

I was peeling apples for a pie this morning which kept my hands busy while allowing my mind to wander backwards, as it seems to do more often these days. My filing retrieval system clicked on my Grade 10 home economics class making, what else, apple pie.

Fun fact #1. I hated home economics class. I'd been taking a large part in the cooking, cleaning and looking after a house since I was eight years old, my mother not being in good health and I was pretty much over it.

Fun fact #2. My patience well is wide but shallow as is my fussy-ometer.

Fun fact #3. Our home economics teacher was inclined to want things done in a particular manner. A very particular manner. She'd long since decided I was more or less hopeless so for the apple pie lesson she paired me with my good, dear and oldest friend who was a very good student hoping, no doubt, to temper my more slap dash tendencies.

Turned out that my good dear and oldest friend wasn't all that keen on making apple pie either. I knew there was a good basis for our friendship.

So there we were. In the home economics kitchen in the basement of the Seminary Building on the Acadia campus, Wolfville High School consisting of five classrooms (the rest of the school housed grades 7 and 8) in those days. Recipe in hand. Pile of apples in front of each pair of girls (there were six pairs of us) all wearing aprons that we had made over previous classes. Knives at the ready.

But first, the pastry - what can I say. Pretty basic recipe - flour, salt, shortening and three tablespoons of ice cold water to stick it together. It was to be handled as little as possible so as not to make it tough.

Have you ever tried to glue two cups of flour together with 3 tablespoons of water and shortening? Somehow our pastry didn't bear much resemblance to the lovely rounds pictured in the recipe. Ah well. I'd been raised on a high desert and that required some adjustments to ingredient amounts when baking. Along with reduced baking powder and reduced flour, increased oven temperature and, the kicker, increased amounts of liquid. Ah-ha! Some is good, more is better. So, add a bit more water. Oops. Maybe a bit more flour to sop up the extra water. The dough was a little sticky, but all the flour was "incorporated" (the text's term). It did stick to the counter and to the rolling pin and it didn't roll to quite the right size, but a little off this side and stick it on that side and voila! Patchwork crust! Now, for the apples.

The method we were to follow was to peel the apples taking as little flesh as possible. Extra points if we got the peel off in one long ribbon. Then the apples were to be sliced paper-thin and layered in pleasing, concentric rings building up until we topped off with one glorious slice of apple. Good target to aim for, I guess.

My friend was in charge of peeling because I knew my limits even then, but I was to slice. Years later, my husband was heard to remark that I just peel the apples and toss them in whole. I do not, by the way, but

paper thin slices are beyond me. More like boxboard chunks. In any case, the slices didn't lend themselves to being placed in any particular order concentric or otherwise. We were happy enough to have just the exact amount of fruit to fill, but not overfill, the pie plate. By this point our teacher had expressed her general displeasure at the look of our pie overall and pointed out one or two of the other pies that did, I had to admit, look better. Quite a lot better, as a matter of fact.

We more or less followed the recipe regarding the sugar except my mother always said to use a quarter cup of brown sugar as part of the one cup of sugar, a tiny pinch of nutmeg, a sprinkle of cinnamon and a dab of butter on top so that's what we did. We were supposed to measure exactly but a pinch of this and a dab of that was close enough. We reasoned that it had been good enough for our mothers and grandmothers. We came up with that argument after the fact in case we had to explain ourselves.

The top crust rolled out about as well as the bottom crust had. It stuck to the rolling pin and tore in a couple of places, but a patch or two fixed that. Into the oven it went. I am almost sure I heard our teacher sigh, but it was done, the pies were baking and clean-up was required.

We didn't realize that our principal had been invited to the classroom to taste test our pies. A visit by the principal was a big deal back when I went to school. Exemplary behaviour all round was *de rigueur* and best performance expected. Failure reflected badly on us as students and on the effectiveness of our teachers. Uh-oh.

Our offerings came out of the oven and the smell of freshly baked apple pies was torture, it being so close to lunchtime and us being nearly starved. Soon enough a knock on the door and the principal entered to respectful greetings.

Each pair of girls retrieved their pies, cut a generous slice and placed it on a pretty plate with a dessert fork alongside. The principal took his job very seriously. He took a good long time to look over our pies and taste each slice in turn, savouring every bite and making the appropriate appreciative noises. Our mouths were watering.

Eventually the principal was called upon to select the slice of pie he enjoyed the most. To our home economics teacher's everlasting annoyance, not to mention our astonishment, our slice was declared the winner.

My partner and I did not get the highest mark for our pie. Not the second highest either. Our pie had definitely not been prepared in strict adherence to the recipe. It clearly had not been put together with the appropriate amount of attention to detail. But the principal said that it had tasted right some good. And really, what better criteria is there against which to judge a pie?



Hello, Neighbour!

I started working in the woods with Dad (Leo Spinney) when I was about nine or ten years old. Like most people we were cutting our firewood but we sold kindling too, along with fence stakes and pulpwood. It gave us some extra money. The first year that I helped Dad I saved up all my money and I went to Griffins and bought myself a 028 Stiel saw.

I was two dollars short but they let it go. I can still hear Dad saying " I think that's a bit big, maybe you should stick to a 026. I kept old faithful, actually still have it, but I haven't used it in over ten years.

After I got hurt in 2003 I had to get help for a year or two but I gradually figured out how I could do it alone. I can no longer cut down the trees but I can do the rest.

I had a couple of people I was selling cut and split firewood to but without having a truck it was hard. I decided I still needed a hobby and Rita agreed.

Over the years I tried several avenues. For awhile I made braided rugs, pot holders and trivets and sold them with Rita's jam, pickles and preserves. But then I figured a lot of people, for whatever reason, can't cut their own kindling and that is how I started my kindling business. And a booming business it is these days. What started as something to do as a project has turned into a full time job. The first year I sold a little more than half a cord and now I'm selling over 10 cords. From the time I get my eight foot length logs in the spring cut, split and put under cover and then start splitting it into kindling that pretty well takes care of the summer.

Late in August the kindling business starts. That being said I still make time for fishing.



Jackson Spinney

View from Tracey Pick's window after six inches of snow, January 2023.

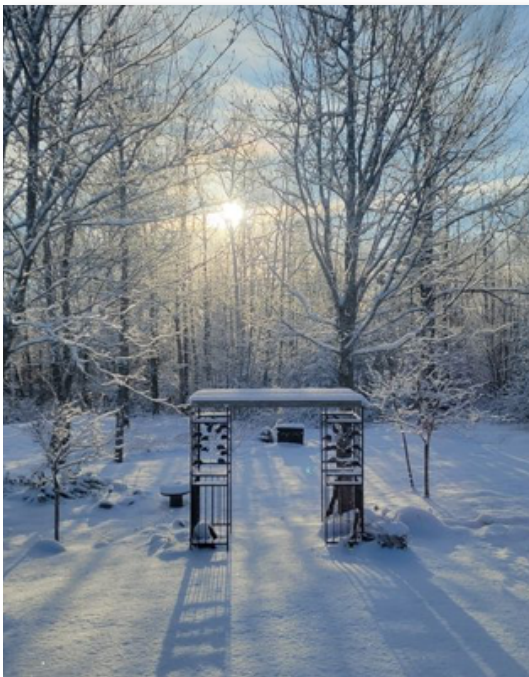


Photo by Tracey Pick



Perry Munro with his grandson Max Pennell

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.

January 6, 1950

Mr. and Mrs. Waldo (Dorothy) Long, Kentville and Mr. and Mrs. Allison (Verna) Chute and three children were Christmas guests of Mr. and Mrs. Rupert (Inez) Long.

Miss Freda Davidson, Wolfville, and Miss Marjorie VanBuskirk, Port Williams, recently visited Mr. L.W. Long.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank (Hattie) Ells and Alfred spent Christmas Day with Mr. and Mrs. Freeman (Mildred) Ells.

Mrs. Rena Spenser spent Christmas with Mr. and Mrs. Emery (Bessie) Spinney.

Recent visitors at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Leslie (Mae) Ells were Mr. and Mrs. Gerald (Phyllis) Henderson and children and Mr. and Mrs. Arnold (Ruby) and son.

Mr. and Mrs. Stanley (Elsie) Levy and Charlton, Mrs. Florence Eisenhauer, Melanson, Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth (Ida Mae) Smith and family, Mrs. Hedley (Merle) Schofield and family, White Rock, Mr. and Mrs. Ivan (Leona) Levy and Mr. and Mrs. Orin (Greta) Levy, Wolfville, recently visited Mr. and Mrs. Arnel (Helen) Levy.

Christmas visitors at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Edgar (Aggie) Weir were Miss Evelyn Weir Halifax, Victor and Gordon Weir, Greenwich, Mr. and Mrs. Lester (?) were also recent guests at the same home.

Mr. and Mrs. Jack (Grace) Allen spent Christmas in Grand Pre.

Claude Rogers will be staying with Mr. and Mrs. Raleigh (Abbie) Eagles, Greenwich for a couple of months.

Mr. and Mrs. Milford (Leta) Schofield and Mr. and Mrs. Merlin (?) Forsythe and Dale, White Rock, spent Christmas with Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd (Ruby) Levy.

February 2, 1950

Ivan Levy, who is employed with Freeman Levy, spent the week end in Wolfville.

Arnold Miner, of Church Street, is employed with Clifford Long.

Orville Levy, who is attending Wolfville High School, spent the week end with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Levy.

Mr. and Mrs. Allison (Verna) Chute and family, Waterville, Mr. and Mrs. Waldo (Dorothy) Long, Kentville, and Mr. and Mrs. Robie (Isabel) Long, New Minas, were recent guests of Mr. and Mrs. Rupert (Inez) Long.

FEBRUARY events ●●●

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
			1 Computer Simplified 10:30 am	2	3	4
5	6 Ways/Means 10 am Maintenance 7pm	7	8	9	10	11
12	13 Sewing/Crafts Meeting 11 am	14	15 Computer Simplified 10:30 am	16	17 BINGO for the whole family 6pm-8pm canteen-50/50 tickets	18
19 Monthly Meeting 7 pm Directors Meeting 7pm-	20 Book Club 7pm-	21	22	23	24 Sequence, Darts,Crokinole Games Night 7-9 pm	25
26	27 Sewing/Crafts Meeting 11 am Heritage Meeting 7:00pm	28				

• **NOTE: Computer Simplified on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month. We are offering a very elementary course in computer e.g. emails, scans, making a business card, designing a poster.** Bring your laptop, ipad, phone. We are not experts but are willing to share what we know. As well, please feel free to just come in and use the internet and work on your own stuff.

• **FEBRUARY 17 6pm-8pm BINGO** for the whole family. Prizes for the lucky winners. It promises to be a exciting evening for parents and children. Admission Free/Donation to Food Bank accepted. Canteen and 50/50 Tickets available.

• **February 24 Games Night 7-9 pm. Special Invitation to the Community.** Come out and enjoy a **Games Night** at the Hall. We hope to have enough people to play darts, crokinole, scrabble, sequence, etc. Canteen Available or bring your own snacks. Free will offering and/or food bank item would be accepted but not necessary. The winter days and nights are long so let's get together and have some fun.

Wanted

Volunteers for Snow Removal

If interested please contact Ed Schofield - see contact info on back page. Month of January is taken care of.

• **Newsletter.** The current newsletter can be picked up at the little Library at the front entrance to the Hall. If you are unable to pick it up at the Hall please let us know and we will find a way to deliver it to you. Contact: sharonlake07@gmail.com. or 902 542 5125

• **Coming Soon:** our newsletter will be available at select places in the Valley area (eg. White Rock Hall, etc.). Some back issues are available at the Hall. More info next month.

NOTE: Baked Beans, Ham, Scalloped Potato, Roll and Fruit Crisp TAKE-OUT. MARCH 17 PICK UP: 4PM-6PM

Please pre-order call 902 542 5125 or sharonlake07@gmail.com Let us know if you want to donate baked beans or a dessert to this Take-Out.

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

Contacts: • sharonlake07@gmail.com 902 542 5125
• gladyslong67@gmail.com 902 542 1994

LIVE LINKS TO OUR FACEBOOK, NEWSLETTER & PODCASTS
Password for internet: communitycenter

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

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

<https://anchor.fm/storiesfromblackriver>

<https://open.spotify.com/show/1zMHYxDMwQ9uUjCNQSmN7U?si=m5N2VSSQQZufzbSNR96dyQ>

• **CONTACTS: Hall Rental/Events Booking: Daily Rental-\$100, Damage Deposit \$50 Contact: Jayn Kenny 902 542 0002**

jayneileenkenny@msn.com

• **Quilting & Crafts:**

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

• **Card Games:** White Rock contact Tim MacKay 902 697 2374 or email tim.mackay@eastlink.ca

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 is offering QUALITY, DRY KINDLING \$6** for a full feed bag. **DROP INTO THE HOUSE AT 85 UPPER SUNKEN LAKE RD or CALL 902.713.5094.**
- **HUMBLE HILL HOMESTEAD** offering: farm fresh eggs in a variety of colours, frozen-fresh rabbit, veggies and transplants seasonally. Contact via Facebook Farm Page or call/text 902.300.5482
- **FOR SALE: Locally grown lean ground beef \$5/lb.** Custom beef orders for sides and quarters \$5/lb. Call Shawn Levy 902 300 4432

Birthdays

Levi Ells	Feb 2 (3 yrs)
Elizabeth Levy	Feb 3
Larry Spinney	Feb 5
Reta Spinney	Feb 6
Perry Levy	Feb 7
Samantha Gertridge	Feb 7
Wanda Schofield	Feb 7
Amy Schofield	Feb 9
Brenda Bylund	Feb 10
Kelvin Davison	Feb 11
Annette Schofield	Feb 13
Noah Tait	Feb 14
Joel Sheffield	Feb 17
Lorna Pick	Feb 18
Carl Levy	Feb 19
Trina Long	Feb 26
Tammy Schofield	Feb 28
Brody Davies	Feb 28

Condolences

Harlan Spinney passed away in December at the age of 93. He was a life-long resident of Black River. Our sympathies are extended to his family, friends and the community.

www.whitefamilyfuneralhome.com/obituaries/167483

With Appreciation

Thanks to Marsha Harper for the donation of money-back recyclables. For the winter months we are accepting the drop off of money-back bottles at the Hall. The money will go towards the upkeep of the Hall for the winter months. In the Spring we will reassess donating the money from the bottles to the War in Ukraine.

UPDATE ON GREENWICH FIRE DEPT. MEDIATION AGREEMENT WITH KINGS COUNTY

January 10 meeting was a quick meeting updating us that the mediation process will begin mid-February and that this issue will be resolved within his calendar year. They explained the process and events that brought them to this point and informed us that they do still have our petitions but are unable to proceed with the process of making outside rate payers the same as inside rate payers for the present, due to the situation's legalities.

They intend to follow through with them and confirmed that they were very useful in helping to show the outside rate payers support as well as other things at the mediation.

I was asked to get the word out. All efforts are being made to ensure a logical, fair, informed and considerate decision.

Clayton Pick

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Sunken Lake and Area Journal of Wildlife Observations

recorded by Clara Spinney

• As you know from last month's Nature Notes we had a loon on the lake, not one of our regular loons. It seems to have come with a flock of mergansers. A few days after Bernard Forsythe did his annual bird count the lake chilled over encasing the loon. Knowing Bernard's great interest in this loon I phoned him. He was on his way when an eagle arrived and killed the loon. Before it was over three more eagles arrived for their piece of the action. That certainly didn't endear me to the eagles. Being the voice of reason Bernard pointed out there had to be something wrong with the loon. Why was it here this time of year? Why did it allow itself to become encased in the ice? Why had its plumage not changed from summer to winter?

• On a lighter note I have lots of chickadees and nuthatches at my feeders. The count in both seems to be in the normal range, maybe up a little. • I put the suet cakes out and as expected in a short while the woodpeckers arrived. So far just the downy woodpeckers but the hairy woodpeckers will come as the weather gets colder.

• So far the goldfinch count is down. Usually they are thick but as yet winter has been kind, so maybe they are getting seeds in the wild.

• We've had several woolly-bear caterpillars on the walkways. Never have I known them to be out and about in January. Woolly-bear caterpillars are the larva of the tiger moth.

• **Jan 14.** Zelma Long just phoned to tell me she had three deer on her lawn this afternoon. Probably enjoying the sweet lawn grasses and comfort of safety.

• **Jan 17** No ice in lake; just visited by a male mallard. Quite tame so he is an old friend from last summer. Two hours later I now have two ducks- male and female mallards.

Telephone Clara 902.542.3180 with any of your wildlife observations and she will add them to her own or email: claraspinnney123@gmail.com

HALL RENTAL:

• Daily Rental \$100 • Damage deposit \$50
Effective January 1, 2022

Hall Rental/Events Booking: Jayn Kenny
jayneileenkenny@msn.com, 902 542 0002
Accepting bookings for Hall Rental Now



Woolly-bear caterpillar