

The Beaver Beacon



Only Island Publication since King Strang's "Northern Islander" in 1856 — Established January 1955

February 1962

WEATHER: Following is our January weather as reported by Vernon Fitzpatrick:

Highest daytime temperature recorded was Jan. 3 at 36 degrees.

Lowest nighttime temperature was Jan. 17 and 18 at 0 degrees.

Average daily temperature was 24 degrees.

Average nighttime temperature was 12 degrees.

Snow fell on 18 days with the heaviest fall on Jan. 7 with 8 inches.

Total accumulation on the ground is 22.8 inches.

We would like to add to Vern's report that high winds have caused drifts of fantastic shapes and sizes. The road to Willie Schmidt's farm is impassable and snow plowing equipment cannot open the blocked areas. As an alternative it has been necessary to plow a path through the field from Father Louis' residence. In order to keep the road open to the airport, road crews have had to work day and night. At Bonner's corner, they have piled the snow to a height of over ten feet. Don Welke has to keep his car parked on the King's Highway and to get to it from his farm, he uses a tractor. Bud McDonough, who lives in the stone house at the King's Highway and Pogenog Road, uses a "relay system" to get to town. He drives one car until the drifts get too deep - then walks to where he has another car parked. Even some of us "city folks" have been temporarily snowbound, with high winds causing snow drifts deep enough to close the street from the old sawmill to the light house. Several of the side streets are unopen at this writing, forcing residents to leave their cars parked on the main street.

BEAVER ISLAND BOAT COMPANY will open bids February 10th on a new ferry for Beaver Island. If a bid is accepted, the new boat will begin her run between Charlevoix and Beaver on July 1st.

Designed by Mr. Hartell, naval architect from Sturgeon Bay, the boat will be 94 feet in length with a 27 foot beam, and have 1000 H.P. twin screw engines which will cut down the sailing time one-half hour. She will be completely equipped with radar and ship-to-shore phones. She will carry 150 passengers instead of 113 permitted on the EMERALD ISLE and carry 12 cars instead of 8. She is also designed to accommodate a house trailer. Estimated cost of construction by the architect is \$150,000.

No decision has been made as to the continued use of the EMERALD ISLE. It has been rumored that she may be put on a run between Petoskey and Beaver Island. This decision, along with other problems including the name of the new boat, schedules, etc., will be made at the February 10th meeting. Further details will be available for your March BEACON.

MORE PROGRESS: Mr. Henry Allen of Ann Arbor has announced a project of importance to the Island economy. Mr. Allen owns 800 acres of wooded and hilly property in the scenic Donegal Bay area. Part of the area has Lake Michigan frontage and part borders on Font Lake. Plans are to plot the area in half-acre lots. The project will be called Island Club Woods. Included in the plans are a club house, heated swimming pool, riding stables and trails, and airstrips.

The club house will consist of a lounge, lobby, kitchen, dining room, facilities for swimmers and possibly a cocktail bar. The airstrips will be located about one mile from St. James. There will be two runways - the east-west will be 3000 feet while the north-south runway will be 1800 feet with clear access at either end.

As an inducement to encourage visitors to the property, Mr. Allen is making an attractive offer to potential lot owners. For a total cost of \$15.00, Mr. Allen will provide boat fare to the Island from Charlevoix, lunch on the Island, a carriage ride through the property, dinner and lodging at the King Strang Hotel for the evening, breakfast and lunch the following day, and boat fare back to Charlevoix. The horse-drawn carriage is designed in a style similar to those used on Mackinac Island and is being constructed by Lawrence McDonough. The property will be open for inspection on June 20th, which is the date Mr. Allen plans to begin the tour mentioned above.

We wish Mr. Allen much success in this venture. It is a big undertaking, and certainly will be an asset to Beaver Island.

POLIO BENEFIT. Beaver Islanders showed their usual generosity at the party held for the benefit of the Polio Fund Sunday, January 29th at the Shamrock. Sandwiches, cake and coffee donated by Island ladies were sold, along with an auction held for a roast donated by Willie Schmidt and a set of towels donated by Florence Burke. Art Brown won the bid on the roast, while Patrick Gallagher had high bid on the towels. Mary Green was winner of the \$3.00 door prize. A total of \$118.74 was realized for the fund. Dick and Musette LaFreniere were chairmen in charge of the benefit. A good job well done!

WINTER FUN. On January 26th, twenty-five Island youngsters met at the Medical Center to join in a sleigh ride party. Lawrence McDonough drove his team through the snow-covered streets and side roads of St. James. It was a special event for Sandy LaFreniere who was celebrating her 13th birthday. There were, unfortunately, two casualties. Jean Wojan fell off the sleigh, breaking a small bone in her left hand. Lillian Gregg, one of the chaperones, found she was allergic to horses! Both "patients" are recovering. Hot chocolate and cookies were served at the end of the evening.

The youngsters are members of three Youth Clubs on the Island. Vernon Fitzpatrick is in charge of the boys whose ages range from 10 to 16. Loretta Malloy, Skip McDonough, Joy Green and Lillian Gregg are the leaders of the two girls' clubs. The groups meet weekly and work on various projects. Dues are 10¢ per month to help defray the cost of the materials used, and once each month a party is held.

BACK TO SCHOOL for Alvin LaFreniere, son of Archie and Frances LaFreniere. Alvin is studying for a Bachelor of Arts degree at Central Michigan University at Mount Pleasant.

OBITUARIES: Mrs. Christina Gallagher, 71, died on January 7th in Chicago. She was the former Christina Schmidt and was born in Grand Rapids, coming to Beaver Island when she was nine years old. Surviving are two sisters, Elsie O'Donnell and Mary Parker, and two brothers, Joe and Willie Schmidt. Plans for burial at Holy Cross Cemetery on Beaver Island have been delayed until Spring because of transportation difficulties due to bad weather and high seas.

Mrs. Mattie Pratt passed away on January 16th at Ormond Beach, Florida. Mrs. Pratt was the former Mattie Cole and came to Beaver Island as a young girl with her parents, Julia and Garrett Cole, who started the town of Nomad at the South end of the Island. Surviving besides her husband, Capt. Forrest Pratt, are three sisters, Mrs. Caroline Jensen, Mrs. Garnet Green, and Mrs. Marguerite Mulligan, and one brother, Jess Cole. Burial was in Florida.

Myron (Bo) Dunham of Grand Rapids passed away January 21st. Mr. Dunham was an Island visitor for many years.

Word has been received of the death of Charles La Belaunga on Jan. 28th at Munising. Mr. La Belaunga's mother was born on Beaver Island and moved to Port Inland after her marriage, where Charles was born. After the death of his father, the La Belaungas moved back to Beaver Island living in a house that formerly stood between the Beachcomber and the Shamrock.

BIRTHS: Mr. and Mrs. Alex Walgus of Hurst, Texas are the parents of a girl, Brenda Jean, born January 8th. Mrs. Walgus is the former Beverly O'Donnell and the daughter of the Frank O'Donnells of Beaver Island. It is the first grandchild for Frank and Nellie.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Annand are the parents of a boy, William Herbert, born January 11th. The Annands reside in Lansing, and own a farm on Beaver Island.

Mr. and Mrs. Bernard McCafferty of Chicago are the parents of a boy, John Gerard, born January 28th in Chicago. Mrs. McCafferty is the former Madonna McDonough, daughter of Bert and Mary McDonough of St. James.

CONGRATULATIONS: To Mr. and Mrs. James "the Bay" O'Donnell on their 50th Wedding anniversary. The couple was married at Holy Cross Church in St. James on January 24, 1912. They had eight children, seven of whom are living, twenty-nine grandchildren and twenty-two great grandchildren.

To Dick and Musette LaFreniere, who will celebrate their 25th Wedding Anniversary on March 3rd. The LaFrenieres have three boys.

WINTER TRANSPORTATION TO BEAVER: At times, Charlevoix airport will be closed down by bad weather while Harbor Springs airport is clear, and vice versa. The lake often causes greatly varying weather conditions in areas a few miles apart. Many of our would-be visitors to the Island are unaware of the fact that flights are available by Al Phillips Flying Service at Harbor Springs. So before you give up your planned trip to the Island, be sure to check with both airports.

TURKEY NEWS: In December, Milt Bennett found one of our wild turkeys dead in the back yard of the Dave Wilson home. The bird was sent in for examination and was found to have died of "blackhead" a fatal disease of turkeys, attacking the liver and intestines. The remaining four turkeys are doing well, making their winter residence near the Rogers Carlisle home where they are being fed. No news on more turkeys for Beaver Island, but we keep hoping.

GROUND HOG DAY: As we told you previously, Beaver Island is covered with snow and any sensible ground hog would not poke his head out just to satisfy an old tradition. Beaver Island's ground hogs must be sensible, since no one reported seeing one on Feb. 2nd. The day was cloudy, windy, and snowing. However, it brought to mind an old Island story. Years ago, Herman Pischner used to leave the Island in the fall to live on Garden Island for the winter. While away he "roughed it" never bothering to shave. He would return to Beaver in the spring with a shaggy beard and badly in need of a hair cut. Because of this custom he was nicknamed "Groundhog". Mr. Pischner has long since passed on, and it was necessary to find a new groundhog. Since Ada Martin is never seen from the first snowfall until the spring thaw, she seemed a logical candidate. We called her on Feb. 2nd to inquire whether she planned to come out and check her shadow. She informed us she was tired of winter, and if the superstition were true, she would go out - would be unable to see her shadow - and would return to the house, thus encouraging better weather and an early spring. Thank you, Mrs. Groundhog!

COLD COYOTE. In last month's BEACON, we gave you a detailed report of a modern safari hunting coyote on Beaver Island. This month we give you details of a far more primitive method of hunting the wary animal, and incidentally, one we do not recommend.

A group of youngsters were out near the airport in Don Cole's truck when Emmet and Ernie Martin, 14 year old twin sons of Charlie and Marion, spotted a coyote in the field. They had Don stop while they went to check. They found a female coyote with her tail so thickly covered with ice that she could scarcely move. They had no gun, but the \$20.00 bounty on female coyotes gave them courage. They grabbed the animal by the neck and tried to choke it to death! As most coyote hunters know, this animal can be quite mean when cornered, is very difficult to kill, and has been known to live for many hours even after being mortally wounded. Since the attempt to strangle her seemed ineffective, they decided to stab it. After this feat, the animal appeared to be dead, and they put it, iced tail and all, on the back of the truck and returned to town. Upon arrival in St. James, they found the coyote still breathing, and finally obtained a gun and shot it! And that, my friends, is the almost unbelievable story of how one coyote met its maker literally at the hands of a couple of kids!

SERVICEMENS' NEWS: Lawrence and Wini McDonough have received word from their son, Gary, stating that he will leave McGuire Air Force base in New Jersey on March 10th for a small air base in Northern Italy near the Swiss border. Gary stated he was happy to leave Thule, Greenland, where he has been stationed for the past year. After a three-day leave in New York, he will fly to England, then to Frankfurt, Germany, and finally on to the new base, where he will continue in communications. His new address is A/2c Gary McDonough, AF 16657202, 2187 Comm. Sq. (AFCS), APO 293, New York, New York.

A PECULIAR COMMUNITY: "Separation from the hustling, progressive world outside their own Island has made the people of Beaver Island in a class by themselves. Their peculiarities are as marked as those of separate sections of a great country, though less than half a hundred miles of water lies between them and the western mainland of Michigan. For years they have lived unto themselves. Until the junction of the Beaver Island group with Charlevoix county two years ago by the legislature, the small group of Islands that constituted Manitou county was pretty much a law unto itself. They went at public affairs in their own way. The judge of the circuit went there once to hold court on the regular day but he couldn't find any court officers. Clerk, deputy sheriffs and all had gone fishing.

The annexation to Charlevoix county has not had the effect of curing the Beaver Islanders of a tendency to run things in their own way. In fact, Charlevoix is sick of its bargain and would not be averse of getting rid of its Island adjunct. The Islanders themselves prefer to be annexed to Emmet county, always having had closer relations with Petoskey, but the legislature thought the other way. The influential group as the head of Beaver Island's society would like to throw off the Charlevoix yoke, too. The Islanders are too much used to managing their own affairs to bear dictation.

A case has now risen showing the peculiar character of the people there, a case that will cause trouble when the supervisors of Charlevoix county meet in the fall. It is either defiance or neglect of law that is as amusing as it is serious. Last winter, the legislature combined the three townships of Beaver Island into one, for the good reason that the trio of county divisions that had existed for many years were not large enough all together to make more than one respectable sized township. The three were Galilee, Chandler and Peaine, named when King Strang a generation ago was monarch on the Island. The law made the three into Peaine township and provided that the officers elected should be chosen through the regularly constituted machinery of Peaine township.

But the Islanders have ignored the new law, solemnly passed by house and senate and to which is attached the name of Gov. Pingree. When the April election came around, each township, without any hullabaloo, elected its set of officers - supervisors, clerks, treasurer, etc. Neither township wanted to give up its old-time perogatives and a little jealousy between the men accustomed to holding sway in the townships, decided the officers, letting the law enforce itself. Three sets of officials exist today, but not a supervisor has cast any assessment and county officials are patiently waiting for the easy multifarious and delinquent township officers to do their work.

The matter will come to a head when the supervisors meet in the fall. As usual a supervisor from each old township will go to the meeting, but the board will throw two, or possibly the whole three, out. It is probable that the supervisor chosen from Peaine township, though not voted for by the voters of the other two townships, will hold his seat."

The above is an article taken from the Detroit Free Press - dateline about 1896. It was found in a scrapbook kept by Capt. Charles C. Allers, maternal grandfather of Musette LaFreniere. We though you would find it amusing.

HOLY CROSS PARISH NEWS: Word has been received from Mrs. Betty Lockton that the campaign to raise money for the care of Holy Cross Cemetery is progressing well. Anyone desiring to know more about this project may contact Musette LaFreniere at St. James, Bob Delaney at 306 Beulah, S.E. Grand Rapids 7, Michigan, or Mrs. Betty Lockton, 14744 Princeton, Chicago 27, Illinois

CIVIC ASSOCIATION NEWS: At a special meeting of the Board of Directors, the chairmen of the various committees were selected as follows:

Activities - Dick LaFreniere, with Lillian Gallagher as co-chairman.
Commerce - Burdene Stromberg
Game Club - Rogers Carlisle
Beacon - Loretta Malloy

Many of you may not be familiar with the duties of these committees and their importance to your organization. The Activities committee is in charge of all parties, methods of raising money, refreshments for meetings and all entertainment planned by and for the Civic Association. The Commerce Committee is responsible for all the Island advertising, the Courtesy Guide folder and the brochure entitled "Historic Beaver Island". Game Club chairman is in charge of all sporting activities such as placing of mineral blocks for deer, planting grain for wild birds, hunters' dinner arrangements and anything in the sporting line. The Beacon chairman is responsible for supplies for the Beacon, addressing and mailing by the deadline each month. Obviously, these committees are important to the Association, and we could not operate without them. Our sincere thanks to all of you who voluntarily accept these positions.

At the regular monthly meeting held Feb. 1st, it was voted to continue the inquiry lists for members who are owners of tourist rental facilities. These lists, containing the names and addresses of all those writing to the Association for information about the Island and its facilities, are prepared by the Secretary and sent out weekly to owners of accommodations for their personal reply.

The world is a looking-glass, and
gives back to every man the reflection
of his own face. Frown at it,
and it in turn will look sourly upon
you; laugh at it and with it, and
it is a jolly, kind companion.

- William Makepeace Thackeray

See you next month!