

2M QUAD-CITY TIMES
Monday, Aug. 23, 1999

QUAD-CITY AREA

Encantoed Island: Some call it home

Continued from Page 1A
subsequent flooding made farming and daily living impractical, he said.

"After a while, you get tired of living in water all the time," said Kathy Flippo, a one-time resident of Beaver Island who nonetheless has fond memories of the place and has written a book about it.

A few remnants of domestic life exist on Smith's Island, which now is a self-guided nature trail. The one thriving community of Beaver Island has reverted to a woodland and wildlife sanctuary with pockets of part-time islanders.

Easy access to land is what allows residential islands to remain residential, Bolman said. Both Encantoed and Campbell's islands have causeways that link them to a city.

Thompson Island had a makeshift causeway that a farmer built with old cars and other junk, but flooding washed away the island's farming potential.

Floods swamp Encantoed and Campbell's islands as well, but the residents do not depend on the islands for their livelihood.

Just about every year Encantoed Island's causeway floods for a few weeks, said Jim Van Posen, a 20-year resident and the island's manager.

Homeowners get up with the effort of hauling groceries and other supplies by boat, the inevitable chores and the "swamps" smell that they insist does not last long.

They sacrifice convenience for the pleasure of sitting on their raised docks and watching the river go by or throwing a fishing line from their front yards.

Mike and Cindy Tedrake sold a 3,400-square-foot home in Blue Grass, Iowa, to buy a bungalow on Encantoed Island because they can't get enough of the river.

"We have our work and we have our river. We can come home and sit our hunk, margarita in hand, and the whole world goes by," Cindy Tedrake said. "It's just so peaceful. The stress and the tension can flow right away."

Houses don't become available very often on the island. But Cliff's daughter lives there, and let her mother know as soon as a house became available.

When high waters lingered last spring, the Tedrakes moved into town temporarily, returning when the waters receded. No big deal.

Other islanders grab about business as usual, but add 10 minutes or so for commute time by boat. Van Posen, for example, said his two daughters, ages 23 and 16, never missed a day of school because of high waters.

"Just figure in the last five years, two weeks to a month out of the island, he said.

As long as his wife, Cathy, likes it here, he will stay. "Maybe she puts up with it because she knows I like it," he adds. "To live on this island, it got to be a partnership."

Most mornings during the warm weather months, they go out on the dock with coffee and watch the sun rise. At dusk, they watch pleasure boats and towboats moving up and down the river.

"When I come home from work at night and on weekends, it's like being on vacation all the time," he said.



SACRIFICES: Mike and Cindy Tedrake gave up a 3,400-square-foot home in Blue Grass, Iowa, to live in a cottage on Encantoed Island.

BEAVER ISLAND One-time residential island turns into retreat

By Barb Ariand-Fyo

CLINTON, Iowa — Six cottages create the appearance of a resort near the center of Beaver Island. One belongs to Jim Thompson, a retired banker from Camanche, Iowa, who escapes to the island as often as he can during the week.

Here, he can savor the sights and sounds of the hummingbirds and crickets that gather at the feeder outside of the screened-in porch.

Sometimes, he'll sit on the dock with his back to the Mississippi River and watch the birds fly from tree to tree on the heavily wooded island.

Other times he joins his neighbors for a game of golf on a course they built and maintain on the island property they own. Brightly colored flag marks each hole on the manicured course that Thompson moved with an old 40 Ford tractor.

This might seem to be paradise, but Thompson frets that it is becoming something less because of erosion of the shoreline, which he believes is caused by large pleasure boats traveling too fast and throwing huge waves against the banks, as well as increased towboat traffic. Both occurrences, he said, also lead to siltation of the backwaters and destruction of the ecosystem.

He built a sea wall along the riverbank that adjoins his property to stop the erosion that already has gouted the edge of the front yard. He and his wife, Sheila, have owned their island property since 1987, but he has been coming to the island to fish and duck hunt since he was a boy.

In the 1960s, a Clinton newspaper touted Beaver Island as a fisherman's paradise, one of the top freshwater fishing areas in the nation. Now it is difficult to navigate the lakes on the island because of the siltation, he said.

Changes to the island began in the late 1950s, when the federal government bought about two-thirds of the property for construction of the locks and dam system to improve river navigation. The government portion now is a wildlife refuge.

Kon Francosen, 75, is intimately familiar with those changes. He grew up on the island and owns about 12 percent of its 1,300 acres. When he was a boy, Beaver Island was a thriving community with houses, a grocery store and school. As many as 120 people lived there during the Great Depression of the late 1930s and '40s, and one-time islander Kathy Flippo reports in her book "Beaver Island Remembers."

That is when the island reached its zenith as community. "There were a lot of old houses here that people left as they grew older and found a better life in town," Francosen, a third-generation islander, said. "During the Depression, a lot of those places were occupied by people who were out of work...so they could move or live off the island, that's my opinion. When times were better, they left."

The semi-retired engineer with Zimmer & Francosen Inc., Moline, continues to escape to Beaver Island for solitude, nostalgia and the appeal of outdoor work. He stays in the two-story farmhouse of his childhood. He raises maple trees and logs them occasionally to keep from growing up into trees, gardens and keeps the place clean.

"The river grows and the river takes away," he said. "Islands grow and diminish just by natural occurrences. The recreational boats, the big boats throw different kinds of waves on shore. They may accelerate erosion. I can't say that is a bad thing. That's the way it is."

He even leases some of his shoreline to large companies for boating purposes, he said.

What will happen to Beaver Island in the future is hard to say, he added. "But I can tell you this, they are not making things like this anymore."

"Beaver Island is good for something. I don't know what. Mainstream, I'm just going to enjoy it."

"I won't lease to someone unless they have a second home or a family to take them in because I don't want them to be without a home," she said.

Still, she understands the island's irremediability.

"I adore the place, its setting, its peacefulness. Everything is calm there. There are enough animals there to make it interesting if you want to watch. And of course the river traffic keeps you entertained."

After Thursday's vote, post commander Dean Hoelke said that problem has not been solved, but former bar manager Doug Schneider has decided to retain the duties for one more year.

In other action, the council approved an ordinance prohibiting cats from running at large.

— Staff and news reports

the 319-383-2232 Classifieds

EARLY CLASSIFIED DEADLINES FOR THE LABOR DAY HOLIDAY!
Our Offices
Will Be Closed All Day MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 1999
Advanced Deadlines Are As Follows:

MULTI-COLUMN DEADLINES
Publication Friday, September 3
Deadline Tues., Aug. 31, 4:30 P.M.
Publication Saturday, September 4
Deadline Wed., Sept. 1, 4:30 P.M.
Publication Sunday, September 5
Deadline Wed., Sept. 1, Noon
Publication Monday, September 6
Deadline Wed., Sept. 1, 4:30 P.M.
Publication Tuesday, September 7
Deadline Thurs., Sept. 2, 4:30 P.M.
Publication Wednesday, September 8
Deadline Fri., Sept. 3, 4:30 P.M.

ONE-COLUMN ADS
Publication Friday, Sept. 3
Deadline Thurs., Sept. 2, 5:00 P.M.
Publication Saturday, Sept. 4
Deadline Thurs., Sept. 2, 5:00 P.M.
Publication Sunday, Sept. 5
Deadline Fri., Sept. 3, Noon
Publication Monday, Sept. 6
Deadline Fri., Sept. 3, 5:00 P.M.
Publication Tuesday, Sept. 7
Deadline Fri., Sept. 3, 5:00 P.M.

HAVE A FUN & SAFE HOLIDAY!
Reg. Phone 319-383-2232 • 8:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.
Saturday 8:00 A.M. - Noon
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163 CEMETERY LOTS
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172 LOST & FOUND
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