



Winter 2014

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When Charles Lindbergh Flew the Spirit of St. Louis

When Charles Lindbergh flew the Spirit of St. Louis along the coast of Atlantic Canada, Jim Baillie was there. He stepped outside the family farmhouse on Cape John Road and looked up as the plane roared by. Years later, he would get to view that famous plane on the ground in Reno, Nevada on a visit to his sister Beth's.

That's just one story in a long life of stories that one of River John's most beloved and respected elders could tell you.

Jim Baillie's storytelling ability is a story in itself. At 95, he's able to retrieve specific dates and vivid details faster than Google. Forget technology. If you want to know about River John of the past, get Jim Baillie to tell you a story. Take, for example, the fire of 1944.

"It was August 1944. I remember because Ian was about 10 days old and we were up with him. It was a dry summer, which is probably why the fire spread so fast. We smelled smoke before the fire was discovered. It started around midnight in the back of where the Odd Fellows Hall is now and there were two storage buildings where nothing was saved. The post office in the front was okay. The fire spread to the two stores next to it. Bessie Henderson's hat shop burned and so did Russell Shannon's house. The old hotel was next in line."

Jim pauses thoughtfully and continues. "We went to the river and started getting water down by the old wharf, passing the water in buckets from one to another. Everyone was there--- men, women and children, a line up from the wharf all up the stairs, inside and up to the roof of the house. There must have been about eight of us up on the roof but we kept it wet and cool enough so it didn't catch fire. I think we also saved the row of maple trees out front too. Yes, there was a fire engine but it was just a fire engine with a little pump so it didn't do much good in the face of a fire like that. Around 5 o'clock in the morning we all met at the Odd Fellows and by 11 o'clock we'd agreed to rebuild. There was a little bit of insurance but cleanup took a long time. We put it out for tender and Eastern Woodworkers got the contract. The Hall reopened in 1946. For a while there, the post office was at the undertaker's parlor."

That fire took place during the war and it was literally the luck of the draw, or rather--- the straw, that allowed Jim Baillie to be in River John and help the night of that fire. As Mary Beth Sutherland told the community at the Remembrance Day Ceremony

held at River John Consolidated School on November 10th, Jim Baillie stayed home from the war to tend the farm because the three Baillie boys drew straws and Jim drew the shortest straw. At the time,

Jim admits, he was disappointed drawing the shortest straw. "Everyone wanted to go to serve their country overseas, " he says quietly, "myself included."

Jim's two brothers did not return from the war. It wasn't the first time he experienced loss. He was only three years old when his mother died in childbirth. Still, he recalls his childhood fondly, life on the farm, extended family, Rita, their housekeeper, and one of his favorite teachers, Gertie Langille. "Everybody loved Gertie," he recalls, "simple as that."

There is another historic event in River John's past Jim was able to witness ---the last horse race at the Cape John Racetrack.

"It was a grudge match," he says, "between the horses, anyway. A horse from Guysborough named The Ghost and Rockboy from Cape John against each other." It was 1929 and for a ten year old, an exciting and unforgettable event. "Rockboy won," he says and it's pretty easy to detect satisfaction in his voice, even after all this time.

The conversation turns to family and Jim's life is remarkable. Widowed with two small children, Ian and Mary, Jim re-married and he and Anna had two more children, Elizabeth and Jimmy. They had livestock and did both beef and dairy farming. "We were always busy," says Anna. Married sixty-two years, the couple and their family endured the loss of Ian to cancer when he was only 39 years old. Ian was a community leader and educator in New Brunswick, and a school in Mirimichi is named in his honour.

Today Jim and Anna are proud grandparents of seven grandchildren and nine great grandchildren. In the latest framed picture taken on their last anniversary, Lincoln, Elizabeth's grandchild, the baby of the clan, is sitting on Jim's knee. Family and strong faith and service to St. George's Presbyterian Church has been an essential part of their life. Jim has been an elder for 62 years and a member of that congregation for 90!

So what does River John look like over span of a lifetime?

Toney River Community Hall

September 6 the old time dance was held at 8:30 as usual. It is almost always the first Saturday of the month weather permitting.

A general meeting was held on the 16th to plan for October. The Barbeque was a great success providing approximately \$5000 in profit to keep the bills paid for another year.

The old time dance was held on the 1st of November.

A very successful baked beans and brown bread supper was held October 18th. The dessert was gingerbread and whipped cream. Thanks to everyone who donated, worked or came to buy our fine meal. 4-H will be holding their meeting on the 24th. The hall is booked the 30th for a candle party.

December is shaping up to be busy as usual. There will be a craft sale on the 6th. There are bookings for birthday and Christmas parties. The sheep producers are having their Christmas potluck and meeting on the 13th.

It is with mixed feelings that we wish Eric and Diane Hann goodbye. We are happy for them to start this new chapter in their lives, but sad that we will be losing two valuable members of our community. All the best Eric and Diane.

May the joy and love of the Christmas season fill our hearts and homes.

Wishing everyone a VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS and a HAPPY NEW YEAR in 2015!

"River John's the best place in the world," Jim says. "People are friendly." When asked about the possibility of River John school closing, he raises his head and says firmly, "Look if you've got no school you're not going have any children because they're off somewhere else and then old people's all that's left."

River John has always provided good education. Doctors, teachers, many other wonderful people have all come out of River John."

Yes, people like Jim Baillie.

To be as fit and young at heart as he is, to still be able to help a bit with haying and tell riveting stories a few years short of a hundredth birthday, is wonderful indeed.

Jim's Baillie's sense of humour is never very far away, either.

His favourite meal?

"Three times a day," he says.

"And any kind of pie," adds Anna.

Jim nods. "I've got another story," he says. "About another plane."

Stay tuned for next issue of Pioneer and another story from Jim.



MP Peter MacKay

Our federal Conservative government recently announced new measures to help make life more affordable for Canadian families. All families with children will benefit. The proposed new measures include: the Family Tax Cut credit, Increasing and Expanding the Universal Child Care Benefit, Increasing the Child Care Expense Deduction, and Doubling the Children's Fitness Tax Credit. Since 2006, our federal Conservative government has lowered taxes 160 times, saving the average family \$3400 per year.

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Karla MacFarlane, MLA

The Heating Assistance Rebate 2014-15 form is available at my office for pick up or they can be mailed out. Forms can also be found online at

www.HomeHeatingHelp.ca

For further information please contact my office. I extend my very best wishes for the Christmas Season and for the New Year

Pictou West

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Ronald Baillie, Warden

County of Pictou

On behalf of Municipal Council, Staff and our families, I wish you all a joyous holiday season and a safe, healthy and prosperous 2015

Phone: (902) 485-4311

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A thank you to the brave men and women of our volunteer fire department

As far back as 1869, there has been a fire fighting presence in the village of River John, known as the Hook and Ladder Company. In 1939 an attempt was made to establish a fire department. This was halted by the start of WW2. Finally, in 1951, the River John Fire Department was formed. From the early beginnings, with an army truck converted to a tanker, to the modern department with the state-of-the-art vehicles and equipment, the River John Fire Department has served the River John area.



Our fire department has the a unique distinction of being one of a few departments that is owned by the firefighting members. This gives them full control of its decision-making process.

Dave Brown has been the Fire Chief since 1996 and has been a member for 35 years.

We sat down with the Chief to ask him about some of his experiences in the fire department.

Some of the more memorable fires our fire department has been involved in include the first fatal fire in the early 1980's. A young boy lost his life in a house fire in West Branch.

Then there was the time the firefighters were fighting a double barn fire when they received a call to a house fire. The house, by the way, is still standing.

A few years ago, there was a barn fire in Marshville where a lot of goats and other animals perished.

Other than fires, the most common call is vehicular accidents and medical emergencies.

Even though the department is manned by volunteers, the members must go through the same training as any paid full-time firefighter.

This includes the Firefighter School in Waverly NS. Every September Pictou County has training. Instructors are brought into the station house for courses.

The department also has a training house on Mountain Road.

Recruiting new members is not an easy task. Not everyone can commit to the time it takes to be a volunteer firefighter. The average age of the department is about 45 years old with 28 members that include both male and female volunteer firefighters.

The department responds on average to approximately 60 to 70 calls a year. The River John area has no fire hydrants, and a major concern at any fire scene is water. That is where the pumping capacity of the tankers plays a role. The latest purchase by the department was a tanker pumper truck. It holds 2500 gallons of water in the tank and pumps a maximum of 1,050 gallons per minute.

The cost of this truck was \$330,000. To compare, the 1969 GMC tanker truck with an 800 gallon tank and pumping capacity of 625 gallons per minute, cost \$18,000.

It is the oldest fire truck in Pictou County still in use today.



Fire fighting equipment does not come cheap and fundraising is a major part of any volunteer fire department. The RJFD is fortunate to have a hard-working Ladies Auxilliary. Since 1979 they have been raising money for the department to purchase equipment and pay for training.

The communities served by the RJFD can be thankful that we have such a dedicated well-trained group of volunteers on our fire department that is dedicated to the protection and well-being of our citizens.

We salute the men and women of the fire department for their dedication and hard work.

Special thanks to Jennie MacLean, grade five student at our RICS and Chief Dave Brown for their contributions to this article.

In a Cape John minute



My kayak crunches up on the sand of the isolated cove on the Cape. I see only the high cliffs, sea gulls, and a beach that stretches off to rocky headlands on both sides. A windy day is best for beach walking for the smell of the ocean. The waves must send up a mist of sea air. Touch the smooth, coarse, cold, clammy on the beach. Let the wind touch you.

We were out all afternoon in the boat and caught four mackerel. They're cooked in foil with lemon and butter and now we eat them around the campfire. The moon is high, the Canada geese are honking out on the Bay and the coyotes are calling from the woods. All in a Cape John minute.

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SOS Committee Update

The SOS committee had a community meeting on September 24, 2014 to update everyone on our progress. Since that time we have continued to meet regularly and build our proposal for CCRSB.

Our first progress report/meeting with CCRSB was on October 21, 2014. This included unveiling the beginnings of our exciting vision for The North Shore "Scholar Ship" Discovery Centre and Maker Space Community. This interactive centre will pay tribute to our past and embrace the present and future and will be housed in what is now the school library. A creative place for our students and the families and children on the North Shore and Pictou County --The "Scholar Ship" will be a space where all ages can learn, discover and make things. The learning and maker stations will cover all subjects, include science, technology, engineering and math as well as the arts and humanities and meet curriculum outcomes.

Our next progress meetings are scheduled for December 17, 2014 and February 17, 2015. Our final proposal will be presented in March 2015.

We have had some fundraising events already, including a soup supper and a flea market. Please "like" and keep watching our Facebook page (River John SOS) for future updates and events. The support of our community as we continue on this path is greatly appreciated.

Our email is riverjohnsos@gmail.com

Editor's Note: We're getting down to the wire. The SOS committee needs the community's support, both emotional and financial. Please support all upcoming fundraising events and make a donation.



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The Great American and European Short Line Railroad

Joshua Miller, age 90, in conversation 1964.

1884 was a pretty exciting year. The town of River John had grown to over two thousand people. Two ships had just been launched from the Kitchin and MacKenzie/MacLennan shipyards, and a fancy new hotel was being built called the Riverside. Mr. Stiles had just opened a new drugstore in MacLennan's Hardware Store, just opposite the steam mill. People could take the Gammon's Stagecoach to Pictou or Tatamagouche or even Truro. We felt that we were living in modern times. What was next...street lights?

Two years before, there was a meeting in the new Town Hall. Mr. Norris Green, a rich man from Boston, told everyone that soon his railroad was going to come through River John. Well, not right through the town. It was supposed to go through West Branch, but Charles MacLennan got the line moved closer to us, only a mile up the road. That was better than Scotsburn; they were going to have to move their town closer to the railroad! A big expensive iron bridge across the river was going to be built, just like the new one planned for next year here in town, and Mr. MacLennan promised to build a new hotel. Boy, were the townsfolk excited! Maybe just as excited as when, twenty years ago, Edward Prince of Wales, the future King, came to River John, and drove all around in MacLennan's new carriage.

But, a railway, right here! People who had the money would be able to travel to Pictou in just one



hour instead of four hours on the stagecoach. Even more exciting, a person would be able to travel up to Oxford Junction and then catch a train for Halifax or even Montreal without having to deal with snowy, muddy or washed-out roads. Coal, salt, stone and mail were going to be moved much better, as well as even cows or apples ... and think about all the new things soon in the stores, if you had the money.

If I didn't have chores, my Grandpa Abner let me walk up to where they had been cutting for the railroad. It was only two miles from my school in Westerly. All work had stopped, but there was enough of a path so you could still walk for a long ways toward Tatamagouche. I never saw a trail go so straight. But

nobody was working on clearing the woods or digging the new railbed. The Great American and European Short Line railway company had gone bankrupt, only two years after they started. Not surprising really, given that the Earltown and Wallace Railways crossing the Cobequid Mountains, had also just gone broke.

I can tell you a lot of people around here were pretty angry. They never got paid for their work or materials. Mr. Kitchin and Mr. MacLennan were trying to get the Government to pay people and to take over building the railway. It wouldn't be for another two years before a new company called the Oxford New Glasgow Short Line Railroad took over and not till 1888 would our station be finished. It's then you might hear the stationmaster call... "All aboard for Meadowville, Scotsburn, Scotch Hill, Brown's Point, Pictou and further east."

When the Intercolonial Railroad took over, they finished the line headed west through Denmark and Tatamagouche in 1890 and all the way to Oxford Junction in 1893.

Trains took a while coming to River John, but a lot of River Johners already had cash in their pockets for the first time in their lives. They were looking in the store front windows for new things to buy...but that's another story.

regions of the country, the stories, not the facts, made the front page.

That view permeated even the highest level of decision making, even among our own. Remember when Premier Danny Williams announced shortly after the Atlantic Accord was signed and oil revenue started to flow, "The people of Newfoundland and Labrador will no longer have to lower their heads in shame." What was he saying about the rest of us who, as Angus L suggested, hadn't been as geographically fortunate to win the oil lottery? Should we be ashamed? The underlying theme of the book is that federal transfers such as the Canada Healthcare Transfer and the Canada Social Transfer should be based upon need. If provinces are going to be expected to deliver a comparable level of service, there will be some that do not have the revenues to pay for it and will always incur deficits unless the transfer payments cover the cost of delivery. The alternatives are to raise taxes or scale back service.

Starr is a Maritimer. Is he biased? Probably, but he doesn't cut our politicians any breaks. He suggests that there is nothing stranger than the about-face that many Atlantic politicians have made when they take up residence in Ottawa. Almost a third of Canadian Finance Ministers have been from Atlantic Canada: Tilley, McLelan, Tupper, Foster, Fielding, Bennet, Rhodes, Ralston, Ilseley, Nowlan, Crosbie. Despite their roots, most quickly adopted the view that per capita funding was the way to go, leaving their home provinces without the revenue to pay for their obligations.

Equal as Citizens does more than correct historical inaccuracies. While it serves as an ominous warning about how our health and social services will continue to be eroded under per capita funding strategies, it offers a framework forward. Provinces are no different than people, a remarkable number of those that have good fortune attribute it to their initiative, not their inheritance, and are reluctant to share. They often do not see how they benefit from supportive systems. They see it as them giving and others taking rather than each making their contribution in different ways. Starr wants businesses in Alberta to understand that when they lure away young people from Nova Scotia, it was our taxes that paid for their education. Without transfer payments, that would not be possible. Sadly, Starr found that it was the political class that was stuck on who's a giver and who's a taker. Canadians across the country believe that health, education and social services should be a basic right of citizenship.

Equal as Citizens is a great Christmas gift for the political junkie or historian in your family.

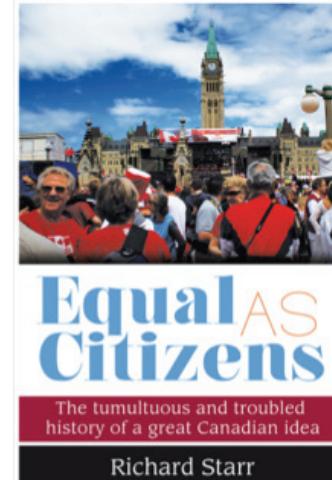
BOOK REVIEW

Equal as Citizens: *The tumultuous and troubled history* *of a great Canadian idea*

Author: Richard Starr

Published, May 2014 by Formac Lormier Books (312 pages)

Reviewer: Rob Assels



Nova Scotia played a pivotal role in the founding of Canada. Back then there were four provinces: Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec and Ontario. There wasn't the connectivity there is today. For example, in 1867, there was no rail link between Nova Scotia and Quebec. Inter-regional information was spotty at best, so the Fathers of Confederation literally had to take it on faith that their would-be partners had the national vision in mind and not their own self-interest – that Canada was greater than the sum of its provinces. Richard Starr's book, *Equal as Citizens*, shows that while Canada had leaders who kept the national vision alive, throughout its history there have been numerous regional, provincial and private sector interests that pitted province against province to undermine a great Canadian idea, that no matter where you lived in the country, as a citizen you were entitled to reasonably equal service.

Starr tells the history of equalization from decades leading up to confederation to the present day. You might think that the history of financial transfer payments between governments is a dry subject – you'd be wrong. Starr's narrative weaves scandal, self-interest, and political maneuvering into a compelling historical account of why provinces, particularly the Maritime provinces have never really had an opportunity to thrive.

West of the Quebec-Ontario border, Atlantic Canada has been characterised as suffering from a "no-can-do" attitude. In October of this year, Sun Media commentator, Ezra Levant, suggested that because Nova Scotia banned fracking, it shouldn't be entitled to transfer payments.

In *Equal as Citizens*, Starr points out that equalization was intended to redistribute federal revenues to the provinces to ensure that the provinces could provide a reasonable level of service at a reasonable level

of taxation. Unfortunately, since the early 70's there has been a constant push for equalization to be given out on a per capita basis, which favours provinces with increasing populations and penalizes provinces like Nova Scotia.

Take healthcare. Seniors use four times the health services of younger populations. Relative to Ontario and Alberta, the Atlantic provinces have much older populations, and need additional funds to take care of their seniors. Per capita funding ignores that need.

Of the larger-than-life characters who played a role in our country's history, one figures more prominently in Starr's account than the rest, Nova Scotia's Angus L. MacDonald. He never viewed Ontario or Alberta as being wealthy provinces; that would have implied their people were more industrious. Angus L referred to them as "geographically fortunate," in part for their resource revenues, in part because the federal government provided them with huge lots of federal lands, while Nova Scotia and New Brunswick received no such gifts. Most of Alberta's oil wealth today is taken from land that was not originally part of Alberta when it entered confederation. It belonged to the nation.

Also since the 70's, the fear of Quebec separation led successive federal governments to give more and more power to the provinces. In Starr's view this has made the federation weaker and has intensified regional fights. He also points out that several "think tanks" that oppose the very concept of a social safety net continuously produce misleading reports suggesting that the Employment Insurance system has led Maritimers to work only enough to collect pogey. That view was completely discredited by a thorough study at Dalhousie University that showed only 2% of EI claims were bogus or undeserved. Stories of systemic abuse make good headlines and as most of the national media exist in the geographically fortunate

Pickle Fun

From where I sit at my keyboard, I am looking at the abundant jars stacked on barn board pantry shelves in the kitchen, which delights me to no end. My husband, the gardener, spends hours preparing his garden to grow what is in these jars and spends countless more hours putting his garden away. There are rows of pickled beets on the bottom shelf, a lovely shade of maroon in shiny mason jars. There are vegetable pickles on the second shelf in jars of differing sizes and heights which shine with fantastic greens and reds and yellows.

Then, on the third shelf, his famous mustard beans, dill pickles and pickled peppers. No meal, however humble, is served at our table now without a jar of something sitting on the table with a fork in it. That is his way, right out of the jar and on his plate. I enjoy some of them some of the time, but I can't say I really get into the whole deal unless I am making a meat sandwich where I love his relishes. Oh yes, there is another shelf of relishes which I enjoy slathering in a meat or cheese sandwich.

This all comes with a price, of course. An hour of washing up the floor and cupboards, and counters and stove top a couple of times because when my man gets in the kitchen making pickles he is a conductor at a symphony, a trader at the stock market, a traffic cop in the centre of a busy intersection, or at least that is how I see it with fruit, vegetables and vinegar flying every which way. Magically, when all is done, the counter is lined up with the most beautiful polished colours in jars, all the lids have popped down. Except for the one he re-used, which I suggested doesn't work, but what do I know, so they end up in the fridge as a first taster.

What we do here is a very small percentage of what used to be done in the last century. Geography, economics and the first and second World Wars taught everyone who had very little to learn to use what they had. Pickling was a way of life, with no freezers or not much access to them. Summers were spent preparing food for winter and the art of pickling was passed down in families and recipes since. In the fall, pickle prizes were won at the fairs and exhibitions.

Strangely, one puts up jams and jellies and puts down pickles. As my husband and I learn to pickle and preserve our own food in more depth in the coming years, I would like to know that we don't need a freezer at all, and are able to do everything properly and safely to feed us for a whole winter, and every year we add one more recipe to our putting-up and putting-down book.

by Terry Giles

You say potato!

Scientists around the world have been documenting potato varieties and tracing their origins. Nowadays there are sophisticated genealogical databases in which potato breeders register their new varieties. But that is a recent process. Fifty years ago, farmers would give their own names to the varieties they liked best. So what is the difference between Congo, British Columbia Blue, McIntosh Black, Sharon's Blue and River John Blue potatoes? Nothing. They are all the same potato with different names. How do we know that? Well it turns out the same CSI forensic tests that are used by the RCMP to solve crimes can be modified and used to identify potatoes.

Dr. Xiu-Qing Li, a microbiologist with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, has developed a fast DNA fingerprinting technique to help us pick potatoes out of a lineup.

According to Dr. Li, you can't determine identity by skin and flesh alone. Genetic matching is far more accurate and can be used to determine which varieties are more disease or pest resistant, which have higher starch content and which will produce higher yields.

So have they determined whether the lowly blue potato was first cultivated in River John? Not yet, but they do know that the River John Blue makes excellent chips. Now if we only knew who first called it the River John Blue.



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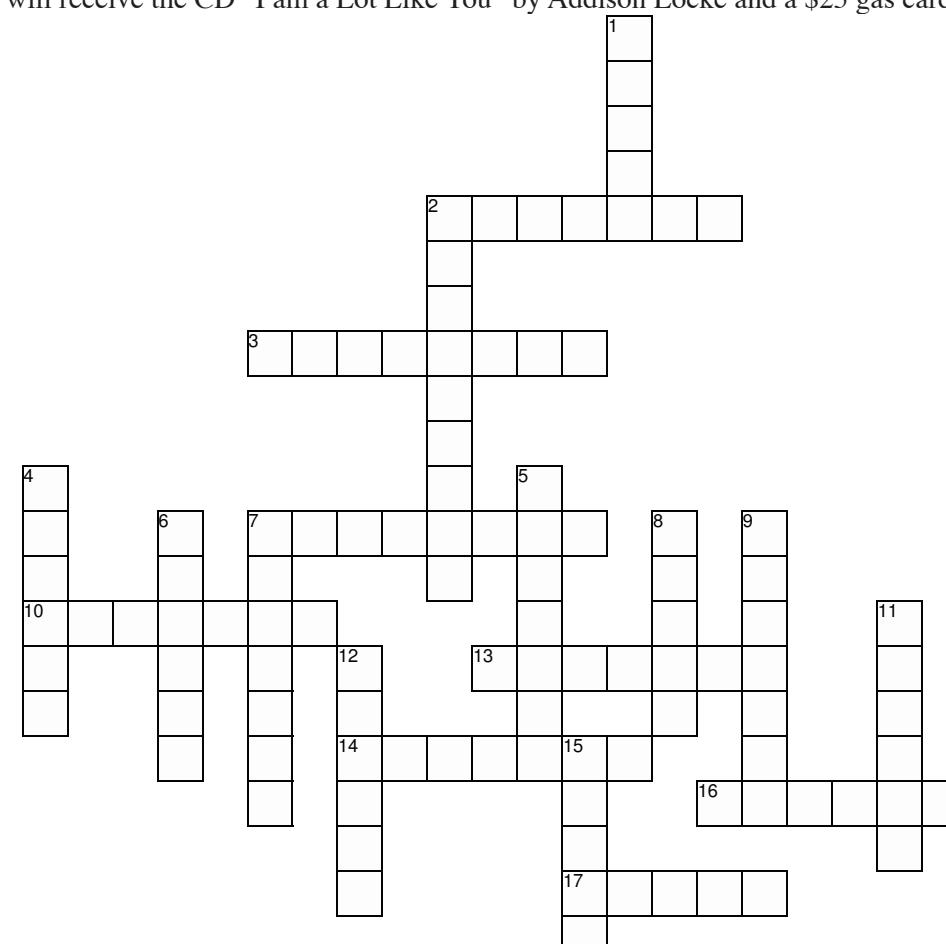
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**Stop in and say 'Hi' to
Anne-Marie & Tara**

Fill out the crossword and mail it to The Pioneer, Box 124, River John, B0K 1N0. The first correctly answered puzzle will receive the CD "I am a Lot Like You" by Addison Locke and a \$25 gas card.



Created on TheTeachersCorner.net Crossword Maker

Across

2. Not a house to live in
3. One method of food storage
7. Tasty fund raiser in Toney River
10. Where great ideas reside
13. Local band: The Slow _____
14. New local fest
16. Root vegetable storage
17. Equal as Citizens author

Down

1. R2D2 was one
2. October night out
4. Anglican Bishop of Northumberland Parish
5. Local real estate brokerage
6. Christmas music
7. A staple at Jo Dearing's
8. What 67P is
9. 'In Good Hands' line of work
11. Our MP
12. Second S in SOS
15. Not quite snow

River John SOS Flea Market

The flea market will be held every two months, first Saturday of every month, beginning with December Flea Market & Craft Fair on December 6th.

River John SOS first Flea Market had a lot more than fleas! There was music and food and crafts and smiles ... lots of smiles.



Former RJ student, now graphic designer and artist, Danielle Shreenan with her wonderful books for sale. Great Christmas gifts for children in your life!

Next Flea Market and Christmas Craft Fair December 6th. 10 -12. HELP SUPPORT YOUR SOS!

River John Consolidated School Craft Fair & Flea Market

in support of River John SOS



First Saturday of every other month
From 10:00 am to 12:00 pm
\$2.00 at the door

Community Treasures,
Food, Music & More!

Dec. 6th	Christmas Craft Fair and Flea Market
Feb. 7th	Valentine's Craft Fair and Flea Market
Apr. 4th	Easter Craft Fair and Flea Market
Jun. 6th	River John Students Soar Craft Fair and Flea Market

To reserve a table call Joanne Wilkins
Community Co-ordinator at 351-2143



Film festival

The Sunrise Film Festival Society is holding an open meeting to take the festival to the next level. We need your time and energy to help make this ambitious festival take shape. Come along to River John Consolidated School on Tuesday 13th January 2015, 7.00-8.30 pm to see how you can get involved and share our vision.

In the meantime, if you need further information email: festival@simple-films.com, like our facebook page: www.facebook.com/SunriseFilmFestival or visit our website: www.sunrisefilmfestival.com

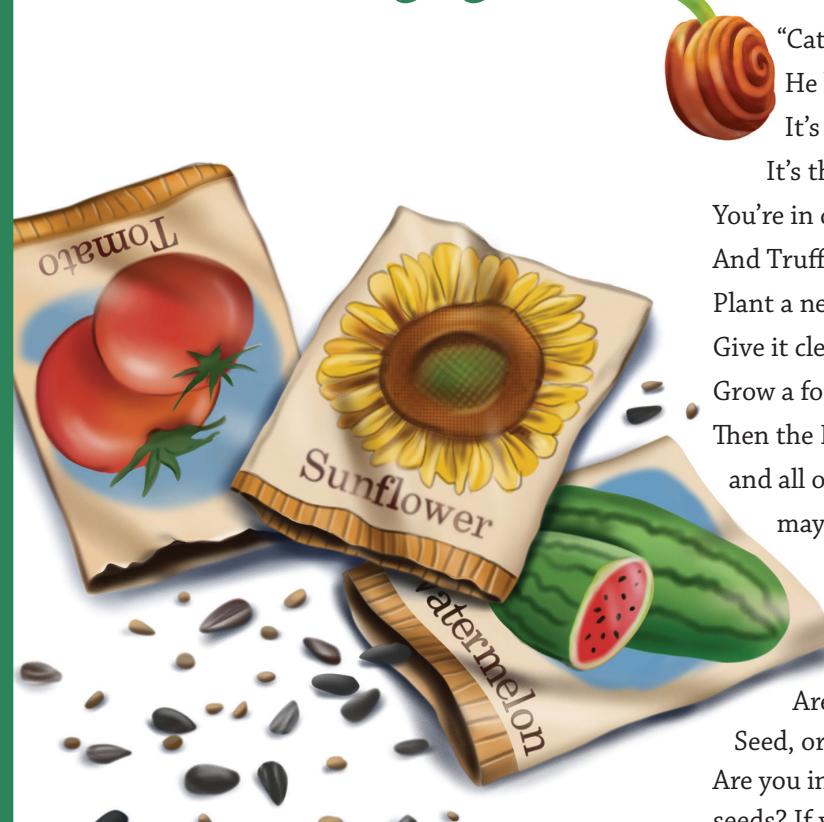


Delicious nutritious goodies from Red Road Farm's Michael Jensen and Susan Stephen.



The Slow Pickers provided some great background music!

THE LAST Truffula Seed



"Catch! calls the Once-ler.
He lets something fall.
It's a Truffula Seed.

It's the last one of all!"

You're in charge of the last of the Truffula Seeds.
And Truffula Trees are what everyone needs.
Plant a new Truffula. Treat it with care.
Give it clean water. And feed it fresh air.
Grow a forest. Protect it from axes that hack.

Then the Lorax

and all of his friends
may come back."

Dr. Seuss, The Lorax

Are you in charge of the last Truffula Seed, or perhaps another unusual seed?
Are you interested in sharing and keeping seeds? If you are interested in starting a local Community Seed Initiative come to 821 Highway 6 on Saturday January 24 at 2 pm to discuss ideas or call Lesley at 351-1476.

Haunted Woods



Fortune teller Judy does not really eat children and in fact she predicts: "the future looks wonderful for the students of River John Consolidated School." She was one of the "fixtures" in Leonard and Shelley's park during the Haunted Wood Walk. RJCS students enjoyed. So did a whole lot of adults Halloween evening!



The Not-so-grim Reaper. We see you smiling.

Let them eat pie?



Harvest Fest gave us lots of great moments. Who doesn't like pie.

Harvest Fest

KUDOS to Johnny and Amanda Reid, hard-working husband and wife team who inspired and worked hard for River John's First Harvest Fest. A great success!



Community coordinator Joanne Wilkins really gets into the spirit of things and makes an extra special day for RJCS students during Harvest Fest.



Go, Gals, Go!



Monday and Wednesday Fitness Class from nine to ten led by the ever energetic and cheerful Lynn MacLeod. Held at RJCS every week, women from Tatamagouche to Brule enjoy a healthy start to the week and a mid-week pick up. For all levels of fitness and every age.

Royal Loom



Joan Sutherland at her loom when Lismore Sheep Farm and friends met Prince Charles this year.

SOS Soup Supper



Reverend Christine Johnson, great supporter of RJCS, looks heavenward, perhaps giving thanks for the super soup supper put on by River John Support Our School and prepared by village soup maker Robin Campbell. Action in society!

Breakin' Tradition



At the Cape: David Dwyer readies Breakin' Tradition for first day of Scallop season.

Need your pumpkin moved?



The Pioneer has found the man for you. Mike Weatherby is pictured above showing fine form at Harvest Fest's Pumpkin Carrying Race

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Website: www.sunsetbeachcottages.com

River John Support Our School (RJSOS) announces
2015 Saturday Winter Workshop
& Maker/Space Series
For Cumberland, Colchester and Pictou County Residents
@ River John Consolidated School

Registration Deadline for all workshops is January 10th

Contact Joanne Wilkins Community Co-ordinator
Phone: 351-2143
bellwilk@hotmail.ca

Help us Help River John Students soar as we re-imagine our school and work towards creating the North Shore Scholar Ship Discovery Centre and Maker Space Community in the first "Hub" school in Atlantic Canada.

A place for all families and students in our region.

Our doors stay open depends upon your support.

All workshops are Saturdays from 1:00-3:00 pm

January 17
-Soap Making with Florence Keatley
-Storytelling for Adults with Sheree Fitch

January 24
-Yoga Dance with Helen Castonguay

January 31
-Gluten Free Bread Making with Susan Stephen
-Drama workshop for Adults presented by Creamery Square Arts Society

February 7
-Head Massage for Relaxation with Joan MacLeod
-Breast Feeding Clinic for Expectant and Nursing Mothers with Jennifer Langille

February 21
-Sap Felting with Christine Silver
-Self Defence Awareness for Women with Jason Mackay

February 28
-Lace Knitting with Sue MacLachlan
-Song Writing Workshop with Chris Silver
-Introductory Class in Qi Gong (Sheng Zhen Gong) with Rose Johnston February 28 (1:30-3:30)

March 7
-Felting with Hazel Mackay

March 14
-Beginning Ukelele Workshop with Christine Johnson

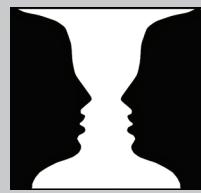


The Gammon Brothers

Stagecoach Line

Joshua Miller, age 90, in conversation 1964.

I remember when I was ten years old, sitting on the old wooden bridge across the River John most Saturday nights in the summer of 1884. I liked this spot because I could wave to all the people I knew as they came into River John on horses, waggons, and walking. Saturday night everything was open; barbershops, blacksmiths, Burke House hotel, Kitchin's hardware store. Everyone wanted to meet their friends, get a few chores done and get home before dark.



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Locke'd on Music

A cool evening of traditional music mixed with a relaxed social atmosphere... That's what guests and musicians alike can expect at the new Friday Night Music Jams hosted by Harley White at the River John Legion every Friday night at starting at 7pm.

I attended opening night to offer my support and my songs. I truly enjoyed seeing old friends and making new ones. You may expect a joyful and comfortable Friday night entertainment option.

These Jams will happen every Friday night and offer an open beverage counter, with alcoholic beverages as well as coffee, tea, soda and chips.

The cost to be in the audience is only \$2.50 per person and you will enjoy being with friends and listening to the musicians as they interact while offering their humble gift of music.

Addison Locke can be reached on Facebook, by phone: 351 2010; by email: silverca@ns.sympatico.ca or addisonlocke1963@gmail.com; or by mail at: 780 Sunrise Trail Marshville NS B0K 1N0

Addison Locke

Your free public library!

Wireless Hotspots & free public internet access, meeting rooms, local history information & much more!

...Books, eBooks, audiobooks, newspapers, magazines...



Antigonish ... 863-8233 New Glasgow ... 752-8233 Pictou ... 485-5021
River John ... 351-2599 Stellarton ... 755-1638 Trenton ... 752-5181 www.parl.ns.ca
Westville ... 396-5022 (902) 755-6031 1(866)779-7761

Agent of Change

On October 19th, Right Reverend Ron Cutler, Anglican Bishop of the Parish of Northumberland celebrated Eucharist at Holy Trinity at Middleton Corner followed by meet 'n' greet 'n' eat in the church.



Here he presents Monica Graham of River John's Saint John Baptist Anglican Church with her certificate from Open University. This marked Graham's successful completion of the course Agents of Change which covers aspects of community development: consultation, inclusion, protection, governance, finance and work programming.

What I loved best was to listen for the thunder of the Gammons' Stagecoach as rolled into River John and pulled up to Burke House. Four horses made quite a noise, especially harnessed to that loaded stagecoach. It was called a Concord Coach, windows covered with tarnished moose or deer hide, with three benches for eight passengers inside and space for four, counting the driver and postboy on top. As passengers were allowed up to 20 pounds, there was a lot of luggage tied to the outside, and filling up all the spaces inside.

I would run to the hotel to see the strangers as they unloaded to rest for the night. Women in fancy hats, their wide skirts, with a bustle up the back, short waistline and all curvey like. The men were just as interesting, in their tight coloured suits, bow ties, wing-tip collars and all manner of hats. I usually followed the horses to Burkes' Barn, where they were stabled. If I was lucky, I might get a penny for currying and feeding the horses. Candy!

The six o'clock stage from Truro had taken ten hours to get here. I heard the driver, Chester Gammon, say that it was a good run, except for a tree that had fallen across the trail. All the men had to work together to move it. But a ten hour trip was fast!

"Coaching" was never a happy experience. Sometimes the stagecoach went right through a forest fire, scorching the men's whiskers and terrifying all. In winter, passengers had to help shovel snow, and in the spring and fall, help push the stagecoach through the mud.

Although stops were frequent, the halfway stop was Earltown, where the horses were changed and passengers got off for a stretch and maybe a meal at the Post House. The stable there had about twenty horses, due to the fact that the stagecoach to Tatamagouche also went through Earltown.

Our newspaper, The Pioneer, started in 1879, would print the twice-weekly stagecoach schedule for the summer. Arrive: Saturday evening and spend Sunday here; Monday round trip to Pictou; Tuesday back to Truro, then out from Truro again on Wednesdays and Saturdays. I got to see the stagecoach four times a week!

Will Gammon owned our stagecoach and made his money from moving goods and mail, as well as passengers. The cost of a trip from Truro to River John was about three dollars. That was two days pay for my grandpa, who was a sailmaker. That much money would feed and clothe me for a month. It was only the rich people that travelled far in those days. The only other ways to travel were to buy a horse and buggy that might cost half-a-year's wages or to walk to Truro and take days.

Work had already started here on another way to travel...the railroad, but that's another story.

A Peace Poem

Peace feels like marshmallows. - Chloe Patriquin
Peace sounds like silence. - Ria Suideest
Peace looks like a puppy with a kitten. - Jack Reid
Peace feels like soft fur on a dog. - Terry Jollymore
Peace looks like a new baby calf starting to walk around the farm. - Alana MacKinnon
Peace sounds like rain drop falling into a puddle. - Riley Allen
Peace looks like a smile on a baby's face. - Madison Langille
Peace smells like cookies baking. - Christena MacLean
Peace feels like hugs and kisses. - Jordyn Peters
Peace looks like poppies blooming. - Shaelyn Matheson
Peace looks like a baby calf freshly born. - Makayla MacKinnon
Peace feels like bunnies. - Cohen Cameron
Peace looks like new born kittens. - Brianna Cantley
Peace sounds like birds chirping. - Ryan Clough
Peace taste like victory. - Colby Nickerson
Peace tastes like smooth, creamy, silk chocolate. - Jayden Roddick
Peace sounds like wind blowing on the river flow. - Logan Munro
Peace feels like a kitten's super soft fur. - Cassie Hiltz

This time of year and all year, may we all recall the touch, the smell, the taste, the feel of peace, and what it means in all our lives. The students of Laura Smith's class at RJCS reminded us all at the Remembrance Day Ceremony on November the 10th how peace is right before us all, amongst us all, if we choose to pause and really notice.

Peace this Christmas and in 2015!



Salem & West Branch United Churches

As we prepare our hearts and homes for the birth of the one we call Emmanuel: God-With-Us this Advent-Christmas season, I invite you to share in our worship services and special events. May the wondrous gifts of hope, peace, joy, and love surround, embrace and dwell in you and with you this holiday season and always.

Blessings to you and those you love,

Rev. Christine Johnson

River John-West Branch Pastoral Charge

ADVENT-CHRISTMAS SERVICES & EVENTS

Sunday Mornings: Join us Sunday morning as we make our way through Advent; celebrating the hope, peace, joy and love of the season.

West Branch United Church (9:30am)

Salem United Church (11:00am)

Christmas Concert. Join us for a light-hearted celebration of the spirit of Christmas in story, skits and song. Admission \$5. Fudge will also be sold.

Thursday, December 11: Salem United Church (7:00pm) / Storm day = December 12.

Blue Christmas Service: This service of hope is for those of us who find the Christmas season difficult, and for those of us who are seeking a quiet place in the midst of the busyness.

Wednesday, December 17: Salem United Church (7:00 pm)

Candlelight Christmas Eve Services: Wednesday, December 24. Come join us as we celebrate the birth of Christ into our lives and our world.

Salem United Church (6:00pm)

West Branch United Church (8:00pm)

Celebrate the season

with the Anglican Parish of Northumberland

December 13th, 7pm 'til late
Christmas Jam session, \$5 (incl. lunch)
St. John's Anglican Hall, River John
If you play or sing, bring an instrument
or just come and enjoy

 **Christmas Eve services:**
5pm - St. John's, River John
7pm - Holy Trinity, Middleton Corner

December 28th, 11am
Lessons & carols, St. John's, River John

 **also...**  December 7th, 4pm
An ecumenical service of carols & lessons
at St. Michael's Roman Catholic church,
Marshville

St. John's Anglican Church

December 13th

Christmas Jam session

St. John's Anglican Hall River John beginning at 7 pm. \$5.00 each. Lunch served. If you play, sing, bring an instrument or just come and enjoy.

December 24th

Christmas Eve service

St. John's Anglican Church, 5 pm.

December 28th

Lessons and Carols

St. John's Anglican Church, 11 am.



Presbyterian Services

- Advent Lunch series beginning Wednesday November 26th.
- The West Branch and Area Singers present an evening of Christmas music at Burns Memorial Presbyterian Church, West Branch on Saturday December 20th.
- There will also be a Christmas Eve service at St. George's Presbyterian Church December 24th at 5:30 pm and at St. David's, Toney River at 7:00 pm.

Faith based announcements are available to all faiths and groups within our community. Please send details to r.assels@icloud.com

The Warrior

Joshua Miller, age 90, in conversation 1964.

So, you want to know about the Warrior. I don't blame you. It's quite a story. Me, I was just a lad of ten when they launched her from the Kitchin shipyard. I remember her mostly from her double top gallant yards and those sky sails. Ships of that time had square sails that worked best when sailing before the wind, and not tacking against it. Most square rigged ships had five sails to a mast, but the Warrior had an extra gallant sail and a sky sail above that. Imagine what she looked like with 21 sails on her three masts alone. Some sight.

At 1687 tons, she was the biggest sailing ship ever built in Pictou County. When Mr Kitchin, I mean Captain James R. Kitchin Jr., built her in 1884, there were only two shipyards left in River John. There was Kitchin on the east side of the River, and Mackenzie with McLennan on the west side. They were working on another ship, the Caldera, only slightly smaller in size than the Warrior. I can still remember the sound of hammers and saws on both sides of the River late into the evening, as these shipyards raced to complete their biggest ships ever.

Wait. I have to fill my pipe.

I know that there were rumours about where the money came from to build the Warrior, as well as some trouble with the crew in Boston Harbour, but these came to nothing. The story that I've always loved was when Captain Kitchin was taking the Warrior on her maiden voyage to Liverpool, England. They had got as far as the Strait of Canso, when a big gale blew up behind them. It was either hove to in the Chedabucto Bay or run before the storm, straight out into the Atlantic. Captain Kitchin dared to take on the storm, and it blew the Warrior clear across the Atlantic in only 12 days.

How do I know these things? Well, I lived with my Grampa Abner on the Cape. He worked on the Warrior as a sail-maker. Other times he helped his four brothers with farming and fishing. Grandpa made me go to school, but whenever I could, I loved to hang around the shipyard. Mr. Johnson, the foreman, didn't mind, as long as I stayed out of the way and off the rigging. I still remember the smells of tar, oak, pine and tamarack and the feel of sisal rope.

I had watched the Kitchin shipyard on the east side of the River since I could remember. There was at least one ship always being built, but after the Warrior, the Kitchin shipyard built no more ships. It was unbelievable. Grandpa told me that thirty-eight ships had been built in this shipyard alone in last 40 years. Mrs. Minnie Kitchin, who was always very nice to me, explained that because of the better roads and railroads, ships were not as useful as they once were. Good lumber was getting scarce and besides, ships were being built out of steel now and driven by steam, not sail. Things were going to change in River John, ...but that's another story.

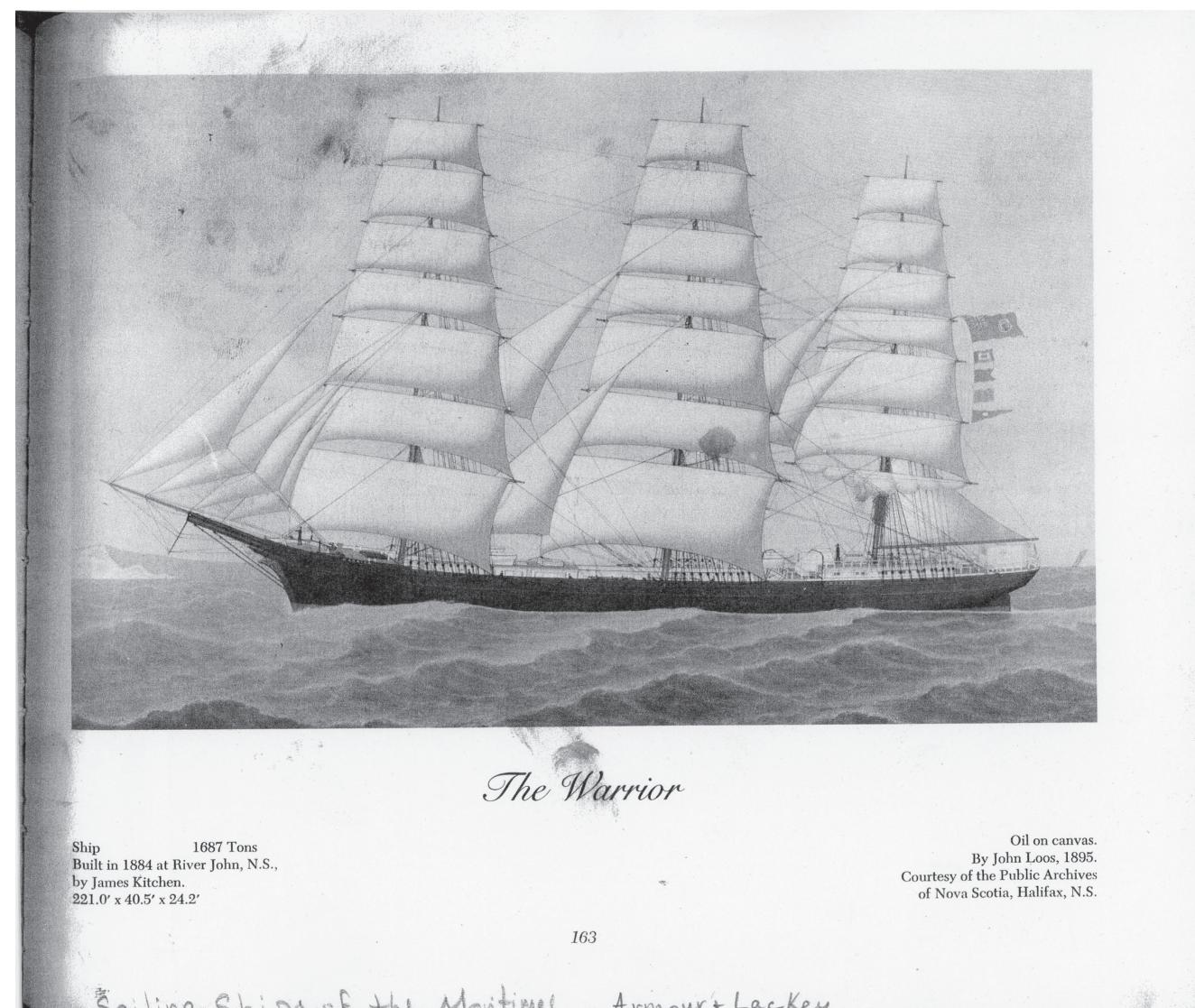
by Chris Giles

Crossword prize winners

We had no winners in our last issue, which means in addition to Addison Locke's CD, the prize for being first to solve this issue's crossword is a \$25 ESSO gas card. There were a number of entries that were close. The clue that stumped most people was "Second moon in a month"; the answer was "Blue".

As always, please send your answers to Box 124, River John, B0K 1N0.

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Any old stuff?

River John and Area Historical Society welcomes new members - old and young! Our goal is preserving and sharing our heritage. If you are doing a cleanup, DON'T throw out any "old stuff" til you give us a call - old books, old documents, old photos (even without names!). We could also use donations of old filing cabinets, old shelves, old display cases (even if repairs are needed) and anything made here. Call Linda Reid, Minnie Cormier, Mary Beth Sutherland, Doug White or Beulah Wright. Come to a meeting - third Tuesday of each month at River John Consolidated School at 7 pm.

And they're off!



Boys, girls, they both leave just a blur as they launch out of their starting gate at this Harvest Fest event

CLASSIFIED ADS

THANK YOU

"That Guy's Veggies", on the all new Cape John Road, wishes to thank its customers for 17 weeks of patronage!

See you on June 26, 2015 with potted geraniums and hanging baskets of wave petunias.

SENIORS' TEA

The RJ's will be presenting a Seniors' Christmas Tea at the River John Royal Canadian Legion on Thursday, December 4th at 2 pm.

WANTED

Contributors from Hedgesville, East Branch, Louisburg and Melville. Articles and photos from all ages, for all ages. Next submission date is November 20. email Rob at r.assels@icloud.com or call 902-351-1476

Is there anything more reliable than a library?

If there is, it's probably the library staff. The River John Library opened in its current location in 2001. Before that, it was located right across the street. That building opened in 1986 but ran out of space. Throughout that period, 1987-2014, we've had the good fortune to have Margaret MacLean oversee the library's operations. Margaret, former winner of the Nova Scotia Library Association's Emile Theriault Award for outstanding library service, has been the face of the River John library for 27 years.

Margaret gave the Pioneer a tour of the library and an update on what's new. The Internet has revolutionized the way people access books and reference materials and libraries have had to adapt.

The library in River John provides workstations for people who need internet access, want to learn new software or just want to stay in touch with friends and family. For those who are unfamiliar with computers, the library provides support and training.

Margaret told us that the library is used by a variety of community groups. There are: book clubs, knitting circles, crafts for kids and movie nights. Here's what's coming up in December:

- 'Share a Yarn' Knitting and Crocheting Circle- Fridays, December 5 & 12, 10 am – 11 am. Needles, hooks and books - a lovely combination! Knit and crochet, and share an hour of stitching and conversation. Bring your own yarn, needles or hooks.
- Preschool Storytime. December 3 & 10, 9:30 am – 10:00 am. A weekly library program for children ages 3-5 years. Stories, crafts, games & more.
- Christmas film & craft ... "From Naughty to Nice". December 11, 6:30 pm – 7:30 pm. 'From Naughty to Nice' features the work of the internationally-renowned Old Trout Puppet Workshop. It is a playful cautionary tale about the consequences of selfishness and greed. The film will be followed by a Christmas craft.
- Imagination Saturdays! (drop-in). Every Saturday 10 am – 3 pm excluding holidays - weather permitting. Drop by the library all day, and see what we have to do. We will have crafts on hand, for you to make & take home, and games to play too.

For more information or to register for any of the above activites or events, contact the library at 902-351-2599.

There are other services the library offers that you might not think of at first. There is computer hardware and software that will convert old vinyl records (LPs for those of you over 40) into digital files that can be played on any computer or mobile device. There is a 3D printer, a digital camera and a scanner.

At the end of the day, libraries are about books, sharing stories and ideas. As Mark Twain once said, "In a good bookroom you feel in some mysterious way that you are absorbing the wisdom contained in all the books through your skin, without even opening them." So if you don't have a library card, don't put it off; getting one is easy. You don't even need to be a resident.

Wellness grants to be announced

The Pictou County Community Health Board will be announcing its grants shortly. In total 32 grant applications were submitted across Pictou County. Four of those were from River John. Twenty-five grants were approved for full or partial funding.

Wellness grants are generally given to community organizations whose goals and activities align with those of the Community Health Board. Organizations are eligible for a maximum of three year's funding with the amount diminishing each year.

Year of Aging Well calendars

2015 is the Year of Aging Well. The Community Health Board has funded the production of the Community Links Calendar, which has a wealth of information and events for seniors. River John will receive 100 calendars for distribution to seniors. If you are interested or work with seniors, please contact Rob Assels at r.assels@icloud.com or 351-1476.

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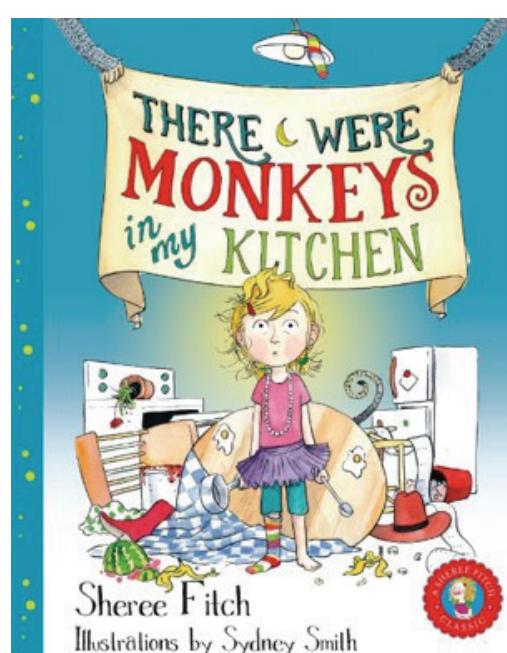
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Author **Sheree Fitch** (and maybe some friends) will be signing books at the RJCS Flea Market and Craft Fair on December 6th. We've heard Santa is out of stock at the North Pole so here is chance to get personalized copies of *Mabel Murple*, *Toes in my Nose*, *Sleeping Dragons All Around* and others. A portion of the proceeds of sales will go to River John Support Our School.





Call anytime at:
902-351-3001 for Donna
or
902-956-3301 for Cathy
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30 River Road, River John

Beautiful Victorian home overlooking the amazing sunsets on the John River. Would make a perfect Bed & Breakfast. \$159,000.



997 Old Pictou Road, Bigney

The only thing original about this house is the skeleton. New foundation, new well, new plumbing, new wiring, new windows, new metal roof and the list goes on within the last four years. 85 acres within minutes of the ocean. \$179,900.



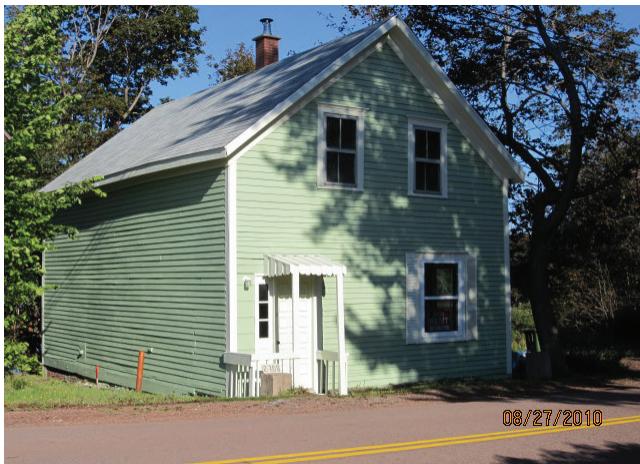
1307 River John Road, Hodson

4 Bedroom home, with several outbuildings and 75 acres of land, what a great place for a hobby farm! Conveniently located just minutes to River John, or 20 minutes to Pictou. \$148,500.



2673 River John Stn Road, River John

How about living in a lovely quiet neighborhood with a very private back yard? This three bedroom, 2 bath home is snuggled in the trees just a city block from downtown River John. \$119,900.



2708 River John Stn Road, River John

Three bedroom home on the River John waterfront. Enjoy the beautiful River John sunsets, peace, tranquility, and camaraderie of a small village! Walking distance to the local pharmacy; post office; restaurants and other amenities. \$59,900.



772 MacKay Road, Welsford

This two bedroom, two bath home is nestled on 20 acres beside a pond, this little retreat is an outdoors person's dream! \$99,500.

Pioneer Contributors:

Bigney – Sheree Fitch
Cape John – Chris Giles
Hodson – Jill Munro
Marshville – Rob Assels
River John - Linda Thompson-Reid
Seafoam – Georgie Fleck
Toney River – Carolyn Elliott
Welsford – Dan Ferguson

Agriculture – TBD
Fisheries – Robert Heighton
Forests, woodlots & forestry – David Sutherland
Music - Addison Locke

River John Consolidated School

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To get involved, contact Rob Assels
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r.assels@icloud.com

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