

# Management of Wye begins

The five and one-half ton "cookie cutter" which is opening channels in the solid mat of cattails in the Wye Marsh is the beginning of a management program for the marsh.

Less than 1,000 acres of the Wye Marsh wetland is open water. Cookie cutter is the name given to the floating machine owned by Ducks Unlimited which is chewing its way through the vegetation. Ducks Unlimited, a conservation group, is footing the bill.

Next summer Ducks Unlimited will be draining the marsh, at a cost of \$50,000 to \$60,000. Vegetation, especially grass, that depends on water, will die.

The marshland isn't the responsibility of the Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre but the marsh's health is of primary importance to the Centre. Director Bob Whittam last Friday said the Centre is very supportive of Ducks Unlimited's interest. "We're glad that Ducks Unlimited is helping."

People walking to the end of the boardwalk, which enters the marsh at its closest point to the Centre, can see water, and then can only glimpse it, only by

ascending the viewing platform at the boardwalk's end. From the level boardwalk, the marsh is covered with cattails as far as the eye can see.

The cookie cutter is cutting a pattern of channels through the mat, linking small open ponds and opening the mat to the flow of the Wye River.

Results have come quickly. Don Foxall, Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre facilities manager, has seen Great Blue herons, bitterns, and more ducks. He expects that the muskrat population will "explode."

The benefit of the cutting should last for five years.

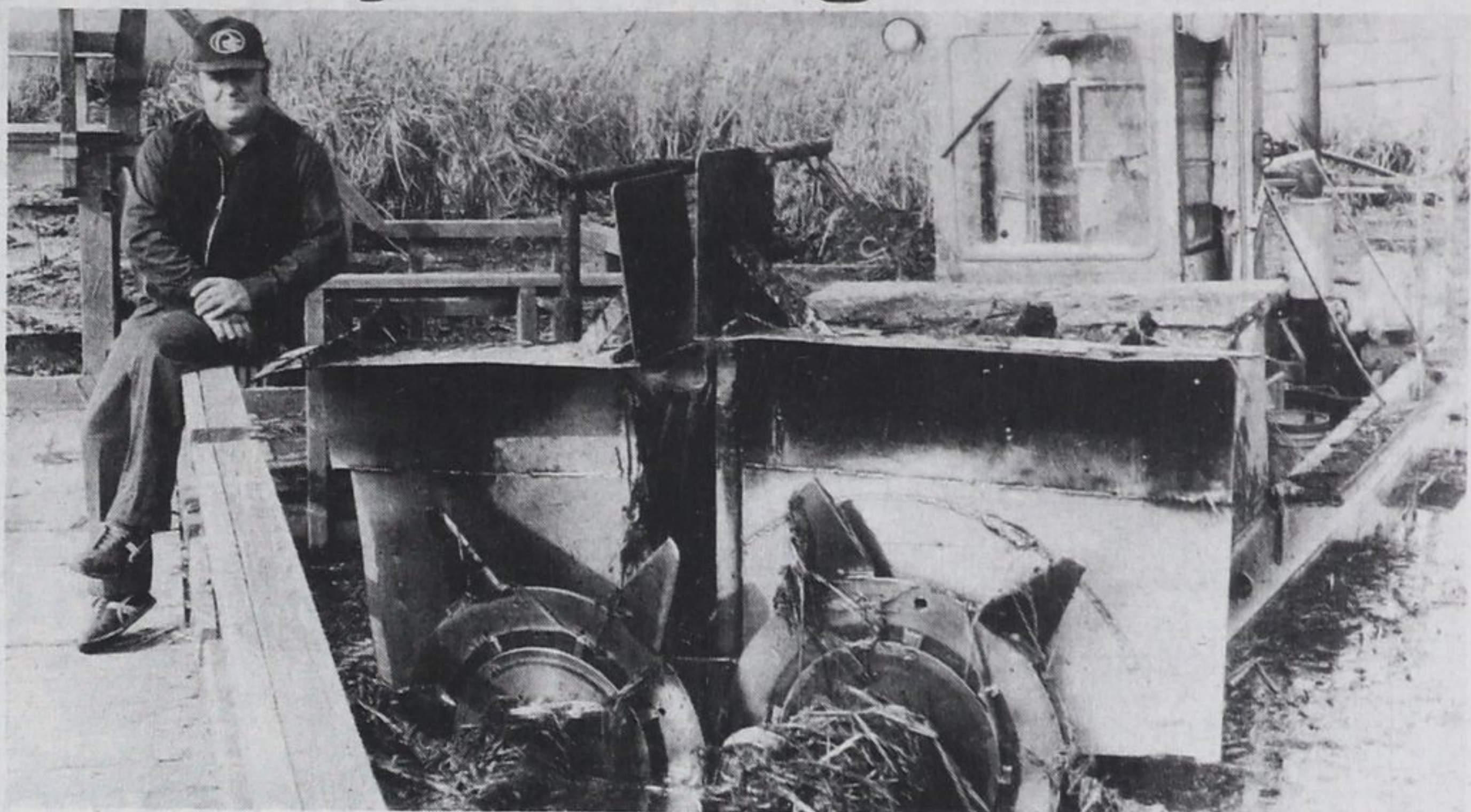
The cookie cutter creates a ledge between the edge of the mat and the edge of the cattails. This edge becomes a nesting area and a highway for birds and animals. "The edge effect is a key factor," Whittam said.

Ducks Unlimited employee Glenn Rogers has been cutting the curving channels for a week. He will continue until ice becomes a problem. He will be back in the spring for a month. The channels he cuts are 150 to 200 feet apart.

The twin six and one-half foot blades on the front of the boat cut a channel six feet wide and as deep as seven feet. The blades complete 350 revolutions a minute when cutting. Each of the hydraulically-driven, independently operated blades are driven by 85 horsepower. One hundred and fifty feet to 200 feet an hour is normal progress. The machine at the Wye Marsh is one of two in Canada. The other machine is in Amherst, N.S.

Normal depth of water in the marsh is six inches to eight inches. The water has been raised to two feet so that the cookie cutter can move. The blades propel the boat as well as cut.

Cattails are being cut around the boardwalk to create open water around it.



**Cookie cutter driver**

Glenn Rogers is the operator of one of the two marsh vegetation, or "cookie," cutters in Canada owned by Ducks Unlimited. The machine weighs five and one-

half tons and on average cuts a channel seven feet wide and up to seven feet deep at the rate of 150 to 200 feet an hour.

## Performers in 10th and best year ever

Huron Performing Arts for Children, which is celebrating its 10th year of bringing quality programming for young people into the area, is looking at its most successful season yet.

The 'A' Series (for 3-7 year olds) is already sold out, much to the pleasure of the series organizers but to the disappointment of those who still hoped to purchase tickets.

"It is very difficult to say no to people who want to buy tickets," said Karen Jurmain, HPAC president, "but if the audience gets too large, the children lose contact with the performer. In one of this year's productions where it is important for the children to participate in the action of the play, we even split the 'A' group into two time slots so that everyone can be involved."

For those that missed getting tickets, the good news is that planning is already underway for the 88/89 season with tickets going on sale in April '88.

The first 'A' Series performance for this year, on Oct. 24, will be The Red Ball a multi-media puppet show by Mermaid Theatre. It will be followed later in the season with music by Sandra Beech, a play entitled Not Like Us by the Carousel Players and an adaptation of Robert Munsch's stories by the Touring Players' Theatre.

Monica Gaylord opens the 'B' Series (for 7-12 year olds) with her program entitled A Handful of Keys. Although a concert pianist sounds a little difficult for young people to appreciate she soon has the audience clapping, dancing, and

even trying their hand at conducting. Monica shows that music is part of our everyday life, reflecting our moods and activities, and then gives us a glimpse into the 'not so everyday' world of the concert pianist.

Despite an all-time high in ticket sales for the 'B' Series, there are still some left. Other presentations include the music of Tanglefoot, a participation play by the Carousel Players celebrating the 1988 Olympics, and The Fitness Show by Theatre on the Move. Tickets are \$12 per person for all four performances and can be purchased at the Monica Gaylord concert or by phoning 526-3585. Single tickets are not available.

A reminder to all subscribers - Both performances are on October 24th at Ecole Secondaire Penetang Secondary School. The Red Ball begins at 11 a.m. and Monica Gaylord will perform at 3 p.m.

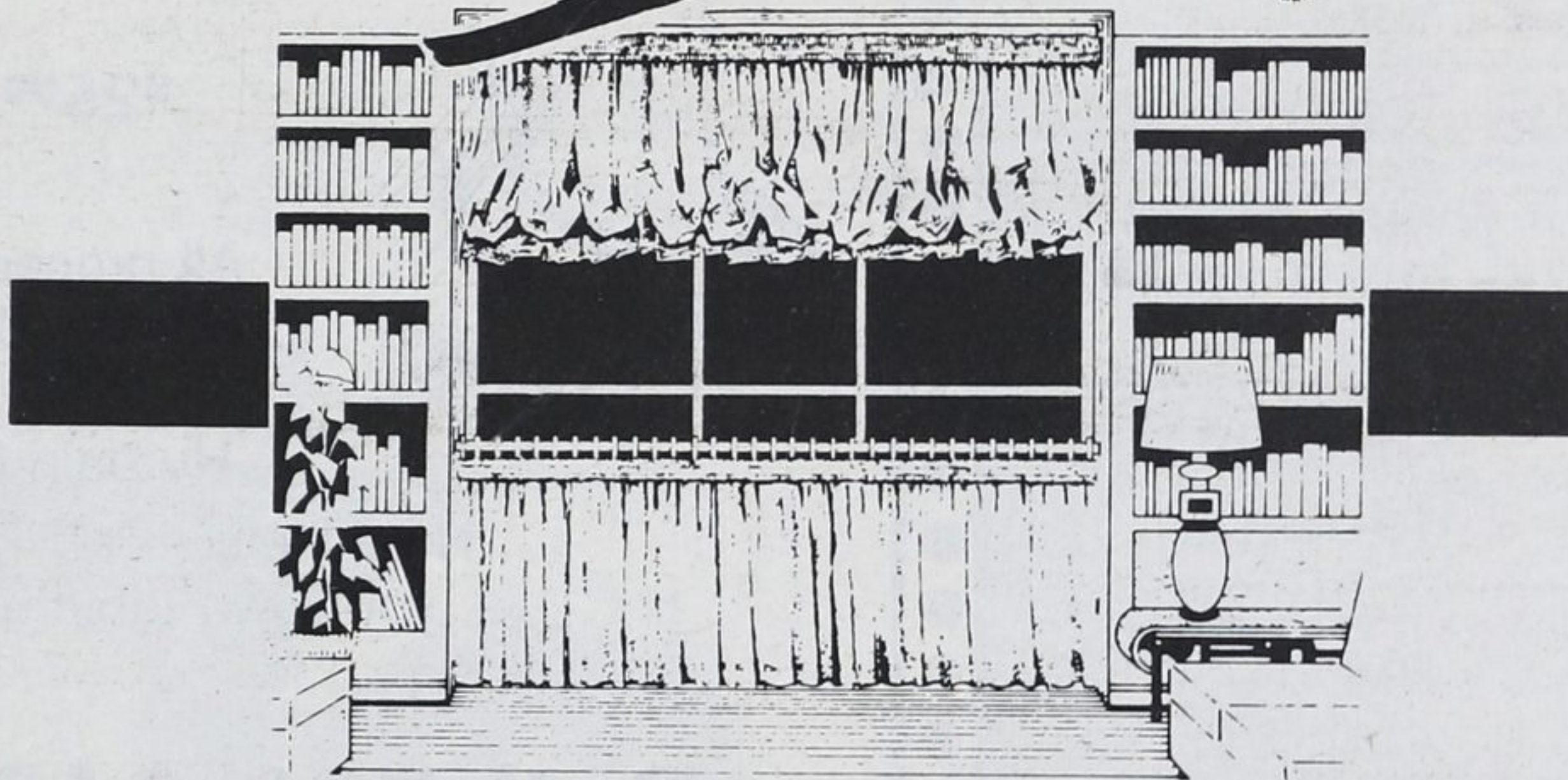
## Dinner for 100

The approximate 100 volunteers in Victoria Harbour who help their community are invited to a dinner.

Each year the village council holds a dinner for the people who sit on village boards and committees, the firefighters and baseball coaches, and all of the other people who donate time in some manner.

This year the dinner will be held on Nov. 13 at the Hunters and Anglers Club.

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