

OTTY LAKE ASSOCIATION

1990-1

APRIL 1990

SPRING IS HERE !

The ice went out over a period of three days, as nearly as we can tell, during April 13, 14 and 15. Yr ed. used to expect this yearly milestone event about the 17th, on average, and his father used to reckon it for April 22; so it seems to be getting earlier. This time the wind was in the south west when it happened; so if your cottage faces that way you may have suffered some damage to your dock.

Soon the loons will be arriving, so this is a good time for us to remember that these magnificent creatures now need our understanding and cooperation if they are to survive in our lakes. Did you know that they spend all their days on the water except for the day of their birth and the days they are giving birth? Did you know that the juvenile loon spends several years on the ocean before returning to the lake of its birth? From time to time as space permits we will print some interesting facts and advice about protection for loons, such as the description of loon calls reproduced on page 5.

SAFE AND SENSIBLE BOATING

Summer won't be far behind, with all the features we like best about summer - swimming, boating, hot sun on our backs, flowers, bird calls and the sound of lake water lapping by the shore. But summer at the lake also brings some things we might prefer to do without, such as the sound of a neighbour's stereo set, especially late at night, or inconsiderate boating.

Each year your Executive hears complaints about bad boating practices, usually related to speeding in high-powered boats, and going too close to shore. Large boats ought to be careful of their wash, and avoid high speeds near shore that may cause erosion of the shoreline. Fast boats should stay away from shore, and avoid fast travel near dusk when visibility is deceptive. Avoid swimmers and small boats. Remember, they have the right of way in law!



Trial ordered in boating death

Canadian Press

PETERBOROUGH, Ont.

A man will stand trial for the boating death of an 18-year-old Kitchener resident last summer, a judge has decided.

Rob Fitzpatrick bled to death after a boat propeller cut off his arm and severely gashed his body Aug. 6 in Stoney Lake, 40 kilometres

north of Peterborough.

At a preliminary hearing Tuesday, Judge R. B. Batten ruled there was enough evidence to send the case to jury trial in district court.

A 22-year-old Toronto man is charged with dangerous boating causing death.

IN MEMORIAM

Norman Ferrier, Reeve of the Township North Burgess for many years. Norm's was a strong hand at the helm, and he never missed an Otty Lake meeting to which he was invited.

The death of
* Norm Ferrier has
* resulted in a
* new alignment of
* The North Burgess
* Council:
* Reeve J P McParland
* Deputy G Greenslade
* Couns. A Inderwick
* Couns. Chas Kerr
* Couns. Don Kirk
* * * * *

SHORELINE PLANTING 1990

Last year was our first year for the shoreline planting program, and it showed what can be done. It also showed us a few adjustments we will need to make in the process. 2,500 valuable plants were put in the ground for their happy owners, and all for free! Varieties available were Red Osier Dogwood, Virginia Creeper, Shrubby Willow and Sweet Gale. These are all low plants, very suitable for binding the soil near the shore.

Planting Day this year is tentatively set for Sat. June 9. Bob Thompson has agreed to co-ordinate the planting arrangements, and will be lining up a team of helpers. Planters are needed. And if you have a light truck or trailer, your services for the day would also be appreciated. If you wish to receive shoreline plants this year, please:

1. Phone your request to Bob Thompson 267 3050, or Amy Pokorny 267 1626 or Art Eastham 733 9356. Phone a.s.a.p., not later than 21 May. Plants will be made available to those who call early, subject to availability of the plants, number of those requesting, and the suitability of the sites indicated. (An inspection of the shoreline will be made in advance.)
2. Arrange to be there in person when the planting team arrives. No planting can be done without the owner's presence.
3. Since as many as 200 plants may be planted in a given property there will be a lot of time required in order to do a good job. Therefore the team will want you to do two things:
 - a) Lend a hand with the digging and planting on your property or arrange for someone to do the work if you are not able.
 - b) Join the team as it moves on to the next properties, for up to half a day of work. Lunch will be provided by the Otty Lake Association.

SECURITY

Have you been concerned about breakins at the lake?
Would you like us to hold another briefing with the OPP?
Would you like to be given the names of persons who provide a patrol service during the winter months?
Please contact a member of the executive before May 31 if your answer to any of these questions is yes, and if the demand warrants it we will take the appropriate steps.

In the meantime, we can all follow the Neighbourhood Watch practice of noting strange movements. If you have your suspicions, record the licence plate number; then, if a burglary occurs in your neighbourhood your information may prove to be valuable. If someone you don't recognize shows up at the neighbour's house or cottage and enters it, you might try phoning there to enquire. Chances are that it will be easily explained; but if not your call could be all that it takes to warn off the intruders.

GYPSY MOTH SPRAYING

Areas 2 and 3 are in good shape, so this year the spraying will be only in Areas 1,4,5,6,7,8, and part of 9. Spraying will take place about May 15. If you have any concerns call 1 800 267 9284.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES

Each year we remind our members that we have three ways of paying their annual fees: pay by mail, pay at the Annual Meeting, or pay your Area Counsellor when he or she arrives at your dock. Paying by mail is a nice idea; it gives hope to the Treasurer and helps get the season off to a good start.

At last summer's Annual General Meeting the 1990 fee was set at \$10. Still a bargain. Some lakes charge more, but we are trying to give the best service needed at the least cost. Our Membership Director is Judy Burns who can be found at 764 Lonsdale Rd. Ottawa K1K 0K1 and you can send your cheque, made out to the Otty Lake Association, with this coupon:

NAME _____
MAILING ADDRESS _____
street _____
city/town _____ province _____ postal code _____
phone city/town _____ at Otty Lake 267-

SAFE SEWAGE

Not long ago we celebrated Earth Day. And you will have noticed that all kinds of people are now discovering the Green revolution. Of course, we on Otty Lake have been aware for some time that safe sewage is the only way to go when we live in a fragile ecosystem like a lake basin. So at this time of year, when we are starting to think of plans for summer projects and improvements, let's give a thought to the sewage disposal. It helps if we remember that all the waste water that goes into a septic system will either evaporate over the tile bed or find its way back to the lake. If our system is too close to the shore or is not up to snuff, we just might be pouring bacteria and phosphate nutrients into the lake we love.

Phosphates are those fertilizers that can set off the growth of algae and speed up the aging of the lake. We don't want that, so let's get serious about our septic tank and tile bed, holding tank, outhouse or other means of disposal. And don't forget the sink waste! That waste water can also cause problems if not disposed of just as safely as the effluent from the toilet.

Ontario law, as it applies to Otty Lake, requires a tile bed and tank to be set back a minimum of 100 feet from the shore in new lots. Local laws differ from lake to lake, but we strongly recommend that all sewage systems, new or old, be placed at least 100 feet from the shore. The farther back, the better. Yr ed. is planning a new tile bed soon and will be putting it about 150 feet back. Sure, it is not as convenient, and it costs a bit more; but Otty Lake is worth a little extra care.

Another way of making the tile bed safer and more effective is to use phosphate-retaining soil when constructing it. Some soils have better phosphate retention qualities than others, and a few years ago we published a list of nearby quarries that qualify. We will try to publish it again before July.

MAP OF OTTY LAKE

Normally we try to publish a new, up-to-date map of the lake complete with road information and the names of new owners every third year, and this would be the year. However, Rex's illness and other factors have put us a little behind schedule, so the next map issue will be in 1991. Besides, there has been little turnover of properties during the past year, so the need for a new map does not appear to be great. However, if anyone needs an update of the names alone, your Area Counsellor may be able to oblige. Or, if a new owner, paying membership for the first time needs one, we might be able to scare up a 1987 map.

LANGUAGE OF THE LOON

This information was adapted from the record album "Voices of the Loon," by William Barklow, copyright 1980, published by the North American Loon Fund and the National Audubon Society.

Though the Common Loon's ability at vocalization is one of its most noticeable characteristics, its repertoire of calls is surprisingly small compared with that of some songbirds. For this reason, it has been possible for people to begin to analyze the meanings of the different calls the loon makes. In the years that people have been listening to loons and imagining the meanings of their calls, there have, of course, been countless interpretations as to just what the loons are saying. For a long time, for instance, the wail was said to be an indicator of rain. Though this does not seem to be borne out by experience (loons in summer may utter the wail nightly, while a week may pass without rain), who can ultimately question the instinctive interpretation of a longtime loon-listener who has listened soul to soul to the loons for decades? The meanings given here are those being developed by ornithologists, and, while they are based on empirical evidence, something as infinite as the calling of loons defies conclusive lexicography.

Loons call infrequently, if at all, in winter, but in summer their vocalizations play an important role, as the loons make contact with one another, defend their territories, and care for their young. Four basic calls have been defined, in addition to the nearly continuous peeping of young chicks. An expanded use of these four calls becomes possible when volume and pitch are altered, phrases repeated, or one call combined with another.

THE WAIL

The wail is the most frequently heard call of the loon. It is a location call, used when one loon is trying to locate another. It is often uttered at night, when it more than likely indicates that one loon of a pair is ready to give up nest duties. Less frequently, it is also used to contact a chick, but in this case it might be preceded by the tremolo, which would give the wail an added connotation of anxiety. The wail is a very loud call, capable of carrying for miles, so it is surprising that it is uttered with the bill nearly closed. The significance of the call can be made more intense by a raise in pitch and the addition of extra "syllables."

THE TREMOLO

The tremolo may indicate alarm, usually due to disturbance by either a human, a predator, or another loon. The call resembles human laughter, yet when one realizes that it indicates distress and fear, this "laughter" quickly takes on an unsettling quality. The tremolo is heard early in spring in territorial defense and later in defense of the nest or chicks. It consists of anywhere from three to ten notes uttered rapidly and evenly. As with the wail, the intensity of the call's meaning is increased by alteration of the pitch and the addition of extra sets of notes.

The tremolo is the only call made in flight. It is also the call most frequently combined with another. When thus combined, two feelings are expressed. The tremolo-wail indicates fear (tremolo) plus desire for contact (wail), as we have seen when a mature loon might be trying to drive off a threat to a chick she very much wants to reach. The tremolo-yodel would likely be used in a territorial dispute where a male is afraid but trying to drive off another male. In this case, the tremolo indicates fear while the yodel indicates aggression.

THE YODEL

The yodel is by far the most complex utterance of the loon. It is actually a song, not a call, in that it is used in the identification and defense of territory. It is most frequently heard in spring and early summer. The yodel consists of a slow, rising note followed by several undulating phrases. The intensity of the aggression is expressed in the number of times the undulations are repeated.

One aspect of the yodel that is exciting for the future of loon biology is that each male seems to have a slightly different version of this call, identifiable from year to year. Loons are very difficult to band because they are strong and elusive and because ornithologists simply hate to disturb a bird that is already suffering from the effects of human encroachment. Through the use of recordings, however, it is possible to identify individual males, to determine if they are returning to the same lakes annually, and to monitor their particular patterns of behavior throughout the summer months.

THE HOOT

The hoot or "kwuk," as it is sometimes called, is that very intimate talking sound that loons make. It sounds very private compared with the loon's other calls, but actually it can carry surprisingly far, for all its softness of tone. The hoot is a one-syllable call with various pitches, each of which probably has a different meaning. It is used to maintain contact between mated pairs and with chicks.

1989 was a good year for loons. Art Eastham reports that he identified five nesting families. And those of us who were on the lake in April heard our first loons shortly after the ice left. Let's do all we can to protect their habitat. Please, no fast boating near loon nests. The wash can kill.

WANTED Cottage or lot on Otty Lake, to buy. Preferably in North Burgess end of lake. Call 267 1399 or 5053.

WANTED to rent. Cottage on Otty for 2 weeks in July.
Call 267 5053 or 722 0339

If you want to advertise in this space, call the editor at 722 0339. Space permitting, we'll carry it free of charge. The next issue will be in June.



***** Are you interested in the Official Plan and By-laws?
Enough to want to help review them? Call Dave Code at 722 0339

*** Want to suggest recreation activities? Call any Exec member.

***** Want to help in any other way? President Rex Boyd has had a run of bad luck during the past year and feels he must retire to nurse his health. This will leave several big holes in our Executive ranks; so if you want to help, we'd like to know about it. Give any of us a call.

Otty Lake good neighbours