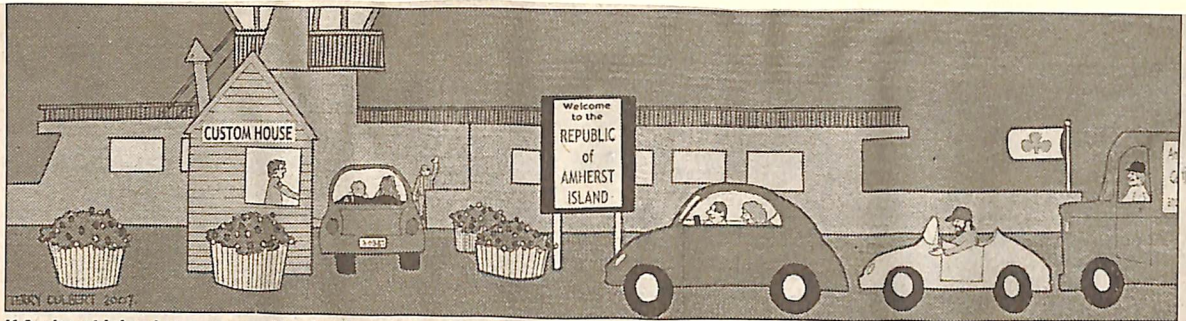


# On Amherst Island



If Amherst Island were a republic (as the joke amongst Islanders goes), getting there might look something like this.

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Another painting is called Republic of Amherst Island: a row of colourful cars are leaving the island republic to get on board the drab gray ferry and go back to the rest of Canada.

"It's a little joke at parties," Culbert says. "Someone will say we should form our own republic."

Hole By Noel is inspired by master back hoe operator Noel McCormick, who worked on the couple's home overlooking Prince Edward County. McCormick's flowing blond hair extends around the painting to its next side. And then there's Amherst Island Sweater Farms in which Culbert's favourite animal is clothed in a nice checkered sweater.

"I can't accept that they can be eaten," Culbert says. "I think they're only here to give us wool."

There's also a portrait of the Island's most celebrated artist, Daniel Fowler, a 19th-century landscape artist who became famous both here and abroad.

Culbert's Pie Island celebrates the many accomplished pie makers on the island and that includes Hoegenauer, who served a terrific apple and raisin pie during my visit there. My favourite is New Year's Eve on Amherst Island, a picture of people dancing at a dance, complete with guitar player and singer with a dangerous décolletage.

Culbert says sometimes he gets ideas for paintings just looking at different shapes of canvas at Wallack's Art and Drafting Supplies in Kingston. One time he saw a tall slender canvas which became House For Sale, a painting of a large house perched on top of a high hill. Another time he tilted a square canvas to make it diamond shaped and paint Scottish Crossing, based on a caution sign for the elderly which he saw while visiting Scotland last year.

It's easy for Culbert to describe the *raison d'être* behind his paintings.



Terry Culbert is an animal lover with a sense of humour, as *The Back Kitchen* attests.

"I love people," he says. "As a journalist, I loved to tell the little stories and make people smile.

"And on the Island, there are a lot of characters who have a great sense of humour. It's so inspiring to

be here and near the water. Sometimes newcomers aren't well received here because they want to change things. But I come from a farm family and a village of 900. I don't want to change anything." **T**