

Otty Lake Settlement

Most of the following was taken from "A History of Otty Lake" by David E. Code, 2006.

Early Settlement

- The first inhabitants of the area were the Iroquois, Huron and Montagnais
- The Townships of North Burgess, North Elmsley and Montague were part of Crawford's Purchase in 1783.
- Otty Lake was named in 1816 by Colonel Cockburn after Captain Allen Otty.
- The first permanent settler in the area was Benjamin Brown who obtained 200 acres in North Elmsley in 1805.
- The Scotch Line was surveyed and settled following the war of 1815-16, and Perth became a military settlement.
- By 1816, 1400 settlers had arrived in Perth attracted by the government's 100 acre land grants.
- In 1822 the area was named the District of Bathurst.
- There was early interest in the north shore. Many farmers from the Scotch Line went there to fish.
- Early farming settlers include the Haverons, the McKays, the Millers, the Hayes and Kenyons.
- Other early residents were the McLarens, who began a phosphate and mica mine in 1901 in the area of present day Burgess Wood.



Photo: Otty Lake Park, present site of Camp Shomria

Early Cottage Development

- The first known summer cottage was at the northeast end, possibly by George Kerr, in the late 1880s.
- The second oldest cottage on Otty Lake was built in 1893, on the north shore, just west of Otty Lake Park, by the Farmer family.
- In the 1920s- farmers began to sell off parts of their Otty Lake shoreline property for cottage development. some summer cottages were beginning to appear on the North Shore, near the site of present Camp Shomria.
- By the late 1920s there were six cottages in that part of the lake.
- The Camp Shomria location was originally the two-storey Connaught Hotel, also known as Bungalow Inn and the Otty Park. Perth people came there for picnics, boating and swimming.
- In the 1920s social events took place there, and there were guest cabins, a snack bar, ice cream stand and gasoline facilities for boats. Many well know bands played there for Saturday night dances and baseball games.
- Otty Lake Park was sold to the Zionist Camp Association in 1942.
- At the Elmsley end (foot of the lake) , cottages were established along Mile Point Road. By 1928 there were 20 or 25 cottages.

Rapid Growth Period

- From 1946 to 1969 the growth was rapid, but most waterfront development took place between 1950 and 1980.
- Waterfront developments doubled between 1960 and 1980 .
- In 1975 there were an estimated 368 dwellings.
- In 1978 there were about 430 dwellings and 363 owners (some of whom owned more than one dwelling).
- Steady growth between the 1980s and 1990s included many conversions from cottages to permanent homes.
- In 1995 there were 401 owners.
- In 2005 there were 547 dwellings: 273 seasonal and 274 permanent dwellings. These figures include Maple Glen and Burgesswood.
- On the south shore, opposite Cloverleaf Island, there was a grocery store and marina in the 1960s and 1970s.
- The west end of the lake, OLA Area 1, was developed starting in the 1960s. The first cottage was Dr. F.D. Green's cottage on Little Otty, but cottages were constructed along the shore as far as Beavertail rock.

Major Developments Around Otty Lake

- Counting Trillium Estates as a separate subdivision, there are six developments surrounding Otty Lake: Maple Glen, Trillium Estates, BurgessWood, Chaloa Acres South, Elmsley Acres and Otty Woods.

- **Maple Glen.** The Carsons started coming to the lake in 1939, and owned and rented several cottages. In 1979 D.A. Carson Realty created the first stage of Maple Glen on the north shore, obtaining approval in 1981 for 18 lots. Residents share a common beach and boat dock area.
- **Trillium Estates.** The Trillium Estates subdivision was created to the north of Maple Glen, and does not have deeded access to Otty Lake.
- **BurgessWood.** Dr. Grover Lightford, a dentist, was the instigator behind BurgessWood. His family had been coming to the lake since 1937. About half of the property he purchased was previously owned by the McLaren Family. Plans began in the mid-70s, but he eventually got approval for 70 private lots of approximately 2.5 acres each in 1983. The first lot was sold in 1986. Residents share a picnic area, swim platforms, children's beach, canoe rack, docks and hiking trails.
- In a separate agreement, 15 lots were created on the shore of Otty Lake and Little Otty shortly afterwards, but these are individual properties, not a subdivision.
- **Chaloe Acres South.** This area was developed by Douglas Wiseman in 1988-89 at the north end of the lake. Much discussion took place to reach an agreement to protect the sensitive shoreline near the entrance to Jebbs Creek. Twenty-one lots have a common access point at the shore.
- **Elmsley Estates.** This subdivision was created in 1988 by Carson Realty, in area by Otty Lake and Jebbs Creek. Access is from the Rideau Ferry Road. Final approval was received in 1989.
- **Otty Woods (McKay Farm).** This development is a 27-lot subdivision off Elm of Grove Road, which includes common green space and recreational areas, and shared waterfront access. Lots are between 2 and 5 acres.