

Mary Lake

Association

ZOOM AGM

Monday
June 28th
7:30pm

2021 SPRING NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The world has changed in the last 10 months and Mary Lake has changed with it. A substantial part of our country's workforce have found that they can work from home. Some of those have realized that their home is the lake. This trend is likely to accelerate as Starlink starts to provide excellent internet where connectivity used to be poor or nonexistent.

As Mary Lake evolves, your Board will strive to maintain and defend those things we love about it. Let's all work together to tread lightly on our water, our shores, our wildlife, our sounds, and our dark nights. Less is more.

This will be my last President's Report, after 6 years in this position. Over the years I've been impressed by the dedicated, knowledgeable, and capable team that is your Board. They apply their broad range of experience and skills to a range of areas. Some protect the lake like water levels, water quality, ecosystem health monitoring, development reviews, and this year's Love Your Lake initiative. Others benefit our members on a shorter timeframe like Lost and Found, this newsletter, and propane group rates. And then there's the organization framework such as managing the finances, the membership, and the underpinning that is the constitution. My deep thanks to the entire Board!

Vice President Josh Laverty has put his name forward for President. Josh is Director at Camp Widjiitiwin. We'd love additional nominations and you're invited to throw your hat in the ring.

The MLA is not just a cottagers' association. All stakeholders are represented. This includes seasonal and permanent residents, but also commercial and camp institutions. Each group has its own particular interests, but the vast majority of our concerns are shared. The Board is effective because we're pulling together and understand each other.

John Hogg

The Stephenson Lions Club 22nd Annual Duck Race



Grand Prize: **\$2,000**

Second Prize: **\$500**

Third Prize: **\$250**

Tickets are **\$5.00** per duck and can be purchased at the following locations in Port Sydney:

- Jamieson's General Store
- Dean's Home Hardware
- Pine Lodge
- Smith's Ultramar Gas Station
- Muskoka Fries

Only 2200 ducks for sale!

Proceeds to:

- The Table Soup Kitchen
- Hunstville Hospice

www.MaryLakeAssociation.org

NOTICE TO WATERFRONT PROPERTY OWNERS



We are excited to announce that Mary Lake has been accepted into The Love Your Lake Program! The Muskoka Watershed Council has partnered with Watersheds Canada and the Canadian Wildlife Federation (CWF) to

assess the health of our shorelines and recommend actions for improvement. And the best part? It's free!

Did you know that shorelines are some of the most ecologically productive places on Earth? The first 10 to 15 meters of land surrounding lakes and rivers is responsible for 90% of lake life born, raised, and fed in these areas. They are up to 500% more diverse than other areas upland from lakes and rivers.

Wait! Before you think that this doesn't affect you, consider this – as shoreline property owners, the choices we make every day can have a great impact on this delicate area. By maintaining our shorelines in a mostly natural state, we help improve water quality and restore habitat for wildlife as well as maintain and improve property values all while we continue to enjoy waterfront living – a place to rest and relax, swim, fish, and play.

Now that I've piqued your interest, here is what you can expect from the program in the coming months:

In June, shoreline property owners will receive information about the program by mail - including an introductory letter and a values survey. Please take the time to fill out the survey as it will add useful insight into our lake. You can choose to use the enclosed survey and mail it back in the provided envelope or online at LoveYourLake.ca. Just click on "Survey" to get started. It will take less than five minutes and is completely anonymous.

Then, in early August you may notice students cruising in a boat along the shoreline. They will be taking notes on each property using a standardized protocol and datasheet. No one will come on your property or ask you any questions.

Over the winter, the data collected will be summarized into personalized shoreline property reports. In the spring of 2022, each shoreline property owner will receive another letter with a unique online access code. To access your free report, you will need to go online to LoveYourLake.ca, click on "Download Report" and enter your unique survey code. You can either download a free PDF version or you can order a printed report for \$20.00, including taxes and shipping.

Your report will be specifically tailored to your shoreline. It will provide friendly information and recommendations for voluntary actions you can take to improve and protect the health of your shoreline, property, and ultimately Mary Lake.

As a bonus, the Mary Lake Association will receive a lake summary report which generalizes the data over the entire assessed area and identifies community stewardship opportunities applicable to the entire lake shoreline.

Mary Lake is following in the footsteps of many Muskoka Lakes including Fairy Lake, Peninsula Lake, Lake Vernon and Lake of Bays.

For more information or if you have any questions about the Love Your Lake program, visit LoveYourLake.ca. If you would like to know more about the MLA's part in this project, contact:

Jill Perry

(705) 789-8727 or jillperry@live.ca



GYPSY MOTHS

Wondering what to do about gypsy moths? Knowing what to do - and when - can help you to manage gypsy moths on your property. Control options are specific to the insect's life stage and time of year. When the caterpillars are active in late spring, banding trees with burlap gives them a place to congregate during warm days. They can be physically removed and destroyed in soapy water. Wear gloves to protect your hands from possible irritation from the caterpillar's hairs.



DONT. Tape Trees

DO: Burlap Banding

For more about gypsy moth and control options, visit the gypsy moth page at:

www.ontario.ca/page/gypsy-moth

BUGS IN THE MUD

The annual 'Bugs in the Mud' is a volunteer-supported program of the District of Muskoka. Organisms that live in lake sediments such as mollusks and crustaceans are good indicators of the health of a lake. This program is vital for us to understand the pollution trends over time.



WE NEED VOLUNTEERS!

Please meet up with us to help with the counting. This year the event will take place at the Town dock in Port Sydney on:

**Sunday August 8th, 2021
at 10:00 am**

Please RSVP to:

Jennifer McLellan

jen.mclellan@mac.com

519-574-7059

2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Josh Laverty..... VP & Webmaster
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Water Quality Committee

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Nancy Laurie
Jane Earthy
Ashley Houlden
Jen McLellan

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Ryan Kidd
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Our next AGM

will be held on Zoom

**Monday June 28th,
7:30pm**

New board member nominations
will be welcome at our online AGM.

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BLUE-GREEN ALGAE: A GROWING THREAT

According to the Simcoe-Muskoka District Health Unit, blue-green algae blooms are on the rise in Muskoka. Algae blooms are undesirable. They can make water unsafe for animals and humans to drink or swim in, and fish caught near a bloom may be unfit for eating. Mary Lake has had no recent reports of algae blooms, but it is not immune. Many nearby lakes, including Lake Muskoka, Lake of Bays, and Peninsula Lake, have experienced blooms in recent years. And scientists believe that climate change will cause blooms to become more common in the years to come.

Below are some facts about algae blooms, including

- How to spot a bloom
- What to do if you see one
- How to reduce the risk of blooms in Mary Lake

WHAT IS BLUE-GREEN ALGAE?



Blue-green algae, technically known as cyanobacteria, are microscopic organisms that are naturally present in lakes and streams. They are usually present in low

numbers, but can rapidly increase in warm, shallow, undisturbed surface water that gets a lot of sun. When this happens, they can form blooms that discolour the water or produce floating scum on the surface of the water.

HOW TO RECOGNIZE IT...

Blooms most commonly occur in late summer and early fall. They thrive in areas where the water is shallow, slow moving and warm, but they may be present in deeper, cooler water too.

Dense blue-green algae blooms may make the water look bluish-green, or like green pea soup or turquoise paint. Very dense blooms may form solid-looking clumps.

Fresh blooms often smell like newly mown grass, while older blooms may smell like rotting garbage.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU SPOT IT...

If you spot a blue-green algal bloom, or you suspect one, be cautious. Assume toxins are present, and do not drink or swim in the water. Pets should be kept out of the water completely.

Report the bloom to the Ministry of Environment Spills Action Centre at 1-866-MOETIPS.

CAUSES...

One factor that contributes to the growth of blue-green algae is unusually high levels of nutrients in the water, especially phosphorus and nitrogen. Blue-green algal blooms can be caused by agricultural and stormwater runoff as well as leaching from septic systems.

“In Ontario, Phosphorus tends to be the nutrient that influences the growth of algae.”

The primary sources of excess nitrogen and phosphorus are:

- **Stormwater:** When precipitation falls onto hard surfaces - like rooftops, pathways, driveways, and lawn – it carries pollutants, including nitrogen and phosphorus, into the lake.
- **Wastewater:** Septic systems are responsible for dispersing sewage infiltration, but these systems do not remove nitrogen and phosphorus before discharging it into the surrounding area, and ultimately, the lake.
- **Fertilizer:** Chemical fertilizers contain both nitrogen and phosphorus, and these chemicals make their way into the lake via runoff.
- **Household Products:** Certain soaps and detergents contain nitrogen and phosphorus, and can contribute to nutrient pollution if not properly disposed of.

TO MUSKOKA LAKES

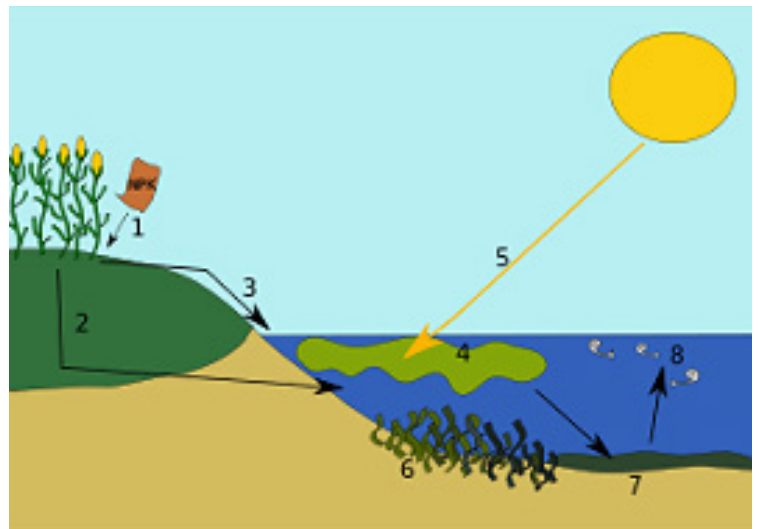
PREVENTION...

There are some simple steps we can take to help prevent the growth of blue-green algae in Mary Lake, including:

- Reduce the use of fertilizers on lawns. Better yet, reduce the size of your lawn, so fertilizer is not necessary.
- Maintain a natural shoreline. Shoreline vegetation helps slow the flow of surface runoff which can carry nutrients into the lake. The plant roots absorb surface water, pulling it into the ground, rather than allowing it to reach the lake. Underground, the pollutants in the runoff, such as pesticides, fertilizers, oils and fuels, become trapped in the soil and are absorbed by deeper plant roots.
- Have your septic system checked to ensure it is not leaking into the lake. Inspect your septic system annually, and pump it out regularly.
- Maintain aquatic plants like bullrushes and reeds at the water's edge. These "weeds" do the lake a great service by filtering out nutrients.
- Minimize impermeable surfaces on your property. Use gravel or pervious pavers where possible to allow water to soak into the ground.

Linda Kangas

Mary Lake Association



This illustration shows how excess nutrients in the lake can lead to an algae bloom which, in turn, sets off a damaging cycle that contributes to reduced water quality.

1. Excess nutrients are applied to the soil.
2. Some nutrients leach into the soil and later drain into surface water via the shallow groundwater.
3. Some nutrients run off over the ground into the body of water. When the ground is dry, almost all rain runs off if there is even a small slope.
4. The excess nutrients cause an algae bloom.
5. The algae bloom reduces light penetration.
6. The plants beneath the algae bloom die because they cannot get sunlight to perform photosynthesis.
7. Eventually, the algae bloom dies and sinks to the bottom of the lake, and bacterial communities begin to decompose the remains, using up oxygen for respiration.
8. The decomposition causes the water to become depleted of oxygen, larger life forms, such as fish die.

Monique Heemskerk

Sales Representative

705-787-6594

Cell

realestatemuskoka@gmail.com

ROYAL LEPAGE

LAKES of MUSKOKA Realty



SPRING 2021 - WATER LEVEL REPORT

A WELL-MANAGED SPRING RUNOFF

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) deserves cudos for its management of this year's runoff. As the chart below shows, the level of Mary Lake was held pretty close to target.

The snowpack upstream from us in Algonquin Park was relatively saturated in February and portended a possible flood. As a consequence the MNRF began a deep drawdown of the lakes in the Muskoka River Watershed, including ours. But the normal heavy spring rains did not materialize and the snowmelt was quite surprisingly gradual, producing a benign natural runoff similar to last year's.

Lake dwellers will no doubt recall that last year our friends at the MNRF chose to relog the dam toward the end of the gentle runoff and ran our lake and several others on up, creating what some referred to as a 'Government-made Flood'. Several lake associations, including the Mary Lake Association, were in touch with the Ministry to protest.

This year, levels were well contained. An important factor was the deep drawdown by the MNRF in February and March to levels significantly below target, as shown in the chart. Because much of the shoreline of our lake and of the river between the Huntsville Locks Dam and the Port Sydney Dam is soft shoreline vulnerable to erosion, we maintain that it is important to avoid long periods of sustained high water.

It is also worth noting that, as can be seen in the chart, the ice went out before the lake level peaked. This helped ensure minimal property damage from drifting and wind-driven ice.

All of this was in sharp contrast with the damaging natural floods we experienced in 2013, 2016 and 2019.

A SERIOUS DROUGHT?

Precipitation levels throughout this spring have been remarkably low, leading to speculation that the drought setting in on the Prairies has now spread east. Flows upstream from us at the gauge on the Big East River and at the gauge downstream from the Port Sydney Dam have slowed quite markedly. At our time of writing at the beginning of June the dam has been relogged by the MNRF in an effort to maintain a reserve for power generation at the four stations downstream from us and to offset evaporation.

The level of Mary Lake is approaching mid-summer target levels some two months ahead of schedule. Whether the level continues downward in the coming weeks will of course depend on rainfall and good management by the Ministry.

IMPORTANT GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES ON WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

Widespread concerns about the management of the Muskoka River Watershed in recent years, coupled with evidence of climate change, have led to significant new initiatives.

Handmade Mary Lake Cards Now Available at Jamieson's General Store



*Yours
truly*
CARDS

YoursTrulyCards.ca

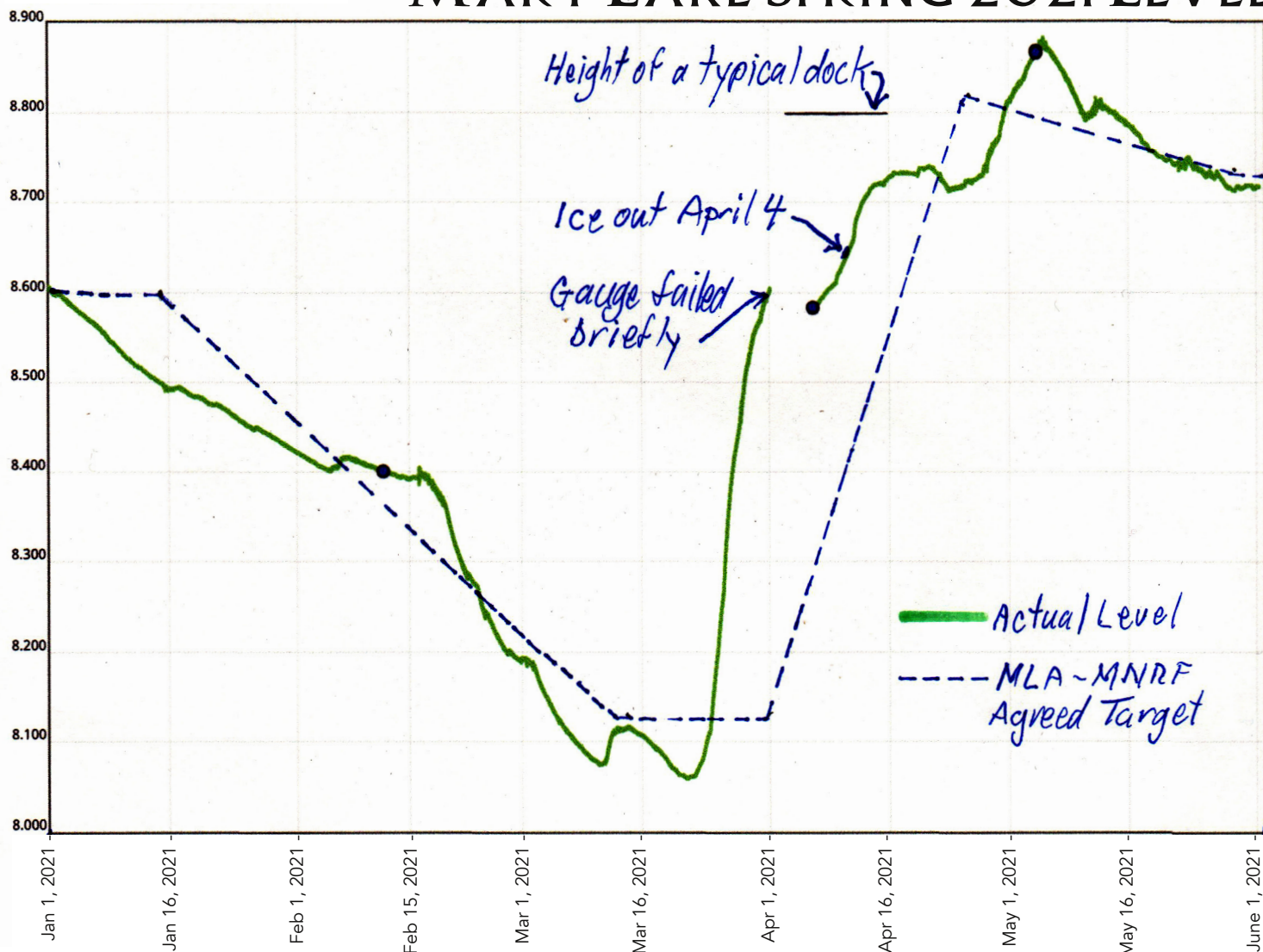


Custom Photos & Orders Available

Original Photography & Design by Greg Crawford

Water level (primary sensor) in metres

MARY LAKE SPRING 2021 LEVEL



Readers may recall that the ad hoc Muskoka Watershed Advisory Group (MWAG) issued a series of recommendations last year. These led to the announcement in April by the Ontario Government and the District of Muskoka of a series of studies and initiatives on water level management, environmental protection and shoreline erosion, all of which are of particular relevance to Mary Lake and to our Association.

The Association is seeking to work with the Muskoka Watershed Council to ensure that our concerns are heard and our interests are protected. We would welcome Members who would like to be involved.

Ted Johnson
Director
Mary Lake Association

Do You Love Water Sports?

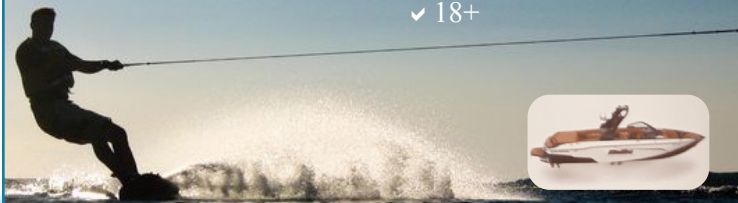
There is Now a Water Sports School on Mary Lake!

NOW OFFERING!

- ✓ Waterski Lessons
- ✓ Wakesurf Lessons
- ✓ Wakeboard Lessons

CLASSES

- ✓ Ages 4 - 9 (with a Parent)
- ✓ Ages 9 - 12
- ✓ Ages 13 - 17
- ✓ 18+



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NAVIGATING



1 THE TOWN DOCK SHORE A significant sedimentary deposit has built up at the mouth of the creek about 100 metres north-west of the town dock. Shallow water extends out about 50 metres from the shore.

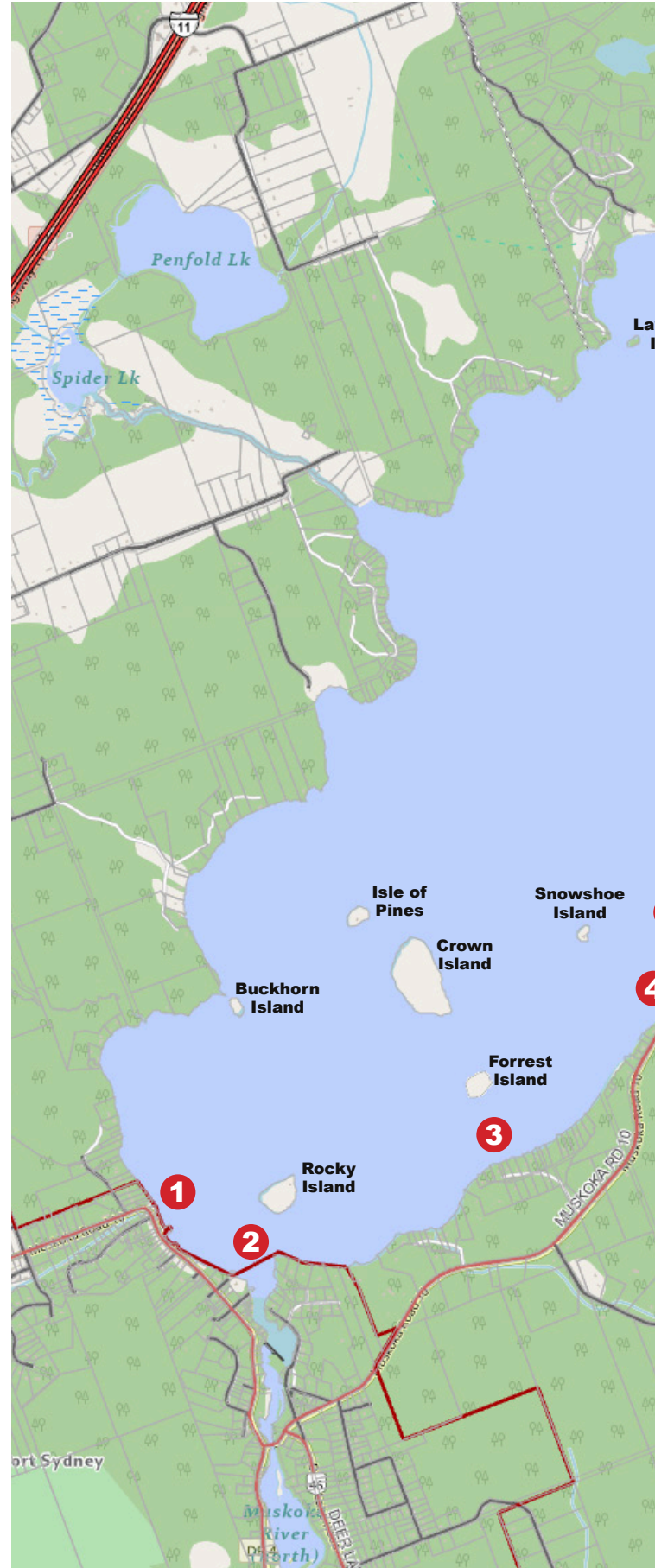


2 MOODIE POINT Shallows extend in a 50 to 75 metre radius from Moodie Point (the easterly point at the entrance to the river) and continue well to the east, past Clyffe House dock. In the early 1900's, the steamer Ramona ran aground more than once on Moodie Point, to be rescued by her competitor, the Gem.

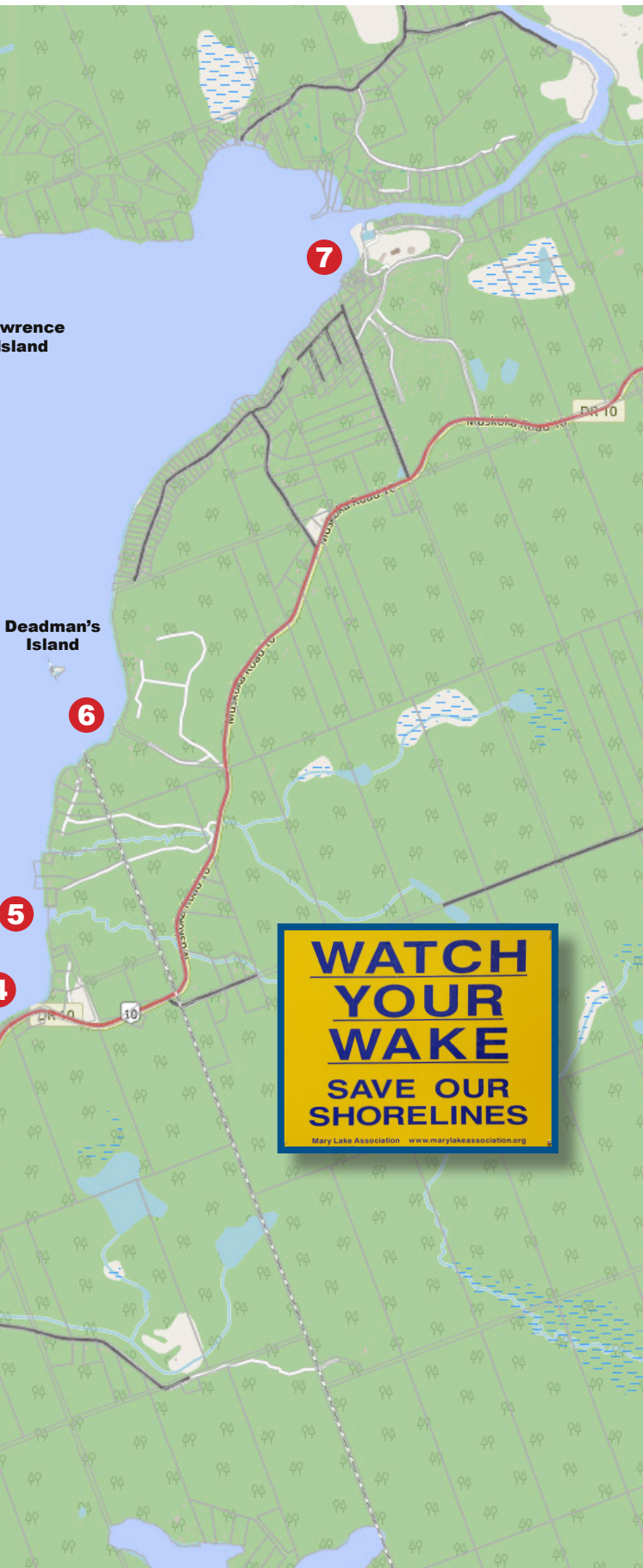


3 RAYMOND'S BLUFF Shows the significant shallows which extend north from Raymond's Bluff toward the easterly point on Forrest Island. Shallow water extends out about 100 meters and runs north for about three quarters of a kilometer.

4 THE REMAINS OF AN OLD CRIB perhaps used to anchor log booms off the Dollar Wharf in the late 1800's lie about 50 meters offshore - **NO PHOTO**



MARY LAKE



GIBSON'S CREEK Boaters should remain a good hundred meters from shore near Gibson's Creek (north of the old Muskoka Lodge). Entry to the creek is tricky, but is rewarded with a view of an 8 metre high waterfall. Recommended for small boats only.



DEADMAN'S ISLAND - CAMP MINI-YO-WE A shoal of boulders extends east from Deadman's Island for about 40 metres. Sandy shoals extend out a good distance from shore to the north of the camp. It is better to steer a course outside this channel, remaining to the north of the island.



HEAD OF THE LAKE Very significant shallows have built up over centuries where the Muskoka River enters the lake. It is important to follow the dog-leg channel marked by buoys. Remember the rule: **"Red Right Returning"** meaning keep the red buoys on your right when upbound against the current.

EARLY SETTLERS AROUND

THE THOMS BAY COTTAGES ...continued from the last issue of the MLA Newsletter
starting with the second cottage on Thom's Bay

THE FLOCK COTTAGE

It is not known when Arthur Flock came to the lake, but he was enthralled with it. He taught at Riverdale Collegiate in Toronto and regularly told his colleagues and students about it so much so that his colleagues came up to visit. One of his fellow teachers bought a lot and one of his students also bought property there. He taught physics but he was an artist painting many lake scenes. He was also a keen naturalist. In 1918 he built a two storey cottage over the lake similar to the McLaughlin and Bell cottages across the lake shown above. The building was over the lake with a boathouse underneath. Flock came up with his two sisters. Regularly guests and boarders arrived. One summer a family rented rooms at his cottage while a daughter worked as a maid for the Flocks. That summer one of the family members killed a loon. Arthur Flock was so upset that he gave the family three hours to get off the property.

The cottage was built on silt and sand in the shallow water. This was an unfortunate location because during the ice break up in the spring it frequently shifted. Eventually in the 1930's the cottage was pulled out of the lake back up onto the shore using a winch like the one used at the Chester Store.

The lot east of the Flock cottage was kept as pasture until 1924 when it was sold to the Bremer family who planned to build cottage there. That summer they camped on the lot until one tragic Sunday night. The two daughters took their grandmother to the evening service at Christ Church by canoe. On the way back just west of Rocky Island the canoe overturned and the grandmother was drowned. The whole community in shock stood on the town dock and watched as her body was brought in. The Bremers were so upset that they never returned to the lake. The lot was sold back to Arthur Flock.

THE HOGG COTTAGE

The third in this cluster of cottages and the furthest from the head of the bay is the Hogg Cottage. The story starts with Carol Stanton who built the cottage. She was born in 1898 and she was a student of Arthur Flock at Riverdale Collegiate. Once again his stories of the beauty of Mary Lake drew her here. The Stantons had originally come from England in 1642 and settled in the United States where they stayed until 1794 when they moved to Cobourg. Carol had worked in a munitions factory next to the Don Jail during WW1. After the war she attended university. This was unusual in those days when only 6% of women went on to higher education.

She first came to Mary Lake in 1922 and camped near the lake. Apparently it was all that Flock said and more because she bought a fifty foot lot from Dick Thoms that year. She must have been quite adventurous because she also had a small cottage built and an icehouse at the rear. In those days women did not do all these things.

It was in 1926 that she met and married David Hogg while they were both working at Simpsons. Once again those were different times. Because they were married, she had to leave her work at the store since a married couple could not work at the same location. They spent their honeymoon at the cabin in November that year. David had to build a toboggan to haul their belongings out to the train at the end of the honeymoon. The Hoggs had come from Scotland and his father had been a medical missionary in China before he returned to Canada.

In the 1930's they would take the train to Utterson with their summer supplies. A farmer would transport them to the Thom's farmhouse in a model T. There they would load their belongings into a rowboat for the trip to the

THE LAKE

cabin. A lot of the summer time was spent in cutting and chopping wood for the winter. Seeing the occasional boat and steamer going past was a special event. Socializing meant either rowing across the lake or walking around the long trail through the bush to Port Sydney to get to the church or store.



Dick Thoms house c 1920

It was always a big event when the Flocks, the Rogers, The Thoms and The Hogs would get together for the annual bonfire. All the year's collection of drift wood would have been put into a big pile on the beach and they would have a great fire to mark the end the summer.

This excerpt is from "The Newcomers"

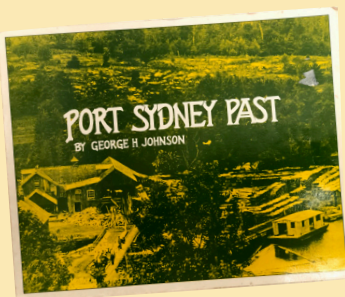
written by: **Ryan Kidd**

Available from Trafford Publishing

12 Suggestions on What You Can Do About Extreme Weather!

"PART 2"

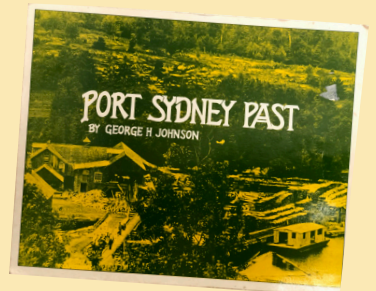
- 13.** Have a basement/ Make sure that your sump pump is working and that you have batteries.
- 14.** Did you know that disaster relief usually only covers primary residences.
- 15.** Keep your shoreline natural to protect your property.
- 16.** Use climate-smart building materials.
- 17.** Building an addition? Use tornado tie downs on the roof.
- 18.** Clear your culvert out.
- 19.** Using lake water? Have some water stored in case lake water is unavailable.
- 20.** Be aware that heavy winter snowfall relates to high spring runoff.
- 21.** Are you on a flood plain? These areas need special precautions.
- 22.** Get your car out in advance if your road is susceptible to erosion.
- 23.** The more you pave your surroundings, (house driveways etc.) the more runoff you'll have.
- 24.** Make sure downpipes lead water away from your cottage.



A Fascinating Account of the Early Days in Port Sydney

Available at Dean's Hardware & Jamieson's Store

Written by George H Johnson



MEMBERSHIP & PROPANE UPDATE

Winter seems far away now that we have had a long stretch of warmer days. Even spring will soon be a distant memory.

WELCOME BACK to Summer again! The snow boots are back in the bins, the flip flops are on the deck again, and the lake is warming up quickly. How blessed are we to be living or cottaging here on Mary Lake! I hope you all survived this Covid-19 winter, even with no traveling to the sunny south. Very luckily spring came early this year.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Please accept a huge thank you to those members who invited their friends on the lake to become new members. The stay-at-home orders, combined with winter weather and other excuses, preventing us from completing our planned membership drive, but it is still high up on our agenda. Our count is currently at 198 members, and with 300 cottages on the lake, there is still room to attract more members.

Many properties have changed hands on the lake, so if you have a new neighbour, please encourage them to become a member of the Mary Lake Association.

PROPANE GROUP

The higher count of members is also a result of the great benefits from Propane Buyers' Group. Who doesn't want to experience a huge discount on their heating cost! Together with Superior we have synchronized our lists, and members who expressed interest but were not

set up yet will be contacted soon by Superior Propane.

Please know that you have to be an individual MLA member in order to enjoy the reduced group pricing.

As with pretty much everything, the Superior propane pricing will be increasing this year, but so will other companies' pricing. The 0.47 cents from current pricing is still a big saving compared to other companies. If you would like to learn more, just let me know.

LOST AND FOUND

The quick melt in the Spring and the lack of big storms resulted in an empty Lost and Found list. This will change for sure when all the toys and docks are back in the lake and the weather shows us its power. If you find something floating, please tie it down and forward a picture to me, so the rightful owner can describe their item to me.

The Lost and Found list with older items can be found here:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1SPCnGf69_mNqdsln-1u7GoaJOtQA84Xj?usp=sharing

There is not much further to mention; please enjoy your summer and I am sure we will see you back at our gas bar soon!

Gas Bar Hours:


Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Monday,
9 am to 5 pm

Monique Heemskerk

Membership Director
Mary Lake Association



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