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Stay Awhile with Cliff Edwards

Life is a Highway

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Lost in Time-General Stores

The Thousand Islanders Chorus  
Singing with Friends

To See Again the Pastoral Miles





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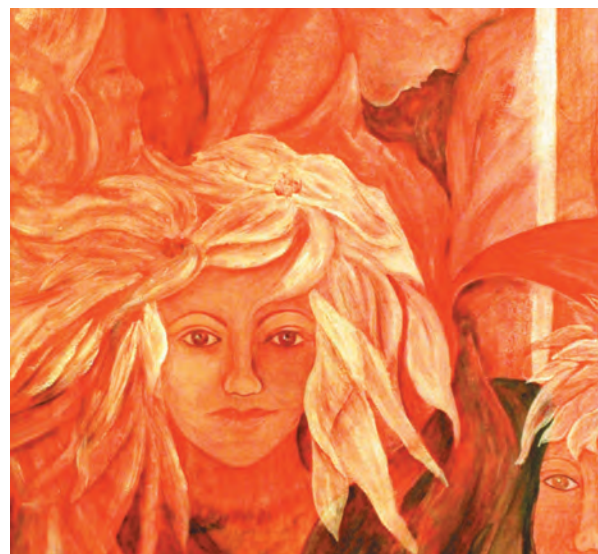




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January | February 2015



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24 Peden Blvd, Brockville, On

www.livingherebrockville.weebly.com

Publisher/Advertising

Jon Marshall

Associate Editor

Catherine Heritage

Contributing Writers

Lorraine Payette, Phil Melchers

Russ Disotell, Joan Rupert-Barkley

Jon Marshall, Brenda Visser

Joe Martelle, Peter Munro, Jonathen Vickers

Cartoonist

Murdock

Advertising Sales

Catherine Heritage

cateheritage@gmail.com

613-342-0428



192 King St. East ~ Gananoque, ON

**613.382.8181**

**www.magnoliaflowers.ca ~ info@magnoliaflowers.ca**

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Letters to the editor: jmarshall46@bell.net

Advertising: 613-342-0428

Jon Marshall

www.livingherebrockville.weebly.com

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## Apple Brown Betty

8 SERVINGS

### You'll need...

6 cups apple slices  
 ¾ cup white sugar  
 1 tsp ground cinnamon  
 Streusel Topping  
 1 ¼ cups all-purpose flour  
 ¾ cup brown sugar, packed  
 ½ tsp salt  
 ½ cup hard margarine or butter cut up

### To create...

- ➔ Place apple slices in lightly buttered shallow 3 quart casserole dish. Sprinkle sugar and cinnamon over top
- ➔ Streusel topping: combine flour, brown sugar and salt in a medium bowl. Cut in margarine until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Scatter evenly over apple. Press down lightly. Bake uncovered in 375°F oven for about 40 minutes, until apples are tender. Serve warm.

Recipes provided  
 by  
 Karen Davis



## Creamy Ham 'N' Macaroni

6 SERVINGS

### You'll need...

2 cups uncooked elbow macaroni  
 ¼ cup butter cubed  
 ¼ cup all-purpose flour  
 2 cups milk  
 4 tsp chicken bouillon granules  
 ¼ tsp pepper  
 2 cups shredded cheddar cheese divided  
 1 ½ cups fully cooked cubed ham  
 ¼ cup grated parmesan cheese

### To create...

- ➔ Cook macaroni according to package directions. Drain, rinse and set aside. In a large saucepan, melt butter over low heat; whisk in flour until smooth. Then whisk in milk, bouillon granules and pepper. Cook over medium heat stirring until thickened. Remove from heat. Stir in 1 cup cheddar cheese, ham, parmesan cheese and macaroni.
- ➔ Transfer to a greased 2 quart baking dish. Sprinkle the remaining cheese over top. Bake uncovered at 350°F for 20-25 minutes or until bubbly. Let stand for 5 minutes before serving.



## Corn and Tomato Chowder

4 SERVINGS

### You'll need...

1 28oz can diced tomatoes, well drained  
 2 cups frozen kernel corn  
 ½ cup finely chopped green onions  
 1 clove garlic minced  
 1 ½ cups half and half cream  
 1 cup chicken broth  
 1 tbsp finely chopped fresh sage or 1 tsp rubbed sage  
 ¼ tsp black pepper  
 1 tbsp cornstarch  
 2 tbsp cold water

### To create...

- ➔ Heat butter in heavy medium sauce pan until melted. Add onions and garlic, cook over low heat until onion is soft. Add cream, broth, sage, pepper and corn. Bring to a near boil, reduce heat to low and simmer uncovered for 20 minutes. Dissolve cornstarch in water; add to chowder. Stir until thickened. Remove from heat stir in drained tomatoes.





# TRANSATLANTIC CROSSING

By Peter Munro

My one passion in life is the history of the old merchant ships, mainly three from the Cunard Line, "Lusitania" "Aquitania" and "Mauritania", all built about 1912. The main purpose was to transport passengers across the Atlantic to America in much style, as well as immigrants seeking a better life. The most modern favorite of mine is the "Queen Elizabeth II", built in 1967 and at that time was the last of her kind as transatlantic travel by sea was slowing due to air travel. Customers wanted to get there in a matter of hours, not days. Since I was seven years old I always wanted to make that trip. About the same time the "Titanic" made her maiden voyage from Southampton UK., arrive six days later in New York, and to see the same sites our ancestors did so many years before.

I have been boat crazy since I was little. I remember in public school I would drive our librarian nuts. During reading time,

each class would go to the library to pick a book to read. I would always ask my teacher "Mrs. Waddginton, do you have any books on boats?" which she would get for me. Until this day, that shipping era has been in my heart.

Finally in April of 2009, I was able to live my dream. However the famous QEII was sold and replaced by the worlds largest and most sophisticated ocean liner ever built, the "Queen Mary II". So my journey goes from Ottawa to London, UK, New York, NY, and back to Ottawa.

Arrived in Ottawa for my flight, leaving at 6pm, six smooth hours later we arrived at Heathrow airport in London UK. After getting through customs, I was met personally by a rep from the Cunard Line, who then drove me right to my hotel in London. After I was settled, I then took a bus tour around the city and went for a walk along the River Thames from Big Ben all the way down to the London Tower

Bridge. It was fantastic! The next morning, I was picked up at the hotel where a bus took me to the pier in Southampton to the QM II, an awesome sight. She was huge! I could have sat and stared at her all day. To give an idea of her size, docked at the Brockville waterfront, she would stretch from the Rowing Club down to Ford St and stand 17 stories above the water line. She had a beautiful black hull, with a red stripe and the famous Cunard red funnel, a perfect picture of every kid's dream of what an ocean liner should look like.

I then check in at the pier, where they take your luggage and issue your room card. They take the necessary info, then you proceed through security and onto the ship where you're greeted by the crew in the "Grand Lobby". Absolutely beautiful! Then it was off to locate my stateroom, meeting my room steward, who was very polite and friendly, as were all the crew.

Now it is 4pm and we're scheduled to leave at 5, arriving in New York at 7am 6 days from now. I must say that this ship being so big, traveling so far and dealing with weather and other delays, she left at exactly 5pm and arrived at exactly 7am perfectly on time.

Daily routine for me, up at 6am, walk around the deck (1 kilometer total) enjoying the fresh sea air, watching the



sunrise. Breakfast in main dining room 8am, you could sit alone or with other passengers. I then went exploring around the ship. Lunch at noon, choosing any of the fine restaurants or have room service in your cabin. The afternoon was much to do, Viewing a special guest on board giving lectures, movies in the theatre, shows in the planetarium, there was also swimming, spa's, games, casino, read in the library or just sit out on the deck and wait for afternoon tea while enjoying the sea air and watching the waves. One day the ocean was very rough, during such times no one is allowed on deck for safety reasons, as the waves were about 20 to 30 feet. During those rough days you hardly felt the ship move, as she had stabilizers to keep her from rocking. There was a slight up and down movement but she was so big you hardly noticed.

Dinner was either at 5:30pm or 8:30pm, your choice. I liked the early one. I was at a table for 10. This seating arrangement was the same every night for the complete voyage with the same people. For lunch or breakfast, you could go anywhere, but dinner was very organized. Guests at my table were great, from USA, UK., and of course Canada. Our table was the Captains table, who joined us for three of the six nights, when not on duty on the bridge. This was fantastic! The food

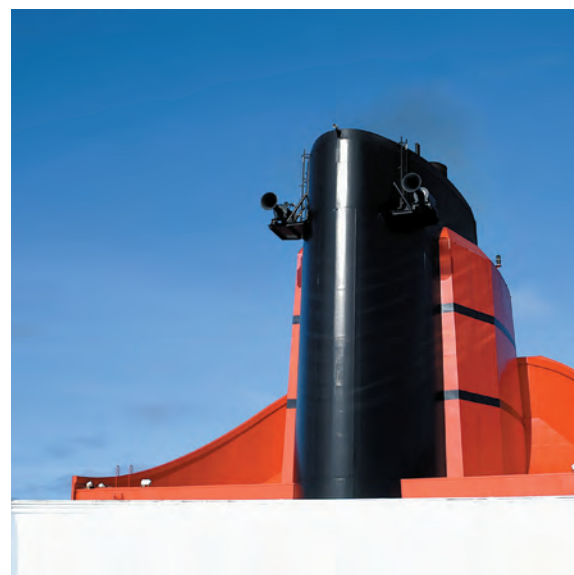
and service were 110%. After dinner, 9:30 to 10:30 you could stroll on deck, go to the casino or one of the many clubs for a night cap.

When the voyage was drawing to its end and we arrived at the Hudson River in New York, I got up at 4am to watch the Verrazano narrows bridge as the ship went under it with about 1 metre clearance. She then proceeded up the Hudson to her berth at the Brooklyn pier.

It was very interesting to see the same sights our ancestors saw when first arriving in America. It is 7am now and you could relax and have breakfast before going to your assigned waiting area until called to disembark. This prevented large line ups and went like clockwork. Outside, you're directed to a bus to take you to the airport.

To summarize, this was a fantastic trip! People in London were friendly, scenery was unforgettable. England always has a place in my heart and I felt like I was returning home from a long absence. The view from the ship everyday looking at the sunrise was like watching a show. The ocean was the stage and the sky was the performer as the sun's rays danced on the horizon. I would recommend this voyage to everyone. [LH](#)

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# FITNESS CHOICES TO START THE NEW YEAR

By Phillip Melchers

It starts on January 1<sup>st</sup>. It is a time of great optimism, nothing but expectation and an arsenal of goals. It's a time to start eating better, to be healthier, it's time, perhaps, to even start going to the gym. A familiar story, I'm sure some would say, though most know how it ends. February 1<sup>st</sup>, the winter Blues, couches and potato chips, suddenly January's optimism fades and coming next is that final phrase, "where did I end up going wrong?"

Let's back up. Every New Year's resolution begins with motivation, the force that drives the promise. This is good. Having motivation is good, important even, but not enough. Often, failure comes from simply being unprepared, or unknowledgeable. Luckily, three local personal trainers are here to help, offering their opinions and expertise on how, not just to get to the gym, but to keep coming back as well.

The first step is in knowing how to plan goals. "Make it a lifestyle," says Brad Toupin, a trainer at XTR Fitness and Sports

Centre. "Know what you want, set a goal, reach that goal, and set a new goal." In setting goals, most trainers will advise against goals that seem shallow. Body improvement goes beyond burning off the holiday bulge, a common mistake that leads to clients "yo-yoing." Another problem with shallow goals is that they create too much expectation in too little time. For example, as Katie Ball, a trainer at Four Season Family Fitness, reminds us, "[weight] goes on a lot faster than it comes off." Additionally she adds, "Don't let a scale discourage you, just because it's not moving doesn't mean you aren't being healthier." Think progressively, she encourages, and focus on the smaller changes at first. In quoting Mark Breyer, owner and trainer at HUA functional fitness, "the hill is always harder to climb... at first. The first few months are tough."

Another mistake to avoid is the temptation to jump right in. Instead, don't be afraid to trial your options. One of the benefits to personal training is that a trainer will learn their client, and choose

the exercise that best suits their needs. For example Katie, aside from regular fitness, specializes in pre and post natal fitness, whereas Mark is more focused on weight training in general. As Brad states, "do what works for you."

Finally, once it is time to start, the next step is to keep going. This is where motivation is most needed. Try asking yourself the important questions. For example, as Mark suggests, "What in the past has gotten you here today?" or simply, "Why am I here?" Know that you can change, that you want to change. "Do not get discouraged," warns Katie, "you will eventually start to enjoy it." If self motivation doesn't work, then know there is a social aspect to the gym as well. Find or make friends that will force you to go. A gym is a social space; use it to your advantage. Remember your goals: don't aim for only temporary change, aim for lifestyle change.

If a personal trainer isn't your forte, there are still plenty of local options to choose from. For example, within Brockville, there is Curves, Good Life Fitness, or the YMCA. The benefit to a personal trainer however is having someone who is beside you and committed. For anyone new, this is a great advantage. Most personal trainers look forward to the relationships they have with their clients, feeling proud when they see them develop. As our local community continues to grow, there seems to be an influx of personal trainers coming in. With so many options, why not make this year the year to finally beat the February blues. **LH**



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# BEAT THE WINTER BLAHS with Snowshoeing in Leeds-Grenville

By Lorraine Payette

There is nothing prettier than a fresh fall of snow under a cloudless sunny sky. It beckons you to come out and play, to indulge in that clean landscape and just do something for the sheer joy of it.

At one time, snowshoes were almost a pre-requisite for living in Canada and getting around in the winter. By studying wildlife like the snowshoe hare, people quickly realized that by making shoes that were three times bigger than the bottoms of their feet, it was like making themselves lighter. They could now float up on the snow instead of sinking down into it, and the snowshoe was born. Wherever snow gets extremely deep, snowshoes make it possible to continue going about your daily business. Although some people still use them for that, most simply enjoy the chance to get out and enjoy some good old-fashioned fun.

The only equipment required for a day of snowshoeing is a pair of snowshoes. These

can be augmented with poles, but they really aren't required. The learning curve is almost non-existent, as all the activity needs, is the ability to walk. It is a little like playing "giant steps" when we were kids – you just need to make sure you don't step on yourself and you're off and doing.

The style of snowshoe is entirely up to the individual. Whether you go for the old-fashioned wood-and-rawhide Hurons or Ojibwes, or move into the modern aluminum models, having fun is the most important element.

If you don't own snowshoes, and don't know if you want to make the investment, some of the trails will rent you a pair. If you decide to buy, most outdoor stores carry them in various styles and sizes, depending on your needs, or you can shop on-line. If you don't know exactly what you want, check with the staff. Trained people can help you find the right product to maximize the fun on your trek.

*Guided tour in Thousand Islands National Park*

Before going out, make sure that snowshoeing is allowed on the trail you are considering. Sometimes trails are restricted, and it's always best to check before going, and make sure you bring a buddy. Even with ideal conditions, a bad fall could leave you in a dangerous spot. A few minutes of practice in your own backyard will prepare you for going out on any of the public trails in Leeds-Grenville.

For the snowshoe enthusiast, there are plenty of great places to visit. Whether a beginner or expert in the sport, this is an adventure worth trying. Anyone can give it a try – there is no age limit to this great outdoor activity.

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**Westport-Rideau Trail** (Chaffey's Locks: 28.9 km),  
**Lion's Loop** (Gananoque: 4.3 km),  
**River Loop Trail** (Gananoque: 7.5 km),  
**Roger's Loop** (Gananoque: 4.9 km),  
**Management Trail** (Kemptonville: 2.3 km),  
**Marlborough Forest – Rideau Trail** (Merrickville: 26.9 km),  
**Opinicon Loop – Rideau Trail** (Perth: 23 km),  
**Portland Bay Trail** (Portland)  
and **Mill Pond Trails** (Tichborne – 6 km).  
You can also contact the Thousand Islands National Park. There are beautiful trails throughout the area that are well worth taking the time to discover and explore. **LH**

For more information on trails in Leeds-Grenville, please go to [www.ontariotrails.on.ca](http://www.ontariotrails.on.ca)





# STAY AWHILE WITH CLIFF EDWARDS

By Lorraine Payette

Do you remember the 70s in Canada? – Long hair, bell bottoms, fringed vests, love beads. Young people waiting for a wonderful new world based on peace and love. The airwaves filled with great music, and hits like “Moody Manitoba Morning”, “Fly Little White Dove Fly” and “Stay Awhile” by The Bells had everyone singing along.

*Clockwise: The Bells (Cliff third from right), The Bells (source: on-line; Cliff on right, white shirt), Cabaret Series (Fiddle, Step and Song)*

A founding member of The Bells, Montreal native Cliff Edwards has spent his life around music. He attended Lake of Two Mountains High School in St-Eustache sur le Lac, a town just north west of Montreal, and while there he joined his first band.

“I have been playing music for over 50 years,” he said. “I started in high school with the Strata-Kats, a 4 piece Country Rockabilly band. We became quite popular with the students and played in our high school gymnasium for dances.”

In addition, the band took some work playing at the Hotel St. Eustache on weekends.

“Unfortunately we were asked to stop by our School Principal because we were underage and attracting the teachers on the weekend, who were seen to be drinking by the staff and some students,” said Edwards.



*Cabaret Series (Fiddle, Step and Song), Cliff Edwards (submitted shot), Jammin' in the Islands (Jim Murray and Debra Hetherington-Day)*

Music was definitely in his blood, and by 1969 The Five Bells (soon to become simply The Bells) were recording numbers like "Moody Manitoba Morning". Their biggest hit came in 1971 with "Stay Awhile" which sold more than a million copies.

Even now, The Bells stay in touch, having occasional reunions and playing charity fundraising concerts. Edwards himself, continues to move forward with his music, and keeps very busy with different festivals and shows.

"I was involved originally, as the Marketing and Entertainment Chair of 'Festival of the Islands' and ultimately the Chair of the event," said Edwards. "I have always wanted to give back to my community, remembering how the community took care of me and my children during the most challenging years."

Edwards would like to see tourism season extended into the "shoulder seasons" (i.e., autumn and spring), with a possibility of stretching them into the winter months. To further this, he is involved with several events in Gananoque.

This past year (2014) he started a new festival – "Sculpture Park Folk & Arts Festival". Running in mid-September, it includes folk music, vendors and various children's activities.



Following this in mid-October is "Jammin' in the Islands" – a free event, showcasing talented musicians performing in non-traditional venues. Almost every business or other venue in Gananoque features live music by local musicians playing many different styles from country to rock to folk to almost anything else. You stop in anywhere to hear high quality music and, if you don't like what's playing, simply pick up and go next door or across the street for something completely different.

Finally, to cheer up this winter, there is the "Cabaret Music Series" at the Firehall Theatre.

"I produce, perform in and present a series of 5 shows," said Edwards. Going into its fourth season, this year's cabaret series includes tributes to Classic Country; Fats, Ray and Jerry Lee; Swing, Swing, Swing; and music from The Canadian Songbook, in addition to the Christmas special held this past December (2014).

Cliff Edwards plans to keep bringing great shows to us for many more years to come. After all this time, it's nice to know he can still warm up our cold Canadian winters with music. [LH](#)





# LIFE IS A HIGHWAY

by Joe Martelle

Jacques Mignault  
meets a lot of people  
by accident.

**T**he owner of C-Way towing would have it no other way. It's been his way of life for the last 23 years. Mignault learned the towing business from the ground up. "I started in September of 1991. I actually started in Ottawa at my brother's towing company. I started in a service truck... didn't tow anything for two years. That was standard procedure in his

company. You had to cut your teeth in the service truck, learn the ropes by boosting vehicles, changing lots of tires, unlocking vehicles, bringing gas to people that had run out, anything that could be done without a tow truck."

From those humble roots Mignault has built his own Johnstown based company into a fleet of four trucks. C-Way does an estimated 2,500 tow and service calls annually. That many miles under the tires inevitably lead to some very memorable encounters. "I've had all kinds over the years. It's funny, sometimes you get behind the wheel and you think you are going to have a really quiet tow and you end up on the

way to Toronto with a whole family in the cab with you. It gets pretty lively. Other times I've had situations where people sleep the whole way and I have to wake them up to find out exactly where we are going. It runs a full gambit."

The towing industry is predominately divided into two main categories. Half of tow jobs are devoted to local garages and dealerships that are constantly in need of having vehicles moved. The other half of an operator's income is generated in a more transient form from travelers broken down or in the ditch. Most of these clients are one-time-only, tourists with steaming radiators on hot summer days or unlucky winter travellers caught out in the cold or victims of icy weather conditions. However, even with roadside towing, history sometimes repeats itself. "Ironically, I've had repeat customers; people that have come up to me on the side of the road and said 'Hey, you're the same guy that pulled me out of the ditch five years ago,'" Mignault states with a chuckle. "You do get repeat business, especially on the 400-series highways (401, 416 and 417)."

It is not a lifestyle suitable for everyone. With long term success often linked directly to consistent availability, drivers must be ready and willing to hop in the driver's seat on short notice. Holidays and home life are often interrupted by the call of the highway. It is also an occupation that demands drivers to excel under storm conditions at times when the majority of the population is advised to stay off the roads.

Included amongst those who have been rescued by C-Way trucks is Canadian Country Music Legend Tommy Hunter. Tommy was broken down near Brockville. We were able to get him off the highway and get him to his gig in Cornwall. We've actually towed a few people in the music industry. We had a young group going into Ottawa once. "The Barstool Prophets" they are called. We towed their truck and trailer into the Civic Centre. We got them there 10 minutes before sound check. So they had to fly to get rolling but it worked out Ok. I still have their CD."

Country, Rock & Roll or just an everyday haul to the corner garage, they are all music to the ears of tow truck operators like Jacques Mignault. **LH**



# THE THOUSAND ISLANDERS CHORUS

## Singing with Friends

By Brenda Visser

In a city filled with excellent musical talent, the Thousand Islanders Chorus is no exception. If you walked into the basement of one of Brockville's downtown churches on a Wednesday evening, you would be treated to the sound of topnotch voices singing energizing music. This all-female barbershop ensemble with membership averaging around 25 has won regional awards, and it is easy to understand why.

Under the quality direction of Stuart MacMartin, the ladies learn new pieces of (tenor lead) music and soon memorize them, performing with no musical score in front of them. With no music to hold in their hands, their bodies are free to move with the music, giving greater expression and nuance to the mood and emotion of what they are singing. They are "ordinary women making extraordinary music", said Debbie Gay, Public Relations Coordinator.

The Thousand Islanders Chorus has been performing for over 40 years. It is filled with

volunteers who love to sing, whether they can read music or not. It is non-profit, only requiring dues for sheet music, hall rentals and the Director honorarium. They love to be involved in the community and show this by singing at nursing homes, churches, New Year's Eve concerts, Christmas events, parades and more.

One interesting thing that is encouraged in the Chorus is the formation of smaller quartets. Having the smaller groups helps strengthen the Chorus as a whole. The FourTune Seekers, for example, has been together for a decade and is available for hire to sing at your events, such as anniversaries, birthdays, or luncheons. Their wide repertoire of songs include ballads, show tunes or gospel songs. There are also other quartets who perform in various capacities. What a great idea for your next event!

Participating in the Brockville Lion's Club Music Festival in April, the Thousand

Islanders Chorus received a gold medal standing- a high standard that is not simple to reach. Bravo!

The Chorus is currently a member in the international barbershop group, Harmony, Inc., and participates in annual competitions and contests. The competition is strong, and if they place in the top 20 standings, they are happy, said Gay. Recently, they won the Small Chorus award for our region, and also won an award for the Most Improved Chorus. When a group qualifies for these awards, often times they also qualify for international competition. Obviously, a lot of hard work and dedication goes into these achievements, and their future looks bright.

At Christmas 2014, for the first time, the Chorus hosted a Christmas tea, which was a resounding success. Their holiday attire was appealing as well, with black tops and bottoms, and a white scarf secured with a miniature silk poinsettia flower. They were Victorian Carollers in downtown Brockville, and donned Victorian clothing, loaned by the Brockville Museum.

During the year, the good cheer of the Chorus does not end with their singing. They contribute to local charities in various ways. For Christmas 2014, they helped a family through the Salvation Army, ensuring that the family would have gifts, toys, and food for Christmas. Previously, they gave to Family & Children Services and other organizations. Annually, they donate to a family or organization that is challenged by the needs of an autistic child. One year they gave a laptop computer to a school in this generous effort.

Any women who love to sing are invited to join the ladies on the risers. The ability to read music is an asset, but not a requirement. Practices are in downtown Brockville on Wednesday evenings from 7-9pm, and performances occur throughout the year. Contact Sue McCloskey, Membership Coordinator, for more information at 613-865-7638.

It is worthwhile to check out the Thousand Islander's website as well, at <http://www.thousandislanders.com/>. It is full of current, detailed information not necessarily included in this article.

Should you choose to join this group, or simply listen to their next performance, you will walk away with a warm feeling. Friendship and teamwork is strong among these ladies, and it shows. As Debbie Gay says, "The only thing better than singing, is singing with friends." **LH**





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# FUN WITH SPELLING BEES

By Joan Rupert-Barkley

Nail-biting, high tension and nerve racking are just a few of the words that describe the atmosphere at most regional spelling bees. However, Lynda Joanisse is organizing an area competition that will emotionally help students prepare for the regionals. She hopes this event will have a more relaxed atmosphere and therefore help build student's confidence.

"I want this practice to create a good watch for parents and a good time for the kids, so they walk away saying that was a load of fun," commented Joanisse.

The Inaugural South Grenville Invitational Spelling Bee will take place on Saturday, February 28, 2015, at St. Lawrence Academy in Prescott. The event is divided into three categories: Primary (Grades 1 to 3), Junior (Grades 4 to 6), and Intermediate (Grades 7 and 8). Registration cost is \$5.00 per student and the last day to register is February 1, 2015. Prizes will be awarded to the top winners in each category.

Although Joanisse considers this competition to be a practice run for the regionals, which will be held in Ottawa or Kingston in the spring, the rules and list of words will remain the same as the regionals. She noted however, that the first round of words the students are given to spell will be ones that will make them feel successful. As the rounds continue, the words will get harder.

There will be three judges, a pronouncer, a timer and an assistance pronouncer.

The contestants will have 2 minutes to spell their word and they can request the pronouncer to re-pronounce the word, define it, use it in a sentence or give the language of origin. Joanisse noted that a bell, not a harsh buzzer, will be used if the student spells the word incorrectly. In order to keep things comfortable and fun for participants, students who are eliminated will sit together in the audience with a teacher and will get the opportunity to watch the rest of the spelling bee.

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The competition is hosted by St. Lawrence Academy and sponsored by the South Grenville Chamber of Commerce. When Joannis approached the chamber with her proposal about sponsoring the event, they were more than happy to be involved in a project that gets children interested in learning.

Chamber president, Dan Roddick, commented that since the chamber reaches the three municipalities (Prescott, Edwardsburg/Cardinal and Augusta) the spelling bee is a great initiative.

"It is part of the chamber's mandate to give back to the community and anytime you do something to help children it is a good thing," stated Roddick.

The chamber sent out spelling bee packages to area schools, as well as home schoolers in the fall. Packages included rules and regulations of the competition, as well as hints on how to practice. Upon registration, students will receive their manual through a pdf file.

**For more information, you can contact  
Lynda Joannis at [lyndajsla@gmail.com](mailto:lyndajsla@gmail.com) or  
(613-803-8040) or the South Grenville Chamber  
of Commerce at (613)213-1043.**

#### EDITORS NOTE

(This is a great opportunity for parents and students to work together and have fun preparing for this event. This is a great way for students to learn about vocabulary, communication skills,



Lynda Joannis (Organizer of South Grenville Spelling Bee and Director of St. Lawrence Academy)

concentration, study preparation and confidence speaking in public. We thank all advertisers for their support in promoting this event in the magazine and the South Grenville Chamber for being a major sponsor to help promote education in South Grenville.



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# LOST IN TIME

By Joe Martelle



They are a piece of history that the winds of modern culture have eroded from the landscape. At one point in time our nation was populated with a mass of corner stores, small “Mom & Pop” operations servicing local neighbourhoods or countryside hamlets. Fifty years ago, smaller rural communities each had their own country store. Many of them boasted several. Almost any crossroads, planted with a gathering of homes, would include that familiar square structure, complete with big glass windows and a trademark cola sign hanging out front.

The decline of the rural stores began in the latter part of the last century. From the 1960’s to the 1980’s, their numbers slowly and steadily dropped. Those within the retail industry, point towards a number of causes for the demise of smaller outlets. The largest factor affecting rural store health was the expansion of the larger chain stores in more urban areas. With the power to buy in mega-quantity at discounted prices, national corporations could often offer retail prices very close to the wholesale cost for the smaller buyers.

Combined with a shift in working habits, where most households now had more than one vehicle and often husband and wife both involved in the workplace, a journey to the neighbourhood store was replaced with a quick trip to the big box stores and malls on the way home.

Government regulations have also been a contributing factor. Environmental issues have made gas pumps a non-viable option, reducing traffic all the more. Tighter restraints in other sales areas, increased utility costs and higher insurance premiums, all added to the downfall. Costs persisted to rise, while the customer base continued to fall.

By the time the millennium rolled around, the majority of country stores had hung the “closed” sign out for the final time. Today they are predominantly empty lots or new structures barren of any remnants of what used to be. For the most part, any of the buildings that survived, have been converted to residential use. They stand along the roadsides, vague shapes from the past, camouflaged by time.

Still they are not all gone; a few have endured the test of time.

Top: Finucan shelves, Above: Exterior Myles





The Village Pantry in Spencerville is a successful model of the new “old fashioned” country store. Family owned for the last several decades, the Pantry is a unique hybrid of modern convenience and traditional service. For the Kirby family, survival comes with hard work and a wide range of service. Along with simple shelving, stocked with the expected sundries, the bustling enterprise offers movie rentals, ice cream, and a deli-counter, stocked with fresh baked cinnamon buns, handmade breakfast sandwiches and pizza, renowned by the local residents.

Down the street a few steps, at Myles Discount Grocery, owner Myles Lassenba has a different approach to keeping the doors open. Myles keeps overhead low by working 12 hour shifts. Working 7:00 am until 7:00 pm most days of the week, his is the face customers see when they visit. In his thirty years of business in the retail industry, Lassenba has seen many changes. The trend he is seeing in the last few years is not encouraging. “My biggest challenge is the service from the bigger companies. It seems like everyone is trying to cut down on costs. I used to get milk and bread delivery at least three times a week. Then it was reduced to twice, but now a lot of my suppliers are only around once a week.”

Perhaps the store most untouched by time is another 10 minutes to the

west. The Finucan's General Store & Supply Ltd. has been part of the North Augusta community for almost 100 years. Sisters Irene and Catherine are the 3rd generation to work the register. Their parents Jim and Betty Finucan have managed the store for 49 years. Irene is stocking the exact same shelves, except for the occasional coat of paint, which Jim stocked for almost half a century. The only major change that comes to mind is the deletion of an area that once served as a lunch counter. “Dad is not big on change” she offers with a chuckle.

Jim Finucan's reluctance to change is evident from the moment one steps past the front door. Visitors are visually transported back in time. Finucan's General Store still resides in an era when general stores lived up to their name. Old wooden shelves, loaded down with everything from canned peas to canned paint, whisper with memories of days gone by, when “one stop shopping” was a neighbourhood norm. Endless pairs of rubber boots hang from the rafters. A row of plumbing supplies dangle on a wall opposite a massive wooden table, hedged with boxes of bulk nails and screws. A wooden walk-in-cooler, packed with refrigerated foods, hums in one corner. Its outer wall is decorated with a sizable collection of fan-belts. They sell tanks full of gas to passing motorists and bags of grain to local farmers. It is hard to think of any household need that is not

*Top: Irene Vandervelde from Finucan's serves up some bacon to Brian Pickens  
Bottom: Myles Lassenba rings up an order*

obtainable inside the old wooden store in North Augusta.

And even here, time is about to take its toll. With Jim and Betty feeling the strains of age, the family has decided to put their little piece of preserved history up for sale. After almost a 100 years' service, the Finucan family store will have new owners. Yet another page will be turned in the great history book of Eastern Ontario. [LH](#)

## EDITOR'S NOTE

We have not touched on all the remaining general stores in our area just a few for this article. You can visit in Lansdowne the Lucky Dollar store, in Brockville Cowan's Dairy on Park St. or Mrs. B's Variety Store on King St. E. In Athens there is Swan's Variety & Gift Shop and Laine's Coffee & Collectables. For many people passing through Greenbush they remember the old general store but that now is gone by the changing times. In Gananoque there is White's Groceteria on Stone St N. These are just a few remaining stores of a by-gone era.





# “THINK SMALL, SHOP LOCAL” IN ATHENS!

By Jonathan Vickers

There are those who tend to think smaller communities in our area don't offer much in retail or services compared to larger cities or towns that have big box retail stores and every service a consumer could want. Don't tell that to Reg Smith, owner of Athens Hardware on Main Street in Athens. Reg is a resident of Athens and a successful long time businessman who truly believes that small business can compete and thrive in today's sometimes overcrowded and highly competitive retail landscape.

Reg should know, he has been running successful small businesses in Eastern Ontario for over 25 years. Reg and his wife currently owns and operates 6 small businesses and was the past owner of Cedar Valley Golf Club just outside of Athens, as well as a land developer in SW Ontario. He is a member of the local chamber of commerce and when the community calls on him to help out with various causes, Reg, like many other local business owners, helps out whenever he can.

When asked what makes a successful small business run in today's business climate, Reg comments “It's all about keeping a high quality of service along with competitive

pricing. Consumers want to deal with a real person that is knowledgeable about the products they carry.” He goes on to say that “customers are still able to get that personal service from a small business, and still get access to any product they require. We are actually seeing a trend whereby consumers are coming back to the smaller retailer because they can be competitive and they do offer unique products and services.” He recounted to me how his hardware business is part of a buying group that gives him access to over 70,000 items which gives him the same competitive advantage big box retailers or other Hardware chains have in purchasing, so he can deliver pricing just as competitive or better to his clients. “It is also important that business people understand how e-commerce, internet and social media are useful tools for today's business owner. Businesses need to adapt to the changes in consumer behaviour. Our hardware store is in the process of upgrading our website to allow customers to view the variety of products we have, both in store, as well as special order.” Reg tells me that he does not just rely on the local population as his customer base, but rather, he reaches outside of the local area to find other

customers. He also says he supplies a factory in Quebec with all their hardware needs and ships products across Ontario from his location in Athens. “It's about buying smart and constantly reviewing your buying partnerships with different suppliers” he added.

Reg believes for a small community, Athens has a lot to offer its residents and the residents of Athens Township and outlying areas. “We have people that shop in town from Lyndhurst, Seeley's Bay, Delta, Lyn, and the Township of Elizabethtown-Kitley, not to mention our seasonal cottagers from Charleston Lake. So we have a decent trading market for consumers,” he said.

“If you look at our Main Street, we have a Department Store (Stedmans) that supplies clothing and dry goods, a very good grocery store (Freshmart), a Pharmacy (Pharmasave) and a Hardware store. We also have some other businesses like Restaurants and Café's in town, gas stations and car repair garages, a Realty Company (Burt Hudson Real Estate Brokerage) in business now 40 years, a florist and gift shop with new owners (Reid's Flowers) that have expanded this past year and a hair salon in the same location. For a small community, we have the right mix of businesses and we also have great services in the area as well. We have major employers like Tackaberry & Sons Construction and Howard's Bus Service & Travel, just to mention a few” he added. The point Reg was making, is that with a rural community, comes loyalty from the shoppers and they will stay local and shop if the right businesses are situated in the community. “With retail times changing, so should owner's thinking, when it comes to having the right product at the right time when the consumer wants it. You can't become complacent and think everyday someone is going to come through your door. You have to work for it everyday and provide quality products, great service, with fair pricing.”

Athens, like some of our other small communities with small businesses and retailers, are finding their way as the economy keeps changing and consumers try to balance competitive pricing with quality of service. Athens, with its unique location, enthusiastic, strong community roots may yet buck the trend that is happening in other small towns across the province and country with stores closing, leaving their downtowns empty. With Slogans here in Athens like “Warm Hospitality Awaits!”, and “Local Businesses keeping our Community Strong”, there is no doubt they will find their way and continue to succeed. **LH**



# THINK SMALL, SHOP LOCAL IN ATHENS!



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## QUICK INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT ATHENS

- Formerly known as Farmersville and settled in 1792 was renamed Athens in 1888 in honour of Athens, Greece
- Athens has one of the nicest collection of large outdoor Murals in Eastern Ontario
- Athens has a group of volunteers know as Athens Blooms that helps beautify public places in the Township with flowers and hanging baskets for the enjoyment of residents and visitors



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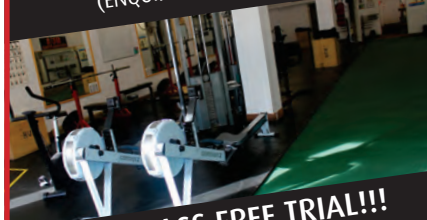


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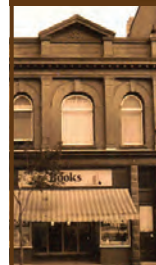
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*The Chadwicks  
(submitted by Phil Chadwick)*

# THE WHY'S OF WINTER with Phil the Forecaster

By Lorraine Payette

Every February, world famous groundhogs Punxsutawney Phil and Wiarton Willie come out of their cozy dens for a brief glance at the world. Their forecasts are shadowy at best, and they quickly duck back under cover to sleep away the rest of the winter.

Leeds and Grenville has its own predictor of all things weather who runs rings around them. Living quietly near Lyndhurst is the one and only Phil “the Forecaster” Chadwick... aka “Singleton Phil”.

He studied nuclear physics at Queen’s, but in graduation year, he saw an ad for the Atmospheric Environment Service on the bulletin board of Stirling Hall. Rather than grad studies in nuclear physics, a career as a meteorologist paid the bills. Weather is 24/7 and joining Environment Canada in 1976 and becoming a severe weather

meteorologist was the beginning of a great and productive career. After retiring in 2011, he went on to teach meteorology at the university level in Iceland, Sweden and Copenhagen, as well as doing the lecture circuit at home.

“I am a ‘weatherman’ – actually a meteorologist,” he says. “I have heard most of the jokes - and still enjoy them.” He also enjoys explaining weather phenomena.

Different phenomena have different effects on our global weather. El Niño was a major influence in 1998, resulting in exceptional conditions.

“I worked throughout the last memorable freezing rain,” he says. “Do you remember the ‘Ice Storm of 1998’? The warnings went out early and I didn’t get home for a couple of days. My own brother in Merrickville, Ontario, didn’t believe the forecast that 5

centimetres (2 inches) or more of ice, would accumulate on surfaces. Any amount of ice on roads is serious but 5 centimetres adding weight to structures is beyond the design of almost everything. No forecast could have prevented the freezing rain from happening but many might have saved themselves some anguish if they had bought backup supplies and a generator.”

He explains the weather we’ve experienced lately as “climate change”, often referred to as global warming. It involves significant changes in heat, humidity, precipitation and all other things covered by climate. Water levels in particular are seriously affected, with too much water in some areas and not enough in others. Temperatures swing dramatically between hot and cold, and the entire biosphere is affected.

Since the 1970s, we’ve gone up about 0.6°C and current science says that if we go up a full two degrees, we won’t be able to recover. By the end of the century, if nothing changes, we’ll be up 6-8 degrees, and there will be no way to go back.

Many of us remember the Arctic Vortex that settled in over James Bay and refused to move. What most of us didn’t know was that it remained stationary, and was there all summer as well.

“We didn’t have a nice warm summer like we used to have when we were kids,” he says. “We had storm after storm after storm because we were underneath this cold trough. It’s been there for more than nine months.” **LH**







# TO SEE AGAIN the Pastoral Miles

By: Phillip Melchers

The two of us sat at the edge of my parent's yard. On the other side of a decaying and wooden farmer's fence was a field, a swamp, and then in the distance our destination: A tall hill where the secret tree grew. It was early October and I had left my Universities' campus in Montreal to spend the weekend out in the country with you, Miles, our family dog, far too energetic for your own good, too stupid to know how old you really were. On my shoulders was my pack, and in my hand was the loop of your leash. I gripped it securely as guilt tugged at me from two different directions. I could see within the dark of your eyes, shimmering excitement, but by the greys that snowed over your muzzle, I could also see your age.

"Miles, you stupid dog, don't you think we're a bit old for this?" I said. We had not travelled to the secret tree since we were both much younger. As a kid it used to be my favourite

adventure to take with you, but then I grew older. Eventually the tree, once so far-away, didn't seem so distant anymore.

You cocked your head at me in attempted comprehension. I laughed to myself when I realized that the word "old" had never even been put in your glossary. It made me feel silly that I would ever even bring up the word at all. Beside me was a black lab who was elderly, but certainly not old, and I, coming into adulthood, was acting as though I had been the one affected by dog years. I threw my boot forward and kicked the planks of the old fence out of their notches. Age be damned, I knew then that we were both still young.

The pastoral scene we came into had been uncultivated for quite some time and although the plant life grew feral, it never grew to be too tall or too wide. The seasoned horizon before

us was autumn brown, the turf like brass. The greens of summer days once remembered in yesteryear were now faded. The remains of dried thistle, like tiny gothic towers, spiked burdock, and a singular dead oak tree decorating the scenery only as monuments to a life passed.

With flashing memory I could see you as a young pup, off leash, covered in burrs, racing through that very field. Dashing and darting, spinning and spurring, nipping at the heads of blow balls and taking reverence in watching them explode. As a kid I had to take my time crossing the field as shorter strides tended to struggle with the uneven terrain. Often you would sprint circles around me before I could even reach the edge of the field. Now I was the one taking the lead with you sauntering behind me. You were just an old dog, sombre in step, which casually paused to sniff at every dead plant. As though coming with your age was a sense of tender appreciation only recently learned.

I took a lesson from your example as I slowed down my stride. As though learning a new language, I began to truly comprehend the soft, cold-kissed wind that curled around my flesh and felt like the touch of a parting friend. In my lax steps, I gazed towards the bright blue sky, so vivid, and saw how contrasting it was to the ground's earthly brown. Better yet, it was in this careful stride that I had become like a conductor composing symphonies, the dried leaves, fallen twigs and dead grass each crying out their own sound from under my foot. The satiating crunch sounded beneath my feet, refreshed the world once so morbid and still. We soon both walked not in furtiveness but instead like titans stomping over the dried bones of creatures long fallen. As a kid the adventure was always about getting to the big tree so far away. Now much older I had wished to never reach that which seemed to be coming closer and closer all too quickly.

The murky swamp that we came towards was the colour of copper green, brown and white, like old pipes rusted past their prime. The once solid ground had now become mutated by the presence of the dismal swamp, and the closer we came the more we had to fight against the suctioning grip of the mud beneath us. It was the grasps of ghouls trying to pull us under, the minions of the swamp beast who slumbered in wait for the next little boy to come and be gobbled up.

The beast that dwelled in that swamp was drawn many times in my childhood, a creature created within the Crayola spectrum. His drawn back was covered in thin spiky hairs; camouflage to help him hide within the stalks

of pussy willows. Those were marked by drawn squiggles of “almond.” His beastly hide, thick, wart covered, and grotesque, was conveyed by the colour “asparagus” with additions of “rose red” to represent the bulbous warts glowing like fire on his skin. “Dandelion” was his eyes, drawn by repeating circles within themselves; a hypnotizing gaze. His smile, “opal black” was drawn as a single upward curve. His grin, a ruse to trick Children, for the swamp beast was truly never happy.

As a kid I made it my duty to staple pictures of the beast unto the tree trunks we found around the swamp. The memories of my childhood became imagined as an array of posters amongst those trees. “BEWARE,” the posters would say with its words written in the crayon colour known only as “red.” As I stapled up the pictures, using a “borrowed” staple gun from mom, you, Miles, were my ever so vigilant protector. Rolling around, getting muddier than muddy, looking and smelling more retched than the swamp beast himself who would stay away in fear.

The posters had disappeared but remaining in the tree were the staples. Remorse haunted me as I thumbed over the stitches rusted numerous in each tree. I thought to myself, *what of the paper once held here, what of my drawing? Did those images come to bleed off the paper, to fall on the ground? Was lingering here the awful taint of the swamp beast? Oh Miles, I thought silently, where now is our horrific beast?*

I soon found that the fears of my childhood did indeed linger in the ecosystem of this foul swamp. I found it netted in the spiral of cobwebs, made once perfect but now decayed; cursed by the winds of rotted time. I found it within the newts, toads, and snakes I discovered years ago but now gone. Their children raised in the crayon blood of the beast decayed. I found it in the swamp plants: the ferns, vines, and flowers, now bare in the autumn weather; leafy blanket no longer, the thorns of their unashamed branches for all to see and just as water does trickle from land to creek, so too carried with it must have been the blood of the beast. The beast’s presence must have then been resting within the murky waters we had to cross.

Our bridge was a fallen tree that we used to travel over the swamp from time after time. The toppled trunk wide enough to safely cross, its rough bark, a degraded grey, became augmented by colonies of fungi spread across its surface.

When you were a pup you would always take the lead on these journeys. You were always the guide, the ever valiant leader, the one who

made me feel safe, and always the one who defended me from the swamp beast. That day when I had stepped onto the trunk, you stayed behind me; your back leg shaking, a pathetic whimper escaping you. For the first time ever it appeared you had become aware of your age, that you were scared, but don’t you see Miles? It was from you that I learned how to have a dog’s courage. So when you thought yourself too old to cross, I brought you into my arms and carried you with me.

When we came to exit the swamp, the air had become fresh once again. I let you out of my arms and together, side by side, we began to walk up the tall hill where the secret tree grew. The Olympian status that I had once prescribed to that hill had been greatly over exaggerated within my memories, and yet, this did not stop its ascension from feeling any less victorious. The air had not become colder, but crispier, solid and embracing. This feeling of rising, of climbing this hill, of leaving the swamp behind, was a joy I had always remembered from my childhood, but as I came to feel it again did I realize that the true face of those moments had been lost to me.

We came to see the secret tree before us, its bare branches like the explosion of a firework, frozen in time, bursting upwards from its tubular trunk. Its brilliant stretch reached across the sky behind it like a many handed giant opening its arms in welcoming embrace. The glow of the sun off-centre, painted the tree darkly within its own umbra, surrounding it with a golden wreath that shined brilliantly. We came to rest at its feet, feeling as though, once again, we were children well journeyed and fatigued.

As we turned to sit down, in my eyes I could see the entire journey we travelled. Before us I observed the desolate wastes inspired by the ensuing autumn, but in the escape of my mind’s eye, I could recollect exactly, the perfect visions of the green life that lived in yesterday’s adventures. Every time we sat at the feet of the secret tree, we sat as the heroic lords we were—the journey traveled, the beast passed, and the secret tree to be our glorious throne highly ascended. It was here, where present mixed with past, that I could see within the eyes of my childhood the blooming green of swamp and field alike; could I see the vibrant life of summer adventures from all too long ago. Closing my eyes, I drifted through those escaping thoughts, my age peeling off of me like layers of an onion.

As it was our tradition, I pulled a saran-wrapped PB&J sandwich from my pack, split it, and then gave half to you. As a puppy you would eat your half in three large bites, and then proceed to beg for mine. As an older dog you did the

same—some things never change.

At first I laughed but then with honesty, did I start to weep,

“I’m scared, Miles,” I confessed to you, “I’m scared of things disappearing. I’m scared of time becoming memory, memory becoming fade, and fade becoming nothing. I’m scared to lose all that which becomes crushed under the weight of coming adulthood. I’m scared of the day when I would finally come to lose you.”

That’s when you looked at me, wagged your tail, and slobbered your saliva covered tongue over my cheek. Once again, you showed me how to have a dog’s courage in the face of human imagination. I looked at you Miles, and I saw a dog too energetic for his own good, too stupid to know how old he really was. You seemed to look at me, a man too worried to live, too stupid to know how young I really am. I looked at you, saw your age, and came to know all too well the fear of the ever-ticking of time’s infinite clock; I had become afraid of time passing, yet what was time except for just another word that you had never learned?

When we were together on that hill, it had seemed to me that the storm clouds of the past were coming to roll into the unseen skies of the future, leaving the present in a state of perpetual downpour. As I looked at that field, as I remembered the way it was before, did I come to realize that it was storms of yesterday that became the nourishment on which the future feeds? That Canadian autumn day marked the death of a present once had, now made into a past, and yet never really gone. Instead, stored was a memory engrained, feed for future days.

It is winter now, months since our last journey together. Our place of adventure now blanketed in slumbering rest under sheets of snow. As I tell you this story, you have fallen asleep on my lap, my gentle hand still lovingly stroking one of your large ears. You seem to be much older this winter than you were that recent autumn passed. So as you dream, as you yelp and shake your legs, I tell you this story. I wish for you to remember properly our latest journey to the secret tree. The snow will leave in time, and so too will you (you are growing to be too old) Whenever you decide to end your story, know that from your grave will a thousand flowers bloom, and know that from those blooms will new life feed, and know that this life will turn to face death but only to give birth to more coming flowers. So there you’ll be—a great part of a much greater cycle. When it becomes time for summer to return, I’ll find you there beside me still as we once again make our way towards that tall hill where the secret tree grew. [LH](#)





*A little family bonding on the ice (submitted by Garry Fisher)*

# ICE FISHING IN THE 1000 ISLANDS Fantastic Fun for All Ages

By Lorraine Payette

As the ice thickens up, many people dream about ice fishing. Ah, the romance! A man cave on runners. Haul it out onto your favourite spot, bring your favourite snacks and beverages, drop a line and you're ready to go...

Slow down, buddy – ice fishing has changed, and it's getting better.

"Everyone can ice fish as long as they have a fishing license," says Garry Fisher, founder of the Big Bass Canada tournament and 2nd Annual 1000 Islands Perch/Pike Ice Fishing Derby. "In Ontario fishing licences expire on December 31, so on January 1, make sure to get them renewed."

Ice is crucial in ice fishing – without it, you're simply dropping a line in cold water in colder weather.

"Ice can be tricky," he says. "On the River, it can be 8" (20 cm) thick in one spot and can go down to 3" (8 cm) only 10' (3 m) away

from you if there's a current underneath. You have to know the body of water you are going out on, so always ask a local or look out to see if there is anyone on the ice before you head out."

For safety's sake, Fisher likes to make sure the ice is at least 4-5" thick, preferably clear and black in colour, instead of white and spongy. He also strongly recommends bringing a properly charged cell phone, and fishing with a buddy.

Another important factor is staying properly warm.

"I always make sure I have my layers ready," he says. "You can always take things off if you are too hot, but you can't put it on if you don't have it with you."

He starts with long underwear, followed by a tee-shirt, sweat shirt or sweater and a flotation suit or water skiing life jacket. This is topped by a snow suit. The flotation

device adds warmth as well as being able to keep you from sinking if you fall through the ice. Good warm socks are needed, with an extra pair carried in a zip-close bag, and warm winter boots. The boots are crucial to keeping warm because your feet are always in contact with the ice. Finally, he brings three pairs of gloves – one to wear, one in a pocket and the last in a zip-close bag in case the others get wet. This wardrobe works equally well for ice fishers of all ages.

Once you're properly dressed and on the right ice, you need to get at the fish.

"I have a little 6" auger that you crank down with your hands," says Fisher. "You can catch perch in most bays where there was a weed bed in the summer, and the best thing to keep kids interested in fishing is catching fish all day long. Just make sure you keep the auger away from the children – the sharp blades could cut their fingers."

When everything is ready, it's time to get out and fish. Bring your favourite equipment, try your favourite baits and lures, but above all, have fun. Not only is ice fishing great fun for everyone of all ages, you don't need a big budget or fancy equipment to go out and participate.

"It's what it's all about – having a good time fishing with friends and family at any time of year," he says. **LH**

*For even bigger fun ice fishing, the 2nd Annual Perch/Pike Ice Fishing Derby is open to everyone, promising fun fishing for all ages and prizes for everyone. Falling on February 7, 2015, more details can be found at [www.bigbasschallengecanada.com](http://www.bigbasschallengecanada.com) or by e-mailing [garry@bigbasschallengecanada.com](mailto:garry@bigbasschallengecanada.com).*

*Also there is the LYNDHURST 7th Annual Ice Fishing Derby Saturday, February 21st 2015 8AM – 5pm Tickets \$20 per person hosted by WING'S LIVE BAIT & TACKLE there are Cash & Prizes – Open to all Local Lakes • Fish Must be fresh, call for rules and info & tickets: 413-415 lyndhurst Rd, Lyndhurst, ON 613-928-2382 [siderisjp@sympatico.ca](mailto:siderisjp@sympatico.ca) (John Sideris).*

*Lastly the Grenville Fish & Game club is hosting the 18th Annual Pike Ice Fishing Derby on Saturday February 28, 2015 6am-4pm at Elevator Bay (the fishing area is on St Lawrence River). There are cash prizes and a Free Perch Derby for Kids (14 and under). Ticket pricing is adults \$10 and Youth (14 & under) \$5. For more details and information about the tournament call Lynn Homes @ 613-925-3408.*



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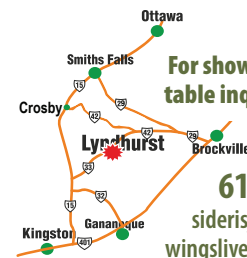
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## QUICK INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT

- Lyndhurst was originally founded and named Furnace Falls in 1801 and was renamed Lyndhurst in 1846.
- A plaque commemorating the Lyndhurst Bridge, built in 1856-57, was erected by the Ontario Archaeological and Historic Sites Board.
- Seeley's Bay was established early in the 19th century as a port of call for steamers going between Kingston and Ottawa on the Rideau Canal.
- Seeley's Bay offers many fishing tournaments and community festivals. The free public wharf provides access to hundreds of miles of shoreline along 4 lakes in the immediate vicinity.





# PAT BUTCHART

## Adding Fire to Ice with Intuitive Art

By Lorraine Payette

As winter deepens, driving temperatures down and covering everything in white, one woman has a mission to bring joyous colour and spontaneous bursts of happiness to all through her paintings. An elfin sprite with a sparkling sense of humour, Pat Butchart of Gananoque can't help spreading her zest for life through the beauty of her art.

"I can't draw," Butchart says. "But when I do this, my spirit feels free to soar!"



Looking at the work, you feel yourself soaring with it. No staid and constricted lines here, no following the rules, no starting from a known point and ending at a preset destination. Instead, the medium takes control, dancing and splashing its way across the canvas; pouring light, movement and every level of emotion into the world for all to see.

She pours and drips, laying down and taking off colour, brushing and scrubbing in wild abandon. The colours run, flow, mix and blend to create a surface filled with depth and illusion. Then she gets out a piece of chalk and begins to sketch, picking up line and shadow to define what is "already there".

"It's like when you were a child and lay on the hillside to watch the clouds. Do you remember the pictures you'd see? That's what I find in the paint."

Real estate agent by day, when she gets home, the artist comes out. All of her work is an expression of herself, and you feel her spirituality when you speak to her. At no times overwhelming or off putting, it is a sense of joy and wonder that passes through her to flow out into the work.

Life hasn't always been happy, however. She's been married twice, raised six kids, worked as a mail girl at Sun Life in Montreal and now is a real estate agent. Sometimes life was so hard she was sure she was going to shatter.

Then, she discovered painting and the wonderful, therapeutic effect it had on her. She enrolled in classes at Langara, following it up with the bachelor of fine arts program at Emily Carr and a goal to go on to do art therapy.

"Anyone can learn to do this," she says. "It doesn't matter who you are or where you come from – just dive in and paint. In no time, you'll open up and find the magic inside you."

Her "doodle workshops" invite students to embrace the medium and see where it takes them. Over time she has helped all kinds of people – Alzheimer's sufferers, newcomers to Canada, school children, even the blind – to reach inside and free themselves, to discover joy and contentment, to inhale life in great gleeful gulps and scatter it across canvas and paper.

"It's so wonderful to see," she says. "People start with fear, not wanting to spoil the canvas. But you can't spoil it! There are no mistakes in painting – only joyful discoveries, and before they know it, they're creating beautiful art and letting out all that wonderful light they keep inside."

Butchart's art can be seen at The Wolfe Island Bakery, 311 Queen Street in Kingston, and in various places throughout the region wherever art is displayed for sale. To learn more about her, her program, or to purchase a painting to warm up your winter, please contact her at [patcandoit@yahoo.com](mailto:patcandoit@yahoo.com). The magic awaits. **LH**

# Speaking of wine

By Russ Disotell

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!  
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AND PLENTY OF  
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This column we look at some tasty reds to match mid-winter cuisine. To combat winter's cold, most of us turn to more robust dishes such as stews, casseroles, hearty soups and basic meat and potatoes. Even the vegetables we favour are mostly root vegetables, turnips, carrots, onions and the aforementioned potatoes. They all share richer, deeper flavours and are quite substantial.

We are looking for food friendly reds with a bit of substance to match this big, winter flavour profile. Remember the days when you could read a wine column and find all sorts of wines below \$10? Well we're going retro! All three of our recommendations are priced below \$10. But don't tell your guests and they'll be none the wiser, because all offer the qualities of much more expensive selections.

Spain and Portugal offer travelers an escape from winter and so do these tasty Iberian reds. The first, Berco do Infante Reserva 2012 (CSPC# 253864, \$9.75), hails from Portugal and is an outright steal for the price. The nose is open and aromatic with ripe plum, black cherry and spicy aromas. It's medium to full-bodied with dense flavours of fig, black fruit, plum, mocha, chocolate and toasty oak. The robust fruit is nicely balanced by crisp acidity that shows through nicely on the persistent finish. It will pair nicely with winter menus, especially pork, poultry and meaty pasta dishes.

Beso De Vino Old Vine Garnacha 2011 (CSPC# 253591, \$9.95) is produced from 40 year old Spanish vines, which helps account for its amazing complexity. Fresh raspberry aromas dominate the nose, augmented by bing cherry and a hint of herbaceous spice. We are again talking about a medium to full-bodied red with spot on balance of all the elements, fruit, tannins and acidity. The palate is multidimensional with plum, jammy blackberry, the raspberry from the nose, mocha, cocoa, licorice and black pepper spice flavours. The tannins are soft and supple, the acidity ample enough to match the generous fruit, producing a silky smooth quality to the palate. The lingering finish has great length and depth of flavour. Bold enough to match our cuisine, yet subtle enough to enjoy by itself.

Finally, we spoke of Portugal's Quartetto 2009 (CSPC# 253880, \$9.70) in the September/October column. It is a perfect choice for our winter fare. It is just in the midst of changing vintage, but not to worry, the 2010 is just as tasty. Better yet, the price has dropped! Enjoy!

**Russ Disotell enjoyed a twelve year career with the LCBO. He spent the last four years as Product Advisor in Vintages purchasing where he was a member of the buying panel and endured the arduous task of tasting products every week! Since leaving the Board he has written columns and articles on wine, helped develop wine lists and conducted wine tastings. LH**



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# Final Thoughts

By Jon Marshall

Welcome to our January/February 2015 Edition of "Living Here" magazine. This is the first issue of 2015 and our 8th instalment as we go into our second year of publication. We publish on a bi-monthly basis; so our next issue will be out the week of March 4<sup>th</sup>. This will be our March April 2015 issue.

The New Year is upon us and as I look ahead to 2015 in our towns and communities, I see nothing but the best is yet to come. Now that Christmas and the holiday season are behind us, January and February brings us a lot of intriguing possibilities if you are a fan of winter. For some, the brisk cold air and snow is rejuvenation and the fun of playing outside, whether you are a child or a child at heart. For others, it is a chance to head south and hit the beach, or to take a cruise and just take a break from winter. There are also those of us who just down right dislike winter and all its extreme cold temperatures, with its snow and ice accumulation. We can all agree however, that with winter passing,

our thoughts are changing to the warmer months ahead and the activities we will be enjoying come spring.

We encourage our readers to take a look at the centre spread, where there is a story of the South Grenville Inaugural Spelling Bee. The organizer Lynda Joanisse is inviting students from all area schools in South Grenville to participate in this worthwhile event. We thank the advertisers for their support by advertising in the Centre Spread to help promote this exciting event and to help promote education and learning in South Grenville.

This brings us to our current issue, where we have articles on ice fishing and snowshoeing for the outdoor enthusiasts who like winter adventure. We have an article on a local individual who took a transatlantic cruise on the Queen Mary II, for those who are interested in travel. We also have a fun story on a local man called "Phil the Forecaster", who can give any groundhog a run for his money, forecasting the weather! We have an article on how general stores in our area are becoming

a lost part of the retail landscape, plus a whole lot more in this first issue of The New Year!

Our Cartoonist, Murdock has reminded us with the crazy weather experienced in 2014, especially the snow out west in November, and the constant rain and floods our neighbours to the south have received, Global Warming is a reality. As Al Gore has constantly reminded us, we should all be concerned, especially in the Arctic, where the melting of polar ice has greatly and steadily changed in the last decade. All countries, including Canada, can do better to help prevent this potentially devastating disaster to continue to ravish our planet.

We thank every advertiser for their support, and the readers for their feedback and encouragement.

Lastly, I encourage all readers to "Shop Local", especially now that we are in the early part of 2015. There are some great deals in retail and services at this time of year, so think **small and local** and support businesses in our various communities. "Living Here" will NOT feature USA ads. We only advertise local businesses and Canadian companies. Until our next issue, THANK YOU for reading.

**Check out our website:**  
[livingherebrockville.weebly.com](http://livingherebrockville.weebly.com) **LH**



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**WE FOCUS ON WHAT MAKES OUR LOCAL AREAS SPECIAL!**

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Next Issue: **MARCH/APRIL**

## **FOR ADVERTISING CONTACT**

Marshall Enterprises 24 Peden Blvd, Brockville K6V 3K3

JON MARSHALL 613-342-0428 jmarsh46@bell.net  
CATHERINE HERITAGE 613-342-0428 cateheritage@gmail.com

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