

Otty Lake Newsletter

May 1995

View from the Bay

Did we have winter this year? The spring floods came in January and the summer drought in April, so when do we get the snow? July? Let's hope not.

The ice slinked away over April Fool's Weekend, almost as Old Man Winter was ashamed of the meager effort he put forth this year. And the robins have been heralding their arrival since mid February. Does that mean three times we have to close the back door carefully so as not to jostle the nest under the eaves?

Report from the President by Lorne Gold

During the past winter, I attended two meetings of the Rideau Lakes Stewardship Committee. This committee, set up by the RVCA, provides an opportunity to learn about area lake association activities. Many have used the Environmental Youth Corps Program, as we have, to carry out surveys of waste disposal systems and shorelines, and other projects. The experiences shared at these meetings have emphasized the importance of a natural shoreline for a healthy lake.

The lake is our front yard and we treasure its natural beauty. However, because of the low rate of flow through Otty, there is a limit to its ability to clear itself of the nutrients that we all put in it. As you will see in Bill Schriever's report, our water quality measurements indicate that we may be reaching that limit.

Our two EYC programs are providing useful information on the development of our shorelines. Table 1 (see attached) shows how far tile beds are from the lake. Table 2 gives the number installed by year, plus the number of cottages and permanent residences in 1993. The difference in number of tile beds between the two charts is due to four owners not knowing when their system was installed. The tables give some indication of lake development and there may be a correlation between this and our water quality measurements. We hope to study this over the summer.

Otty Lake AGM, Saturday, July 8,
9:30am, Perth Library.

Hugh Burwell of the Black Lake Assoc. is heading up a joint EYC grant application for the five lakes in N.Burgess that have surveyed their sewage disposal systems. If the application is successful, students will place the data from these surveys in standard format, work with the Twp to obtain missing data, provide advice for remedial work and good maintenance practice, and carry out comparative studies for the five lakes. We have already made a good start on the analysis of Otty's survey results.

Elsewhere in this newsletter is a questionnaire that we hope you will complete and return with your membership. Your executive greatly appreciates having your thoughts on what you feel are the priority issues for our lake.

Councillors' Corner

by Susan Henry

Councillors are our link to the OLA. We will be distributing area maps, fire route information and environmental pamphlets via your councillor. Area co-ordinators will be contacting all councillors soon. Thank you for your many efforts for the Otty Lake Assoc.

Report on Water Quality for 1994

by W.R. Schriever

The water sampling program resumed from the middle of June to the beginning of Sept 1994 in the 'traditional' way. For the fecal coliform reading, Dawson Girdwood collected a total of 96 readings in six outings from the usual 32 near-shore stations. Dawson and I also collected Secchi-disk, chlorophyll A at two midlake locations.

As reported before, the commercial lab we used in Ottawa reported only fecal coliform readings exceeding 10, so we cannot calculate actual averages (we don't know the value of all readings less than 10). Thus again, we had to use the number of values exceeding 10, expressed as a percentage of the total samples. After the really 'bad' year in 1993 (55%), we dropped down to 44% in 1994. This is still higher than the late '80s when we had values between 25% and 35%.

The Secchi disk and chlorophyll A readings (which indicate water clarity) showed practically no change. The total phosphorus readings reported to us by the RVCA (the first phosphorus readings in many years) also showed very little change from the few spot readings available from 1971-76. Total phosphorus is supposed to be an indicator of the eutrophication of

the lake (i.e. the process by which water becomes enriched in dissolved nutrients). I find the results surprising in view of the significant increase in fecal coliform of the last few years. I hope the RVCA will continue to accept and test samples for phosphorus tests.

Loon News

by Wally Robins

In 1994, Otty's loon population remained relatively stable. Four nesting pairs produced four chicks, three of which reached early adult status by mid-September.

This year, a number of nesting platforms will be installed at key nesting locations on Otty. These platforms resemble small swimming rafts complete with prime nest-building material. Being off-shore, loon nests will be better protected from predators, like foxes, raccoons and, yes, even the family pooch.

Boaters should watch their wakes when passing these nesting platforms. More importantly, all cottagers and residents should stay away from them, especially in late May, June and July.

Comings and Goings

It is with deep regret that we report the passing of North Burgess Reeve, **Charles Kerr**, this spring. Mr Kerr had served on township council from 1982-1991 and was elected reeve in last fall's municipal elections. We extend our deepest sympathies to his wife, Carmel, and his family.

Don Kirk, Deputy-Reeve, has since been appointed to serve as Reeve for the remainder of the term.

After many years of sterling service to the OLA, **Judy and John Burns** are retiring as membership secretary and treasurer, respectively. They're an excellent team and certainly kept the rest of the executive on their toes.

We are extremely fortunate to have two other long-time board members take their place. **Dick and Rhoda Atkinson** have assumed the positions of membership secretary and treasurer, respectively. Please send your membership dues and the completed questionnaire to:

O. L. A. c/o R. Atkinson
20 Mancil Dr., Nepean, Ont. K2J 2J5

The Fishin' Corner

by Wally Robins

Poacher Patrol

Last year, some cottagers and residents teamed up to attack the problem of poaching. A number of infractions were reported to MNR with photographs and descriptions of boats and individuals.

We'll be watching again this year! Anyone interested in joining the Poacher Patrol should contact Wally Robins in Ottawa at 523-0471.

Opening Dates?

Fish Consumption

The Ontario Government's 1995-96 Guide to Eating Ontario Sport Fish is now available. For those who enjoy eating fish, take note of the following:

• Smallmouth and largemouth bass in Otty over 14" in length have varying degrees of chemical contaminants - mercury, PCBs,

dioxins, pesticides, etc. The larger the fish, the more contamination. Northern pike over 18" in length fall into the same category.

• As a general rule of thumb, bass over 2-2.5lbs and northerns over 4lbs are not recommended for your frying pan. As a very tasty alternative, eat perch, bluegills or black crappies. These species are abundant, easy, fun to catch and delicious.

Fishing Etiquette

Some bass anglers like to fish close to shore which sometimes results in conflicts with residents. Property owners are justified in being concerned so here are some common-sense fundamentals for Otty Lake anglers:

• **Never** fish around shoreline that is being used by swimmers, water-skiers or sun-bathers. This is both potentially dangerous and an invasion of privacy.

• **Always** release all fish that you catch close to shore. Many cottagers consider these fish as "pets."

• **Shoreline fishing** is no place for errant casts, light line or for boats without electric trolling motors. Hooking or bumping someone's dock is inconsiderate.

• **Never** break off a snagged lure - adults, kids and pets can have a ruined holiday if they step on a treble hook. If snagged, wade or dive in and retrieve it.

Anglers are legally entitled to fish close to the shore. No one "owns" the water in Otty Lake. However, with entitlement, comes responsibility. Live up to yours!

Boat Access to Otty Lake

In response to the request for information in the last newsletter, only six people told us that they use the public boat access ramp. In view of the low number of users, the poor water level conditions at the site and concerns raised by several people, your Executive has decided to take no further action. We will, however, look into the possibility of alternative arrangements.

Land Use Committee

N. Burgess has completed its new Official Plan and has adopted the relevant by-laws, but not promulgated them.

Over the last couple of years, there has been great discussion and consultation on Bill 163, An Act to revise the Ontario Planning and Development Act. Bill 163 will give municipalities a greater role in land use planning and development approvals, streamline the planning process to permit environmentally sound development proposals to proceed more quickly and better protect the environment through a comprehensive set of policy statements.

As we will probably be in a provincial election by the time this newsletter is issued, the Land Use Committee will watch with interest how the new government responds to development concerns.

If you are looking for suggestions on how to "improve" your shoreline property the environmentally safe way, check out *Living by the Water* (General Store Publishing House, \$14.95). It is a practical and easy-to-use guide for keeping waterfront properties green and beautiful, the smart and easy way.

Table 2: The number of septic systems installed up to the year shown at the top of the column. Shown also are the number of cottages and permanent residences in 1993.

Year	before 1960	1975	1985	1990	1993	# cottages	# permanent residents
Area	1	13	24	31	35	36	5
	2	4	13	18	21	16	9
	3	8	17	25	30	38	3
	4	5	20	22	27	28	5
	5	3	7	19	28	31	15
	6	4	18	32	41	43	20
	7	1	19	20	30	39	23
	8	12	21	30	37	37	17
	9	13	23	30	42	41	14
Total	16	108	197	260	313	283	111

TABLE 1: The number of tile beds between the lake and the distances shown at the top of the columns. Shown also, are the number of systems for which the distance was not known. The figures under "more than 100" are the total number of tile beds for each area.

Distance ft	25	50	75	100	more than 100	# unkn	
Area	1	1	13	18	30		
	2	1	3	8	12	12	
	3	1	3	10	19	33	9
	4		6	12	26		
	5		1	10	19	28	
	6	1	5	19	31	47	
	7	1	6	17	27	44	
	8		1	9	19	40	1
	9		6	10	14	43	
Totals	4	26	102	171	317	10	

copy given
May 27/95

Questionnaire

We want to know what you think and want. Please take a few minutes to complete the following questionnaire and return it with your membership. Please use the back for additional space.

1. Are you happy with the way in which the OLA Executive is working? Yes No
Comment _____

2. What issues would you like the OLA to address in the near future?

More active role in
Township politics

3. In your opinion, does Otty Lake have a "noise" problem? Yes No

Comment Not extreme, but
jet skis are annoying

4. In your opinion does Otty Lake have a boat speed problem? Yes No

Comment see above

5. Would you like to volunteer your time to help our Association?

Name already on
(Dave Code)
Address _____
Tel No. _____

Ontario Hydro Information

As a means of maintaining a 0% increase in rates for 1995 and a proposed 0% in 1996, cash payments will no longer be accepted in the Perth and Arnprior hydro offices. You can drop-off your cheque or money order in the depository at either office, or mail it to the address on the bill.

1995 Membership

Fees for 1995 are \$10.00 (unchanged).

Please make cheque payable to:

OTTY LAKE ASSOCIATION, and
mail to the Otty Lake Association,
c/o R. Atkinson, 20 Mancil Dr.,
Nepean, Ont. K2J 2J5

Are the name, address, postal code and
Lake Area correct as shown on the
envelope? Would you please fill in your
telephone numbers below, and add any
corrections to the address.

Should you have any special requests such
as mailing to an alternate address during
part of the year, please write me a note on
the back of the sheet.

Please return this whole page. Thank you
for filling in the questionnaire and
telephone number information.

1995 Otty Lake Association Membership Application

Name David E. Code
Address 456 Hillcrest Ave.
Town/City Ottawa Province ON Code K2A 2M9
Telephone (Cottage) 267-5053 Home 722-0338
Area (see lake map) 1 (one)