

# Black River News

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VOLUME 16 ISSUE 2

February 2021

## Storytellers, An Old Story and Two Foundations

The history of this community is mainly, in my case, a verbal history told by the excellent storytellers of Black River. For me, it was a learning experience listening to the stories, an oral history course and a great deal more entertaining than reading about it!

Percy and Maxie Atwell (Judi Atwell Munro's father and uncle respectively) were a treasure trove of information and it is with regret that I didn't tape their stories. Most were fun and covered events that were humorous. Some required a couple of beers to appreciate! Did I just write that! And some were just great stories about the past. I will share one that Uncle Maxie told me.

We were discussing the early settlers in the community - where and why they picked a certain spot to homestead on. I asked if he knew where the first settler hung his hat. Assuring me that it was true he told me the following:

The first settler built a house and a barn on the hill overlooking the Beaver Pond on what is now the Corkum and Burns Road. Of course there was no road at this time. At this point Maxie skipped all the mundane parts such as - Was he married? Did he have any kids? What was his name? - and jumped into the part of how he died! This was the part of the stories Maxie loved to tell, the hero part, the dramatic and the unusual.

He died of starvation! Wait for it. All they found when they cut him open was a piece of moose hide in his stomach! I wish you could have heard Maxie tell it.

Every once in a while this story would come to me and I

decided to seek out any remains of the homestead. On the south side of the road on the west side of the Beaver Pond I found one foundation, which could be the barn but try as

I might I could not find the second foundation, which would be the house.

The puzzle was set aside and years passed. One winter's day with no snow I took my bow and arrows and went to scare a few rabbits. I was hunting along when a rabbit taunted me and I shot an arrow in retaliation. The arrow skipped on the frozen ground and went into a thicket and disappeared. While searching for the

arrow I saw a rectangular frozen pond and I knew I had found the foundation of the house. It was about a hundred metres from the other foundation.

Last fall I took Sharon Lake and Clara Spinney to see it. Without ice it was difficult to see the contours and the surprise was it was on the north side of the Corkum and Burns Road.

PS. Further information has come to light since I first wrote this story. Sid DeWolfe, who is the present owner of the land which the foundation on the south side is situated, said he found some time ago an old filled-in well by this foundation. This new information begs the question was this the house site or the foundation on the north side? A mystery, which will probably remain so but an exploration of the sites might prove interesting! Or at the very least we might find the remains of the moose!

*Perry Munro*



Photo of the Beaver Pond by Sharon Lake 2020

# NATURE'S PANTRY AND PHARMACY

## *Poinsettia ...*

Each year around this time, people enjoy the bright colours of the holiday Poinsettia available now in shades of red, pink, yellow and variegated. After enjoying them during the holidays, the question arises: how can I keep this plant so it can put on a wonderful show next year?

### **A BIT ABOUT THE PLANT**

The Poinsettia is of the spurge family (Euphorbiaceae). Indigenous to South America, it was described as a new species in 1834. Joel Poinsett, the first US Minister to Mexico introduced the plant to the US in the 1820s. They are shrubs or small trees, with heights of 2ft -13.1ft. Though it has a reputation for being toxic it is not so to pets or children. They were cultivated by the Aztecs for use in traditional medicine.

### **CARE**

Poinsettias do best in temperatures between 65-75° F. Keep away from drafts and cold windows and don't let the temperature go much lower in the evening or you may get leaf drop. Place your plants near a southern, eastern or western window as Poinsettias also like lots of direct light. Keep the soil moist while they are still in bloom. When the surface is dry to the touch, then re-water. And don't let the plant sit in water.

### **IN THE SPRING**

Allow your poinsettias to go a little drier between watering during the spring. Around May, cut about 4" from each stem to foster a lush, full plant for next winter. Spring also is the best time to start fertilizing.

### **RELOCATE FOR SUMMER**

As the temperature rises around June, it's time to move your poinsettias outside to an area that gets a moderate amount of sunshine- not hot, hot afternoon sun. Look for a spot that gets good morning sun and partially shaded afternoon sun. They tend to do well on a patio or under a tree. As the fertilizer starts working you should notice new branches. Pinch these back another inch from each stem. Add 1/4 strength fertilizer on a weekly basis or full strength on a monthly basis and fertilize when the soil is moist to not burn the roots. Prone to aphids and white flies on the underside of the leaf. An easy homemade insecticide: 1 tsp. mild dishwashing liquid to a gallon of water. Put in spray bottle and keep near plants.

### **BE AWARE OF TEMPERATURE**

Bring the poinsettia inside when temperature starts to dip below 65°F around Oct. 1. Inside make sure the plant gets 12 hrs. of darkness - this produces the flowering. Can place a cardboard box over the plant to ensure this or place in a dark room from 5pm -8am and return them to a sunny location during the day. This takes about 8 wks. - That's the key to getting them to bloom on time. Once the plant has bloomed stop fertilizing. Keep watering as you did this Christmas and then you start all over again! Good luck and have fun.

*Ed Schofield*



# Black River

... from the *Wolfville Acadian*

This column was originally printed in the Wolfville Acadian and was printed without the wife's name, as was the practice of the time. Where it is known we have included it in brackets.

*April 29, 1948*

Sunday visitors at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Frank (Hattie) Ells were Mr. and Mrs. Frank (?) Brown, of Canning, Mr. and Mrs. Lester (?) Brown and two sons, of Amherst, and Mr. and Mrs. Freeman (Mildred) Ells and little daughter of Gaspereau.

Sunday visitors at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Leslie (Mae) Ells were Mr. and Mrs. Arnel (Ruby) Davidson, of Forest Hill, Mr. and Mrs. Gerald (Phyllis) Henderson and son of Wolfville, also Avon Schofield, of White Rock.

We are sorry to report that Mrs. Florence Eisenhauer, who has been spending the winter months at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Stan (Elsie) Levy, is on the sick list. We all wish her a speedy recovery.

We are glad to report Master Phillip Long, son of Mr. and Mrs. Clifford (Ada) Long, has returned home from the B.F.M. Hospital, Kentville, much improved.

Mr. and Mrs. Ian (Hazel) Long and three children were Sunday visitors at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Howard (?) Smith.

We are sorry to report that Mr. and Mrs. Clyde (Florence) McInnis' youngest daughter is on the sick list. We hope to hear better news of her soon.

Ben Stultz plans to go back to Camp Hill Hospital, Halifax this week. This is his fourth trip since Christmas. We trust he will be improved this trip.

We are glad to report that Mrs. Susie Long, who has been on the sick list, is somewhat improved.

Miss Grace Long and Jack Allen were Sunday visitors at the home of Mrs. Jennie Long.

Clarence Atwell and son, of Davison Street, were Sunday visitors at the home of Mr. and Mrs. L.W. (Mabel) Long.

The Black River Community Club reopened their meetings Thursday, May 13th evening at the home of Mrs. Ian (Hazel) Long.

# February Events



**COVID 19  
Prevention  
Guidelines  
in Effect**



**Masks  
Must  
Be  
Worn**

SUN	MON
	1
7	8 Ways & Means & Directors Meeting 7:00-8 pm
14	15 Book Club 7-8 pm
21 Monthly Meeting 7:00-8 pm	22 Heritage Meeting 7-8 pm
28	<b>Next Month MARCH 2021 TBA</b>

## Stories from Black River Podcasts

*Some interesting stats on our podcasts:*

The podcasts have been available since early November and to date we have had 437 plays with geographic locations of Canada (NS & BC), the USA New Hampshire, Texas, Ohio, California & Washington, Scotland & England in the UK, Australia, Mexico, Germany & Denmark. 100% are listening from earth.

The most listened to story is "Christmas Eve", a story written by Zane Long and voiced by Catherine Knott. Age group 38-44 listen to most of our podcasts with ages 28-34 and 60+ a close second.

Click on the active links below and go directly to the podcast or to our facebook page or website.

<https://anchor.fm/storiesfromblackriver>

<https://open.spotify.com/show/1zMHYxDMwQ9uUjCNQSmN7U?si=m5N2VSsQQZufzSNR96dyQ>

## FOOD DRIVE FOR THE COMMUNITY UPDATE

People in Black River proved their generosity once again. Taking care of each other, the follow items were received:

Fifteen people donated a total of \$70 in cash, several gift cards and several bags of groceries.

These were distributed in Black River before Christmas and were much appreciated.

Sincere thanks to everyone who let the Christmas spirit shine through their actions.

## ANNAPOLIS VALLEY HIGH SPEED

Compliments of **Annapolis Valley Highspeed** our Community Hall has a new internet provider.

The internet is available for everyone's use and is accessible outside the building. Many people use it from their cars or sit outside the building if it is not possible to come inside.

We hope you will feel free to take advantage of it as it is here for all of us to use.

*New password is : communitycenter*

**Annapolis Valley Highspeed** is a locally owned company - reliable, no contract, unlimited transfer with prompt service. For more information please click on the active link below or call 902 692 9100.

<https://www.facebook.com/Annapolis-Valley-Highspeed-1635116689866275/>

**NEWSLETTER** *The deadline for submissions is the 15th of each month.*

<https://www.facebook.com/blackrivercommunityhall/>

<http://blackrivercommunityhall.weebly.com/>

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### CONTACTS

Quilting & Crafts: levy.judy3@gmail.com, 902 542 5182

Book Club: mary.tanner.long@hotmail.com



## Classifieds...

**PORCUPINE CREEK PRODUCTIONS** - handcrafted by Nellie Schofield - nellieed.schofield@gmail.com. Tel: 902.542.5134

**JESSICA MYRA - NATURAL FIBRE CREATIONS**-mothermuse@outlook.com

**JACK SPINNEY BRAIDED RUGS** - local and handmade, 85 Upper Sunken Lake Road, Sunken Lake B4P 2R2 Tel: 902.542.1552

Looking for **KINDLING** for the winter season? Look no further. **Jack Spinney is offering QUALITY, DRY KINDLING** at the great price of \$5 for a full feed bag. Call Jack at 902 542 1552.

## Birthdays

Elizabeth Levy	Feb. 3
Larry Spinney	Feb. 5
Reta Spinney	Feb. 6
Taryn Long	Feb. 7
Perry Levy	Feb. 7
Samantha Gertridge	Feb. 7
Jennifer Bigelow	Feb. 7
Wanda Schofield	Feb. 7
Brenda Bylund	Feb. 10
Kelvin Davison	Feb. 11
Annette Schofield	Feb. 13
Joel Sheffield	Feb. 17
Lorna Pick	Feb. 18
Carl Levy	Feb. 19
Trina Long	Feb. 26
Tammy Schofield	Feb. 28
Brody Davies	Feb. 28

## Update on Letters to Santa

Nineteen children wrote to Santa and each received a personalized response complete with a Santa treat. Thanks to Victoria Tait for setting up it up. It is very exciting to know there is a mainline to Santa all the way from Black River.

## EXECUTIVE ...

### Black River Community Hall

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**902 542 7913**

### President - Tina Gertridge

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### Vice-President - Jayn Kenny

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### Secretary - Gladys Long

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### Treasurer - Tara Lee McLearn

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### Ed Schofield

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### Clara Spinney

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### Joe McInnis

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### Clayton Pick

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clayton-765@hotmail.com

### Wanda Schofield

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### Sharon Lake

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902.545.5125

### Don Feltmate

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902.542.2798

## For the Hall Garden

Thanks to Paul Spinney for the donation of manure for the Hall garden and also to Blake Spinney and Clayton Pick for the pick up and delivery to the Hall. Appreciate your work and I'm sure the plants will be delighted to get some nourishment in the spring.

## With Appreciation

This summer Clara Spinney noticed that some of the headstones in the cemetery had been repaired, as if by magic. After asking around we were able to ascertain that Jeff Long, Bryce Ells and Bernie Davies were the mystery menders. Thanks to you all for your faithful care of the cemetery.

## Well Wishes

The community extends well wishes to Stephen Harris who is facing a serious illness. Our thoughts are with you and your family.

## With Sympathy

We extend our condolences to Judy Levy and family whose father passed away in December.

## Sunken Lake and Area Journal of Wildlife Observations

recorded by Clara Spinney

**Dec. 28** - Getting more woodpeckers now. For awhile it did not seem as if I was going to have any but more are coming now.

**Jan. 2** - So many birds at the feeder today. Lots and lots of chickadees

**Jan. 3** - Got a scare this morning. I was sitting in front of a window when a merlin swooped down and hit the window. What a smash! So lucky the window pane did not break.

**Jan. 5** - Though Tracey and Phil Pick had all the doves but more and more are coming here now that we are putting more ground feed down.

**Jan. 10** - While reading the paper this morning a merlin was sitting on a low branch looking in at me. Pretty bird.

There has not been any mention of furry friends from anyone. Earl Reddens had a visit from a weasel one day this past week.

**Jan. 15** - This beautiful owl called in at the Pick household to check out some small birds for supper while posing for this photo which Tracey took.



Barred owl photo by Tracey Pick

Telephone Clara 902.542.3180 with any of your wildlife observations and she will add them to her own or email: claraspinney123@gmail.com