

Summer 2020 Newsletter

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President's Message

Summer 2020

Hello Everyone

This is our summer newsletter but it is arriving at the end of the summer, which once again has gone by very quickly. This as you all know has been a very different summer than any of us has ever experienced. The weather has been quite wonderful, the water lovely for swimming and the ability to enjoy friends and family not really happening. As well, our American friends and members have not been able to enjoy their summer on the Bay.

As you are aware, we were unable to hold any of our usual events. We did manage to hold a Zoom meeting AGM. Not many joined but a few were able to do so. There was an update on the potential of merging with the North Sound Association and this is progressing. I hope in the fall newsletter to let you know exactly the outcome of our discussions.

You may have seen the contests on our website – a “guess where this is” and a “painted rock”. The winners are on the website. I must say when I looked at the places identified as being around West Carling, I could only identify the really obvious ones. I think I need to get out in the boat more and enjoy our beautiful location. I was lucky enough to have the opportunity to be one of the judges in the painted rock contest. The entries were very creative and funny. It was extremely difficult to pick a winner. To me, they were all winners!

Check out our website for the auction of a beautiful painting by one of our members Peter Pook and make a bid.

For those of you who are on the Bay, I hope you are able to enjoy the rest of the summer. Stay safe and take care.

Pam



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COVID 19 Advice for Cottagers

By Donna Tucker

Although the numbers of Covid-19 cases in the area are low (as reported by the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit) be aware that cases are defined as those that have received a positive test result and have a permanent address within the Health Unit's district. Seasonal residents who test positive will be counted in the district of their mailing address. This could result in under-reporting of positive cases in the Parry Sound area and a sense of complacency because the reported numbers are low. Our community is counting on you to do your part to keep everyone safe. It is recommended that we all follow these important practices.



Wear a non-medical grade mask whenever you are out in public and safe physical distancing cannot be maintained. You can get a mask at 92 James Street, Monday to Wednesday 9 am to noon from the West Parry Sound Health Centre Auxiliary mask project.

Although social gatherings can be up to 10 people, we still need to practice physical distancing by keeping at least two metres (just over 6 feet) away from others outside of our direct households and wearing a mask when we are in close contact with those who are not part of our household. Physically-distanced outdoor activities are the safest way to gather with family and friends. Consider options for BYOS -Bring Your Own Supplies!



Carry a personal container of hand sanitizer with you in your car, in your purse or pocket and be a frequent and visible user in all public places. Be aware of high-touch surfaces. Keep household surfaces clean and always practice hand washing whenever soap and water is available.

Water Levels Update – Spring 2020

Bill Bialkowski, June 11, 2020

As I write this water levels update, the US Army Corp reports that Lake Michigan-Huron and Georgian Bay (MH/GB) is 5 inches higher than ever recorded in June. We are 1.37 metres or 54 inches above chart datum (176 meters above sea level) and only 4.5 inches below the all-time high-water record of October 1986. As in the last six years, we are higher than this time last year, by 8 inches, and are forecast to rise 2 more inches before we crest in July. That should put us about 2 inches below the October 1986 all-time record high. Hopefully, the level will then start to recede. But wait, there is more.

You may ask- what is going on! Why are the levels so high, and why are they not coming down like they used to? The recent GBF Water Levels Webinar simply repeated what the government agencies are saying – we have had record breaking precipitation – its climate change, so get used to it.

The current high water was caused by record-breaking water supply in 2014 and 2015, but that is not the whole story. It is complicated as always and involves not only the whole Great Lakes – St Lawrence Basin geography, hydrology and climate science. The map below presents the details of the Great Lakes – St Lawrence Basin, including all of the levels, flows and Net Basin Supplies (NBS). It shows the Long Lac and Ogoki diversions that have fed extra water into Lake Superior since 1940. Our question during this high-water crisis is why not cut these back as has been done previously?



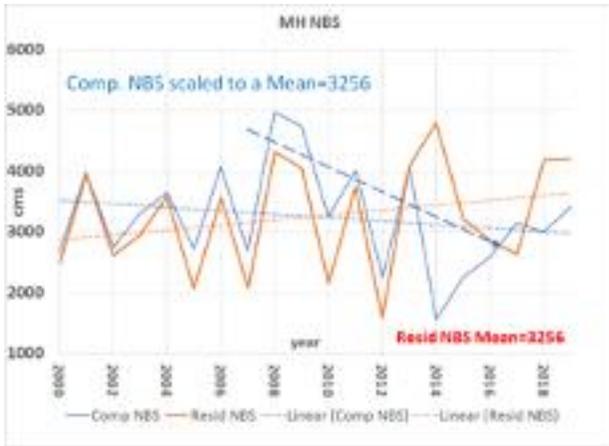
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A quick primer. Canada and the US signed the 1909 Boundary Waters Treaty, and formed the International Joint Commission (IJC) to administer it. The IJC sets the rules by which the Great Lakes waters are to be administered. It oversees three boards of control that oversee the monthly discharge of water, from Lake Superior, Niagara Falls and Lake Ontario. There are no controls or discharge oversight for Lakes MH/GB. Further, the IJC can only advise government on what to do. The governments often ignore the IJC and do not follow the recommendations. The technical agencies include Environment Canada and Climate Change (ECCC), and the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) who carry out the actions needed by the control boards, and also compile the monthly water levels, channel flows, and the water supply to each lake, the net basin supply, or NBS. ECCC and the National Atmospheric and Oceanic Administration's (NOAA) Great Lakes Environmental Research Lab (GLERL) also compile NBS data, although differently.

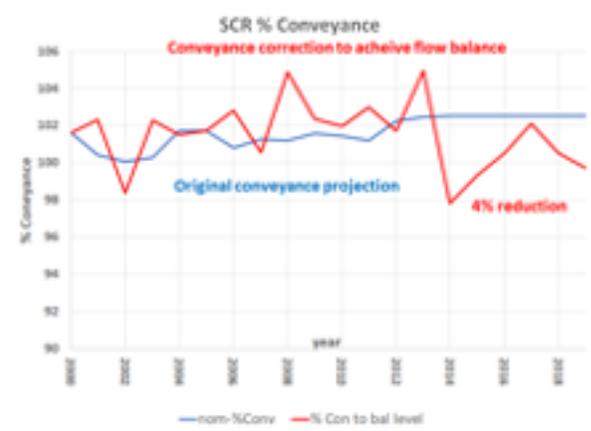
In 1998 water levels suddenly dropped to record lows, and stayed there till 2014. Wetlands shriveled up and some people could not get to their cottages. This was when feverish work started to try to figure out what was going on. This was led by Mary Muter, Chair of Georgian Bay Great Lakes Foundation (GBGLF) who organized the retaining of Baird and Associates, Coastal Engineers to study the problem. The 2005 Baird Report revealed that the capacity of the St Clair River, the main outflow from Lakes Michigan-Huron and Georgian Bay, had expanded an additional 10% over and above what the IJC had accounted for, based on the navigational channel dredging that had occurred between 1900 and 1962. This combined expansion of the river had lowered Lake Michigan-Huron, Georgian Bay by 20 inches, 50 cm during low water periods. The troubling part of this story was that the new erosion was completely missed by the government agencies and it took a private initiative to discover it.

The Baird Report put its finger on the likely cause of this significant miss. Both ECCC and USACE record the net basin supply, or NBS, using what is called the 'residuals method'. Simply put, calculate how much each lake level went up or down each month. The NBS is this volume of water, less inflows plus outflows. This works as long as the flows are accurate. There are problems however on Lake Michigan-Huron, because the St. Clair River flow is calculated based on a river level gage equation. This is accurate after it has been recalibrated to account for the current river depth, but the calibration is laborious and is done infrequently. To complicate matters further, in 2011 the USACE installed an acoustic velocity meter (AVM) in the St. Clair River to help determine the river flow. To calculate flow from velocity also requires accurate river depth measurements. At present this depth calibration appears to be seriously overestimating the true flow. Yet the USACE appear to be giving the AVM flow calculation a very high weight in establishing the 'official' monthly St. Clair River flow. The result is that NBS supply is further inflated, while the St. Clair River conveyance capacity is lost to the four winds.

Unlike the USACE, the NOAA Great Lakes Environmental Research Lab (GLERL) compiles NBS data using the 'components method' – precipitation, plus runoff less evaporation. This is an extremely difficult calculation to make, as there are few measuring stations in the middle of large lakes.



So what about right now? We have been told that the water supply, or NBS has simply been going up and up. The graph on the right compares the annual NBS using both methods for the last 20 years. It shows a different story. Yes, the residual NBS has been slowly rising (red line). However, the components NBS has been falling. Especially, between 2008 and 2014, when the decline was very rapid. When the two NBS methods differ, errors in St. Clair flow have been made.



If the NBS has been declining, and not rising, why are the levels going up and not coming down? With a little hydraulic modeling and water balancing, it is possible to extract a St. Clair River flow ‘conveyance capacity’ graph as seen on the right. The blue line is the conveyance capacity we had been calculating through to 2012 based on earlier work. The red line is the result of re-balancing the St. Clair River flow with actual water levels, and the components NBS. It shows a sudden 4% reduction in 2104. Somehow, the St. Clair seems to have suddenly ‘clogged’ up, hence reducing the outflow and causing the level to rise. While this has not been ‘officially’ proven, it is collaborated by the fact that since 2014, the seasonal decline pattern for Lake Michigan-Huron has changed radically. Normally, levels start to decline in July or August, and decline by about a foot by January or February. Since 2014, this decline has become much smaller and less pronounced. Clearly the water is being held back, and as a result each year we start the cycle a little higher, as the normal amount of water has not had time to drain before spring starts. As a result, we start each year a little higher. At the same time, it has been noticed that the amount of sand being carried by the water entering the St. Clair has dramatically increased, as groynes built to hold sand back on Lake Huron beaches have been overwhelmed by the high water. This suggests that the likely cause of the ‘clogging’ is sand deposited in the river. But then, a recent bathymetric (depth) survey has not been done yet. Till then we will not know.

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We have advised both the US Army Corps and Environment Canada of all of these concerns and are in discussion with them to help clarify the cause of this super high-water.

In April and May, Mary Muter, Chair GBGLF and Roger Gauthier, Chair of Restore Our Water Levels International (ROWI), put on a Water Level Webinars (<https://www.georgianbaygreatlakesfoundation.com/wp-content/uploads/Webinar-ROWI-20200507FL.pdf>) which described the many layers of this saga in detail. An appeal was made for the participants to contact their elected officials to demand practical action that can reduce the current crisis levels and improve how water levels are managed going forward. What could be done? The Long Lac and Ogoki diversion into Lake Superior could be reduced and the discharges from Lake Superior could also be reduced. Why do we have to continue to be the forgotten cousin on the Great Lakes?

In conclusion, our water levels have changed once again, as now it appears that the St. Clair River has been partially clogged with sand, causing Lake Michigan-Huron to back-up. The cycle of increasing water levels is likely to continue into 2021 and beyond.

*Bill Bialkowski, is a Board member – Georgian Bay Great Lakes Foundation (GBGLF) and Restore Our Water International (ROWI)

Divert and Capture – Parry Sound Pilot Project to Reduce Microfibres in Georgian Bay

By Donna Tucker

Microplastics are now a global pollutant that eventually end up in the food chain, water sources and soil. The level of microplastics in Georgian Bay is as high as the concentration in our oceans. Fish in Georgian Bay have higher levels than those found in ocean fish.

There is evidence that more than 800 different species are affected by plastic pollution. Effects on animal life include decreased feeding and growth, hormone system disruption, decreased fertility, and abrasion and blockages from ingestion. Microplastics are found in deep-sea species and can be transferred to their predators. A 2019 study conducted at the University of Victoria estimated that humans ingest between 39,000 and 52,000 particles annually. It is not known whether it is harmful to humans to consume microplastics.

Where do microplastics come from?

Sources of microplastics include litter like coffee cups, foam dock material, nylon ropes, wipes and contact lenses. Another little-known source of plastic pollution is microfibres in clothing that contain fibres such as polyester, nylon and acrylic. Microfibres are tiny strands of microplastics that are less than 5mm in length, difficult to see and almost impossible to clean up. When these fibres are shed either directly through swimming or through washing they don't biodegrade naturally but begin to slowly accumulate. Microfibres are the most common plastic found in the oceans and in wildlife. Up to 700,000 microfibres can be shed in one laundry load and wastewater plants do not capture them all. For households on septic systems, the accumulation of microfibres can lead to failure of the system by blocking effective drainage.



Divert and Capture Project

The Rochman Lab at the University of Toronto has partnered with [Georgian Bay Forever](#) on a two-year project in Parry Sound to divert microfibres from entering the Great Lakes. One hundred volunteers from the town of Parry Sound have had a Filtrol filter installed on their washing machines. The filter captures microfibres that would otherwise end up in Georgian Bay. The project began collecting data in August 2019 and after three months researchers had collected 7 kg of fibres from 70 of the 100 households, which was estimated to be almost three million microfibres. As well, pre and post data collection from the Parry Sound wastewater plant showed a 10% decrease of fibres in wastewater entering Georgian Bay.

Should all washing machines have filters?

Currently, in Japan, washing machines come with lint traps and France will make filters mandatory by January 2025. In Ontario, legislators are starting to work on legislation to require filters and are waiting to see the final results of the Parry Sound study.

How can I help?

1. Use a filter or a Cora Ball to capture fibres. The Cora Ball is placed directly in the washtub. It costs \$55 Cdn and captures 26% of fibres. Two different filters that can be installed on the outflow of the washing machine are the Lint Luv-R, which costs \$140 Cdn and captures 87% of fibres and the Filtrol 160 that costs \$219 Cdn and captures 89% of fibres.
2. Wash clothes less often as frequent washing stresses the fibres and causes more shedding
3. Use cold water as polyester sheds more at higher temperatures
4. When purchasing a washing machine consider a front-loading machine as they shed seven times fewer fibres
5. Recycle textiles. The Killbear Transfer Station now has a textile-recycling bin.

For further information on how you can help refer to the [Georgian Bay Forever website](#).

On Breaking the Code of Silence

By Bruce Davidson

I suppose everyone has a cottage story that cannot be repeated in public lest the listener take a dim view of either the perpetrator or the establishment itself. In the odd instance, there occurs an event of such potential trauma to family members that one feels a chivalrous need to shield them from the details...possibly forever. As you may expect I have just such a story that my brother Alex and I agreed not to tell lest there be unpleasant repercussions. But now that the family cottage has burned to the ground, I no longer feel honour-bound to observe the code of silence.

The original cottage, built by my grandfather in 1923, was conceived as a hunting and fishing lodge rather than a vacation home with creature comforts. Not only was my long-suffering mother denied electricity for more than 30 years, there was pretty grim indoor plumbing as well. (On that subject, I recall as a youth having to contend with hordes of mosquitos and the constant fear of rattlers as one made one's way to the rickety old outhouse in the woods. An outhouse, by the way, featuring two seats, which speaks volumes about familial closeness in days bygone.) But I digress. The point of the story is that not only was the cottage not insulated, it was not wired for electricity nor properly plumbed.

As every builder will attest, it is not the easiest thing to renovate an old building especially when there is no decent crawl space, no proper lighting to see what you're doing and no power tools. Perhaps I'm just making excuses for the appalling opening that was made in the floorboards to accommodate the septic line for the original indoor toilet, installed in the days before hydro. My grandfather unwittingly had hired *The Great Impostor* starring in his lesser-known role in the 1940's classic *The Carling Carpenter*. Said individual had seemingly taken an axe to the floor to fashion the hole and then feathered wooden shingles around the pipe to

cover up the butchery. It may have actually worked for a while, although you can imagine the long-term consequences with insects and rot in a damp space.

Which accounts for the nightly entertainment that we were frequently treated to whilst reading by coal oil lamps, huddled around the old stone fireplace in the living room. A deadly quiet night would suddenly be disturbed by the sound of something noisily rolling down the rafters! What on earth could it be? Well we finally figured that either chipmunks or squirrels had found Grand Central Station under the toilet and made their way up the wooden studs in the walls into the attic. With no insulation to impede the rolling or muffle the sound, the Brunswick Beasties took great delight in bowling acorns down the rafters from the peak, scampering down to retrieve them and then letting the next batch go. The commotion would often last for an hour or more.

Now to the point of the story. One day Alex and I decided that in order to put a light in a bedroom closet, we had to run some wiring through the attic. This was no simple task, as the access was by way of a trap door in the ceiling. Being the mental midget that I was, I dutifully volunteered to climb the ladder and move aside the trap door while Alex held the ladder steady. Now I ask you to picture the moment when, standing high up on the fourth step of the ladder, having lifted the trap door I stuck my head up into the blackness of the attic, switched on my flashlight and found myself staring inches away into the steely black eyes and flickering pink tongue of a viper the size of an anaconda! Letting out a blood-curdling scream, which naturally very nearly gave Alex a heart attack, I dropped my flashlight and leaped straight to the ground over his amazed face, whereupon he knocked over the ladder in joining me in a headlong flight out of the closet, out of the bedroom, and out of the cottage. Had we not been living on an island, I suspect that we'd be running still.



Alex recently recollects that should he wish to confirm the veracity of my source of fright, my rather callous advice to him at the time was “be sure to hold a tennis racquet in front of your face when you stick your head up into the attic”. Needless to say Alex never bothered to conduct the confirmation, the wiring job was never done, and he and I, in the interest of protecting our reptilian friend, agreed never to tell a soul. After all, knowing what lurked above, who could ever sleep peacefully inside again?

Years later, during a renovation of the porch, the contractor, who was no sissy, let out a curse worthy of his trade, having had snake skeletons raining down around him after ripping out a ceiling panel. Seems that rattlers, who are excellent climbers found Grand Central Station led straight to the Brunswick Beasties’ bowling alley. Given the huge entertainment value, the Brunswick Palladium had over the years attracted a menagerie of rodent spectators as well. So the rattlers took up residence, kept a very close eye on the spectators filing into the

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Palladium, slept on nice toasty floorboards, dined at their leisure and lived happily ever after—except for that one occasion when a two-legged creature bashed an opening in their living room floor, flashed a blinding light straight into their eyes and then let out a shrill scream for no reason at all. “Scared the hell out of us! Stupid human. Serves him right!”

Surprise Visit

By Skip Allen

It was a gorgeous Sunday in August 2012, when three unfamiliar boats pulled up to our big red boathouse on Bateau Island. The visitors introduced themselves as David Stewart, Donna McNeill and family and were just hoping they could see the cottage that used to be owned by their great-grandfather. My wife Lucy invited them up for refreshments, and after everyone was properly introduced (our cottage was full of family and guests that holiday week), we sat down to get a history lesson.

To our astonishment, they explained that their great-grandfather was the original owner of our cottage! Henry William Radcliffe Tisdall, owner of Tisdall Jewelers in Toronto, had purchased Parcel P&Q of Bateau Island in 1911. (We knew the Canadian Government had originally surveyed Bateau for 24 parcels in 1910, and that ONLY parcel P & Q were purchased before the Crown changed its mind and decided Bateau should stay a pristine wilderness because of its wetlands. But we never knew who the original owner was). Henry Tisdall was born May 27, 1864, died May 27th, 1926, and was married to Marie Alice Fiske. One of their daughters (Dora Dieudonnee) was the grandmother of our unexpected visitors. Henry's brother was Dr. Frederick Tisdall, a famous Toronto Pediatrician, who invented Pablum.

The visitors also recounted some unusual bits of family lore. In 1920 a pregnant young woman was walking from the cottage out to the 'Teahouse' and was bitten by a rattlesnake – she eventually lost her baby. This led to the construction of the original boardwalk (see picture) so as to avoid any such repeat of the snakebite.

Lucy gladly escorted our visitors around our 100-year old cottage, and then after exchanging addresses, we bid goodbye to our intriguing guests. Could it really be true that we share such a connection to our beloved cottage with strangers we had no idea even existed? Within a few weeks we exchanged additional emails with David & Donna, and to our amazement they eventually sent us pictures that made the Tisdalls strangers to us no more.

As thanks, we sent back to our visitors the following history of what had happened to their old family cottage after their great grandfather Henry Tisdall passed away.

The Ohmer Years (1926 to 1941):

Mr. W.I. Ohmer, like many wealthy Americans, vacationed in the Parry Sound area in the early 1900s. It was relatively easy to reach via cruise ships or passenger trains. Also the summers were cool, a major attraction for someone living in the hot, humid Ohio Valley. By the 1920s Parry Sound had several excellent hotels, including the Belvidere where Mr. Ohmer was a frequent guest of the proprietor, Mr. A. G. Peebles. In 1926 Ohmer's love of the area soon led him to purchase his own cottage on Bateau Island (which we now know was from the Tisdall estate).

Wilfred Ignatius "Will" Ohmer, was born 26 April 1860 in Dayton Ohio. He initially entered his father's furniture business, Michael Ohmer & Sons, and eventually became CEO. He invented the streetcar fare register, perfected in 1893, which was the forerunner of the taxicab fare register. In 1896 he was managing director of the Register Recording Company, London, England. At one time, he was also the owner of the Dayton Journal newspaper. His Gracemont Estate was in the ritzy Oakwood section of Dayton. He and his wife Grace Dana Snyder of New York City had one daughter, Grace.

Will Ohmer was good friends with the most famous inventors from Dayton, Wilbur and Orville Wright. When the Wright Brothers needed help patenting their new 'flying machine', they turned to their friend Will Ohmer. He took them to his lawyer outside of Dayton and in so doing started them on their journey to one of the

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most famous patents in all history. Orville Wright was also connected to Georgian Bay. He had purchased a cottage on Lambert Island in 1917 and legend has it he and Thomas Edison may have visited their friend Ohmer on Bateau.

By the late '30s Mr. Ohmer was nearing 80 years old and his health was deteriorating. In Aug 1941 he wrote a letter to his friend Mr. Peebles, who had helped Ohmer purchase the property in 1926, asking Mr. Peebles to help him now sell the cottage. (Our family still has a copy of this original handwritten letter – it shows the deep feelings that Ohmer had for Bateau, and the importance he placed on the simple pleasures it gave him.)

The Douglass Family Years: 1941 to Today

Our family's connection to Georgian Bay and Bateau Island began when Mr. Will Ohmer, somewhat frail in his 81st year of life, walked into the law office of the Honorable Mason Douglass in Dayton Ohio. Ohmer was sure if Judge Douglass saw the island he would fall in love with it just as Ohmer had many years before. It was August 1941 and America's entry into WWII was only a few months away – but Mason was intrigued, so he called his wife Jessie and told her to pack and get their twin daughters (Martha and Mary age 19) ready for a trip to Parry Sound, Ontario.

Their destination was Bateau Island. It was a 600- mile trip from Dayton Ohio to Parry Sound Ontario, but that was the easy part. After arriving at the town dock, they still needed to board a Livery Boat and head 30 miles out into the 30,000 Islands of Georgian Bay. The scenery was like nothing they had ever seen — pure clear water, smooth pink granite islands, windswept pines and hardly a soul in sight. After spending just a few short days on Bateau, the Livery Boat came back and returned them to civilization. But Ohmer was right, and the island spell had been cast. Mason & Jessie returned to Dayton and made the purchase that would come to have a profound effect on their lives, and those of their grandchildren, great-grandchildren and even great-great-grandchildren.

For the twin girls (Martha and Mary, who were still in college) those first summers on Bateau were a welcome respite from the terrible events gripping the world. Most of the boys their age were off to war, and some would never return. Bateau Island did “pitch-in” for the war effort. A Pine blight had struck the northern shores of Georgian Bay in the early '40s and now most of the old pines on Bateau and surrounding islands were dead. Mason gave the Canadian Government permission to build a small cabin on his Parcel Q and use it to house the loggers who would harvest wood for the war effort.

For Jessie Douglass, just in her early 40's, the first few years at their new cottage on Bateau meant no running water, no toilets, no electricity, no outboard motors, no phones, no refrigerator, no restaurants and only a few nearby neighbours. Clothes were cleaned with a hand wringer and washboard. Meals were cooked on a wood stove. Food was kept in the Icebox using frozen blocks cutout from the lake and stored in the Icehouse. Jessie was strong and independent and would have made a great pioneer woman. She had no trouble embracing this somewhat rugged island life. In fact, she came to love it and would make this her 'home away from home' for the rest of the summers of her life.

When the war ended, gasoline rationing stopped and travel was easier. Jessie was now spending most of the summer at the cottage along with Mary & Martha, who had recently graduated from Ohio Wesleyan College. These two pretty, single young girls attracted their share of “visitors” — including a handsome young Ontario game warden who always seemed to need to check on the fishing near Bateau when the girls were around.

But the most important visitor came in summer 1948. Jessie loved company, and her friend Lucille Dietz from South Carolina visited with her that year. When it was time to go home, Lucille enlisted her husband Phil and her

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nephew Stone Bagby to come pick her up. Stone had been an Air Force Pilot flying ‘over the hump’ from India to China during WWII, so she figured he could navigate from South Carolina to Parry Sound.

We’ll never know whether it took Stone one minute or five days to fall in love with Martha L. Douglass during his stay on Bateau. But we do know when he returned home he told his mother he was “going to marry that girl”. On Apr 2, 1949, Stone Bagby and Martha Douglass took their wedding vows in Dayton, Ohio.

Jessie wanted to spend the whole summer at the cottage, but Mason was a practicing lawyer, so he could not be away from Dayton for such long periods. Mason knew no one should be staying in that ‘wilderness’ alone, so he hired Jim, a native Ojibway living on the Parry Island First Nation reserve, to keep the place open with Jessie from June thru Aug.

The small room at the back of our boathouse is still referred to as “Jim’s Room”, since that is where he lived during the summer months. There was plenty for Jim to do in those days. Wood for the stove, cold blocks from the icehouse, guiding fishing trips, maintaining all the wood boats, cleaning fish, and on and on. He was a very good carpenter as well. In 1947 Jim rebuilt the entire boardwalk using only a handsaw and hammer. The existing kitchen cabinets were also hand-built by Jim over 60 years ago.

Jessie may have been content with the simple cottage way, but Mason had some different ideas. In the 1950’s he began to add conveniences that many of the surrounding islanders thought were somewhat grand. Examples: Two Peterborough runabouts with 16hp motors, that some islanders predicted would pull the transom off the boat; a new Servel propane fridge to end the dependence on the icebox; a gas-powered pump, attic mounted water tank and a Septic bed that allowed for modern bathrooms to be installed. By the early ‘60s he had built a new Dining Room and added a large covered deck; extended the boathouse to 100ft to take care of the three new Thompson wood boats; added a massive front dock, and wired the cottage and boathouse for lights run by generator. They even added a Baby Grand Piano for the living room!

In those early days, all this earned the Douglass cottage on Bateau a bit of notoriety. Many of the other cottages still had outhouses, oil lamps, and just one small boat. In the early ‘50s, Mason purchased Barrett Island (“the little house”) from Charles & Lillian Noble to accommodate the many guests Jessie was inviting. Jessie often used it as her own retreat, and let her guests stay on Bateau. Mason renovated that cottage as well, and they owned it for 30 years.

Jessie passed away in 1972, and by 1980 Mason was in poor health. Like many family cottage histories, this meant a period of transition as the next generation learned how to maintain and share the cottage. Fortunately for our family, Martha Douglass’s bond to Bateau was very strong. She had met her husband Stone Bagby there in 1948, and she had continued to bring her children to the island every year. My wife Lucy, Martha’s oldest child, has essentially spent a portion of every summer of her life at the cottage. We now have four children (plus their four spouses) and three grandchildren coming to the cottage every year. Lucy knows that in a few years another generational transition is inevitable, so she makes sure to gather her grandchildren around the fire each July and tell them the stories first hand of how their great-great-grandparents Mason & Jessie Douglass and all their descendants came to love Bateau.

Footnote: Bateau and Dayton.

Many of the early nearby islanders (we now count ~ 15 cottages as neighbours) were also from Dayton — and were associated in some way with the Dayton Gyro Club. The Crouch’s and Millers had owned Killarney from 1926. The Grandins (Paradise) and Newells (Nutz Knob) came in the late 1930s. Byron Spoon (Spoonland) and Harry Brown (Evelyn Island) purchased their cottages just before Mason in 1941. The Robinsons, Gerard’s, Lohrs, Bates & Shorts followed in the late ‘40s, and then Watsons (Beacon Island) in late ‘50s. The Millers (leaving

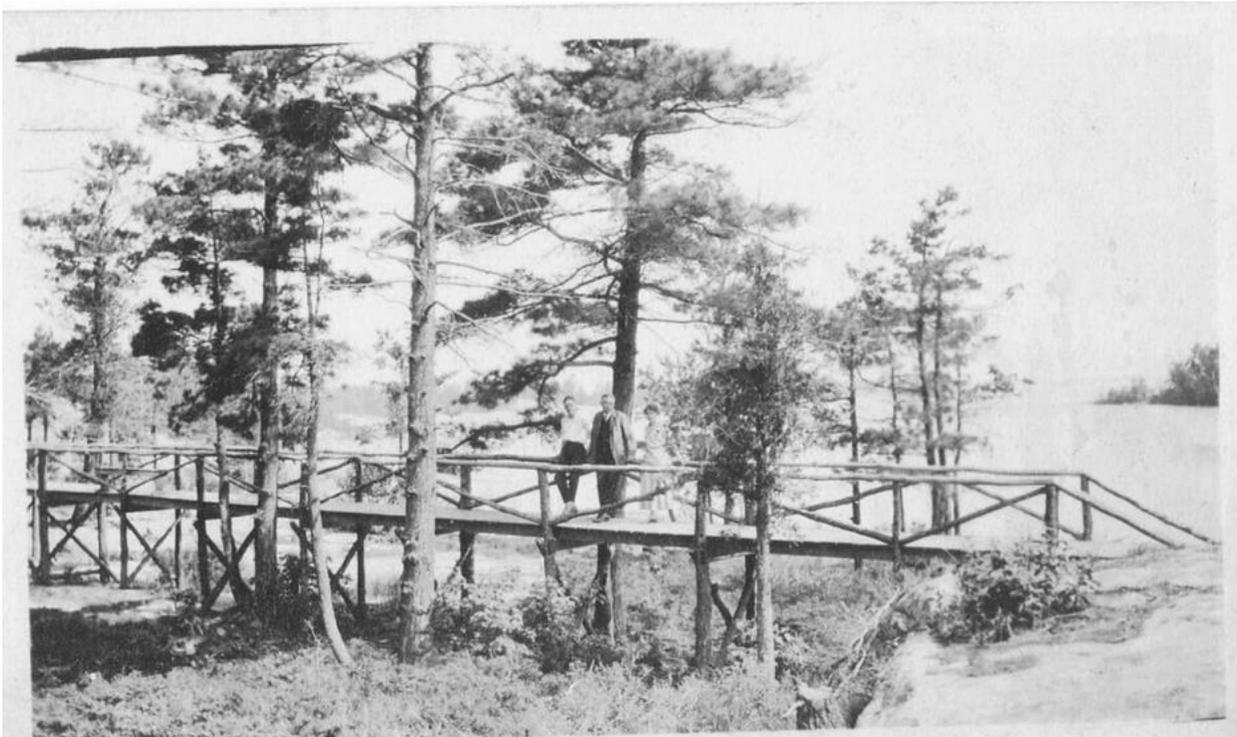
West Carling Association – Summer 2020 Newsletter

Killarney to the Crouch's) set up the only other cottage on Bateau in 1960. Every one of these families was from Dayton.

Only six of those original families still own cottages around Bateau — Douglass, Newells, Spoons, Watsons, Millers, & Gerards. Each one of those families has a rich history of their own to tell.



Mrs. & Mr. Tisdall (on the right) with their staff on Bateau circa 1920



Henry Tisdall (center) with his daughter and son-in-law on the boardwalk c. 1920



Mary Alice Fisch Tisdall with her Grandson c. 1921

SOCIAL AND PERSONAL NEWS **THE DAYTON DAILY NEWS** **CLUBS-MUSIC BOOKS-AND ART**

VOL. LI. DAYTON, OHIO, SUNDAY, JULY 8, 1928 NO. 321

WINTER SCENE OF JOHN G. SUTHERLAND COTTAGE—
"PETER PAN" ON GEORGIAN BAY

DANA LODGE
SUMMER HOME OF
MR. & MRS.
WILL I. OHMER

DAYTONIANS LEAVE TO TAKE UP SUMMER ABODE IN COTTAGES, LODGES

Many Guests Invited to Enjoy Season's Social Period With Residents — Homes Most Attractively Arranged and Improved
By Helen B. Kling

The accompanying photographs of summer homes of several of Dayton's social set portray only in a small way amid what pleasant surroundings the coming months will be spent by the occupants, who, within the last two weeks, at the first suggestion of the heated period ahead, willingly closed their city homes and left for the remainder of the summer.

"Dana Lodge", the home of Mr. and Mrs. Will I. Ohmer of Gracemont, is located on an island of 22 acres in Georgian Bay, near Toronto. The Ohmers purchased the island from the Harry Tisdall estates, and have added many modern improvements to the already artistic structure. In the large living room, overlooking the bay, grass rugs are used with Filipino furniture, and the fireplace is an unusual design of pink granite, off the island. The lodge is constructed of bass wood, as is also the tea-house, set on the water's edge and connected with the main structure by a rustic bridge. A natural sandy beach, a golf course, motor boats and canoes, are ready for the pleasure of the summer visitors. Mr. and Mrs. Ohmer are spending the entire summer at their Canadian home, and early in August their daughter, Miss Grace Ohmer, plans to join them, and will have as her house guests a group of college classmates, before she sails in September to study abroad during the winter months.

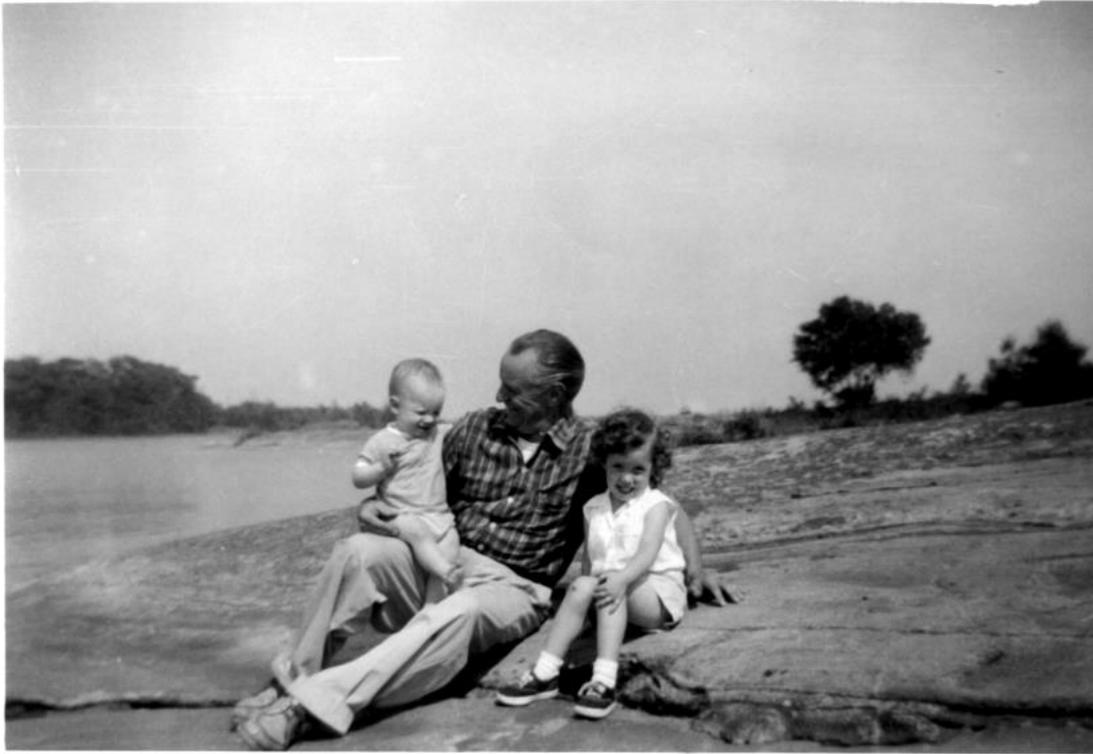
Dayton Daily News Society Page announces Will and Grace Ohmer heading to summer cottage on Bateau Island (July 1928)



Orville Wright meets with his friend Will Ohmer at Dayton AirField



Mary, Jessie and Martha Douglass have afternoon tea (same bench as Mrs. Tisdall in 1920's picture)



SEPTEMBER, 1953

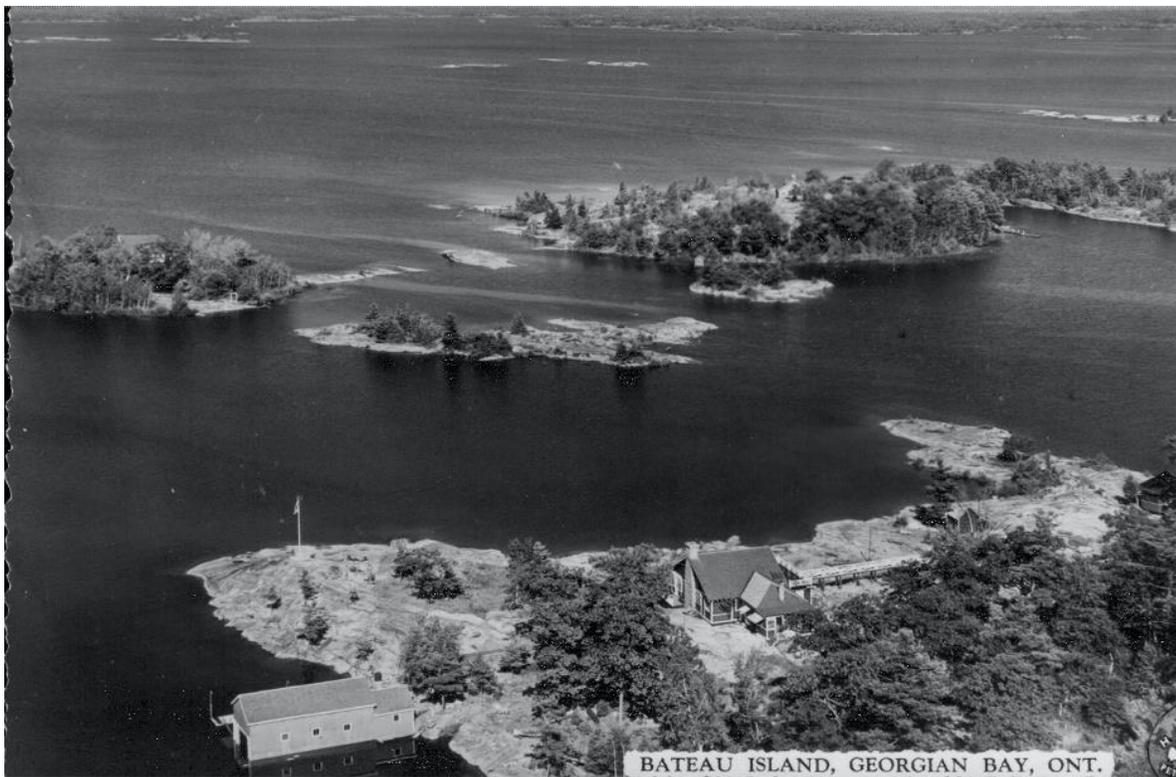
Judge Mason Douglass with his grandchildren John and Lucy (Aug 1953)



Island Party at Douglass's Cottage (1947) with many of the Dayton neighbours.



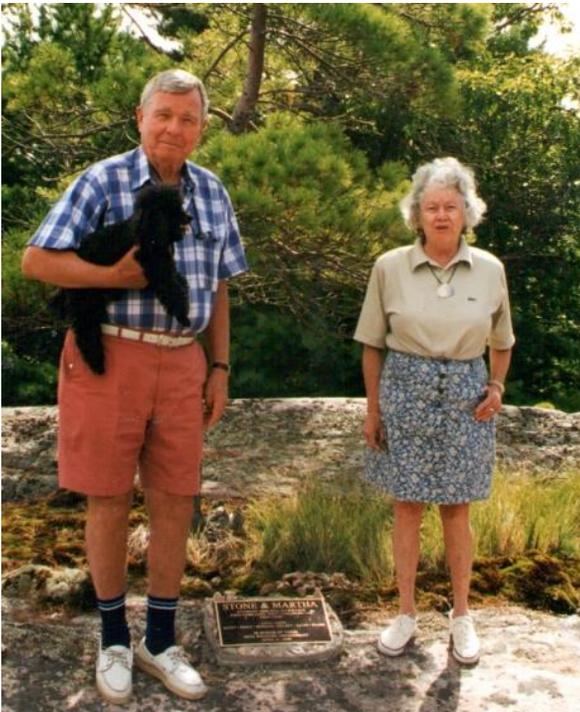
Jim shows off the day's catch down by boathouse circa 1955



Postcard of Douglass Cottage in 1953 from the West



Jim's rebuilt Boardwalk c.1950. Compare to Tisdall picture in 1920 — all the pines are gone due to the Pine Blight.



Stone & Martha (nee Douglass) Bagby commemorate their 50th wedding anniversary near the spot they first met in 1948



The Big RED boathouse that has stood for 110 years.



Lucy showing off the beauty that is Bateau.

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