

Hurononia Community Calendar

Organizers are invited to publicize their upcoming events free of charge in the Times Community Calendar. Please call the Community Calendar editor at 526-9369 or drop your message into the Midland Times office, 525 Bay Street.

August 12, 13, 14 and 15
Alliston Potato Festival. Some of the activities will include, flea market, potato pancake breakfast, queen contest, horse show, and much more to keep residents and visitors entertained.

Saturday, August 14
Bazaar and Bake Sale, 1:00 p.m. in the Ship-Ahoy Hall, Woodland Beach, sponsored by the Bayshore Senior Citizens.

Saturday, August 14
Georgian Shores Swinging Seniors are holding a tea and bake sale at 11:00 a.m. at The Surf, Balm Beach.

Saturday, August 14
Afternoon Tea and Bake Sale from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. will be held on the lawn at Miss Eva Taylor's home, Percy Street, Waubaushene. Auspices of the Waubaushene Anglican Guild.

Saturday, August 14
Garage Sale, starting 10:00 a.m. on the church grounds, Church of the Good Shepherd, Wyebridge. Included will be a bake table and produce. Bargains galore!

Saturday, August 14
Garage and Bake Sale at the Wyevale Orange Hall, starting at 11:00 a.m. Proceeds to go to new heating system in the Hall. Under the auspices of men's and ladies' Orange Lodge. Anyone with articles to donate, please phone 322-2647, 322-2990 or 526-5990.

Sunday, August 15
Annual cemetery decoration service, Waverley United Church, at 10:00 a.m.

Saturday, August 21
Third annual Old-Time Piano Playing contest, hosted by the Oro Lions Club, will be held at the Guthrie Arena. For information on how to enter the contest, call Bill Badour, RR 2, Hawkestone, 487-5334 after 6 p.m.

Saturday, August 21
Dance: Georgian Bay Riding Club at Orillia Fairgrounds. Tickets available at the door: \$2.50 per person.

Sunday, September 19
Horse Show - Coldwater Fairgrounds. Sponsored by Georgian Bay Riding Club.

Public relations comes first with OPP Marine Patrol

by Dagmar Kanzler
Except for the black identification initials printed in two foot letters on the side, the boat looks remarkably inconspicuous - not at all what I had in mind for the OPP Marine Patrol. I'm not quite sure what I was expecting (a floating patrol car, perhaps?) but

before I could think about it Constables Ron Rowe and Gord Mugford (my official tour hosts) ushered me aboard and sped off across Midland Bay. Between joggles and thumps, I managed to glean that we were headed for the Honey Harbour-Thirty Thousand Islands area, by far the

most populated area on the Marine Patrol beat, and consequently the area where most of the "action" is likely to be.

Saturday is usually a fairly busy day for the marine patrol, meaning that they head out with a couple of calls to investigate - thefts, erratic boaters, and the like. As usual, Lady Luck had looked the other way when I decided to make this the "D-Day" for accompanying the patrol; you guessed it, not a single complaint (however eccentric) to look into. Well, at least it wasn't raining.

My official mission on this cool, Saturday is to accompany the boys in blue on their regular daily patrol of nearby waters and to gain some insight into the whys and wherefores of the provincial police's marine patrols.

The Midland based patrol (detachment 87-198) is responsible for the waters between Balm Beach, Penetang and Midland Bays and up past Honey Harbour to Twelve Mile Bay, the Severn to Big Chute and Six Mile Lake. It is a large area, impossible to patrol daily with the two boats supplied to the local marine patrol. This summer, the patrol's situation was further complicated by the absence of the larger of the two craft - the 35 foot General Williams - and the man in charge of the Midland Marine Patrol, Corporal Mohan; both had been requested by the Olympic Organizing Committee and had been dispatched to Kingston in late May. That left Constables Rowe, Mugford and Scandlan to patrol the immense waters under their jurisdiction: "Even with two boats," explains Constable Mugford, "it's impossible to be on top of everything..." he trailed off, leaving the rest to the individual imagination.

Officially, the marine patrol is responsible for enforcing water law and boating regulations, and which includes everything from investigating thefts at cottages to checking for lifejackets, searching for missing boats and boaters, locating dangerous boaters (ie. those who flagrantly disregard right of others on the water) and occasionally participating in search and rescue missions. It's a job that can have the constables out at any hour of the night, combing the waters for a boat that didn't return on time. Neither rain, snow nor fog (unless it's thicker than soup) will keep the constables off the water; their water duties start as soon as the ice leaves, and end when Georgian Bay becomes impassable in the late fall. In fact, Constable Rowe has been out on patrol as late as December 18, not exactly boating season but marine patrol season nonetheless.

The 115 h.p., motor on the 18 foot Marine Patrol's Starcraft has whizzed reporter and hosts across the bay and in no time flat we're cruising through the quiet waters of the Thirty Thousand Islands. Every now and then the constables hands go up in a casual salute to passing boat or cottager relaxing on his wharf - boaters are friendly souls. But in fact, both Constable Rowe and Mugford make a concerned effort to get to know as many of the marina operators and knowledgeable locals as possible, for they're invariably on the look-out for a stolen boat or motor. Right now, they're trying to track down three

identical engines that disappeared in a week, a rather suspicious situation. But the quiet, almost too-casual exchange at the marina where we stop to gas-up turns up nothing new. And so it's back to watching the water, the scenery and the boats out on the water: "Some days," explains Constable Mugford, "things just pop up right in front of you, and on others you have to go looking around. And then, sometimes we're just not there at the right time."

I'm about to take up the constable on his promise that something newsworthy will come up when - lo and behold - a cottager frantically waving his arms, motioning the patrol boat to approach. Apparently a particular cruiser had steamed by too fast, leaving a dangerously high wake, and could the patrol look out for this vessel and warn the driver. Particulars are taken down, but there is actually little the patrol officers can do unless someone is hurt and/or willing to go to court about the matter.

There has been a particular problem with speeding boats and resulting high wakes in the Honey Harbour area this summer (complaints and misnomers seem to go in cycles, according to Rowe), and so Constables Rowe and Mugford make a point of keeping a look-out for this particular boat. "You get to know where cruisers pull in, what bays they prefer, and you get to know the cruisers after a while too" comments an attentive Rowe. A cruiser is spotted and the skipper is (very) tactfully questioned; my intuition tells me this is the one, but I'm proven wrong. Facts, and more facts are required. Later on another cruiser is located, and this time it appears the marine patrol has found its man. The delicate situation of questioning and explaining the problems involved is brought off with a minimum of animosity (all of which stemmed from the skipper, needless to say) and the parting is (relatively) cordial.

These aren't only law enforcement officers - they're public relations experts as well, if not first. "When do we warn, and when do we ticket?" - Constable Rowe repeats my question. "Well, it really all depends on circumstances...you're kind of like an umpire, you call it as you see it but use an awful lot of good judgement." I somehow get the feeling that these officers are more likely to give a lot of understanding and ticket only when required. All of which seems to have earned them the undying respect of many a boater and cottager who call out as we motor by.

A one week training course for officers accepting marine patrol duty covers everything from life-saving to the laws of waterways and using navigational aids. Good P-R is touched on, but really comes with "on-the-job" training and Constables Rowe (in his fourth year with the marine patrol) and Mugford (three years on water duty) have learned their lessons well.

Do they enjoy their jobs? The only negative aspect they pointed out was that the heavy, dark pants tend to become "inconvenient" on sultry summer days. But then, it gets pretty hot in those patrol cars too, and out on the water the "scenery" is a lot better!

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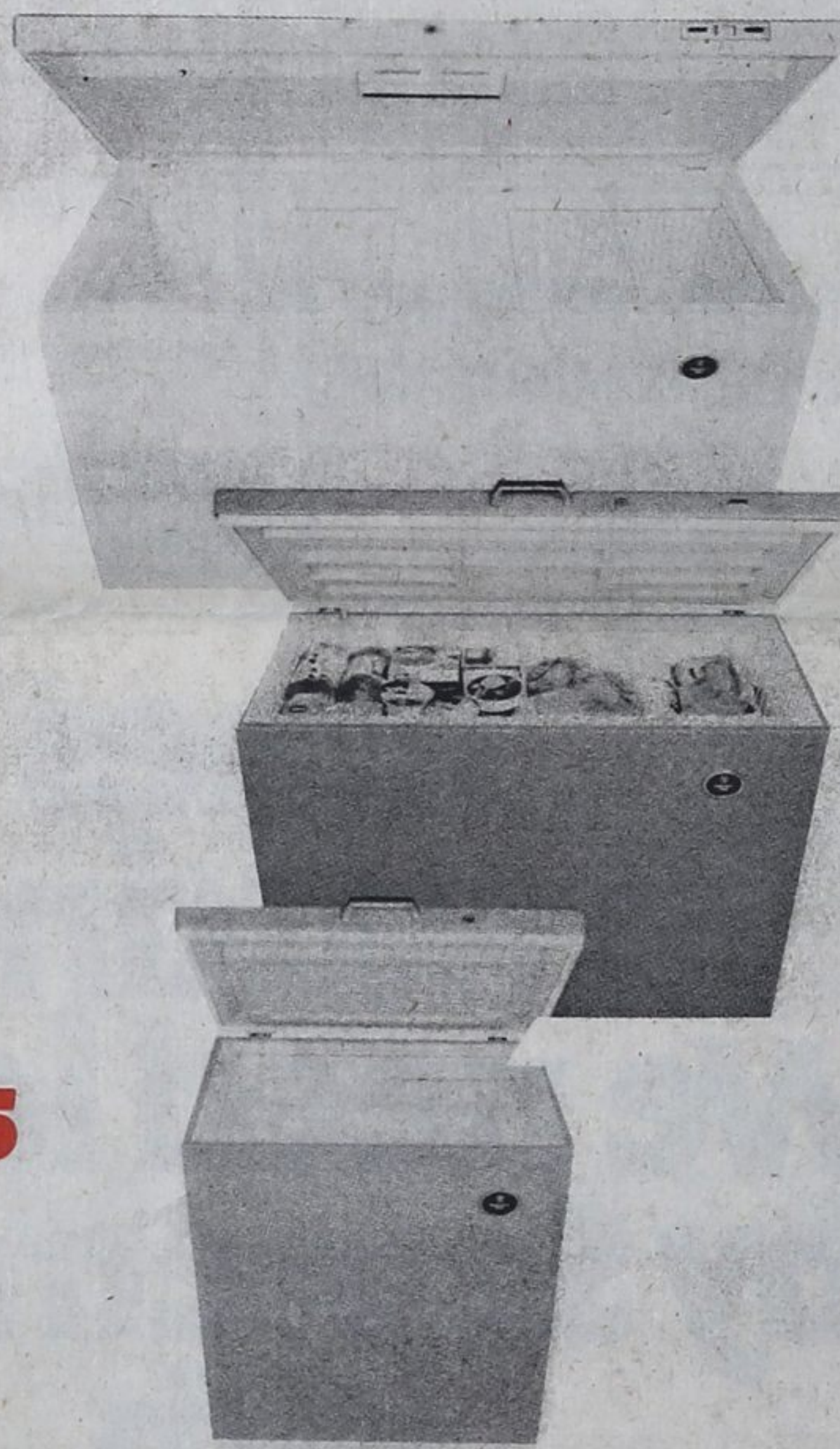
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