

# Gulf Islands Driftwood

Serving the islands that make beautiful British Columbia beautiful.

SECOND SECTION

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## Islanders at Work

### After 61 years they still have their first customer

BY VALERIE RICHARDS

Patterson's general store at Fulford has a long and busy history. The store, owned by Bill Patterson and son, Bob, celebrates its 61st anniversary this coming July so 1915 sets the clock back to pioneer days.

Bill is of Scots heritage but was born in the United States, where he lived for a very short period. His career before coming to Salt Spring in 1907 involved many trades.

He has been a street car conductor, a provincial policeman and before starting his own store, Bill was deckhand on the Iroquois ferry boat.

Arriving on Salt Spring, he promptly found employment at Malcolm and Purvis, where he worked in various departments of the Ganges store that is now known as Mouat's.

Bill Patterson first started his store at the tip of Beaver Point. There, in 1915 he opened his new south end business house which, combined with postal services for south end islanders, proved a complete success. Up until 1930 that was the only Patterson store.

In 1930 Patterson's purchased the cottage situated by the ferry dock at Fulford. Besides having the facilities for a store, the cottage could accommodate a family. Bill's wife, Emily watched the Beaver Point store while Bill took charge in Fulford.

When, in 1951, south end Salt Spring postal services became centralized and the post office was located at Fulford, Pattersons closed shop at Beaver Point. As well as serving the public in grocery needs the Pattersons also supplied the area with feed and petrol.

Son, Bob Patterson has assisted his father throughout the years with his operation of store ownership and has known Salt Spring since the day he was born.

A brief stint to Victoria during the war gave Bob experience with work in the shipyard but he returned after five years to the island and the quietude of Fulford Harbour.



In 1967 the Patterson family bought the old garage workshop in Fulford. It is the present location of Patterson's Store today.

Bob's wife, Nancy bought the Cudmore coffee shop in 1955 which then, was a cafe and store combined. It is open during the summer months, catering to the ice-cream fans as well as burger buyers.

Bill Patterson still has his first customer from back in 1915. Andrew Stevens is one of the store's regular customers. He was their first customer in 1915 and is still, 61 years later, prominent among the Salt Spring residents in need of general supplies, from blue jeans to bread.

From left to right are Bruce Patterson, his grandfather, Bill Patterson, Andrew Stevens of Beaver Point and far right is Bob. They are three generations of Patterson's to assist their first customer from 61 years ago.

## Dispute

Trustees of Gulf Islands School District called for legal advice last week in a dispute over payment of several thousand dollars to the architects who worked on the recent school extension program at Ganges.