

CAPTAIN OTTY'S LOG

Newsletter of the Otty Lake Association

March 2000

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Brian Perkin

Many folks on Otty Lake are looking forward to another year on the water in 2000. And some are hoping to do it without the weeds.

OLA members who attended last summer's annual general meeting may remember a group of 10 property owners in Mary Miller Bay (Carson's Bay) were looking for solutions to a severe weed problem. The group headed by **Fern Thompson**, reported the weeds were so thick that swimming was impossible, boats couldn't navigate and even the fish weren't able to make their way through the surface-high tangle of weeds. Fern had talked with various government agencies and OLA forwarded several names for possible solutions but there were few solid answers.

Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) documents state that waterfront owners with weed problems may clear a 50' x 100' area for recreational purposes. But simply cutting the weeds results in only short-term relief as the weeds return even thicker than before. Chain-dragging the bottom is illegal.

Enter long-time resident **Norm Wright** from Otty Lake's north shore. Norm tracked down a machine that had been on the lake several years ago and started a process which would eventually see him buy the machine and the company, Renfrew Dredging. Over the summer, Fern Thompson's group applied to MNR for a permit to remove the weeds and silt. Once approved, the permit moved to the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA) for approval. RVCA granted their final permission in late September.

The OLA invited Norm to the August executive meeting to provide a progress report on the process. And explain how the machine operates. He explained that it is not really a dredger but rather a silt vacuum that cuts weeds at high speeds, sucks out the chopped weeds and silt and shoots the mixture through a long hose to an approved disposal area onshore. This usually involves setting up a straw bale barrier to allow the filtered water to drain back into the lake, while the debris remains and composts away rapidly. Ministry officials like the process because the silt vacuum is designed not to alter the lake bottom or disturb fish habitat. The vacuum head travels on a sled as it cuts the weeds and sucks the silt. When the sled hits the bottom, the machine stops operating and does not suck up sand, gravel or rocks. (You can see the machine in operation on his web site www.perth.igs.net/~apache/)

Norm Wright had the machine in operation last November at Rideau Ferry Harbour. There were few fish in the area and boaters had their

propellers choked with weeds. Permits were granted from Parks Canada (federal waterway) and the machine cleared a path of weeds, heavy mud and silt from five inches under the surface to a depth of 5 1/4 feet. The sledge was pumped to the old Coutts farm and deposited behind a berm equipped with a filter dam. Fish are expected to return to the harbour to spawn this spring because the bottom is down to its natural bedrock and gravel. Norm says the machine operated on Otty Lake several years ago in Whippoorwill Point Bay and the bass are reported to have returned there to spawn.

They hope to have the machine this summer in Mary Miller Bay (see photo p. 6) after the spawning season and hopefully the Thompsons and neighbours on this bay can enjoy a summer of weed-free water activities.



Canoes on Otty Lake Circa 1920

HYDRO BILLING

At the 1999 AGM, OLA member **Herb Robertson** told how he was able to have Ontario Hydro reclassify his residence on their service grid, resulting in a reduction in his hydro rates. While Hydro has been dealing with requests on an individual basis, **Don Hill** has offered to approach Hydro on behalf of OLA to ascertain how members might apply for group re-classifications. Things might become a little more complicated with the new service setups at Hydro; Don will do some digging and let us know.

HAND OUT PACKAGE

Karen Hunt is seeking suggestions for material for this year's Members Hand-Out Package. Last year it was chock-full of items ranging from the new federal boating guides to leisure activities and tourist destinations. If there is something specific you would like to see in the package, or have suitable material to submit, call Karen at 264-9273

FOCA NOW ON-LINE

You can now connect in cyberspace to the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations (FOCA). OLA is a member of this group and we invite you to visit their website at www.foca.on.ca. FOCA News usually appears in *Cottage Life* magazine six times a year, but articles are prepared three months in advance, making it difficult to tackle fast-changing issues. They hope to respond to queries and issues faster via their website. You can see articles from zebra mussels to tax fairness to cottage succession. They offer a whole range of programs of interest to waterfront owners.

ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH *Lorne Gold*

Water Levels: At the AGM 1998, the Environmental & Health Committee agreed to set up a small committee to examine the effects of *Jebb's Creek* on the lake water level. The committee was established but unfortunately the individual who had offered to chair it could not do so because of other commitments. As reported in the last Newsletter, we did manage to have a gauge installed in the creek by the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority that will allow us to measure the depth of water in the creek. The RVCA has given us additional information from which we can estimate how much water is flowing through the creek from the water depth and the rate of flow at the surface at the site where the gauge is located.

There was quite a long period last summer during which there was practically no flow in the creek. Measurements showed that the water level of the lake was dropping at a rate of about 1.2 inches per week during that period. This is equal to a water loss of about 1075 cubic meters per hour or about 18 cubic meters per minute, and corresponds to a rate of flow in the creek of about 10 meters per minute. As it was observed that there was practically no flow, **most of the loss of water from the lake must have been by evaporation.** This is an example of one of the extreme conditions we can expect for the lake, i.e., a decrease in water level of over one inch per week due to evaporation alone during dry weather.

It is now clear that we will need good measurements of rainfall and water flow through the creek to obtain a reasonable understanding of how the creek flow affects water levels. The E&H committee is looking for one or more individuals who expect to be at the lake all summer and would be willing to help with these measurements. If you can help, call Lorne Gold at 733-2449 home or 267-7657 cottage.

Septic systems: The BBS Township Council is considering developing a data bank of information on septic systems in the Township, particularly for lakeshore properties. A survey of septic systems on Otty Lake was carried out in 1993 under the Environmental Youth Corps program. The information from this survey was filed with the old North Burgess Township office. It should provide a good base for the data bank for the lake, though it is probably out of date by now.

In response to a request for comments on a draft BBS Council document, the OLA Board has said that it would be willing to cooperate with the Township in the development of a **comprehensive record of waste disposal systems** on the lake. This would probably require a voluntary response to a questionnaire by all property owners to bring the information from the 1993 survey up to date. The Township has indicated that it might assist the process by providing a traveling display and hand out material. We will be following up this initiative by the BBS Council and hope to have a definite proposal at the AGM.

Help reduce the growth of weeds in our lake by maintaining a natural shore line and using non-phosphorus containing products. Do not use chemical fertilizers near the lake. Your Area Counselor will be distributing information on the care and maintenance of septic systems.

LAND USE *Tom Foulkes*

There has been a fair amount of activity along the McKay Farm Road/Bishops Way over the past few months. For the most part, property owners have proven to be environmentally responsible with respect to the long term health of our lake. The Land Use Committee has provided input into these applications, as have RVCA and BBS.

We continue to be concerned about the monitoring process: that is, the capacity of BBS to ensure that the agreed upon plans are implemented in accordance with the agreement.

We are not aware of any significant activity in D/NE in recent months. Properties upgraded or converted in 1999 met the requirements of the 1978 official plan and bylaw.

Official Plans

D/NE: As reported earlier, a public meeting was held in June 1999 to review and discuss the plan. Your representatives offered numerous suggestions to improve the plan. Doug Grant, the planner engaged by the Township, stated that he would reply to all who made submissions and/or attended the meeting and requested information by mid-September. As of mid-March, no response. In early February, Paul Snider (Clerk, D/NE) was asked about the state of the official plan. He indicated that he would pursue the matter with Council. We have no further information. It would appear that an official plan will not be submitted and proclaimed during the current tenure of this Council.

BBS: Following the July public meeting and comments from the various provincial government departments/agencies, the plan was

upgraded and disseminated on February 15, 2000. The official Plan Review Committee met and finalized the new draft in February. The Plan may be found on BBS web site at www.twpbbs.com. Following the second public meeting on March 11. Incorporating any changes from that meeting, the Plan will be submitted to the province for approval and proclamation. Activity on the bylaws will be commenced immediately, so that the foundation of the bylaws will be in place prior to the fall elections. Tom Foulkes will continue to serve as the OLA representative in the bylaws process.

The Greening of Perth and Area

Amy Pokorny

At the Crystal Palace on May 6, EcoPerth will have several thousand small trees and shrubs to give away. Phone EcoPerth at 267-1128 or visit the office at 83 Gore St W (old Post office). You may not order more than 50 plants of one kind - first come, first served. It would be helpful to have a rough plan of your house or cottage with North oriented and showing how your front door faces. You must pledge to plant promptly.

Shade trees: white ash, red & burr oak, white spruce

Shrubs: Red osier dogwood, tall bush cranberry, nanny berry (these last two are Viburnum, one with red berries, one with black). Wild plum, a small tree that may form thickets, white cedar.

Apart from the above topic, how about a substitute for a lawn over your septic tank? Plant either dwarf thyme or a taller variety to discourage maples from seeding in; mow it at least once a year. *Ajuga* (bugleweed) is willing to take over your present lawn! *Kamchaticum* sedum grows fast, as do some other low sedums. Perhaps you can find in the woods some yellow-flowering barren strawberry or buy it at the Kiwi Nursery under the name of *Waldsteinia*. For questions, phone a Master Gardener (Adele 264-8335, Bob 264-9061, Amy 267-1626).

TAY RIVER ROUND TABLE UPDATE

- video of the Tay shoreline from the Rideau to mid-Bobs Lake has been produced. - the Invertebrate Monitoring Program was begun in October - a committee is assembling historical aspects of the Tay (contributors call Ken Baker at 267-6996)

BUILDING RULES FOR LAKE RESIDENTS

Spring is the time our thoughts turn to clean-up, paint-up and improvement to seasonal or permanent homes on the lake. For most construction plans, a permit is necessary. It is equally important, to avoid later embarrassment, to ensure that one abides by the rules - e.g., at least 100 feet back from the lake for new building and respect for side lot distances. In BBS, contact Henry Hess (267-5353 or 267-6500) in D/NE, contact Ray Scissons (267-6500).

WASTEWATER SCHOOL DEMOS

One quarter of all Ontario households are on septic - more than 1.2 million systems.

Ten different demonstrations of septic and other non-traditional wastewater systems will be available at the Baxter Conservation Area and courses will be offered at the Interpretive Centre (proposed courses on Septic System Basics, Soils, Site Evaluation, Installing Basics, Troubleshooting and Maintenance) Call 692-3571 for info.

FISH SPECIES IN OTTY LAKE

Wally Robins

Game fish: Largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, northern pike, walleye (pickerel)*

Pan fish: Bluegill, sunfish (pumpkinseed), yellow perch, rock bass, black crappie

Forage fish: Blacktip sucker, redbin sucker, river chub, lake herring (shad), golden shiner

Other: Carp, brown bullhead (catfish), yellow bullhead (catfish), ling

* Since 1953, I have caught ONE walleye and have seen one other walleye caught, also two apparently having died from natural causes. If you are an avid walleye angler, you would not want to waste time fishing in Otty Lake.

PERTH MUSEUM DISPLAY

Dave Code

The Perth Museum is organizing a display of photos and artefacts depicting life in Perth in earlier times. It will be on display May to September 2000. A companion exhibit will do the same for nearby lakes, including Otty Lake. Some photos and other items have already been loaned by some residents, illustrating the scenes and people at the lake between 1908 and 1925. Other contributors should phone the curator Susan McNichol (267-1947) before April 30.

LATE LOONS Off the north shore, Dec. 8, 117 loons. Dec. 9, two pairs. Dec 12, the usual straggler.

DEER LIKES AND DISLIKES

IN THE GARDEN

Helen Halpenny

I stared down at the chewed remains of a new apple tree (a special variety bred to be disease-resistant), all its lush new leaves gone. The lettuce and Swiss chard had disappeared. A huge clump of variegated hosta met with the same grisly fate, and I knew who the culprit was, an innocent-looking white-tailed deer, who, under cover of night, had a late-evening snack or early breakfast.

These episodes, plus some telephone enquiries from other gardeners who had similar experiences, prompted me to do research on deer-proofing gardens. There are mechanical barriers, such as high fences, or you can move Rover's doghouse to mid-garden, or you can plant things that deer do not normally eat.

Deer do not like their flowers spicy, so members of the mustard family are safe - dame's tucker (*Hesperis matronalis*), perennial and annual alyssum and rock cress (*Aubrietia*). Deer stay away from aromatic

foliage. Yarrow, tansy, lavender, mint, artemisia, dill, rosemary and thyme keep them at bay.

Deer don't like the texture of fuzzy foliage. Lamb's ears (*Stachys byzantina*), rose campion (*Lychnis coronaria*), black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia*) and lamium are avoided by deer. Some plants are poisonous to deer, such as foxglove (*Digitalis*), snapdragon (*Antirrhinum*) and toadflax (*Linaria*). The *Ranunculus* (buttercup) family is poisonous to grazing animals and they leave it alone. Cultivated kin of this family are delphiniums, larkspurs and monkshood.

Prickly needles and spines keep deer away. Spruce is an absolutely safe choice of evergreen. The Oregon grape holly (*Mahonia*) and barberry will be untouched by deer. (Unfortunately, with the hordes of deer, some are so starved they will eat even what they dislike! Amy).

Captain Allen Otty, R.N. by Barbara J. Griffith

79 pp, illus, references, notes. Privately printed 1999.

"When the question 'Who was Captain Otty?' was posed in the Newsletter of the Otty Lake Association, I took up the challenge to tell his history. Now, over two years later, many pieces of the puzzle have fallen into place." Thus Barbara Griffith opens her introduction to her intriguing account of the active life of the enigmatic Captain Otty. Her research brings to life a man born in Yorkshire who spent 45 years in the service of the Royal Navy and died at 74 in New Brunswick. She tells the story superbly and her account of harsh military life and the development of settlement in eastern Canada in the early part of the 19th century, based on her research in British and Canadian archival sources and an extensive list of references, makes absorbing reading. The work includes copies of military documents pertaining to Allen Otty and a painting of the Captain.

According to the author, she made this study for her own enjoyment and as a contribution to local history. She has deposited copies locally in the Perth Museum, the Public Library and at Algonquin College. Though it was not intended to be sold, Barbara has intimated that if significant interest is shown, she will consider having it reprinted and made available for sale (tentatively @ \$25 plus postage). Those interested should contact the Newsletter editor, Keith Fraser, 571 Fraser Ave, Ottawa K2A2R3, 728-3950 or jkfraser@cyberus.ca.

THE WHITE PINES OF OTTY LAKE

Keith Fraser

Scattered along the shores of Otty Lake are some magnificent specimens of White Pine, towering 100 feet or more, with trunks 15 feet in circumference. In the optimum growing conditions for white pine in Ontario - the Trent watershed - this species reaches maturity in fewer years than in Lanark County, which is more northerly with a shorter growing season and harsher climate. Mature White Pine or Red Pine can live up to 200 years, so when Captain Otty viewed the lake named for him in 1816 - 184 years ago on March 16 - some of our

trees might have been seedlings. Lumbering in the Ottawa Valley reached the confluence of the Ottawa and Rideau only about 1810, and did not reach the Perth area until after the canal was built more than 20 years later. Even in March, when the deciduous trees were bare of leaves, Otty might scarcely have seen the lake at all, for except for the swamps, the country was mantled with dense virgin forest. Perhaps from Jebb's Creek, where the marshes would have no more encouraged the growth of pine than they do now, he might have been able to enjoy the winter vista down the lake.

MEMBERSHIP Dick Atkinson

The OLA membership year is from Jan 1 to Dec 31, and is why this first Newsletter of 2000 contains a request for fees. On the address label on your envelope, you should see a 'year' or an 'xx'. If the year is 1999 or 'xx', this means that your year 2000 fees have not yet been received. Please send a cheque in the mail along with the "tear-off" form from the last page of the Newsletter. If you wish, you can pay your fee at the Annual General Meeting in July, or give it to your Counselor during the summer.

Preparations are underway for a new Lake Map this year. Please call Dick Atkinson (613 825- 5619) to advise of any lake property name changes in your area, to ensure that the map will be up-to-date when issued this summer. Maps will be issued to residents who have paid fees last year or/and this year.

Most lakes have a cottagers' association, and OLA membership is among the highest, 75% of lakefront residents, of all the associations in Ontario.. Otty Lake has been testing the water continuously for over 25 years, and has a database history that is the envy of the ministry and neighboring lake associations. OLA supports a pollution free lake system. Fees are used for water testing, newsletters and programs that maintain good water quality.

The Board, Committees and Counselors list has 50 names of people who freely give of their time to work on behalf of all residents. You are asked to support this worthwhile and substantial effort. There is a space on the form for comments and for any questions you have for the Board. I will ensure that your comments and questions are passed to the appropriate Board Member. If you can volunteer, please indicate this on the form or call me at 613 267 4587/825 5619 and I'll forward your name to the Nomination Committee.

What's the most dangerous thing you will do this year? Dick Atkinson

Probably filling the boat tank or bringing home the propane tank. Since gasoline fumes are heavier than air, the tank must be filled on the dock and not in the boat. And NEVER use gasoline for cleaning anything

The re-filled propane tank must be put in the seatbelt on the back seat and not in the trunk. Containers must be stored in well ventilated areas, preferably out of doors, a long way from the house.

**Here is a horror story to show
how easily something bad can happen.**

A teenager entered the family cottage in the early summer. He noticed that the red plastic container of gasoline was bulging. He loosened the top and heard the s-s-s-s! as the pressure was released. In less than a minute, there was an explosion that sent the teenager through the front window and onto the ground, shaken but relatively unhurt. The cottage was afire. The 911 people knew there were water bombers working on a nearby lake, and diverted one to the fire. However, so many people had gathered near the cottage that the pilot couldn't risk dropping two tonnes of water and maybe flattening someone. By the time the fire trucks arrived, the cottage was in ashes. The insurance didn't cover gasoline storage in the cottage. If you have never read safety precautions for gasoline or propane, you should. It could save you a lot of grief or even save your life.

GET THE LEAD OUT

Recently there have been many articles on the dangers to wildlife caused by **lead sinkers**. Today they are made of an inert material which do not harm Loons and Fish. However, just a reminder that old tackle boxes may have lead sinkers. So when you get Grandpa's tackle box out of the shed, or buy gear at a garage sale, put the old sinkers in the hazardous waste bin.

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Otty Lake (Canoes and People) c 1920

Archives of Ontario C224-0-0-19 Photo 33





Otty Lake - Mary Miller's c1920

Archives of Ontario C224-0-0-19 Photo 34

