



Acton Island Association

In This Issue:

1. Meet and Great
2. Bala Falls
P
3. Port Carling
Locks
4. Watershed
Council Report
Card
5. Acton Island
Heritage Trust
Bid
6. Did You
Know?
7. Afterword
8. Upcoming
Summer
Events
9. Contacts

A Note From Your President..

After a beautifully warm May 24th weekend, we should all feel much better about the coming summer of 2010. Hopefully the high temperature and blue skies will stay with us and we can all get some serious water activities going...I don't know about your cottage but the swimming and boating was considerable less at our place last year.

This July will mark the end of my Presidency of the Association, I have agreed to remain as a member for an additional term but will hand over the reins to Malcolm Faulkes. I would like to thank my Board of Directors for all their support and encouragement.

This year at the "Meet and Greet" we are trying something a little different .We will be combining the afternoon's festivities with a very short, but sweet "Annual General Meeting" so please try to come out, meet your neighbours and get caught up on the boards activities.

We are looking forwards to seeing you...

Leslie McCann

President, Acton Island Association

Annual Acton Island Meet and Greet and AGM

Sunday July 18, 2010

Host: Tom and Ann Verth
Location: 1011 Kemp Road
Time: 1 pm

This year we will be combining the Meet and Greet with our Annual General Meeting. This is an excellent opportunity for you, the membership, to get to know your neighbours and we look forward to seeing you all there.

Please bring your own hors d'oeuvres /snacks for approximately 6. Refreshments will be provided by the AIA.

Bala Falls Hydroelectric Project Update

This spring has seen some advancement on the Bala Falls Hydroelectric project's status.

In late 2008 the Muskoka District Council voted in favour of building a hydroelectric plant on the North falls in Bala pending an environmental assessment of the Bala Falls. The bid to build the hydroelectric plant was won by The Swift River Energy Limited. After much lobbying by the Save The Bala Falls Association the Ministry of the Environment decided on May 14th, 2010 that the Swift River Energy Group must conduct a further study into the effects of the hydroelectric project and report back to the ministry by mid-July 2010. This study would be in, "respect to navigation matters and economic impacts" as "there are outstanding concerns that have not been adequately addressed."

Furthermore, the Ministry of the Environment has committed to making a decision in regards to the Save The Bala Falls Association's request to require the proposed development to be held up to a more rigorous environmental review than the standard review which has already been processed. The director of the Environmental and Approval Branch will "continue to review the issues raised and will then make a decision on the elevation request made."

An alternate issue that has come to light is the privatization of the hydroelectric project. In April, Swift River Energy Limited was told that it would be offered a long-term contract from the Ontario Power Authority to purchase all the power produced by the proposed 5 MW hydropower plant. The small hydroelectric project would produce in excess of \$100 million in revenue over the next 40 years.

The privatization of the hydroelectric project has become a key campaign feature in the upcoming Township of Muskoka Lakes mayoral elections. Jeff Mole, one of the three mayoral candidates has incorporated this into his platform with a proposed Bala Energy Co-operative, should the proposed plant go ahead. Incumbent Muskoka Lakes Mayor and mayoral candidate Karen Ellis has also said that at this point the project is under the provinces jurisdiction, however, should the project go ahead, "I would like to see us work with them [Swift River Energy Limited]."

Again at this point the board does not have a firm commitment for or against the proposal. The board is willing to assist you in finding published information on this project and request you to consider your own direction on this matter.

The Swift River Energy Limited project website: www.balafalls.ca

<http://savethebalafalls.com>

Port Carling Locks

In early spring the Muskoka District announced that beginning this summer the small locks in Port Carling connecting Lake Muskoka to Lake Rosseau and Lake Joseph would no longer be operating 24 hours a day. Instead the small locks would operate along with the larger Port Carling Locks until midnight when both would close for the evening. Following pressure from the Muskoka Lakes Association the district has chosen to reverse this decision and will be keeping the small locks open 24 hours a day as well as having them staffed on the weekends until close to midnight on a trial basis for the summer of 2010.

Watershed Council Report Card

The Muskoka Watershed Council, a derivative of the Muskoka Heritage Foundation has been working vigorously over the past several years to protect and maintain the Muskoka Watershed. The 2009 Muskoka Watershed Progress Report was recently issued to highlight and track the municipal progress since 2007. The progress was tracked by breaking down the progress into 7 core areas to guide the work of the council. These core areas are 1. Protect shoreline vegetation 2. Control storm water runoff 3. Protect wetlands 4. Maintain large natural areas 5. Remediate degraded areas 6. Encourage new development to locate in urban areas 7. Reduce carbon emissions. Each goal was classified in the report as having made optimistic progress, cautiously optimistic progress or a concerning level of progress.

The results of the 2009 report showed that there had been an optimistic level of progress made towards the goal of protecting shoreline vegetation since 2007, a concerning level of progress towards the protecting of the wetlands and the maintenance of large natural areas since 2007 and a cautiously optimistic level of progress towards the remaining 4 areas of work.

Based on these results it is evident that much work still needs to be done to improve and maintain our watershed. The Muskoka Watershed council holds the principle that “increasing individual responsibility is essential” as is understanding “the impact of everyday lifestyle decisions and practices on watershed health.”

The Muskoka watershed council has produced a series of fact sheets on maintaining a healthy waterfront. Your Acton Island Association challenges you to check out these fact sheets and see how you can make a contribution towards improving the watershed this summer.

Fact Sheets and more information are available at www.muskokaheritage.org/watershed

Watershed Facts:

The Muskoka Watershed’s headwaters arise on the western slopes of Algonquin Park and flow southwest for approx. 210 km to the southeast corner of Georgian Bay. The watershed measures 62km at the widest point and is 120 km long covering a total area of 466,000 hectares. The more than 2000 lakes in Muskoka cover 17% of the watershed. The watershed is home to predominantly cool and cold-water fish and a wide diversity of mammal, amphibian, reptile and bird species whose life cycle is directly dependent upon the Muskoka River and its surrounding watershed.

Acton Island Heritage Trust Bid

The Acton Island Association has been working this winter to try and get some areas on the island delegated as heritage trust protected lands through the Muskoka Heritage Foundation. Some areas in the interior of the island have recently been subject to small commercialized logging projects. A land trust agreement with the Muskoka Heritage Foundation would serve to protect other segments of Acton Island from future commercial and development projects and would maintain the natural beauty and biodiversity of Acton Island for future generations.

The Muskoka Heritage Foundation trust has certain criterion to ensure that the lands they protect best represent the uniqueness and variety of significant lands in Muskoka. They should embody one or more of the following:

Uniqueness, diversity of habitat, quality and ecological integrity, rare or unusual biota, hydrological significance and scenic or cultural significance.

The Acton Island Association believes that Acton Island represents a significant land in Muskoka and is hard at work on making this bid.

Did You Know?

Did you know that the Torrance Barrens Dark Sky Reserve, established in 1999, was the World's first permanent dark sky reserve. The conservation reserve of 1990 hectares just southeast of Bala was developed by the Muskoka Heritage Foundation along with the Ministry of Natural Resources and become a region of protected space free from the intrusion of urban night pollution. This protected area has been supplemented with light initiative programs in the surrounding areas, including Bala, to provide streetlights that cast the light down towards the ground as opposed to up into the sky, minimizing the light pollution in the areas around the reserve. The reserve is located on a relatively open area with modest tree growth so as to give a clear view of the sky from horizon to horizon. The reserve provides a space to observe the night sky unmasked by light pollution. The area is so clear that on occasion the northern lights (Aurora Borealis) are visible, most commonly as pale green flickering light but sometimes in a full-multicolored spectrum. With a basic beginner's telescope it is also possible to see the cloudbanks of Jupiter and the rings of Saturn from within the reserve. The township of Muskoka Lakes Recreation Trails Committee has created several trails through the reserve and the area provides excellent blueberry picking in the summer. The reserve is accessible from the parking area at highland pond off of District Road 13. Turn West on District Road 13 and drive approximately 20 minutes until you see the Torrance Barrens sign.

Afterword

Beginning this summer the Acton Island Annual General Meeting is being combined with our annual summer Meet and Greet. This years AGM will be held on Sunday, July 18th at 1pm. The Acton Island Association roster will now be published every two years beginning this year.

In other news, after rising concern over the speed of cars driving on the island it has been decided that there will be a police presence on the Acton Island roads this summer monitoring car speeds. Please keep in mind the speed limits in place on the island and cut your speed this summer.

Please also be mindful of your speed on the water and remember to abide by the new Ontario boating laws that were instated last year. The new boating laws can be reviewed on the Muskoka Lakes Association website at www.mla.on.ca

Upcoming Events in Muskoka Summer 2010

Every **Monday** Bala Summer Market at the Sports Park 9-2pm
Every **Tuesday** at 7:30 June 29th- August 31st SWS ski show, Windsor Park, Bala
Every **Wednesday** at 7:30 Historical Haunted Walking Tour, Bala Bay Hotel

June

June 20th- Father's Day Car Show, Bracebridge
June 25th-26th- G8 2010 Summit, Huntsville
June 25th- 26th- Cottage Country Comedy Fest, Bracebridge
June 25th-27th- Doors Open Muskoka
June 26th- Boating for the Cure, Family Boat Rally for Cancer, Gravenhurst

July

July 1st- Celebrate Canada Strawberry Social, Huntsville
July 1st- 31st- Resort Lunch Cruise, Gravenhurst
July 1st- 31st- Pirate Cruises, Gravenhurst
July 1st- 5th- 9th Annual Pressed Glass Open House, Port Carling
July 3rd- 4th - Bala Craft and Gift Fair, Bala Arena
July 3rd- 4th, Bala Antique Show and Sale, Bala
July 5th, Summer Open Horse Shoe Tournament, Bala
July 10th- 11th- 30th Antique and Classic Boat Show, Gravenhurst
July 11th- Edge of the Woods Theatre, James Bartleman Island Park, Port Carling
July 16th- 18th- 48th Annual Summer Muskoka Arts and Crafts Show, Bracebridge
July 17th- 18th- Gravenhurst Triathlon Weekend, Gravenhurst
July 23rd- 25th- 3rd Muskoka In-Water Boat and Cottage Show
July 24th- Steel Toes and Sandals, Bala United Church and Habitat for Humanity Fundraiser
July 24th- Bala's Museum With Memories- Lucy Maud Montgomery, Bala
July 24th- The Artful Garden, Bracebridge
July 25th- HSBC Triathlon, Bala
July 26th- Canadian Classic Car Luncheon and Show, Bala
July 30th- Piratefest, Muskoka Warf, Bracebridge
July 30th- BIA Midnight Madness, Bracebridge
July 31st- Fireworks, Gravenhurst

August

August 7th-8th- Model Railway Show, Bracebridge
August 13th- Summer Sizzler Fundraiser for Hospice Muskoka, Minnett
August 20th- 22nd- Steamship Festival and Sidewalk Sale, Muskoka Wharf, Gravenhurst
August 20th- 21st- 19th Annual Docksides Festival of the Arts and Crafts, Gravenhurst
August 21st- Reggae Muskoka Bob Marley Festival, JD Lang Activity Park, Bracebridge
August 21st- Bracebridge Highland Games, Bracebridge
August 27th- 29th- Bracebridge Antique Show

Check the Muskoka Lakes Chamber of Commerce Directory website for more information.
www.muskokalakeschamber.com

Your Acton Island Association
Board of Directors

President: Leslie McCann,
1133 Innisfree Rd.,
705-762-5784 or 705-645-8645
leslie@summitmortgage.ca

**Immediate Past President and
Membership Director:** Gord
Richards, 1153 Acton Island Rd.,
705-762-5394
grichards@sympatico.ca

Secretary: Brian Atkinson,
1153 Acton Island Rd.,
705-762-5394
brianatkinson@sympatio.ca

Treasurer: Bruce Patterson,
1250 Acton Island Rd.,
705-762-5270
oldpeakroad@yahoo.com

Directors:
Malcolm Foulkes, 1054 Kemp Rd.,
r.d@bellet.ca
John McMechan, 1314 Innisfree Rd.,
705-762-3748
kmcmechan@hotmail.com
Larry Scott, 1173 Innisfree Rd.,
705-762-2548
lawrencejacksonscott@gmail.com
Michelle Fish, 1072 Kemp Road,
705-762-2521
mfish@rogers.com
Hugh Kerr, 1220 Acton Island Road,
hugh.kerr@sunlife.com

Your board is here to serve the needs
of its members. If you have ideas or
topics to discuss please let us know

Leslie J. McCann
President

For more information, feel free to contact:
Your Township Mayor and Councillors

Acting Mayor: Karen Ellis
705-765-3156
kellis@muskokalakes.ca

Acting Deputy Mayor: Mary Grady
705-762-3409
mgrady@muskokalakes.ca

District Councillor: Brian Hare
705-706-4800
bhare@muskokalakes.ca

