



SPRING 2018

Newsletter

Safety, Environment & Community

President's Message



By Allison Burchell-Robinson,
TIA President

The word change can be used as a verb and as a noun. The river changed course. A change in the course of the river was noted. Did you know that there are five or six definitions of this word in each category in the dictionary? A very simple word with many connotations and yet so often viewed by many as a threat and one to be avoided at all costs. As a toddler, my son decided that he was not going from kindergarten to first grade because he didn't want to change teachers.

My early summers in the thousand islands were spent in a cottage lit by kerosene and then by gas lamps. My job was to clean the kerosene lamps and to this day I cannot abide the smell. Despite this aversion, that didn't stop me, as a young adult, from striding down to the dock to advise the Hydro crew that they were not welcome. No way did I want electricity in the family cottage. When we moved down river to our current island, I immediately discontinued the telephone service and dismantled the antennae on the roof that allowed decent television reception. No changes for me.

Today, we have all the conveniences in the cottage and I wouldn't have it any other way. I bet earlier cottagers accepted change slowly as well but eventually the outhouse went away, the Thousand Islands Bridge at Ivylea was built, the ice house disappeared and water flowed upward.

Change is often about advancement and betterment, but we still throw up roadblocks. It took TIA more than 25 years to convince the town fathers to build a wash room at the town dock in Gananoque.

Change can also be inconvenient or cause serious damage as in the water levels last year. Boat owners were not able to get their boats in or out of boathouses. Docks and lawns were under water. The wake from inconsiderate boat owners caused serious erosion and damage to shorelines and buildings.

Today, new changes are in the wind as the Town of Leeds and the Thousand Islands introduced their upcoming Official Plan with several workshops open to the public to make their opinions known. This fall a conference "Ecosystems, Shorelines, Education and Official Plans", organized by the Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust was held. Please see the article by Don Ross in this newsletter.

Change has opponents and proponents. There are among us those who would build bigger marinas and more condominiums. There are those who would go backward as in "Yes, I prefer to row from the Town Dock to the Lake Fleet Group". Other prefer the status quo. What will happen down the line is still unknown, but what is known is that we will adapt. We will change as changes are made.

By the time you read this the seasons will have changed. Happy Change!

— Allison Burchell-Robinson



WHITHER THE WATER LEVELS?

As we went to press in mid-March, the waters in Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River stood at 74.89 meters, a little over a foot above the norm which is 74.02 meters. That represents a record drop of 3.7 feet from last year's peak over the months from June to December. At its peak in 2017, the water in the river reached 75.91 meters or 6 feet, six inches over the norm.

Historically, however, winter water levels have not proved to be accurate indicators of spring peaks.

Due to a cold and wet start to the winter, the International Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River Board has been allowing maximum output from the lake, reducing it from time to time to manage ice conditions. A stable ice cover is necessary to avoid ice jams which could produce flooding.

The great unknowables in the equation are hydrologic... read that RAIN and SNOW. The Board's Rob Caldwell says it's highly doubtful that the combination of factors which produced last year's record high water will occur again. But then, it would have been considered highly doubtful last year too.

To stay in the loop, go to the Board's website at www.ijc.org/en_/islrbc, or find "International Lake Ontario - St. Lawrence River Board" on facebook.

- Our Roots -

History of the Thousand Islands Association

This history of the Thousand Islands Association is taken from the report compiled by Veronica A. Cooper in 1995 based on information from the Gananoque Reporter and the association's annual meetings. It covers the years 1934 through 1988. This is the third of a series of articles that will present the history of the association.



Mark your calendars - the Boat Museum will be opening for the season on May 19, 2018. With a full season hosting exciting events, be sure to red circle these dates and come join us on the river!

Nickel Cup Hydroplane Regatta
June 2-3, 2018

Come experience the 3rd annual festival featuring an action packed weekend of exhilarating hydroplane races at the Museum.

Canada Day Celebrations on the Waterfront
July 1, 2018

Crafts and boat fun during the day, fireworks in the evening.

Annual Boatshow and Parade
July 14, 2018

Come ride the river in your own boat or hitch a ride on a parade boat!

Sailing School Starts
July 23, 2018

Three week-long sessions of sailing fun and river adventures for kids aged 8-14.

Ultimate Shootout & Poker Run Weekend
September 5-9, 2018

A season finale weekend of boat rides, races and river entertainment.

For more information please visit tiboatmuseum.org. Follow us on Instagram and Facebook for up to the minute events and happenings.



Photo: Come visit Windswept III, the Museum's newest acquisition.

1964 - 1974



By Allison Burchell-Robinson

In 1964, the same prevalent issues remained paramount: garbage removal, boat waste into the river, no bathroom for the Bay St. Dock and no plans to lengthen the dock so in 1965 TISRA (Thousand Islands Summer Residents Association) voted to spend \$1500 of their \$2300.00 balance toward the bathroom project. Another familiar topic raised that year was tax allocation as road maintenance would be taking up a larger portion of tax dollars.

In the late 60's TISRA decided to take a more aggressive stance towards damage to their property from the wash created by large commercial and private vessels. Member Birks reported boat washes over 6 feet with the police powerless as there is no law regulating this issue. Gananoque Boat Lines added a trim cap to reduce the swell created by their double

deckers. Shoal islands are no longer for sale. \$100.00 was given to Half Moon Bay to help with the continuation of church services.

In 1970, the pollution problem in the river expected to decrease with coming mandatory pump out facilities for the big boats but concerns remained about the building of cottages on the shoal islands and the inadequacy of the survey on pollution conducted by Leeds, Granville and Lanark Health Unit. There are three forms of pollution to be dealt with: cottage, boat and industrial.

In a recap dated 1974, the Gananoque reporter highlighted the many projects undertaken by the association: have the township change the allocation of tax dollars; the threat of winter damage and looting of cottages; the fight to preserve the ecology of the islands and the need for services at the Municipal Dock; the marking off more than 125 shoals. The association also agreed to operate three motor boats with the help of an RCMP officer to help curb speeding on the St Lawrence River.





This Museum is engaging, educational, family friendly, and will contribute significantly to any visitor's Gananoque experience. Located on the waterfront, the Museum displays 10,000 years of history including the geology, the unique Frontenac Arch ecosystem, First Peoples, early settlers, the War of 1812, the "Golden Age", and early industrialization. "Migrations", this year's seasonal exhibit, explores the factors that bring both nature and humans to the region.

The Beauty of Shorelines



By Don Ross
Photography by Don Ross

No doubt you are reading this because you are a shoreline person, And no doubt you've asked or are going to ask about carrying out some projects on your shoreline property – and are wondering about the reasons behind restrictions and permits.

There's much more to shorelines than a strip of land at the water's edge. They are a broad transition between land and water, reaching well inland and well into the water. They are some of the most important places on Earth. Simply put, regulations are all about your role in helping to protect the values we all share in this wonderful place.

There are very good reasons and very clear science behind the regulations surrounding shoreline development. The efforts of the TIA, the Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust, Watersheds Canada, MNRF, TIARA, Save the River, the conservation authority and several others, including township and county planners, are working to track down and present in clear and readable language, just what's behind the rules and regs. When one wonders what's behind the regulations, it all comes down to keeping the water in good health. And it takes a shoreline community and all of its members – including you, and the finned, furred, winged or leaved to keep your water healthy.

The hard work begins well back from the water's edge. Whatever flows downslope will get to the water. Nature evolved an exceptionally effective purifier – from trees,

shrubs and wildflowers, to soil microbes that glean every bit of nutrient they can from soil and decay before it reaches the water. From roots in un-compacted soil to leaves and branches on a healthy shoreline, rainfall and runoff is absorbed and slowed to a trickle, keeping nutrient from fertilizing algae and crowds of water plants. By contrast, water that floods across hard surfaces and tidy lawns is warmed by sun, enriched by fertilizer and laden with viruses, bacteria and decaying debris makes swimming for you and the neighbours less pleasant, and even unhealthy.

Remember the realtor's line about the million dollar view? That view is what the Thousand Islands is famous for – pines towering, massive oaks, granite cliffs, clear waters... It's the view that never grows old. Hopefully, others have that same extraordinary pleasure when looking across to your place on the shoreline. Keeping, or restoring your place in a picture-perfect field of view could be the hardest but most rewarding challenge you'll ever face. And as the Kentucky novelist and farmer Wendell Berry said just a few years back, "Do unto those downstream, as you would have those upstream do unto you".

The many groups and agencies including the TIA are together creating a handbook with the reasons and how-to that will help everyone understand the science and share the stories behind the shoreline regulations. Watch these pages for where and how to get your copy. It will be worth a million dollar view.

Hopefully this will help in the Township Leeds and Thousand Islands Official Planning Review process. Check the TLTI website www.leeds1000islands.ca/en/governing/official-plan-review-2017-18.aspx for ways to have your say.



The Museum and Gift Shop are fully accessible. Admission is by donation. Visit the website at 1000islandsheritagemuseum.com for more information.



Photography by Finn Long

TIA Officers

President: Allison Burchell-Robinson
Secretary-Treasurer: Deborah McGee

Directors

Rob Aitchison
Troy Donovan
Peter Fitton
Bryan Jones
George Kittredge
Ormond Murphy
David Orr
Paul Regan
Thornley Stoker
Ken White

Emeritus: Graham Armstrong, William Hale

TIA Membership

Those white shoal markers are placed and maintained by TIA and Save the River. They would not be there if it were not for you as the program receives no outside funding. Your membership makes it possible!

Please take a moment to consider what it would mean to be on the river with no shoal markers. You can join TIA by going to our web site thousandislandsassociation.com and clicking on membership or you can use the enclosed form to send along with your check to the Canadian or US address listed below.

Membership Fees:

Single: \$50 (Includes 1 AGM breakfast)
Couple: \$75 (Includes 2 AGM breakfasts)
Family: \$100 (Includes 4 AGM breakfasts)

*Annual General Meeting (AGM):
Saturday, July 21, 2018*

THOUSAND ISLANDS ASSOCIATION

thousandislandsassociation@gmail.com

Canadian Address: P.O. Box 274, Gananoque, ON K7G 2T8
U.S. Address: P.O. Box 718, Wellesley Island, NY 13640

thousandislandsassociation.com

THE OLD BOATHOUSE



By Jay M. Siegel

The article on the history of the Thousand Islands Association in the Summer 2017 Newsletter was of particular interest to me. The structure with three windows, in dark shadow, in the background of the picture of M.J. King's Store, is our current boathouse in Ivy Lea.

My parents purchased the property containing the boathouse from John and Edith White in 1966. Mr. White stated the location was known as "King's Landing, the name referred to Marcus J. King, a former owner of the property who sold it to John and Gertrude Anderson, who sold it to John and Edith White in 1961.

At the time my parents purchased the property the lower level of the boathouse had been floored over and was no longer used to store a boat. It remains that way today, used as a workshop and storage area for boating and recreational items. The upper level remains a single room guest facility. There have been several renovations to the boathouse since 1966 but it retains the same basic outline.

The light colored building beyond our boathouse with the open door was another boathouse that finally collapsed into the River. It was removed. September 2017

The large structure in the foreground (M.J. King's Store) is no longer there. The building immediately beyond the large structure was and is known as "Thelma"

that name, and the date "1897", being decoratively cut-out in the front fascia insert. It is barely visible, in the picture.

The Whites operated the entire property as a "cottage colony", with four units in Thelma, one unit in the upper level of the boathouse, and two units in a duplex structure (still there) on the rise between Thelma and the boathouse. My guess is that the property was also operated as a cottage colony by the Andersons,

The dock along the entire waterfront from Thelma to our boathouse was under water for much of this past summer (2017), making it impossible to moor our boat there and thus have access to the property from the water.

The four boats pictured in the Newsletter photo also brought to mind more tranquil days on the River, before the advent of the massive-wake-creating behemoths that now churn the water and bounce us small-boat River Rats about like corks. It was not uncommon in those days for two young teenage boys to voyage from Ivy Lea to Alexandria Bay in a 12 foot "fisherman" with a 9.9 horsepower motor, or to camp about on unoccupied islands for days at a time. I know—I was one of them.

Thank you for stirring up some treasured memories.

Photo: M.J. King's Store, Thousand Islands, Ontario.

