



SPRING 2019

Newsletter

Safety, Environment & Community

President's Message



By Allison Burchell-Robinson,
TIA President

I was day dreaming the other day watching the snow drift down and thinking about the summer to come and all those accompanying thoughts. What shape would the cottage be in, how was the dock, did we lose any trees or to put it another way were there any major projects waiting that we didn't even know about? I am now too old to dislodge any more beaver dams from under the dock house. Three times and out is my motto.

As the snow swirled and whirled around my window, my thoughts strayed to other large projects undertaken over the years from sodding the lawn, rebuilding the deck, tearing out the underpinnings of the old dock (while my husband who dislikes spiders called out encouragement from above), removing the cement based antennae and discarding the mannequin. Somehow they never seemed to be chores, just the facts of living on one of the 1000 islands in the St. Lawrence River.

You forget that each roll of sod weighed more than 35 pounds and you needed more than 50 of them, that the lumber for the deck almost sunk the whaler and required more than six trips from the marina. It was always worth it because it was truly a labor of love because you were on the island. My family's answer to those who ask how your vacation was has always been you don't vacation on the island.

As the snow intensified, I drifted to other thoughts about projects on an island and what it must have been like back in the early 1900's when the first islanders arrived to begin the task of settling in. There were no cottages or docks awaiting repairs. Instead, they were waiting to be built and many of the early arrivals were up to the task of doing it themselves. Imagine, arriving on an island with nothing man-made on it. There was no electricity to power up your fancy tools. Water had to be pumped or carried. Supplies had to be ferried via boat or ferry. You even had to ferry yourself or travel by boat from Clayton as the 1000 Island Bridge wasn't built until 1938. We consider them to be pioneers, but I bet they were just doing their job as they saw it then. Chores that were truly a labor of love and many of the results of which exist today. And, down through the years a mantra hand carved over a mantel piece in 1910 remains true today, "Pray to God, but row for shore".

I don't know what projects await us. I know there will be something, but it won't be a chore. It never really has been. Daydreaming aside, the summer really will be here soon. Now, I need to chore up to help shovel the foot of snow that arrived during the night.

— Allison Burchell-Robinson

Photograph © Pete Medcalf

NEW WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

We have renewed our website... again! New features and a new look! Please visit it at www.thousandislandsassociation.com. We are embarking on a more creative and current social media strategy as well. For both of these 'media' we need as many river photographs as we can find. Can you help us with this? If you could share pictures of your family enjoying the river (with permission and the name of the photographer please) and pictures of river life, your contribution would help build our photo library.

DO YOU LOVE THE RIVER AS MUCH AS WE DO?

As with every volunteer organization the need for volunteers is an ever-present challenge. Do you have a few hours a month to help TIA? Currently we need help maintaining the membership data base and a web site administrator. Please contact us at thousandislandsassociation@gmail.com.



TIA MEMBER NOTICES

Events

TIA Annual General Meeting
Saturday, July 20, 8:30am at the 1000 Islands Playhouse dock we will be holding our Annual General Meeting again. Come for the best shore breakfast, see your friends, meet some new ones and learn what's happening on the river. Susie Smith will be our guest speaker.

Annual Deck, Dock & Den Tour,
Saturday, August 3d. Save the date for the 2nd annual DD&D tour. The overwhelming positive response to the inaugural Island Patriots tour has forced us to step up our game and deliver more laughs and smiles on the River this year. Stay tuned for all the exciting news coming soon!

– Our Roots –

History of the Thousand Islands Association

The 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 fifth and final series of articles that will present the history of the Association to date.

1980 – 1987



By Allison Burchell-Robinson

The 1980's began again with a focus on the Bay Street Dock, the emphasis this year on parking. Council told TIA that some of the extra monies collected by boat-parking fees would enable the town to plan for future waterfront activities. Susan Smith reported on her project of researching island names and background. In 1982, TIA planned to be a force in this year's municipal elections which, when reported to the Front of Leeds and Lansdowne Council, was met by "an enthusiastic yawn". In 1983, Gananoque itself was the focus in that the town "has quite a way to go before it meets the needs of TIA members and an even longer way before it meets the needs of estimated 460,000 visitors".

In order to guard against liability in the matter of shoal markers, the decision was made in 1984 to incorporate TIA as a nonprofit organization. The Coast Guard informed TIA that the shoal markers no longer met the provincial guidelines coming into effect in 1987 but pledged to help TIA upgrade and maintain the service. Pike were

taking a beating due to the increase of lamprey eels. Garbage remained an issue. Gypsy Moths were an issue in 1985.

The headline for 1986 says it all, "Islanders irked by Boaters, Beavers and Gypsy Moths. The incorporation of TIA was completed, the incorporated name being The Thousand Islands Association for the Preservation of River Quality, but the group applied to have the legal name shortened to Thousand Islands Association.

1987 brings this series to a close with concerns about irresponsible power boaters, the large wakes and the overall 30% increase in boaters as reported by the marinas. Garbage again raised its ugly head as municipal garbage bins were filled to overflowing on weekends. TIA was wary of a rumored move by the township to go to a 1984 market value assessment. The Thousand Islands Land Trust presented a plan to preserve open space and keep it safe from commercial use and exploitation.

Photographs @Leeds & The Thousand Islands Archives



M. J. King's docks & store, Ivy Lea

COTTAGE OPENING TIPS

I know most of you know this list off by heart but sometimes it's worth refreshing it. I find that my list seems longer every year especially when I make changes to the property.

Here is my list:

- Locks still secure?
- Before you turn on the main electric breaker remember to make sure your water-pump and hot water tank breakers are off!
- Check the roof for branches or holes.
- Check the house and boathouse for critters that might have moved in over the winter. Evidence of mice or, heaven forbid, red squirrels, beavers or mink.
- Has your dock sustained any damage over the winter?
- Any painting or varnishing required? Probably easier to do before the mob descends on you for the summer.
- Windows, doors, cupboards still open and close properly?
- New cracks in the walls?
- Inspect your water intake pipe for cracks/leaks

Things to consider doing this spring:

- Seed/weed the lawn?
- Paint those outdoor chairs?
- Create a new flower garden?
- Check the septic system to see if it should be pumped-out?



By Thornley Stoker



@ Pete Medcalf



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A Parks Canada Update



By John Haselmayer
Field Unit Superintendent, Georgian Bay
and Ontario East, Parks Canada

There is no place like the Thousand Islands! We have all been inspired by the rugged granite shorelines and windswept pines that surround historic estates and family cottages on islands scattered along the river's blue-green water. Established in 1904 on traditional Haudenosaunee lands, Thousand Islands National Park was the first Canadian national park east of the Rockies. Today it is comprised of all or parts of some 26 islands and several mainland properties. Whether exploring park islands by kayak or powerboat, or as a neighbour who enjoys our many hiking trails, we look forward to welcoming you back to the park for the 2019 season on May 17th.

Significant flooding impacted the park in 2017 and many of our docks were damaged beyond repair. We are undertaking a multi-year process of building new docks so that boaters can continue to discover and enjoy the natural beauty of the islands. Many damaged docks throughout the park have been

removed and construction through this season will focus on McDonald, Camelot and Mulcaster islands.

While the park is a boater's oasis, it is also a refuge for a diverse mix of rare and unique species. You can see a great example of our restoration work on Georgina and Camelot islands. The use of prescribed fire has successfully aided in Pitch Pine growth and provided new habitat opportunities for species at risk. Situated along the intersection of the Frontenac Arch and the St. Lawrence River, the park is the only ecologically intact connection between the Canadian Shield and the Adirondack Mountains therefore an important North to South corridor for the movement of wildlife. The park is spread out, which means that working together is key to ensuring positive conservation outcomes for the park and for the region.

Thousand Islands National Park is committed to being a national heritage

place that celebrates the contributions of Indigenous peoples, their histories and cultures, as well as the special relationship Indigenous peoples have with traditional lands and waters. We work closely with the Mohawks of Akwesasne on various conservation activities such as deer management, species at risk research, and community outreach. We foster new opportunities for Canadians to better understand the cultures and histories of the Indigenous peoples of the Thousand Islands. Come out to the Visitor Centre in Mallorytown Landing on National Indigenous Peoples Day in June to learn more!

We are currently preparing an updated management plan and we encourage you to get involved, visit us, and provide feedback. This plan will guide decisions and actions in protecting, presenting and operating the park for the next decade and beyond. We have identified opportunities related to resource conservation in a fragmented landscape; visitor experiences; long-term asset sustainability in the wake of climate change; and ways to improve park awareness support and partnering.

Help shape the future of your national park during our public consultation period this summer! We will be reaching out to municipalities, partners, community stakeholders, residents, and Canadians to develop a common vision for the park at its future best, and the strategies for getting there. You can access up to date information on the management plan and on park services at www.pc.gc.ca/ti, by following the park on [Facebook.com/TINationalPark](https://www.facebook.com/TINationalPark), and on Twitter [@TINationalPark](https://twitter.com/TINationalPark), or by stopping by the Visitor Centre at Mallorytown Landing. See you this summer!



TIA Officers

President: Allison Burchell-Robinson
Secretary-Treasurer: Deborah McGee
Past President: Thornley Stoker

Directors

Troy Donovan
Peter Fitton
Bryan Jones
George Kittredge
Ormond Murphy
David Orr
Ken White

Newsletter Editor: Tony Charters

TIA Membership

Those white shoal markers are placed and maintained by the Thousand Islands Association 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 www.thousandislandsassociation.com and clicking on membership or you can send a 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)

Corporate Sponsorships available

For five years Doug McLellan and team have helped us by providing design and coordination expertise for our newsletters. We knew it was temporary and now it is time to say goodbye. Thank you Doug for taking us on and bringing us this far.

THOUSAND ISLANDS ASSOCIATION

1000islandsassociation@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



ASIAN CARP NOW

© Jason Lindsey



By John Peach
*Executive Director of
Save the River*

The plan to block the entrance of Asian carp into the Great Lakes through the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, known as GLMRIS - Brandon Road Lock EIS Plan (Plan), has been sent to the US Congress for approval and funding. When excited, two species of the invasive Asian carp, bighead and steel carp, weighing 80 to 100 pounds can jump and injure recreational boaters. They are currently within four miles of the Brandon Road Lock located 41 miles southwest of Lake Michigan. If allowed to become established in the St. Lawrence River they will drastically alter food chains, impact our ecosystems, fisheries, and harm our recreation and tourism industries.

A complete description of the project, with a good introductory illustration, can be found at www.mvr.usace.army.mil (search for GLMRIS-Brandon Road). The executive summary is a good description of the Plan. Save The River, the Upper St. Lawrence Riverkeeper, sent a comment letter to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) on December 21, 2018 requesting that they push forward the Plan to block the progress of Asian carp. You can read our letter online at <http://bit.ly/AsianCarpCommentLetterUSACE>. A call to action went out earlier that week to all of our members and followers, in addition to a press release that was sent to regional news media and received coverage at several news outlets including Thousand Islands Sun, North Country Public Radio, Watertown Daily Times, and North Country Now.

Those letters and calls to action were the first stage in a multi-step campaign to encourage the Congress to pass and fund the Plan, which will be followed by a campaign to urge New York State to step-up and share in the funding of the non-federal portion of the Plan. It is crucial that work on the first step of the Plan, the

Preconstruction Engineering and Design (PED) documents, gets funded and started as soon as possible in order for the project to hit its target completion date of 2027. Save The River will be reaching out to all our members and followers to contact their Representatives and Senators to urge them to pass and fund the Plan. We know that Congresswoman Stefanik is in favor of the Plan and will be working to see it passed. If you are interested in helping with this effort, go to Save The River's website for suggested messaging that could be sent to your legislators.

Funding for the currently estimated \$778 million project will be shared 65% by the Federal government and 35% by the Great Lakes states. New York State has not yet indicated a willingness to participate in this non-federal cost sharing, in spite of the hundreds of miles of NYS shoreline on the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario. We are planning a campaign of communications to engage the governor and state legislators, stressing the importance of funding the Plan and educating them on the perils of not acting to stop Asian carp before they establish a breeding community in the Great Lakes and River.

We hope that we can count on you to help push through these essential steps of Save The River's fight to stop Asian carp. In the past, we have been successful halting the ill-conceived winter navigation project on the River, along with advocating for Plan 2014, the passage of micro-bead legislation, and more stringent regulation of ballast water exchange. These successes were all because of the passionate and enthusiastic support and involvement of our members and followers. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you have about the plan to block Asian carp at

executivedirector@savetheriver.org.

Editor's Note: For more information see <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/species-especes/profiles-profils/asiancarp-carpeasiatique-eng.html>