

Rockport group closer to rejuvenating Custom House

Annual tournament and supper helps to raise funds

BY CATHERINE ORTH

Approaching Grenadier Island, serene green surrounded by the river, leads one's eye over impeccable lawn to a low standing white club house. History is in the air, as you embark and step onto the Island that once had 14 active farms, a school and a polling station, local historian Brian Phillips said. He also provided some source documents which said, "the Grenadier Island Country Club had its inception in 1927 when a small group of summer residents met to consider the feasibility of purchasing the old Albert Root farm for the purpose of building a golf course. In all 60 acres was acquired."

The Grenadier Island Golf Club became an

important part of The Thousand Islands social life then and now.

Indeed, it was the setting, on Saturday evening, September 16, for the seventh year in a row, for the Rockport Development Group's fundraiser tournament and supper.

Rockport Development Group Chair, Dianne Phillips said, "Once again, the club graciously allowed us to hold our fundraiser tournament and supper at the Club." She explained that the Development Group is a community organization made up of village businesses and community volunteers.

One of the main focuses for the dinner was to continue fundraising for the Custom House recently acquired by

TLTI. The Development Group has been working toward the acquisition of the Custom House since 2009. Estimates for the its rejuvenation have been set at \$500,000. Quite a hefty price for a small community to raise but supporters of the project are very optimistic. "We're turning it into a public park for the people in our Township," said Ms. Phillips. "There is no public land in Rockport for people to come and enjoy the water. This will be a public park where you can go have a picnic, fish and maybe swim." She said the Custom House's pine interior is beautiful and "artists could rent it, or perhaps it could be a history museum."

She said after this dinner tonight, "we will have raised almost \$15,000. that we will turn over to Friends of Rockport Customs



Some of the folks who volunteered to help make it happen. (L-R): Phyllis Chipman, Marjorie Cromwell, Rockport Development Group Chair Dianne Phillips, Chefs Eric and Cathy Siegwart. Photo: Catherine Orth

Restoration Society whom are raising money for our public water front park in Rockport."

There were lots of prizes for the days'

golfers, a silent auction and a bountiful buffet of pierogi, cabbage rolls, sausages and more catered by Eric and Cathy Siegwart. Ms Phillips said that it could not have happened with-

out the combined efforts of many volunteers which included: Phyllis Chipman, Marjorie Cromwell, Cheryl Grusnick, Karon Warren, and TLTI councillor Gerry Last.

Decorating with gourds this autumn

TO THE MURAL

Mounds of colourful pumpkins, gourds and Indian corn appear at farmers markets and in local gardens this time of year. What to do with this autumn bounty?

Athens Garden Club has invited Christine Forman and Natasha Abrams, experienced gardeners at Forman Farms in Seeley's Bay, to talk

about "Harvest Décor for the Home," at the next meeting on October 17.

They plan to demonstrate how to use gourds, corn and other fall produce to decorate inside and outside the home. Starting with containers people are likely to have in their homes already, they'll build a striking display to set up at the front door. On a smaller

scale, they'll show how to make a seasonal centerpiece for the dining room table.

Forman and her husband Charles have operated their fully diversified family farm on Brewer's Mills Road at Seeley's Bay since 1973.

"Follow the bees to Forman Farms Greenhouses," Christine likes to say. All year round, people will find seasonal food and décor products. Each fall there are classes for people wanting to decorate for the holidays.

The Athens Garden Club meeting on October 17 begins at 7 p.m. in the club's accessible venue, the Fellowship Hall of the Free Methodist Church, 58 Elgin Street North.

Everyone is welcome; visitors pay \$3. Refreshments will be served (small free will donation appreciated); please bring your own mug. For more information, visit www.gardenontario.org/site.php/athensgc or email athensclubexec@gmail.com.

New heritage skills workshop

TO THE MURAL

Heritage Skills Workshop is a new series of hand-on learning experiences presented by the Brockville Museum. Participants will be able to explore largely forgotten skills and techniques in an informal and relaxed setting. The museum's Amy Mackie will guide you as she shares her knowledge and experience with you.

This year's series' theme will be "Cooking". This will include cooking at your own individual workstation following Amy's instruction and of course tasting what you have prepared.

Dates are as follows: September 27, 1 - 3 p.m.: Cast Iron Cooking - discover the history and utility of cast iron pans.

October 25, 1 - 3 p.m.: Wartime Recipes - the secrets of cooking meals during the period of rationing will be

revealed, as well as some enduring wartime recipes.

November 29, 1 - 3 p.m.: Candy Making - just in time for the holidays! You will make your own candy and look at Brockville's long history of candy making. Purchase the entire series of three for only \$36 per person; \$15 per person for single programs. The cost includes all supplies. Advance registration is required either by purchasing your spot in person at the museum or by calling us with a credit card number.

For more information about this and other happenings at the Brockville Museum, please visit our Facebook Page or webpage, email us at or call at 613-342-4397. The Brockville Museum is located at 5 Henry St in downtown Brockville.

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