



Lake Views

Greater Bobs & Crow Lakes Association Magazine

Fall/Winter 2021



Photo by: Carol Lynn Watson

Don't cry because it's over;

Smile because it happened.

Dr. Seuss



Board of Directors 2020-2021

Larry Arpaia

Past President

past.president@bobsandcrowlakes.ca

Mike Byrnes

Crow Lake Gatekeeper

mcbyrnes@hotmail.com

Marilyn Caldwell

Green Bay Representative

m.caldwell@rogers.com

Bonnie Carabott

Water Quality Director

water.quality@bobsandcrowlakes.ca

Trish Chartrand

Communications and Social Media Director

communications@bobsandcrowlakes.ca

Cindy & Jean Faucher

Crow Lake Representatives

crowlakerep@bobsandcrowlakes.ca

Carson Jen

Treasurer

treasurer@bobsandcrowlakes.ca

Dick Johnston

Marine Safety Director

marine.safety@bobsandcrowlakes.ca

Joselyn Morley

Wildlife Director

fd755@ncf.ca

TBA

Fisheries Director

fisheries.wildlife@bobsandcrowlakes.ca

Rick Prudil

Membership Director

membership@bobsandcrowlakes.ca

Bill St Arnaud

Director at Large

bill.st.arnaud@gmail.com

Lynn Watson

Secretary

Kathy Yach

Cottage Safety Director

Tammy O'Neil

Editor & Technical Support

oneilt11@gmail.com

Message from the Board of Directors

The Greater Bobs and Crow Lakes Association (GBCLA)

This is the 4th consecutive issue of Lake Views, where Covid 19 is still the dominant theme on the lake and in everyone's life. But the news continues to get better. Vaccination rates among the eligible Canadian population has surpassed 80%, the 4th wave is receding, and public health restrictions are loosening (and not prematurely). So we have reason to be optimistic. Although Covid 19 is likely to be with us forever, it may recede back to where most other day to day challenges of life reside, and we will be able to comfortably manage them. Let's hope so.

But there were some happier moments on the lake this summer. It was a warm welcome back to our American residents, even if it was a tad late in the season. Knowing everyone crossing the border was fully vaccinated and entering a region where vaccination rates are approaching herd immunity levels, was reassuring to everyone. Reciprocally, Canadians will soon be able to cross the border by car just in time to avoid the winter cold. The lure of a warmer climate will be a true test to those residents who "celebrated" the winter at the lake in 2020-2021.

There were no GBCLA events in 2021, nor was there the annual Frontenac Frolic hosted by the Bobs and Crow Lakes Foundation. The Annual General Meeting (AGM) was once again a virtual affair that still drew 25 attendees. On the assumption that 2022 will bring a cautious return to normal times, several events are under consideration. A Bioblitz, similar to the one 7 years ago, is a possibility as is a Cottage Safety and Security Fair. A Bioblitz is a lake resident exercise in "citizen-science", to record as many species of living organisms within a designated location on Bobs Lake during a 24 hour time period. The participation of local scientific experts helps lead the fun and outdoor experience in this family-friendly event. The Cottage Safety and Security Fair will feature local businesses, public agencies, and Township services. Cottage owner concerns such as fire safety, septic systems, well water, pest control and vandalism, are some of the helpful topics that can be discussed at each of the participant tables.

The summer of 2021 was marked by another severe infestation of caterpillars, worsening internet service, and the growing popularity of rental cottages. We re-published an informative article by Joselyn Morley - Wildlife Director on the Lymantria Dispar Dispar or LDD (formerly Gypsy Moths).

There was extensive tree damage to widespread areas around



Message from Board of Directors (cont'd)

the lakes this summer. The outlook for 2022 could be the same as 2021, or possibly worse. Ben Stevens has chronicled his personal "Battle with the Invading Moths". For those of you who missed Adrian Sunderland's summary (Spring 2021) of internet service levels, you would not have missed the severe drop in service levels this summer, especially during the weekends. Some providers such as Rogers had no service at all during some weekends.

The strong demand for rental cottages continued this summer. More people want to live and work outside of urban centers, and ideally at the lake. This trend is leading to lakeside issues relating to more upsized developments, lake and road traffic and garbage. Derek Cook has written about his own experiences in Mud Bay, regarding unsightly, unsafe and disrespectful garbage practices. Lawrence Pick warns about the approaching shock to some owner wallets from Hydro One rate classification changes. Andrew Shannon provides a very informative Q & A for island owners on the challenges to getting a septic pumpout. Lyle Turner has authored a heartwarming story of his family's 50th anniversary on Green (Idyle) Island in Crow



Fall at the Lake

Photo by: Peter Thorp-Levitt

Lake. In recognition of the first Truth and Reconciliation Day, there is an historical story on Chief Shawinipinessi and the promised reserve on Bobs Lake by Bill St. Arnaud. Jeff Carabott also has reviewed the book by Lloyd Jones entitled "Living by the Chase" on the history of Indigenous People of Bobs and Crow Lakes.

As mentioned this spring and starting with the Fall 2021 issue, there will be a strict rule that the magazine will be sent only to those members whose membership status shows as having

paid their current year dues. Keeping track of the paid status of a membership has been simplified from a July 1 to June 30 fiscal year, to a simple calendar year. Please go to our website at bobsandcrowlakes.ca and use our secure online payment methods of Paypal or E-transfer (cheques are ok too).

Although many of us are quietly moving closer to a "back to normal" way of life, there is a need to remember that healthcare staff and other essential workers are still struggling. For them, there is no simple shift back to kids at school, occasional office visits and eating out. Their role over the last 18 months in saving lives and protecting the public, cannot be understated. Support for them in the public and political forums should be a priority for everyone.

Board of Directors

The Greater Bobs and Crow Lakes Association



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Happy Holidays





Information and Updates

Hydro One Seasonal Rates – Get Ready for the Pain

By: Lawrence Pick

Members may remember the Hydro One letter of February 9, 2021 which announced an Ontario Energy Board proceeding to implement a decision to eliminate the Hydro One seasonal rate class. Most members of GBCLA are billed their electricity at the lake as members of the Hydro seasonal class, roughly defined as properties which are not principal residences and not occupied year-round. The Hydro One letter calculated that the distribution rates for modest users of electricity would go up over 100% upon elimination of the class. That is, if you occupy your lake cottage from April to November and draw less than 50kWh per month, your distribution rates will double, unless this is your sole or primary residence in Ontario.



Sunset Shores Peninsula Association (SSPA) sought and was granted intervenor status in the OEB proceedings which have continued through the summer and fall. A decision is expected by year end.

The good news is that the rates will not jump until 2023. The bad news is that the OEB has refused to entertain submissions on whether the seasonal class should be eliminated at all. The proceeding this year focuses on the length of time over which the rate increase will be phased. In other words, how long will the pain of this outrageous rate increase be stretched out.

Fundamental to Ontario justice, is a requirement that persons affected by an administrative order be given the opportunity to speak and be heard before the order is made. But here the OEB decided to eliminate the seasonal class without first giving notice to the class members and now is not prepared to hear objections at this stage. In short, the seasonal class members were invited to their sentencing hearing, when they were not invited to the substantive trial.

Hydro One for years published data showing that the seasonal ratepayers were paying their way, covering the cost of electricity they used. In 2016 the OEB decided to roll the seasonal class into one of Rural (R2), Medium Density (R1) or Urban (UR) classes. This is an urban centric rate system that imposes the highest distribution costs on rural users. OEB also decided to impose flat rate distribution charges, meaning that low users will pay the same global amount as high users (the opposite of a user pay system). The result of these decisions is that many residents of our lake system will pay about \$19 distribution for every \$1 of electricity used. Remember that Beatles song Taxman: “here’s one for you, 19 for me cause I’m the taxman”?

Rate determination in Ontario is dense and Byzantine in complexity. Additionally, the provincial government subsidizes the rates of rural ratepayers with only one billing address. The rationale was to protect those ratepayers with the highest rates of default. Cottagers tend to pay their bills, and most were left out of the rate relief.

Is there any way out of the maze? Well, if you are a snowbird and the cottage is your principal residence you should get the rate subsidy but need to apply through Hydro One. Also, if your cottage is used year-round and you have a child or friend in full-time residence (Covid style), you may have a shot at the subsidy (but Hydro One has yet to concede this). Leaving the grid entirely is a long shot option. Otherwise, sit back on your dock and enjoy the sunset, for which you pay handsomely.



Waste Management Issues - Island Drive and Mica Point Lanes

By: Derek Cooke

Many years back, South Frontenac Township (SFT) adopted 'Curb Side Pick-Up' for garbage and recycling material. For those of us living on the above lanes at the north end of Bobs Lake, this was managed through the use of communal bins set at the lane intersection with the county road. The nearby Waste Disposal (WD) site was closed. Property owners were charged with shared bin purchase costs, bin maintenance and clean ups. For property owners on our two lanes, this has resulted in escalating health issues, which have been magnified greatly in recent times. Pick-up for us is Tuesday morning but many weekenders leave their waste at the site on Sunday. Contaminated recycling containers were incorrectly sorted in the Blue Boxes. The resulting mess created by animals (bears + racoons), extended across the lanes and into the woods and swamp areas. This became a nightmare.

Most times these messes have been cleaned up by volunteers. This is a daunting, unhealthy, and potentially dangerous task (especially for us seniors) when faced with getting in and out of these deep cumbersome bins and scrambling around irregular terrain. It is not the responsibility of anyone to look after a garbage mess left by the inconsiderate. The summer of 2020 was particularly bad. Mark Segsworth and Jamie Brash of SFT were contacted, as well as our local councillors. After much email traffic, including vivid pictures, we got their attention. They agreed that they shared in the problem but offered no solutions. By-Law Enforcement was also powerless. With local dump closures, the nearest site now is south of Verona (for building and other materials). Repeated requests for access to local sites has had no success.

Mica Point

I personally contacted most lane residents, gathered contact info, and began keeping them in the 'loop' by messages and pictures. At SFT Mark Segsworth resigned and Jamie Brash took charge and communications improved. Site meetings led to relocating our site down the county road clearing space for a newly purchased Tye-Dee steel bin, plus our blue boxes. We made enlargements of Recycling signs, pick-up schedule and a 'Critter Alert' Sign all mounted at our site. Our lane folk have been very responsive with many weekenders taking their garbage out with them (lessening the load on the bins) and a lot less missorted recycling stuff left out. The new bin has worked very well and is critter proof! As a result of these efforts this busy summer of 2021 has been relatively free of problems (see photo below).



Original white garbage bin, new Tye-Dee bin, blue boxes and signage at Mica Point Lane.

Island Drive

Island Drive Lane has not fared as well this summer. It is very distressing to pass by the animal strewn messes, broken bins, and dumped material (see below). Clearly, we are not 'out of the woods' yet and better solutions are needed.



Island Drive: bins broken, strewn garbage over the road (10 Sept 2021)



Island Drive: Sept 17 (1 week later)

Improved and directed communications between Island Drive residents and SFT staff and council to pursue solutions and strategies (including the ones used by Mica Point) to literally clean up the mess may help. Ideally a means to provide for curbside pick-up on our lanes so each individual takes care of their own waste, and access to a local dump are worth striving for. We pay more taxes and yet receive fewer services for our garbage disposal needs. We deserve the extra consideration and tangible support for a really, workable long-term solution!

Derek Cooke, Resident of Mica Point Lane
Call 279-1217 or email me at derek@cookes.ca

Island Septic System Pump-outs

By: Andrew Shannon, A 2021 Experience



Pumping out septic tanks is a critical health and water quality task for all cottage owners. However, it is even more critical for properties located on islands. To offer some insight on the challenges and costs of an island pump-out, we have prepared several Questions and Answers from a recent pump-out experience on a Bobs Lake Island. Owner Andrew Shannon has kindly shared his recent 2021 experience with his contractor Georgian Bay Septic and Barging.

Septic Pump-out Q & A

1. As an Island cottage owner, how are your septic requirements different from others?

Type of septic system

- *We have a plastic 1,000-gallon, two compartment system. It was installed in 2004.*

How does your pump-out frequency differ and why?

- *We will probably pump our septic every four to five years. Given that it's a seasonal property and we have limited access during certain times of the year, the usage is probably lower than a mainland cottage.*

2. What are the additional challenges you have for pumping out your septic system?

- *Primarily getting a service provider to the lake, given the limited number of customers and poor business economics;*
- *Where the service provider can put the holding tank on the mainland for pump-outs; and*
- *Access to public and private launches throughout the lake*

3. Describe what the septic pump-out contractor does?

- *Pumps your septic and assess the condition of your septic and septic bed.*



4. What preparations if any does the cottage owner have to make?
 - *Taking pictures of the septic tank/area and the run from the septic to the lake where their barge will dock. The gentleman had a 250' hose, which provided sufficient flexibility. As the draft of the barge will increase when the tank fills, it is good to identify any potential hazards in the lake and docking area.*
5. What is the name and contact Information of the Pump-out contractor you used?

*Georgian Bay Septic and Barging
Port Severn, Ontario
Owner: Mike Smith 705-321-5282*
6. What difficulties did you experience finding and hiring this contractor?
 - *Due to the challenging business economics, there are no island septic services providers in the Frontenac region. Fortunately, working with the association, I was able to connect with Mike Smith at Georgian Bay Septic. The gentleman had to drive roughly four hours to Bobs Lake. We helped coordinate potential boat launches and provided a place for his holding tank. It is a lot of work mobilizing his barge, so he needs at least five customers on the lake to make it worth his while.*
7. How does the cost compare to a land-based septic pump-out?
 - *Not familiar with the cost of pumping a mainland septic system, but island pump-out can run from \$2,500 and upwards, depending on the number of jobs on the lake.*
8. Was there special insurance coverage required?
 - *From my understanding, the insurance cost for the service providers is quite expensive and partly the reason the business economics are challenging to generate sufficient profitability to sustain operations. Maybe this is something the provincial government can look into, because I don't see insurance costs abating anytime soon.*
9. What recommendations would you give to other island cottage owners?
 - *The need to work together and coordinate our schedules for future pump-outs to ensure that service provider like Georgian Bay Septic can provide a more cost competitive service. But island residents need to understand that \$2,500 is around what it is going to cost to get your septic pumped. Fortunately, this isn't a yearly expense.*
10. How can island cottage owners coordinate between themselves to better satisfy their septic maintenance requirements?
 - *I would look to the Association, if possible, to provide contact information of all island residents on the lake. We can then coordinate schedules for septic pumping and provide sufficient notice for service providers like Georgian Bay Septic to coordinate pump-out on or before end of June.*
11. What risks are there when island septic systems are not maintained properly?
 - *I'm not a septic expert but inevitably your septic bed will stop working. Critical infrastructure needs to be properly maintained, and best practices dictates that one should pump their septic on a regular basis.*
12. Do you see any role for the Greater Bobs and Crow Lakes Association to assist island cottage owners with their septic maintenance?
 - *Yes, providing a forum or sharing of contact information so that island residents can coordinate scheduled pump-outs. Secondly, locating suitable areas throughout the lake where a holding tank can be placed to facilitate pump-outs from the barge to mainland is also critical. We were able to facilitate that from our mainland property, but certainly not ideal.*



Marine Safety

Marine Safety

By: Dick Johnston

Approximately 35 years ago my nephew Michael made his first attempt at water skiing. Life jackets were properly fitted, skis were adjusted, the tow rope was checked, and a spare life jacket was in the boat just in case. We were sure that everything was in good condition. He was in the water with his dad, his mom was in the boat as the spotter, and I was driving the boat. We were ready. On the first attempt his mom suddenly started yelling – Let Go, Let Go. We all then realized no one had communicated to him he should let go if he fell. From that point on all future skiers benefited from his experience.

Approximately 18 years ago when taking my oldest grandson Patrick for his first tube ride, my daughter started yelling – ‘Dad stop the boat, stop the boat’. Turns out the tube was one of the older styles. It was a donut-shaped one where you sat in the middle and it had a mesh bottom. As luck would have it the sun had weakened the mesh so when my grandson jumped up and down, he fell through the bottom. Since it was his first time, I promised my daughter I would go slow. He thought I was going too slow and wanted to have a bouncier ride. After exiting through the bottom of the tube there was concern he may have hurt himself. When we approached we could see that he was laughing. Never thinking he would end up in the water I realized we had not told him how to let us know he was fine and not in trouble. We all know the ‘I am OK’ sign to use when skiing but this was a first. Something else to add to the list. Another point to this example – when the spotter yells stop, do so immediately. Do not turn around first to see for yourself.

Last year when taking a good friend skiing for the first time, we did a quick review of the hand gestures we use to communicate. The usual – faster, slower, turn around and communicating with the skier about approaching traffic. After doing a couple of loops around the bay, our neighbour appeared to adjust her life jacket. She kept tapping the left-hand side of the jacket. After another loop we went by their cottage where she let go. What I learned was that their family used a different ‘Go Home’ signal. The tapping of left side of the jacket indicates – ‘Home is Where the Heart Is’. Our family just pointed in the direction of our cottage. I see the advantages and benefits of that communications technique. Just pointing may be confused with trying to indicate something specific, e.g., a boat/kayak/canoe, a swimmer, or debris in the water.

There are three individuals who have to be aware of all the different communication techniques used when skiing, wake boarding and tubing - the person(s) being towed, the spotter and the driver. Since you cannot verbally communicate when you are underway it is vital to get these signals straight before starting. It will keep everyone safe, and it will alleviate potential bad experiences, especially for first timer adventurers.

You may have an expanded list but here are the hand gestures that we use:

Faster; Slower; Speed is Fine; Stop; Turn Round; Take me Home; I am OK; Are You OK?; Oncoming traffic; Approaching Traffic; and Potential Hazards.

Enjoy the water!



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Water Quality

Water Quality Testing Results – 2020

(1 year lag)

By: Jeff Carabott

As reported in the Spring newsletter, the Ministry of Environment (MOE) Lake Partner Program (LPP) was impacted by Covid-19 in 2020. The LPP is a province-wide, volunteer-based, water-quality monitoring program. Volunteers collect total phosphorus samples in May and make monthly water clarity observations on their lakes. This information allows for the early detection of changes in the nutrient status and/or the water clarity of the lake due to the impacts of shoreline development, climate change and other stresses.

The LPP was placed on hold during the Spring of 2020 in response to the Covid-19 outbreak and physical distancing requirements. As a result, the usual May water sample collection was delayed until October. By that time, many volunteer testers had already either left the lakes or had removed their boats for the winter. In addition, some of our volunteers are from the USA, and were unable to make it up to the lake that past summer. However, water samples and Secchi disk clarity readings were eventually submitted for some of the testing locations on Bobs and Crow Lakes (thank you to all our dedicated volunteers). Unfortunately, some submitted samples and readings did not make it into the LPP results database for 2020. Any data included in the 2020 LPP report is shown in the tables below.

Why Sample?

High levels of phosphorus can lead to algal blooms and in some cases affect the habitat of cold- water fish such as lake trout. By sampling the total phosphorus in May of each year it is possible to detect a change in the nutrient status of your lake. It is important to note that several years of data must be collected to observe the normal, between-year-differences before a trend can be identified.

Take these simple steps to prevent the growth of algae blooms:

- use phosphate-free detergents, personal care and household cleaning products
- avoid using fertilizers on lawns, especially fertilizers that contain phosphorus
- maintain a natural shoreline on lake and riverfront properties
- reduce agricultural runoff by planting or maintaining vegetation along waterways and minimizing fertilizer use
- check septic systems to ensure they do not leak into the water source

While total phosphorus concentrations are the best way to describe the nutrient status of your lake, regular Secchi disk visibility depths can also help to identify changes in water clarity that are not linked to nutrient status (zebra mussels, climate change, etc.).

The LPP Annual Report may be downloaded by visiting the FOCA website:

<https://foca.on.ca/lake-partner-program-sampling-assistance/>

Sunset Country Campground

41 Riders Lane, Tichborne, ON. K0H 2V0
West Basin Bobs Lake

www.sunset-country.ca
sunsetcountryrv@gmail.com

Inside boat storage – winterizing and
external boat wash

Premium Gas – Propane Exchange

Grocery Store - Worms

Hand scooped ice cream

Cottage opening and closing

Custom dock building



Water Quality (cont'd)

Secchi disk visibility readings are interpreted as follows (the higher the reading, the clearer the water):

High transparency (Secchi depth >4 m)

Moderately transparent (Secchi depth 2-4 m)

Low transparency (Secchi depth 0-2 m)

The Minimum Provincial Water Quality Objective (PWQO) is 2 metres indicating that waters are usually clear, and sufficient sunlight is able to penetrate the water column to support aquatic life.



Secchi disk

Location	Avg. Secchi disk 2020 (m)	Avg. Secchi disk 2019 (m)	Avg. Secchi disk (m) 1996-2018
Buck Bay	-	-	4.4
East Basin	-	5.3	5.5
Crow Bay	-	-	4.4
Central Narrows	4.7	-	4.4
Green Bay	6.1	6.4	6.0
Long Bay	-	-	4.6
Mill Bay	-	2.7	3.1
Mud Bay	5.8	5.8	5.3
Norris Bay	5.1	4.4	4.8
West Basin	4.8	3.4	4.5
Crow Lake	-	5.4	5.2

Total Phosphorus (TP) readings are measured in micrograms per litre (ug/L), and are interpreted as follows (generally, the lower the reading, the clearer the water):

- 10 micrograms per litre or less – oligotrophic, few nutrients
- 10 – 20 micrograms per litre – mesotrophic, moderately enriched
- 20 micrograms per litre or more – eutrophic, enriched, higher levels of nutrients

Location	Avg. TP (ug/L) 2020	Avg. TP (ug/L) 2019	Avg. TP (ug/L) 2002-2018*	Avg. TP (ug/L) Pre-2002
Buck Bay	-	-	9.8	9.0
East Basin	-	10.7	8.7	11.0
Crow Bay	-	-	9.2	7.0
Central Narrows	9.3	10.9	9.6	11.0
Green Bay	8.5	8.5	8.7	11.0
Long Bay	-	10.2	9.1	16.0
Mill Bay	-	11.2	16.0	17.0
Mud Bay	-	9.5	8.1	8.0
Norris Bay	11.3	8.6	9.5	14.0
West Basin	-	14.0	11.9	10.0
Crow Lake	-	8.7	9.1	9.0

* Possible outliers not included

Calcium and Zebra Mussels

Calcium, at a concentration of 20mg/l, allows zebra mussels to more likely establish colonies and complete their life cycle. Calcium was below the threshold of 20 mg/l in all bays, with the exception of Green Bay. However, calcium concentrations are very close to exceeding this threshold in Mill Bay, Mud Bay, East Basin and Crow Lake. Zebra mussels have already taken a strong foothold in Mud Bay. Therefore, it is important, property owners and users of the lake remain vigilant in protecting against the spread of this invasive species, particularly at public access points in these areas.

Boats, fishing gear, and other recreational equipment should always be cleaned and inspected before entering a different waterbody, to minimize the spread of invasive species. Drain water from the motor, live well, bilge and transom wells while on land. For more information please visit

www.invadingspecies.com



Mud Bay Water Clarity Update – Fall 2021

If you have been in Mud Bay since mid-September, you likely will have noticed a significant increase in the amount of aquatic weeds, the overall “greenish” colouring of the water and a corresponding decrease in water clarity. Similar observations were most recently made in September 2010 and 2012. The Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA) completed their 2021 testing season in Mud Bay during the last week of October and has provided an analysis of the driving factors.

RVCA believes the greenish water colour and decrease in clarity is the result of lake mixing and stratification (different temperature layers of the water; warmer water on top). This happens in the beginning stages of ice cover for the lake. Mud Bay was observed to be green in colour, with a cloudy appearance and/or particulates all throughout the season. These observations, combined with observed changes in terms of temperature and oxygen levels in the latest round of testing, indicate lake mixing to be the likely cause of the decrease in clarity.

There was also a slight increase in Total Phosphorus (TP) in May. This increase in “fertilizer”, at the right time, combined with the possible optimum timing of rainfall, 2 heat waves and sunshine, may have optimized growth conditions for weeds and algae in Mud Bay.

Climate change is the driver for the plant growth. In many lakes, the period of ice cover has decreased allowing for a longer growing season, which is all the more reason to have better land use practices and mitigations.

Further 2021 data analysis from both the RVCA and our own volunteer testing for the Lake Partners Program (LPP) will be available for the Spring newsletter.

Lives Lived

Patricia (Pat) Barr passed away on October 5, 2021. According to the Frontenac News, she had contracted Lyme Disease and Anaplasmosis in late 2020. There is an article in this issue about Anaplasmosis. These two diseases are carried by black-legged ticks, which are present around Bobs and Crow Lakes. Pat was hospitalized for 4 months and only resumed normal life recently in the spring of 2021. However, complications of the gastrointestinal tract worsened in early October.



Pat Barr with Mayor Ron Vandewal

Pat was born and raised in Bedford District of South Frontenac Township, which includes a large portion of Bobs and Crow Lakes. Her father Carl was a Councillor and Reeve of the former Bedford Township in the 1990's, before it was amalgamated into the new Township of South Frontenac. Pat graduated with a degree in Geography and worked for Loblaws in Ottawa prior to returning to Bobs Lake to look after her aging father. She served 8 years on the Council of South Frontenac, representing the Bedford District, which includes large portions of Bobs and Crow Lakes. Pat joined the Council in 2013 and was sworn in as Deputy Mayor in May 2021.

Pat was a long-standing member of the Greater Bobs and Crow Lakes Association, and a strong supporter of the values and objectives adopted by the GBCLA. The white house of the Barr farm is on the west shore of Green Bay at the south end. Pat together with her husband Lee Dillabough, have lived on Green Bay for at least 15 years. Pat was also a longtime supporter and member of the Burrige United Church, where she was married.



Lake Resident Interest Pieces

Anaplasmosis

Author of the Article: Elizabeth Payne, July 23, 2021. Material republished with the express permission of Ottawa Citizen, a division of Postmedia Network Inc.

‘One of the scariest things I have ever been through’: Rare tick-borne disease on the rise in Ontario

Anaplasmosis is caused by a bacterium that is spread by the same blacklegged ticks that are responsible for Lyme disease.

A black-legged tick, also known as a deer tick, and common source of Lyme disease. PHOTO BY VICTORIA AROCHO /THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Artist Alice Hinder’s high-energy life came to a screeching halt on July 6 when she suddenly began to feel sick with flu-like symptoms. When the fever, aches, sore throat, nausea and exhaustion continued, she dragged herself to Smiths Falls, near her cottage, for a COVID-19 test.

That test came back negative, but Hinder’s condition worsened.

She eventually ended up in isolation at the Kingston Health Sciences Centre, hooked up to oxygen and barely aware of her surroundings, while doctors tried to figure out what was making her so sick.

After four more negative tests, doctors were convinced it wasn’t COVID-19, but they weren’t sure what it was.

One of her doctors told Hinder they were trying another test, adding: “I am not making any promises.” But he was soon rushing back into her hospital room, saying, “We found it!”

What they found was anaplasmosis — a disease caused by a bacterium that is spread by the same blacklegged ticks that are responsible for Lyme disease.

This tick-borne illness is fatal in about one per cent of cases, according to the U.S. Centres for Disease Control. People over 60 and those who don’t get treatment quickly are most at risk for severe outcomes. It is treatable with doxycycline, the same antibiotics used to treat Lyme. It is rarer than Lyme disease. But doctors in Kingston, like health officials south of the U.S. border, are seeing a sharp rise in cases this year.

It is one more serious reason to take precautions to avoid being bitten by ticks.

“It was one of the scariest things I have ever been through,” says Hinder, who is now home recuperating.

Warming winters, which have contributed to a rise in ticks that carry the bacterium *Borrelia burgdorferi* that causes Lyme disease, are also contributing to more cases of anaplasmosis, which can be the result when people and livestock are bitten by ticks carrying the bacterium *Anaplasma phagocytophilum*.

Until recently, it was practically unheard of in Ontario.

Researchers, including Dr. Gerald Evans, an infectious disease specialist at Queens University and Kingston Health Sciences Centre, reported the first known human case acquired from a blacklegged tick in Ontario in just 2018. The first cases reported in the U.S. date back to 1994, in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Until Ontario’s first case was identified, doctors had only seen cases in people who had travelled to parts of the U.S. where cases were more common.



But that has changed this year. Doctors are seeing more cases of anaplasmosis than ever before during a year in which people are not travelling — meaning, all of the cases were acquired by tick bites near home.

“There has been a rise in cases. Anecdotally my colleagues and I are seeing a larger number than in past years,” said Evans. Kingston is one of Canada’s hot spots for the ticks that carry Lyme disease.

“This is the first year I can remember that we have seen multiple cases in a relatively short period of time.”

Hinther says one of her doctors told her that he had never seen a case until this year. And he has seen one a week.

Health officials in upper New York State, where the illness is reportable, have also seen a spike in cases this year. As of early July, cases in Warren County, New York, not far from the Canadian border, had quadrupled from a year earlier.

Officials there say it is one more reason to take precautions to avoid tick bites. That could be even more important with the rise of anaplasmosis. While ticks generally have to be attached to a person for more than 24 hours to transmit Lyme disease, there is evidence that transmission of anaplasmosis can occur in a shorter period of time and there is no telltale rash left behind. Ticks can be as small as a poppy seed.

Hinther was never aware of having been bitten by a tick.

Ottawa Public Health says it does not know of any human cases in the city, although there is no requirement for cases to be reported to public health, as there is with Lyme disease. That could change if anaplasmosis becomes more common in Ontario, said Evans, and public health officials see a need to track cases.

Ottawa is considered an at-risk area for Lyme disease. Recent research from uOttawa found that one in three blacklegged ticks tested in the city were positive for Lyme disease.

Evans said Lyme and anaplasmosis present quite differently. Lyme disease can appear more subtly, usually beginning with a rash, most often in the shape of a bullseye. Symptoms include joint and muscle aches, fatigue, headache and low fever. In later stages, Lyme can lead to cardiac and neurological problems, among other things.

Anaplasmosis usually causes fever, chills, severe headache, nausea, vomiting and muscle aches. It can also result in an enlarged liver and spleen as well as low white blood cell and platelet counts.

“They both make people feel pretty dreadful,” said Evans.

Hinther, 69, a multimedia artist who is known for her cards, calendars and stained glass, is now at home after more than a week in hospital.

Those days remain a bit of a blur. But after she began improving with antibiotic treatment, a doctor told her she was lucky to be alive.

“I don’t think you realize how sick you were,” he said to her. “We thought we were going to lose you.”

Hinther is determined to warn others to protect themselves and meticulously check for ticks to avoid a similar ordeal.

“I have been to hell and back,” she said. “I just want people to know it could happen to you if it happened to me.



That Other Epidemic of 2021

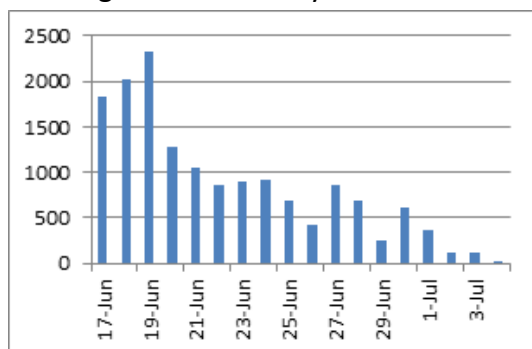
By: Ben Stevens

Spring 2021 was bright and cheerful after a long and not-so-cheerful winter. The tree blossoms were really colourful and bursting out all over. Then came the invasion of the *Lymantria Dispar* or LDD (formerly Gypsy Moths, name change courtesy of the International Bug Labelling Conference). And they came by the millions.

So, what do they do? Simple answer, they eat everything in sight. Their favourite targets are oak, apple, birch, willow, locust, maple and, when they are done, on to pine and cedar. In fact, the only things that seem to be immune in our backyard are bushes such as lilac and grapevine. Here are before and after pics of a crab-apple tree - blossoms in May and stripped in late June.



A bit too late, we found them already in the trees, but spent an afternoon banding the tree trunks closest to the house. We used the duct tape solution - sticky side out (many wildlife experts do not recommend this as it traps all insects), but an alternative is burlap sacking. Band the trees below the bottom branches, if possible, about 3-4 feet above the ground. Remember that over-lapping trees are not much of a challenge for these voracious eaters. Lots of the caterpillars drop to the ground overnight and the warm mornings will bring a major migration back up the trunk again – only to be stopped by the banding. And there they will mass in their hundreds.



At their peak, we were patrolling 3 or 4 times a day and dealing with up to 600 each time. We got bumper crops around 2000 in the early days - this from maybe 15 trees. By the beginning of July, the numbers had tapered down to a few stragglers. How did we deal with them? Checking with neighbours, we zeroed in on two methods – pick them off and drop them in soapy water, or (my preferred method) a thick glove on one hand for picking and squishing them out of the lower leaves and twigs, and an exacto knife in the other for a quick jab or slash on the

branches and trunks. A couple of suggestions, wear safety goggles as a squirt in the eye is no fun and, as you reach over your head into the branches, keep your mouth closed, they don't taste so good.

We started our campaign this year on 17th June and that was too late. It depends on the seasonal warmth of course, but we should have started around June 5th. You'll also see significant variations in the daily count. Blame the rain and the lower temperatures on those days.

By the time July 1st came along, most of the caterpillars were above the bands. They especially love to gather in their dozens below where branches branch out, and where deep Vs are in the wood. In the bigger trees, a lot of them are way out of reach, but you can have a great effect on them with a stick and a bit of wiggly patience. Look for them massing together.





That Other Epidemic (cont'd)

Sorry to say, the end of the caterpillar season is nowhere near the end of the story. By July 6th, they are starting to pupate (look for little brown pellets and squash them) and by July 10th the moths are hatching. The female moths don't fly, they stay in the trees and lay eggs, masses of them (around 400 per female). This means our Great Caterpillar Hunt of 2021 prevented around 3 million eggs from hatching next year! The



male moths fly furiously around by the thousands looking for females. Trapping them is a smart move, but you'll need to get some pheromones and a trap to attract them. Westport Lions Club had a few available and neighbours are emptying hundreds from the traps a couple of times a day. Google "LDD moth traps" for samples. Our homemade version using female moths as bait was a total failure. For the females and the egg-sacs, you'll have to go

looking for them in the trees, mainly low down on the trunks and underside of medium to large branches. Start in mid-July and by early-August, most are laid, ready for you to scrape them off (or if not, ready for hatching next year). And so, the cycle starts again.

Do they do long term damage? Deciduous trees will typically and partially re-leaf fairly quickly, subject to decent weather and reasonable tree health. Multiple infestations will do long-term damage. Conifers are different and their regeneration rate is less certain. We have a couple of stripped red pines that I don't think will recover, and we have reports of big white pines being killed off completely and having to be felled. These infestations come in cycles and depending on who you talk to, 2021 was the peak, or 2022 will be worse. The Ontario Government says that 2250 sq mi (5700 sq km) have been stripped. That's twice the size of Frontenac County and it's probably an underestimate.

Should we spray? This is a difficult one. If you have a few trees you want to protect, then it is feasible. If you have a bush lot, then aerial spraying is the only option, and is expensive. Spraying from the ground is only effective if you get real pros to do the job so they can reach the treetops. And of course, you don't want spray wafting onto the lake or on to your neighbours. We have had this debate locally many times. We personally will not spray, but others plan to do so.

Finally, can we eat them? Apparently, the grubs are quite tasty barbecued or roasted and they are protein rich (Witchetty Grubs - an Australian snack). Unfortunately, we never found any grubs to try, and I can't find a recipe for the caterpillars. So, I think the answer is probably no.

For more info, check out <https://www.ontario.ca/page/gypsy-moth> where they have a handy timetable. Good luck and happy hunting!

The views in this article are the personal views of the author Ben Stevens stevensb@kingston.net – August 2021





Book Review – Lloyd B. Jones: Living By The Chase

By: Jeff Carabott

For many of us, appreciating the serene, natural beauty of Bobs and Crow Lakes conjures up thoughts of simpler times and wondering about the past. You may be familiar with author Lloyd B. Jones and his excellent first book *The Damned Lakes – an Environmental History of Crow and Bobs Lake*. In it, Lloyd included a chapter on local Indigenous history. *Living by the Chase* delves into great detail, the proud and sometimes tragic history of Indigenous peoples around the Lakes, dating back over 11,000 years.

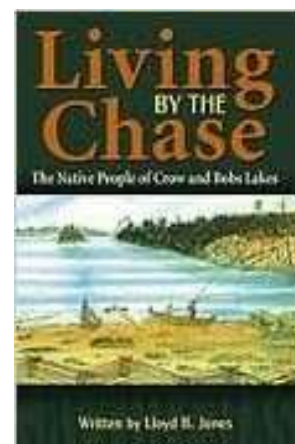
Published in 2002, this 133-page historical account is Lloyd's second book chronicling the history of the Lakes. Lloyd had stood witness himself to more recent history, his grandfather having been a foreman at the Bobs Lake mica mines in the early 1900s and his mother came to Crow Lake at age 18. Lloyd had attended elementary school in Crow Lake and continued for many years as a cottager.

Nine known groups of Indigenous peoples are historically tied to Bobs and Crow Lakes. These groups and their approximate arrival times include:

- Clovis, as early as 11,500 B.P. (Before Present, or years ago)
- Laurentian Archaic, about 7,000 B.P.
- Woodland, about 5,000 B.P.
- Iroquois, possibly after the Woodland; Iroquois and Huron, 1600s A.D.
- Ojibwa/Bedford Mississauga, about 1700 A.D.
- Mississauga, some returning to Bedford about 1834 A.D.
- Algonquin and Nipissing from Lake of Two Mountains, about 1842 A.D.

Lloyd's extensive research included "several books on the Native peoples of Ontario, regional archaeological and social science research, artifacts found around the lakes, map analysis, mill records and accounts, a few interviews on specific topics with people who had special knowledge, some local historical and genealogical materials, research retrieved via the Internet, and primary sources in the form of several hundred documents from the various officials of Indian Affairs from the late 1700s and 1800s...Data from these sources were compiled by a process known as *triangulation* – that is, cross-referencing data from different sources to construct more robust description, and where possible to confirm the reliability of specific information".

The title, *Living by the Chase*, refers to the way of Indigenous living, in other words by hunting, trapping, fishing and gathering, and the culture associated with that way of life. As any local gardeners are likely very aware, the land in this area is often not easily suited to agriculture. As early as 1830, the Crown



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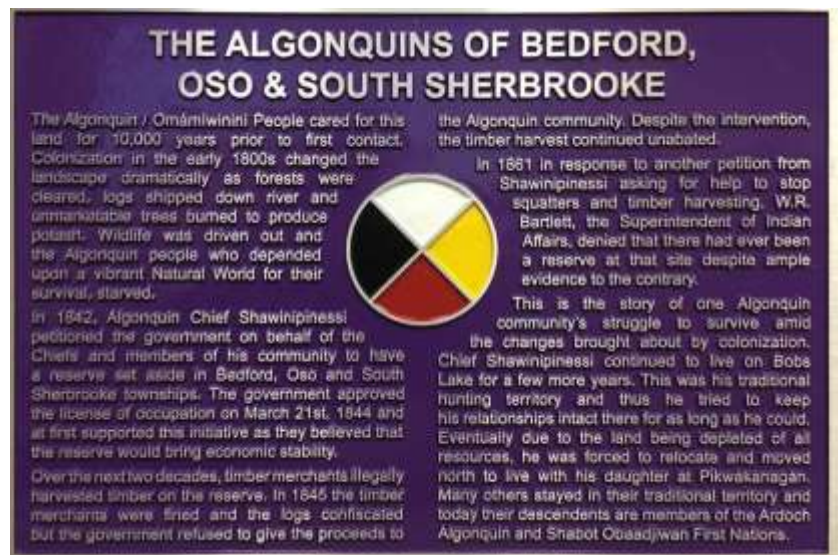


(government) policy focused on having Indigenous peoples “giving up the chase” and adopting a more stable, agricultural lifestyle.

Lloyd takes us through a very detailed account of how this transition was attempted and the results, including census data and some family histories that impact living descendants in the area to this day. Many may also find the description of the 1870 dam construction / flooding of the water system, and its present-day effects on the lakes to be very interesting.

By the 1850s, the Mississauga, Algonquin and Nipissing had almost faded from the history of the Lakes. A lasting recognition of the history and ongoing presence of Algonquin communities can be found on a plaque mounted on a boulder entitled “Algonquins of Bedford, Oso & South Sherbrooke” located near the Bolingbroke bridge at County Road 36 and the Crow Lake Road turnoff.

Living by the Chase is a very interesting, well written and easily readable historical account, which includes a number of old photographs, illustrations and maps.



Books can be ordered on the GBCLA website from the GBCLA Store. Pricing is \$12.50 each and sold at cost. Lloyd's other book “*The Damned Lakes*” is also available for purchase at \$25 each.

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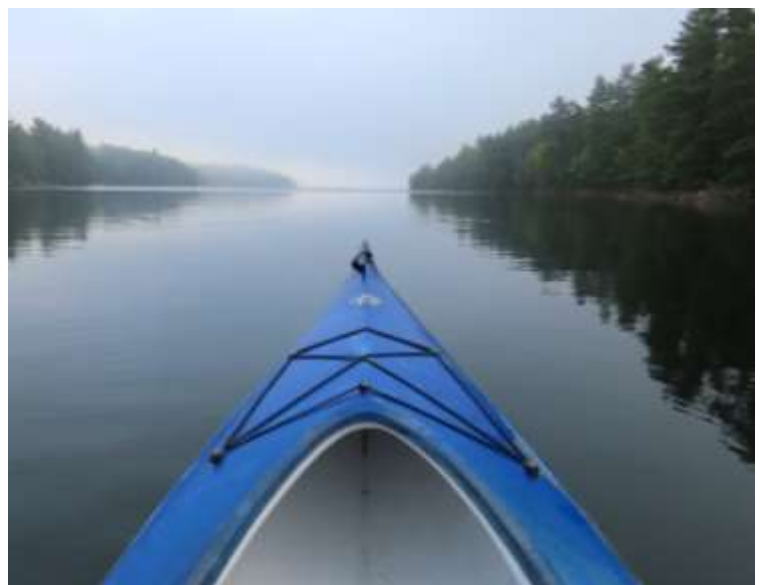
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Peace on the Lake

Photo by: Ian MacLachy



Chief Pierre Shawinipinessi – A Promise Broken Bobs and Crow Lake Was To Be An Indian Reserve

By: Bill St. Arnaud

Many cottagers on the lake may be surprised to find out that at one time, a large part of our lakes was designated as an Indian Reservation. The following article tells the tragic story of Chief Pierre Shawinipinessi and his promised Indian Reservation.

Chief Pierre Shawinipinessi lived on an island on the North end of the lake in the early 19th century. After many petitions he was promised by the Crown, an Indian Reserve on Bobs and Crow Lake. Despite written guarantees that such a reserve would be granted to Chief Shawinipinessi, the Crown eventually reneged on its promise.

In recognition of this historical injustice, and many others suffered by the Algonquins over the past centuries, the Crown land that exists between Bobs and Crow Lakes is to be transferred to the Algonquins of Ontario as part of the larger treaty currently under negotiation between the Algonquins and the governments of Ontario and Canada. As you will read in the following article, this Crown land between has a much greater historical significance than just a simple transfer of land.

The Greater Bobs and Crow Lake Association is now in discussion with the Algonquins of Ontario to see how we can play a small part in recognizing this historical injustice as our small contribution to Truth and Reconciliation. Topics under discussion with the Algonquins of Ontario include a possible detailed archaeological survey of the known 38 archaeological sites on the lake including the island where Chief Pierre Shawinipinessi and his family lived for many years. As well, we are investigating the possibility of analyzing, protecting and possibly restoring a famous pictograph on the lake that dates from the time when Chief Shawinipinessi lived on the lake.

Thanks to the Lanark County Neighbours for Truth and Reconciliation website where an in-depth version of this article can be found. Excerpts from the Lanark Neighbours Truth and Reconciliation website: <https://www.lanarkcountyneighbours.ca/the-petitions-of-chief-shawinipinessi.html>

After the war of 1812, the British government rewarded loyalists and soldiers for their service with land grants and many moved north into Lanark and Frontenac counties from Kingston (which housed the government of the Province of Canada until 1843). The town of Perth was established as a military settlement in 1816, to both reinforce a military presence to protect Upper Canada from threats from the United States, and to help with provisioning settlers in their move to take up their land grants. Land for settlers and former soldiers became scarce, and the push beyond the limits of the British Territories in North America, into what had formerly been protected as “Indian land” commenced.

This set the groundwork for the logic behind Chief Pierre Shawinipinessi’s petition of 1844.

Pierre Shawinipinessi's birth was registered in 1790 at Lac des Deux Montagnes, the mission set up by the Sulpice missionaries at what is now known as Kanesatake when his parents made their annual visit. Little is known of his life until 1837 when his purchases appear in a logbook kept by Benjamin Tett, a local magistrate and businessperson who operated a mill store near Bob’s Lake. Shawinipinessi settled on an island in the East Basin or Long Bay area of Bobs Lake. In 1842 with the arrival of other Algonquin people at the north end of Bobs Lake, Chief Shawinipinessi requested that the tribe’s annual presents be made in Canada West (what is now Ontario) instead of Canada East (what is now Québec) and on July 17, 1842, petitioned for a land tract of 2000 acres straddling the townships of Oso, Bedford and South Sherbrooke.

Chief Shawinipinessi argued that a land tract for agricultural purposes would enable his people to sustain themselves given the depletion of the game.



Chief Shawinipinessi (cont'd)

The petition was met with support from the Superintendent of Indian Affairs at the time, Samuel P. Jarvis, who referred to the petition as a claim for a reserve to be established at this site. Superintendent Jarvis noted that a reserve at this location would encourage settlers to move into the area, as a stable Indigenous population would result in the development of stores with local products supplied by the Indigenous community:

On March 21, 1844, an Order in Council from the government of the Province of Canada approved the application for 2000 acres to be set aside under a license of occupation in Bedford, Oso and South Sherbrooke:

Logging activities, including timber cutting, shanty building and trespass on the tract, resulted in ongoing conflict similar to that caused by logging-related incursions across Algonquin unceded territory. Chief Shawinipinessi wrote a number of letters of complaint to the Department of Indian Affairs administration, supported by Benjamin Tett. From 1844 until 1861, Chief Shawinipinessi fought to convince the government to intercede with loggers and trespassers on their behalf.

The timber harvest at the Bedford tract set aside for Chief Shawinipinessi and his people was temporarily stopped in 1845 when Benjamin Tett and John Kilborn, magistrates at Newboro, intervened and collected penalties from the trespassers who had also begun to construct cabins on the site. Despite this apparent success, by the next timber season, the timber cutting had resumed at an even greater rate. Chief Shawinipinessi again petitioned the government on December 25, 1845 complaining that the loggers had returned and threatened the lives of the Bedford Algonquins if they should interfere with them.

In 1861 Chief Shawinipinessi again petitioned for action by the government against logging and squatters. In response, W.R. Bartlett, the new Superintendent of Indian Affairs, in correspondence with the Commissioner of Crown Lands, explicitly denied the existence of the Bedford, Oso and South Sherbrooke tract, even though the tract had been listed in the Bagot Commission report on Indian Affairs of 1844 and census records had been taken at the tract until at least 1851.

Chief Pierre Shawinipinessi continued to live on the island in Bobs Lake. Records show that Pierre Shawinipinessi was listed on the Pikwàkanagàn census in 1881 and 1882, and that he lived there with his daughter until his death at the age of 101. The land that once made up the Bedford tract is now the site of cottages on Bobs Lake, and little remains in the area to remind visitors of its history as an Algonquin community. Algonquin people today continue to live on their traditional lands but dispersed throughout the territory. Many of the descendants from the Bedford tract are members of the Shabot Obaadjiwan First Nation and the Ardoch Algonquin First Nation and continue to fight for their land and rights as First Nations people.



*Wildlife at the Lake
Photos by: Ian MacLachy*



Family History Around the Lakes

Idyle (Green) Island in Crow Lake

By: Lyle Turner

It was 50 years ago this month that I first saw Crow Lake. We had just been uprooted from our home in Quebec, and emigrated west to Ontario. The FLQ October crisis was a “script” of sectarian violence my parents were all too familiar with, having immigrated from Ireland. They sold their dream home and moved for our family well-being, safety and stability.

My father, Meikle Turner, landed a job as the new Principal at Verona's Prince Charles Elementary school. We had settled in Kingston, and he was making the daily commute, when a four-line ad in the Whig-Standard caught his attention: For Sale: - Island in Crow Lake. The planning for a cottage had begun before we left Quebec, building a plywood boat in our backyard, using a retired church pew to provide curve to the bow.



Idyle (Green) Island



Meikle at the helm of the Springbok loaded from Oso Township dock

It was on a late afternoon in early October, that I joined my dad on that first trip on Crow Lake, taking that plywood boat powered by a ridiculously small outboard. It had no reverse gear, you spun the motor 180 degrees to back up. My father had called the number in the ad. He had directions scribbled out in his unique hand-writing style. We put in on the Oso Township beach and headed out into what looked like a very large lake to a 10-year-old boy. It took a very long time to get around the point from Crow Bay, but there she was: Idyle Island (some maps still show Green Island). My father was smitten. We landed on the protected black sand beach most often in the lee of the wind. We hiked around the island shore, up the trails, and loved the colours of the leaves, the majestic wind-blown pines, and the stately oaks.

It was love at first sight! My father called the owner, and they negotiated the final price. The next day, Meikle went into the bank in Verona and managed to trade on his good name as the new Principal in town to secure a loan to buy Idyle Island. We now owned an island! The summer of '72 was our first summer on Crow Lake. The Island had been a party site for many years, so we spent a good amount of time picking out debris from the woods, the beach, and the shore in general. Sometime during the spring, the plywood boat was replaced with a 14ft aluminum Springbok with an Evinrude 9.9. (Both still in use).

We camped, at first. My parents built a small cabin, with two bunks and a deck. My brother and I continued to camp below the deck on an open spot with only a few degrees of pitch. You had to sleep with your feet downhill. You learned quickly that only the very centre of the island is flat, and that reefs extend for some distance in the shape of the island at both ends.

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Idyle (Green) Island (cont'd)

My parents planned to build a cottage starting the next season. The cottage was modeled in the style of the dream home they left behind in Quebec. We cleared a few trees and measured out the corners. My father talked the owners of Crow Lake Lodge (long since sold off as individual properties) into allowing lumber deliveries on the end of their lovely property, on the iconic pink granite of the Canadian Shield. We moved all that lumber in the 14ft Springbok over to Idyle Island and up the trail to the cottage site. The cottage was shelled in by August and the camping was reduced in frequency depending on the number of guests.

Family dinners on the Island are the epicentre of our world. Multicourse meals capped off with homemade pies and the joy of manually whipped cream! The “bottle wall” is a unique anthology of all the suds consumed over the 5 decades. Rules are it had to be consumed on the Island (no dups!)



Beer Wall and Original Slalom Ski

There were many tears too. We lost my mother Emma, to cancer. She loved her time at the lake to the very end. It was fitting, that a family friend invited her widowed bestie Margaret, up for a visit to Crow Lake on a Thanksgiving weekend. She too had lost her husband to cancer and was also an Irish emigre with two kids of her own. Sparks flew. She knew right then what she was getting into with a cottage family! Our island family doubled that November 43 years ago next month. Idyle Island remains the hub of our family every summer. Margaret curates with pride, the annual family photos taken on the Island. We have now introduced the 4th generation, born this past spring, to Idyle Island.



1978 (L to R on plywood boat): Uncle Eric, Aunt Prue (Emma's Sister), Meikle and Margaret (Crow Lake Lodge in background)

Over the years, a visit to Idyle Island has been a very hot commodity. There have been Aunts, Uncles, Cousins and their partners from Ireland, England, Australia, New Zealand and the US who have visited and gone home with tales of our Canadian Eden. My brother attracted love notes with the lyrics of Thunder Island altered to Turner Island.

Not all was smooth sailing. There was the ex-Marine who was saved from drowning after being thrown over the stern of his rental boat when he started in gear. There were fishhooks embedded in scalps, shear pins broken, the ham that rolled out of the package and was consumed by a very happy dog. There was the occasional marooning due to thunderstorms. By far, the good memories far out-weigh the tribulations.

The fridge, stove, docks, boats, and motors have all improved with time and technology. A swim dock for entry rather than risking slippery rocks, trekking polls used from the dock up to the cottage, and ‘Sherpas’ for moving supplies up to the Island.

We have spent 49 summers loving our slice of heaven on Crow Lake. The vision my parents had 50 years ago has been instilled to their kids and grandchildren. We are stewards of this place, and very aware of carrying out everything you bring in: “Leave it better than you found it!” Margaret and Meikle (M&M to family and friends) look forward to the 50th family summer on Crow. When you see the blue pontoon boat docked at the island, stop in and say “hello”. Perhaps listen to a tale or two. See you on the lake next summer!



(left to right): Meikle, Aunt Prue, Margaret, Uncle Eric (last photo of Prue @ Crow Lake) Idyle Island in background



Wildlife on the Lakes

Bobs & Crow Lakes Turtles

By Joselyn Morley

One morning I looked outside to see my dogs barking at a big, flat rock in the grass. They're not the brightest dogs, but even for them that warranted investigation. I dragged the dogs away and waited a while. Sure enough, the big old snapping turtle eventually stuck her head out and continued her slow crawl back towards the water. Another day, I looked up to see one of my dogs trotting along proudly with a treasure in her mouth. It was a painted turtle that she'd picked up very gently from above. When I returned it to the marshy water's edge with a quick apology on behalf of my dopey dogs, it was most likely mad but unharmed.

Eight species of turtles call Ontario home. Seven of those species are endangered, threatened, or designated as a species of special concern. Wetlands are threatened in Ontario due to development, draining watersheds and floodplains, agriculture, road building and expansion, mining, dumping and pollution, damming, and climate change. Turtles are threatened by the same forces that destroy their habitat. Alongside threats from natural predators such as raccoon or skunks, turtles are vulnerable due to habitat loss, hunting and poaching, and roads. Seven of these species of turtles can be found in the Bobs & Crow Lakes area in the Rideau Watershed. The Wood turtle, listed as endangered in Ontario, is the only turtle we do not find here. There are pockets of Wood Turtle populations in Ontario but habitat loss and poaching for the pet trade has decimated their population. Our three endangered turtles are the Spotted Turtle, the Eastern Spiny Softshell Turtle, and the Blanding's Turtles. The other four, designated as species of Special Concern are the Northern Map Turtle, the Eastern Musk Turtle (or Stinkpot Turtle), the Snapping Turtle, and the Painted Turtle. They take 8 to 25 years to reach maturity and most live to 30 or 40 years, but some over 100. The sex of many turtles is dependent on incubation temperature. Long hot summers mean more female turtles. This is another way climate change threatens a species.

The **Spotted Turtle** is found in bogs, swamps, and marshes. It is small with a smooth black shell and bright yellow spots and can live to 50 years. Unlike most turtles, the **Eastern Spiny Softshell Turtle** does not have the horny plates on its shell. Its shell is leathery with bumps on the front edge. It spends most of its time in the water and buries itself in soft bottoms of rivers and lake shorelines. Its feet are very large, its neck long, and it has a pointy snout. They can live up to 50 years.

Blanding's Turtle is a medium-sized turtle with an oval, dark brown or black shell with a sprinkling of spots. It has a distinctive bright yellow throat and is not a great swimmer, spending a good deal of time on land. It can live to 75 years.

The **Northern Map Turtle** has a low, flat shell with serrated edge at the back, covered in thin curvy yellow lines that look like a map. It likes large bodies of water and its mouth can crush molluscs and crustaceans. They have large, webbed feet and although you may see them on logs or rocks, they take to the water at the first sound or movement. They can live up to 30 years. The **Eastern Musk Turtle** rarely leaves the water. It's named for the musky odour it produces when disturbed. They live up to 50 years old.

Painted Turtles are often seen sunning on rocks. They stay mostly in the water and are found in lakes, ponds, rivers, streams, and wetlands. It has a flat shell with a flare at the back. The undersides of the margins of the shell have red and black patterns that look painted. Its head is green with yellow stripes and the same stripes are red on the legs.



The **Snapping Turtle** is our largest freshwater turtle. It spends so much time in the water that its shell is often covered with algae. Its feet are huge with sharp claws and its neck is long and muscular. There is a lot of flesh exposed on a Snapping Turtle which is one of the reasons they can be really nasty on land. Snapping turtles can live up to 100 years.



Snapping Turtle Hatchling

Depending on the species, between 1 and 7 of every 10 000 turtle eggs make it to adulthood. That is a 0.01% to 0.07% survival rate. Turtles are killed in large numbers on Ontario roadways. The adults lay eggs in the sand or gravel along the sides of roads and highways. The adult is vulnerable to traffic while making the trek, and hatchlings can be hit as they make their way to the water. Small pockets of a population are not sustainable. Our wetlands and natural spaces need to be connected by protected corridors

Turtles on the road can look like bumps, rocks, or oil on the road. If you see one, give it space. Turn on your hazard lights to warn others. If it is safe to do so, you can help the turtle cross the road, always in the direction that it is travelling. Pick it up by holding both its plastron (underside) and carapace (topside) of the shell. Helping a turtle digging on the side of the road takes a while. Don't move it. Just stick around if possible and keep it safe from cars. Never pick up a turtle by its tail as you can dislocate its spine. Snapping turtles are a challenge to move but it's possible. Far back on the shell where the top meets the bottom, there is a place to grab firmly. They have really long necks and can reach far. Don't pick it up unless you're confident as they crack if dropped on pavement! You can use a car mat or blanket by manoeuvring the turtle onto it, turn it around and drag the mat or blanket backwards. Turn the turtle back to the way it was headed after it's safely across.

An injured turtle needs medical attention ASAP. The Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre is at 705-741-5000. Put the injured turtle in a well-ventilated plastic container with a secure lid. Do not give food or water. Do the same for a deceased turtle. A female turtle could have eggs that could be incubated. Note the location and call the Centre.

Ontario's Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 2007 allowed for an assessment of a species' status by the Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario (COSSARO) comprised of an independent scientific committee working in conjunction with Indigenous knowledge holders. Once a species was classified by COSSARO as threatened or endangered, it received a level of automatic legal protection. The ESA was far from perfect, but it was considered to have some teeth especially when compared with other provinces. In June 2019, the Ontario Government passed the *More Homes, More Choice Act*, declaring that "many will be able to realize their dream of homeownership while renters will see lower costs." This act significantly crippled the ESA several ways. The integrity of COSSARO was sacrificed by allowing individuals with any claim to "community knowledge." This can include anyone with interest in developing an ecologically significant area, for example. It changed how the species was looked at geographically, discounting distinct isolated populations and the status of a species in Ontario. A species in endangered or threatened status in Ontario can be ignored if there is a population elsewhere in North America. Previous deadlines for designating a species at risk have been extended and acceptance of repeated delays have been built into the system. Even after officially listing a species, the act allows a "delay of prohibitions upon initial listing" allowing a further year's delay. A further "temporary suspension of protection upon initial listing" allows the Minister the power to suspend protection for another three years. Under the guise of streamlining construction process, a broad landscape agreement allows for multiple activities on a larger geographical area under one permit. There are no limits on the size of a project or the extent of activities. Finally, developers can pay into a Species-at-Risk Conservation Fund in exchange for habitat destruction. Payment to the Fund allows unchecked destruction.



Helpful Hints and DIYs

Cottage Fire Safety Tip

By: Lynn Watson

Perhaps it is because I have family in BC who have watched BC burn, or maybe it was the orange sunsets over Bobs Lake in July, and the increasing droughts that we are experiencing in Eastern Ontario, but this summer it suddenly hit me that we need to be better prepared for forest fires.

My northern BC family live in a rural area north of Prince George and they are all volunteer fire fighters. They are fire aware and were excited to install a sprinkler system on their roof this year. That seemed extreme to me, but a little research aided by my niece showed me that there are many things we could do around our cottage to make it more fire safe.



I downloaded a free app to my smart phone called FireSmart which provided me with a quick checklist to assess our cottage for its fire safety. Bad news! **It is not fire safe.** We were only thinking aesthetics when we built this place, so we used cedar siding and constructed a large deck out of cedar. Oops! We did not pass in that regard. We were given three recommendations to make our cottage FireSmart which included of course, replacing the siding and deck. While the siding did not pass, the

shingles on our roof, did! In other regards, like keeping debris off the roof, cleaning the gutters regularly and having boxed in fascia and soffit, we scored very well.

The area immediately surrounding our cottage was somewhat better. Did you know that you should have a 1.5 metre non-combustible surface around your entire home? A quick review of our yard prompted by the FireSmart App indicated that we had wood piled too close to the cottage. It was convenient on those cold mornings in the spring and the fall! We quickly remedied that problem and moved the wood pile several metres away to our new woodshed.

We are fortunate here to live in a mixed forest. The presence of leafy trees which are resistant to wildfire is a bonus that my BC relatives do not share. Conifers, on the other hand, are highly flammable.

We are aware that many cottagers on Bobs and Crow Lakes, especially those who live on islands have purchased pumps. In some cases, several cottagers have gone together to purchase a pump that is available to all in case of fire. This would seem prudent in view of the increase in periods of drought in recent years.

For more information on how to make your cottage safe from fires, check the web site, <https://firesmartcanada.ca> or download the app to your Smart Phone as I did. It is a quick and easy inventory to do and someday it may save your cottage if you are fire smart.

