



# WEST CARLING ASSOCIATION

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Incorporated 1992

\*Georgian Bay Shoreline Concerns\*

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## SPRING 2007 NEWSLETTER

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Bruce Davidson, President

The latest issue of *Update* from the Georgian Bay Association is not only commendable for its photographic and journalistic excellence, but gives ample evidence that many issues confronting West Carling are shared and being addressed by our 'parent' organization. Of course, the fact that the lead article on wind farms has been co-authored by three WCA members leads to a congruent interest on this front. Congratulations to members Bill Bialkowski, John Crean and Jeremy Gawen for the creation of an excellent position paper for the GBA entitled "Wind Farms and the Ontario Environment". Other issues of common interest dealt with in *Update* include critically low historic water levels and improved cellular phone service.

There are, however issues that are unique to West Carling which are deserving of our undivided attention. Notably, these include the crafting of a new Official Plan specific to our area and the need to protect Franklin Island and other Crown lands within our borders. I will take this opportunity to comment on the first issue, while the latter will be dealt with elsewhere in this newsletter.

The Official Plan for the Township of Carling presently being drafted replaces the existing Official Plan that was a joint document shared with the former townships of McDougall and Foley. The stated purpose of the Official Plan as contained in the draft of February, 2007 is "to establish goals, objectives and land use policies to primarily manage and direct physical change and the effects on the social, economic and natural environments of the Township of Carling". In practical terms, this document, when finalized and approved by relevant Ministries, will be the legal framework for zoning by-laws governing us for decades to come. So it is extremely important for WCA members with concerns on this front to provide input. There are opportunities to participate in the monthly workshops and there will be both an Open House and a Public Meeting to discuss its provisions, hopefully this summer.

There are a few items in the February draft that are noteworthy. Firstly, 50.4% of Carling Township is Crown land. I think all WCA members will be relieved to learn that "one of the key components ...will be the management and preservation of the natural environment which is central to the goal and objectives of the plan". Secondly,

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the results of the questionnaire circulated to property owners last year reveal that water quality preservation and quiet enjoyment are the most important character features in Carling. Thirdly, some two-thirds of the entire population of Carling is seasonal, while the year round population is a relatively small 1055 persons. Finally, as a perspective on future growth, it is interesting to discover that there are now about 1500 developed lots in Carling, 650 vacant and the potential to create almost 1150 additional lots based on existing standards. When one considers that many owners will not choose to subdivide, it is evident that most of the pressure on the environment in the future will come from visitors.

In conclusion, it would appear from the initial drafts of the Official Plan that Carling Township is well aware of the special nature and fragility of our natural environment and will likely be proposing sensible by-laws to preserve and protect it. What is less clear is how the Township intends to deal with the huge influx of summer visitors and the resultant environmental pressures that this creates. I think it would be valuable if West Carling members attended monthly workshops during the drafting stages to provide input in this regard. To receive notification of meetings and draft documents, kindly contact Susan Murphy by e-mail addressed to [clerk@carlingtownship.ca](mailto:clerk@carlingtownship.ca).



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## WHO REMEMBERS THE JOHN P?

Another historical note from the Carling Market Cookbook. This wonderful old ship was active on Georgian Bay in the 1950's, providing delivery of necessary food supplies to many island residents. Read all about it in the cookbook.

After a second printing, the cookbook will now be available again at the Carling Market , starting the first Market Day, Saturday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>, at the Rec. Centre on Rte. 559, from 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM. The Market will be open every Saturday until Labour Day. Hope to see you there!



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**PLEASE FILL OUT AND RETURN THE  
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**TIME TO PUBLISH A NEW WCA MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY**  
By Michael Gordon

The West Carling Association last published a Directory booklet in 2001. At that time, prior to the introduction of new privacy legislation, the township office was able to provide the information (names and addresses) about the owners of all properties in the West Carling Association territory (corresponding to every number on the West Carling Association maps). Even with that assistance, the work required to compile and produce the Directory was substantial. Since the 2001 Directory was published, Doug Malvern (our membership database manager) has tried diligently to keep the information current. However, with no mechanism to alert him to changes of ownership and no ability to obtain information about the new owners, the task has been difficult if not impossible.

The need to publish a new Directory has been a regular item of discussion at the WCA Director's meetings, but with the township office no longer able to share personal information about property owners, the task of compiling a comprehensive directory was simply too large for a Board of volunteer directors to assume.

At our final Director's meeting last fall we decided to try and publish a directory in summer 2007 but instead of being comprehensive (including information on every property), we would focus only on those property owners who are members of the WCA. To compile and publish this Membership Directory, however, we need your permission to include your personal information. You will note on the membership renewal form that we have included a box for you to check to allow us to include your information - please do check it.

Our intention is to distribute this Membership Directory to current WCA members along with the Fall newsletter. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at [mgordon003@sympatico.ca](mailto:mgordon003@sympatico.ca) or at home at 705 326-7553.

# STEWARDSHIP OF FRANKLIN ISLAND

By Scott Tomenson

Increasing use and in some cases, abuse of Franklin Island grabbed the attention of a number of concerned groups who quickly came to a common understanding that something needed to be done and relatively soon.

In the summer of 2006, Eric McIntyre of the Eastern Georgian Bay Stewardship Council (EGBSC), a quasi arm of the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), spearheaded a monitoring program, with the assistance of some West Carling Association (WCA) volunteers and White Squall (and with funding from the Great Lakes Sea Kayaking Association GLSKA). The intent was to monitor the use of Franklin Island, the "side-effect" was that signs were posted, "thunderboxes" (latrines) were installed and garbage was regularly removed at some of the areas where traffic had been heaviest in previous years. It appears that even this little effort had a "calming" effect on use of the Island. There were still some problems, but it appeared that some "education" for the users had some positive impact.

This led to an idea that a more consistent "monitoring and education" program might continue to have a favourable impact. We turned to our neighbours in Pointe Au Baril, who have a "Marine Patrol" run by the Georgian Bay Land Trust (GBLT) in conjunction with the Pointe Au Baril Cottagers Association, to learn about their experiences.

With this in mind a group of "partners" gathered in October of 2006 to discuss alternatives: This group included:

- The Township of Carling (Mayor Konoval, Gord Harrison)
- Eastern Georgian Bay Stewardship Council (Eric McIntyre)
- Georgian Bay Biosphere Inc. (Greg Mason)
- Georgian Bay Land Trust (Wendy Cooper)
- Great Lakes Sea Kayaking Association
- West Carling Association (many of the Board of Directors)
- White Squall (Tim Dyer)

From these discussions a proposal for a "Carling Summer Student Program" was developed in an effort to build on the successes of 2006.



# WEST CARLING ASSOCIATION

Annual General Meeting  
Sunday July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2007  
10:30 a.m.  
Carling Recreation Hall

Come early at 10:00 am for coffee and chat with your neighbours

## *Stewardship (cont'd)*

The purpose of the 2007 program will be to build on the 2006 program and expand beyond clean-up and data collection to focus on education on responsible recreation, monitoring and collecting data on use, increasing awareness about the initiative and creating a presence on the water to encourage responsible recreation on Crown land and in the Carling community in general.

The program will continue to have a volunteer component and be supported by staff and volunteers associated with partner organizations. Although a local initiative, it will build on other successful stewardship programs such as the Pointe au Baril Marine Patrol.

The program will continue to represent a strong and successful partnership between a number of groups with Carling Township as the "lead organization" involved because the MNR and the EGBSC do not have the resources to continue.

This was proposal for a "Carling Summer Student Program" was presented to Carling council in January.

Minister Ramsay (MNR) met with Mayor Konoval and other council members in February to discuss the "leadership" role and although Minister Ramsay made certain verbal commitments, the follow-through was lacking in funds and scope.

This prompted the "Partnership", at a council meeting on March 12<sup>th</sup>, to once again ask Carling Township to take the lead role to employ summer students who would be managed by the "Partnership". It was agreed by Mayor Konoval and Council that a special meeting would be arranged to work out further details in late March or early April. While no firm commitment has yet been given, we are hopeful that these meetings will produce a positive result for the program.



## UPDATE ON THE PARK-TO-PARK TRAIL

By Lori Ingriselli, Project Coordinator, Park-To-Park Trail Association

At the Park-to-Park AGM held Jan. 25<sup>th</sup> 2007, Mayor Mike Konoval and councillor Hans Muysson expressed their continued support for the Park-To-Park Trail, which has been an important part of the area's history and community. It is Park-To-Park's goal to see the trail completed through Carling Township, finally connecting Killbear Provincial Park, this year. To complete the trail connection through Carling to Killbear Park we first need to complete a survey through the area. We've obtained quotes for this work to be done and have been working towards setting aside enough funding for the survey, and the trail development to follow. We are currently prepared to have the area surveyed this spring/summer.

As a non-profit organization with 230 km of trail to build and maintain, however, securing funding for trail issues is a challenge we continue to face, and this can often slow the trail development process. A major goal for the organization in 2007 is to increase trail pass support and awareness. Since all trail pass dollars go directly into our trail maintenance fund, trail pass support has the potential to move the organization to sustainability and provide the means to repair damaged trail and respond to other trail issues.

Any questions or comments can be directed to the Park-To-Park office in Parry Sound at 705-746-4455, [info@parktoparktrail.com](mailto:info@parktoparktrail.com), or visit [www.parktoparktrail.com](http://www.parktoparktrail.com).

	<p>CRAIG GROVES</p> <p>705 342-1228 705 746-3122 (cell) <a href="mailto:cegroves@vianet.on.ca">cegroves@vianet.on.ca</a></p>
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# **THE GEORGIAN BAY ASSOCIATION**

90<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting  
Wednesday, April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2007

Reception 6:30-7:15  
Meeting 7:30-9:00

Leaside Memorial Gardens  
1073 Millwood Road. Toronto

## **Carling Township Hospital-Equipment Benefit Dinner**

Saturday July 7th, 2007  
Carling Recreation Center

Cocktails 5:00 to 6:30pm  
Dinner at 6:30pm

Featuring: Mark Crocker – “one of North America's best ventriloquists”

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# SPECIAL CORMORANT REPORT

By Bill Davis

*“If you have a cormorant problem, and you do not do anything about it, nothing else you do as a fishery manager, matters. Reducing creel limits, shorter seasons, better enforcement, stocking, habitat improvement, all just provide more food for cormorants.”* - Chris Davis, Area Fishery Manager, Lac La Biche, Alberta.

Because I agree completely with this statement, I am writing a special report dealing with the cormorant issue. We have a cormorant problem, nothing is being done about it, and (almost) nothing else matters. This report deals most specifically with our experience in this area.

For five years, 2001 - 05 MNR oiled the eggs of cormorants in some of their nesting colonies on Georgian Bay and the North Channel as part of a research program. Although some locations were placebos, with no control, we were lucky to be one of the locations where eggs were oiled. As another part of the research, extensive studies were done on fish populations to determine the impact of cormorants on them. As I reported in previous reports, the fish researchers found that cormorants caused profound effects, especially surrounding and near nesting colonies (these locations are called predation halos). In some instances all fish, of a size vulnerable to cormorant predation, were absent. Another purpose of this research was to see if the egg oiling control method would allow a recovery of fish populations, and thus provide another indication of the effect of the cormorants. Since cormorants live an average of 6 years in the wild and have been known to live 18, I felt that the 5 year duration for the research was minimal, and that at least 10 years would be needed. I

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felt it would take several years for cormorant numbers to drop below significant predatory levels, especially considering the depleted nature of the fishery. And also, it might take a few years for fish to respond, because not all years are climatically favorable for good fish production. This would, of course, vary with the many species of fish involved.

Because of the profound impacts on fish communities found by the fishery biologists, imagine my dismay when last May I found a cormorant colony in the McCoy's with all nests full of chicks. When I asked our Lake Manager, Dave Reid, if a colony had been missed, he did not know, but said he would check. He soon reported back to me that the egg oiling was over. I want you to note two things here. First, our **Lake Manager** did not know that the cormorant egg oiling had ceased, and two, **the control of cormorants had ceased**. Given the huge impact found by the fishery researchers, how could this have happened? The answer is that **the** top predator in our aquatic ecosystem is not managed by fishery biologists, it is managed by wildlife biologists. And, as my son Chris says, there has been a lot of bad fishery science done, especially on cormorants, by wildlife biologists. I might add the qualification that this bad science just applies to what happens below the water's surface. Wildlife biologists have understood, and have been quite concerned about crowding of other bird colonies, and damage to vegetation, by cormorant colonies.

I obtained a copy of a report titled "Review of the Status and Management of Double-crested Cormorants in Ontario 2006". This report, combined with what I already know of cormorant management, leads me to believe that the wildlife biologists have made 3 monumental errors in forming their opinion on cormorants' impact on sport fisheries and other components of our aquatic ecosystem. To some extent, my view is amplified by my experience with our recreational fishery which is

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relatively close to excellent locations for cormorant colonies in the Minks, McCoy's and Limestones. We may be a worst case scenario, - a predation halo.

1) Wildlife biologists began studying the impact of cormorants after anglers complained that cormorants were wiping out their fish. I could find nowhere in the report a caveat that cormorant diet studies were done on severely degraded fish communities.

2) Wildlife biologists performed most, if not all, of their cormorant diet studies at nesting colonies, probably because any attempt to study adult cormorant diets elsewhere would be very difficult, and consequently very expensive. Cormorants spend almost seven months in our area, but only six to ten weeks tending chicks. Any diet studies done at nesting colonies could hardly be considered representative of overall cormorant diets.

3) Wildlife biologists reported their cormorant diet study results, for individual fish species, as a portion of cormorant diets, not as a portion of that fish species present in the lake. This leads to their assumption that a small percentage of a particular fish species in cormorant diets would have a proportionately small impact on that fish species. There is apparently no attempt to relate the size of the cormorant population, and the numbers of any particular fish species that would be consumed, to the numbers of those fish present.

Cormorant management is now as much a political issue as biological. This can also be blamed on the MNR Wildlife Section. They have consistently validated the opposition to cormorant management by a wide variety of naturalist groups. It will take decades to undo the damage their misinformation has caused in the public arena. This opposition has intimidated the fishery biologists into taking a very slow and cautious approach in trying to change the public perception of cormorants. Fishery biologists have now had solid evidence, for almost three years, how bad the cormorant situation is, but there is still no sign of a cormorant management programme on the distant horizon.

The bottom line is that, if this situation is to change, and you would like to see a recovery in the health of our aquatic ecosystem, and our recreational fishery, you had better complain long, and loud, to MNR and your elected politicians.

For a copy of the complete report, please contact Bill at 705-342-5412 or [bbdavis@vianet.on.ca](mailto:bbdavis@vianet.on.ca)