

# Captain Otty's Log

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## President's message

*Robert Cosh*

When my wife Carol and I were in the process of buying our house on Otty Lake five years ago, I looked up Otty Lake on the Internet, found the OLA site, and was impressed by what I saw. I felt that this was an organization I would like to be part of. Now five years later I find myself writing my first message to you as President of the OLA.

We love living on the lake, and are happy to see so many others enjoying it too. We enjoy the changing weather and the different views wherever we look. Unfortunately it's not all fun, as some aspects of lake living can really get under your skin. Thanks to Karen Hunt for arranging for tick kits to be available at the AGM. Her interest began as a pain in the neck, and ended in providing a valuable community service. Thanks Karen! Share your stories: If you have experienced a tick, let's talk.

As I sit at the table overlooking the lake seeing the leaves change, I am reminded of how the lake community is changing: More full time residents, a new generation of kids enjoying the lake, cottage conversions and the demand for better setback, septic systems and shoreline protection. For the OLA Board, planning events and programs that meet everyone's

interests, needs and priorities is a challenge. I would like to thank the Otty Lake Association Board Directors, Area Counsellors and members of committees who work on our behalf throughout the year planning activities, attending meetings, and collecting and distributing useful reading material. Information about their activities is brought to you by Rick Stojack on the OLA web site, [www.ottylakeassociation.ca](http://www.ottylakeassociation.ca), and by Don Beattie with Capt'n Otty's log. Thanks to these individuals and all others who keep us updated, informed and involved. Our volunteers care. They care about the lake. They care about their neighbourhood. They care about you, the lake community. Not all residents of Otty Lake are members of the OLA. If you think membership is worthwhile, tell your neighbours, especially new residents. If you don't think it's worthwhile, we would be glad to hear your suggestions on how we can serve you better.

Not all OLA activities are directly related to lake health. For the second year, members participated in Pirate Day at the Maple Glen waterfront. In addition to water gun fights, there were educational presentations on aquatic life, Roger Nuttall's guide to edible wild plants, games for the kids, and Dave Bell's BBQ. Thanks to Darlene Bishop and her team for staging this popular event. There were many suggestions to expand the scope of the event next year, and to give more recognition to the non-piratical activities. One suggestion was to have pirates selling corn for

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*Photo by Amanda Brady*

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*President's Message continued from P.1*

a buck an ear. If you have some ideas, let us know. We'd like to see more people involved.

I would like to express a special thank you on behalf of all of us to Karen Hunt for her work during her term as President, and for the advice and guidance she continues to provide as Past President. Her continued dedication to the welfare of the lake and the lake community is an outstanding example of the need for ongoing attention to the many factors affecting lake health, and the enhancement of our lives and properties.

Many challenges and opportunities face us: The new work by the Ontario Government on a more meaningful lake carrying capacity model, septic reinspection programs carried out by the townships and health units, shoreline naturalization, aquatic vegetation, invasive species, and fluctuating water levels. These perennial favorites spark much discussion, and occasional disagreement. This is your lake, and your lake association. Participate if you would like to, in any way you have to offer, whether it's your time, knowledge, or suggestions. Contact us, we will listen. If you or anyone you know has moved or changed e-mail address, let us know so that we can continue to pass on useful information to all concerned.

And finally, remember that the shoreline protects you and your families: Don't venture on to thin ice, especially if it's over deep water. Enjoy the changing seasons and all they have to offer in our Winter wonderland.

## OLA Annual General Meeting

**A**t the OLA's 2011 AGM on 9 July, approximately 150 members renewed acquaintance, checked out more than ten displays, spoke to the exhibitors, inhaled coffee, and munched on muffins baked by volunteers.

The 2011-2012 Otty Lake calendars, whose theme is the Otty shoreline we love, are a big hit. Gail Read reports early sales of approximately 300 calendars, including 98 at the AGM! Calendars are still available; please see the OLA website for the order form.



***Gail Read marketing the Shoreline Calendar to Rosemarie Hoppe-Wilhelm***

### ***Finances***

Treasurer Dave Bell presented the financial statement for 2010. Revenue was \$7600 including \$5600 in memberships (THANK YOU!), plus donations of: \$500 from D/NE, \$1000 from RVCA, and \$100 from a group of Kentucky fishermen who have been visiting

Otty Lake for many years, and who send us a donation every year. Expenses in 2010 were \$9300, the largest items being production of shoreline binders and Otty Lake maps, Captain Otty's Log, and FOCA membership.



***Councillor Brian Campbell renewing OLA membership with Phil Anderson***

### ***Speakers***

Susan Freeman, Deputy Reeve of Tay Valley Township and Aubrey Churchill, Reeve of Drummond/North Elmsley Township, gave us updates on what is happening in the townships. Susan presented outgoing president Karen Hunt with a gift from TVT, saying that she had been kind, respectful, diligent and professional in her relationship with TVT.

Noelle Reeve, Planner of Tay Valley Township, described an MoE study of lake carrying capacity on Farren, Christie, and Otty lakes, using a new model based on calculated background level of phosphorous before human development. This provisional model showed that Otty Lake is already above capacity, but the model is derived for lakes that are on the Canadian Shield, whereas Otty Lake is a mix of Shield- and non-Shield areas. Noelle stated that phosphorous is only one criterion that should be used to assess lake development capacity. She is continuing to discuss lake capacity with MoE to see what action should be taken.



Lynda Ruegg, Turtle Care Technician at the Toronto Zoo, described the Turtle Tally and Frogwatch programs and encouraged OLA members to send observations to the zoo at [www.torontozoo.com/adoptapond/TurtleTally.asp](http://www.torontozoo.com/adoptapond/TurtleTally.asp) and

***Lynda Ruegg from Toronto Zoo with Painted Turtle friend***

www.torontozoo.com/  
adoptapond/FrogwatchOntario/  
asp. At present, seven out of eight  
Ontario turtle species are at risk, so  
reporting turtle sightings will help  
establish where turtles survive and  
what threatens them.

Wally Robins, Chair of the  
Environment Committee, spoke at  
length about the threats to Otty's  
bass population. After more than  
20 years of monitoring bass, Wally  
has found that during the past  
four years the population of adult  
bass has dropped markedly which  
will compromise the health of the  
lake. He believes that fishing out of  
season, and taking large numbers of  
bass bigger than two pounds during  
the legal season, are responsible  
for the decline. He recommended  
photographing offenders and  
calling MNR to report incidents.  
[The reporting line is 1-877-TIPS-  
MNR. Wally may contribute a  
detailed article in a future issue of  
the Log.]

### Loons

The loon population appears to be  
nine adults and five chicks. Loon  
sighting reports are welcome at  
McLeishBill@hotmail.com.

### Elections

Robert Cosh has volunteered to take  
the reins as OLA President. A slate  
of excellent volunteer directors was  
accepted. After the AGM, the board  
assigned roles to the directors:

Karen Hunt	Past President
Anne Scotton	Vice President
Dave Bell	Treasurer
Shari Beattie	Secretary
Phil Anderson	Membership
Don Beattie	Log editor
Darlene Bishop	Director
Chris Harrison	Director
Murray Hunt	Lake Steward
David Reesor	Land Use
Wally Robins	Environment
Rick Stojak	Website

(Ric Potter also joined the board  
as a director on 18 July, after the  
AGM)

The ceremonial paddle was passed  
by Karen Hunt to Robert Cosh.



### The Presidents and the Paddle

The AGM closed with door prizes  
received enthusiastically by the  
winners: Tay Valley Township  
T-shirts from TVT, potted  
shrubs from the RVCA Shoreline  
Naturalization Program, and a  
basket of environmentally healthy  
products from Foodsmiths.



*Tiger Tanner operating the  
audio-visual display console*

## The Otty Lake Association Logo

By Karen Hunt



Lorraine Hill and  
her late husband  
Don came to Otty Lake  
in 1967, built a home  
and became part of the  
Otty Lake community.

The Otty Lake Association logo that we  
have all come to know and cherish was  
designed by Lorraine in 2002 and given  
to the OLA. Since 2002 the logo has  
been used on T-shirts, sweatshirts, caps,  
letterhead, calendars and OLA reports  
and has truly come to represent the  
Otty Lake Association. The logo first  
appeared on the masthead of Capt'n  
Otty's Log in November 2005.

In the spring of 2011 another Otty Lake  
resident, David Bromley, submitted  
revised versions of  
Lorraine Hill's original  
logo that he felt might  
be easier to replicate  
using updated graphics  
technology which he  
offered to the Otty Lake Association.  
The OLA board chose this logo, which  
first appeared on our masthead in June  
2011.



Many thanks to committed and skilled  
members of the Otty Lake community  
such as Lorraine Hill and David Bromley.

## Otty Lake Shoreline Calendar

**T**HANK YOU to all for the outstanding response to our  
second biannual Otty Lake Association calendar and special  
congratulations to our resident photographers who have represented  
our wonderful lake so beautifully!! This year we ordered 500 copies  
and have only a few remaining on a first come, first served basis. You  
may be wishing that you had purchased for yourself or be considering  
some special Christmas presents at a terrific cost:

**OLA Member Cost:** \$8 per calendar, 3/\$20

**Non-Member Cost:** \$12 per calendar, 3/\$30

**Pick-up:** Please call Karen Hunt (264-9273) or Gail Read (267-5381).

In planning for our 2014 edition, we ask that you cull old pictures  
and start accumulating great shots of all of the flora and fauna "with  
whom we share our watershed". The next file has begun!! Contribute  
by sending your best pics to 4gail2read@hughes.net.

## BurgessWood Picnic Includes Unique Door Competition

BurgessWood, the rural subdivision whose shared waterfront separates Otty Lake from Little Otty, held its (approximately) 20th annual picnic on 13 August. Eighty-five happy people attended. The BurgessWood social committee had organized volleyball and horseshoes competitions, which (predictably) brought out the friendly partisan in many of the teams.

The third competition, “Whose Door Is It, Anyway?” was a non-physical challenge. Photographs of the doors of BurgessWood houses were posted on an easel, with each photo assigned a number. Contestants tried to match the photos to their neighbours’ houses. The winners were the observant Trevor Brown family, who were presented with the “door prize”, which was a real door, painted by local professional artist Suzette MacSkimming.

After working up an appetite, everyone scrambled to be first to the food. One long buffet table held all the contributions from the gang. Meanwhile a team of smoky chefs had barbequed huge numbers of chicken breasts and legs using Grover Lightford’s amazing original chicken recipe. No one went hungry.



*The chicken production line.*

*Photo by Dan McIver*



*Door prize winners Trevor Brown, Joanne, and Molly*



*Bob Drouin and Mary Russett examining the Doors of BurgessWood*



*Highly official volleyball umpire Roy MacSkimming*

Lake Links 2011 Saturday 29 October  
8:30 a.m. – 3:10 p.m.  
Civitan Hall,  
Hwy 43, Perth

Lake Links is a first-class opportunity to learn about lake health and current issues from experts. This year’s theme is “Developing Eastern Ontario Lakes Sustainably”. Speakers from MNR, Center for Sustainable Watersheds, Hutchinson Environmental Services, Frontenac Stewardship Council, Muskoka Watershed Council, French Planning Services, Kennebec Lake Association, and Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust will give informative presentations and answer your questions.

OLA members may be particularly interested in presentations about lake capacity, development pressures in Eastern Ontario, working with developers, and the use of land trusts.

OLA members who attended Past Lake Links workshops have found their time to be well spent.

Cost is \$12. including light lunch and refreshments. Pre-register at 613-272-5136 or [info@watersheds.ca](mailto:info@watersheds.ca)



## Notes and Comment

### Lake Links Workshop Saturday 29 October

Please see the flyer in this issue giving the details of Lake Links 2011. Past Lake Links workshops have been invaluable to anyone wanting to know more about lake health from experts. This year's theme is "Developing Eastern Ontario Lakes Sustainably", including sessions about the new lake carrying capacity model and about development pressures.

#### Radon Testing

Some Otty Lakers have wondered whether they need to worry about radon gas, which is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that results from decay of uranium in rock, soil, and groundwater. Radon can enter your home through foundation cracks and may accumulate, particularly in basements. Long-term exposure to high radon levels may cause lung cancer, which has led to a Health Canada advisory (<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/iyh-vsv/environ/radon-eng.php>) that levels higher than 200 becquerels/m<sup>3</sup> require remedial action. Editor Don Beattie conducted a three-month test in his home on Otty Lake north shore on the Canadian shield near BurgessWood, finding levels of 51 and 78 Bq/m<sup>3</sup> from two sensors. However, tests conducted by other area residents have sometimes shown levels above the allowable maximum. Several private companies supply sensors and provide interpretation of results.

#### New Website For Landowners

Check out the new website Nature In Deed (<http://www.natureindeed.com>) which was recently launched by the Community Stewardship Council of Lanark County working in partnership with several other conservation groups. It is intended to be a practical, accessible resource for rural landowners across Ontario. Whether you are looking for information on septic systems, bats in the attic, building a shore-friendly dock or many other topics, you'll find helpful information here.

#### Thinking of Property Changes: Who Ya Gonna Call?

In 1984, the answer to the question above was Ghostbusters. Today the answer is the RVCA, who have a useful chart that shows you which agencies (RVCA, MNR, Parks Canada, your municipality, or the Coast Guard) to call if you want to sever your property, stabilize your shoreline, install a dock or a raft, or harvest Eurasian milfoil. It's on the OLA website <http://www.ottylakeassociation.ca> on the home page (second entry below the photo), or you can call the RVCA LandOwner Resource Centre at 613-692-3571 ext. 1128 or 1132, or [info@lrconline.com](mailto:info@lrconline.com).

#### Sore Backs and Muddy Hands at RVCA

On 12 July, RVCA passed a major milestone, marking the FOUR MILLIONTH tree they have planted since 1983. At Otty Lake we have bought several hundred trees and shrubs each year through RVCA, including sumac, red osier, dogwood, highbush cranberry, and nannyberry.

#### Attendance Surprise at FOCA Seminar on Cottage Succession

When the Lake Networking Group booked Farrell Hall for the 28 August FOCA (Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations) seminar about passing the family cottage down to children or family members, they estimated attendance would be at most 75 or 80 people. The turnout was 150! If you missed the seminar, the websites of the speakers are: financial planner Chad Tranter [www.cottagesuccession.ca](http://www.cottagesuccession.ca) ; and cottage succession planning lawyer Peter Lillico [www.lbkglaw.com](http://www.lbkglaw.com) . Future sessions for Otty Lakers are being discussed by the OLA.

#### How Do You Manage Your Private Road?

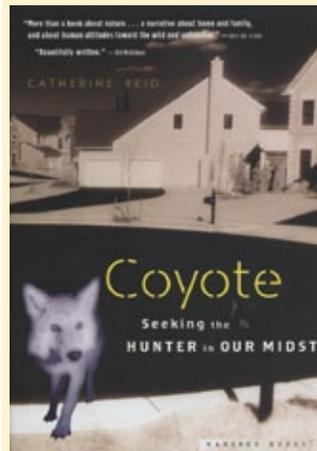
If you are a member of a private road association, have you ever wondered how other road associations handle snowploughing costs, maintenance, and owners who refuse to pay their share? FOCA completed a survey of 147 road associations. The summary of results is at <http://www.foca.on.ca/roads>.

#### RVCA Welcomes Input to Perth Wildlife Reserve Management Plan

The reserve, which is located at the corner of Rideau Ferry Road and Wildlife Road, is a 257-hectare haven of biodiversity. The reserve's master plan is being updated, and the RVCA seeks your input. You can take a survey at <http://www.rvca.ca/> (under What's New) and attend an open house 2 November 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Drummond/North Elmsley township office.

## The Reader's Corner

This issue's Reader's Corner features a non-fiction book suggested by an OLA member.



*Coyote: Seeking the Hunter in Our Midst*, Catherine Reid, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

"[Reid's] beautifully grounded memoir interweaves personal and natural history to comment on one of the most dramatic wildlife stories of our

time. With great appreciation for this scrappy outsider and the ecological concerns its presence brings to light, Reid suggests that we all need to forge a new relationship with this uncannily intelligent species in our midst."

*Do you have a favourite book for reading at the lake? If so, please let Don Beattie (DonaldB@ripnet.com) know about it! We're hoping to list book titles regularly in the Log.*

## Dowsett Lane's History Revealed

If you travel along Kenyon Road on the north shore of Otty Lake you will see Dowsett Lane. Why Dowsett? Like most roads around the lake it was named after early residents, some of whose descendents are still here. To find out who the Dowsetts were and what parts they played in the history of Otty Lake, Capt'n Otty went to Mary Catherine Dowsett Mahoney, known universally as Mayme.

### *The Consitts and the Dowsetts at Otty Lake*

Mayme's mother, Aileen Consitt, one of eight daughters of Dr. Ed and Caroline (Carrie) Consitt, first came to Otty Lake in 1916. Aileen later married Ernie Dowsett and brought Mayme to Otty Lake for the first time in 1937. In those days, families would move to the lake after school was out in June and stay for the summer, the menfolk working in Ottawa during the week. Mayme recalls as a child the excitement of seeing the cars come from Ottawa every Friday night during the summer.

### *Otty Lake Park and Nearby Cottages*



*Otty Lake Park hotel. The dance pavilion where Grover Lightford learned to dance is to the right behind the cars*

The site where Camp Shomria now stands (plus the land to the east

including four adjacent cottage properties) was earlier occupied by a hotel, cabins, and a dance pavilion, all under the name of Otty Lake Park. A Mrs. Devlin had owned Otty Lake Park and had built the hotel and pavilion, as Mayme recalls. Mayme's grandfather Dr. Ed Consitt, his brother Tom, Syl O'Donnell, and a Mr. Brocklebank bought Otty Lake Park in 1916 and operated the hotel.

In the mid-1930s Carrie, who by then was a young widow with eight children, called her brother Jack Cavanagh with a problem. She explained to Jack that Otty Lake Park was being seized for back taxes, which meant that she would lose her cottage, which was one of the four cottage properties that were part of Otty Lake Park. Carrie asked Jack whether he could help.

Jack, who was a prosperous miner living in Rouyn Quebec, bought Otty Lake Park for the price of the back taxes, saving Carrie's cottage, but his heart wasn't in the hotel business. According to Mayme's family recollections Jack used to come to the hotel wearing his white Panama suit and sit on the porch, but didn't do much else in running the hotel.

Everything changed when Jack and Mayme's father Ernie Dowsett played a poker game not long after Jack had bought the hotel. The stakes were the ownership of Otty Lake Park. Ernie won the game, and Jack tossed the hotel keys across the table. Ernie and Mayme's mother Aileen had become instant hotel owners.

The hotel was a success. With the dance pavilion, cabins, a snack bar, and gas pumps at the dock, Otty Lake Park was THE centre of activity. The pavilion featured dances whose musicians included blues singer/saxophonist/bandleader Tex Beneke, who had played with Glenn Miller. At the pavilion Teresa and Betty Consitt (see photo) taught

teenager Grover Lightford, later a long-time Perth dentist and the developer of BurgessWood, how to dance.

Ernie and his wife Aileen Consitt Dowsett ran the hotel until 1943, when Ernie auctioned it for \$3000 to Camp Hagshama, later Camp Shomria. The cottage properties to the east of the hotel site stayed in the Dowsett and Consitt families.



*Advertising postcard from the heyday of Otty Lake Park*

### *Fishing and boat racing*

People have long enjoyed the bass fishing at Otty. The photo of fishermen on the dock shows Muckle



*Well-dressed fisherman Muckle MacLean, ca. 1942*

MacLean wearing appropriate clothing circa 1942: dress shirt with tie. Mayme appears as a babe in arms on the right. The photo of four happy American fishing visitors demonstrates that the expressions on fishermen's faces are universal. Mayme's father Ernie raced hydroplanes, sometimes testing them on Otty Lake. Ernie won the McLean Gold Cup at Rideau Ferry in 1949 driving his inboard racer



*The universal Smiles of fishermen*



*Ernie Dowsett (centre) after winning the McLean Gold Cup at Rideau Ferry, 1949*

“Mooch”. He is shown with the trophy in the year he won, and Mayme is the gorgeous girl seen on the left holding the same trophy (in a year when her father didn’t win).



*Mayme Dowsett (Mahoney) on left, holding the McLean Gold Cup trophy (but her father didn’t win that year)*

### *Cottage continuity*

The cottage that holds so many memories for Mayme was originally an icehouse that was brought across the lake to its present location east of Camp Shomria, and Mayme still spends her summers there. Most of the other cottages that Mayme’s grandfather Ed Consitt owned are still in Mayme’s extended family. Mayme’s four children have been coming to Otty Lake every summer of their lives, and now her grandchildren and a great-granddaughter are following the same tradition, though Mayme’s son Mike arrives unconventionally in his seaplane.

At the 2011 Consitt golf tournament that Mayme hosted at Mapleview golf club on the Scotch Line, 45 people from five generations showed up. Otty Lake is alive and well in the hearts of the Consitt and Dowsett families after nearly a century of happy summers at Otty.

Many thanks to Mayme Mahoney for taking the time to share her family’s history. Her charm, good humour, and unerring memory made the interviews a pleasure. All photos accompanying this article were provided by Mayme.



*Wedding picture including Euphemia Cavanagh (black dress, Mayme’s great-grandmother) and Teresa and Betty Consitt (second and third from right) who taught Grover Lightford to dance.*

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*The poem below was written by Betty Stapleton, who passed away in 2011 at age 86. Betty had enjoyed summers all her life at Otty Lake. The poem has been abridged.*

### **Our Old Cottage**

Our Old Cottage  
Was a wonderful place  
A magical place to be  
With the lake, the trees and the  
changing sky  
Each summer drifted by.

When the school year ended  
We’d hurry home  
Mom would be ready – all set to go  
With the cat on our laps and the car  
piled high  
We were off to the cottage  
Where summers drifted by.

We loved those hot and hazy days  
The lake like glass, so quiet and  
still  
Those were the days we would lie  
on the raft  
Laughing and talking, you would  
think we were daft  
As summer slowly drifted by.

Come September we had to go  
Back to the city, we were feeling  
low  
But like the birds, the geese and the  
loons  
We knew we’d be back before too  
many moons  
So with the cat in our laps and the  
car piled high  
Off we went – waving goodbye  
To our old cottage  
Summer had drifted by.



*Otty Lake kids, ca. 1927. Betty Consitt Stapleton front row, 3rd from right. Photo: Mayme Mahoney*

## Fiercest Pirates Ever at OLA Pirate Day

At the Maple Glen beach on 30 July, the sun beat down as bloodthirsty pirates stormed ashore from their well-armed pontoon boat. Fearsome captain Steve Takach fired the cannon while his two ruthless pirate maidens caused the local population to quake with fear (or laughter). Ashore, pirates of all ages lined up to have their tattoos applied by specialist, Diana Nuttall. Comely, though fierce, maiden Susie Sinclair fashioned pirate hats for small pirate heads, completing their thoroughly piratical look.

When properly attired, the pirates visited Wally Robins, who showed them the finer points of fishing technique, with equipment and hats kindly donated by Shimano/Loomis. They then practiced their skills from the dock.

Kaitlin Brady from RVCA fascinated everyone with her display of invertebrates, and several brave souls collected samples by dredging yukky, oozing mire from the lake bottom near the shore. It was wondrous muck. Animated, knowledgeable Roger Nuttall took the pirates on one of his ever-popular nature walks, showing them the plant life of Otty Lake. Shari Beattie had a secret treasure chest containing real treasures, ancient coins and samples of Otty Lake rocks that knowledgeable pirates could use to amaze their friends. Darlene Bishop had a treasure hunt that involved pirates scouring the area identifying plants and rocks.

Dave Bell barbecued unlimited supplies of pirate grub on the Maple Glen barbecue. At the end of the day the pirates held a great water-fight (unlimited ammunition from the lake), which turned out to be mayhem, as battles usually are. It was very hard to tell the men from the kids. The ladies stood at a discreet distance, dry.

Willie Newsome summarized how everyone felt about the day when she said that her three grandchildren from Calgary had a wonderful time and learned about Otty Lake at the same time. Thanks to Darlene Bishop for coordinating the event, to the board members, almost all of whom came to help out and to have lots of fun, the many excellent volunteers, and to Maple Glen for providing such a wonderful location.



*Dastardly captain Steve Takach on the attack*



*Pirate Queens Susie Sinclair and Lynne Stockless – note handbag*



*David Currie learning haberdashery from reformed pirate queen Susie Sinclair*



*Isaac Mitchell sports his tattoo and OLA badge*



*Kaitlin Brady showing pirates how to collect samples*



*Pirates hanging on Roger Nuttall's every word*



*Wally helping fishers set up their equipment*