



fore'n aft



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Venus, Jupiter as seen in Yacht Club sky



Brad Power snapped this sunset shot of Venus and Jupiter on June 12 just a couple of days after their famed "celestial kiss" when the two planets appeared to be side by side. In the photo, Venus appears brighter and sits higher in the sky than Jupiter which had been steadily sinking towards the horizon and would soon disappear behind the sun.

On July 29 the planet will be in solar conjunction, that is positioned directly behind the sun as viewed from Earth. It will re-emerge in mid August to be seen in the dawn sky. By November, Jupiter will again be visible in the evening sky this time in the east very close to the planet Mars which is easily distinguishable by its reddish colour.

June picture gallery



With near perfect weather, this year's Dockside Party in June was well attended with round a dozen boats taking part and active participation on all docks. Members were treated to an interesting and varied selection of drinks and snacks, and a light breeze kept things comfortably cool. The party continued well into evening with many folks crashing overnight on their boats making this one of the best attended social events of the year.



From l-r, Dawn, Mary, Susie and Maureen with grandchildren Victoria and Owen in front.

The Clubhouse saw a large turnout for Mary Game's "Surprise" 75th birthday party on June 20. The milestone event was planned and executed by daughters Maureen, Susan and Dawn, with some help, in the form of a tiny white lie, from Carol Bailey. To keep Mary out of the way while preparations were underway, she was treated to an afternoon of wine tasting in the County by Maureen, who only flew in from Calgary the day before.

Carol's role was to lure Mary to the Clubhouse on the pretext that she had screwed up the cash register during a private event and was in dire need of Mary's assistance to get things back on track. The ruse worked perfectly. As she rounded the stairs, an astonished Mary was greeted by 50 voices shouting in unison "surprise!!"



Also on June 20, Bob Forgues turned 77 years young! Not wishing to steal Mary's thunder he kept quiet about it at the time, but his friends all knew. They chose to mark this singular event with cake and appropriate libation on the boat, en route to Main Duck Island – at anchor, of course!.



Lois as she will be remembered.

TRIBUTE TO LOIS IRWIN

MAY 14, 1947 - MAY 30, 2026

A Celebration of Life for long time Honorary member Lois Irwin attracted a good crowd to the Clubhouse on July 11. Upwards of 50 people attended the memorial, comprising family, friends, work colleagues as well as Yacht Club members. Lois passed away on May 30, 2026 at Belleville General Hospital following a short illness. She was in her 80th year.

A member since the early '80s, Lois made a significant contribution to the Club over those four decades. Outgoing, fun-loving, a born organizer with a flair for decoration and attention to detail, Lois was naturally drawn to help with entertainment. She cooked, sometimes in large quantities, like the enormous pots of chilli, clam chowder and stew for work parties.

Over the years she helped plan and decorate countless events, and would have provided the "bling" for a great many a Commodore's Balls. Talking of bling, remember the antique silver serving dishes used for the Valentine's wine-tasting night back in the day? That classic sparkle was all Lois!

Her most significant contribution to the Club's social calendar was, of course, in starting the Wednesday night barbecues. This was largely accidental. What is now tradition began as private burger night for the Irwin family while watching the Club races, but gradually morphed into one of the most popular and enduring of all Club events. If you have never attended at least one Wednesday night barbecue – then shame on you!

Lois was a keen photographer back in a time when only a very few had a camera in their pocket. Over the years she snapped hundreds of casual shots of people and events around the marina. This has proved useful from a historical perspective, as a valuable record of how our Club has evolved. The family plans to donate the pictures to the Yacht Club thus ensuring this record will be preserved.

Eric and Lois were keen cruisers. Each summer, they would head out on *Infatuation* in the general direction of the Thousand Islands. Their voyage always included at least one stop at Main Duck for a spot of bass fishing. Lois was expert in catching, filleting and frying, so your luck was in if you were moored in Schoolhouse Bay at the same time as *Infatuation*! An added bonus were the fresh cherry tomatoes, courtesy of a basket hanging in the stern.

Lois was a one-off. She had a big smile and a big heart. She loved to talk, often loudly, and was never afraid to say what she thought. Speaking briefly during her late husband Eric's 2024 memorial, Lois described him as "quiet and thoughtful," adding quite frankly to a roar of laughter, "I was the noisy one!"

She will be missed by her many friends at CFB Trenton Yacht Club.



Club boats rafted at Sandy Cove, July 2010. They are Irish Rover, Josh, Infatuation, Zest4Life, Scotch'n Water and Mariah.

Photo by Lois Irwin.



Lois and Eric Irwin back in the day.

Club Cruise to Main Duck Island



Mike Simic holds a small-mouth Bass.



Checking for snake fungus disease.



Two species call Main Duck home:
Eastern Garter and Gray Rat Snake.



Moth and butterfly trap.



It's an annual pilgrimage – a flotilla of Club boats heading out to Main Duck Island. This year's participants were Mike Simic, Bob Forgues, Rick Jones, Eric Lawlor and Simon Geller.

They found the island unusually busy. "The busiest we've seen," says Mike. "There were two main groups camping. One from Parks Canada who were studying animals and plant life. There are plants that are only found on Main Duck. Nowhere else."

Main Duck's biodiversity is shaped by its extreme isolation, 20km from the nearest mainland. This has created a unique nature preserve – an ecosystem with no squirrels, skunks, rabbits or raccoons – while allowing migrating birds, massive snapping turtles and water snakes to thrive. Main Duck is home to two snake species – the Garter Snake and Gray Rat Snake.

In the picture (left) the Parks Canada team is checking snakes for a potentially fatal fungal disease that was first identified in Canada in 2015.

A moth and butterfly trap (shown below) was also set up near the camp. Mike says "At night, a blue light is turned on to attract the insects."

A second group, from Trent university's Indigenous Studies program, was investigating known historical sites using ground-sonar equipment. They have found pottery remnants proving that people have been using the island since at least five BC.

In addition, there was a Coastguard ship anchored outside the harbour. They were clearing vegetation from the various markers and navigation aids so they could be seen.

And Mike says, "Add on a visit by the RCMP and Border security. A busy place to be sure!"



Delegation to Main Duck from CFB Trenton Yacht Club; from left Rick, Eric, Bob, Simon and Mike.



Campsite at Schoolhouse Bay.



One of the giant snapping turtles.



Main Duck Island Citizenship and Flag Induction Ceremony



The iconic Main Duck Lighthouse



BY THE AUTHORITY VESTED IN ME BY THE COUNCIL FOR THE CARE OF MAIN DUCK ISLAND I, Bent Rasmussen, holding the title of Master of the Sacred Flags, do appoint _____ as a citizen of Main Duck Island, including the satellite island of Yorkshire.

_____ promises to respect his/her new status and to leave this precious island as pristine as he/she found it.

Try not to upset any snakes and to feed the Great Turtle. A word of advice, do not use the extensive ground vegetation if you run out of toilet paper. To complete this ceremony, offer a libation to the Great Lake Ontario. Rum, the darker the better, is preferred. If not, anything except Crème de Mente.

Bill Phillips.

It would have taken place at least once every summer, a formal ceremony featuring a scripted oath, customized flag and a generous supply of rum.

Known as *"the Main Duck Island Citizenship and Flag Induction Ceremony,"* the rite was performed at the water's edge by the Island's self appointed Guardians: Bent Rasmussen, Bill Phillips and John Seddon.

Since their deaths, the ritual has taken a hiatus. But this spring, a team of New Guardians, namely Bob Forgues, Eric Lawlor, Mike Simic, Rick Jones and Simon Geller, is reviving the tradition.

Having obtained a copy of the oath, they set to work making a supply of flags in preparation for that all important first visit of the year – the opening of Lake Ontario's bass-fishing season.

For the Original Guardians, the idea of conferring citizenship on like-minded persons probably had more to do with the amount of dark stuff they'd consumed than any altruistic feelings for the island's well-being. Nevertheless, Bill jotted down some appropriate words with creative input from John, while Bent designed and produced a suitable Flag – a simple red duck on a white ground flanked by broad red vertical bands.

To Bent, the direction of the duck was an important detail. It should swim forward, facing the rope edge. At some point he ran out of pre-made flags, so Lois Irwin offered to make some. But she inadvertently reversed the stencil so that the duck appeared to swim backwards. Bent called these "counterfeit" flags and would have nothing to do with any of them!

The citizenship ceremony took place at the water's edge in Schoolhouse Bay. Bill, whose booming tones could be heard in Kingston even when whispering, would recite the text. Bent then presented the inductee with a Main Duck Flag. A shot (or four) of Dark Rum completed the proceedings – never forgetting to share a drop with the Great Lake Ontario.

There might even be a trumpet fanfare if Bent could find the instrument in his boat. Making it sound was another matter altogether. Ask Dave Flett who managed it, once!

Anyone interested in joining this elite group and being presented with a Main Duck Flag at an official ceremony should contact one of the New Guardians for details.



Flag of Main Duck Island, "Bent" approved version.



Rick and Bob work on template-production in the Clubhouse. Below, Rick works his magic with spray paint.



Main Duck Society inductee Capt. Rick Jones, accepts his flag from Bob Forgues following the swearing-in ceremony.

DIANA DOROTHY KOECHLIN

OCT. 17, 1929 - FEB. 22, 2026



MANFRED KOECHLIN

OCT. 21, 1935 — APRIL 18, 2026



BY CHRISTINE FLETT

With the passing earlier this year of Manfred and Diana Koechlin, the Club lost its oldest and longest-serving honorary members. Manfred died suddenly on April 18 2026 in his 91st year. He was predeceased by Diana, his wife and soulmate, who passed away on her own terms (MAID) on February 22nd. She was 97.

During his early years in Canada, Manfred operated a Volkswagen dealership in Belleville, and later a Petro Canada in Trenton winning multiple awards for his franchise as well as for his community work. His last business was repairing clocks and watches.

Manfred and Diana joined the Club 59 years ago in 1967. An ardent sailor, Manfred was keenly aware of the region's deteriorating water quality. In 1985, the International Joint Commission designated the Bay of Quinte as an "Area of Concern." Prompted to take action, Manfred participated in a public inquiry into the health of the Great Lakes, and was instrument in developing the highly successful Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan (BQRAP).



Diana and Manfred relax on board their boat Arial.

At the Yacht Club, Manfred took on the role of Safety and Environment Officer, a position he held for over 20 years. During that time he worked hard to keep the harbour open in the face of ever-increasing invasive weeds. The 2010 emergence of Starry Stonewort, a previously unknown filamentous algae impervious to herbicide treatment, presented a huge challenge. A study of options led to six years of labour-intensive copper-sulphate treatment under an experimental permit. This expired in 2017 after which bubblers were installed.

In 2014, facing deteriorating health and hearing problems, Manfred handed the Environmental reins over to Eric Lawlor and myself. But he never lost interest in the Club nor his concern for the water, continuing his involvement with both the BQRAP and Great Lakes United.

There was another side to both Koechlins. They are highly regarded in Belleville for their part in establishing the Quinte Arts Council (QAC). Both served on its board in the '70s, she as secretary, while Manfred set up and chaired a performing arts committee. Through his connections to Friedl Bellstedt, CEO of Corby's Distillery, Manfred obtained funding to establish the long-running Weiser's Deluxe Performing Arts Series, and later, the more intimate Music Box series.

Diana was a founder of the Jest for Fun children's arts program, and helped establish art councils in Trenton, Picton, and Bancroft. In 1977, she parlayed her community arts development expertise into a 17 year career with the Ontario Ministry of Culture & Recreation. In 1994, she was one of the first recipients of the City of Belleville Cultural Award.

On a personal note, Manfred was an excellent mentor both to myself and my co-chair Eric. He was also the sweetest, most generous person – a true gentleman in every sense of the word. His published obituary refers to him as "the kindest of souls, passionately devoted to his family and community. His love, laughter, and sense of humour will be sorely missed by his family and all who knew him." A fitting epitaph to be sure.

Boating with pets

By Dorothy Fletcher

It's always fun to go boating with friends and family. For many people, family includes their furry friends—usually dogs but sometimes cats—whom they like to take with them on excursions.

Is this a good idea? It can be if you plan ahead.

Take the time to acclimatize your pet to your boat. Short trips will make him more comfortable and confident before you head out for longer cruises. It will also be a good time to train them to do their business on a piece of artificial turf, pet pad or litter box.

You should also ascertain if you can leave your pet alone on the boat while you shop or have dinner. It's not fair to pet or other boaters if your dog barks and howls the whole time you are away.

Get your pet a lifejacket and put it on them when you are underway. Yes, they can swim, some better than others, but they may not have the necessary strength and endurance, particularly in cold or choppy water. If your dog or cat jumps in or falls off your boat, are you sure they can remain paddling long enough for you to turn the boat around, return, then pull them back on board? You don't want to find out the hard way.

Pet Flotation Devices (PFD) are sold by the pet's weight and come in various styles and colours. If possible, take the pet with you to the store to try them on to ensure the best fit. Make sure it has a handle for you to grab to help them out of the water. Pets easily get used to wearing a lifejacket and it could be a life-saver.

If your dog has difficulty boarding your boat, you might need a ramp. There are various types available to make it easier for them.



Fletch and Dorothy's late great dog Barney.

When travelling, consider attaching a GPS tracking device to your pet's collar in case they wander off and get lost at a marina. Preferably, you will be taking them for walks on a leash but sometimes they can sneak away! Remember to take the poop bags with you on walks to be a good citizen.

Crossing a border such as into the USA?

Before you go make sure you have verified any vaccinations or paperwork you require for your pet.

Be sure to have enough pet food on board, stored in a watertight container, and maybe some treats for your good boy (or girl.)

Keep their water bowl full. There are water bowls specially designed for boats with weights on the bottom to reduce tipping.

Ensure there is adequate shade on board to keep your pet safe and comfortable. Don't forget any medication your pet needs.

Bring your pet's favourite blanket or bed and a toy or two. This will make them more comfortable and can be a place for them to retreat to if the going gets heavy.

Taking the time to plan ahead will result in a happy boating experience for you and your furry first mate.



Are Carpenter Bees destroying your deck?

If you've never heard of carpenter bees, you might want to check your deck for signs of damage.

Often mistaken for bumble bees, which are round and fuzzy with yellow

markings, carpenter or wood-eating bees are oval with a hairy yellow top and smooth shiny-black abdomen.

Unlike bumbles, carpenter bees are not social insects. They build individual nests in dry untreated wood, tunnelling a circular hole of 11-15mm into the wood. This is where the female lays her eggs. Only the female has a stinger.

Carpenter bees do chew through wood, but they do not actually eat it, they just excavate it to make their tunnels. Their diet, like most bees, consists of nectar and plant pollen.

Carpenter bees nest in untreated softwood like pine or cedar. They prefer live trees, but are known to nest in man-made structures such as siding, eaves, fascia, decks, porches, even lawn furniture.

Adult carpenter bees overwinter individually in their nests which they will reuse in spring, continuing to enlarge it as needed. Over time, moisture will get into the wood causing it to rot and decay. This is a major problem if that wood is structural. Although not as destructive as termites, carpenter bees can still cause substantial property damage.

To destroy overwintering larvae requires injecting insecticidal dust into the tunnels—hard to do without specialized equipment as the tunnel network can be extensive, especially if the nest has been there a while. Best to leave this to a professional.



Three ways to enjoy Rhubarb



BY DOROTHY FLETCHER

Few things say spring better than the first shoots of rhubarb in a garden. Rhubarb is an ancient vegetable – yes, vegetable – that came to prominence in the 1800's. As it spread throughout North America, most pioneer homesteads planted a patch to provide the first fresh food of the season. It fell somewhat out of favour during WW II, possibly due to sugar rationing.

Rhubarb is both versatile and delicious. It can be used in savoury preparations or sweet, as demonstrated in this classic Rhubarb Pie. But you may never have considered it as a beverage. Try making this rhubarb nectar – you will be amazed at how good it tastes – then you can drink a toast to a long awaited spring!

RHUBARB CREAM PIE

1 single pie crust (9")
 1 cup sugar
 3 tablespoons flour
 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
 2 eggs, slightly beaten
 4 - 5 cups chopped rhubarb
 1/2 cup flour
 1/4 cup sugar
 1/3 cup butter



In a large bowl, blend 1 cup sugar, 3 tablespoons flour and nutmeg.

Add eggs and mix well. Stir in rhubarb. Turn mixture into unbaked pie shell.

In a small bowl, blend 1/2 cup flour and 1/4 cup sugar. Cut in butter and sprinkle crumb mixture over pie. Bake at 375F for about 50 - 60 minutes or until a tester comes out clean.

RHUBARB NECTAR

10 cups chopped rhubarb
 3 cups water
 2 cups sugar
 In a large pot bring rhubarb and water to a boil. Reduce heat to medium and simmer until the rhubarb is cooked and falling apart.



Strain through a colander into a clean pot.

Add sugar and bring to a boil.

Cool and chill before serving.

Serve mixed—two parts nectar to one part lemon-lime soda (ie: 7-Up) or orange juice.

Add rum if you wish.

The strained nectar can be frozen either before or after you add the sugar.

BY KAREN MATHIAS

RHUBARB RELISH/CHUTNEY

4 1/2 cups rhubarb chopped in 1/2 inch slices
 3/4 cup onion, chopped
 3 tsp fresh ginger, grated
 3/4 cup sugar
 9 tbsp apple cider vinegar (1/2 cup)
 6 tbsp raisins
 3/4 tsp cinnamon
 3/4 tsp allspice

Cut rhubarb into approx. 1/2 inch slices.

Finely dice the onion and mince the ginger.

Put everything in a wide non-reactive pot and bring to simmer for around 10 minutes until mixture thickens, stirring occasionally. Take care not to break up the chunks. Set aside to cool.

Store in refrigerator for a day or until needed. Bring to room temperature before use. Put into jars using a wide mouth funnel.

Note: This works well with cheese and crackers or can be served with grilled meat.