

LARK HARBOUR

THE

YORK HARBOUR

BLOW·ME·DOWNER

ABOUT THE OUTER BAY OF ISLANDS, NEWFOUNDLAND

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NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

2013 December 06 Friday

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REMEMBRANCE DAY OBSERVANCES AT LARK HARBOUR



Part of the congregation present in St James Church for the Remembrance Service



Mr Kenneth Druggett of Lark Harbour, a Veteran of the Korean War

ON REMEMBRANCE DAY, 2013 NOVEMBER 11, the weather was dry but rather cold. With a chilly northeasterly breeze, occasional flashes of sunshine between the clouds, and a threat of possible rain showers, the decision was made to hold the service inside St James Church rather than to expose everyone to the outdoor discomfort.

The congregation gathered in church about 10:45am, the Maple Leaf and the Union Jack and all were in place for the Two Minutes Silence and the clear bugle tones of Last Post on the dot of the Eleventh Hour of the Eleventh Day of the Eleventh Month, recalling the first Armistice of 1918 which marked the termination of hostilities after World War One, the Great War, the War to End Wars. We are told that there are now no military personnel still living, ninety-five years after that first Armistice Day.

It may be tempting to contemplate the irony of the fact that *The War To End Wars* is in fact a misnomer, as there have been several other wars in which Canadians have participated since then: World War Two (1939-1945), the Korean War (1950-1953), and the Vietnam War (1955-1975), all fought with the participation, the deaths, and the accompanying carnage, of Canadians; not to mention the involvement of many more Canadians in Peacekeeping and other paramilitary actions since then in various parts of the world such as Cyprus and the Middle East, some with comparable loss of life and limb.

No matter where or when the action was staged, those of us who did not serve in any of those campaigns owe much to those who did. Yet we hear comments sometimes that those later actions “were not real wars”. This may be true for a few, but in many instances soldiers, and medical or other support personnel suffered injury and death while serving abroad, and many returned home in body bags, or missing arms and legs, or enduring nightmarish psychological attacks of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) which can be just as debilitating or worse than physical wounds.

It is our responsibility to provide the care and support required by any of our Veterans, whether they served fifty years ago, or five years ago, or even today. All who were fortunate enough to return home — some with visible injuries, but others apparently unscathed yet affected by ravages of PTSD — deserve to receive whatever care and treatment they may need. But an alarming number find themselves unable to pass the tests which will qualify them to receive appropriate medical support and compensation to enable them to lead normal and productive lives in the country on whose behalf they risked life, limb, and even sanity. This is not the treatment they should have to endure in a country which claims to be proud of their service and sacrifice.

*At the going down of the sun, and in the morning,
we must remember them.*

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

LH = Lark Harbour YH = York Harbour JB = John's Beach
 HC = Holy Communion; MP = Morning Prayer; EP = Evening Prayer

2013 DECEMBER 2013

1 st	<i>Sun</i>	11am Advent 1 - LH - Holy Communion 7pm - JB - Holy Communion
5 th	Thur	6:00pm - Town Tree Lighting 6:30pm - Family Carol Service at St James Church (originally announced for Tuesday 10 th)
8 th	<i>Sun</i>	11am Advent 2 - LH - Morning Prayer 7pm - JB - Evening Prayer (Memorial Bulb Service)
10 th	Tues	School Christmas Concert Human Rights Day (United Nations)
14 th	Sat	10:00am - Annual Christmas Parade from Little Port to Down Below, finishing at York Harbour Town Hall for refreshments.
15 th	<i>Sun</i>	7pm - LH - Memorial Bulb Service 10:30am - JB - Holy Communion
22 nd	<i>Sun</i>	7pm - LH - Holy Communion 10:30am - JB - Morning Prayer
24 th	Tues	7pm - Christmas Eve, LH - Holy Communion 4pm - Christmas Eve, JB - Holy Communion
25 th	Wed	Christmas Day
29 th	<i>Sun</i>	7pm - LH Evening Prayer 10:30am - JB - Morning Prayer
31 st	Tues	New Years Eve

2014 JANUARY 2014

1 st	Wed	New Years Day
5 th	<i>Sun</i>	11am Epiphany - LH - Holy Communion 7pm - JB - Holy Communion
12 th	<i>Sun</i>	11am Baptism of the Lord - LH - Holy Communion 7pm - JB - Holy Communion
19 th	<i>Sun</i>	7pm Epiphany 2 - LH - Memorial Hymn Sing 10:30 - JB - Morning Prayer
26 th	<i>Sun</i>	7pm Epiphany 3 - LH - Holy Communion 10:30am - JB - Memorial Hymn Sing

2014 ADVANCE DATES 2014

Feb 14 th	Fri	St Valentine's Day
March 5 th	Wed	Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent
March 8 th	Sat	Daylight Saving Time begins. Advance your clocks one hour before you go to bed.
April		
April 20 th	<i>Sun</i>	EASTER SUNDAY
April 22 nd	Tues	EARTH DAY

Organisers of local events or activities are asked to [email](mailto:blowmedowner@gmail.com) information to blowmedowner@gmail.com for inclusion in the next issue of the **BLOW•ME•DOWNER**. Please also provide your contact information in case we need to check with you.

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A similar announcement will also be made on my Facebook page.

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● ● ● Please support local enterprises ● ● ●

*Several local businesses supported the **BLOW•ME•DOWNER** in the past. Their inclusion here is a recognition of that support. Other local businesses will be included at their request.*

Listed alphabetically :-

- **Byrne's Store, Main Street, York Harbour**
groceries, hardware, gas & diesel, souvenirs 681-2040
- **Captain Cook B&B & Cottages, York Harbour**
Email: info@captaincookbb.ca 681-2906; 1-877-681-2906
- **Curling ONE Stop Service Station, Corner Brook**
automotive repairs, servicing, fuel 785-2619
- **Drop In Lounge, 23 Main Street, Lark Harbour**
entertainment, food, licenced 681-2103
- **Eddie Joyce, MHA, Bay of Islands, Corner Brook**
Member, House of Assembly. Corner Brook Office 634-7883
- **Fillatre Memorials, 1 St Mark's Avenue, Corner Brook**
memorial furnishings 634-1529
- **Gerry Byrne, MP, Humber-St Barbe-Bay Verte**
Member of Parliament. Corner Brook Office 637-4570
- **Quik Lube Plus, 65 Humber Road, Corner Brook**
automotive repairs, servicing 639-5823
- **Sheppard's Clover Farm Store, Lark Harbour**
groceries, hardware, gas, Sears agency, marine 681-2160
- **Vater Family Daycare, Frenchman's Cove** 789-3940

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*Merry Christmas
A Happy New Year*

Next BMD will be in April

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY**2013 December 10, Tuesday**

SOME READERS MAY FEEL that too much emphasis is placed on Human Rights. When we hear of cases of violent criminals being affected by Human Rights Charter considerations, we may be inclined to feel that they do not deserve it. But in a civilised society the rights of all persons, criminal or not, must be respected in the process of law.

On 1948 December 10 the United Nations General Assembly passed [The Universal Declaration of Human Rights \(UDHR\)](#). This is a long document consisting of 30 articles which together encompass a standard which should be applied to every human being, regardless of any variations in his/her human condition. Since that original Declaration, there have been supplementary documents (for example, the [International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#)) but the basic principles remain.

It's inconvenient that the UDHR has to be so long: the first such document was the Habeas Corpus Act, passed in England in 1679 to require an arrested person to be brought before a judge within a certain time period for a decision on whether there is sufficient cause or evidence to keep the person locked up. We often hear of an accused person being given 'bail'. This happens because of the Habeas Corpus Act. This Act is the earliest example of the introduction of Human Rights in law, and while the Act dates only from 1679, the principle of *habeas corpus* dates from at least as far back as Magna Carta in 1215.

We Canadians are fortunate that we live in a country which over the years has copied much of the best legislation from British, American and a few other traditions to protect our Human Rights. The unfortunate thing is that sometimes governments, even our own, pay lip service to Human Rights and then fail to support them. In the past there have been cases of such failure, which may have led to the miscarriage of justice, even here in Newfoundland.

Imagine the despair of individuals in Iran, China, Russia, and many other countries, who have been imprisoned for taking part in a peaceful demonstration to express disagreement with a government policy. Certainly we cannot condone violent demonstrations, or even major damage to property, but in many countries some people who have joined peaceful actions have been imprisoned just because they spoke out against the government. In some Latin American countries people who demonstrated against the uncompensated destruction of their homes and land to enable a mining company, often a Canadian one, to set up there, have been imprisoned. Because they are Canadian companies, run by Canadians and governed here at home by Canadian laws, we often assume that they continue to observe our laws overseas. Some do, some don't. But often those countries either have no laws similar to ours, or have no desire to enforce them. Don't ordinary people like ourselves deserve our support, wherever they are?

For a full and proper democratic society to exist, Human Rights must be respected. A nation which denies such rights to *any* of its citizens may be judged as less committed to the principles set forth in those rights. For Canadians, the current status of Human Rights is enshrined in the [Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#) enacted in 1982 under the Government of Pierre Elliot Trudeau. In many cases, such as the 1988 abortion debate or the 2004 same-sex marriage issue, the Charter can influence legislation and its results. That is why the Charter is so important.

Often governments find such "interference" a problem, but it is a safeguard and a cause for more detailed reflection which will usually result in fairer and better legislation.

SLH

FRACKING UPDATE

Text of Minister Dalley's Nov 4th announcement as provided to the media. I have bolded the sections I consider most significant.

**Announcement in the House of Assembly on 2013 Nov 04
by Hon Derrick Dalley, Minister of Resources and Development**

Mr. Speaker, I rise in this Honourable House today to reiterate our government's vision for **economic development, balanced with environmental protection**. There has been much discussion surrounding hydraulic fracturing in recent months. **I can assure Newfoundlanders and Labradorians that our government's first and main consideration when exploring an economic development opportunity is the health and safety of our people and protection of the environment. These principles guide our decisions and remain our highest priorities.**

Today, I am announcing that **our government will not be accepting applications for onshore and onshore-to-offshore petroleum exploration using hydraulic fracturing**. This measure provides an opportunity for government to undertake a balanced review of regulations, rules and guidelines in other jurisdictions; to complete the technical work necessary **to fully assess the geological impact in Western Newfoundland; and, following this process, to undertake public engagement to ensure that our residents have an opportunity to comment and are fully informed before any decision is made.**

Mr Speaker, oil and gas exploration and development has played a significant role in the economic growth of this province, transforming the economy and prospects for Newfoundland and Labrador.

Petroleum drilling and production activities throughout our province have proceeded in accordance with stringent regulations and rules. Our sound approach to petroleum industry regulation and environmental protection is guiding the step we are taking today.

Our first consideration is the health and safety of our people. In making this decision, our government is acting responsibly and respecting the balance between economic development and environmental protection.

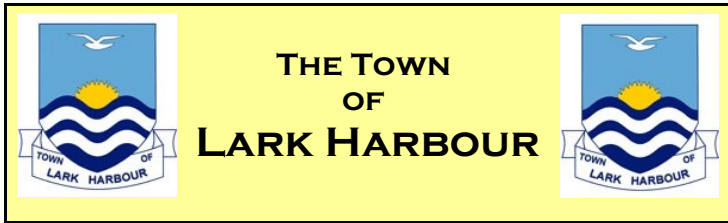
Editorial Comments

The Government's statement is highly commendable, including as it does the essentials we have been looking for from them over the past months. It deserves our approval as a step in the right direction.

However the Oil Industry is perhaps the most powerful lobby group in Canada, years of experience in shaping the responses of governments to its own preferences. It also has financial resources far beyond those of provincial governments such as ours, and it can even apply pressure on larger ones such as the Government of Canada. This is important when we deal with the Harper Government which has consistently shown itself sympathetic to the Oil Industry.

Because of these influences which are so powerful in Canada, we, the public, must be vigilant to see that Minister Dalley's statement does in fact set the tone for our Province's approach to fracking. It is therefore our responsibility to keep our elected representatives aware that we, the residents of the area where fracking may take place, are watching, and we will judge them at election time. SLH

Next BMD will be in April



MINUTES of MEETING held on 2013 November 09

Present : Mayor John Parsons; Deputy Mayor Jamie Park
Councillors : Llewellyn Childs; Stanley Childs
Clerks : Peggy Sheppard (Recording); Joanna Pottle
Absent : Councillor Pauline Sheppard

Meeting commenced at 7:00 pm.

- **Minutes** of Regular Meeting of 2013 Oct 22 and Special Meetings of 2013 Oct 29, Nov 01 and Nov 05 all approved.
- **Water/Sewer Update** – All agreed that any further costs pertaining to this project would be paid through obtaining a loan. Review of additional costs to complete Phase 1B, a letter has been sent to the Dept of Municipal Affairs to request funding for these additional costs. Representatives from DFO and Anderson Engineering are scheduled to be in Town on Thursday, November 21 to inspect the site. Clerks had been advised of damage to the road leading to the dam site; clerks directed to contact Marine Contractors for repairs. Council will be re-applying for funding for Phase 2 in spring 2014.
- **Fracking** – Moratorium presently in place on all fracking for the West Coast. Councillor asked if there was any new information since the statement by Black Spruce in the newspaper on Nov 07. Mayor Parsons to contact Black Spruce for an update.
- **Amalgamation** – Brief discussion on items for negotiations. Clerk to set up a meeting with York Harbour Council to discuss those items.
- **Route 450** – Review of letter received from Cyril McCarthy indicating that underground water flow and eroding weak rock is the cause of the subsidence near Copper Mine Brook; options to repair this are being studied. Petitions regarding the condition of Route 450 have been forwarded to Mr Eddie Joyce, Mr Cyril McCarthy and Mr Nick McGraw. Council was advised that Mr Joyce will present the petition in the House of Assembly next week.
- **Harbour View Road** – Review of quote from Bell Aliant to install phone lines for residents in this area to connect to telephone and internet services. Agreed to send a letter to Bell Aliant requesting a re-evaluation of this quote, copy to Eddie Joyce. To be discussed at next regular monthly meeting.
- **Playground streetlight** – Agreed that an extended arm streetlight would be the best option in the paved area of the playground. Agreed to purchase an extended arm at the cost of approximately \$311.00.
- **CEEP project** ([Community Enhancement Employment Program](#)) is currently underway. Review of expenses for materials to date. To contact Eddie Joyce for more funding.
- **“Infilling” limits** – Council will proceed with “infilling” land within the Town limits as per map from Mr John Howley. [This will make provision of town services more efficient by making available for development (for homes or other approved purposes) of land presently unused.]

- **Property at end of Little Port Road** – To forward information to Municipal Assessment Agency to have this property put in the Roll Book. It will then be liable for property taxes.
- **Financial Report** – Approved accounts payable of \$19.00.
- **Collections update** – Review of report as presented by Clerk. There are taxpayers still owing 2009 taxes. To date \$15,264.52 outstanding taxes for years 2009-2013. Due to administrative time and cost, clerks will cease to carry out the collection procedure. All outstanding taxes will be forwarded to a collections agency, beginning in 2014.
- **Approved write-offs** of \$787.19.
- **Approved** all building permits.
- **Professional Development Opportunities** – Approved Mayor Parsons to attend Councillor Orientation session in Deer Lake.
- **Municipal Operating Grant** increased by 84.6% to \$73,810.48.
- **Draft Budget 2014** reviewed. Minor changes to be made for approval at December’s monthly meeting.
- **Western Director Municipal Assessment Agency** – All Council cast votes. Clerk directed to return the ballot.
- **Municipal Assessment Agency Annual Report** reviewed. Mayor Parsons will have a further look at this.
- **Christmas Activities** – the **lighting of the Town’s Christmas Tree** will take place on Thursday, December 05 at 6:00pm, followed by the **Family Christmas Carol Service** at the Church at 6:30pm. The **Annual Christmas Parade** will take place on Saturday, December 14 at 10:00am. The parade will leave from Little Port, travel Down Below and finish at York Harbour Hall for refreshments. Donation of \$50.00 approved for refreshments for the parade.
- **Complaint** regarding a dog not being properly tethered. Clerk advised that the owner had been notified of this.
- **Correspondence** - All reviewed with no follow-up necessary.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.

SOMETIMES IT SEEMS that in the interest of political correctness we should refer to Christmas and New Year as “The Holidays”. Not everyone celebrates Christmas, but why is it wrong to keep the name Christmas? It commemorates the festival of Christ, which is why it exists. Should we be calling it Yuletide, just because that was its name when it was the celebration of the winter solstice, the turning point of the sun, an event known to even primitive people, important because it meant the eventual return to warmth and new growth?

I think not. It is *Christmas*, and for me it will remain so. Other festivals of other cultures are in no way downgraded by our talk of Christmas. *Passover* or *Ramadan* are no less important because of Christmas. If we lived in their countries, would we expect them to change the name of their religious season to include us? I think not. Nor do we expect them to forget their festivals when in Canada.

So, the name of Christmas will remain for me.

And I take this opportunity to wish everyone

*A Joyous and Merry Christmas
 and A Happy New Year
 et aussi
 Joyeux Noël et Bonne Année
 à tous nos amis québécois*

Obituary

MELINDA ELIZABETH JOYCE-MORRIS

1950 Sep 20 - 2013 Nov 20

IT IS WITH GREAT SADNESS that the family of Melinda Joyce-Morris announces her death on Wednesday, November 20th, 2013, at the age of 63, after a courageous battle with cancer. We experience great joy and assurance knowing that she is at perfect peace in the arms of her Saviour.

Born in Lark Harbour, NL, on September 20th, 1950, she was the wife of Stan Morris of Lincoln, NB.

In addition to her husband, Stan, Melinda leaves behind her daughters, Andrea Sullivan (Glenn) and Crystal Joyce-Berto (Terly); grandchildren, Alyssa, Abigail, Olivia, Luke and Sophie; brother, Harold Wheeler; as well as many nieces, nephews and extended family. Melinda was predeceased by her parents, George and Mary (Park) Wheeler, first husband, George Joyce Jr, and brother, Bernard Wheeler.

Melinda was the office manager of a local fish plant in Lark Harbour for many years. Always one to persevere over any hardship, she returned to school following the closing of the plant and went back to her first interest, nursing. Melinda moved to New Brunswick to be with her family and was a Licensed Practical Nurse at York Manor Nursing Home until her retirement in 2010. Melinda's love of Christ and the love of her family were the most important things to her. She was actively involved in ministry, especially music, at St James Anglican Church in Lark Harbour and at Lincoln Baptist Church in New Brunswick.

Visitation will be held at St James Anglican Church in Lark Harbour, NL on Sunday, November 24th, 2013 from 7-9pm and Monday, November 25th from 1-2pm with the funeral service beginning at 2pm. Interment will be in the St James Anglican Church Cemetery with a reception to follow in the church hall. In addition, a memorial service will be held at Lincoln Baptist Church, Lincoln, NB, on Saturday, November 30th, 2013, at 11 am. A time of fellowship will follow at the church. Pastor Steve Ranni will officiate both services. For those who wish, donations in Melinda's memory can be made to the Lincoln Baptist Church Expansion/Building Fund or St James Anglican Church in Lark Harbour.



Obituary

ALEXANDER NICHOLAS McCARTHY

1998 Mar 20 - 2013 Nov 22

IT IS WITH GREAT SADNESS that the family of the late Alexander "Alex" Nicholas McCarthy announce his sudden passing on Friday November 22, 2013, at the age of 15 years.

He leaves to mourn with fond and loving memories mother Lori Anne McCarthy; grandmother Anne Marie O'Keefe; father Philip Sheppard (Pam), Rick Wayson (Tammy); grandparents: George and Hazel Sheppard, Maxine Wayson, David McCarthy (Lisa), Gloria Hickey (Paul), Eileen Youden; great-grandparents: Sadie O'Keefe, Ralph and Dossie Pennell; siblings: Ashley McCarthy, Georgia Sheppard, Timmy Mishaud, Katie O'Brien, Justin O'Brien, Brandon Ford, Jessica Youden, and Mandy Youden; aunts and uncles: Donna Wheeler (Karl), Shelly Stuckless, Pierre Sheppard (Ann), Edwin Sheppard, Pat Anderson, Patsy Wayson, Jack Wayson (Rita), Jim Wayson (Shelia) and Eileen Wayson (Pete); honorary mother Krista Batt; as well as a large circle of relatives and friends in Benoit's Cove, Lark Harbour, Gallants and Corner Brook.

He was predeceased by great-grandparents: Leonard O'Keefe Sr, Noble and Jessie Sheppard, Jessie McCarthy, William and Eileen Wayson, John and Kathleen O'Connell; grandfather James Wayson; great uncles: Leonard O'Keefe Jr, William "Billy" O'Keefe, Dusty "Brian" O'Keefe, Raymond McCarthy and Gerald Sheppard, and his special fishing buddy Maurice McCarthy. Friends may visit Country Haven Funeral Home, 167 Country Road, on Monday and Tuesday between the hours of 2-4 & 7-9pm.

Funeral service will take place from the Cathedral of the Most Holy Redeemer on Wednesday, November 27, 2013 at 10:30am with Father Maurice O'Quinn officiating. Cremation will take place. As expressions of sympathy flowers are graciously accepted or donations may be made to the Fire Departments of Benoit's Cove and Lark Harbour. The family guest book may be signed by visiting our website at www.country-haven.ca.



Editorial - THE SEAL HUNT

WITH THE RECENT PUBLICITY surrounding Harper's trade negotiations between Canada and the European Economic Community, discussion on the Canadian Seal Hunt has once more surfaced, because seal products are still banned and cannot be imported legally into the EEC.

This EEC decision was appealed by Canada to the WTO, but it was upheld by the World Trade Organisation which admitted that the ban *undermines international trade obligations but is justified due to "public moral concerns" over the animals'* [the seals'] *welfare*. (See <http://www.ctvnews.ca/world/canada-to-appeal-wto-ruling-on-eu-sea-l-ban-1.1559167>.) This is fine if such concerns for the welfare of animals were upheld equally and consistently, but they are not. A striking example is seen in the production of *foie gras*, a paste made from the livers of ducks kept in small cages where corn is force-fed through a special tube directly into the birds' stomachs which then swell beyond their natural size, causing great pain and discomfort. →

→ The modern Canadian Seal Hunt is controlled because people have been concerned about food production methods involving inhumane treatment of animals such as battery-kept hens and pigs which are shut in cages so small they can scarcely move. But the *foie gras* industry must rank today as equally cruel.

Foie gras is a luxury item only, not essential for a healthy diet. In contrast seal products are highly nutritious, seal oil is a great source of Omega-3, seal skins make fine clothing, and the industry could provide a source of income for many people, given the chance. Moreover, seals are a threat to other fisheries because of their rate of increase and the quantity of fish they eat. Meanwhile, the Sealing Industry is being destroyed by unfair publicity, while the *foie gras* industry, clearly less humane than the Seal Hunt, is protected by the WTO. And at the same time, Harper is signing a deal with the EEC, apparently without a single argument in support of our Seal Hunt. Why has this not become a big political debate? It could have been a good chance to argue for the Seal Hunt.

Is it because seals are cute and ducks are not?

Next BMD will be in April



LIBRARY NOTES

 by
 Susan Harvey


2013 DECEMBER

There are still some new books coming into the library, so readers need not despair altogether. Also it might reward us to look through all those books which live on the shelves all the time; might we have missed out somewhere along the line?

Thanks to all who bought tickets in the Library Board's 50/50 draw. Congratulations to Mary Compagnon (Benoit's Cove) who won \$400. Winning ticket drawn by Mariam Diamond, gr 2.

1. <i>October</i>	Richard B Wright
2. <i>Inherit the Dead</i>	20 mystery writers
3. <i>Mistress</i>	James Patterson & David Ellis
4. <i>Storm Front</i>	John Sandford
5. <i>Flash and Bones</i>	Kathy Reichs
Newfoundland Collection:	
6. <i>Master Shipbuilders of N and L</i>	Calvin D Evans
7. <i>The Loss of the Marion</i>	Linda Abbott
8. <i>Moose Country</i>	Darrin McGrath

1. *October* is a novel set in the present day, but relating strongly to events back in the 1940s. The main character, James, is a Canadian visiting his daughter who is teaching in England. He is very surprised to meet an old man, and immediately recognise him as Gabriel, someone he had known as a teenager on the Gaspé Peninsula of Québec. Gabriel was confined to a wheelchair, and James was expected to push him around and be his friend. However, Gabriel was not very likable; and, being wealthy, he was very bossy. James' memories are very clear, but not that pleasant. Gabriel does seem to remember James as a real friend, and persuades him to stay with him for an extra visit, ending with a surprising request. James feels reluctantly compelled to grant it. The circumstances of Gabriel's situation are similar to a couple of very traumatic situations in James' life, and he is not eager to re-live them; but in the end he agrees. The reader will be reminded of some of the situations we read about now, regarding the right to die with dignity. A good story, set in Canada.

2. *Inherit the Dead* is one mystery story told by twenty different authors. Each writes one chapter, and obviously they have agreed on the details of the story; the result makes for a good exciting read. The main character, Perry Christo, is a private detective who is asked to look for a missing daughter. It turns out to be a very non-functional family, most of whom have killed each other by the end of the book. The daughter is found, but not exactly a triumph for Perry. All those authors have produced a book the reader will not want to put down.

3. *Mistress* seems different from others with James Patterson's name on. Perhaps his many co-authors give different flavours to the books they help on. In this one, the protagonist, "Ben", is the detective looking for a girl, Diana. Although he actually knew Diana, and believed himself to be in love with her, it turns out that she was more complicated than he had realised; and he finds it hard to believe what he seems to be discovering about her activities. He meets several strange characters who all knew Diana, and someone is trying to frame him for at least one of the murders which take place. By the end of the book, Ben knows a lot more about Diana and also he comes to understand more of the problems of his own life. Some similarities with the previous book, though only two authors in this one.

4. *Storm Front* is also different from Mr Sandford's efforts in the *Prey* series, which have generally been fairly serious. This book is part of a second series featuring a more casual type named Virgil Flowers. Virgil works for some kind of police force in the state of Minnesota. He does have to work with serious crime, but he seems to be able to be more laid back about it. This particular story deals with a piece of rock supposedly stolen from an Israeli archaeological dig, and claimed to be a very important find which will change our whole idea of Biblical history. While trying to find the rock, Virgil must deal with various criminals, Israeli spies and murderers; at the same time trying to sort out local criminals on a much smaller scale. The result is reasonably exciting, and also rather funny.

5. *Flash and Bones* is another tale of Temperance Brennan, forensic anthropologist. This story is set in North Carolina, and features quite a bit of action on the stock car racing circuit. Tempe must try to identify a couple of fairly well aged corpses, perhaps involved in the racing. Having dealt with unco-operative witnesses and the FBI, who are not only unco-operative, but actually obstructive, Tempe does manage to discover some helpful connections. Unfortunately, just as she figures out who the villain is, he realises she is onto him and makes an effort to discourage her, involving putting her in a large hole and burying her. Lots of excitement, and the reader will be happy to find how Tempe escapes and how it all turns out.

6. *Master Shipbuilders* is a very thorough history of shipbuilding in this province, at least on the east coast. A lot of names and dates, and anyone looking for an ancestor will surely be in luck. Mr Evans considers shipbuilders to be the main ones responsible for establishing Newfoundland communities; many of them also built churches and other public buildings. His grandson, an architect from the mainland, has added a chapter about the formation and possible renewal of outpost communities. A book to make the reader think.

7. *The Loss of the Marion* is the story, said to be inspired by true events, of a schooner which leaves a small Newfoundland community and never returns. The community never gets a real explanation of what happened. Given a long history of bad feeling between the captain of the *Marion* and a French captain from the island of St Pierre, some of the women suspect that Captain Maurice has made good on his threats to kill Captain Ike and in the process has killed all of their menfolk who sailed with him. The main character in the story is Nellie, one of the widowed women. She feels strongly enough that she actually goes to St Pierre and tries to ask some questions of Captain Maurice's crew members and anyone else who might know anything. She gets a lot of support from the community, especially the local nun and the priest on St Pierre, ship owners who provide transportation, and friendly neighbours who help to look after her children. She must also deal with efforts to take away a child she has been caring for and regards as her own. The reader will be very pleased to find how that problem is dealt with, when an uppity woman from Montréal tries to take the child away. Finally, Nellie believes she has found proof of her suspicions, and there is a bit of a surprise ending. A good easy read, and the reader will feel a lot of sympathy for the women in this typical Newfoundland community.

8. *Moose Country* is a history of moose in the province since their introduction, first in 1875, and including many stories of hunting and otherwise dealing with the vast numbers now living here. Mr McGrath is apparently an avid hunter himself, but also has academic qualifications in wildlife management. He also gives us many stories from others who live with moose, and there are recipes too.

Next BMD will be in April

A 'OLE IS A 'OLE IS A 'OLE

A TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY MYTH

NOW THAT THERE'S TALK of a start being made on a tunnel to transmit electrical power under the Strait of Belle Isle, a story came to mind from some years back when the same subject was broached. You may remember it, but a lot has changed since then. Back then the project was called "The Lower Churchill".

Since then, with Newfoundland and Labrador having little or no prospect of reaching an advantageous agreement with Hydro Québec, new plans are being made to construct an electrical transmission link under the Straits of Belle Isle to bring Muskrat Falls power to the Island of Newfoundland and then across the Gulf to Nova Scotia.

Calls for tenders have been invited for the new tunnel project, and they have been arriving from all over North America, Europe, and even Russia and China. When the envelopes were opened the tenders were all for many millions of dollars, except for one that stood out from the rest because of its significantly more frugal total.

The details of tenders of this kind of course are not divulged publicly until a decision has been made, so the **BLOW•ME•DOWNER** too will respect the wall (or cone) of secrecy, in order to protect our innocent informant. Besides, we don't want to risk our sources of juicy morsels like this, knowing that secrecy is something most governments seem to cherish. Therefore we won't even say where the tender came from, and we certainly won't publish the names of those who submitted it. Suffice it to say that they were two brothers, late forties or early fifties, and we'll call them Jack and Fred.

Governments traditionally avoid spending too much taxpayers' money if they can, because they like to have plenty left around so in the cold Canadian winter they can take trips around the world to warm countries, to see "how other countries are doing it". Doing *what*, you ask? Sometimes that's hard to figure out.

Well, when the Minister of Public Works looked closely at this amazingly frugal tender, he promptly invited the brothers to his office in Conglomeration Building to talk about it. After the usual introductions, the discussion went something like this:

"So, gentlemen, your tender looks very interesting, and the price is just what our government is looking for. But this is a very demanding project, so tell me, do you have degrees in engineering?"

"No sir, no schoolin' at all worth speakin' of," said Jack, the older brother. *"But you don't need college schoolin' to dig 'oles. A 'ole is a 'ole is a 'ole, no matter where or 'ow you digs it."*

"And what about experience?" asked the Minister. *"We have tenders from all over the world. One company just finished a new tunnel through the Swiss Alps, another is working on a big dam in China, and another is building a hydroelectric station in Russia ..."*

"Sir, believe me," Jack broke in, *"you don't want them foreigners comin' 'ere to work when there's folks like me and me brother Fred ready and lookin' fer work, now do you?"*

A little taken aback, the Minister thought for a moment, then said, *"So I take it you have had previous experience of this kind of work?"*

"Oh, my! Yes, sir, lots," said Jack. *"Only a few weeks back we put in a new septic line and tank for our dear old Mother. And we dug a well and half a mile of water line for the new bed & breakfast last fall. And this spring we dug new toilet pits in the park. Not a dollar over budget on any of 'em! Yes, sir, me and Fred does a lot o' that kind o' work, diggin', excavatin', stuff like that. Folks is always after us for jobs. They knows we does good work. We could 'a' gone*

to Fort Mac last fall, but we didn't like the sound o' that tar sand stuff. Sounds nastier than the pug behind Mother's house."

"Well," said the Minister, *"you know this tunnel will be about nine miles long, and pretty deep too, through hard rock. And you might have to work through the winter, in bad weather?"*

"Yes sir, for sure, but we's ready for greater things now. Mother's sure we can do it. And as for bad weather, we'll be underground all the time, sheltered," said Jack.

"Right!" added Fred. *"Talk about cold ... and windy, when we did that job for Mother! This job couldn't be any worse!"*

"And what equipment do you have?" asked the Minister.

"Picks, shovels, buckets, two good wheelbarrows, and a bit o' dynamite when we need it," said Jack. *"And I just bought a brand new pickup a few months back, one o' them fancy Ram jobbies."*

Fred nodded and grinned approvingly. *"Fine truck that, covered in chrome, and with plastic box liner,"* he added. *"Oh, and the biggest darn hemi he could find! You know, sir, guts, glory, Ram, like they say in the ad! His wife nearly killed 'im when she found out 'ow much 'e paid for it! But she changed 'er mind when she see'd that truck all decorated up in our Santy Claus Parade, and Santy 'isself, wavin' to all the kids and givin' away left-over Hallowe'en candy!"* Fred rubbed his eyes. *"I swear, sir, it fair made my eyes water!"*

The Minister ignored Fred's enthusiastic outburst, seeming to be lost in his own thoughts, maybe half asleep, and there was a long pause before he asked his next question. *"Exactly how do you plan on organising the work?"* he asked.

"Simple enough, sir," answered Jack, hoping to drive a few points home. *"I'll start at one end, and me brother Fred'll start at t'other. We'll get a couple o' them big power drills from Canadian Tire, and we'll have a good ship's compass each to keep us on track so we know which way to dig, and in Jig's time we'll meet in the middle."*

"Have you thought about what happens if you get a bit off line and miss each other in the middle, so you don't meet there?" asked the Minister, raising his eyebrows.

Before responding, Jack rolled his eyes scornfully and looked at Fred, who grimaced and shook his head in despair. Then, *"Oh, yes, sir, for sure! Me and Fred, we talked a lot about that. We agreed, if that 'appens, we just keeps on diggin'. We got to come out again somewhere in the end."*

There was another long pause of the kind sometimes described as 'pregnant' before anyone spoke again. The Minister was rubbing his chin and gazing dreamily out of the window at an Air Canada jet that was climbing steeply into a clear blue sky and heading over the ocean, perhaps to Bermuda, or somewhere in the Caribbean.

"Anyway, sir, you got no cause to worry," said Jack at last.

The Minister awakened with a jolt from his dream of a sunny beach under a palm tree with a martini in his hand. *"What's that?"* he asked confusedly. Then, recalling the reason for this meeting, *"Oh ... right! So ... er ... How do you figure that out?"* he asked.

Fred and Jack again looked at each other in disbelief that a man entrusted with government decisions could be so dumb.

"Don't you see, skipper?" said Jack, staring in amazement and scorn at the Minister. *"If Fred and me 'appens not to meet in the middle, you gets a real bargain—two tunnels for the price of one!"*

THE END

Editorial - END-OF-LIFE CONCERNS

THE OLD MEASURE of “threescore years and ten” as the expected lifespan of the average citizen of the developed world has become outdated. Instead, more and more people are living healthy and active lives many years beyond that limit. Many are choosing to work beyond what was once the mandatory retirement age, not always because they cannot afford to retire, but simply because they do not relish the idea of being without the discipline of working life. And among those who have chosen retirement, thousands are embarking on cruises or other forms of world travel: activities that a generation ago were relatively rare for all but the very rich. However many of the ailments associated with old age are still with us: the difference is that on average they occur later in life than they used to.

Another significant factor is that modern citizens expect to have greater control over their lives. They are less willing than their predecessors to accept the restrictions enforced by tradition. With the idea that “my life is my own” comes also the idea that, when life becomes a serious burden, “I should have the right to terminate it”.

There are three categories of end-of-life procedures usually discussed. The definitions are slightly different, but each has a clear requirement that the patient be under some form of severe suffering or pain. The categories are:

1. *Assisted Suicide* - suicide with the help of another person. This is illegal today in Canada and most other countries. The main reason usually seems to be that it is open to abuse, although closely defined regulation could help to resolve that.
2. *Euthanasia* (mercy killing) - killing of another person in order to relieve suffering. This is permitted in some places where value systems are less conservative than ours, such as the Netherlands, Switzerland and the USA states of Oregon, Washington, and Vermont. In Canada, governments have rejected this form of end-of-life intervention even where cancer, dementia and other ailments have rendered life no longer possible without pain and suffering. Supporters of *euthanasia* frequently make comments such as, “You wouldn’t allow your dog to suffer like this”.
3. *Physician Aid in Dying* - at the request of a competent but terminally ill patient, a licenced physician may prescribe a lethal dose of a medication for the patient to use to end his/her own life. The problem here is that the patient must apply it him/herself, a requirement which may be impossible if the illness has already progressed beyond the point where he/she is able to administer it. Any person found to have assisted in the administering of the lethal dose could face serious charges.

Recently a number of people suffering from various terminal illnesses have explained in the national news the arrangements they have made for themselves when they reach the point where they know they are close to the end of their lives. They will take the lethal medication when their family is with them, and will die in peace. This requires careful and detailed planning well before the event. But in many cases the only arrangement available is to enter a *hospice* or nursing home which will provide palliative care until such time as natural death occurs or life support systems can be removed on authority of a doctor and with the agreement of family members. At this point the patient is often heavily sedated or no longer conscious and is judged to be unable to recover to any reasonably sentient life. By that time natural death is likely to occur fairly soon anyway, but there may have already been much suffering before then.

With the exception of the Province of Québec which is considering legislation, Canada remains resistant to enter any debate on the issue,

although there are growing numbers of people who believe strongly that it is time for changes in the law. Also, with the increasing age of the population and a system already overloaded with persons whose health requires much individual care, changes are necessary. But also in demand are more places in purpose-designed residences or hospices where residents can receive varying degrees of care based on their needs. Such establishments could range from independent living space with minimal supervision where couples can stay together and prepare their own meals or perhaps have some meals supplied, to others where more assistance is available to cater for individual requirements. By comparison, living in a typical hospital is no fun for anyone, and is so costly that people should only be hospitalised when their condition demands solutions not available elsewhere.

Aging is a fact of life. Quality of life should be available to everyone, regardless of age, state of health or ability to pay. The extended family once took care of the needs of its aged and infirm, but that is rarely possible in today’s highly mobile society. Governments have a responsibility to ensure quality and appropriate care for all citizens in every stage and condition of their lives. Unfortunately some of our governments, notably the present Conservative Federal government, are reluctant to accept this responsibility.

As long as any Canadians are not receiving the care they need, our country is failing. The excuse is that we can no longer afford the social networks we have benefited from since shortly after World War Two, but this is due more to government ideology than to economic difficulties in a land where we are regularly assured that we have one of the best economies of any developed country.

The only valid measure of a community is the quality of the care it extends to all its members. With the will to do it, this can still be achieved in Canada.

Editorial - OUR SECURITY THREATENED?

IN THE 2013 NOVEMBER BMD it was suggested that Edward Snowden’s “leaks” of secret government information may be more of a benefit to us than the threat that our government would have us believe. According to published reports based on more documents recently “leaked” by Edward Snowden, the American National Security Agency (NSA) was **allowed** by CSEC (Communications Security Establishment Canada) to operate from the US Embassy in Ottawa during the G8 and G20 conferences in Toronto in 2010.

Such activities are of concern since NSA was recently accused by Germany’s Chancellor Angela Merkel of monitoring her cell phone, and suspected of similar “spying” in France and Brazil.

A Canadian spokesperson refused comment except to state that “Canadian security organisations have independent oversight mechanisms to ensure that they fulfil their mandate in accordance with the law”. This raises the question of whether CSEC may have too much “independent oversight”. It was suggested too that CSEC may also have been working to forward Harper’s international agenda. This seems highly likely, given the recent suggestion that our External Affairs Department will in future be concentrating more on international trade than on diplomacy, already a weak and ineffective area in Canada’s foreign policy.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE

<http://news.nationalpost.com/2013/11/28/u-s-spied-at-g20-summit-in-toronto-in-2010-and-canada-knew-reports/>

OR

<http://www.torontosun.com/2013/11/28/us-spied-during-2010-g20-summit-in-toronto-snowden-leak>