



WEST CARLING ASSOCIATION

9 Christie Street,
R.R. #1 Nobel, Ontario, P0G 1G0
Since 1921
Incorporated 1992
Georgian Bay Shoreline Concerns

SPRING 2013 NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

by Jeremy Gawen

I realize that this letter follows fairly closely on the last newsletter but I really thought that you would want to know what has happened to water levels since last summer and what is being done around the township to ease the situation. For those of you who may not be aware, after a long dry summer, water levels in Georgian Bay were very low by September with lots of people having to move docks further out and dinging their propellers on rocks they've never seen before. Since then, things have gone from bad to worse. Terry Gilbert of Snug Harbour reported that the water went down about 10 inches in December alone. The US Army Corps of Engineers announced that the January average level for Lake Huron broke the previous all-time record low set in March 1964. This puts us sixteen inches below chart datum and into uncharted waters. Unless we have extremely high levels of precipitation and very cold weather so that the lakes freeze for the rest of the winter, there is every chance that the record all-time lows will persist into March. Marinas all along Georgian Bay are reporting major problems and many of the interconnecting channels are too shallow, not to mention the problems faced by individual cottagers who are unable to get to their cottages by boat.

At West Carling, we have surveyed our commonly used channels, given the water levels, and will be issuing an advisory in the next few weeks regarding which channels are likely impassible and where extra caution should be used.

Finally the IJC have completed their deliberations on the Upper Great Lakes Study, and the public review meetings held last July. Yet in spite of promising a decision by early 2013, they have said nothing yet. At the Midland and Collingwood meetings in July, Canadian IJC Commissioner Lyall Knot said to us all: "We hear you loud and clear - restore our water levels and do it NOW". Instead there are rumours that the IJC now favours an 'Adaptive Management Strategy'. This simply means - folks you are on your own, so adapt as best you can to the low water levels - they are a fact of life, and by the way no structures in the St. Clair River. This is speculative and we look forward to the official word in the next few weeks. A key point is that the IJC's only role is to make recommendations to both governments.

**WEST CARLING ASSOCIATION
LIST OF OFFICERS**

Jeremy Gawen, President & GBA Rep
e-mail: j.gawen@aympatico.ca
Cottage: 705 342-9192 (254)
Toronto: 416 481-7538

Dave Turner, Vice-President
Home: 226 920 6101
Cottage: 342-7211 (101)
potturn@yahoo.ca

Sheila Tierney, Secretary
tierneyes@gmail.com
Cottage: 342-1653 (099)
Home: 905 468-2200

Murray Hogeboom, Treasurer
mhogeboom@sympatico.ca
Home: 905 889-3645
Toronto: 416 484-9480

Marc Cooper, Vice-President
mcooper@agency59.ca
Cottage: 705 342-7470

Bill Bialkowski, Newsletter
Bialkowski@rogers.com
Cottage: 342-7354 (261)
Home: 905 883-7508

LIST OF DIRECTORS

(365) Christina Caap 342-7301
sofiefred@yahoo.se

Ian Hunt 705 751-0102
Ianlhunt@aol.com

(177) Dick Biggins 342-7187
Home: 828-299-9128
rgbiggins@aol.com

(I-254) David Hume 905 466-2877
Home: 905 815-0060
davidhume@cogeco.ca

(I-229) Ken James 416 587-5000
Home: 416 485-8400
kenj587@gmail.com

(I-257) Alex Davidson 342-5129
Toronto: 416 484-9480
alex@jcclark.com

(367) John Rohr 342-7781
jandprohr@yahoo.ca

(I-257) Bruce Davidson 342-1034
Toronto: 416 932-0030
dbdavidson@rogers.com

(Telos Is.) David Shelley 416 931 3005
davidmshelley@cogeco.ca

(C254) Phyllis Ortved
Cottage: 647 808-6163
Toronto: 416-920-6163..

That's the bad news; the good news is that a lot of people have been working really hard to alleviate the situation both in the long term and the short term. In the long term, we all believe that something has to be done in the St Clair River to (a) stop the ongoing erosion and (b) install underwater sills in the river to slow the water pouring out of Lake Huron and hence raise water levels in the lake. This has been brought about by the excellent work of the Great Lakes Chapter of Sierra Club Ontario (SCO). Sierra Club has just triggered the formation in the US of the Restore Our Waters International Inc. group (ROW-I), and has also uncovered, a) that the 1956 Canada-US agreement to build St. Clair River structures to compensate for past navigation dredging is still in force, although by now un-funded, and b) that the US Army Corps of Engineers is still authorized to design and construct compensating structures in the St. Clair River. March 7 was the start of 'Great Lakes Week' in Washington, DC, and ROW-I's Chair Roger Gautier, a retired US Army Corps hydrologist, was there to persuade congressional leaders and the Obama administration to provide the funding needed for the Corps to start their work immediately. All this makes the IJC's up-coming decision moot; as there is little need for a recommendation on something for which the governments have an outstanding agreement.

In the short term, the GBA has formed a Water Access Committee which is working with the local township Mayors and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) to try to expedite the issuing of dredging and blasting permits to clear channels and dock approaches (again, more about this in UPDATE).

In our area, we have done a brief survey of the local marinas and can report the following:

- At **Dillon Cove**, Sue reports that she lost the use of 6 dock spaces due to low water last year. She had to find alternate dockage for her rental boats and had to jockey customers' boats around the few spaces still with water. The gas dock operation was a huge concern, while sailboats could simply not get in at all. An added expense was the need to build stairs and hand rails just to allow safe access down steep ramps to docks which are now so far down. Water lines were also vulnerable and easily nicked by props. Sue had to move her water line out an extra couple hundred feet.

The Carling Fire/Rescue boat at the township dock already had trouble leaving and entering with this low water.



G & B McNabb Lumber Co. Ltd.
22 Seguin Street, Parry Sound, ON P2A 1B1
Tel. (705) 746-2147 ¥ Fax (705) 746-2186
1-800-810-0156 ¥ email:garymc@mcnabblumber.ca

Gary McNabb
Owner / Operator

* Open Sunday 10am - 3pm (during summer)

Sue and her family have been offering marina services for over 40 years and this is the lowest water level she has ever seen. She adds that it would be devastating to see even one of Carling's few marinas close, yet if the water continues to recede, this could happen. For this year, Sue is concerned about how many more dock spaces she will lose and is considering dredging for the third time at considerable expense. She hopes that there will be some sort of funding assistance available.

- At **Snug Harbour**, Terry has already done quite a lot of work; as I mentioned in the last letter, he has been working in the creek to add more dock spaces there; he has extended the concrete boat ramp by 3 feet – and now needs to extend it further! He also will have to dredge throughout the marina and hopes to get that done this winter.

- At **Killbear** Will reports that from the buoyed entrance channel to the main dock, minimum depths last year were 5 ft 10 inches in June, falling to 5 ft 6 inches in August, then dropping even more rapidly after Labour Day. The entrance channel itself falls under Fisheries and Oceans and is supposed to have a depth of 6 ft. hence now has barely 4 ft. Sailboats with a draft of 6 ft will be unable to get in or out unless the water level comes up by May or dredging is undertaken.

I have also talked to Mayor Gord Harrison who reports that the proposed dock work at Snug Harbour has been approved and work will begin in the spring to remove the old dock and the access road and replace with floating docks with a greater number of spaces than at present. I am still hopeful that the Town will also set up a separate spot for kayak launching. No word yet from the MNR on whether they will lease the Township more land for parking at Snug.

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a great 2013 – just watch those rocks!



From the Editor

By Bill Bialkowski

I have just been appointed to the prestigious post of Editor of the West Carling Newsletter. I was born in war-torn Poland, grew up in post-war Britain, spent a few years in the Canadian Navy, and a career as a Canadian engineer. I have now had a dozen wonderful retired years at the cottage on the north shore of Snug Harbour, just past the Speed Sign, where I used to keep a floatplane. I have experienced our beautiful Georgian Bay from a sailboat, canoe, floatplane, row boat, swim suite, mathematical model, GBA boardroom, camera and book.

Since 2003 I have been deeply involved in the Georgian Bay water levels issue, where I used my mathematical modeling experience to help first GBA, then GBA Foundation, and finally Sierra Club figure out the low water levels problem, its causes and potential solutions. We are through the science part and into the political will phase of this problem, and 2013 threatens to be a banner year for bent propellers.

I would like the WCA Newsletter to be something you truly look forward to reading. For that to happen it must strike the right balance between being topical, historical, humorous, and useful. To help strike that balance, on Jeremy Gawen's initiative, we have formed an Editorial Committee that meets to 'kick' around ideas for articles that might shed light on happenings in West Carling, our characters and pastimes. With this in mind I would welcome articles written by you on issues that might be of interest.

As usual you will receive the WCA Newsletter by mail along with the GBA Update. The suggestion has also been made that some of you may also wish a copy to be sent to family members at other addresses. If this is of interest please let us know. Another suggestion made was about the possibility of accessing the newsletter electronically by e-mail. All of these ideas are of interest.



*Preserving unique properties along the eastern shore
and North Channel. Join with us in protecting
the natural beauty and character of
Georgian Bay.*

For more information visit,
www.gbtl.org or call, 416-440-1519

A view from Carling Council – Winter 2013

By Michael Gordon

Since my last report in the Fall, the major issues that we have focused on have been:

- Finalizing the update of our Municipal Buildings. As I reported in the fall, Council has decided to go forward with a new 4-bay steel frame building on a new site just east of the Fire Hall. Construction was to begin in late December but was delayed and should begin very soon. We have discussed the future fate of the existing PW building and have asked our architect Duncan Ross to work with our Fire Chief to determine if it is of any use to the Fire Department. If not, we have included an option to demolish the building as part of the Public Works building construction tender.
- Upgrading our road infrastructure – As part of our effort to hard-surface all of our township roads, the major project this past year was Sand Bay Road. The construction work was completed in the Fall and the surface treatment will take place in the spring. The major road project for next year is Pengally Bay/Linda Ave and Blind Bay Rd. We have also applied to the provincial Municipal Infrastructure Investment Initiative Capital Program for funding to support those projects and more in 2014.
- Expressing our concerns about low water levels – Council is working with the township of the Archipelago and other municipalities around the Bay to communicate our deep concern about our water levels. Council has also developed a plan to support waterfront property owners impacted through assisting with blasting/dredging applications and implementing a temporary use Bylaw for docks that will provide additional flexibility to enable property owners to access the water.
- Exploring a septic re-inspection program – in November, the North Bay Mattawa Conservation Authority presented to Council some options for a septic system re-inspection program. Council has asked for some additional details that we hope to receive soon and we can decide on how to proceed.
- Determining the future of our Lighthouses – Council has received a structural assessment report on the Snug Harbour lighthouse and confirmed our interest in proceeding further along the process to develop a business plan for that site. We still have many questions concerning the process, costs, and obligations but we will continue to engage on this issue.

I am always happy to speak with anyone who has questions or concerns about anything relating to Carling Council. You can reach me at mgordon003@sympatico.ca

Valleyhaven Farm


By Dick Marshal

The old saying goes, “Life is what happens while you're busy making other plans!”

I would have to say that was exactly what happened to us; we set out to buy a cottage property and ended up buying an old farm here in Carling instead. We saw it as a healthy place for our children to spend their summers and for me to work on my academic pursuits. A major perk was the fact that it was five minutes away from Killbear Park and its wonderful beaches and picnic areas. The previous owner pointed out that the two gardens around the house were filled with narcissus bulbs and that they were long overdue to be dug and separated. We had never given daffodils much thought, but when we ended up, after the digging, with two bushels of the things, we felt obliged to see to it that they were properly replanted. If mighty oaks from tiny acorns grow, so it was with the bulbs. We began to notice all the daffodils the gardening catalogues offered, buying six of one kind, ten of another. I guess what began as a hobby has now almost become an obsession; from the original two or three hundred bulbs, we now have hundreds of thousands in more than five-hundred varieties. I have developed a PowerPoint lecture which I have offered to numerous garden clubs and a thriving business through which, over the years, thousands of people have been able to enrich their gardens with our hybrids. The best time to view the gardens is mid-May when the flowers are at their height. Visitors are welcome so call and make an appointment; you can preview with your own eyes, rather than from catalogue pictures, what you might want to buy in the fall.

Valleyhaven Farm is located on Highway 559 just past the Snug Harbour turnoff on the left side of the road

	<p>CRAIG GROVES</p> <p>705 342-1228 705 746-3122 (cell) cegroves@vianet.on.ca</p>
--	---

<p>Home of Great Fish & Steak on beautiful Georgian Bay</p>	
<p>705-342-5552</p>	
	
<p>SNUG HARBOUR RESTAURANT & MARINE</p>	<p>Terry, Nathan & Parker Gilbert 138 Snug Harbour Road</p>

ON GEORGIAN BAY - A VISIT FROM THE JOHN P.

By Jill Kimberly



Source: Edwine Kimberly

On one of those rare, windless, flat calm mornings when the silence was almost palpable, you could hear the deep thrum of the engine of the John P. long before the old fishing boat came into view. It rounded Laird Point and headed toward Pengally Bay, and then into the channel between the mainland and Pleasant Island. The antique boat, named after fisherman John Perks, had been converted into a supply boat by the Kerr brothers, grocers in Parry Sound, and it carried groceries, mail, and other necessary commodities the Georgian Bay island cottagers needed to live. Since roads to Parry Sound in the late 1940s after the war were mostly poor and sometimes even just fairly flat rocks with rock cairns and arrows to signify the direction to take, the car trip was slow and difficult. My family and other summer visitors in the area were happy to patronize the Supply Boat.

In 1947 the canoe channel had not yet been built, so the Supply Boat continued its route back via Big Spruce Island when Sheriff Bert Armstrong was in residence, and then out to the Minks and other outer islands to make a circular route and then return via the South Channel.

My father, Jack Noye, built a triangular dock cantilevered off our big rock bluff where the water then was close to 20 feet deep, perfect to accommodate the John P. When the boat arrived at the dock, there was already an armada of little outboards hauled up on the rocks on Pleasant Island. People gathered to watch the landing and tie-up of the boat, and to take turns shopping. One of the Kerr brothers would jump out, and with onlookers' help, would secure the lines on the dock and tie the bow line to the nearest big pine tree.

As the cottagers took turns shopping inside the boat, the other neighbours all sat on the rocks and discussed everything from the weather, fishing, and boats, to the best way to cool and preserve food. With no electricity, most people had icehouses and primitive wooden ice boxes where a block of ice was placed in a top compartment and the food was kept cool below. Styrofoam coolers were nonexistent, and it took a bit of ingenuity to keep food fresh until some years later when propane refrigerators became common and available.

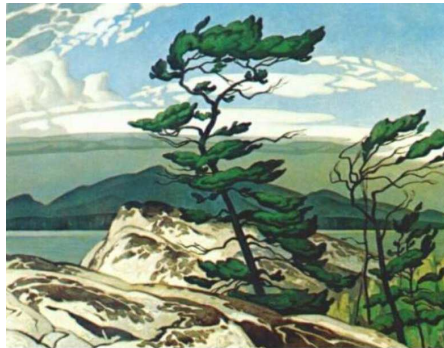
Inside the boat, ladies with their lists picked fresh lettuce and other vegetables out of bins, asked for specific canned goods, and if meat had been preordered, added that to their collection. One Kerr brother totted up the prices and the other found the necessary items and packed them up in cardboard cartons. Since there were not many choices, the shopping went quite quickly, but of course if you were expecting mail, you had to take some time to go through a pile of mail all thrown together in a carton to find your letter. When everyone had finished shopping, money had changed hands, or credit approved, the brothers prepared to untie and cast off the lines.

Neighbours and onlookers carried their boxes of provisions to their boats and left when the John P. had disappeared around the point. The visit was the social highlight of the week and everyone enjoyed it. Only once, I was told, the dock had too many people on it, and apparently slowly sank under the weight, dumping several grocery orders into the Bay. Fortunately the boat had not left yet, so those items that were not retrieved could be replaced, and the wet shoppers could dry out in the sun. My father shored up the dock underpinnings so the sinking dock incident became just another entertaining tale about the antique, well-loved Supply Boat.

For those of us who remember those summer mornings perching on the warm rocks in the bright sunshine, the memories will always remain, and we can't help but fervently wish the picturesque old John P. was still in service today..

Our Beautiful but Beleaguered White Pines

by Alex Davidson



Source – Google: Group of Seven White Pine, A. J. Casson

What would our beautiful Bay shoreline be without its majestic eastern white pines? What would the Group-of-Seven have captured on canvas without them? Their disappearance is virtually unimaginable. Few of us fail to comment at one time or another upon their ability to survive and thrive in the most meager of soils and in a most hostile environment marked by periods of drought, intense winds, and extreme ranges of temperature. And yet a healthy long term future for this beloved tree is by no means assured.

Incredibly, there are a total of 277 insects and 110 disease organisms known

to attack the white pine, a vast number of which are exotic in origin; that is, not native to North America. We are all probably most familiar with the pine saw fly caterpillar, a pest which has wreaked havoc on the white pine in our area in recent years. Yet there are a number of other organisms, both insect and fungal, which are common to our region and of increasing concern. In the interests of space, I will restrict this article to a discussion of just one of the multitude, a particularly virulent and damaging fungus known as white pine blister rust. I will also point out some of the things I think we can do to prevent or at least impede its spread.

White Pine Blister Rust

I recall as a child a particularly extensive breakout of this destructive fungal disease that badly disfigured and eventually killed a great number of trees on our property and throughout Carling. In the past couple of years I've noticed the telltale signs of its re-establishment around our cottage. White pine blister rust is one of the most destructive of the white pine diseases and has now been around for almost 100 years following its introduction on infected seedlings brought in from Europe. Blister rust causes branch death, top kill, stem (trunk) cancers, and is often fatal to the tree, particularly young trees. It's generally first noticed as a reddening of one or more branches of the tree along with extensive sap 'bleeding' at the site of the infected branch or on the tree stem. By the time we notice the disease by the branch discoloration, the infection has been growing as a canker inside the branch or trunk of the tree for several years and is now cutting off the supply of food and water to that part of the tree beyond the infection. Thus the blister canker girdles and kills infected branches and everything beyond. And if it has infected the trunk or bole at a lower level, the entire tree usually reddens and dies.

There is however a wee bit of good news in all of this and that is the fact that the fungus requires an intermediate host plant in order to spread and propagate to surrounding trees. The fungus can only spread if it can also access a member of the *Ribes* species, either red currant or gooseberry, both of which are common along the Bay. Some decent measure of control can therefore be achieved by eradicating these plants from your region. My brother and I can both recall many years ago being sent out by our father with a pressure can full of fungal spray and a mission to spray at will. Cutting or pulling out the plants doesn't work well to the extent that the root structures usually remain intact.

Another means to control is to prune the infected branch or branches. If you are particularly sharp eyed and can spot the earliest signs of the disease, a yellow or red spot on needles and/or a slight swelling of the infected branch, then pruning of the branch at this time offers better chances of success. When pruning, be careful not to flush cut the branches. Don't leave long stubs either. It's also important that the cuts be made just outside of the 'branch collar' to permit proper healing by the tree. There is no need to paint the pruning cut or to remove the pruned branches since they cannot spread the infection. As a final note, forget about pruning if the trunk is infected since the tree is doomed anyways.

Carling's Cast of Characters

by Bruce Davidson

It's not difficult to imagine the shoreline of Carling Township as it existed early last century. After all, the rocks certainly have not changed, while some of the old buildings, icehouses, outhouses and boathouses are still standing as mute testimony to what might best be described as a frontier settlement. What is not in evidence, however, are any traces of the colourful cast of characters who gave this community life. Now that is simply not right.

Last year we mourned the loss of Don Christie, a Georgian Bay giant who had one foot firmly planted in the past and the other somewhat tentatively planted in the present. Don was without question a leader in the various shenanigans that occurred in the Snug Harbour area when I was growing up. But it was another character, now probably less remembered simply for the sin of not owning a marina, who certainly qualified as a genuine larger-than-life Carling legend. That man was none other than barrel chested grizzly old Alan Acres.

As some of us may be aware, it was not uncommon for certain families to be able to acquire vast tracts of land, some of it even waterfront at the turn of the last century. After all, it was just bush—vehicle access was either by pretty rough logging roads, or simply non-existent. One of these families was named Acres, and owned a huge swath of shoreline extending all the way from the nearest point of land opposite Franklin's Christie Point, to the south end of the peninsula that lies on the mainland east of Snug Island. Alan's father built a classic Victorian cottage with verandah on the high promontory of land circa 1912. (That cottage has recently been restored to more than its former glory by the Schmitts.)

As kids, we were terrified of Alan's mother, notwithstanding an act of kindness that she bestowed on my brother one time by rescuing his model sailboat that had somehow managed to escape the bonds of a long fishing line and had gone adrift on the Bay. I guess it was her manner of dress that frightened us. Lady Acres was seldom seen, but when she did appear, it was somehow sudden and mysterious. She inevitably wore a long flowing black dress of light gauze, perhaps in mourning, and a fashionable black bonnet of wire and gauze. Those who have read *To Kill a Mockingbird* will appreciate the vivid imagination of kids and why we were scared of Lady Acres.



Sea Kayak Georgian Bay

White Squall Paddling Centre
53 Carling Bay Rd. Nobel, ON

705-342-5324 www.whitesquall.com



(705) 342-9631

Larry's Marine
& Small Engine Repair

LARRY LASHBROOK
Proprietor

P.O. BOX 179
NOBEL ONTARIO P0G 1G0

As a young man Alan, although not tall in stature, was evidently quite athletic and had a powerful physique. Doubtlessly this came in handy when my grandfather banned him from our island for exploits unnamed. Not deterred in the slightest, Alan would swim across the bay under cover of night to attempt a rendezvous with girlfriends of my Mother.

Alan in many ways personified the wild and woolly ways of Carling as it made the difficult transition from a hunting/fishing/logging community to the vacationing personality that generally characterises the shoreline community today. How he made a living during those years was never clear and perhaps my grandfather was wise indeed in suspecting that Alan was never a subscriber to the hard work clean living ethic. The only answer I ever got to my question of what he had done for a living was a somewhat vague reference to being a wrestler, pronounced 'rassluh', as I recall.

In any event, I had a soft spot for Alan in his later years with his grizzled beard, unkempt hair, lumberman's shirt and distinctive black patch over one eye. If ever you could imagine a pirate, Alan personified it in spades. He actually introduced me to his good friend Captain Morgan in my teenage years. I liked to paddle the canoe around the island at sundown and Alan, would occasionally call out across the water with "Hey, young feller! Why don't you come ashore for a little nip?" And with that, I was drawn into the Alan's private world and his many exploits with his buddies in the Snug Harbour area. While not quite the raconteur that Don Christie was, Alan could tell a few good ones of his own.

Alan is long gone now, having somehow managed to live a lifetime on the Bay without succumbing to the dreariness of traditional employment. While it would be going a little too far to say that I admired his approach to life, I suppose I would give grudging acceptance to his fierce independence and devil-may-care attitude. Alan Acres certainly qualifies as one of the most colourful characters of Carling in its early years, and for that I salute him.

Author's note: we bought Alan's old property on the point facing south down Snug Harbour in 1985 and for 5 years, lived in his cabin which was constructed by Don Christie from the ice house and the Japanese man-servants cabin from the original main cottage now owned by the Schmitts. It is a really beautiful little guest cottage now. We still have a few bits and pieces left by Alan but we didn't keep the close to a truck load of empty booze bottles from his dump!

Scheffel Construction

H 705-538-1411

C 705 427-2022

30 yrs Experience

Renovations & Additions

Windows & doors

Ceramic tile & flooring

Trim, Decks, Docks



Island access