

The Beaver Beacon



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

February 1967

Mid-winter finds the island ringed with ice and the harbor populated with eighteen ice fishing shanties. The snow is at a moderate level as compared to our friends well south of us. High ridges of wind-blown pack ice are forming along the eastern shore of the island, changing the sea-scape with each passing day.

WEATHER: The Beaver Island weather as reported by Fire Officer Bill Wagner, for the month of January.

January the first found us with five inches of snow on the ground, and bare spots in the fields. On January thirty-first the conditions were about the same but 17.7 inches of snow had fallen and left. Total precipitation was 2.06 inches, including the water equivalent of snow. On the evening of the 24th and the morning of the 25th, we received .52 of an inch of rain. The daytime temperatures varied between 11 and 45 degrees. The nighttime averaged between 2 and 34 degrees. No sub-zero temperatures were recorded. Average high temperature was 30 degrees, with the high for the month of 45 degrees falling on the 23rd and 25th. Average low temperature was 20 degrees with the low temperature of 2 degrees falling on the night of the 18th. Total snowfall for the month was 17.7 inches, and 45.7 inches of snow has fallen since November 1st. Although most of the month was cool, the temperature did climb into the 40's on two different days. 13 days the temperature was into the 30's and into the 20's for 14 days. Only two days were recorded below 20 degrees.

ST. PATRICK'S PARTIES PLANNED: That time is here again and we have just received word from Mrs. Rosie (McDonough) Zajakowski about the Chicago Party. This year it will be held on March 18th at the Flying Roof Hall at 364 Torrence Avenue, Calumet City, Illinois. Next month we will have more details about the party but at this time just make a big GREEN circle around the 18th.

St. James - The St. Patrick's Day dinner will be held at the Holy Cross Parish Hall on March 19th. Admission will be \$1.25 for adults, \$.50 for children and pre-schooler's free. Why not plan a trip to Beaver Island, then you can celebrate twice - once on March 17th and again on the 19th.

REMEMBER - CELEBRATE ST. PATRICK'S DAY ON THE FOLLOWING DATES:
March 17th - Anywhere you are March 18th - Chicago March 19th on B.I.

GAME NEWS: Things are comparatively quiet in this department. Adverse weather has held rabbit hunting to a minimum, but signs show there are more rabbits on the island than was previously suspected. Perch fishing in the harbor has been anything but spectacular, with small catches, but as any sportsman knows, this picture can change quickly and, of course, this is the big hope. Coyotes seem to be having a great winter as their numbers appear to be growing. The Island's band of avid coyote hunters are planning to alter the situation in the very near future. We would like to add another reminder that the February issue of "Sports Illustrated" will feature an article describing Beaver Island winter hunting. This should be on the news stands by the 16th of this month.

ICE CUTTING TIME - A rare sight anywhere, but on Beaver Island, is the cutting and hauling out of lake ice. Charlie Martin and his crew are quickly filling their ice house with 200 lb. blocks of blue ice and carefully packing it in sawdust, to be used for icing fish during the coming Whitefish season. After selecting a spot where the ice has frozen clear and smooth and to a thickness of approximately 16 inches, the ice is scored with an ice plow, into a grid determining the size of the blocks. After hand sawing the starting row out, the blocks are split out with a spud along the scores. The ice is then poled along to the point where a wooden ramp is placed into the water and extends to the height of a truck bed. With the aid of a line, one end attached to a sling that is placed behind the blocks, and the other end to a small truck, the blocks are slid up the ramp onto the bed of another truck. Of course, in years past, horses were used instead of trucks and the ice was usually hauled directly into the ice houses that once fringed the harbor. How carefully the ice is packed in sawdust, determines how much ice will be left come mid-summer. Even the type of sawdust is important. Soft wood is used with the best results, for its insulating qualities are far better than sawdust from beech, maple or other hardwoods.

MARCH OF DIMES PROVES SUCCESS: With the Island's unique way of raising funds for the March of Dimes, the results were hardly short of spectacular. Many items, from loaves of home-baked bread, to a plane trip for two, were auctioned off to the highest bidder by Lawrence McDonough. The final proceeds amounted to \$225.21, which certainly must be some kind of a record for such a small community. The party was held on January 28th, with a snack lunch being served after the auction.

FIRST-AID CLASS: Promoted by the Beaver Island P.T.A., several classes in First-Aid are being offered to the public. Dr. H. B. Haynes is the professor of the hour. His talks, both enlightening and sprinkled with wit, have been met with a very good attendance. About one more lesson and those attending should be ready to cope with most any emergency first-aid problems.

WHY MOTHER'S GET GRAY: A story that filtered back to the island concerns a summer visitor's six year old child who energetically raised her hand in school when the teacher asked if anyone knew what a Shamrock was. Her reply, "It's a beer joint on Beaver Island", nearly floored the teacher.

C.M.U. GETS BIG GRANT FOR CLASSES ON ISLAND: Central Michigan University, which conducts summer classes here, has received word that the

University will receive a \$44,940 grant to support a "Summer Institute of Biology for Secondary School Teachers" at the Beaver Island Biological Station next summer.

The grant was announced by Judson W. Foust, University President. The grant is under the direction of Dr. Matthew H. Hohn, professor in the C.M.U. Department of Biology, who is director of the Institute as well as the Station.

This summer's Institute will run from June 19 to August 11. Covered will be field biology, including limnology, aquatic insects, field botany and biological problems. Central Michigan faculty members will staff the Institute.

Facilities at the Biological Station limit the enrollment to 32 students. Dr. Hohn points out. This summer about 25 who have participated in previous sessions will be returning for advanced work. This left only a few available openings. Junior and senior high teachers of botany and Biology are eligible to apply and should contact Director Hohn for admission. Credit received at the Station is counted as on-campus credit, either for graduate or undergraduate work.

SCHOOL NEWS: The Faculty of Beaver Island Community School releases the Honor Roll for the third marking and first semester of the current academic year.

For the third term, the following have earned a "B" average:

Jeanne Wojan	- Grade 12	Gerald Connaghan	- Grade 3
Ronald Wojan	- Grade 10	Mary Teresa Green	- "
Joan LaFreniere	- Grade 6	Christine Martin	- "
Jan Howland	- "	Kathy McDonough	- "
Audrey Wojan	- "	Diane Wojan	- "
Julie Gillespie	- Grade 5	Karl Crawford	- Grade 2
Dawn Martin	- Grade 4	Kathleen Martin	- Grade 1
Patricia Wojan	- "	Bernadette Green	- "
		Linda Wojan	- "

For the first semester, the following students are worthy of honorable mention. This means that these students have a "B" average for their work for the entire semester.

Jeanne Wojan	- Grade 12	Patricia Wojan	- Grade 4
Ronald Wojan	- Grade 10	Gerald Connaghan	- Grade 3
Angie Wojan	- Grade 9	Mary Terese Green	- "
Joan LaFreniere	- Grade 6	Christine Martin	- "
Audrey Wojan	- "	Kathy McDonough	- Grade 2
Dawn Martin	- Grade 4	Karl Crawford	- "

Congratulations, everyone!

Thank You: Sister M. Wilma, O.P., our 1st thru 4th grade teacher, would like to thank everyone for their prayers, plants, cards and get well wishes that were sent her while she was recuperating in Grand Rapids following surgery during the holidays.

HOSPITAL NOTES: Don Burke returned this week from the Charlevoix Hospital, where he had been a patient for a week.

Ben O'Donnell is a patient in the Charlevoix Hospital. He has been there since he left the Island in December.

Francis Ricksgers is recuperating at home after being hospitalized for very severe burns on his back and hands. He will be returning to the hospital in the near future for skin grafts.

Mrs. Russell (Joy) Green is a patient in Little Traverse Hospital in Petoskey, following surgery on February 9th.

Mrs. Mae Coppens is a patient at the hospital on the Kinchloe Airforce Base.

Tom (Red Hughie) Boyle is a patient in the Veteran's Hospital in Chicago, Illinois.

CIVIC ASSOCIATION ELECTION: The following officers were elected at the January meeting of the Beaver Island Civic Association.

President	- Archie LaFreniere	Secretary	- Lillian Gregg
Vice-President	- Perry Crawford	Treasurer	- Mary Minor

OBITUARIES: Our condolences to the following families.

Karl Martin - A visitor to Beaver Island for many years passed away with a very sudden heart attack on January 4th.

Mrs. Nora (Procter) Allen - A former Beaver Island resident passed away in Grand Rapids on January 4th.

Vern Runberg - On February 3rd, Mr. Runberg, passed away after a lingering illness. He is survived by his wife, the former Marqurite McCann; 2 sons, John and Manis; a daughter, Mrs. Tom (Maureen) Bussells and 12 grand-children. He was employed by the Dow Chemical Company before his retirement two years ago.

BUFFET SUPPER: On Sunday, February 12th, the ladies of Beaver Island held another Buffet Supper at the Beaver Island School with the proceeds again going to the Convent Fund Drive. The total for the evening was \$140.05. This brings the grand total for the Convent Building Fund to approximately \$18,200.

BIRTHS: Mr. and Mrs. Leroy Hooker, the former Patricia O'Donnell, announces the birth of a daughter, Grace Ann, on December 24th.

BEAVER TALES

Part II

In continuing our thumb-nail sketch of High Island's history we must admit an error in time. The Israelite move to High began just after the turn of the century, as close as we can determine, between 1906 and 1910, not as late as 1920.

The Israelites were a communal group, devout in their efforts and remarkably good at their trades. Strictly vegetarians, they did not

believe in killing, even though they were living in the midst of some of the best fishing grounds in the country, they made their way without entering the industry that was the prime business of the area. Anything earned beyond their immediate needs, went directly to the Mother Church, in Benton Harbor. They ate in one large dining hall and the food was prepared by their own specialists in cookery and baking. Each had their own particular job and for the most part, did them well.

King Ben very rarely visited his Island domain but instead placed one of his Church Elders in charge. The man most remembered in this position was a colorful character by the name of George Boskie. In the frequent trips from High to Beaver Island to sell their produce, George was there to oversee the trading. Though generally considered temperate, George soon made friends with many of the Irish fishermen of Beaver, who liked to spend some of their idle time bending an elbow at the local bistro. In due time, much of the profits from the sale of produce, ended up in the cash registers of the local taverns, instead of the coffers in Benton Harbor. On some occasions a good party would require more than one load of produce in a single day. During this time the population of Beaver Island was at its post-Strang era peak. All the farms were occupied, many of which can now hardly be distinguished, yet during this time the Israelites supplemented all of the produce to the islands and none had to be shipped from the mainland. On top of this, shipments of lumber and produce were also being sent down the lake to Benton Harbor. Even though George Boskie occasionally strayed from the laws of his religion, he was well liked and kept the growing community on High Island running smoothly.

Often times in the summer, many of the group from High Island would take a Sunday outing to Garden Island. The large field along the eastern shore of Indian Harbor was the usual site of these outings where many a ball game was played. Rich home-made ice cream, cakes and a wide variety of other food made the outings complete. As lengthening shadows marked the end of the day, the group would board their boat and amid laughter and singing, head back to High Island.

The large eight sided building that was first presumed to be King Ben's Castle, was used to house the young girls of the Israelite families until they were of age to be married and their activities were pretty much restricted to the working day. Noted for their beauty and purity, a nightly guard was posted around their quarters, known as the "House of Virgins".

When winter settled down upon the islands, the industrial activity on High Island was confined to cutting timber. As the ice gained in thickness, transportation between High and Beaver Islands was made easy for horse drawn cutters and sailing ice boats. On one occasion, Beaver Islander's paying the Israelites a visit by auto, were flabbergasted to discover, when it came time to leave, that the ice had gone from between the islands and they watched helplessly as their car drifted away on a cake of ice.

The public school on High Island was taught by one lay teacher and handled grades from first to eighth. It was located along the eastern shore of High Island, perhaps a little over a mile south of the northern tip. Some of the teachers were of the Israelite group and others were from Beaver Island and from the Petoskey area. Some of those who taught on High Island are Madeline Kishego, of Harbor Springs, Lucille Gillespie, Catherine Floyd and Jane McDonough of Beaver Island and Della Wyland, of the House of David. We realize of course, that this list is incomplete for our information is somewhat limited.

The Catholic Church on High Island was built for the Indian colony and governed by missionaries of the Brown Franciscans, as was the Church on Garden Island. The headquarters for this order was at Petoskey. A humorous side note is the fact that the Church on Garden Island was built by the "Devil". Hugh, "The Devil" Gallagher, as he was called, of Beaver Island, constructed the edifice on Garden Island. King Ben died on December 16, 1927. An order that the sect be disbanded was dropped and Judge Dewhirst, of Benton Harbor, and an official in the Church, took over the leadership of the Colony. A fight ensued for control of the multi-million dollar kingdom, between Judge Dewhirst and King Ben's wife, "Queen Mary". In 1930 a settlement was reached in court and "Queen Mary" left the House of David with about 200 supporters.

Judge Dewhirst gained control of the High Island venture, yet, the colony on the island were anti-Dewhirst and pro-Mary, causing the end of the Israelite era on High Island. Judge Dewhirst sent William Wright to High Island to supervise the moving off of the island and to take inventory of his assets.

Some of Beaver Island's enterprising traders could foresee some golden opportunities during this period. On High Island, the Israelites had some beautiful livestock, milk cows and prime breeding stock. On the other hand, the Beaver Islanders had a number of decrepit animals that were nearly ready for the fox farm. With some carefully planned strategy, a trade of cattle was made prior to Billy Wright's arrival at High Island. Upon arriving and supervising the loading of livestock for shipping to Benton Harbor, Billy spent some time carefully stroking his beard, as he pondered the decision as to whether or not it would be profitable to ship these aging critters. Eventually, all that was worth moving was loaded aboard their vessels and sent down the lake. Their little freight boat, the High Islanders, was purchased by Nels LaFreniere, of Beaver Island.

Claude Swafford, his wife and three daughters, were left behind to manage the potatoe farm on the island, as this chapter in High Island's history came to a close.

(Part III of this Beaver Tale will be continued in next month's Beacon)

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

FOR SALE: Cottage for sale in Beaver Harbor. Contact Jewell Gillespie, St. James, Michigan 49782.

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BEAVER TALE

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