheet and the end result was - A TIE! We tied our first ball game. The kids celebrated and the parents cheered. Things were looking up.

Next up. Team Black. A few notes on sizing up our newest opposition. First of all, these kids were bigger, and their bats looked newer. They might've chewed tobacco. I think some of the kids had sideburns, and a few drove themselves to the game. I quietly inquired about their age group but was assured none were over twelve years old. This was definitely a "Mighty Ducks vs. Iceland" kind of scenario, (look it up.) Secondly, I think each kid on the team had two bats of their own. It seemed like hundreds of bats lined the fence. We had three-and-a-half bats. Lastly, I looked over at their dugout to greet their coach. It was none other than former Defence Minister, Peter MacKay! Surely this man's organizational capabilities as a coach trumped my own? His team must be a well-oiled machine, militarily trained in the art of baseball. Were they going to pummel us?

I eventually snapped out of my intimidated trance and embraced the fact that this was all just for fun again. We started the game as daylight slowly began to fade, and I again was surprised by our team's poise, focus and talent. They executed routine plays in the infield with ease. They hit the ball well. The outfield proved to be a different animal as our kids' attention spans work on different wavelengths out there. Something to work on next year.

Shayden got another monster hit. Johnny and Lewis did their best Roberto Alomar impressions, and Beckett only got better as the day wore on. Kinsley played stellar third base. Our smallest, youngest player, Holden, didn't look out of place as he swung for the fences and popped a few deep into the infield. Base running got a little confusing by times, but those are teachable moments in an otherwise fluid ballgame.



T Ball Kids Age7-11

Left to Right Kneeling - Keil Sutherland, Kaleb Henderson, Holden Bishop-Thornhill, Nora MacDonald, Carter Langille, Faith Mulholland and Kinslee Carmichael.

Left to Right Standing - Beckett Noel, Trey Mulholland, Coach Jay Reid, Malachi Lucas on shoulders, Cooper Allan, Lewis MacDonald, Ashton Chisholm, Nora Lowden, Coach Pat Mulholland

Missing from photo: Lily Allan, Shayden Freeborn, Bentley Herring, Rayna Fraser-Shepherd and Johnny Wood.

The Honorable Peter MacKay's squad proved to be a worthy adversary, but our kids had persevered, leading by one run in the bottom of the fifth. This should have been the end of the game, but with a small amount of daylight left, all the kids agreed that to play one more inning would be great. That would be our great undoing as a few minor gaffs in the infield saw Team Black take the lead and finish the game one run ahead of us. So technically, we won, and they won. You couldn't have written a better ending to our inaugural baseball game. Everyone left happy, and the coaches and I all raised our eyebrows to each other, signaling, "Hey, these kids are pretty damn good."

For these kids, something happened this past summer. Something good. Something, hopefully, they will all remember fondly for as long as they can.

Also important, the younger kids had a fun, eventful T-ball year. No away games but they participated in stations, listened better than the year before and are looking forward to their own double headers in the summers to come.

It's important to highlight those who helped make this program possible. T Ball is organized under the umbrella of River John Recreation Association and is played on our ball field on River John Station Road. The Jr. Rippers would love to thank: Will-Kare Paving, Caldera Distillery, What's For Dinner, River John Legion, Fulton Pharmacy, Cohen's Cones, The Odd Fellows, Meh Yap and Anchor Park for their generous donations of time, facilities and money. Without their helping hands the total success of this program would not be possible. Many thanks, and we'll see you next season!



T ball kids ages 3-6

Lying down, Coach Jay Reid

Sitting/kneeling - Brynn Lochead, Isabel Cripps, Isaac Langille, Holden "Jose" Consecro, Everleigh Farrell, Emma Hines, Ambrose Heighton, Jasmine Langille, Brody Chisholm, Snow Scotthorn, Caleb Chisholm.

Left to right front row - Noah Ingram, Cole Withrow, Emmett Langille, Waylon MacKinnon, Finnegan Mosso, Keegan Clowater, Colt Adams, Arthur "Roberto" Alomar.

Middle row left to right - Bowen Withrow, Jaelyn Peters, Michael Jennings.

Very back row - MJ Weatherby, Bellamy Morris, Rylan Algarra, Isaiah Lucas, Bryce Clowater, Georgina Allan, Blakeleigh Henderson, Nora MacDonald, Brody Allan, George Cripps, Belle Reid, William Cripps, Nash Lochead, Weston Lochead.

Missing - Sawyer Langille, Georgina Allan, Nathan Cotter, Olivia Dooley, Roland Mattinson, Nessa Watts.

River John Fire Department Report

by Santina Weatherby,
Public Relations Representative

The cooler weather has arrived. After an eventful September and October spent recovering from Hurricane Fiona, we hope our community has been able to enjoy the weather before winter begins.

On Halloween several of our members spent the evening handing out treats, and also replacement smoke detector batteries. As we all know, November brings the “fall back” time change, and also presents a good reminder to change smoke detector batteries.

Special thanks to all those who continue to support the Fire Fighters 50/50 fundraising draws. Recent fundraising contributions have made the installation of four dry hydrants in our local fire coverage area. Dry hydrants provide more seamless and timely access to designated water sources in our community, resulting in our crews being able to draft water more quickly than with the standard portable pump technique.

We are continually looking to enhance our emergency response abilities, and will be targeting fundraising efforts to contribute to the investment in an “off-road” rescue unit in the future.

We are hopeful everyone will have a safe and warm winter season.

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River John & District Lions Club

by Anne Patriquin

Hello everyone, we hope you had a great summer and fall. We have been busy like everyone else cleaning up after Fiona.

We would like to congratulate the River John Community Support Society on their new building. They started building it and it will be a great asset to the River John and area community.

We passed out treats on Halloween night again this year and were visited by 84 trick-or-treaters. It was a lot of fun and we enjoy being involved in our community.

We are now looking at helping decorate Bissell Park for Christmas. Anyone interested in helping is welcome to join us on December 3rd.

We would like to thank everyone for your support by dropping off your recyclables at our club.

Also, thank you for supporting our weekly Radio Bingo.

Our calendars will be coming out soon with a sincere thank-you to all our advertisers.

Sunrise Trail 4-H Club 2021-2022

by Bonnie Allan

Sunrise Trail 4-H Club began the 2021-2022 4-H year on Monday October 11, 2021, at 7 p.m. at the Toney River Community Hall.

Cloverbuds are 7 and 8 year olds by January 1st, 2022 and we had 3 of them, Nora Demetre, Lily Allan & Sadie MacLennan. Their special project allows them to learn about some of the projects available in the 4-H program. At the end of the year, July 25th, they displayed what they had learned all year in a 2'x 2' decorated box.

Twenty members completed numerous projects that the club offers as well as doing some on their own such as Alpaca. Some of the projects available with Sunrise Trail includes: Livestock - rabbit, goat, sheep, dairy, beef, light horse, mini horse & draft horse. Life Skills - Crafts, Great Outdoors, Building Blocks, Cake Decorating, Photography, Small Engines, Scrapbooking, Welding & Woodworking.

Throughout the year, Members & Cloverbuds participated in a Halloween party, a Christmas social, a coasting party, a beach party, Breakfast on the Verandah, Woodsmen and Tug of War. Every Member and Cloverbud did a speech or demonstration. Seven of our Members went to Camp Rankin as campers, one Member went as a Junior Counsellor. The campers each had to pay \$100 and the rest of the cost (\$250) was covered by the club. They had a fantastic time!

Members, Cloverbuds and Leaders are encouraged to participate at the county Level and were looking forward to attending Pro Show.

Throughout the year, everyone sold tickets on scallops and lobsters which were very generously donated by fishermen in the Sunrise Trail communities, and also sold baked beans and brown bread. Thank you to all who support the Club, Leaders & Members. Without teamwork, the Members & Cloverbuds would not be so successful. Parents are also part of the team.

Registration for the 2022-2023 4-H year for the Sunrise Trail 4-H Club took place on Monday, November 14th at the Toney River Community Hall at 7 p.m. If you are 7 or 8 years old, come be a Cloverbud. We have 2 Leaders who are planning to introduce the Cloverbuds to most of the projects that Sunrise Trail 4-H Club has to offer. If you are at least 9 years old by January 1st, 2023, we'd love to have you join the 4-H program & the Sunrise Trail 4-H Club. We offer: Dairy/Beef/Sheep/Goat/Rabbit/Cavy/Light Horse/Mini Horse/Poultry/Waterfowl. If you don't live on a farm but would like to learn about any of these animals or birds, please join us & we will do our best to help you find animals to work with. If animals or birds aren't your thing, how about cake decorating; Lego (Building Blocks); crafts; foods (learn how to cook/prepare food);welding; small engines; woodworking; Great Outdoors; Photography; First Aid; Heritage; Vet Science (Senior Members). We also have a Woodsman team as the year goes on and there is always Tug of War. Bring a pen to the meeting & your Health Card. Registration is \$40 per member & due by December 1st. (There is financial assistance available to those who may need it, we don't want anyone to miss out on the 4-H program because of cost.) If you have any questions, please email me at allansea49@gmail.com or talk to any of our 4-H families.

Pickleball at the Fire Hall

The River John Pickleball Club offered its first pickleball session at the River John Fire Hall on October 27th. Thirty-five individuals have come out to play in the first three weeks with twenty-one of those new to the sport. With a quick lesson and a few drills everyone is playing the game, learning to keep score, and staying out of the kitchen. And signing up to play again! The consensus is that it is a great physical activity and a huge amount of fun. If you haven't tried pickleball yet, come on down to the Fire Hall and give it a try. Balls and paddles are provided, just show up with non-marking footwear, \$2 for the River John Fire Department and we will have you playing the fastest growing sport in North America in no time. You can find the schedule and details on how to sign up by joining the River John Pickleball Club on Facebook, <https://m.facebook.com/groups/riverjohnpickleball>



Derek Andrews, Margaret Barry, Cindy Morrison, Gerald Barry



Colleen Flemming, Ann McKim

Timbits Soccer



George Cripps, William Cripps, Nathan Cotter, Marlee Feix, Lina Feix, Rylan Algarra, MJ Weatherby, Everett Mattausch, Isaac Langille, Nash Lothead, Weston Lothead-Mingo, Brynn Lothead, Noah Ingram, Jaelyn Peters, Belle Reid, Olivia Dooley.

St. David's 200th Anniversary

St. David's Congregation had its beginning in the homes of the early settlers. In 1817, Rev. Donald Allan Fraser from Scotland arrived in Pictou to establish Kirk Congregations in the County and in 1822, his ministry was extended to include Toney River where the Cape John Congregation was organized.

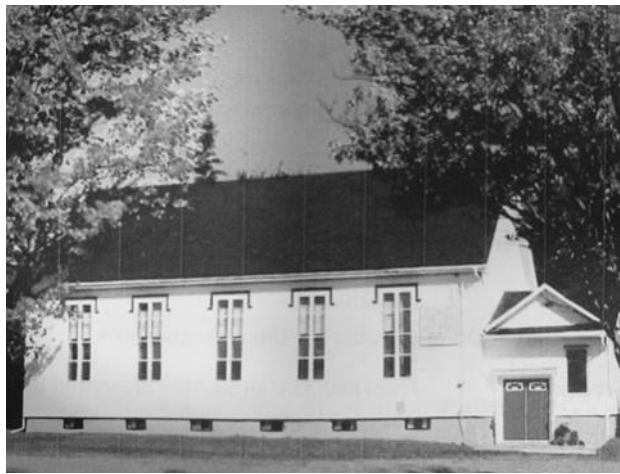
From its beginning, this Congregation was associated with St. John's Kirk, Scotsburn and lasted until 1907.

The first church was built around 1834 with Rev. Roderick MacAulay as its minister and was destroyed in a forest fire in 1852. The present church building was started in 1853, completed in 1854, and continues to serve the people here.

Rev. John Goodwin ministered here from 1864 until he resigned in 1868 to sail with his wife and three children to the Hebrides as the first Foreign Missionary to be sent out by the Kirk Synod to the Lower Provinces, a trip which lasted 6 months. This was the same place that the Presbyterian Church of Canada had sent Dr. John Geddie 22 years earlier. The climate proved unfavourable to Rev. Goodwin's health, so they returned in 1878 and settled on Prince Edward Island to carry on his ministry there.

Among other ministers who served was Rev. James William Fraser, from 1870-1907 for 37 years. In Rev. John Murray's book "The Scotsburn Congregation," Its History, Professional Men, Etc., he wrote that Rev. Fraser was a good preacher, a diligent pastor, a wise counselor and his long pastorate was one of harmony and peace.

In 1908, Cape John church entered the Presbyterian Church of Canada and joined with Melville Church, Caribou River, and this union lasted till 1925. In 1913, our church name was changed to St. David's, Cape John. In 1925, St. David's, Cape John, joined with St. George's, River John. In 1929, our church became St. David's, Toney River.



St David's Presbyterian Church, Toney River

Many improvements have been made through the years at St. David's, making it possible to have various events.

A small cemetery, no longer used, is located at the back of the church and maintained by St. David's. The earliest known burial is 1829.

You can see there is a long tradition of Scottish Presbyterianism at St. David's. As the community grew on the strength of newcomers to Canada, so did it also grow in spiritual strength in the service of God.

Welcome to our humble, simple church. We hope you will enjoy your encounter with God every time you come to visit.

Sunday morning worship is in the traditional style, but often includes a time for the young people to lead and participate.

A church service was held on October 23, 2022 at 7 p.m. to celebrate the 200 years with special music and speakers.

Presbyterian Church News

by Rev Enjei Roni

We are drawing closer to the end of the year and we have experienced different challenges, yet God has still come through for us. We are still alive and can go about our activities. May God grant us strength to continue to live life with hope, joy, peace and the love of God that calls us to love God and love our neighbours as ourselves. We are now getting into the season of advent and we have the following activities.

St. David's

On October 23rd, St. David's Presbyterian Church, Toney River, celebrated the church's 200th anniversary. They created a book of memories which tells the story of how far they've come. It was a glorious celebration and people came from Caribou, Pictou, Trenton, Brookland, Scotsburn, Bigney, Welsford, River John, Melville as well as Toney River. Different people participated in the anniversary and everyone had a lovely time.

During the prelude to the anniversary service, the choir presented a piece of music called "Old Country Church Hymnal Medley." The song lyrics are meaningful to St. David's and the choir enjoyed singing the song which included choruses from four of their long-time favourites: "Shall We Gather at the River," "In the Sweet By and By," "Leaning on the Everlasting Arms" and "Redeemed."

Important Dates:

Nov 20th: 4-H Worship Service

Nov 27th: 1st Sunday in Advent –

Communion Service 9:30 a.m.

Dec 24th: Christmas Eve Service at 6.30 p.m.

Dec 25th: Christmas Day Worship Service at 9.30 a.m.

St. George's

We all went through a challenging time when we experienced Hurricane Fiona. We are grateful for all who showed up to the Legion to help out. We are especially grateful for the Sunrise Youth Group of St. George's who did a week of volunteer childcare at the Legion for those who needed help with the kids.

Important Dates:

Advent Bible Studies: Wednesdays, November 23rd, Nov. 30th, December 14th, December 21st at 7 p.m. in St. George's Presbyterian Church, River John.

November 27th: 1st Sunday in Advent – Communion Service 11 a.m.

Tuesday November 29th at 5 p.m.: The Sunrise Youth Group of St. George's Presbyterian Church, River John is hosting a family dinner in the church hall. Anyone interested can contact either Cindy Langille or Melanie Cote. It would be lovely to know how many people are coming so we can prepare adequately. Please pre-book.

December 24th: Christmas Eve Service at 5pm.

December 25th: Christmas Day Worship Service at 11 a.m.

Rev Roni: 782-440-3772,
e-mail

rev.enjeironi@yahoo.com

Book Review of "The Salt Path" by Raynor Winn

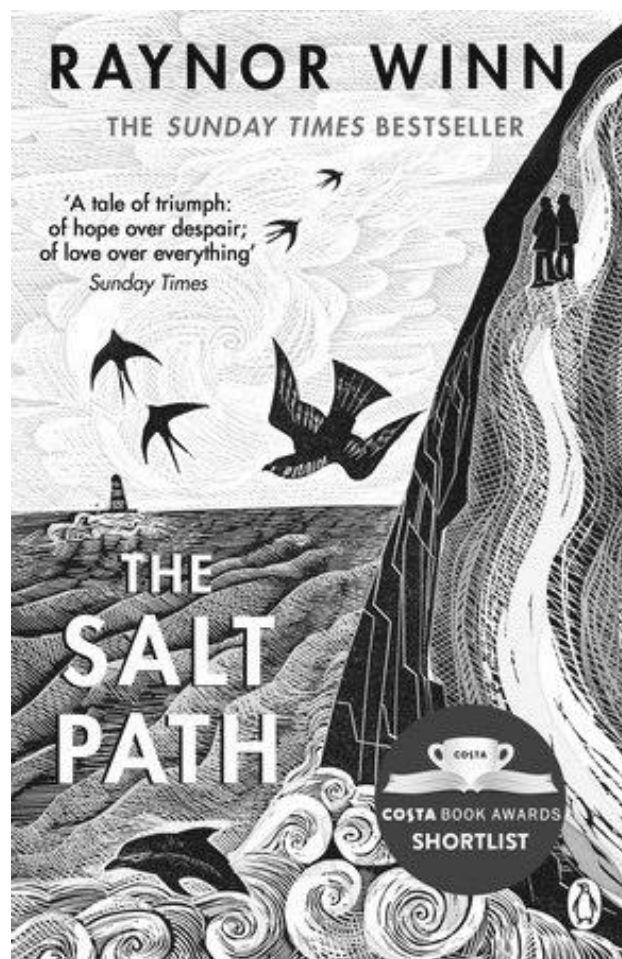
by Joan MacLeod

Written in 2017, this book is a memoir about how the author and her husband hiked 634 miles along the southern coast of England. They began their journey on a whim when they were suddenly made homeless through an investment gone wrong. They were not to blame, they had just trusted the wrong people and the courts failed them.

The couple impulsively chose this walk as they had nothing to lose, especially when Moth, Ray's husband was diagnosed with a degenerative brain condition. In the process of walking step by step, in all weather conditions, and living on a shoestring, with minimally adequate gear, they found new strength and indeed, themselves. The journey took them two summers and they gained a new appreciation of nature and a path forward as a couple to new adventures and experiences; for example, the author used the experience to become a writer.

What was fascinating to me was the way the couple described the reactions of fellow travellers when they variously told them they were able to do this trip because they had sold their house, or that they were homeless. They certainly experienced the stigma of being judged very differently. And along the way they met many homeless people living wild in south-west England and often banding together to help each other. Some of these people had jobs as farm workers, but had been evicted from their tithed cottages.

The book also describes the beautiful south-west coastline of Britain. It is an uplifting odyssey, which I found well worth reading. It compassionately pre-



sents the growing issue of homelessness. Published by Penguin, I am donating my copy to the River John Library so that others can enjoy the read as well.

What? Who?

by Beulah Wright

We were given a copy of the Pictou County Municipal Council List of officers for 1968. Not so very long ago, but quite interesting. It seems there were a great many residents of Districts 3 to 7 who were appointed certain tasks, but exactly what were their duties? Perhaps these tasks are no longer on the books of a municipality? A few of these are still current and quite self explanatory, such as Town Clerk, Presiding Officer for Municipal Elections and Deputy Presiding Officer. Others like Surveyor of Lumber and Bark, Stock and Cattle Reeves – not so familiar. However, a bit of research might explain some of the terms.

A Surveyor of Lumber and Bark would be required to develop survey plans for wooded areas, methods and procedures of legal surveys.

Fence Viewers would deal with disputes between land owners of line boundaries, for new or existing lines, and had the authority to make a decision on the line and describe the fence and materials.

Minutes and Proceedings of the Municipal Council of Pictou County, and List of Officers 1968 Appointed at January Term

Submitted by: Ian MacLean

DISTRICT NO. 3

Presiding officer for Municipal Elections: Lawrence Roberts, R.R. No. 4, River John

Deputy Presiding Officer: Mrs. Myrtle Langille, River John

Fence Viewers: Lawrence Roberts, R.R. No. 4, River John; Austin Patriquin, Everett Reid, R.R.No.1, River John

Stock and Cattle Reeves: Harold Allen, James Baillie, R.R. No. 4 River John; W.E. Gammon, R.R. No. 1, River John

Pound Keepers: Sydney MacLeod, Austin Patriquin, R.R. No.4, River John; Everett Reid, R.R.1, River John

Constables:

Surveyors of Lumber and Bark: Norman Brown, Allison Robinson, R.R. No.4, River John; Henry Baillie, R.R. 4, River John; Wilson Langille, River John, Ralph Allen, R.R. No. 1, River John.

Fire Wards: Allister MacKenzie, Aubrey Heighton, Seldon Heighton, Roland Zinck, River John.

Town Clerk: Allister MacKenzie, River John.

DISTRICT NO. 4

Presiding Officer for Municipality Elections: Mrs. Edward Langill, R.R. 2, River John.

Deputy Presiding Officers: Amos C. Tattrie, R.R. 3, River John.

Fence Viewers :George R. MacLean, R.R. 3, River John; James A. Murray, R.R.1, West Branch; Stanley Gratto, R.R.2, River John.

Stock and Cattle Reeves: Arthur G. Langill, Dwight Langill, R.R. 2; River John; Charles Joudrey, R.R. 3, River John.

Pound Keepers: Benvie Bigney, R.R. 2, River John; Harry Tattrie, R.R.3, River John.

Constables: Wallace MacNabb, River John; Dwight Langill, R.R. 2, River John.

Surveyors of Lumber and Bark: Arthur S. Langill, R.R. 2, River John; Chesley Haliburton, River John.

Fire Wards: Boyd MacKenzie, Carl MacLeod, Wallace MacNabb, River John.

Town Clerk: Ralph Langill, River John.

DISTRICT NO. 5

Presiding Officer for Municipal Election: Mrs. Carleton Byers, West Branch.

Deputy Presiding Officer: J. Charles MacIntosh, R.R.1, Scotsburn.

Fence Viewers: Donald Munroe, Murray Langille, Ben R. Bain, R.R. 1, Meadowville.

Stock and Cattle Reeves: D. R. Sutherland, J. R.

Stock and Cattle Reeves would make decisions on livestock in the community. The title "Reeve" means an elected official of the municipality.

A Pound Keeper was responsible for the establishment of a pound, for a dog or other animal, to collect fees and make decisions regarding animals seized because they were running at large.

Fire Wards dealt with a fire disaster, at a local level, prevention and safety, providing food and lodging and offering psychological care.

Constables were responsible for protecting the public. They could enforce municipal laws, testify in court and draw up legal documents such as affidavits, etc.

Since these officers were residents and neighbours in the rural communities, one wonders if sometimes their authority was contested and their decisions resented? Different times – different rules.

MacKenzie. R.R.1 Meadowville; Clarence Wall R.R.1, West Branch.

Pound Keepers: William Haviland, West Branch.

Constables: David Bezanson, West Branch.

Surveyors of Lumber and Bark: C.D. MacKay, Carleton Byers, West Branch; V.A. Langille, R.R.1 Meadowville; James M. Rae, R.R.1 Scotsburn.

Fire Wards: James H. MacKenzie, West Branch; Murray Campbell, R.R.1 West Branch; J.R. MacKenzie, R.R.1, Meadowville.

Town Clerk: James B. Ross, West Branch.

DISTRICT NO. 6

Presiding Officer for Municipal Election: Alex MacIntosh, R.R.2, Scotsburn

Deputy Presiding Officer: Murray MacCara, R.R.1, Scotsburn.

Fence Viewers: James Langille, R.R.1, Scotsburn ; Arthur Peckham, R.R.2, Scotsburn; Wilbur Chisholm, R.R.1, Scotsburn.

Stock and Cattle Reeves: William Forbes, R.R.1, Scotsburn; George Ross, R.R.2, Scotsburn; Milton MacKenzie, R.R.3, Scotsburn.

Pound Keepers: Forman MacCara, R.R.1, Scotsburn ; David Holmes, R.R.3, Scotsburn.

Constables: Lawrence Langille, R.R.1, Meadowville ; George MacKenzie, R.R.3, Scotsburn; Wilbur Chisholm, R.R.1, Scotsburn; Andrew Beckwith, R.R.2 Scotsburn.

Surveyors of Lumber and Bark: Wilbert Ross, R.R.1, Scotsburn; Owen Cotter, R.R.3, Scotsburn; Edward Fraser, R.R.1, Meadowville; George Graham, R.R.3, Scotsburn.

Fire Wards: Edwin Graham, R.R.2, Scotsburn; George Jordan, Calvin Graham, R.R.3, Scotsburn.

Town Clerk: Murray MacKay, R.R.1, Scotsburn.

DISTRICT NO. 7

Presiding Officer for Municipal Election: Donald McInnes, R.R. 1, Scotsburn.

Deputy Presiding Officer: Sanford Gammon, Scotsburn.

Fence Viewers: Eric Dunn, R.R.2, Pictou; Stewart MacIntosh, Meadowville; John Adamson, Scotsburn.

Stock and Cattle Reeves: Joseph MacCulloch, R.R.1, Scotsburn; Walter MacKenzie, R.R.2, Scotsburn; Leonard Fullerton, R.R.2 Pictou.

Pound Keepers: George A. MacLeod, R.R.2, Scotsburn; Claude Gammon, R.R.2, Pictou.

Constables: John Campbell, R.R.2, Scotsburn; Ronald Goodall, R.R.2, Pictou; Borden Forbes, Scotsburn; MacLeod Murray, Meadowville.

Season's Greeting 2022

by Christiane Gill

We, the team of the Pioneer, want to put you, our devoted readers, into the Christmas spirit with this piece from Janice Murray Gill's 1978 Nova Scotia Down-Home Cooking book (pp. 67, 68). Janice is referring to when she was a child in the 1940s.

December

The master of the ceremonies (the Christmas concert) was usually one of the ministers, and Santa Claus was always Jim MacDonald; instead of a red suit, he wore a raccoon coat with a beard and wig of carefully frayed rope. The candies we got were Christmas candy, seen at no other time of year. There were long curls of red and green "ribbon" candy, surely the prettiest of all confections, and barley sugar "toys." These were red or yellow shapes ranging in size from small pieces that would fit comfortably in the mouth to huge horses, dogs, and bears, weighing a pound or more, which had to be broken with a hammer into smaller pieces that would provide hours of contented sucking.

A very Merry Christmas & a very Happy New Year to each and every one of you out there and all your loved ones.



Welcome Wagon

by Joan MacLeod

A couple of years ago, a small group of us decided to start an unofficial Welcome Wagon in order to welcome people to our community. As we live rurally and we were in the midst of a pandemic, we felt that it might be hard for new arrivals to meet and make new friends. So we came armed with goodies and information about our community and the many service and other organizations we have. Also, when possible, we helped new people make connections with like-minded souls. And newcomers are still arriving!

Then COVID re-emerged and it did not seem like a good time to be visiting people's homes. Also, I got busier and started travelling more, so there has been a hiatus. Now there is an interest in starting Welcome Wagon visits again. I am stepping down and Maureen Topley is taking over. If you know of anyone who would like a welcoming visit or if you would like to join our team, please contact either Maureen Topley (902-351-2261) or Lynn MacLeod (902-351-2640).

by Joan MacLeod

Our last issue was published in June. So, this is a bumper issue, because a lot has happened in these past five months. Firstly, our community celebrated eight weddings. Four babies were born. After two long years we were able to have "River John Days" again. Then there was Hallowe'en, Remembrance Day and finally the activities being announced for Christmas! It is a lot for a small publication to report on.

The most dramatic event though was Hurricane Fiona, September Friday 23rd to Saturday 24th.

The worst storm ever to hit our region caused widespread power outages, thousands of downed trees, cottages swept away, collapsed, barns, a nine foot high sea surge causing costal erosion and billions of dollars of damage across the Atlantic provinces. Our coastline, PEI and South Eastern Newfoundland were the hardest hit. Some gusts were 170 MPH and it was the lowest barometric reading ever recorded in Canada. This issue of the Pioneer, which originally was slated for the end of October, had to be postponed because many people lost power for more than two weeks. Some of our team did not have their land lines or internet restored until almost a month after the storm. Being so rural and with such loss in our area, it felt like we were the last to get help. But the damage was severe; one report said that there were 21 power poles that needed to be replaced between Jollymore's Corner and Brule Corner, a distance of about 6 kms.

As one of our team has written, we are all suffering from "Post Fiona Stress syndrome". Comments that have been made to me were; "While driving, I was so upset at seeing the trees downed like match sticks that I had to pull over, as I thought I was going to be sick". And another person said, "I can replace the shingles on my roof and I can replace my broken window, but I cannot replace the 20 trees blown down in my back garden". Many, many trees were uprooted, leaving little dug graves. And then there were the barns, many of which were heritage buildings. One family in our area lost 2 barns and most of their ewes, who were family pets. We need to mourn our losses and take the time we need to heal from this tragedy

and disruption in our lives. Sadly our area will never be the same again and it will take time to get used to this. Please be kind to ourselves and others as we do this healing work.

The other unseen cost of the loss of thousands of trees is the way that trees sequester carbon, eating carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen into our air. Unfortunately, Global warming is increased. And because we cannot possibly clean up all the trees in our woodlots and forests, as they die and dry up, there is a greater potential for forest fires.

But the big story here is our survival and resilience. We put up with the discomfort, we cooked on barbeques (even cookies, I understand!), we had to travel to Pictou or Tatamagouche for our gas for generators, (those who were fortunate enough to have generators and the money to keep them gassed up!). The Legion operated a comfort centre, offering food, cooked meals, water, charging stations for phones, and comfort. We worked hard. Neighbour helped neighbour. And when the power crews came (from all other parts of Canada and from the USA) we treated them with such generous hospitality, that they remarked on this, saying they had never been treated so well by the people they were coming to help. Our local "Winmill Electric" need to be praised for putting on a barbeque two days in a row for the power workers. Others brought them coffee, gave them cookies and helped them in other ways. It certainly makes me glow with pride to hear these stories about our community.

Our whole team has worked hard on this issue of the Pioneer and we hope you enjoy it with its focus on past, current and future events in the River John and surrounding areas. Enjoy.



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Benjamin Moore Authorized Dealer

by Christiane Gill

Fiona - what a beautiful name! Of many beautiful ladies!

I have always loved that name.

Now that love has been tainted - badly. We all thought we knew what was coming when hurricane Fiona loomed large on our horizon and we prepared accordingly.

But boy, were we all in for a rude awakening when a couple of hours in, shortly after midnight on September 24th, the power, as almost expected, went out. The gale force winds with hurricane strength gusts didn't let up for twenty-four hours, each subsiding gust letting us hope that it was receding, only to have the next gust shatter that hope, rattling our increasingly rattled nerves.

Yes, we all made it through one way or the other but many, if not all of us, are scarred in some form. A (post) hurricane and ten to fourteen, in some cases even more, days without power tend to do that.

Yes, beloved trees are gone forever, windows broken, barns collapsed, roofs and porches damaged, cottages destroyed - to name only a few of the visible damages.

What we don't see is the hidden material damage like spoiled food, the water pump or heater that couldn't handle the dormant time, the televisions and smaller appliances that couldn't handle the power surges and fluctuations.

And then there is the PFSD - the Post Fiona Stress Disorder (my terminology) - the little things that send some of us reeling again, the exhaustion some of us feel to this day, the sadness some of us try to talk away. Yes, it is OK to feel some or even all of this. It comes part and parcel with a catastrophe like this (post) hurricane. I remember talking with 80+ year old community members. Some in tears, some subdued, all very clearly stated that they have never experienced anything like this. Meh mentioned that even having a generator didn't stop her from worrying about how to serve our community with what little she could offer if the generator gave out. Other generator owners gave up because of the cost of running it, most of the cost coming from having to drive well over an hour just to get some gas. Some of our community members didn't even know where their next breath would come from. And then there are the nagging worries. How to get the livestock through the winter without a barn? How to pay for the material damages? What damages will coming winter storms cause? Will the most urgent damages be repaired in time? Just to name a few.

A lot of the time people are not aware of the struggles someone goes through because they are hidden. "No! Everything is fine," or is it?

Yes, we all made it this far because we are a community, a tightly-knit community, in the true sense of the word. The Legion, Meh's, our very own food truck, "What's For Dinner" and many more cooked hot meals, coffee and tea; our kids were well taken care of at the legion, neighbour helped neighbour, the pharmacy was open all throughout, everyone pitched in to the best of their ability.

And now comes perhaps the most important, the longest, the most difficult stage: the stage to reflect, heal and become whole again. Let's take this final step so that this episode in our lives will become a distant memory and I am sure that the name "Fiona" will regain its beautiful ring again.

The Pioneer is published by the River John Community Action Society

P.O. Box 161, River John, NS, B0K 1N0

The views expressed in this newspaper are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the editorial board.

The Pioneer is distributed throughout the BOK 1N0 postal area which is primarily River John and West Branch. We welcome any articles or pictures from any of our newspaper friends and areas. Contributions to the next issue should be sent to the editors. Please send text files and pictures as separate attachments. Text should have the bare minimum of formatting. Photos should be 400-1200 pixels wide, and be accompanied by a list of captions. We reserve the right to edit letters and articles for clarity and brevity. Profanity will not be tolerated and we have the right to refuse to print letters.

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Devastation in Marshville

by John K. Morrell

My wife Kathy has been a summer resident in Marshville since the 1950s when her father set up a cottage near the beach. Her uncle, Sebastian Rio and his wife, Ann, from Long Island, New York, bought a cottage about the same time. From the time of our marriage in 1974, we have spent every summer on this beach. In 1983, we bought the Rio cottage, as they bought another one on Cape John.

During 2009, an all-season home was started by builder Micah Stewart and completed in the spring of 2010. During its construction, my wife and I were first living in Doha, Qatar, late 2009 and then 6 months in Grenada where I did mission work at an Anglican Parish. In July, 2010, we returned to Nova Scotia with our two cats (one from Qatar and a kitten from Grenada) and began moving in.

We suffered minor damage during Hurricane Dorian in September, 2019, and in January, 2022, a violent storm sent ice floes around all our front yards and the beach road with minor damage to buildings. Hurricane Fiona was a totally different storm.

We began some preparations days before, positioning a number of items in our spare bedroom in case we had to evacuate. Tuning into the weather report late Friday night, the heaviest winds and rain were predicted to land far east of our position. In the middle of the night, we heard some pounding on our front wall thinking siding might be coming off. At 7:10 a.m. I woke up. The pounding was spray from the storm surge rushing over our lawn and bumping into our building. The mobile home near my west door had flipped over onto our beach access road. From my east door I saw one neighbour's cottage totally destroyed – the wind exploding their front plate glass window and blowing out their back wall. Three other cottages near the beach had floated towards the marsh. Two other cottages and two trailers back from the beach road had also floated into the marsh and were under 3 feet of water. The wind and storm surge was unbelievable and high tide was still hours away.

We packed up the car with our supplies and two cats within the hour and first headed to the Ocean Breeze Cottages [former Amet View Chalets]. No one was there to offer us a chalet to evacuate to. We then headed on Route 6 towards River John steering around fallen trees. About halfway to Louisville Road we met the Fire Department coming east to rescue someone in Little Truro who was surrounded by water. They asked if we were out taking pictures. "No," Kathy replied, "we're evacuating!"

We settled in with a friend in River John for the next twenty-four hours, (she had a generator). I slept with the two cats in the sunroom, Kathy in her bedroom. On Sunday we returned to our home; the wind had died, the water had receded, we had a community hand pump for water and a wood stove. Some items from our freezer found a home in our friend's freezer. Thus we began the two weeks with no power. Fortunately, we had booked a western vacation trip for October 1-10 to go to Calgary, Banff and Vancouver and were able to luxuriate in warm beds, heat and hot water.

Fortunately, there was only one recorded loss of life and few injuries from what was called the biggest hurricane to hit Canada since records were being kept over one hundred years ago. However, the big lesson learned was that everywhere people were helping each other with food, shelter, generators, and property and tree clean-up. Tragedy can bring out the best in people. In River John it certainly did!



Thanks Fiona

by Linda Atkinson
Seafoam NS

I pulled this together on Oct 29th, 2022, after several weeks of tri-aging and trying to begin repairs on our cottage after Tropical Storm Fiona. I recognize the huge privilege it is to be whining about repairs to an insured second home. So while it is not an event that will ever compete with the real angst in the world, it is a big deal in mine. Therefore, it gets a poem!

Well didn't old Fiona put a whomping on to us?
Oh my goodness, she made a mighty bother and a fuss.
I think my heart breaks just a bit each time I look and see
Nothing but the neighbour's lights where my tree line use to be.
The shingles on two buildings that once kept us warm and tight?
Well now they cover our beach lot, thanks to Fiona's might.
With shingles gone, the rain came in and what a mess it made.
Insulation, tiles and floors are all headed to their grave.
Salt and sand is everywhere; furniture will soon be gone.
It is a sad and mournful scene my eyes now look upon.
If I find one more piece of vinyl, shutter or drain spout.
Anywhere it shouldn't be, I declare I'm going to shout.
Insurance is not playing nice, to understate the case.
Rigmarole and run around stand in their service space.
Not a contractor to be found; they're needed everywhere.
If even one returned our call, we'd feel a bit of care.
Our little retreat is battered. Our friends commiserate.
Our families came and lent a hand. That's what they do. They're great.

Today I cleaned my whistles from their state of silt-stained grime.
And on my B flat whistle, I blew out a little rhyme.
Again "Dark Island" filled the air, as did "Come By the Hills."
I think the cottage smiled again and felt a little thrill.
And then I scrambled to the beach although the steps were gone.
And here, I found things mostly good; at least more right than wrong.
The gulls still wheeled. The eagles soared. The sea and air were salt.
Our beach is a place with which I can rarely find much fault.
The fire is on, the sun is bright. The seals are at their play.
All is well. And I know "Tomorrow is another day".

My Fiona Song

by Bertha I. Langille

Praise the Lord, I see the light.
No more swearing in the night.
Praise the Lord, I see a light.
Had to go to neighbours' to use the john,
Oh, my God I waited too long
So dark at night and I had to pee.
Tripped, fell and hurt my knee.
Now I can shower and wash my hair,
If I haven't pulled it all out and it's still there.
Praise the Lord, I see the light
No more swearing in the night.
Praise the Lord, I see a light.
Had no power for over a week,
My poor stomach is empty and I'm getting weak.
They said the storm was just a freak,
But now my roof has a huge leak.
It even blew the roof off a barn,
But the cows they came to no harm.
Yet lost all their hay,
Oh, what a sad, sad day.
Praise the Lord, I see the light.
No more swearing in the night.
Praise the Lord, I see a light.
A tree fell on my son's car,
Broke the front windows and the frame.
That Old Fiona Song is solely to blame!
Although he did have some luck,
The tree missed his brother's truck.
Praise the Lord, I see the light
No more swearing in the night.
Praise the Lord, I see a light.

This is Bertha's first song. She is 89 years young, from Malagash, and now lives at Willow Lodge, Tatamagouche. Bertha is the mother of the late Keith Langille, and mother-in-law of Elaine Langille, River John.

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"If we don't have it, we'll find it!"

Fiona in pictures

We were warned.....

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WIND WARNING

RAINFALL WARNING

STORM SURGE WARNING

TROPICAL CYCLONE INFORMATION STATEMENT

Forecast issued: 4:00 PM ADT Friday 23 September 2022

Tonight
13°C

Rain at times heavy. Amount 70 to 90 mm. Wind north 30 km/h gusting to 50 increasing to 50 gusting to 80 this evening then to 90 gusting to 120 except gusting to 150 over exposed areas overnight. Temperature steady near 13.

.....and after many long hours of high winds, rain and storm surge, trees were snapped or uprooted, buildings were damaged, destroyed or moved, and power lines were down.



Power crews arrived from across Canada and the USA. Many were accommodated at the Wellness Centre and hotels rooms were fully booked across the province.



All manner of government agencies and volunteer fire departments were called in to control traffic and keep power crews and tree removal workers safe.



The Legion was open as a comfort centre.

THE OVERSTREET CAFE

2727 River John Station Road

Check out our Facebook page for updates on hours and opening!

True Humanity

by **John Crichton**

I would like to tell you a tale that was triggered by hurricane Fiona.

This story, however, is not another lamentable list of objects damaged or lost due to her ferocious wind. This is about people stepping up in a truly selfless and honourable way in response to tragedy and distress.

One day last week I came home, to find about eight people with chainsaws and a huge wood chipping machine working in my back yard cleaning up damage inflicted by Fiona. I was very surprised and concerned because I had not arranged for anything like this.

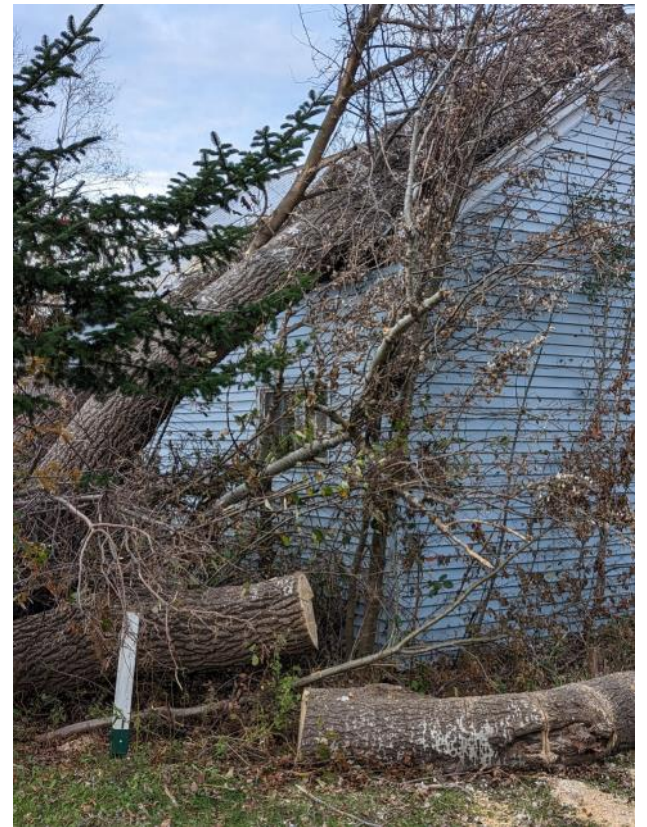
Of course, I asked what was going on, and the leader of this team explained that they were a group from Ontario, come to assist in the cleanup after the storm and they planned to come back the next day.

They were, as I found out, all volunteers with the Christian Aid Ministries of Canada.

The next day they were back in force, this time 15 young men.

Their church, they explained, freely provided this service in times of need and they had all volunteered to take part. They did a marvelous and very thorough job, removing the debris and wood chips, and stacking the wood for future use. At the end of the day I was given a bible in which each one had written their name, and was invited to join them in a prayer. And as we stood there in my driveway in prayer, I could not help but reflect on how in this time of international conflict, financial duress and news headlines dripping blood, this stood out as a shining example of a true humanity.

Editors note: I stumbled across this team having their bagged lunch at Bissell Park. They kindly agreed to remove and chip a broken branch from a maple tree and also to remove some of the debris which had been gathered in the park. They are one of four Rapid Response teams across Canada. This team was based in Oxford, where they have sleeping accommodation and all their meals are prepared. They come with all their equipment, chainsaws, boom truck, chipper etc.



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Winmill Electric laid on a barbeque and bagged lunches for crews working in the area.



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The Brit who Braved Fiona

by **Christiane Gill**

Tony Riddle was beseeched by his family and friends in England to return early with Fiona projected to hit Nova Scotia hard. He remained steadfast and stayed. He was confident that everything was going to be all right, but just to be on the safe side he set up his bed in the front left room of the ground floor. Tony still wasn't worried when the winds picked up "fast and furious" and put his head down to sleep. Tony Riddle slept well until a deafening crash tore him from his serene dreams. Upon investigation Tony realized that a huge tree had crashed down literally just inches from his head - luckily on the outside side of the wall. No power, no water, no heat, only cold food like most of us who did not have the option to leave, he took one day at a time. Eleven days into this unreal situation I asked him if he ever regretted having stayed. Surprised, Tony looked at me, smiled from ear to ear and said, "The other day, when I got back from the most delicious hot lunch and wonderful chats, I came back to this," (gesturing to the cut and stacked trees, the yard immaculate). "Why would I? Just look around! This is what community looks and feels like and I am proud to be part of it."



Bonnie Murray

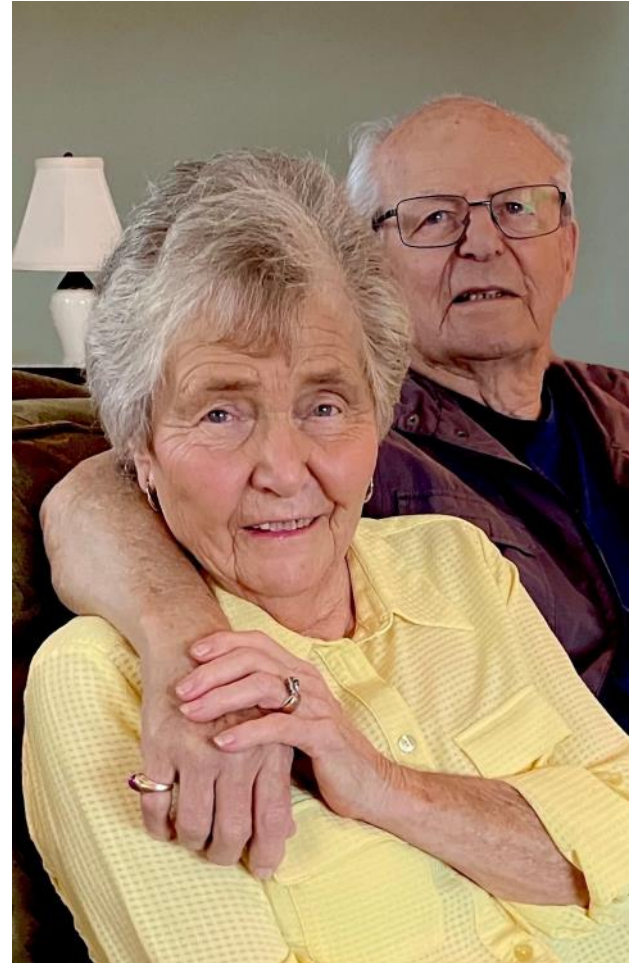
by **Debby Shaw**

Recently, I had an enjoyable visit with Bonnie Murray in her lovely home overlooking the river. After talking with her, I realized that she had a story to tell and without hearing it, the readers of the Pioneer would not know the whole story of River John.

When her husband, John, brought his wife home to this community in 1987, did he know she was to become an influential person in our community? Prior to coming here, Bonnie had been a hospital administrator, and held various positions with Shell Canada, first in Toronto then moving to Calgary. After John settled with Bonnie in River John, he was invited to a meeting at the Legion because they needed help and wanted his input. Following that meeting, John became their president and Bonnie became the help they needed. Bonnie had a gift: seeing what was already there and what it could become, and she was willing to share. She taught the community how to plan and access community and government money.

John and Bonnie bought, improved and sold various properties in River John and, at one point, renovated and lived in John's father's house. They ran Bonnie Brook Farm where they raised sheep and operated a bed and breakfast and Bonnie was a regular on Party Line, a CBC Radio Show where she promoted our community from the farm. In the nineties, John and Bonnie bought their present house and, after extensive renovations, opened the Parsonage Tea Room. They sold meals and refreshments; planning, decision making and a lot of the business of River John happened at the Tea Room. Bonnie donated the front room there to the RCMP as an office so they could have a presence in River John.

Plans were underway to make changes at the



Legion. Land was purchased and clearing brush began. An extension to the Legion was built and a park designer was contacted. Next to the Legion, there would be a Remembrance Garden; Project Remembrance Gardens was born. People paid \$50 to buy a tree in memory of a family member and it was planted in the park. Memory Benches were also available for purchase. Still thinking of fundraising for the Legion, Bonnie collected poems of local poets, Dell Robinson and Carol Daggitt. She had a book published called Rhymes of River John. It was sold at the Legion to raise money for the Remembrance Gardens. Christmas house tours were organized and were a great fundraiser for the Legion. Janice Gill wrote three plays that were performed at the Legion; dinners were served. One such play was called "We'll Meet Again" and was performed in Halifax.

After all this fundraising, and many hours of hard work, the Remembrance Gardens were officially opened by MLA, Donnie McInnis.

When Pictou Regional Development encouraged communities to start their own group of action societies, Bonnie was instrumental in starting ours. The River John Community Action Society began, and Bonnie was appointed its first treasurer. She had vision and knew that the village needed someone to coordinate people and to obtain non-profit status. In the beginning, she wrote applications for grants, and helped others to do so too.



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To our clients affected by Hurricane Fiona,
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..... Continued on page 17.....

Katimavik - A Once in a Lifetime Experience

by **Katy Crawford**

I am writing this story from Winnipeg, Manitoba, where I am a participant in the Katimavik program. It is a once in a life time experience open to anybody that is a resident of Canada ages 17-25. Katimavik began in 1977 with the mission to develop diverse youth as engaged, caring citizens and capable contributors and leaders for a better Canada. There are nine Katimavik houses across Canada from Nanaimo to Halifax and participants are sent to places away from their home community.

I am one of a group of eight from across Canada ranging in age from 22-25. We all arrived in Calgary on July 13 for our first rotation of our six-month program. We were met by our Project Leader John, who took us to our house where we would be living together for the first three months. We soon got involved in a variety of volunteer work placements which we do Monday-Thursday. Weekends are for more learning, exploring, community events, volunteering and some time for ourselves.

In Calgary, two others from the group and I volunteered at the Calgary Drop-In Free Goods Program. Other placements were Women in Need, Alberta's Animal Rescue Crew Society, My Best

Friend's Closet, Adventure Society of Calgary and the Kerby Centre. In our free time we visited some of the local sites including the Calgary Stampede, Drumheller and Banff.

On Sept 28 we left Calgary and flew to Winnipeg where we will stay until Dec 14th. We are now all volunteering in new positions including a

radio station, Winnipeg Trails, Festival du Voyageur, Arts Junction, Oyate Tipi, Flavie Centre and Harvest Manitoba.

It is a great experience to live and work with people from across Canada. We are all learning a lot and having tons of fun.



Pride Parade, Calgary, Alberta



Our first bread making challenge. Our leader John used to be a chef so he was the judge.

From the right: Jesse from Magog, Quebec and Isabelle from Toronto, 1st place; Brennock from St John's NL and Fred from Montreal, 2nd place; Katy from River John, NS and Kat from Oakville, ON, 3rd place; and Zach from Montreal and Shea from Vancouver came in 4th.

Bonnie Murray

..... Continued from page 16

Before that, in 1985, Janice Gill and the River John Ladies Group, along with a donation from the Bissell family, were instrumental in forming Bissell Park and getting our new Library. John and Bonnie got electric power outlets installed in Bissell Park. The Church of Christ Disciples building was acquired and turned into a museum, and a history kiosk was built behind it. These have been well visited by both tourists and locals. It will be no surprise to hear that Bonnie was also involved in the Save The School Action Society.

The Legion acquired a karaoke machine, one of the first in Nova Scotia! Bonnie and Sandra McKay travelled around the area singing and encouraging others to use it. They hired themselves out to other Legions, retirement lodges and nursing homes. This raised a lot of money for River John Legion 108.

Bonnie and the River John Community Action Society got grants to hire Recreation Coordinator, Joanne Wilkins, who has been our coordinator for eighteen years. Joanne has written grant applications, hired and overseen many students who did various jobs including caring for the parks in River John and running the Day Camp for upwards of thirty children during the summer, in space donated by Legion 108.

In 2011, then Member of Parliament, Peter McKay, presented Bonnie Murray with the Diamond Jubilee Award. There was a limited number of these awarded across Canada and our small area received three: Rev. Don Sutherland (posthumously), Marg Jones, and Bonnie Murray.

I hope that after reading this article, those who were not old enough to know of the work that was done to develop our village, will now have some understanding. And those, like me, who are come from away but now call and feel like River John is home, will have an awareness of at least one of the movers and shakers, Bonnie Murray.



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The Great Loop

by Anne Patriquin

The adventure begins.

Bruce & Cheryl Frizzell have had this adventure on their minds for what seemed like eternity. Finally, on June 6th, 2022, it became real. This was their Trip of a Lifetime. They are finally going to do THE GREAT LOOP. The trip will take at least fifteen months on the water to complete. So they will be on the boat for fifteen months. They left Nova Scotia with the biggest smiles on their faces, you could not wipe off if you tried. The hardest part was leaving family and friends behind.

Their first destination was PEI, then off to New Brunswick. They left there and sailed to the Gaspé Peninsula; then to the Saint Lawrence, and next on to the Ottawa River where they went through eight locks, and stayed at Parliament Hill. They then left for the Rideau Canal, then to Thousand Islands and crossed Lake Ontario to Picton and entered the Trent Severn Waterway, coming out into Georgian Bay, and cruised Parry Sound to Lake Huron. Leaving there, they sailed to Lake Michigan and cruised to Chicago, entering the Illinois River in a town in Ottawa, USA. They went through 200 locks (locks are for moving a boat from one waterway to another by systematically raising and lowering the water level) at Big Chute Marine Locks by the train tracks. Next, on to Nashville, where they stayed a few days in hopes of seeing some of the big country stars. They are having a great trip and meeting



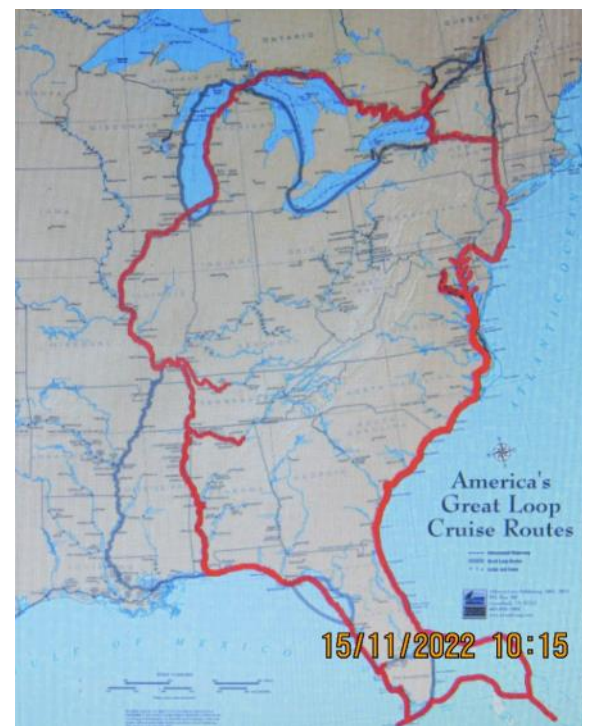
Cheryl and Bruce's departure.



Going through the lock on the Severn

so many people along the way. They have also met up with other boaters who have joined them. Right now there are around 600 loopers. Wow, can you imagine.

That's all for now, hope you enjoyed reading this. I will try and do a follow-up for the next paper.



This is a map of the Great Loop, but it excludes the Maritime portion of the journey, Across to PEI and then around the Gaspé and up the St Lawrence.



A group of "Loopers" on the waterway. Cheryl and Bruce's boat is the yellow hulled one in the middle.

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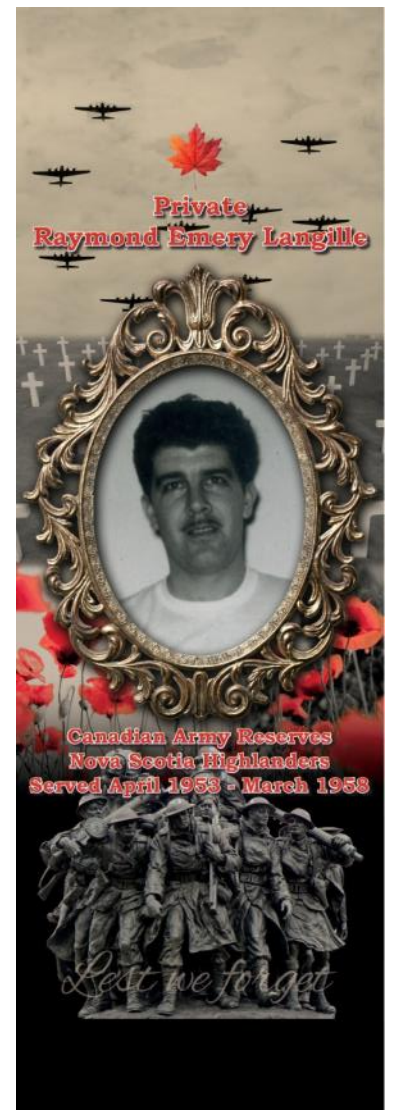
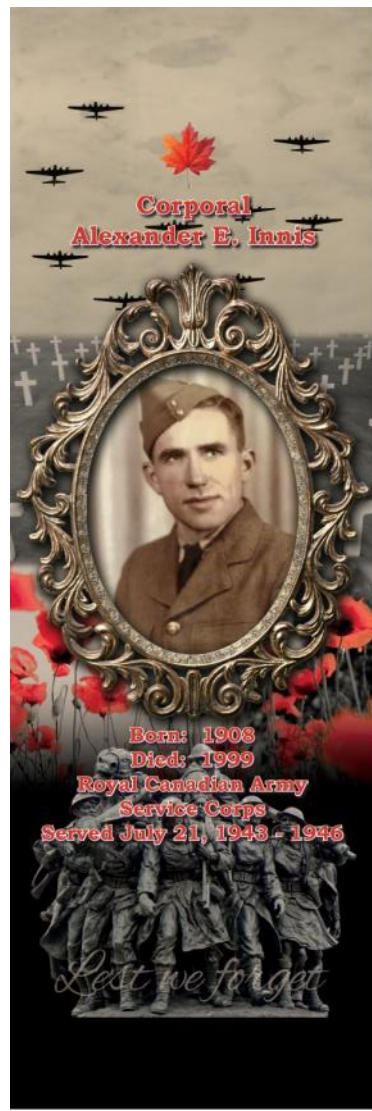


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Farewell and Best Wishes

by **Mary Beth Sutherland**

RCMP Constable Rod Doe and his family arrived here in River John with his transfer from Fort MacMurray, Alberta. Then this past August, after nearly five years in River John, they received their next posting to Ottawa, Ontario.

Constable Doe and his wife, Ashley, and sons enjoyed the community and the friends they made while here. Ashley and their young sons, Lucas and Liam, (who was born here,) were often out in the community with other young mothers and children. Ashley was always eager to lend a helping hand to anyone in need. Rod was a good mentor to the young children in the community, they were happy to approach and talk to him, which is important for our youth to feel a policeman or policewoman is a safe person. We send them best wishes for their future.



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On Guard For Thee Memories by Guardsman J.W. (Wallace) Sutherland, 2nd Canadian Guards

**by Barb Rondelet,
River John Legion Branch #108**

It was the first week of October, 1964. I was stationed at Canadian Forces Base Petawawa. We were in the mess hall when the C.O. (Commanding Officer) came in and informed us that Company #7 would be guarding Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II at her stop in Prince Edward Island.

We flew out from Ottawa to Prince Edward Island. As the plane approached Charlottetown, the weather picked up and the plane hit an extreme crosswind, just as we were touching down. With a heavy bounce, back up into the air we went! Needless to say, all comrades were scrambling to find their sick bags simultaneously! The plane eventually circled around and landed safely at Summerside airport.

We were then loaded up on buses to famous Charlottetown. All two hundred comrades were housed at a boy scout camp. It was a nice place at that time and we were very grateful that we didn't have to stay in tents. The evening was spent spit, shine, polish, creases straight - everyone knows the routine.

ROYAL VISIT, 1964



FROM
HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH THE SECOND
AND
HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE PHILIP,
DUKE OF EDINBURGH

The next day, the Royal Yacht Britannia was docked at Charlottetown harbour. We formed two columns on each side of the road from the ship to the Confederation Building. Many people gathered behind us, all ages, young and old, happy, cheering, waving flags. We were very excited at the time, standing tall and proud as Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip drove by in their car, waving to the people lining the streets. After Her Majesty's scheduled events were over they returned to the ship. Our duty had been completed.

Most of my comrades and I myself, were more impressed with some of the other famous people who attended the event, for example, Lorne Green from the TV show Bonanza.

After all the excitement for the day was over, it was time to chill out. This 23-year-old had a pocket full of change and headed straight for a pay phone to call his (then) fiancée, Anna, in River John, to share his day's experiences with her.

About two weeks later I received a thank-you letter and a picture. I was very proud to have participated.



October 30, 1964.

Dear Mr. Sutherland:

I am commanded by The Queen to express Her Majesty's thanks to you for the loyal and efficient help which you gave in connection with the visit to Canada which she and The DUKE of Edinburgh have just completed.

Her Majesty and His Royal Highness realize that it was only by the united efforts of many persons, of whom you were one, that their tour was made so pleasant and enjoyable, and they much appreciate your personal contribution to the success of their visit.

Yours sincerely,

Canadian Secretary to The Queen

Gdsm J. W. Sutherland SF 103794
2nd Canadian Guards
Camp Petawawa, Ontario

Warrant Officer C.H. Webb

by Derek Andrews

When Wallace Sutherland's article arrived at The Pioneer I was reminded of a family photo I have of my uncle, C.H. Webb being "inspected" by the Queen.

He joined the RAF as an apprentice wireless operator at RAF Cranwell in about 1937. His war-time service was mainly in Malta, on High Speed Launch 128, the most successful of the search and rescue boats with 110 rescues including George Frederick "Buzz" Beurling, DSO, DFC, DFM & Bar, Canada's most successful fighter pilot of the war who was credited with shooting down 31 Axis aircraft.

After the war he went on to serve in Palestine where he was mentioned in despatches and later joined the Queen's Flight and flew to Canada on at least one occasion. My cousin told me, "I remember Dad going on a VIP trip to Canada with Lord De L'Isle & Dudley. He loved it! He brought me back a huge red toy earthmover, which has been played with by three generations of the family." My aunt (Senior Aircraftswoman J. Oatley who served in the WRAF during WWII as a barrage balloon operator, being bombed in Glasgow and Sheffield), also told me that he liked Canada very much and that if he were to emigrate anywhere it would be here.

He went on to do two tours of duty in Singapore and retired in about 1970 with the rank of Warrant Officer.



Queen Elizabeth inspecting her Flight at RAF Benson, we believe in 1953. Flight Sergeant Webb, back row, fourth from the right.

Devil's Brigade Member Shares Account of Battle

The following is an article that was published in the Pictou Advocate on November 10, 2021.

Reproduced with permission.

Editor's note: The following is an account by Joseph Aurel Blanchard, who grew up in New Brunswick but lived briefly and spent summers in Pictou County. He was a member of First Special Services Force, otherwise known as the Devil's Brigade. The Canadians and Americans in the force trained in Helena, Mont., and joined the U.S. Fifth Army in Italy in November 1943. He shared this account with family members. He was my dear Uncle Aurel, married to my father's sister Thelma.

Aug. 14, 1944, 10 p.m., World War II

Joseph Aurel Blanchard, France.

The men of Second Company First Regiment (2-1) of the First Special Services Force had finished their last shipboard meal and were sitting around below decks in full battle dress, checking weapons for a night landing on the Hyeres Islands, about three miles off the coast of France. This would allow the invasion of the mainland of South France to go ahead the next morning as planned, without the island guns shelling.



We had been given our orders and we knew what we had to do. They were simple orders - get into 11-man army boats, go ashore, climb the cliffs, kill or take prisoner the several hundred enemy defending the island and put the big guns on the island out of operation.

I had joined the force several months earlier in Anzio. At that time, the force was under-strength with probably one or two thousand men on the line, normally held by a full division of 10,000. As we were so spread out, I got to know only a small number of the men by name.

The men of our company were ready. I could see no fear in their faces, just a grim determination. This could be a dirty job, but we were ready. We had the confidence in our ability to use our weapons, the tools of our trade.

Why didn't I have my notebook and write something about each of the men in our section?

Sgt. Frank and Sgt. B gave last minute advice - check your Mae West (our inflatable flotation device worn high up around the chest) and check

..... Continued on next page

your guns. Their confidence helped reduce tension.

I missed my close buddy from Anzio, Walter Dawes from Mississippi, who had taken a bunch of shrapnel in the foot and leg and had gone back stateside. Walter and I were the “old soldiers” of the front line force; we were 28 and the average age of the front was 20 or less.

I wondered, and I suppose most of the others also wondered, how many would die that night. Would it be like back on May 23 when we lost 23 men there, killed in action?

Then the call from the ship’s officer came, “OK lads, time to go.” This was from the British officer. We were on a British boat. We filed up the stairs to the deck. Some landing craft were in the water and some were in the davits. The British officer’s orders were in low key. “Lower away handsomely now. Down you go lads.” And we climbed over the rail and down the rope ladders to the rubber boats now in the water.

There were 11 men to a rubber boat. One on the front (bow) and five on each side. I was last on the left side. Three or four rubber boats in tow by several larger landing craft and soon we were quietly on our way to the islands. Our island was Isle de Port Cros. If we were not fired on, we would be cut loose from the motor craft one-quarter mile or so from shore, and then we would paddle in as quietly as possible.

The big question on our minds was when will they start firing and we waited for their bullets and paddled quietly and slowly towards the cliffs, and we wondered if we would reach the cliffs or would we have to swim in the cold Mediterranean.

It is hard to believe, but we reached the cliffs without a shot. There was no beach, the deep water went right to the cliffs.

Carefully, I got a foothold on the rocks and, groping in the dark for footholds and handholds, started the slow climb. We had trained to climb carefully and quietly and we went up inch by inch without a sound. We had climbed for what seemed to be hours and up a half-mile, but was probably more like half an hour and 180 feet up, when someone lost a helmet. The four clanks on the rocks and the splash in the water smashed the silence, and we melted into the rocks, not a sound or movement for at least five minutes. Then slowly we started to move up again.

The steep cliff became a slope and we crawled quickly on elbows and knees, guns cradled, as we had often done in training, and then we were in the bush. Now we were ready to fight. It was great to feel the comfort a loaded Tommy gun can give you when you have both feet on the ground.

We advanced slowly across the island, picking up prisoners as we went. There was not much shooting. They would fire a few rounds and then surrender. One of our officers, Lt. MacLean, was shot and later died of his wounds. By daylight we had control of the island and had taken about 100 or more prisoners. The last 20 or so defenders were holed up in Fort de L’Eminence and would not surrender. Dive bombing by U.S. planes and 15-inch shells from the British battleship Ramilles had no effect and we were forced to wait overnight.

Our company took shelter in a hotel-like building in plain sight of the fort, which was hardly more than 100 feet away. My stomach accepted the contents of a K-ration pack, a can of hash, hard biscuits, cookies and candies, then it was sleep. With complete exhaustion, the wood timbers felt like a feather bed.

Her Majesty the Queen April 21, 1926 - September 8, 2022

by the editor

Queen Elizabeth II passed away on September 8, 2022, at 96 years of age, surpassing her great-great-grandmother Queen Victoria in 2015 as the longest serving British monarch in history. She reigned for seventy years and was the first monarch to celebrate a platinum jubilee. She came to be second in line for the throne in 1936 when her Uncle David (King Edward VII) abdicated, thus putting her father in as King George VI.

She concluded a speech given when she was twenty-one years of age by saying, “I declare before you all that my whole life, whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to your service and the service of our great imperial family to which we all belong.”

When her father died prematurely on Feb 6, 1952, she became queen at twenty-five years of age, by which time she was already married to Prince Philip, and had two young children, Charles and Anne. She ascended to the throne in the 1950s,

a young woman in a man’s world. What a wonderful role model she has been to women.

I know that colonialism and the monarchy has many faults, (some consider it an outdated institution,) but the Queen was widely loved throughout the Commonwealth. She was a stabilizing, moderating influence. She helped to modernize the Commonwealth which she cared about passionately. Canada was one of her favorite places to visit having come here twenty-two times during her reign.

Yes, I know she has three palaces in which to live, servants, fine clothes and jewels, but she lived a life of service. She was always on public display and she served (swearing in a new UK Prime Minister) until two days before her death. And she did it all with graciousness, humour and kindness. Imagine having to be nice to thousands and thousands of people, all who want to meet you. She did a remarkable job for seventy years. We will miss her.

Thank you, Queen Elizabeth. Rest in peace.

Joan Sutherland’s Memories of Her Majesty the Queen

as dictated to Mary Beth Sutherland

I have always had an interest in the Royal family, it might go back to my youth. My first brush with the Royal Family was when I was in grade two, in Truro. We had been taught to properly sing, “God Save the King.” King George VI and Queen Elizabeth were travelling through Truro on the train; the train would slow down or even stop at communities along the route as they travelled across the nation. They were standing on the back platform of the train waving to all, I saw the King but I was too short to see the Queen (she was also short). They were on their way to Halifax to take the ship back to England. Lots of people came to see them pass through the area.

I saw Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh in the winter of 1951, when they visited Canada. I was a student nurse at the Victoria General Hospital in Halifax; I was on duty and her car was passing the hospital. All patients and staff that were able to, gathered by the windows to see her pass by in the open car. The top was covered with glass due to winter weather. There were rumours that she would appear at the Nova Scotian Hotel that evening. So that evening I went down to the waterfront with my aunt and uncle. He worked in an office at the end of Pier 21. We were in the freight shed peeping through the slightly open door to see the Royal couple. When they arrived, they boarded the train to continue their travels through Canada. She boarded the train and we could see her settle down to read the newspaper. There were also staff from the Emigration Hospital on the 2nd floor of Pier 21 watching with us.

The Coronation was filmed live in London, England, so for Canadians to watch it, as each recording reel of film was finished, the reel was put on a jet and it crossed the Atlantic Ocean. The film was developed for viewing here, then next reel, as finished was put on the next jet. There was a possibly a small break in the viewing on this side as they waited for the next jet plane and reel to arrive. Once it made it to this side of the Atlantic, it was already developed and ready for distribution for all to view on television, possibly even theatres. My, how times have changed!

In 1973, our family went to Prince Edward Is-

land for some of the 100th Anniversary celebrations of PEI joining Canada. The Queen and Prince Philip were invited guests of the government, attending part of their celebrations. I remember standing at a street corner where the Queen was to pass by, we had a quick, but good view. After she passed, the RCMP officer standing with his back to the street, on crowd security, asked “How did she look?”

In 2010, her last trip to Canada was for the 100th Anniversary celebration of the Royal Canadian Navy in Halifax. My husband Donald and I were staying at the Nova Scotian Hotel. Our room was on the water side so we could watch the sail past of all the ships; we could see from the window and also watch on the television. Later we were invited to the Cunard Centre for a reception. We were all dressed up and Donald was wearing his kilt; Prince Philip stopped and shook his hand. The Queen was on the other side of the line of people. They were staying at Government House as guests of the Lieutenant Governor. I climbed up on the steps of a house near Government House and could look into the garden and see the Queen come out to walk around the garden. We were glad we travelled to Halifax to see them.

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River John Square Knitters

by **Netta Heukshorst**

This summer we were contacted by the NS Palliative Care Society in Halifax to see if we were interested in knitting some of our squares together for blankets for palliative patients in hospital or in hospice. So this was bantered back and forth at our Friday morning get togethers for a few weeks. Then it was decided that of course we could do this little project. Then it occurred to us that why couldn't we do that for our own patients right here, instead of far away. So contact was made with Martha Ferguson, our local palliative care nurse in Tatamagouche. Her response was very positive indeed.

So over several weeks, seven blankets were sewn together, using 35, 8in by 8in. colourful squares each. They turned out lovely.

On Friday, September 16th, Martha Ferguson joined us at the library to formally receive these blankets to be given out at her discretion. It sure was a fun morning of coffee, treats and lots of laughter.

We thank Wilma for always putting the coffee on for us on Fridays. Also, a thank you to Christine Gill for being there to take pictures of this event.

Also, this summer, the group had visitors join us from Wales. Chris Chiplen and her son Andrew. Friends of Gloria Grandy, our RJSK founder. It was a pleasure to meet them, not once but twice they joined us and shared their stories of knitting and their adventures while visiting Canada.

The group had a table at the RJ Sunday Market at the Old School, selling various knitted items in order to raise money for postage expenses, to mail the bundles of squares to South Africa, at a cost of approximately \$47.00 per bundle. To date so far this year 23 bundles have been mailed out of the RJ Post Office.

As an ongoing fundraiser, pretty dishcloths are available for purchase at the RJ Library, The Overstreet Cafe, the RJ Post Office and The Country Bread Basket in Brule at a cost of 2/\$5.00.

All knitters and crocheters are welcome to join or visit us at the library on Friday mornings from 10-12. We can supply yarn if needed. Donations of yarn, new or used, are always welcome and can be left at the library.

More information on the Square Knitters can be found at Knit a Square.com.

"Knit Locally- Share Globally"



Martha Underwood, Palliative Care Nurse,
June Kirjavainen, Netta Heukshorst

Swallows and Oaks

by **Maggie Howatt**

You may remember my piece about swallows in last year's Fall issue of *The Pioneer*. During the cold June weather that year, many swallow eggs and babies died. 2022 was another hard year: the economy recovering from COVID, people recovering from COVID.

On the upside, it was a good summer for gardens and farming until Fiona roared in, but aside from all that, the tree and barn swallows had a pretty good summer. And here's the story:

The first couple of weeks in May were cold and wet but ten pairs of tree swallows were checking out the nest boxes on May 2nd. So, as per usual, the swallows were here and gone as the weather comes in fits and starts, but by May 8th they were plentiful and the barn swallows were starting to appear. On May 12th the first hummingbird arrived.

By the middle of May, the boxes showed signs of nesting material as the pairs were busy ferrying grass and feathers.

By the end of May the hens were sitting on their eggs. Out of thirty boxes here, twenty-three were being used with five or six eggs each.

All were doing very well and then the heat rolled in towards the end of June. I was away on the weekend of June 23rd and, when I heard about the temperature back home, began to panic that the chicks would overheat in the crowded boxes. As summers are heating up with climate change, I had added extra ventilation holes to the boxes, so there would be a way to allow for cross ventilation. So now each box has two or three large holes at the top of a side wall, with a little door that starts out closed and can be swung open as the temperature and humidity approaches twenty-five degrees Celsius and up. They would need to be opened, and I was in Ontario!

I contacted my volunteer rescue crew around this part of Pictou County, and they set out to open all the little vents on nest boxes in Caribou River, Caribou Harbour, Caribou Island, Meadowville, West Branch, River John and Cape John. This involved quiet and careful work so as to not disturb the nesting birds, eggs and new babies. Hats off to Derek Andrews, Gina Bain, Pam Craig, Katherine Knight, Jane Morrigan, Bernadette MacDonald, Kristin Scott, Rita Wilson and Julie Windebank. I really believe that effort made a difference to the survival of all those chicks. The mortality rate was low this year and there were even a few second layings. The tree swallows have now long departed for their winter homes in the south, although the warm weather continues right into November. Wishing them a good winter, and safe home to Nova Scotia next spring.

And back to Fiona... like most of northern Nova Scotia we suffered terrible damage in our woods. But I have been stuffing acorns into the ground here for a number of years and I am astonished at the number of oaks that survived near misses and crushing from fallen wind-blown trees. There they are, now visible among the storm-shattered hem-



locks, spruce and maple. Some are 6-8 feet tall, some only 6 inches or a foot.

So that gives me hope. I will keep stuffing acorns in all the new gaps and watch them grow.

"The creation of a thousand forests is in one acorn." Ralph Waldo Emerson

Poem by Mary Sather

submitted by **Beulah Wright**

Here I sit so forlorn by myself
I do believe I'm put on the shelf
Seems I don't see no one at all
And who wants to talk to the wall
I don't have a car and neither a phone
But it doesn't make sense to sit here and moan
For writing I seem to have taken a yen
Some very good friends are paper and pen.

Chores I have done and water is pumped
Now I'm not going to sit here all stumped
Bread in the oven is already baking
Do I hear, "Mom, what are you making?"
But voices of children have gone with the breeze
It's only the sound of the wind in the trees
Or was it the chirp of a sparrow or wren
Birds too, are my friends, dear paper and pen.

When you read this, whoever you are
About me never worry for trains can go far
No doubt this to most is not even funny
It's written for pleasure - not for the money
It's so hard when you're old to keep up with the times
So I don't care what I write as long as it rhymes
For written are many strange tales about men
By folks who have friends like paper and pen

If Robert could read this he'd call me a fake
Lacking in talent or what it should take
For sure he would say, it would be more fitting
That Grandma refrained and tended her knitting
Of kings and their castles and tall stately domes
Must we write about these in all of our poems?
Eight lines I have written it shouldn't be ten
Enough for today, dear paper and pen.

Mrs. Mary Sather from Rose Valley,
Saskatchewan, is Alan Carlson's
mother.

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Allan Fraser

Happenings at the River John Library

**by Wilma van der Veen,
Managing Branch Assistant**

New province-wide (minus Halifax) Same Page catalogue launch

In April 2022, a new library system called Same Page was established, creating a catalogue that included all the materials found in provincial libraries with the exception of Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) libraries. Since the launch, the Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library (PARL) has seen a 55% increase in circulation of books, magazines, and other materials compared to pre-COVID numbers. The increase in the number of books moving between regional libraries since the launch of Same Page has remained steady at approximately a whopping 650%, meaning materials are being well shared across the eight regional libraries outside HRM.

The COVID virus is still with us but the library has been once again open to in-person programming and there are lots of new workshops to attend after several years of being closed to such events. There is something for everyone; if you don't find anything of interest then reach out and tell us what you might be looking for.

Arts & Crafts monthly workshop series – Every 1st Saturday of the month

Pictou County and the north shore is a repository for many hobbyists, artists and artisans. Each 1st Saturday of the month, the library will host a different arts & craft workshop. Halloween saw Creative Pictou County, (<https://creativepictoucounty.com>) offer to Pictou & Antigonish libraries holiday-inspired workshops which included making papier mache masks and spooky spider webs. Past and upcoming workshops include basics of photography, painting, leatherwork, felting and more. Our local Marg Jones will be running her popular card-making workshop in December, just in time for the holidays for those of you who want to make a gift instead of buying something made elsewhere. Maybe you already have a creative hobby to occupy your spare time; maybe you want to learn a new hobby. Let us know what arts & crafts you are interested in learning and we will try to find someone to teach it.

Gardening monthly workshop series – Every 2nd Saturday of the month

The RJ Seed Library was launched in spring 2022 with lots of contributions and exchanges. The seed stock is currently low but fall is a time for seed

saving, and thanks to Lesley Longhorn's facilitation of the September Seed Saving workshop, more are now equipped to get into the practice of seed saving. October's workshop was about preserving the harvest; November's was about winter gardening. Future workshops will include growing cannabis for personal use (January), seed ordering (February), garden tool maintenance & sharpening (TBD). This activity spearheaded the creation of the River John Library Garden Club which normally meets every 2nd Tuesday of the month at 1:30 p.m. with a hiatus over the winter.

Fix-It Café monthly series of workshops – Every 3rd Saturday of the month

Some may be wondering what exactly is a Fix-It Café, otherwise known as a Care & Repair event? Repair Café is a part of the grassroots movement that aims to reduce waste, overconsumption, and planned obsolescence. A Fix-It Café event is a space where folks bring household items that they would like to repair and fixers help to make it work again. In essence, the events are a means of teaching skills so that folks can do the repairs themselves with the guidance of skilled persons, instead of just throwing the item away and adding to the landfill. Sewing events have been held with a sewing machine now being available for patron use at the library. Future events will cover basic auto maintenance, repair of light fixtures & small appliances, basic solar systems, tool maintenance, safe use of power tools, basic soldering, tool kits for the home. We are always looking for fixers; perhaps you know of some retired trades persons who might want to volunteer some of their time to help others, if so, then please get in touch.

Astronomy anyone? Join the River John Library Nightowl Skywatching club

The library has a growing club of budding astronomers. The first event - Astronomy 101 in June with David Hoskin of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada (RASC) – saw a dozen people get an introduction to astronomy, and he graciously joined us for our October viewing event. The library has been generously gifted two telescopes, one from a family in River John, and another from the RASC. The plan is to hold at least one skywatching event per month; alas the first three planned had to be cancelled due to uncooperative weather, just par for the course in the world of astronomy. The November's event enabled club members to become familiar with using telescopes, coinciding with a full moon viewing; similar events are planned with an initial

segment to learn about all matters astronomical. At events you are welcome to use the library's telescopes or bring your own. Join us as we explore and learn about the night skies.

Board game events:

Every 2nd Tuesday of the month, 6-8 p.m., and every 4th Saturday of the month, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Do you wish you and or your children would take some time away from screens? Are you wanting a family friendly event? Well look no further. For folks of all ages, the Library is holding monthly board game events: For children: Snakes and Ladders, Hats Off, Jenga, Tiddley Winks, Kerplunk & more. For older children & adults: Classic Monopoly, Who wants to be a Millionaire, Animology, -opoly, Worst Case Scenario Survival Game, Beginner's Mahjong, Upwords, Boggle, Trivial Pursuit, Super Quiz, Master Mind, Password, Malarky, Taboo, Isolation, Chess, Chinese checkers, Backgammon, Cranium & Cranium Cadoo (for kids), Cross Cribb (a version of Cribb) and more... A big thank you to those who have donated games.

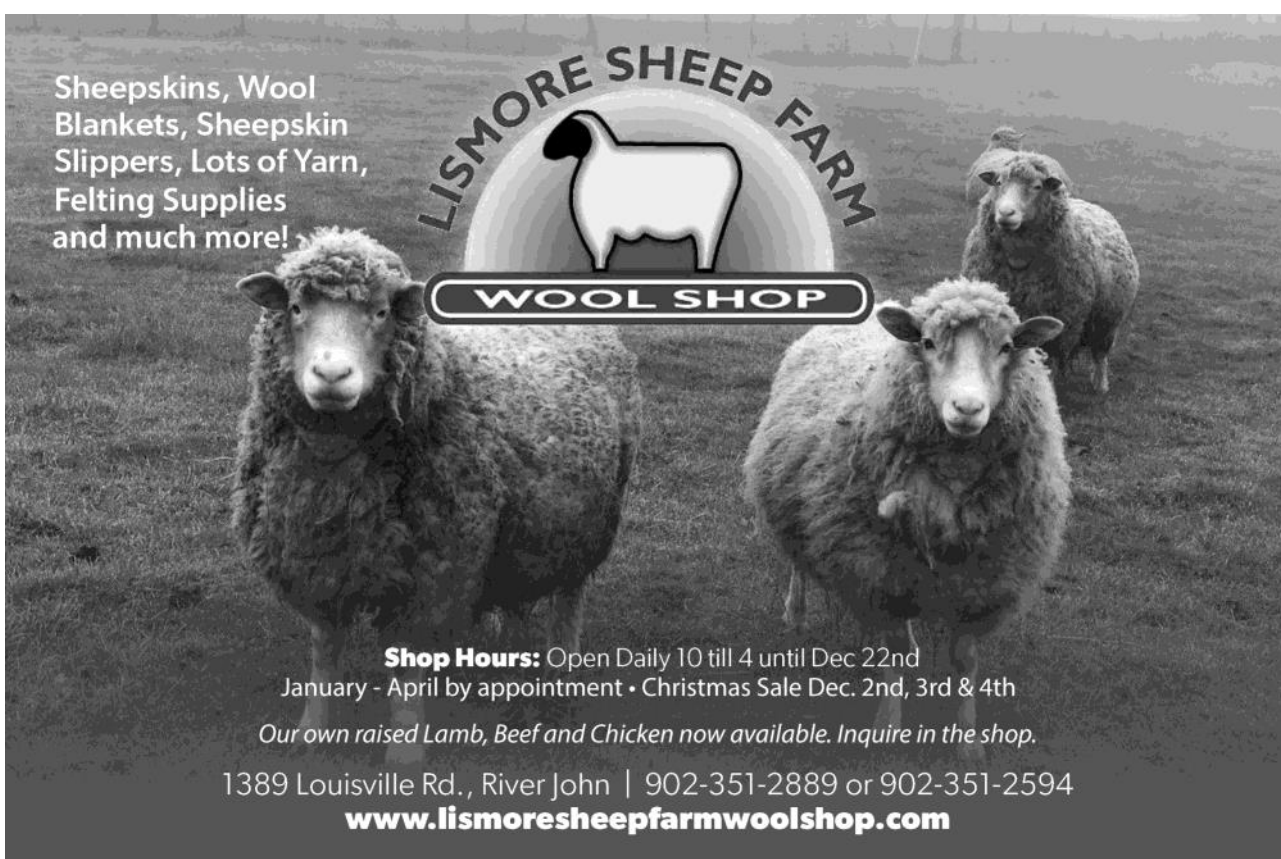
Book Clubs new and old - monthly

Book clubs come in many different formats. River John Library now has two book clubs that meet on-site, both suitable for older teens and adults; new members always welcome.

1) The River John Library Book Club: The library has had a general book club for as many years as the library has existed in its present location. Facilitated by Barb Acker, our part-time library clerk, books are chosen collectively where individual group members as well as library staff provide suggestions for books to read. Books read so far in 2022 include: A Man Called Ove, Lusitania, Emancipation Day, Educated, Water for Elephants, Dead Wake, Dirty Birds, My Husband's Secret, and The Good Sister. They meet every 3rd Tuesday of the month, 4 p.m.

2) The River John Library Banned Books Book Club: Book banning is not a new phenomenon but with the increased right-wing extremism of the past few years south of the border also appearing in parts of Canada, there has been a dramatic increase in attempts to ban or challenge books. Many social issues are examined and we explore why the materials have been challenged. Not for the faint of heart or easily offended, respectful and stimulating discussions ensue where joy and sadness are shared.

Continued on next page



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For more information check out the Saltwire article: <https://www.saltwire.com/atlantic-canada/communities/banned-book-club-dives-into-controversial-works-100775707/>. Some of the books read so far include: This One Summer, The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian, To Kill a Mockingbird, Betty: The Helen Betty Osborne Story, Three Wishes: Palestinian and Israeli Children Speak. Upcoming books include The Handmaid's Tale, and The Book of Negroes. Suitable for young people and adults, they meet every 1st Tuesday of the month, 6:30 p.m.

Playgroup – Wednesday mornings 10-12, self-guided

The River John library has an awesome children's space that so often sits empty (sad face) ever since we lost the school. Fortunately, there has been an influx of new families in the area, many with small pre-school age children. The library does not offer daycare or babysitting services, however, there is lots to entertain children of any age – there are arts & crafts supplies, lots of building blocks, Lego, learning and reading activities and of course lots of books from which stories can be read. The library of course welcomes children of all ages during open times. If there are particular activities parents would like to undertake with their children and some supplies are required, let us know and we will do our best to acquire necessary materials.

Upcoming programming

Next steps – A series of workshops for graduating high school students

A series of workshops are being organized targeting graduating high school students as they soon begin making decisions about the next phase of their lives. An initial workshop will help students explore their options – study, work, volunteer, travel - considering their interests & skills, undertaking a process without pressure from family or society telling them what they should do. Subsequent workshops will focus on applying to university and community colleges and associated scholarships, employment options and preparing for job market, a human library activity with New Glasgow's Mentoring Plus where students can engage with persons who have been employed in different occupations and professions.

The End of Life Stage – Introducing the Death Café series of workshops

Death is the one certainty we all share; we all know we are going to die, the how and when is generally an unknown. It can't be said enough, but planning for events and situations that will arise when our end of time comes can save a lot of grief and stress for all concerned. The Death Cafe movement began in the UK in 2011, and has spread throughout the world. Its primary objective is "...to increase awareness of death with a view to helping people make the most of their (finite) lives. [It] is a group directed discussion of death with no agenda, objec-

tives or themes. It is a discussion group rather than a grief support or counselling session." (www.Deathcafe.com). This series of workshops will offer an opportunity to discuss any and all aspects of death and dying in an inviting, secular and confidential space with no judgement, acting as a springboard for deeper awareness of end-of-life choice and disposition. Some workshops will have facilitators to discuss specific topics such as advanced care planning including creating your Personal Directive, steps for preparation of wills and other end-of-life documents, options for burial including home funerals and green burials.

The library is more than just a place for books and other reading materials. We are also a learning and a sharing space for the community. We are always looking for suggestions for workshops and activities. Remember in order to participate in library programs, we ask that participants have a library card – it is easy to register for a card and it's free. A world of exploration, ideas and learning awaits. Call 902-351-2599, e-mail riverjohn@parl.ns.ca or drop in.

St Michael's Church

by Netta Heukshorst

After 14 years of dedicated service to our parish here and at Immaculate Conception in Truro, we said farewell to Father Darius Miskowicz. A well-attended reception was held in his honour as we wished him well at his next posting in the U.S.

We welcomed in his place, Father Andrew Rembarczyk and Father Jim O'Conner.

The church sustained minor damage during hurricane Fiona, some siding blew off the peak. It sure could have been worse.

Regularly scheduled Mass is on Saturdays at 4 p.m. After each Mass a fellowship hour is enjoyed downstairs in the hall, all are welcome to attend.

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What is A Ribbon Shirt ?

by Paul Martin

Kwe' (hello);

For this issue of the Pioneer I have mulled over which aspect of Mi'kmaq culture to present to the reader. I have written in previous articles about The Salite' and, later, about the Powwow or Mawiomi and have lately contemplated discussing topics from the meaning of Truth and Reconciliation to the importance of Treaty Day to how the early Mi'kmaq travelled from Newfoundland to Cape Breton in their ocean-going canoes. These topics I feel are interesting and important and beg to be explained by way of the printed word. There will, however, be ample time to cover each of these topics in subsequent editions. Today I have settled on a short history and meaning of Mi'kmaq regalia (not costumes) and, in particular, the men's ribbon shirt which, in various styles, were on display at this summer's Mawiomis.

Ribbon Shirts are regalia items that are worn by Indigenous people of many tribes throughout North America and the Mi'kmaq are no exception. From indigenous gatherings to boardrooms, ribbon shirts are a visual symbol of Native pride. They can be subtle or showy, but ribbon shirts almost always have a hint of personal expression and tribal tradition. Prior to the 1800s, Mi'kmaq men traditionally wore buckskin coats and pants and they were often decorated with items such as animal skins, furs,

bear claws, bone, teeth and quills to name a few. Paint, or pigment, was used to further decorate their clothing with drawings of animals, birds, humans and natural elements like the sun, moon, stars and water. The dominant paint colours of yellow and red paint were made from yellow and red ochre while charcoal was used for black paint and ground white shells made up white colouring. Incidentally, each of these colours has great significance in the Mi'kmaq culture and could make up an entirely separate article but for now suffice to say that they, in part, represent the four directions that are prayed to; North (white), South (red), East (yellow) and West (black). Other pigment came from roots, bark, flowers and leaves.

When Europeans came to Turtle Island (North America), Indigenous people traded with them, receiving cloth, ribbons and beads in exchange for furs and meat. It was at this point that fabric shirts gradually became standard wear for Indigenous men during the early 1800s. The shirts, developed from European Trade Shirts were usually made of cotton or linen fabric and were preferred by Indigenous people over their traditional garments, perhaps because of their light weight and uniqueness. Colourful silk ribbons and beads were two other trade items brought to North America by the Europeans. The bright colours of the ribbons and beads made them very popular among Indigenous people and so it followed that these items were added to

the fabric shirts and often replaced previous traditional decorations to make up the more modern and familiar regalia shirts.

Today, ribbon shirts are often worn at ceremonies and celebrations and sometimes, as stated, as an everyday garment. Additionally, these garments are worn by men and women along with their everyday jeans and running shoes. My father's ribbon shirt was passed down to me and I recently had the opportunity to wear it to my mother's celebration of life and to the celebration of life of a good friend. My father's ribbon shirt is a cream-coloured open-necked pullover and is adorned with the aforementioned white, black, red and yellow ribbons. It is fairly subtle but can be further personalized if so desired. In fact my idea is to add symbols representing the marten, which is my father's family clan, as well as a symbol representing the bear which is my mother's family clan.

The ribbon shirt has an interesting and meaningful history; it has survived as an important part of our culture and heritage and it is still in wide use today. You can readily see ribbon shirts of all designs on colourful display alongside traditional regalia by simply going online and checking out pictures of a Mi'kmaq Mawiomi or for that matter any indigenous gathering across North America. Thanks for reading, and until next time;

Wantako'ti (wanda ho dee) Peace.

The Kitchin Shipyard

by Beulah Wright

In the period of the mid-1800s to the end of the century, the thriving village of River John was well-known as the birthplace of at least one hundred and seventy handsome wooden sailing ships, the greatest number outside of New Glasgow, built on the northern shore. Not only in number, River John holds title to the largest ships and lays claim to some of the fastest as well. These were magnificent vessels, some of them surviving for many years and sailing all over the world, carrying all kinds of cargo. And they were commanded by River John captains and River John crews, from captain to cabin boy. Crossing the Atlantic was no novelty to these men, and often the shipyard owners were the commanders of the vessels' maiden voyages.

If you take the River Road on the east side of the village of River John, you will come to a state-ly home, facing the river, built by James Kitchin Senior, and just below that on the shore was the site of the busy Kitchin shipyard. That home is the only tangible reminder of the Kitchin family, once so prominent in the village. Behind the house are several large outbuildings which once housed the forge for the metalwork and other necessary work-ings to create ships.

James, termed James Kitchin Senior - some-times spelled Kitchen - was born in England in 1818, and came to Pictou about 1822, with his parents and a younger brother. His father, also named James, was a shoemaker and a merchant and he and his wife Elizabeth, had twelve children in all. Not much is known about the younger surviving children, except for one daughter Martha, who married George Harris of Pictou. The religion of the family was of The Society of Friends, or Quak-ers, probably the only Quakers in Nova Scotia at that time. His mother died and is buried in Pictou, but his father died at sea, when returning from England in 1853.

James Senior married a Pictou girl, Elizabeth MacConnell, became a merchant and moved to River John, where he built a store in 1844, but soon entered the shipbuilding industry. His first vessel launched was a brigantine, the "Express," of 103 tons. All the vessels built later, 70 or more, were much larger. His son, James Junior, joined him in River John in 1850. Before long the Kitchin ship- yard was launching as many as three vessels each year, each one not only larger, but more magnifi- cent. It is a pity that a complete list of the Kitchin ships has not survived. The Kitchins were fortu- nate, indeed, to have in their employ a master ma- rine architect and designer, Duncan Johnson. He soon became noted and was given credit in many newspaper articles announcing yet another launch- ing from the Kitchin yard. One of his models won first in an international competition. Many River John men were employed and they seem to have been happy and loyal, judging by the number of babies given the name Kitchin as their middle name.



The Kitchin shipyard ended its history in 1884, with the launching of the "Warrior" which was the largest square rigger in Pictou County, with a tonnage of 1,687 tons. She was the result of a rivalry with another famous builder, Archibald MacKen- zie, on the other side of the river, whose ship "Caldera" was actually longer, but was measured first and tonnage - deck space - established. So, James Kitchin added another deck, later removed, as it was rather a nuisance, and the "Warrior" won the title! Sadly, the "Warrior" did not have an illus- trious history, first causing financial difficulties, then an enquiry engendered by a motley and mutu- ous crew (not River Johners!) and finally insur- ance losses due to damage at sea. But nothing could take from her the proud title of the largest ship.

James Jr. married Minnie Lane in 1874, and they had six children, but left few descendants, most having died young. The Kitchin home was left to daughter Louise, who later married Albert Munro, but had no children. She was River John's postmistress for many years and maintained her position in River John society. She was very proud of her parents and her father's shipbuilding success. Louise loved to display some of the curios he had brought home from his travels, including a long- lived parrot with a salty vocabulary, as well as large glass demijohns covered in braided rope, to ease their passage in the ship's hold, containing spirits from the West Indies. In addition, the house was furnished with furniture from England, such as mahogany bookshelves, tables and cabinets, dam- ask table cloths, crystal and silver service.



Painting of the "Warrior" The largest ship built in Pictou County



This picture is from the photo collection of Stewart Joudrey (Senior). The girl in the picture is Stewart's older sister Helen Joudrey. She is on the MacQuarrie Bridge, with Salem United church in the background. Do any of our readers know when this bridge was taken down and replaced with a causeway?




This picture is from the photo collection of Stewart Joudrey (Senior). It was taken about 1946 on the present Sunrise Trail, Route 6 in River John. The three children on the back of the old farm wagon are siblings Donnie, Betty and Stewart Joudrey. They are on "Bill's Hill" and "Bert's Corner" is seen in the distance. Notice the road is not paved.

(Editor's note: Bill MacDonald's Hill was on the hill west of the village, beside the property now owned by Cathy Covey. Bert's corner refers to the turn as you approach the village where Bert Jollimore lived and his son still resides.



Front L-R: Minnie Kitchin, James Kitchin Jr., their daughter Louise (Kitchin) Munro

Back: Dr. J. S. Murray, Albert Munro (Louise's husband)



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“Central” The Telephone Office in River John

by Beulah Wright

In this day and age when even many of our children manage their own cell phone, it may be difficult for us to imagine a time when the local telephone office played an important part in the life of the community, from ringing an alarm to alert the fire department, calling for medical help in sickness or accidents, or just connecting neighbours who wanted to chat.

The telephone came to River John about the turn of the century and by 1908 there were 28 telephones in service. This convenient means of communication caught on quickly and by 1917 there were many Maritime Telephone and Telegraph subscribers in the village and in some of the outlying areas. This required the services of a local telephone operator who managed the switchboard in their home. There were five different telephone operators in River John. The first was Mrs. Angus MacKenzie, the former Jessie Sutherland, and her house was located near the Riverside Hotel but is no longer because in 1944, it was destroyed by fire.

Long before that fire, the second operator, Alice Proudlock, had taken over and ran the telephone office in the Alma House, owned by her father, now the home of John and Christiane Gill. Alice resigned when she married Angus Johnson and moved “Out West.” By then West Branch was part of the River John exchange and was connected to five rural lines.

The third operator was Nina, Mrs. Edward Munro, and the office moved across the street, to their home, where it stayed until the dial system came to River John and the office was closed. When Nina passed in 1936, her sister Vida Stramberg took over and was operator for 14 years, until at age 72, she passed it on to Kathleen, Mrs. Doug Munro, who ran it, with the help of her family, for 24 years until 1974.

Kathleen and Doug had five children who were brought up in the telephone office. The surviving three, Sandra MacKay, David Munro and Marilyn Heighton have lots of memories of that time, and the experiences of their childhood. The job was a 24/7 responsibility, so there were no vacations, no Sunday afternoon drives, no trips to the beach and rarely a meal with everyone at the table. David remembers that Christmas Day, for instance, was one of the busiest for the family, as people would be calling relatives and each other with holiday greetings. Kathleen, “Kay” would hire an employee



The Munro House with telephone booth

sometimes, and pay her out of her own pocket, most often, Beth MacKay, so they could sit down to have Christmas dinner without interruption.

But, for the time, effort, and dedication to the position, the wages received were not that good. Sandra often had to take over and as time passed all of the children would help out at the switchboard to give their mother a break. And they probably learned some valuable life skills from doing so, even if they may have been reluctant at the time, such as the importance of confidentiality, patience and a friendly manner. Kay and Doug insisted on those traits and taught them well. The phone would ring, sometimes in the middle of the night, maybe someone needed a doctor, for a sick child, and Kay or Doug would be patient and understanding and get them connected.

The young people would be told never to listen in on conversations, but it was nearly impossible to prevent, as they had to keep checking to see if the line was still busy. The telephone operator knew all occurrences and events, as well as the community secrets, but never passed them on. The younger people still won't, though memories bring a few chuckles and eye twinkles.

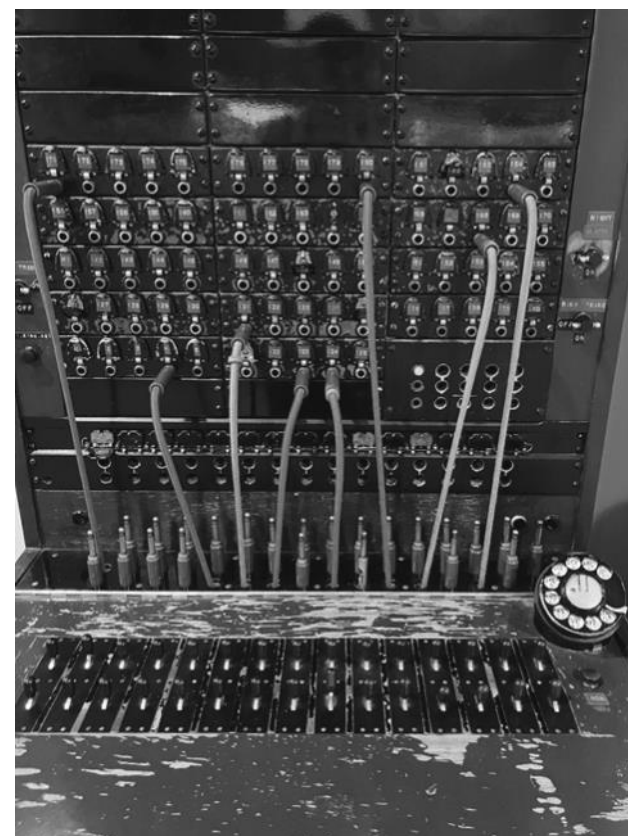
Another important task for the telephone operator was notifying the fire department, as someone would call to report a fire and the alarm would be rung to notify the firemen that their assistance was

needed. The alarm was right there, activated by a switch and Marilyn remembers how loud it was!

For residents with no phone of their own there was in later years a telephone booth outside the operator's home that the caller would use, coin operated, to call Central and make their calls. Before the booth, callers would just walk into the house where the phone was kept, and call the operator from there.

There was a fair amount of bookkeeping required, as long distance calls had to be recorded and tallies kept. In the museum there are samples of these papers as well as a manual from Maritime Tel and Tel. This contains very detailed instructions on the manner in which calls must be answered, how things had to be handled, and then of course the rates that determined the number of coins to be inserted and all the other usual bookkeeping tasks.

Then in 1974, the dial system came to River



A switchboard

John and everything changed; the office was closed, the items belonging to Maritime Tel and Tel were taken away and the operator no longer had a job, rewarded merely with a silver tray for many years of dedication. The Munro family had served the community well, and their efforts were appreciated by the local residents.

Just one more institution made obsolete by progress.

Editor's notes: “Central,” as we called the switchboard, provided another valuable service. In the days before answering machines, my father, the local undertaker, would be aware that an elderly person was low and would call Kay to tell her that he was going to the Giles's in Wentworth for Sunday afternoon dinner if she needed to get hold of him.

Also recently, when, due to the hurricane, we were cut off by both downed land lines, no internet and non-operational cell towers for (in some cases) longer than a month, we definitely realize the importance of the ability to communicate!



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New book on the history of medicine in NS

The History of Medicine in Nova Scotia from Confederation to Medicare: The Transition from Allopathic to Scientific Medicine.

by **Allan Marble**

This present book is the third of a series of three volumes which I have written on the history of medicine in Nova Scotia. The first volume covered the last half of the eighteenth century and identified surgeons as the main providers of health care, and smallpox as the disease which led to the deaths of hundreds of first settlers and their families.¹ The second volume focussed on the history of medicine during the pre-Confederation years of the nineteenth century. During this latter period allopathic physicians became the chief health providers, however, they were faced with competition from several alternative medical practitioners including homeopaths, hydropaths, electrotherapists, phrenologists and mesmerists, as well as practitioners of botanic, eclectic, and Thomsonian medicine.²

The purpose of this third volume is to inform the reader of the major changes which took place in both medicine and surgery in Nova Scotia due to the epoch discoveries of Louis Pasteur and Joseph Lister in the 1860s. Their discoveries initiated the slow transition from allopathic to scientific-based medicine in the province. Once Pasteur's connection between bacteria and disease was accepted by physicians and surgeons in Nova Scotia, a remarkable change took place regarding their understanding about how to improve public health conditions for citizens with regard to clean water, the proper treatment of sewerage, and with immunization.

Doctors in Nova Scotia also immediately recognized the significance of Lister's antiseptic procedures and began to use them to control infections of surgical wounds post-operatively.

Prior to Confederation, members of the medical profession had actively petitioned the government to establish a hospital for the general public, but to no avail. When Dr. Charles Tupper became Premier and Provincial Secretary in 1864, however, he was determined that Halifax should have a general hospital and convinced Halifax City Council to partner with the Province to establish the Provincial and City Hospital which opened in 1868 and which became the Victoria General Hospital in 1887. This book shows that, following Confederation, other medical doctors in Nova Scotia began to take active and leading roles in convincing the Provincial Government to pass a Public Health Act, and to encourage municipal governments to establish rural hospitals for the general public and county asylums for the mentally ill. Due to the efforts of the medical profession, the healthcare system in Nova Scotia began to slowly evolve and improve during the last half of the nineteenth century.

This present volume also includes a discussion of three additional important events in the medical history of Nova Scotia which, heretofore, have not been addressed by historians. I refer here to the response of the medical and nursing professions to the Halifax Explosion, the Spanish Influenza Pandemic, and the First and Second World Wars. During the first three days following the Explosion, 90 doctors from Halifax and 153 doctors from other parts of

Nova Scotia, along with hundreds of nurses, provided treatment and care for the injured until the doctors and nurses from the American Hospitals arrived on the 9th of December, 1917. During the Spanish Flu pandemic it was the Mayor of Halifax, Dr. Arthur G. Hawkins, Public Health Officer Dr. William H. Hattie and Quarantine Officer Dr. Norman E. MacKay who took the lead in establishing regulations and giving directions to the general public to isolate themselves. The response of doctors and nurses in Nova Scotia to both World Wars was absolutely remarkable, considering that 236 doctors and 300 nurses from Nova Scotia enlisted in either the Canadian Army Medical Corps or the Royal Army Medical Corps during World War I. These doctors and nurses constituted over 15% of Canada's medical officers and nursing sisters in that war whereas Nova Scotia had only 6% of Canada's population.

The book contains 360 pages and 157 photographs. It was self-published and is available from me using either cash, cheque, or e-transfer. The book sells for \$30. My email address is allan.marble@ns.sympatico.ca

1. Marble, A.E.: *Surgeons, Smallpox, and the Poor, A History of Medicine and Social Conditions in Nova Scotia, 1749-1799.* McGill-Queens University Press, Montreal, 1993.

2. Marble, A.E.: *Physicians, Pestilence, and the Poor, A History of Medicine and Social Conditions in Nova Scotia, 1800-1867.* Trafford Publishing, Victoria, 2006.

Local Plane Spotters

by **Mary Beth Sutherland**

Recently, I was looking through some photos and these ones puzzled me; who were the young men with my grandfather? I asked Jim and Nancy MacLeod for assistance; they sent me to Stewart Joudrie. I had a delightful visit with Stewart and Chrissy Joudrie and learned an interesting story.

There was an after-school-hours Cadet Program in the River John School in the late 1950s. The Cadet Leader was my grandfather, "Colonel Dan" Sutherland. Stewart told me the cadet members wore a badge on their arm to signify their role and were taught to identify planes. They were known as Plane Spotters, so any plane flying over the skies of River John and area would be identified quickly. If the plane appeared suspicious, then a report of the plane, model, make, and the direction it was flying, etc., would be telephoned to a special military instructor. The report would then be passed on to the Chief Observer or the Regional Observer of that district, who, if necessary, would contact the Department of National Defence and Royal Canadian Air Force.

Stewart remembered being taught to identify the plane by its wing span, shape, how the engine hung, its markings, and so on.

"We knew all about them." Stewart also said, "Dan was a military man, he taught us well, and he was also good to us boys."

In the 1950s, the Cold War, as it was known, between Russia and the United States and their allies, had started. There was fear of Russia bombing the USA and their allies. In Canada it felt as if we were stuck in the middle; bombs could fly over Canada from Russia to the USA. These plane spotters were part of the early warning system in case sometime was about to happen. My mother also remembers Granddad hurrying outside to check

any planes flying overhead.

I found a letter dated June 1955 referring to plans for a provincial military operation called "June Bug." The plan was for various planes to fly over and around the province as an identification test for all spotters.

In these photos are Charles Langille, the son of Hazel and Clyde Langille. His brothers Arnold (Arnie), Raymond, Colin and Wayne still live in River John.

Earl Fisher was the son of Alfred and Leota Fisher, he was also a younger brother of Elsie Langille.

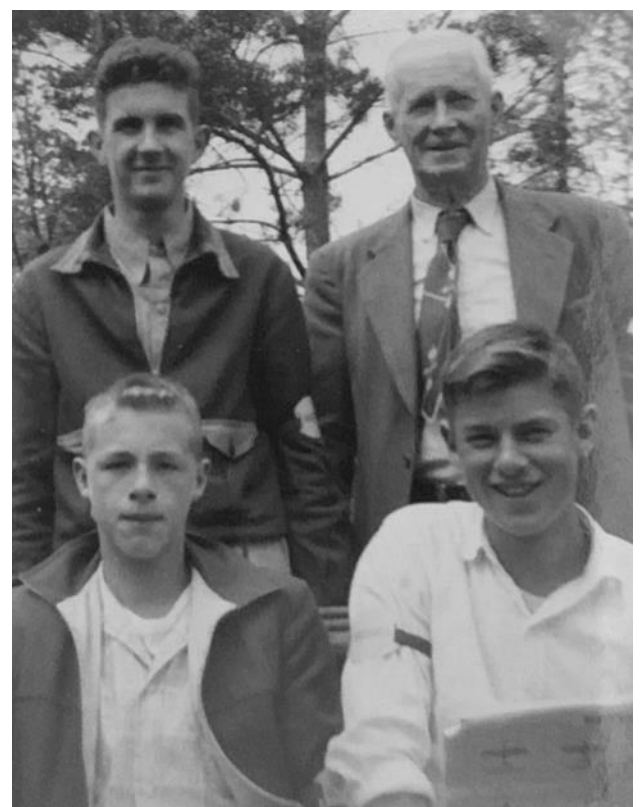


Charles Langille and Stewart Joudrie holding a plane identification poster

Richard Heron's parents were Harry and Grace Heron; his widowed mother married Jim Henry. His sisters, Nina, Mary, and the late Martha were "the Henry girls," who return every year they can to visit family and friends.

Stewart Joudrie's parents were Nelson and Grace Joudrey. Stewart is father to Donna, Stewart and Jillian, he is also Chelsey and Cody Joudrie's grandfather.

"Colonel Dan" Sutherland was the CO of the No. 2 Construction Battalion in WW1 and he commanded the Second Battalion of the Pictou Highlanders in WW2. He was very active in his community of River John.



Back Row: Earl Fisher and "Col Dan" Sutherland
Front Row: Richard Heron and Stewart Joudrie

Excerpt from the Diary of Reverend James MacGregor, Part 5

shared by Rev. Glen Matheson, D.D.,
Scotsburn, NS.

Rev. MacGregor's diary, 1786. (Note that the East River in Rev. MacGregor's day had two settlements. What is now New Glasgow was called Lower Settlement, and what is now Sunnybrae was called the Upper Settlement. The group of houses that would years later be called Pictou was called the Harbour in those early years, and "Pictou" meant this entire region of Nova Scotia rather than just the community.)

"As I had not yet been to the Middle River, I took opportunity of visiting it this week. It is the smallest of the rivers, and had only eleven families on it - four of them emigrants from Dumfries, the rest, Highlanders. Here I became acquainted with Robert Marshall, a man worthy of being held in everlasting remembrance. He and his family suffered every thing but death in Prince Edward Island, by hunger and nakedness; for though they had plenty of clothes of all kinds when they came there, he had to part with every article of them that could possibly be spared for provision. Soon after he came to Pictou, he lost a most amiable consort; and for some time had a great struggle to bring up his family; but he was filled with the joy and peace of believing, and abounded in hope, not only of everlasting happiness, but of hearing the joyful sound of the gospel in Pictou. He was afterwards and elder, and a great comfort to me; but for many a day he had to go to her sermon in an old red coat which an old soldier had given him, and a weaver's apron, to hide the holes and rags of his trousers. He had, I believe, the poorest hut in Pictou; but many a happy night did I enjoy in it. Robert Marshall was eminent for honesty and plainness, for charity, liberality of sentiments, and public spirit. He was very useful to the young generation, teaching, and warning, and directing them; and he would reprove the greatest man in the province as readily as the least, for any plain violation of the law, as profane swearing, or travelling on the Sabbath. In time he got over his poverty; but he had his trials as well as his comforts all his days.

"It was no little discouragement to me that I scarcely saw any books among the people. Those who spoke English had, indeed, a few, which they had brought with them from their former abodes, but scarcely one of them had got any addition to his stock since. Almost all of them had a Bible; and it was to be seen with some of the Highlanders who could not read. There was no school in the place. Squire Patterson had built a small house, and hired a teacher for a few months, now and then, for his own children. In three or perhaps four other places, three or four of the nearest neighbours had united and hired a teacher for a few months at different times, but this was a great exception. What was more discouraging, I could not see a situation in Pictou where a school could be maintained for a year, so thin and scattered was the population. Besides, many of the Highlanders were perfectly indifferent about education, for neither themselves nor any of their ancestors had ever tasted its pleasure or its profit. But afterwards I found that children made quicker progress in the small and temporary schools with which the people were obliged to content themselves, than they did at home in their large and stationary schools: and I found it easier than I had thought to rouse the Highlanders to attend to the education of their children, as far as to read the Bible.

(There are also some notes not dated but written years later that give a good picture of his early days here)

"In Pictou not a loaf could be afforded of our

own wheat. There was no mill to grind, now we have plenty of mills, and plenty of loaves. We had an imitation flour by the hand-mill, but of oats-mill we had not a semblance, but now we have oats-mills and oat-meal so good, it should not be come from Scotland."

"There was not a foot of road in the district, and for carriage, neither sleighs or gigs. The chief of travel was by canoes, or along the shore when the tide was out, and most disagreeable it often was, especially on crossing brooks and guts, where we had often to go afoot, but in very soft ground. There was a path from the West to the Middle River, and from the Middle River to the East, but no path from any of the rivers to the harbour"

"There was not a merchant in the district, nor any who commonly kept goods for sale, or made the third of his living by the sale of goods. Little schooners came round in the summer with some necessary articles, to which the people repaired in their canoes, and got a few things for which they exchanged a little produce. Sometimes James Patterson got a few pounds worth more than he needed, and afterward sold them."

"In this town there was not a single house for years after I came here. The town was some years without a single inhabitant, then there was a shed with one family, then another with it, and so on till it became what we see now."

"As for our population, Pictou did not then contain five hundred souls. If Merigomish be included, I suppose they would amount to a few more souls than five hundred."

An individual who arrived in Pictou in the year following, and traversed the eastern part of Nova Scotia, thus describes the state of matters then: "In 1787 there were only four or five houses from Salmon River to Antigonish. There was not one inhabitant on the Cape Breton side of the Gut of Canso, and but one on the Nova Scotia side. In 1788 there was one house at Ship Harbour. I may add that from Pictou to Co-caigne, there were but four or five families at River John, and Mr. Waugh and his family at Tatamagouche, some refugees at Wallace, and but one family at Bay Verte. At Miramichi there were but five families."

"There were so few houses in Pictou with any accommodations, that I could get no convenient place for lodging. On the East River there was but one house, within two-and-a-half miles of the place fixed upon for a meeting-house, which had two fireplaces; and here I had to fix, for there was none equal to it within four miles of the other place of public worship. Still it was very inconvenient, for the heads of the family had to sit and sleep in the same room; but I

could not better myself. This circumstance fixed my lot on the East River to this day. After two years I got a house where I had a room to myself."

"During the whole of the harvest and the fall I saw no preparation for building any of the meeting-houses. This discouragement, with the rest, affected me so, that, if I could have left Pictou, I would have done it, even late in the fall. I saw little fruit of my labours; still Providence was, in many respects, favourable. Though public worship had been conducted in the open air, till we were compelled by the cold to go into a fire house, yet we were never disturbed by a shower."

"The upper settlement of the East River being farther off from the place of public worship than any other part of the congregation, it was agreed to let them have sermon in their own settlement three Sabbaths annually, and I agreed to give them three week days besides. This arrangement continued till the second minister came to Pictou, when they got more. I saw them the first time early October, and on Sabbath they came all to hear with great joy and wonder; for they had not indulged the hope of ever seeing a minister in their settlement. They had very poor accommodations. I had to sleep on a little straw on the floor."

"On November the 15th winter set in. We had a few showers of snow before, which melted away; but the snow of that day continued until the middle of April, and some of it till May. I was tired of winter before New Year's Day, but before March was over, I forgot that it should go away at all. The snow became gradually deeper, 'til it was between two and three feet deep; when women could travel only where a path was made, and men betook themselves to snow-shoes. We had now to alter the plan of preaching entirely. People could not sit in a house without fire, and they could not travel far. It was therefore agreed that I should preach two Sabbaths at the East River, two upon the Harbour, two upon the West River, and two upon the Middle River, and then renew the circle, 'til the warm weather should return. The upper settlement of the East River, being unprovided with snow-shoes, were excluded through the whole winter from communication with the rest of the people, as effectually as if they had belonged to another world, excepting one visit by two young men, who made a sort of snow-shoes of small tough withes, plaited and interwoven in show-shoe frames. This circulating plan of preaching was no little inconvenience to me. For six weeks in eight I was from home, almost totally deprived of my books and of all accommodation for study, often changing my lodging."

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MacDonald's Cove

by Beulah Jane Wright.

You might not realize it is there – an unmarked little beach, at Seafoam, secluded and serene beneath the cliffs, but the locals, the campground people and the cottagers enjoy it. There is still a wharf, favoured now by sea birds such as cormorants and gulls which line up the length of it like soldiers. The wharf provides some protection for the beach, but it is off limits to visitors, as a place of risk.

At one time though, MacDonald's Cove was a busy fishing area. Sam Brody, a clothing merchant, from Springhill moved to River John, where he set up a store. About 1911 he built a lobster factory at Melville, and that quickly expanded into a full scale operation. In the early days, the fish plant owned many of the fishing boats and provided bait, gas, gear and accommodation for the fishermen as well as the factory workers. Many of the 20 or so women were from New Brunswick and would stay for the season. There were bunkhouses, a cookhouse, a weigher's office, a bait shed and one or more trap sheds.

Before the wharf was constructed in 1945, the fishing boats were anchored offshore and dories were used for travelling between boat and shore. As far back as 1893, there is a letter from Ottawa, Department of Public Works with the result of an examination of the area in regard for a request for a wharf and breakwater, which was denied because of the estimated cost of \$36,000. or more and of "local benefit" only.

In the Museum there is another document from the Municipality, dated May 1900, paying the land owner the sum of \$27.50 in compensation for the



Fishing boats at MacDonald's Cove 1952

construction of a road from the highway, the Sunrise Trail, down to MacDonald's Cove, and a further \$1.50 for the gates for the same road.

But eventually the wharf was built.

In the early fifties, Betty Holmes was the cook and Laura Elliott was the cookee. Betty treated all her customers very well and there were always snacks set out for after hours and delicious cookies available for visiting children and probably parents too.

Some of the two or more generations, of fishermen using MacDonald's Cove for their lobster fishing were Gollan, MacDonald, Langille, Mackenzie, Mertin, Joudrey, Robison and Holmes, and others. Sam Brody's son, Bill had taken over the company and moved on to Caribou where he established Maritime Packers. The plant at Melville was closed. Dredging was needed, at the Cove, in order that the fishing boats could more easily come in to the wharf until finally there was only Rollie Gollan still fishing from MacDonald's Cove. Most of the buildings were moved away and put to other use, and finally there was nothing left to show that MacDonald's Cove had been a busy place.

The Department of Fisheries had no further use for the area, and there was talk of removing the wharf. The local residents did not want to see that happen, as further erosion of the beach would follow and they wanted the beach to be preserved for local use. In 1997, they set up the MacDonald's Cove Preservation Association, acquired the wharf and land and still maintain the area for the enjoyment of the public. In summer it is a great place to swim, collect sea glass or walk the beach, quiet and peaceful.



Taken at MacDonald's Cove in May of 1928 or 1929.

Back row – L-R Billy Thompson, John Langille, Fred MacNabb, Chalmers Bigney, Collie Dwyer, George Dwyer

Mid. Row – Rueben Dominey, Gordon Robinson, James Holmes, Ned Coolen, Percy Langille, John Langille

Front Row – Kiah Cook, Dewey Joudrey, Stanley Hayden, Collie Langille, David Holmes, Jim Murphy, Sam Brody (Owner)

River John Festival Days 2022

by Chelsey Joudrie,
River John Festival Days Coordinator

It wasn't hard to tell how much we have all been missing celebrating our village together; River John Festival Days 2022 July 22nd-27th was one for the books! Not only were we impressed by the attendance and participation at events, but the financial support we also received from local businesses and individuals was incredibly encouraging.

We would like to thank the Festival Days Committee, organizations and individuals who planned and facilitated the events during the week. Without all of your planning and hard work, River John Festival Days would cease to exist!

That being said, there are many different ways to get involved with Festival Days and if you would like to see how you can play your part in Festival Days 2023, please connect with us via email at rjfestivaldays@gmail.com or via our Facebook page.

2022 was full of "High Tides and Good Vibes" and we cannot wait to see what our 2023 Festival Days has in store!

Ed note: People who are new to our village may not realize that River John Festival Days is a week-long event which has taken place in our community annually (except for COVID years) since 1985, when we celebrated 200 years of the arrival of European settlers. It is celebrated on the last full week in July. We are justly proud of this festival which involves many moving parts and organizations. The photo collage will show: the hearty breakfasts served by various community groups, the display of sheep shearing, and spinning at Lismore Sheep Farm, the ball tournament, children's parade, tie-dyeing workshops in the park, trivia night, chocolate bar bingo, the warden's tea and birthday cake, the Pioneer's own graphic designer, Dylan Langille, selling Festival Days T-shirts, the lobster trap race across the river, the festival parade and finally glorious fireworks over the water. Something for everyone!

Christmas Cookies Recipe

by Regan Campbell

Chocolate Pixies

1/4 C Butter
4 sq Unsweetened Chocolate
2 C Flour (divided)
2 C White Sugar
4 Eggs
2 tsp Baking Powder
1/2 tsp Salt
1/2 C Walnuts/Pecans (chopped)
Icing Sugar

Melt butter & chocolate, stir to blend. Cool
Beat together chocolate mixture, 1 c flour, sugar, eggs, baking powder, salt until well mixed. Stir in remaining flour & nuts. Cover & refrigerate 2 hours or overnight. Shape 2 tsp dough into 1 inch ball. Roll in icing sugar and place on baking sheet.

Bake @ 350F for 12-15 minutes.

NOTE: These cookies are chewy. If not using within 2 days, these attractive and delicious cookies are best stored in the freezer in air-tight containers. Also this recipe doubles very easily.

MERRY CHRISTMAS from: Campbell's Christmas Kitchen. ENJOY!

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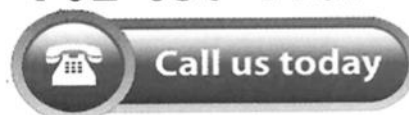
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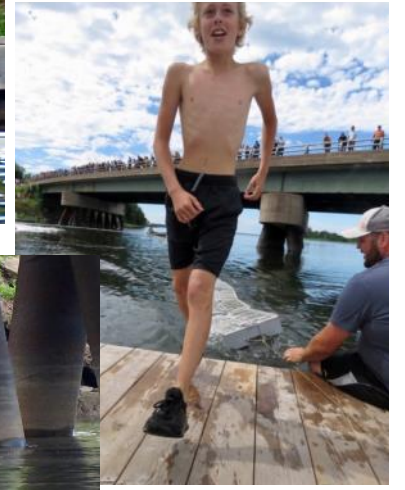


Festival Days pictures

Breakfast in the park is always a good start to the day.



The Lobster Crate run is great fun and draws a large crowd. Not many make it all the way.



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Halloween 2022



Melville Corner Homestead

by Debby Shaw

I got up one day this summer and thought I would bake muffins. I discovered I didn't have any eggs so I went up the road to Melville Corner Homestead to buy some. There they were in a little fridge in a little house by the side of the road. Lo and behold, what did I find but fresh muffins for sale; zucchini lemon muffins! I bought them and my family thought I was "the best".

Jamie and Chantal O'Kane, with their two children, Ceilidh (3) and Lily (1), moved from Shubenacadie to Melville Corner in April, 2021. Jamie is originally from Rusagonis and Chantal is from Merigomish, New Brunswick. They met at Dalhousie Agricultural College where Chantal studied Plant Sciences and Jamie earned a diploma in Dairy Farming. Together they moved to Shubenacadie and in April, 2021, they bought a small farm in Melville Corner where Jamie and Chantal expanded their gardens, animals, and family. They heard of our Sunday Farm Market at the Old School in River John and came to sell. That was where I met Jamie and Ceilidh; even at three years old, Ceilidh made \$15 that day. She told me about her garden and that she thought she would hire her mom to work for her!

Since arriving, the O'Kanes have turned a lot of gardening ground by various methods. Jamie built a hoop house that shelters planters which he also built to extend their growing season. I got introduced to a chicken tractor. No, it doesn't have a slow-moving emblem. With this "tractor" the chickens can be moved over a planned area to fertilize the ground and regenerate the soil. Not being a farmer myself, these ideas were new to me. Their garden looked different to me as well. It consisted of rows of vegetables and flowers with grass walking paths between. The bees loved this and were fast at work pollinating in harmony with the garden. Jamie and Chantal started with 12 chickens but egg sales grew quickly and they now have 50 laying hens. 50 spoiled hens, I might add, because young Ceilidh decided the chickens were bored and needed a playground. Therefore Ceilidh and her mom dragged an old tire and some "pieces of junk" into the henyard to entertain them.

The Homestead also includes 5 milking goats that are penned within a fence made with lobster traps, (Oh, I have learned so much!) The goats supply the family with milk and the O'Kanes also sell



Chantal and Jamie O'Kane and their children and hens.

their milk to the Seafoam Lavender Gardens and Farm Store for soapmaking.

Back to the beginning of this article and the muffins. Chantal keeps the little house by the side of the road supplied with baked goods, pickles, jams, and produce for sale. What they can't provide from their farm she sources locally. Jamie says they have "more and varied expansion plans for next year". This young family is such a great addition to our community. Jamie and Chantal say this has been an amazing year and they have appreciated the kindness and generosity of the people around here. If you haven't visited Melville Corner Homestead yet, I hope you will get out and support them soon.

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The Melville Corner - August 2022

by **Sandy Stewart**

When approaching Melville on the Sunrise Trail, you approach a familiar turn which takes you toward River John. This area is called Melville Corner.

The Melville Community, led by Laura Elliott, took on the challenge to clear this land, and make it more appealing and safer for drivers. The project started in 2005. With the help of Earl Johnson, Roger MacLellan and Laura Elliott, the area started to take shape. The first welcoming sign was completed by L. Chisling in 2011.

Recently, a local artist and art teacher, Sandy Stewart, was approached to revise the sign. Sandy decided to focus on the fishing community and Skinners Cove. Using both photographs and sketches, she designed two large signs (4 feet x 8 feet each) facing each direction on the road, (shaped as an L,) with the greeting "Welcome to Melville."

Enjoy the new addition - a friendly welcome to our small fishing community.



Laura Elliott, Earl Johnson and artist Sandy Stewart

Mary Beth receives prestigious award

by **Beulah Jane Wright**

On September 27, Mary Beth Sutherland of River John was presented with a Platinum Jubilee Medal, by Lieutenant Governor Arthur LeBlanc, at Province House. Mary Beth was chosen to be a recipient, mainly because of her untiring efforts to promote and keep alive the memory of the No. 2 Construction Battalion, which was commanded by her late grandfather, Colonel Dan Sutherland of River John, in World War One. Since 2015, Mary Beth has been providing information, photos, letters, etc. and has been, and still is, guest speaker at various functions, featuring these black men, wishing to serve their country but denied the chance because of their colour. They did not bear arms, but because of their efforts, building roads and bridges and structural work, they assisted the war effort. Col Dan was a photographer and he was proud of his men, fought consistently for the recognition they deserved, and saved all the documents and photos pertaining to the Battalion. Just imagine how proud he would be, that his granddaughter is now carrying that on.

Volunteering seems to be second nature to Mary Beth, as River John is well aware! She is currently the president of Clan Sutherland, member of Clan Sutherland in Scotland, the president of St. Andrew's Society, and representing St. Andrew's Society at The Hector 250, a member of The Federation of Scottish Culture, a member of the River John Legion, a member of the River John Community Action Society, a member of the River John and Area Historical Society, a member of the Pioneer Editorial Board, plus she supports two churches, Salem United and St. George's Presbyterian. Did we forget anything? The usual comment at any event or project in the village - we will ask Mary Beth!

All this, besides her many years as a Registered Nurse at Willow Lodge, from which she officially retired this summer, but is still on call and still working. And then, there's her family, her mother, her husband, her children and grandchildren who all appreciate her support and caring. After hurricane Fiona, when power, phones and internet were out, she delivered food and water and provided transportation to those who were stranded and lacking. And she does all this with a sweet smile!

Just a few facts about her award. The Platinum Jubilee Medal originated at the Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II, when the 70th year of her reign was celebrated, and is intended to recognize Nova Scotian volunteers who make a valuable contribution to their community.

A much deserved award for Mary Beth. Congratulations! River John is proud and grateful to have you as part of the community.



River John Community Food and Health Centre

by **Bernadette MacDonald**

The vision of the Community Support Society of River John, to establish and operate a Community Food and Health Resource Centre, is coming to fruition. The ground was prepared this fall and the building's external frame has been erected, and some internal work has commenced. The hurricane which blew through the community slowed construction temporarily, but it is back on track. The society will be informing the community of the grand opening, anticipated to be before next spring.

The vision of establishing the Community Resource Centre for communities along the north shore in Pictou and Colchester Counties was always based on helping to ensure food security for everyone in the area, and having an adequate and accessible facility for the delivery of primary health care.

The society felt it was important to go beyond the Food Bank model and incorporate the Food Centre model. The Food Centre model still helps to ensure an adequate and nutritious food supply, but goes further by providing programming based on improving food skills, so people can be part of their own food security. Food will be free, and there will be a grocery store where people who can pay can pick up what is on offer at reduced cost. Complementing this there will be a Community Garden and Greenhouse where organic growing practices will be applied. This will help to fill the food shelves, fridges, and freezers. Programming through the Community Kitchen on food preparation, growing, and preserving is part of the model that will involve nutritionists, food experts, and community volunteers who want to share their expertise.

The Health Centre will be a satellite health service, in partnership with the Pictou County Com-



munity Health Centre. The not-for-profit health service will provide primary care via Family Physician and/ or Nurse Practitioner, together with other health professionals. Health Promotion programs, which will be identified by the community and health professionals, will be offered. The group is reaching out to other service providers to consider using the Resource Centre as a satellite site to bring their services and programs to the community, instead of community members always having to travel to access services. The space is able to accommodate both one-on-one and group programming.

Fundraising and Food Donation drives will be part of ongoing activities. This will help to defray building and food centre operating costs, allow for purchase of food items, and co-ordinate food donations to stock the food centre shelves.

The group wants the community to understand that the Community Meeting Room and Kitchen are there for the community to use. They can be used by local groups to meet or provide programming and services, educational sessions, and possible Community Luncheons on a weekly or bi-weekly basis, (dependent on volunteers).

In conjunction with other disaster relief services in the area, the Resource Centre will be another Comfort Centre where community members can obtain hot meals, drinking water, emergency supplies, clothing, and assistance in accessing emergency services and programs.

As with any not-for-profit, where operational funding is very scarce, volunteers are always needed. If you are interested in becoming a member of the Board, have an interest in gardening, want to offer a program, just want to help out, have any questions, please contact Dolly Mertin (President) at dollymertin@hotmail.com.

