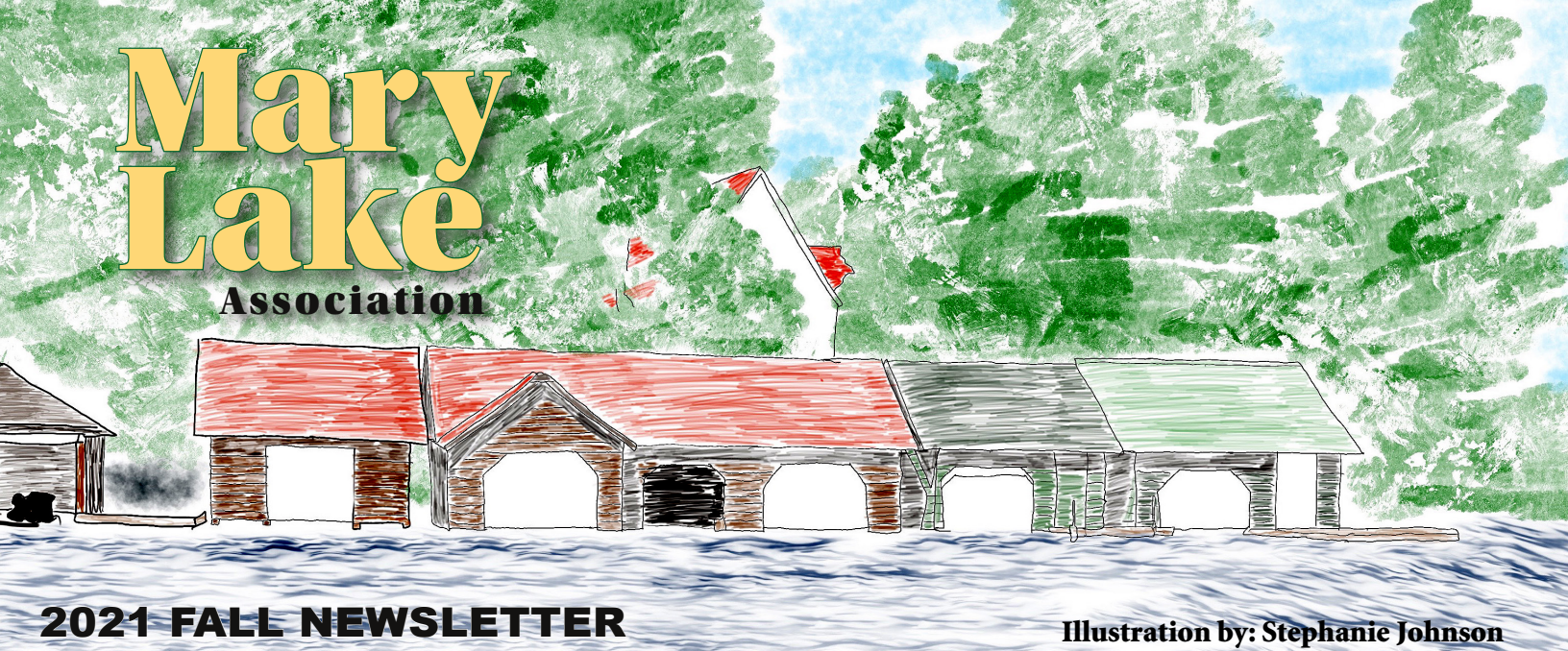


Mary Lake Association



2021 FALL NEWSLETTER

Illustration by: Stephanie Johnson

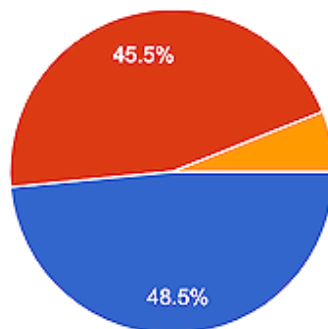
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As the newly elected President of the MLA, I want to thank the board and the members for their confidence in entrusting me with this responsibility. My past 8 summers have been spent directing summer camps on the shores of Mary Lake and the Muskoka River, activities that depend on the accessibility to and the quality of the water in the lake. The MLA is a rich community that benefits the whole lake, members and non-members alike. The focus for this board over this coming year will be to be an active part of the town's Port Sydney waterfront planning, preserving water quality and expanding the MLA Board with new members and committee volunteers. To this end we look forward to what is in store through the coming months.

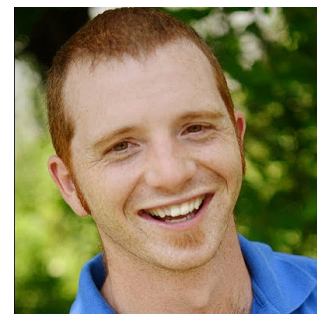
As I write this the colours are starting to fade as the leaves are falling. 2020 was a landmark year with the Covid-19 virus dramatically changing the world and, as a cottage destination, Muskoka experienced an influx of tourism that included a host of new permanent residents. 2021 has continued that trend, and with it increased usage of Mary Lake. This has given rise to questions about the management of the Port Sydney waterfront moorings and swimming - and we are grateful to those that responded to the survey we shared. Although a seemingly small sample (16% response rate), the town appreciated the feedback and it has opened a discussion that I hope will allow this association to have a voice in the plans as they proceed. Those that have seen the public feedback website and the results of our survey can see that this is clearly a contentious topic with varied opinions. The board plans to keep our members in the loop with information as we work with the town on this important project.

In your opinion, should the mooring of boats in Port Sydney be regulated?

33 responses



● Yes
● No
● Maybe



Sincerely, Josh Laverty

Love Your Lake Shoreline Assessment UPDATE

As promised, this past summer the Mary Lake Association participated in the "Love Your Lake" (LYL) Program. This program brings awareness on the importance of taking individual actions on each property. If everyone focuses on the small changes, then collectively we can improve water quality and the overall health of our lake. The assessment of Mary Lake's 299 properties went extremely well!

A trained technician in a kayak paddled slowly around the entire lake evaluating the state of each property's shoreline. Photos were taken and a data sheet was completed. Before November 30th, this information will be inputted into the LYL online database.

Next March, property owners will receive a letter with a unique survey code which can be used online at www.loveyourlake.ca to view their confidential, personalized property report. Simply scroll down to "Download My Report" and follow the steps. There is also an option to purchase a printed copy.

The report will contain information about the state of each individual shoreline with suggestions of simple, voluntary actions that can be taken to improve the natural state of the waterfront area and in turn, the health of the lake.

Some of the recommendations include native planting, erosion control, wildlife habitat enhancements and shoreline access improvements. Sometimes it is difficult to know where to start. The Muskoka Watershed Council offers the Natural Edge Program for property owners who are interested in creating or improving their buffer area. Property owners can sign up for a free site visit and participate in the program. This is a great way to deter those pesky geese! Watch for more information in our spring newsletter.



The Mary Lake Association will also receive a lake summary report which summarizes the observations recorded around the lake including the types of development, the degree of erosion, the presence of invasive species, and opportunities for community stewardship activities.

All information contained in the individual reports and the MLA report is completely confidential and non-regulatory.

The Canadian Wildlife Federation has found that the Love Your Lake program is an excellent example of how personal action can make a huge difference for the environment.

Watch your mailboxes come March!

Jill Perry

(705) 789-8727 jillperry@live.ca

Monique Heemskerk
Sales Representative

705-787-6594

Cell

realestatemuskoka@gmail.com

ROYAL LEPAGE

LAKES of MUSKOKA Realty



Membership Update

The pumpkin pie is finished, the trees are past their peak and the lake is quiet as most of the boats are put away in storage.

I always love this time of the year, don't get me wrong....I do love the Summer, the busy time at our Marina, seeing all the customers for gas or rental boats & real estate but I really prefer the Fall with the cooler nights, the turning of the leaves, some quiet time and good family dinners.

Our membership has grown, we are past the 200 mark! 203 to be exact and still growing, I am sure you will keep your eyes open to find a new neighbor or property owner on the lake that would be interested to become a member.

Have you recently checked out our website? <https://www.marylakeassociation.org>
Lots of information why one should become a member!

On a more sensitive note: there are some memberships still outstanding and despite my messages, they are still not renewed, I don't want to see you leave so if you received "one of those" emails, please reply.

My message is short, keep forwarding those new property owners and thank you for doing a great job and keep your membership in good standing.

Our lost and found was very quiet this year, some items found and returned, some others still lost and might never be found.

Soon the snow will be upon us, go out there, Muskoka is such a beautiful place and before you know you will be receiving our Spring Newsletter!

Have a great Winter and all the best to you and your family.

Monique Heemskerk

Membership Director
Mary Lake Association

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Jill Perry Water Quality
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Jen McLellan

Water Quality Committee

Jill Perry
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Jane Earthy
Jen McLellan

Directors Without Portfolio

Ryan Kidd
John Hogg



Actual photo of Algae Bloom
at Port Sydney Beach Oct 6th 2021



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Looking Back 150 Years

First Visit by Founder of Port Sydney

This year marks a significant anniversary in the history of Mary Lake and Port Sydney. It was 150 years ago, in the summer of 1871 that the tall dark-haired Albert Sydney-Smith first visited Mary Lake and set out on a path to create the village that would bear his name and build an economic engine that would drive this region of Muskoka for some fifty years.



The rebuilt and enlarged Port Sydney sawmill in full production, circa 1900
(Photo from Johnson family collection)

Albert Sydney-Smith, or “Mr Smith” as he came to be affectionately called in the village, was born in Hayesville, near Kitchener, in 1846. His grandfather, John Sydney-Smith was a British surgeon who, family records indicate, served as surgeon to the Duke of Wellington’s Staff at the Battle of Waterloo, moved to Canada and died ministering to the sick in the 1820’s cholera epidemic in Toronto. Albert’s father, John Sydney-Smith II, was a successful hardware merchant who made his fortune in Hayesville and subsequently moved to Stratford.

Armed with an inheritance following his father’s death, the twenty-five year old Albert looked north for opportunity. We don’t know what bought him to Mary Lake in 1871 - perhaps a word from a friend in the area, or perhaps word of a failed sawmill on the Muskoka River. In a letter home he described his trip by train to Washago, steamer to Bracebridge and cart and foot to Mary Lake, noting “...not a single settler I spoke to is displeased with (the country) or had any desire to leave.”

Mary Lake at the time comprised a few pioneer farms as well as two stores and a post office just north of the present Town Dock. At the falls stood the remains of an unsuccessful and perhaps under-capitalized sawmill. The country surrounding the lake was not as lush as it is today; a bit of logging, land cleared for farming and forest fires had thinned the tree cover. But among the hills stood many virgin pines, hemlocks and hardwoods.

Albert bought the sawmill together with several hundred acres of surrounding land, commenced reconstruction of the mill and started laying plans to subdivide the land to create a community. Working with him were three men, William Morgan, Isaac Fawcett and Robert Goodwin, whose names appear on streets in the “Plan of Survey of the Village of Port Sydney” he filed in 1873. Morgan (and possibly Fawcett) was a friend from Hayesville.



Mr Sydney-Smith, his steamer the Gem, and a load of tan bark ready to be shipped from his mill to the tannery in Huntsville, circa 1905. The cheese factory and the Anglican Church can be seen in the background, as can the steamer Ramona as she approaches the Cheese Dock from Huntsville.
(Johnson family collection)

It was these men together with farm and store owners David Hogaboam and the Ladells who proposed that the village be named after Albert. The name “Port Sydney-Smith” would have been cumbersome, so they settled on the first half of his double-barrelled family name. The proposal gained wide support among the community. Over the next five years the ringing of hammers and

clanging of the sawmill machinery echoed audibly as the village became centred around the mill and a new dam and bridge at the falls. With Albert's investment the sawmill was rebuilt and very much enlarged, and a grist mill and oatmeal mill were added. All were powered by the waterfall. William Morgan was the proud owner of the new Sydney Hotel (where the Red Door now stands), over a dozen new homes and a school had been built as well as a community hall on land donated by Albert. And in a blessing from Ottawa 'Mary Lake Post Office' became 'Port Sydney Post Office'.



Albert Sydney-Smith addressing an Anglican Church function, possibly the annual Christ Church picnic at Port Sydney, circa 1918
(Johnson family collection)

The architectural jewel of that era was the new Anglican Church built with pride in intricate detail by local craftsmen led by William Morgan on the finest lot in the village, with a spectacular view up the Lake, donated by Albert to "...the Bishop of Algoma and his heirs and successors". When it was destroyed by an arsonist in 2008 it was the oldest frame church in Muskoka. (As the population grew he provided additional land near the present bridge for a Presbyterian Church.)

By 1897 Albert's enterprises were providing sufficient returns to finance the building of his steamship the Gem to provide cargo and passenger service to Huntsville and beyond. In that same year a co-operative cheese factory was organized and built by local farmers. The Gem would deliver milk from lakeside farms to the Cheese Dock, adjacent to the factory. The dock is still there.

During the railroad building era of the eighteen eighties and nineties, Albert strove to convince the builders of the Canadian Northern and Pacific Railway (now CN) to route

their railway through Port Sydney on its way north. This would have made Port Sydney the head of transportation and navigation for north Muskoka and a boomtown. To his disappointment a route was chosen through Huntsville. Had he succeeded, Port Sydney would not be the picturesque village we know today.

Fifty years after his first visit, Albert Sydney-Smith would have looked about with justifiable pride. But supplies of merchantable timber were waning and the economy of the area was evolving; tourism and the building of seasonal residences began to dominate. However the spirit of the community he began continued to be strong.

The late Bill Clarke reminisced a few years ago about Albert Sydney-Smith, the tall man with the white beard whom Bill had met as a child and who had been so much a part of the community. He recalled vividly the day in September 1925 when he heard the bell in the Anglican Church ring across the village for half an hour. When he asked, his mother told him 'Mr Smith' had passed away.

It was the end of an era that began 150 years ago.

Ted Johnson

Director

Mary Lake Association

Do You Love Water Sports?

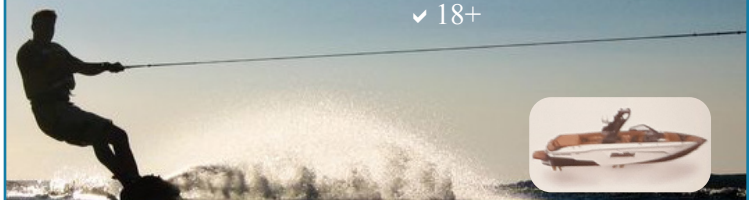
There is Now a Water Sports School on Mary Lake!

NOW OFFERING!

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

CLASSES

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



Boat Being Used
2021 LSV Wakesetter

ONE WEEK CLASSES

Starting June 29th until the End of Summer!

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Please Email: gpbwayne@hotmail.com

2021 Mary Lake in Photos...



Carol Baker



Nico Byl



Greg Crawford



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Greg Crawford



Greg Crawford



Judy Kurtz



Ryan Kidd



Greg Crawford

2021 Mary Lake in Photos...



David Gillies



Ryan Kidd



Nancy Laurie



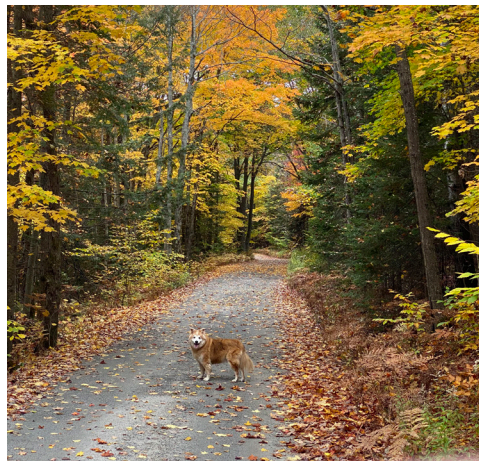
Greg Crawford



Carol Baker



Ryan Kidd



Nancy Laurie



Jennifer Ancona



Joel Beatty



Greg Crawford

2021 Mary Lake in Photos...



Dean Baker



Nico Byl



David Gillies



Jennifer McLellan



David Gillies



Nancy Laurie



Nancy Laurie



Nancy Laurie



Judy Kurtz

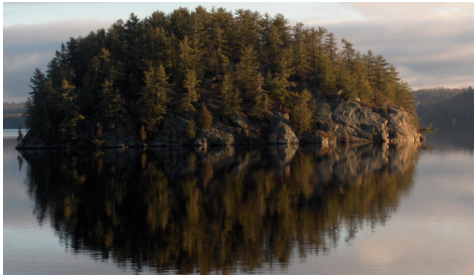


Greg Crawford

2021 Mary Lake in Photos...



John Hogg



Ryan Kidd



Murray Rubin



David Gillies



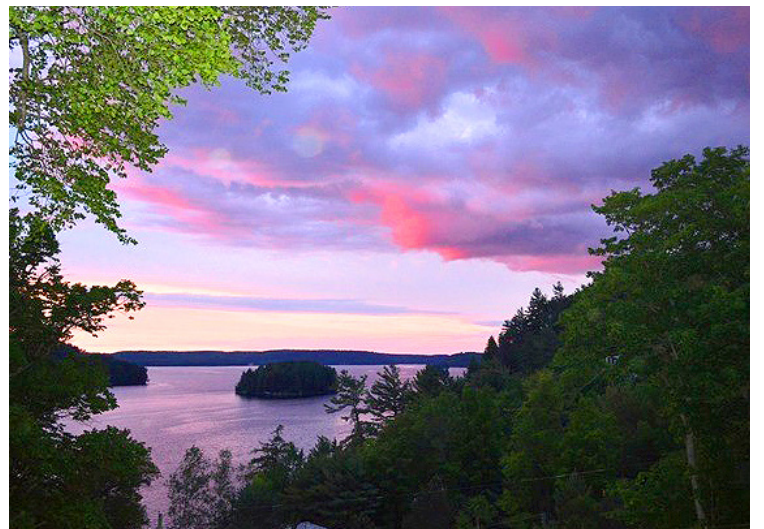
Jennifer Ancona



Sue MacMurtry



Nancy Laurie



Ryan Kidd

Fall Photo Tour of Mary Lake by Air



Early October when the fall colour was at its peak Tom and I had the privilege of seeing Mary Lake from the air in a friend's aircraft. We circled Mary Lake then headed on up to Algonquin Park, following the Big East River to McCraney Lake, which is the source of the water that makes its way into Mary Lake. But that's a photo story for another time. The photos you see here start with Port Sydney. We flew up along the East side then returned from Algonquin and flew around the north end, then along the west shoreline and ended up with a shot of Buckhorn Island and the shoreline behind it to the west of the village.

We left around 3pm so the sun was waning and by the end of the flight the photos were taken in dusk. They are not a complete record of the whole of Mary Lake shoreline, so I apologize for not getting your place in one of the shots. I was most taken by the endless forest of colour that extends beyond the shoreline of our lake. We had visibility of around 50 k. It is most impressive that our shoreline remains predominately forested right to the shore's edge so that in fact you see very few buildings from the air.

Hope you enjoy seeing Mary Lake from above.

Nancy Laurie, Director Mary Lake Association

If anyone would like the complete set of these arial shots, please contact Nancy at nalaurie45@gmail.com



Port Sydney



East Side of Mary Lake / Camp Mini-Yo-We



East Side of Mary Lake



Shoreline South of Camp Mini-Yo-We



Lancelot Creek joins Mary Lake to Spider Lake



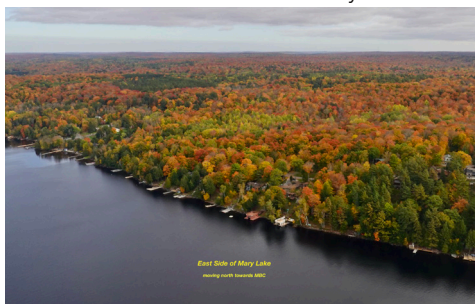
Lawrence Island and Mary Lake Marina



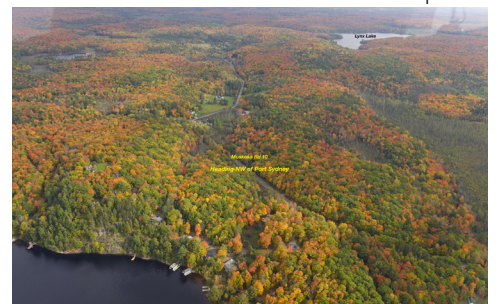
Griffin Bluffs Development



East Side of Mary Lake



East Side of Mary Lake Towards MBC



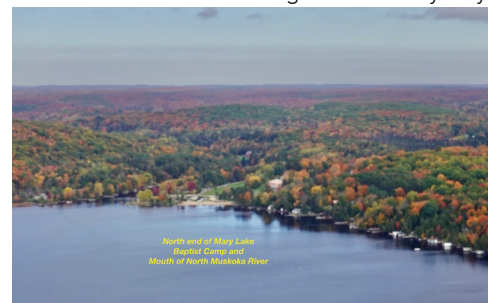
Muskoka Rd 10 Heading NW of Port Sydney



The Old Gryfin Lodge Property



Muskoka Rd 10 and MBC



MBC and the Mouth of North Muskoka River



MBC and the Mouth of North Muskoka River



North End of Mary Lake and MBC

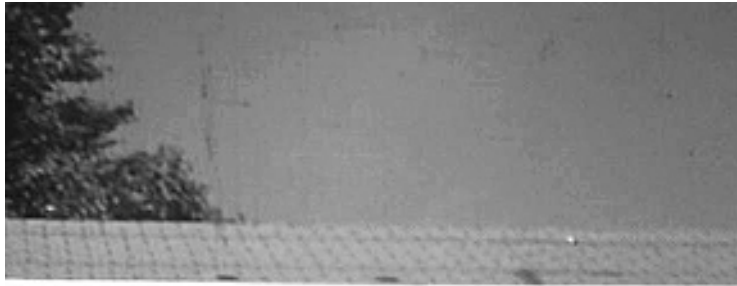


MBC and the Mouth of North Muskoka River

Cottagers have asked about early settlers around the lake

THE GLENOKAWA STORY

The boy could hardly contain himself. School was over for the year and he was about to start out on a great adventure.



It had begun early in the morning when the train left Union Station in Toronto. Other boys had joined him. Some were loud and noisy while some were strangely quiet. He had felt sad for a few minutes when he left his parents on the platform but the many new sights soon overcame his loss. The stink of the smoke from the engine entered the car as they clattered through towns with strange sounding names. The one that he had watched for was Utterson. It was the stop where he got off to go to Port Sydney. The entrance to Port Sydney was at Mary Lake Motors where all the signs were located. There were over a dozen of them pointing to lodges and camps....but the one he wanted was "Camp Glenokawa".

At the town dock he and the others had waited impatiently until the boat ferry came. Jerry Ashton in a peaked hat was the driver and he collected the 25-cent fare for the ride over to the camp which could barely be seen to their left at the head of Echo Bay. (The first bay on the west side of the lake before Buckhorn Point)

The welcome had been tumultuous as the other campers and the camp director Glen Allen, had rushed down to the dock to welcome the new boys.

Glen Allen was a pianist, an artist, an actor, a dancer and a conversationalist. He always seemed to be acting. He was larger than life and charmed everyone in his conversations. Glen had been born in 1904 and had joined the famous Dumbell Troupe after WW 1 in 1928 during a revival of the troupe in England. For many soldiers in the trenches in the deadly mud of the war, the Dumbell Troupe had been a bright moment of laughter and song as they made fun of army life, did ribald female impersonations and sang risqué songs. For most of his life he used his stage name Glen Allen instead of his real name Arnold Armstrong.



After working at Pinecrest Camp in Bala in 1931, Glen decided to bring his energy and enthusiasm to his own camp for boys on Mary Lake in 1932. He was lucky in getting 30 acres of inexpensive land southwest of Buckhorn Point and a pile of lumber on the town dock left over from a defaulted delivery...and so Camp Glenokawa was born. From then until its demise in 1958 due to competition, hundreds of boys came to the camp mostly for two weeks to learn canoeing, canoe tripping, swimming, archery, boxing, arts and drama. They lived eight to a cabin with no hydro, no phone or road to the camp...and in the main loved it. Glen was very liberal for the day and gave them talks on Sunday nights about the Golden Rules, table manners, sex and held debates

about God. He was a character good at drawing kids out helping shy kids to be heroes and brash kids to tone it down. The graduates of the camp in many cases went on to become successful leaders. One became the director of the National Art Gallery.

The highlight of each summer was the holiday at the beginning of August. The whole camp went into training for the regatta and competitions against their arch-rivals at Pioneer Camp. Because of their emphasis on canoeing, Glenokawa was usually able to clean up on canoeing events. The other big event on that weekend was the show at the community hall. Tickets for seats at the community hall would all be sold out for the show called "The Annual Riot" because this was also a big event for Port Sydney. Glen would spend the winter writing the script for the review and the whole camp would spend over two weeks preparing for this event held on August 1. Props would be prepared that would cover the whole wall at the stage end of the hall. They were painted in sections and glued together. Often there were several of these large sheets. One would be torn down revealing the next one to prepare for the next scene. The crowd loved the presentation which was like the original Dumbell shows. The campers would sing, dance, do impersonations and tell slightly off colour jokes. Parents who came to the shows were sometimes not too impressed with the jokes that their sons were telling. People in Port Sydney still remember the shows and the camp. Every night the villagers heard the trumpet at the camp playing "taps".



During the years that the camp operated, Glen decorated Eaton's windows in the winter and wrote romance novels. After the camp closing in 1958, Glen was devastated. He

went to Denmark only to return in the early 60's broke and in poor health. The boys from the camp came to his rescue and held a reunion. One of the favourite songs at the camp had been "We ain't got a barrel of money" and so they gave him a barrel of money and helped him until his death from cancer in 1978.

The "boy" and his fellow campers still come back occasionally to revisit the site of their memories and to look at the two falling down cabins. It is said that sometimes at dusk taps can be faintly heard from Echo Bay.



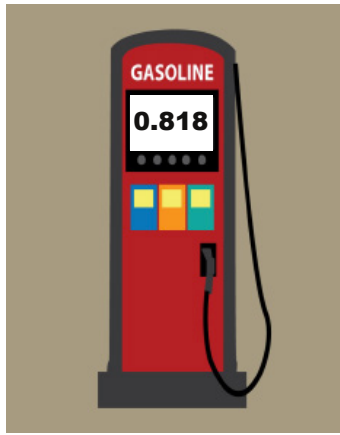
Not long ago, a woman stood for several minutes at the end of the dock in front of Glenokawa. Her husband who had recently died had been a camper at Glenokawa many years ago. She dropped her wedding ring into the lake thus fulfilling a promise made to him before he died. His fondest memories had been at the camp and his marriage to her. This was the way to bring these special times and memories back together.



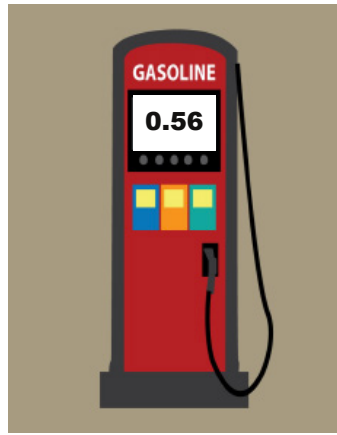
***This excerpt is from
"The Newcomers"
written By Ryan Kidd
and is available in
local stores and from Trafford
Publishing***

Propane Membership Update

You pull into your local gas station and the first pump is selling gas for 0.818 cents and the next pump shows gas at 0.56 cents. Which pump are you going to use to fill up your tank?



or



Over the past decade, the Woodland Heights Community Association (WHCA) has developed one of the most value-oriented residential liquid propane supplier management programs in Muskoka.

The program has grown beyond the residents of Woodland Heights, including Echo Valley, Hidden Valley and Mary Lake.

Administration of the program is provided on a no cost basis with all net savings going to participants.

The program elements include

1. Your MLA membership must be in good standing.
2. Minimum use of 500 liters of propane a year - but less than 10,000 litres.
3. No commercial Accounts allowed
4. The contract with the supplier runs for 1 year starting in August 5 -10 year (provincially mandated) inspection @ \$149.00 for the first 3 appliances will move to 5 appliances & \$20.00 for each additional propane appliance

This year's Supplier is Superior Propane who are the lowest liquid propane per liter cost in Muskoka
* 2021/2022 contract cost = 0.56c/Liter (Plus applicable taxes)

- * FREE propane Tank rental from supplier
- * FREE existing tank switch over
- * FREE delivery
- * SMART remote monitoring device = \$ 30/annually

The contract is a fixed rate annual propane contract (will not fluctuate in winter peak demand months). Over this past year, Covid 19 has caused commodity markets unprecedented escalation in costs. Home building supplies, food, base materials used in manufacturing, energy & most other commodities have suffered steep cost rises. By way of example between Sept 2020 through to this summer, the wholesale cost of propane rose over 70%. The escalation is largely driven by supply chain systems having broken down creating inventory shortages, manufacturing plant being offline

and likely a good deal of speculation and profit taking by traders. FYI Superiors last year price 0.435 c/L current 0.56 c/L

I notice some of the members are interested in this amazing price per L, they are holding back or are not switching over as Superior follows all of the Acts requirements and during an inspection the home owner found out their equipment is not up to code so they stick with their current supplier which sometimes is matching the price per L (delivery fees and tank rental will still be charged)

Propane users should note that if their tank to home connection does not conform to the Ontario regulations, should an explosion & or fire occur, the insurance carrier will consider the event contributory negligence by the homeowner and will not financially support the claim. So in the end, this is about: 1. be in accordance with the law, 2. safety for the homeowner & 3. not allow for insurance relief should a mishap occur.

**ONLY INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS
CAN SIGN UP! NO GROUPS &
NO ROAD ASSOCIATIONS!**

Please contact me.
Monique Heemskerck
Membership Director
Mary Lake Association