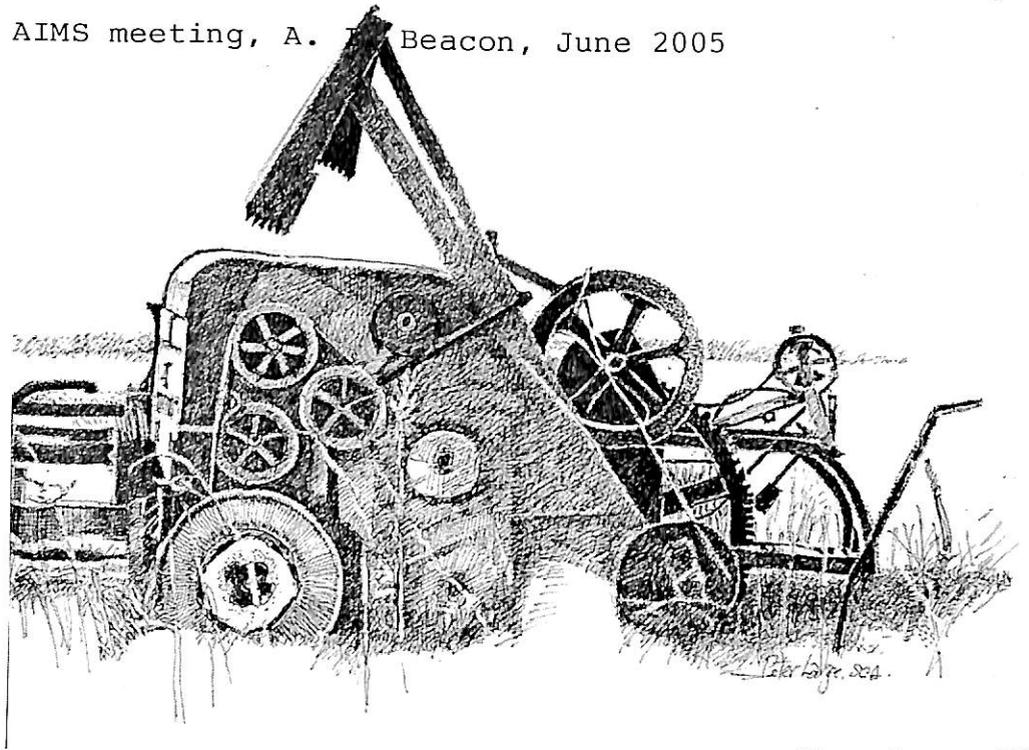


from AIMS meeting, A. I. Beacon, June 2005



Guest Speaker: Neil Johnston introduced guest speaker Bruce Caughey, one of three directors of the Amherst Island Agricultural Society.

"The Amherst Island Agricultural Society has two important assets," Bruce said, "we own seven acres of land behind the village parkette on Front Road and we own this beautiful, old wooden briefcase, which holds the Society records. The records date back to 1920;

Peter Large, SCA

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however, we do know that the fairground was operational prior to that date. Record book entries show that by 1932, assets and cash on hand totalled \$825.94. 'Trials of Speed' were held using horses and Eaton's and Simpsons donated many of the prizes. Another entry in the book showed Mr. Bulch's large peas were overlooked and to his great consternation were not judged. After considerable discussion, Mr. Bulch was awarded 3rd prize."

Bruce Caughey explained to the AIMS membership that the Amherst Island Fair used to be an annual event other than in 1945 when it was cancelled. The fair resumed the following year, which unfortunately was its last. The 1946 fair featured a popular slow automobile race. Once drivers had put their car in high gear, they were

not allowed to use the clutch again. First over the finish line was the winner.

Occasionally during the 1960's, the 4-H Club would hold their agricultural shows on the fairgrounds. In the 1970's and 1980's, the grounds were used for training horses. Except for a farmer renting the land as pasture and the Island Market using the parkette in the summer, the grounds have remained unused.

A couple of years ago, the 4-H Club requested use of the fairgrounds. The Agricultural Society agreed to their request providing they had insurance for the occasion. The 4-H Club contested that decision and a letter was written to the government agency that oversees the 223 fair boards in Ontario. The agency pointed out to the Amherst Island Agricultural Society that it was the only one in Ontario not holding an

annual fair. The Amherst Island Agricultural Society was granted a two-year period to produce a plan for the property.

Bruce Caughey is in the process of speaking with all Island organizations to determine possible usage for the land. Any input by Islanders is greatly appreciated.

At 10 am Neil Johnston thanked Bruce and adjourned the meeting. The next AIMS Breakfast Meeting is scheduled for Saturday, June 11th 2005. Guest speaker to be announced.

