

n o v / d e c 2 0 2 3

RIVER TALK



RIVER SAFETY
ENVIRONMENTAL
AWARENESS
COMMUNITY SUPPORT





Contents

03 PRESIDENT'S
MESSAGE

04 FROM THE
EDITOR

05 IN CASE YOU
WERE WONDERING

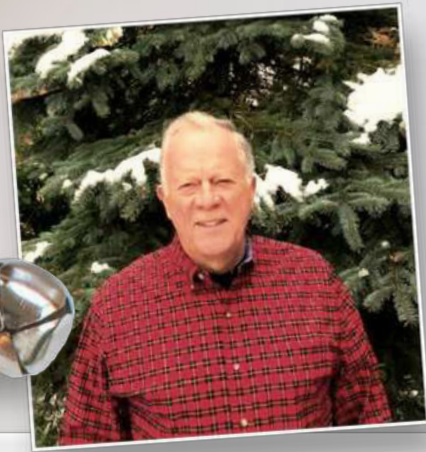
06 GETTING INTO
THE GREEN SCENE

08 WILDLIFE
CORRIDOR

09 WATER LEVEL
UPDATE

10 NOTEWORTHY





Peter Fitton

President's Message

We are fast approaching winter solstice, and the countdown to another New Year!

There is something special about experiencing all four seasons in a year. We have enjoyed another memorable summer and colourful fall on the river, and now is the time to prepare for the festive season and to start the New Year with fresh opportunities and possibilities waiting to be unlocked.

Countries all over the world have unique Christmas Traditions, and your families have created their own. [Click here to read about Christmas Traditions from Around the World](#) that may surprise and delight you.

One of my traditions is to take inventory of what I accomplished this past year and to start planning for an even better new year. New Years resolutions are a good thing to make. They should include a focus on yourself, and be “SMART” ... Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-Bound. [Click here to be guided on the Top 10 New Year's Resolutions \(and How to Follow Through on Them\)](#).

Looking back on 2023, TIA had another good year of accomplishments. Rock Markers were all out and in place alerting you to subsurface hazards and TIA invested in replacement markers for those deteriorated due to the forces of nature. Our Environmental Programs included expanded locations for Fishing Line Recycling Stations, more Turtle nest protectors, well attended Trash Free River Clean Up days, and increased social media messaging on awareness. Thank you to our Membership, Business Sponsors, and Grant Partners that make this possible.

The TIA AGM at the Gan Playhouse was another success - live music, a hot buffet breakfast, river community fellowship, greetings from the local Mayors, and knowledgeable Speakers explaining the complications of IJC Plan 2014 concerning water level control. Next year TIA will be celebrating its 90th Birthday because of generations of support from you!

December is our National Giving Month, and it revolves around people making a difference in society by helping others. The TIA Annual Appeal has become a critical component to balancing our budget, and we are grateful to be included by you as a significant charitable cause for annual support. All donations receive Canadian and American tax receipts. Please [Click here to Donate now](#).

On behalf of the Board, I wish everyone Seasons Greetings and a happy & healthy New Year!



From the Editor

Allison Burchell-Robinson

The day was sunny with a gentle breeze in the low 60's, a great day for a boat ride. My neighbor was pulling his boat soon but wanted to take the last ride of the season and invited me to come along. He allowed that he didn't know the Canadian waters well but felt comfortable on the US side. Since we weren't planning on getting out of the boat, I suggested a visit to the other side. I would navigate.

We headed out from Clayton and cruised up to and around Canoe Point a lovely trip and then we were in Canada heading towards the Lake Fleet Group where I spent so many summers. There we were, not another boat in sight out on the wide river, and something was not right. Was I lost? Why wasn't it familiar? Had something changed since my last visit in August?

And then it dawned on me, there were no shoal markers anywhere. I hadn't been paying attention while on the US side, leaving it up to my neighbor to navigate. Did I know the way, my neighbor asked? A mild panic was settling in as I reassured him that all was well.

It is puzzling to be in a place that is ever so familiar to you and yet so strange. I did know where I was and where I was going but my comfort zone had been rattled. Those familiar white and orange markers were not bobbing anywhere. I realized that however much we take them for granted we do depend on them to reassure us we are on the right path.

We continued to cruise slowly through the Navy Islands and down to Ivy Lea. I was relaxing, my instincts were working. I did know the way. The scenery was different, there were few boats, fall foliage was out and many of the cottages were closed, a very different perspective.

It turned to be a wonderful day-rewarding and revealing. Heading back to Clayton I thought about my great grandfather and how he made the same trip over the years starting in 1910. I wonder what his markers were.

My respect for the River, always there, increased as has my respect for those on it year round.

In Case You Were Wondering...

...what to do with that old canoe?

Dave McWilliam & Alec Turner

You know the one in the rafters of the boathouse or the one stuck behind the shed or the one languishing on the shore of the neighbour's property or the one you inherited from a friend. Yes, it could become a flower planter or a storied object hanging from the rafters in the living room or perhaps a bookcase or put a posting on Facebook for a free canoe. Lord forbid you could burn it! After the hard work this venerable vessel has performed does it not deserve a better place?

Why not give the craft a new life, perhaps as a rescue vessel. A quickly accessed craft for retrieving the children's inflated swan or retrieving the favourite hat blown into the water or even to rescue the dog who has ventured out on the thin ice. (This latter suggestion is fool hearty, though we suspect has been done!)

What your craft needs is a bit of TLC and a canoe rack situated near the shore but out of the way. First, ensure the canoe still floats. Second give it a good cleaning and maybe a new coat of paint and varnish as none of us want to be seen in a derelict craft.

After all, should experienced craft not be able to perform other tasks in their latter life!

For instructions on how to build the pictured canoe rack email us at: thousandislandsassociation@gmail.com or you can find many other designs with a quick internet search.





Janet Smith-Staples

Getting Into the Green Scene

Have you ever had an altercation with a swan? I have and so has another TIA member whose story I am sharing here. This member had written Queen's university to find as much information out about these birds as possible.

"We have a cottage in 1000 Islands, Admiralty Group, across from Gananoque, on Tremont Island. This past summer I had a very frightening experience early one morning (6:30) while kayaking around the big community island where our cottage is located. I am 83 years old. I paddle not far from shore. My paddling is more meditative and peaceful than racing or tripping.

I came upon a family of 6- 2 adults, 4 signets-who were feeding near shore as I paddled along. They swam away in front of me a considerable distance, then a strange thing took place. The male suddenly turned back, swam incredibly fast and aggressively, hissing, snorting, displaying big feather and wing display, turned his back to me, displaying big neck maneuvers also. He then faced me again hissing. He came to within about 20 feet of me. I had stopped paddling not wanting to seem aggressive.

A neighbour having tea in her cottage thought he might come directly at me and turn over the Kayak so she was watching closely.

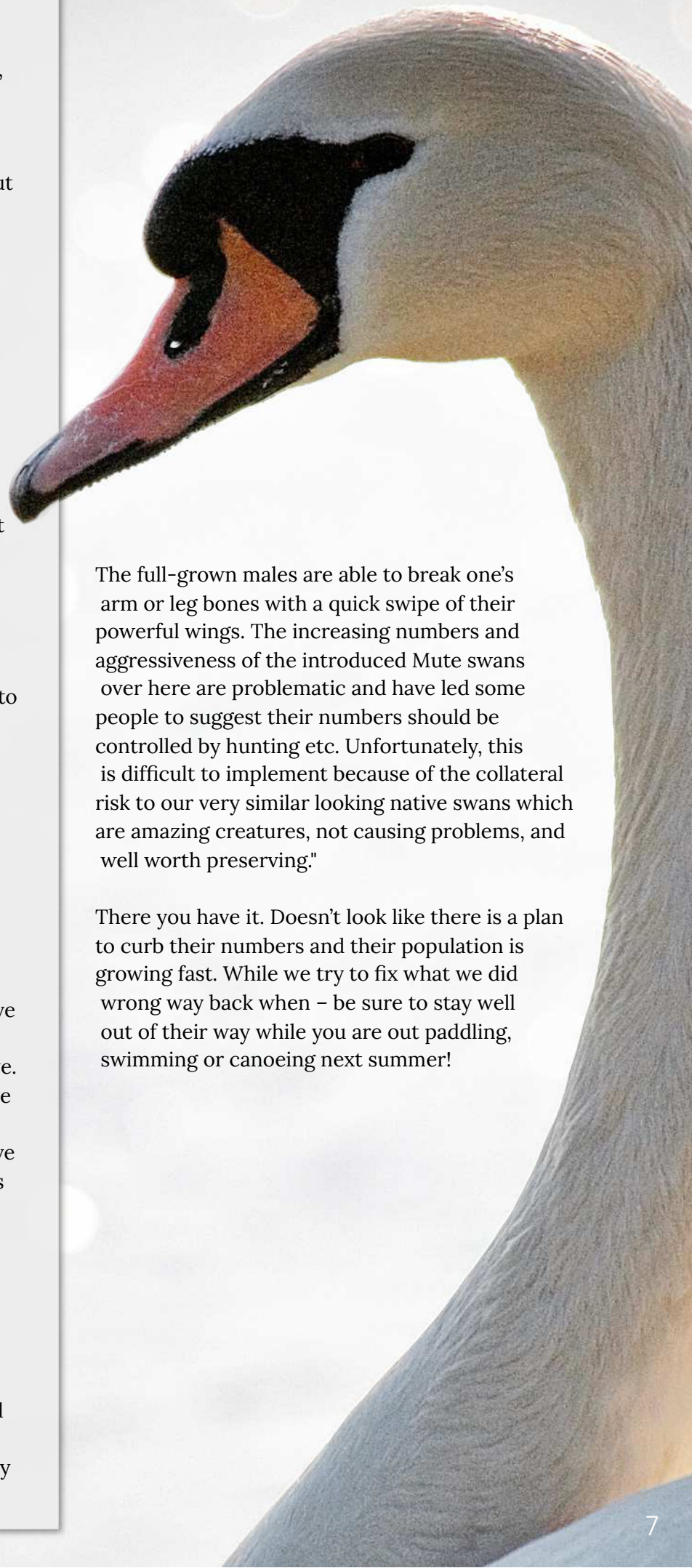
I then began to paddle very slowly towards home, watching the swan. I came near a very, very large inflatable floating toy in front of another neighbour cottage and swan stopped moving near me again. I think perhaps the colour, size and height of it scared him.

He stopped but stayed near, 40-feet away as I came to my dock which was very close. I was completing my morning paddle. I was quite rattled by this as was my young neighbour who came over to me. Had I been on other side of island, when most are often sleeping, and I was alone on the water, what might have happened."

Her response from came from Peter T. Boag, PhD, FRSC Prof. Emeritus of Biology, Queen's University:

"I'm a retired bird biologist from Queen's, not sure I can offer much practical help but I can make a few observations based on personal experience and my professional past. We live on a lake north of Kingston and just this summer watched a similar display on the marsh below our house. A male Canada goose battled for better part of 30 minutes with a male swan trying to enter the marsh with its mate. Ultimately the goose won and the swans retreated. The aggressive swans are almost certainly Mute swans, a non-native species introduced to North America for display at zoos and parks. It is the largest swan species, indeed one of the largest birds in the world. They are highly territorial and very aggressive towards other waterbirds, and almost any other animal, including humans, if they perceive them as a threat to their mate, young, or nest site, especially during the March to August breeding season. Mute swan numbers have been increasing, and they now nest in many places in the greater Kingston area.

It is important to distinguish Mute swans from our 2 native swan species, the much smaller Tundra swan which breeds in the far north but passes through our area spring and fall in numbers. The other native species is the Trumpeter swan, almost as large as the Mute, but much less aggressive. The Mute swans are considered an invasive species because their aggressive territoriality on marshes can exclude native waterfowl including our native swans, plus Mutes can be voracious feeders doing damage to wetland areas by overgrazing. Not much to suggest in the way of safety, except to suggest people learn to identify Mute swans (distinctive orangey red beak with black knob) from the other swans (all black beaks). Stay well away from Mutes, especially during the breeding season, and super-especially if they have cygnets (young) when they can become particularly aggressive.



The full-grown males are able to break one's arm or leg bones with a quick swipe of their powerful wings. The increasing numbers and aggressiveness of the introduced Mute swans over here are problematic and have led some people to suggest their numbers should be controlled by hunting etc. Unfortunately, this is difficult to implement because of the collateral risk to our very similar looking native swans which are amazing creatures, not causing problems, and well worth preserving."

There you have it. Doesn't look like there is a plan to curb their numbers and their population is growing fast. While we try to fix what we did wrong way back when – be sure to stay well out of their way while you are out paddling, swimming or canoeing next summer!

Wildlife Corridor

Travelling across our beautiful country

This “Wildlife Corridor” will take the title a little more literally than previous articles. I have been fortunate enough to crisscross North America numerous times, perhaps twenty times along different corridors. My latest trip was through Northern Ontario and continued with several stops all the way to Tofino, BC.

Over 5000 kilometres of beauty from streams, rushing waterfalls, Lake Superior and the Rocky Mountains to the turbulent western shores of Vancouver Island all demonstrating again and again that our country is absolutely splendid.

The abundance of wildlife across this country is just as magnificent as is its scenery. One cannot keep track of the variety of birds that one sees on your journey. There are song birds, water fowl, owls, hawks and eagles to name just a few. I have my favourites which includes Ravens, one of the most intelligent birds found in Canada and the Great Grey Owl. These two amazing birds can also be seen in the Thousand Islands region.

From the large moose, elk, and grizzly bears to the smallest of weasels and shrews we have a tremendous variety of mammals in Canada. We have a total of eleven ungulates, three bears (four if you include the BC Spirit bear), wolves, fox, coyotes, plentiful weasels and numerous other mammals throughout Canada. At least one species and often more of each mammal variety can be found in the 1000 Islands.

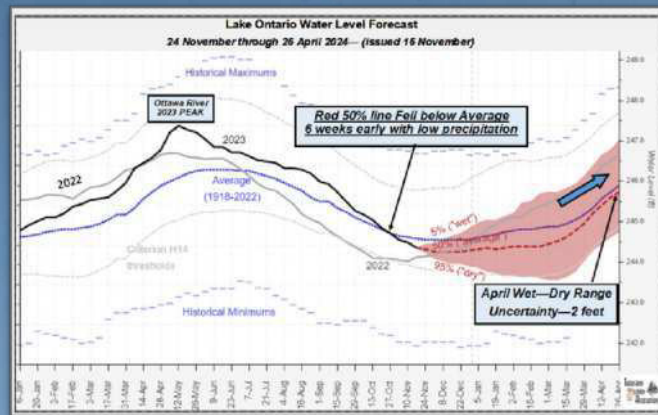
From our threatened Deerberry shrub on some of our own Admiralty Islands to the old growth forests where the Redwoods grow, our flora and fauna is indeed spectacular.

So, if you are working on a bucket list, add travelling across Canada. It is a unique and marvelous experience for all ages.



Water Level Updates:

What goes Down Will
Come Up – A Bay is only
0.7 ft above Datum!



Lake Ontario Water Level Forecast Edits by TIA

Vince Barton, Ken White, Ross Stewart

2023 was an above-average water level year for 10+ Months until a Dry October

While water levels during early Fall 2023 were much improved over the lows of 2022, a lack of precipitation recently dropped levels into a similar low domain.

Did you know there was a Canadian Seaway worker strike on October 22 which threatened the transiting of over 100 ships? Vince picked up on this. The good news is it was settled on October 30th. Click [HERE](#) for more...

The Seaway will end shipping on January 5, 2024, the latest date ever. This delay will help offset strike days lost. Check out end-of-season instructions to shippers from the US and Canadian Corporations, joint operators of the Seaway. Click [HERE](#) for a PDF to see what's needed to put the Seaway to Sleep for 3 months.

Exercising its authority to implement minor deviations from Plan 2014, the Board ignored the flow increases specified by the 'September Rule' of Plan 2014 from September 2nd through September 30th to provide higher and more predictable water levels on Lake St. Lawrence and the upper St. Lawrence River. This deviation slowed the seasonal decline upstream of Moses-Saunders Dam by setting outflows below those prescribed by Plan 2014 and improving recreational boating opportunities during this time.

Now that the boating season has ended, as required, the deviation from the September Rule was offset <paid back> (150m³/s higher outflows than prescribed) from about October 14 through November 17. Thanks to the ILOSLR Board for moving the "shallow fall" to late October when most of us were gone for the season!



Noteworthy:

Dock, Deck & Den Tour 2024

We know you've been talking about it, wondering where all the Island Patriots have gone? In 2018 the TIA introduced a member driven river event called The Dock, Deck & Den Tour. 10 members shared their homes, docks, dens, gardens and decks and most importantly, river stories, with over 100 guests for an exclusive one day event.

While there have been many distractions since the launch event, the DD&D Tour has remained a constant conversation piece among those who joined the inaugural tour. It was initially intended to be a bi-annual event but like most that operate on river time, we got a little distracted.

The Island Patriots organizing committee is pleased to announce the Dock, Deck, & Den Tour will be back in action for the 2024 river season on August 3, 2024!

From the exit survey of the 2018 tour, we learned the following:
100% of the initial Island Patriots

that shared their docks said they would do it again and recommend the opportunity to others
100% of those who purchased a pass said they would do it again
80% of those surveyed believed an event of this caliber should cost more (we can accommodate that)

So, do you have what it takes to be an Island Patriot?

Do you have river stories and don't mind sharing occasionally?

Enjoy spending time with old friends and meeting new friends?

Are you willing to be known as a safe harbor to your river neighbours?

If the answer is yes to any of the selection criteria, we ask you to join the Patriot family. It's simple, fun and a great opportunity to support the fundraising efforts of the TIA.

While details will be coming in the new year, if you already know you want to be an Island Patriot, feel free to reach out to Dan McWilliam or the TIA.



Captain Level \$150

- ❖ A One-Year Business membership to TIA
- ❖ Social media mention on TIA Social Media
- ❖ Your hyperlinked business logo on the TIA sponsorship webpage

Admiral Level \$500

- ❖ A One-Year Business membership to TIA
- ❖ Social media mention on TIA Social Media
- ❖ Acknowledgement during TIA's Annual General Meeting
- ❖ Your hyperlinked business logo on the TIA sponsorship webpage
- ❖ Your hyperlinked business logo in our scrolling banner at the top of all TIA webpages
- ❖ Hyperlinked logo in all TIA River Talk publications (Our digital newsletter published 8 times per year)
- ❖ Invitation to submit an article about your business for inclusion in TIA River Talk

3 Easy Ways To Purchase: Click, Scan Or Email

[Click To Purchase](#)



SCAN ME

[Click To Email](#)

Pay Online Via PayPal, Credit Card, Or Send Us An Email Asking For An Invoice To Be Sent

Our Mission: River Safety - Environmental Awareness - Community Support

Business Sponsorship support helps TIA to fulfill its mission to the river community and its flagship program of maintaining 200 shoal markers essential to the safety of boating and our local and seasonal residents.

www.thousandislandsassociation.com/sponsor



Thousand Islands Association (TIA)

Due to seasonality, varying water levels, vandalism and equipment failure, the Thousand Islands Association (TIA) disclaims any liability for the absence of any of its shoal markers from time to time.

The Thousand Islands Association (TIA) is a not for profit organization that is proactive in addressing safety on the river, promoting environmental preservation and supporting the interests of the Community for the benefit of the 1000 Islands region of the St. Lawrence River.

thousandislandsassociation@gmail.com

P.O. Box 616
Clayton, NY 13624
United States of America

P.O. Box 274
Gananoque, ON K7G 2T8
Canada





TIA Thanks Our ADMIRAL Sponsors



CHRISTIE'S
INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE



Clarke & Wright Professional Corporation
Barristers and Solicitors



Keyes Insurance Brokers



To learn more about any sponsor, click on their logo.



To learn more about any sponsor, click on their logo.