



# Captain Otty's Log

The Newsletter of the Otty Lake Association

February 2016

## President's Message

From Reid Kilburn

Find this time of year is a time of reflection and for some an opportunity to take advantage of the mild start to the winter by being adventurous! How about the residents who were spotted swimming around Christmas? How about the folks, who on January 2nd, went kayaking on Otty and then cross country skiing at Murphy's Point Provincial Park? Then there were the many birds which seemed to have enjoyed the lake much later this year (See Karen Hunt's article with the results of the December 19th bird count elsewhere in this newsletter).

Regardless of the winter weather I continue to reflect on the beauty of our lake and its surroundings. It is the quiet of winter that causes one to mull over the significant events of the past year and the support the OLA received from the Otty Lake community. For example:

- Our AGM was very successful with almost 100 in attendance
- Over 70 individuals from around the lake had fun at our annual picnic at the Maple Glen waterfront
- Our Wildlife Habitat Project was launched by the building and installation of two types of bird boxes
- Our Fish Spawning Habitat Enhancement project continues to impress and gain support
- Paddle Power was widely



Photo: Christine Kilburn

supported this year and followed by a paddle to McLaren Lake

- Researchers and scientists continue to seek opportunities to study our lake and assist, either directly or indirectly, in the vital work carried out by our Lake Steward team.

All of these events would not have been possible but for the dedication, creativity and welcoming nature of those who volunteer, including the Board of Directors. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for the times shared and the successes in 2015. I am looking forward to 2016, and once again sharing your enthusiasm for stewardship and community.

As for 2016 and the challenges that lie ahead, the biggest challenges relate to balancing the many broader community events with our own events and projects. The 200th

Anniversary of the settlement of our area and the naming of our lake represent very significant events in our history. As you know, the OLA would like to be a part of this celebration and as alluded to in our last

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## Christmas Bird Count

The Christmas Bird Count is North America's longest-running citizen science project. Counts are taken in over 2000 localities throughout the Western Hemisphere. The annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC) began on Christmas Day in 1900. On that day, a conservation-minded ornithologist, Frank Chapman, proposed a new holiday tradition, a Christmas Bird Census, to take the place of the then traditional Christmas Day Hunt (a competition to shoot the most birds and small mammals). Instead, Chapman proposed that participants identify, count, and record as many birds as they could, founding what is now considered to be the world's most significant citizen-based conservation effort.

The information collected by thousands of volunteer participants forms one of the world's largest sets of wildlife survey data. Bird Studies Canada and partners at the National Audubon Society in the United States rely on data from the CBC database to monitor bird populations, assessing population trends and distribution of birds.

Each Christmas Bird Count is conducted on a single day between December 14 and January 5. Counts are carried out within a 24-km diameter circle that stays the same from year to year. They are usually organized as group efforts at the lo-



Photo: Mary Beaudoin

cal level, often by a birding club or naturalist organization.

Areas within the Otty Lake watershed are included in the count area for the Rideau Ferry Christmas Bird Count. The Rideau Ferry bird count was established in 1986 and ran until 2010. It was re-started in 2015, under the sponsorship of the Mississippi Valley Field Naturalists Club. The Rideau Ferry count area is a 24-km diameter circle centered on Rideau Ferry and includes the Town of Perth, most of Smiths Falls, several conservation areas, and Murphy's Point Provincial Park. A variety of habitats ranging from wetlands, lakes, and open fields to dense woodlands are found within the circle.

The 2015 Rideau Ferry Christmas Bird Count took place on December 19th. Thirty-seven field naturalists took part, assisted by a number of residents who provided observa-

tions from their properties and feeders. A total of 9211 birds and 46 species were recorded. 2015 was unusual because the warm weather and open water contributed to the presence of many water birds.

Within the Otty Lake watershed the following observations were made ... Canada Goose – 122, Trumpeter Swan – 8, Mallard – 7, Bufflehead – 4, Hooded Merganser – 4, Common Merganser – 140+, Common Loon – 2, Cooper's Hawk – 1, Bald Eagle – 2, Ring-billed Gull – 200+, Herring Gull – 8, Rock Pigeon – 30, Mourning Dove – 17, Downy Woodpecker – 3, Hairy Woodpecker – 4, Blue Jay – 18, American Crow – 10, Black-capped Chickadee – 25, White-breasted Nuthatch – 5, Red-breasted Nuthatch – 1, Brown Creeper – 1, American Tree Sparrow – 1, Dark-eyed Junco – 9, American Goldfinch – 1.

*Karen and Murray Hunt*

### *President's Message (continued from Page 1)*

Captain Otty's Log, we are still working on a cookbook that would contain recipes from around the lake as well as some of the unique history of our lake. Be sure to read more about this project in this newsletter.

To address other important projects in 2016 we are exploring external funding opportunities, such as grants, that will help support existing and new initiatives important to the future management and enjoyment of our lake. With the potential for additional projects comes the need for additional volunteers.

If you would like to help please contact us via [our website](#).

All the best to everyone in 2016.

*Reid Kilburn*

# State of the Lake Report: Mostly Good News

If you haven't already, please take time to review the 2015 State of the Lake Report released in the fall. This is the second year that this summary document has evaluated the overall health of the Otty Lake environment and summarized the monitoring and environmental programs that were conducted on the lake that year.

Results of E. coli monitoring have been excellent, and nitrogen and phosphorus levels are stable. Instances of algal blooms and amounts of aquatic vegetation have declined, and water clarity has increased. There was less Eurasian watermilfoil in shallow bays and fish populations are stable, but zebra mussels are still thriving. Cormorant populations are increasing in Ontario, and may become an issue on the islands where they rest and roost.

A number of programs are in place to maintain the quality of the

Photo: Krista Hearty McLean

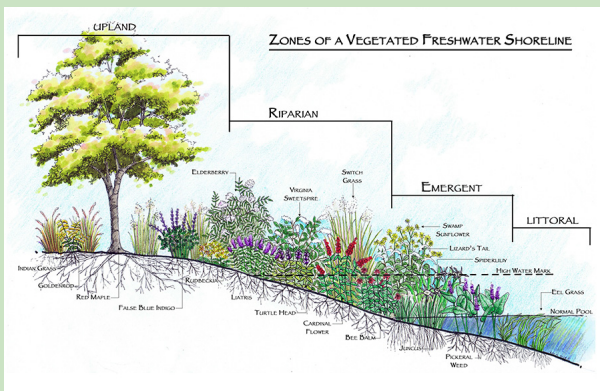


lake environment, including shoreline planting and the fish and wildlife enhancement projects. We are fortunate that both Otty Lake municipalities have mandatory septic reinspection programs, and as of this summer only a few properties had not been inspected.

Thanks to Derek Smith for pulling the summary together with the help of contributors Murray Hunt, Wally Robins, Gail Read and Eve-

lyn Dore. Read the report on our [website](#). You may also wish to see the similarly named Report on the State of Otty Lake and its Watershed that was completed in May 2007 as a starting point to the Otty Lake Management Plan process.

## Trees, Shrubs and Wildflowers Being Offered



As the shoreline plantings from previous years are nestled away for this blustery winter on Otty Lake, your friends at OLA are completing arrangements with their partner organizations with spring in mind! We continue to promote natural shorelines through the use of green landscaping to

naturalize shorelines to restore habitat AND to improve 'curb' appeal. However, we will be offering plants for all three of the zones (upland, riparian, emergent) that may appear between your home or cottage and the shoreline.

Natural shorelines are stable shorelines with three tiers of vegetation:

- Tree canopy
- Shrub understory
- Herbaceous plants: aquatic, wetland & upland

We will be offering large bare-root White Spruce, White Pine, White Birch and Sugar Maple for upland

planting. Shrubs for the understory will include Buttonwood, Bebb's Willow, Sweet Gale and Alternating Dogwood in two-gallon pots. Wildflowers for the emergent zone will include Canada Anemone, Obedience Plant, Foxglove, Green Headed Coneflower and Purple Coneflower.

- Please review your shoreline and establish where we may be of assistance!
- Available to waterfront residents. OLA members will be subsidized.
- Early bird sales begin on [our website](#) in early April.
- Pick up will be Saturday, June 25th.

*Ev Dore & Gail Read*

# Municipalities Launch 200th Anniversary Celebrations

On January 8, 2016 at the Perth Civitan Hall, the Townships of Beckwith, Drummond/North Elmsley and Tay Valley and the Town of Perth launched the 200th anniversary of the Perth Military Settlement. More than 300 people joined the organizers from the four municipalities to learn more about the legacy projects and celebrate the upcoming events that have been organized for 2016.

One of the key projects unveiled at the launch was the Historical Mapping Project, developed by Barrie Crampton. The mapping tool is a searchable database and map of the original settlements and the people who settled in the Perth Military Settlement Area – and it is now [available online!](#)

Each of the municipalities has planned signature events in 2016, and there will also be additional events and projects during the year organized by community members in each municipality to help celebrate the 200th anniversary. Please check the municipal websites for more details.

Signature events in [Drummond/North Elmsley](#) include Pioneer Maple Days, April 2 and 3, hosted by three of the township's maple syrup producers (don't forget to buy your special 200th Anniversary commemorative bottle of maple syrup) and a pancake breakfast; Drummond/North Elmsley Heritage Day, May 28, an afternoon of entertainment, pioneer games and heritage displays for the whole family; Celebrate Balderson, a weekend celebrating the dairy heritage of the area on July 9 and 10; and Discover Drummond Day, September 18, a self-guided car tour of historic Drummond Township followed by a

community get-together.

Signature events in [Tay Valley Township](#) include Tay Bells, an old fashioned winter carnival on February 6; Settler Heritage Days coupled with the Lanark County Plowing Match on August 19 and 20; and Betwixt and Between, a heritage themed community dinner dance on December 28. Have you purchased your copy of At Home in Tay Valley, a book celebrating the history and people of Tay Valley Township?

Volunteers in Drummond/North Elmsley and Tay Valley Townships are working together on some legacy projects including commemorating the route that the first settlers took from Brockville to the Perth Military Settlement (inauguration of the Trail, June 17) and honouring the more than 80 farms in the townships that have been in the same family for 100, 150, 200 years.

The [Town of Perth](#) is hosting Fire + Ice, a fun-filled winter carnival, February 13; the Ontario Town Crier Championships May 21 and 22; and a Blast from the Past Home-

coming Weekend July 22-24.

[Beckwith Township](#) has planned Beckwith Heritage Days for June 11; the Jock River Paddle May 14 and the Franktown Lilac Festival May 28.

For more information and links related to the upcoming anniversary, please visit <http://www.2016.lanarkcountytourism.ca> and click on Events.

Another source of information about the 200th Anniversary of the Perth Military Settlement is [www.perthhs.org/200th.html](http://www.perthhs.org/200th.html).

*Karen Hunt*

## Looking Ahead

- Pitch-In - April 17 to 23
- Plant Pickup - Sat. June 25
- AGM - Sat. July 9
- Family Picnic - Sat. July 23
- PaddlePower – Sun. Aug. 7



## Otty Lake Association 2016 Membership Renewal

Your prompt renewal would be much appreciated, as our expenses occur year round. This completed form and a cheque for \$20 can be mailed to the **Otty Lake Association, Box 20122, Perth ON K7H 3M6**. Please complete the following so we can ensure our records are correct:

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Lake Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ Prov/State: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal/Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Please consider email delivery of your your Captain Otty's Log newsletter so we can keep our costs down. We do not share our email list with other organizations! Please indicate your preference:

- email    Canada Post    Log by Canada Post, e-mail other notices  
 Call me about volunteering for the OLA.

*Thanks for supporting the OLA!*

## Winter Photography Tips

Here we are in the midst of winter, Christmas is over and it's time to put the camera away 'till spring, right? Wrong! If you do that, you're missing out on some of the greatest photo opportunities of the year.

Yes, it's more comfortable to take pictures in warmer weather, but with a few precautions, winter photography can be amazingly rewarding. Here in Eastern Canada we have four distinct seasons, each with its own personality, and winter can be particularly beautiful if we look beyond the storms and salted roads.

First, a couple of pointers on keeping warm – both you and your camera. Wear layers, warm hat, gloves and boots, even if you're just staying near home. If you're carrying a tripod, wrap the legs with foam pipe insulation so that you don't freeze your bare hands on the metal. If you're in your car, climb back in from time to time to warm up.

There are a few precautions you need to take with your equipment in the cold. Sudden changes in temperature can cause moisture to form inside the camera, especially when coming in from the outdoors. If you go back out, the moisture can freeze, causing damage to the camera or preventing it from operating properly. Before coming indoors, put the camera in a plastic bag or at least in a camera case and don't open it until



*These unusual ice crystals of 2-3 cm across were captured on the lake January 10 by Gail Read*

it warms up. I often tuck my camera inside my jacket outside because batteries don't like the cold and will give up on you much sooner than when they're warm.

So, what is there to take pictures of in our coldest season? I don't have room here to list all the possibilities, but I'll throw out a few suggestions. Close to home (even out a window) – birds at a feeder, sunrise, sunset, snow patterns (best late in the day when the shadows are strong), frost on trees, open water, animal tracks. Venturing farther afield – skaters, skiers, snowboarders, trails through the woods, fences, country lanes, cattails, waterfalls, ice formations, fog or mist, pets or kids frolicking in the snow, winter carnivals, ice sculptures – I think you get the idea! When you put your mind to it, the possibilities are endless and the results can be quite inspiring.

One problem many photographers discover when shooting bright snowscapes – the snow can turn out a dreary grey rather than white. This is caused by the light meter in the camera being fooled (it's not as smart as you thought) by the excessive brightness of the scene. The secret is to overexpose by one to two stops. Check your owner's manual to see what control you have with your particular model. The more advanced the camera, the more adjustments you can make, as a general rule. With digital, you can see right away if you need to make exposure compensations. If your camera is a basic model, just aim at a darker area in the picture you want to take, press the shutter button halfway (this locks the exposure), swing back to get the scene you'd like to take and press the button the rest of the way. This forces the camera to overexpose, which is what you want in bright snow conditions. Hopefully, you'll get those perfect picture-postcard photos (try saying that fast!) that will keep you shooting all winter.

Click!

**Graeme Crabb**

*Graeme is a member of the Lanark County Camera Club which meets the fourth Tuesday of the month, 7 p.m. at Algonquin College Perth. Visitors are welcome. See [their website](#) for more details.*

### When to Look for the International Space Station

Rural Eastern Ontario is blessed with very low levels of light pollution. One of the prime benefits of this is the clear views available of stars, planets and satellites.

The International Space Station (ISS) is the second-brightest object in the night sky, behind the moon and ahead of Venus. The ISS circles the earth every 92 minutes in a shifting orbit (it doesn't pass over the same

places on earth on every orbit). While the ISS does not have any lights on it bright enough to be seen from earth, at certain times in its orbit it reflects the sun's light down to earth. That's why it can't always be seen when it passes overhead and why, sometimes, it "disappears" as it travels above us.

To see the ISS you could camp out every night waiting for a bright light to move quickly across the sky OR you could take advantage of NASA's website to find out

when it is visible. To learn when the ISS will be visible over Oty Lake, which direction to look and how long it will be visible (usually from one to 10 minutes), go to <http://spotthestation.nasa.gov>.

From this page you can even sign up for e-mails reminding you when to watch, and also look up schedules for other cities.

**Ken Waller**

*This story originally appeared in the Sharbot Lake Property Owners' Association's Fall 2015 newsletter.*

## Something Fishy at Lake Links

The annual Lake Links workshop was once again a rewarding day for the participants. About a half dozen Otty Lake people attended the all day workshop at the Perth Civitan Club October 24. About 113 people attended in total, and interestingly, only about half had attended a Lake Links workshop before. This year's theme was management of our fish resources, and how lake associations can get things done.

Three lake association representatives described how their organizations had tackled some major projects. Karen Hunt of Otty Lake outlined how the successful 2012 BioBlitz came to pass. Irv Dardick from Eagle Lake described how they mobilized volunteers to control the [invasive European frog-bit in their lake](#), and Brenda Martin from the Malcolm and Ardoch Lakes Landowners' Association described how they funded and executed the [Love Your Lake](#) project. (Otty Lake properties received their confidential shoreline property reports in 2014 through this [Watersheds Canada](#) program.)

Lisa McShane of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry pre-



sented "Fish 101". Here are five fun fish facts you might not know: 1) the mouth position of a fish is indicative of where in the lake it lives; 2) fish colour can depend on the mineral content of the lake; 3) similar to tree rings, rings on fish scales indicate the age of the fish; 4) Fish ON-line is a Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry map tool that lets you search for fishing related information, including what fish are found in any Ontario lake; 5) a splake is a hybrid resulting from the crossing of a male brook trout with a female lake trout, and is usually the trout used for stocking lakes.

Of particular interest was the description of various fish enhancement programs that have taken place in our region. Jennifer Lamoureux of the RVCA described the Otty Lake project, as well as the [Jock River Fish Habitat Embayment Cre-](#)

[ation Project](#) that took place at the Richmond Conservation Area, creating 100m of additional shoreline, and 1,000 square metres of new fish habitat. Anne Bendig from the Lanark County Stewardship Council described how in-water brush bundles (also known as "fish sticks") were placed in Christie Lake and White Lake, and three walleye spawning bed enhancements were completed on White Lake with the placement of 150 tonnes of washed river stone. The White Lake and Christie Lake projects are described in detail with plenty of photos on the Watersheds Canada site. In each enhancement project, volunteers contributed the major portion of the labour.

[Lake Links](#) is always a great opportunity for our association to network, hear what resources are available, and consider other actions we can take to keep our lake healthy. The OLA makes a small financial contribution to support the Lake Links workshop, and those attending generally pay their own registration fee. Registrants were also asked to make a contribution to The Table Community Food Centre.

*Barb Hicks*



## Winter Slow To Begin

The lake remained open into January due to the mild weather. Normally Otty freezes by the first or second week of December. Some hardy kayaking enthusiasts ventured out, and some trumpeter swans were spotted having a swim in early January.

*Photo: Gail Read*

*January 13, 2016  
Photo: David Reesor*



## Submissions to Our “Cookbook Plus” Wanted

We are still welcoming submissions to our “Cookbook Plus”. To mark the 200th anniversary of the naming of Otty Lake and the 40th anniversary of the Otty Lake Association, the OLA is putting together a collection of cherished recipes along with some history, local stories, and household tips. Our working title is “*Our Table To Yours: A cookbook, history book and story book of the lake we love so much*”. An email request went out in mid-November, and attracted some great contributions as well as some much needed volunteer assistance, but we need a lot more to make this project a reality.

Please send us your favourite, time perfected, family recipes, perhaps with a note of what makes it special to you. Perhaps your grandmother had a favourite dessert she made for special family get-togethers on the lake. Do you have any short, humorous stories about living or cottaging



at Otty? We are going to be researching historical information but we would welcome your contributions and historical photos as well.

We are on a tight schedule to get the cookbook available to everybody at the AGM on July 9, so please send your contribution by February 28 to [editor@ottylakeassociation.ca](mailto:editor@ottylakeassociation.ca). Help spread the word by mentioning the project to family and friends with an Otty Lake connection from the past.

The books will sell for \$10, and we will be accepting pre-orders starting in April.

If you would like to discuss materials you have to contribute, or would like to join the team putting this together, please contact Cathy Kari at (613) 552-6359. Some suggestions on format are posted on our homepage under “*Contribute to our Anniversary Cookbook.*”

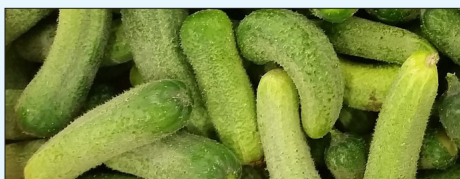
## A Sample Recipe Submission to “OTTY”

Here is a sample recipe submission to “Our Table To Yours” (OTTY). Please provide your name and the part of the lake you are from, and if you can, the reason the recipe is special to you. Each recipe will begin with a list of ingredients (two columns in most cases), followed by instructions in sentence form.

*“It was in the late 1960’s that the Mile Point Road area of Otty Lake began to have their pot luck suppers. The idea originated with Marge Hay and “CB” Kinsella. They were always held at the Kinsellas’ where there was adequate flat ground, and plenty of children were available to carry neighbours’ picnic tables to the area.*

*Marge Hay’s baked beans were famous. Evelyn Vice usually brought Spanish rice and Sally Church always raided her garden for fresh vegetables. Annie Girdwood and Alma Abercrombie usually provided the pies.*

*The get-togethers usually occurred every other year and continued for 20 years, and were a great way to enjoy wonderful friendships. Today Ken and Jan Smith still continue the occasions in their backyard.”*



### Cottage Refrigerator Sweet Pickles

*CB and Jack Kinsella, Mile Point Road*

- ½ gallon whole dill pickles (cheaper ones OK)
- 1 cup vinegar
- 1 cup water
- 4 cups sugar

Drain the brine from the jar of pickles and slice them rather thick into a colander. Wash with cold water and allow pickles to drain well. Make a syrup with the vinegar, water and sugar. Bring it to a boil and cook slowly until the syrup is slightly thick. Put the sliced pickles back into their empty jar and pour the syrup over them. Do not use for 24 hours. Keep refrigerated.

# Around the Lake



Photo: Christine Kilburn

## Board Briefs

OLA board meetings can cover a lot of ground! Besides the necessary housekeeping issues, here are a few of the topics discussed at the OLA's November board meeting:

- Newsletter mailing costs
- Whether the OLA should be promoting lake-related businesses
- More educational opportunities and involvement for area counsellors
- A possible more proactive approach, encouraging residents to consider the health of the lake before planning modifications to their property
- Grant possibilities
- 2015 State of the Lake Report

The next OLA Board meeting will take place Saturday, March 5 at McMartin House, Perth. Minutes of past meetings are available on our [website](#).

## New Board Member

The OLA Board voted in a new director, Kyla (Simpson) Haley, at their November 2015 meeting. Kyla and her husband Jason have owned property on Colin Farmer

Road for five years, and moved into their new house there in July, along with their daughter, Brooke. Kyla has an honours degree in biology as well as a Bachelor of Education, and has spent her professional career teaching. Kyla has been interested in the initiatives presented at Otty Lake AGMs, and is honoured to be asked to be a part of the OLA. Welcome, Kyla!

## Pitch-In 2016

Spring is just around the corner and already signs of garbage are appearing on our roadsides and ditches. All of us around Otty know that throwing things out of car windows is antisocial, thoughtless, selfish and disgusting. Not only that, someone else has to pick up the mess. We would like that "someone" to be you! If you would like to help clean up along a road on the west side of the lake, or do your usual road, please give me a call.

This year's Pitch-In is April 17-23, or whenever the weather warms up.

I will leave you with this quote "Why should everyone have to live in a teenager's bedroom? It's bad for your spirit."

[Elizabeth Allcock](#) (613) 706-3562

## A Natural Communication Link.....Your Area Counsellor!

Otty Lake Area Counsellors are a friendly group of lake residents who are interested in meeting their neighbours. They are a critical communication link between each Area and the Otty Lake Association. Counsellors represent their Area's interests, questions, wishes and concerns, providing a voice to the OLA Board.

**We need YOUR assistance!!** If you are interested in joining this vital group of enthusiastic and informed volunteers who represent our lake's 25 Areas, please consider the following openings and contact Area Counsellor Facilitator, Gail Read at [read2read@outlook.com](mailto:read2read@outlook.com).

- 7B: The far end of Mile Point Road including Sunrise Lane and Trillium Point Road.
- 8A & 8B: Loon Drive, Bayside Road and Mary Miller Road.
- 5A and 5B: Sunset Drive.



**CAPTAIN OTTY'S LOG** is produced by the Otty Lake Association (OLA) three times a year, and is distributed by e-mail or Canada Post to all Otty Lake cottagers and residents. Contributions to the Log are welcome.

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To find out more about the OLA, or to see past issues, please see: [www.ottylakeassociation.ca](http://www.ottylakeassociation.ca). Or write to: **The OLA, Box 20122, Perth ON K7H 3M6.**