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# Duck Lake Cottagers' Assoc. Newsletter

Spring 2021

8th edition



New Website Address: [ducklakecottagers.ca](http://ducklakecottagers.ca)

Association email address: [ducklakecottagers@gmail.com](mailto:ducklakecottagers@gmail.com)

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## President's Corner - John Fisk

The ice is out, the maple syrup is in, the peeps are peeping, and the birds are returning. Spring is here and we are all looking forward to another season at our cottages. Well, most of us are, unfortunately the US-Ontario boarder remains closed without any indication of how long that will last. Without much to report on, I thought to ask a local resident to let us know what has been going on in Port Loring during this season of Covid. Tamara Bain the current facilitator of the Argyle Facebook page has written what I feel is an excellent report on what has been happening in that community. Her day job is running the Bain Lake Camp on the East Road in Loring and she writes for the Great North Arrow paper.

Please see her contribution in this newsletter.

This President's Corner was a new addition starting in our Fall 2020 newsletter. I wish to personally keep in touch with all of you. Make sure that your contact information (especially summer phone numbers) is up to date and that you have paid your dues. Look for more information about what is happening around Duck Lake.

Save these tentative dates:

Dependent on Covid  
restrictions

### 2021 Summerfest Picnic:

Saturday July 24, 2 - 7 pm.,  
eat at 5- ish (Rain date July  
25, noon -5 ish.)

At Allan & Kathy  
Crowther's cottage, Duck  
Lake Road. Bring: lawn  
chairs, swimwear, and a  
dish to share (salad or  
desert).

Cold drinks **and** BBQ options  
**will be supplied.** BYOB.

### 2021 AGM

The Annual General Meeting of  
the DLCA on Saturday July.  
31st, 2020, 9 -11 a.m.

Anyone interested is  
welcome.

Come find out what the  
Assoc. does, and bring any  
topics you want discussed.

### Stage 3 - Final Stage of Public Dock Project - Claire Theijsmeijer

WE are excited to have completed the first 2 stages of the new public docks and launch area!

People give the 2 new docks on the west side a thumbs up for lots of docking space and a stable surface to get in and out of boats! They find the improved launch area much easier to launch boats too!

In summer 2021, the plan was for volunteers to build a ramp and 3<sup>rd</sup> floating dock for on the east side (pending lumber prices). The ramp will be 8 x 8 ft., and the dock 8 x 20 ft. If possible, the old floating dock will be attached to the end of this, to provide 36 ft. of docking. Thanks to our generous donor of last year, we have enough used dock floats for the new dock, and some to spare for the future.

Volunteers will be needed for the build, date T.B.A., so watch your email and the bulletin board at the parking lot for the dates. Come out and lend a hand for a few hours at Block's cottage, or stay for whatever time that you can.

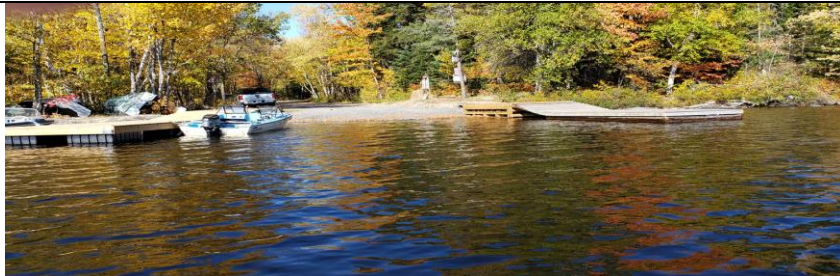
We thank Tom Howell, Mark Young and Rodger Willson very much for storing the docks for winter, and reattaching them in spring.

There is approximately \$1200 in the dock fund. Based on old prices, about \$2500 was needed for lumber and hardware, it will be significantly more this year, so donations are appreciated and can be made by:

Etransfer to - [ducklakecottagers1@gmail.com](mailto:ducklakecottagers1@gmail.com)

or

Cheque to - Tom Howell, 610 Lumberton Cres., Mississauga, ON. L4Z 3Z6.



### Youth Social News: Jody Dugas

Spring is upon us and as the social youth engagement lead, we should be planning Canada day celebrations, summer picnics, Friday night socials but .... unfortunately, we are in the middle of the third wave and just beginning our most restrictive lock down to date. As the situation is very serious, I wanted to send a message of HOPE and that we all will gather again. Until then, we are thinking up so many fun events for all the Duck Lake youth like Geocaching, canoe adventures, outdoor movie nights with popcorn, nature hikes, water sports, bonfire nights, arts and crafts and we want to hear from YOU and all your ideas too. We are trying to engage the youth and bring them together in a safe environment that's beneficial. This may not happen this year as we are following provincial guidelines but you can send all your ideas. Better days are ahead, stay positive and patient and we will get there. I can't wait to meet all the amazing youth on Duck Lake and learn all about you and your special gifts. Please feel free to contact me anytime at [JDugas1@hotmail.com](mailto:JDugas1@hotmail.com) stay safe everyone.

## Social News

As we proved last year, the **Canada Day Boat Decorating Contest and Flotilla** can be a very effective socially distanced activity. So... get your thinking caps on and your creativity working to come up with your boat decorating ideas for this year's contest!

When: Thursday July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021, 2 p.m.

Where: Cruise around the Duck Lake Landing docks, for the judging and awarding of prizes. This will be followed by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual flotilla of decorated boats around Duck Lake and Pigeon Bay.

Why: Great fun activity. Chance of winning a prize, and the flotilla is a TERRIFIC way to raise awareness of the Association around the Lake.





## Invasive Species Awareness - Evann Seney (and family)

Have you ever seen any of these invasive species, on Duck Lake or the Pickerel River system?

### **Reed Canary Grass**

Reed Canary Grass is rapidly growing and is part of the grass family. This grass changes the hydrology of natural water systems, and can spread quickly. To get rid of this invasive species the entire root mass has to be removed.

They can grow to be 6 feet tall!



### **Water Soldiers**

Water Soldiers are Native to Europe and Northwest Asia. This is an aquatic plant that floats in masses, and is a perennial. A Water Soldier also has sharp edges, and has recently been discovered in the Trent and Black River systems in Ontario. It creates stagnant waters, and crowds out Native vegetation. The leaves grow to be 40cm long!

### **Emerald Ash Borer**

This invasive species has killed millions of ash trees around Ontario. The spread between regions has been mostly attributed to people moving firewood place to place. An invasion of this bug can result in loss of habitats and food for other species.



### **Zebra mussels**

Zebra Mussels go from region to region by attaching to docks, boats, propellers, and more. They moved in on large ships from Europe, to North America in the 1980's. The largest way to spread Zebra mussels between bodies of water, is on the bottom of our boats.

## **Invasive Species Awareness – Evann Seney (and family)**

continued from previous page

We can all help stop the spread of invasive species by remembering these steps:

- Purchase plants locally.
- Purchase firewood locally.
- Clean your boat when moving between bodies of water.

For more detailed information on invasive species please visit the following links: <https://foca.on.ca/invasive-species/>

<https://www.ontarioinvasiveplants.ca/what-we-do/>

[https://foca.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/FOCA\\_InvasiveSpecies\\_REV\\_FINAL.pdf](https://foca.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/FOCA_InvasiveSpecies_REV_FINAL.pdf)

**If you see any Invasive Species in these waterways, please let the Duck Lake Cottagers' Association know, or contact Ontario's Invading Species Awareness Program at: 1-800-563-7711**

**Thank you!**

## **NEW website invitation – Ken Konkel**

This is an invite to the new Duck Lake Cottagers' Association website [ducklakecottagers.ca](http://ducklakecottagers.ca) which replaces the old google site, <https://sites.google.com/site/ducklakecottagersassoc/> Check it out! It has all the old boring stuff like minutes of the association meetings and lots of cool new updates on what's happening at the lake. There are great photos of many of my favorite places in the area and for members only, a new Cottage Watch map of Duck Lake with contact info for most of our neighbors. (please check that your contact information is up to date)

If you have any comments or questions send a reply to me, Ken Konkel at [iamducken@gmail.com](mailto:iamducken@gmail.com)

Hope to see you all soon.

## LAKE ASSOCIATION DUES

Reminder – Dues now follow the calendar year!

2021 Duck Lake Cottagers' Association dues of \$100.00 were due in January.

To Pay:

Etransfer your funds to:

[ducklakecottagers1@gmail.com](mailto:ducklakecottagers1@gmail.com)

or

send your cheque to the treasurer –

Tom Howell  
610 Lumberton Cres.  
Mississauga, ON CANADA  
L4Z 3Z6

Members will receive their 2021 placards once dues are paid.

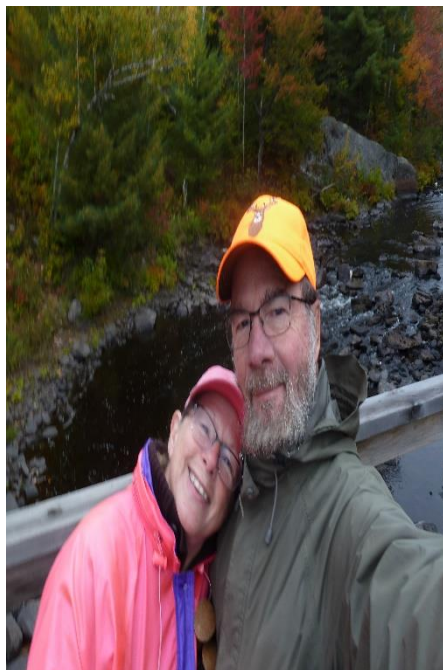




## Meet Two more Association Directors:

### **Ken Konkell - Webmaster**

Here is a selfie of my wife Linda and I on the Ski-doo/ATV bridge just up the Pickerel from the Slide. My first trip to Duck Lake was to visit my Aunt Nori and Uncle Bill Fitzke in 1984. I fell in love with this place and have been gladly driving the miles from our home in Ohio to our Fitzke Island getaway. Since retiring many years ago, we have been able to visit several times a year. We now share the cottage with my brother Jim, and my sister Chris and her husband Dick, and their extended families. Linda and I have made many wonderful life-long friends here and can't wait to see them all again.



### **Tom Howell -**

My name is Tom Howell. I am your treasurer for D.L.C.A. and I have been fortunate enough to have been cottaging all my life. When I was young my mother's family members had cottages on Lake Chandos in the Kawarthas. We spent time with my grandparents, my uncle and aunt and my mother's aunt there in the summer every year until we bought our own place. We eventually bought my mother's aunt's place when her husband passed away and we were there for many years until my parents sold in the late 70 s.

My dad's parents had a place in Port McNicholl, outside of Midland, on Georgian Bay and we spent a lot of time there as well all year long. That was a different kind of cottaging as it was not waterfront, but I have many great memories from there as well.

When Deborah Hart and I met we both found out that we had the same type of experiences cottaging when we were younger and we ended up buying here on the Duck Lake. It's been a great experience and we have met and been welcomed by many new friends.



## Duck Lake Cottagers' Association Directors 2020-2022

### **President:**

**John Fisk**

[Jrfisk43@gmail.com](mailto:Jrfisk43@gmail.com)

### **Vice-President:**

**Chris Wheeler**

[cwheeler003@sympatico.ca](mailto:cwheeler003@sympatico.ca)

### **Treasurer/Corresponding Secretary:**

**Tom Howell**

[Tomhowell610@gmail.com](mailto:Tomhowell610@gmail.com)

### **Director/Lake Steward:**

**Evann Seney**

[evann@honeyelectric.com](mailto:evann@honeyelectric.com)

### **Director/Social & Youth Engagement**

**Officer: Jody Dugas**

[jdugas1@hotmail.com](mailto:jdugas1@hotmail.com)

### **Director/ Communications Officer:**

**Claire Theijsmeijer**

[reflect@vaxxine.com](mailto:reflect@vaxxine.com)

### **Director/Webmaster:**

**Ken Konkell**

[iamthinken@gmail.com](mailto:iamthinken@gmail.com)

### **Administrative Assistant/**

**Newsletter editor:**

**Deborah Hart**

[debthefroghearted@gmail.com](mailto:debthefroghearted@gmail.com)

# There's No Place Like Home!

## How the Argyle Area Has Fared the Pandemic

### - Tamara Bain

Never before have I appreciated 'living-in-the-boonies' as much as these last 14 months! Our geography has served us well during this Pandemic, but don't think for a moment we've let our guard down! With the majority of our population over the age of 50, our town has erred on the side of caution, especially during the summer months last year. Our province's restrictions opened up enough to allow visitors to the area, and I think we did as well as we possibly could have dealing with the influx of folks desperate to get out of the city.

Currently all but essential businesses are shut down again after being allowed to open for a very short period of time. Spring Break for the schools was pushed from March to mid-April and the government has just closed the schools with no re-start date. I can foresee schools staying closed until the fall but who really knows?

The Covid numbers in our district have remained very low. The North Bay Health Unit is the governing agent under which our area falls. Right now, there are under 30 active cases in the entire region, but neighbouring Sudbury has been hit quite hard with around 300 active cases last week. The 'variant of concern' has crept into the more urban areas and is causing quite a spike.

A vaccination clinic arrived in the area the last few days of March for folks 80+. The clinic was held at the Argyle Community Centre and was extremely well organized. Both my mother and my husband's mom received their first shots with the booster to be administered in July. Now that those born in 1961 and before can get their first vaccinations, things seem to be stalled in this area. The vaccine is slowly being distributed in North Bay and larger city centres but so far, another local clinic has not been announced. And so, we wait our turn as the Province concentrates more on the hardest hit areas such as Toronto.

Our local businesses have done an exemplary job at doing their best to restructure according to Provincial guidelines, keeping their patrons distanced and as safe as possible. Although hair salons have been one of the hardest hits by closures, a close second are the restaurants. As most folks know Jake's Place was sold to David Sheepway, finally allowing Jake to retire! Over the last while, Dave has renovated the restaurant, building a beautiful new washroom area, creating a one-bedroom apartment back off of where the men's washroom used to be, and of course redecorated with very unique items. Nolan, Heidi and staff at Roxie's Diner kept up their fabulous food selection, converting to a take-away window. They continue to dazzle us with a unique and varied menu, coming up with all sorts of tasty, inventive recipes, donut Tuesdays being the latest addition!

The Port Shores barely got up and running before Covid-19 kicked the legs out from underneath them last summer but were able to operate their eateries and shops in a limited way. Their boat tours were a challenge though because of limits to gatherings.

Though the number of visitors to the area exploded last summer, camps and resorts were forced to keep their doors shut until June. My camp, Bain Lake Camp, was fully booked opening weekend in May. It was a big hit to the pocket-book after a long winter. Camps that provide winter lodging were forced to close from Boxing Day to March, losing all snowmobiling clientele and ice fishing bookings. With the current restrictions in place until at least the first week of May, I am bracing for a repeat of last year.

Turning now to the Great Canadian conversation topic; the weather! With the exception of about ten days in late July it was a cool, rainy summer followed by a very rainy fall. Winter though was slow in arriving with area waterways not frozen until well into the New Year. We had very little snow until late January, then it didn't stop for 3 weeks! We went from hardly anything to well over 3 feet of the white stuff practically overnight! The snowmobile trails were exceptional but sadly they were closed the majority of the year in the provinces' attempt to control the spread of Covid. It was extremely hard on businesses dependent on their winter months income from accommodating riders.

Spring arrived with a bang the beginning of April; temperatures well into the plus twenties made short work of the ice on area waterways, resulting in a very early break-up.

Property in the area continues to be selling like hot-cakes! Several homes that changed hands, in mid-2020, have already been listed and sold again! It's a great time to sell but not so great to buy or build for that matter. Lumber prices are through the roof this year; my husband and I built our home early summer last year when a 4X8 sheet of chipboard was \$13.00, today that same sheet of plain-old chipboard is over \$50.00! The demand is so high that prices are predicted to stay inflated or go even higher all summer! I understand from both lumber suppliers in town, Karen at Buchanan's Castle Building Centre and Rob from Home Hardware, that they will also be facing shortages and huge delays in getting their product. If a building project can be put off a year, it may be prudent to do so.

One of the last barriers holding back urban folks from selling out and moving north was the lack of reliable internet service in this area. But now with the availability of Starlink, folks are able to work from wherever they are. We are becoming the next 'Muskoka'.

Last November our Argyle Nursing Station had a staff change; new Nurse Practitioner Kevin and his receptionist Pauline have now extended hours; they are open 5 days a week and are doing a fantastic job caring for all our health needs.

## Off-Grid Electricity - Tijs Theijsmeyer

Several times I have heard people complain about Hydro One and how much they have to pay to use their services. Some complain that they are not near a convenient hook up and so would have to pay a large amount of money for them to run a line to their property. Other people just don't like to pay their high fees for having and using the electricity when they are not there all the time. It is a lot of annual expense for a few months of convenience. They say that they would go off grid, but don't want to listen to a gas-powered generator running all the time, when they value the peace and quiet of their cottage property. So, they feel frustrated by a situation that they think there is nothing they can do about. I quickly tell them that there is a great alternative they could use, which is to do a wind and/or solar system to give them all the electricity they will ever need for a much better return on the monies spent. Sadly, most people have not investigated this option fully enough to discover how great it can be. We had electricity from Hydro One for several years, but decided to install a solar and wind combination system and we have enjoyed it now for many trouble-free years with a great rate of return on the money we spent, as offsetting the annual savings from not paying Hydro One any more.

To put in the system, we looked at our usage chart on the Hydro One site to see what our average usage was each month and what our peak usage was at the various months of the year. From that we knew what size of off-grid system we would need to supply our needs. We added another 15% to the size in case our electricity needs increased in the future. We could have waited to add to our system but wanted to do it one time and then be worry free. We were able to create a combination wind and solar system so that if the sun was not shining, but the wind was blowing, we would still be generating electricity on a continuing basis. We put in 6 back up batteries which guaranteed that we would always have a 3 day supply no matter what. We still have a gas-powered generator hooked up in our system but we have not needed it. We used acid-glass-mat batteries which are good for temperatures down to -40 Celsius, so that we did not have to worry about the winter cold affecting our electricity system and we could use the cottage in the winter if we so desired. We have a wood stove for heat in the cottage, but also baseboard heaters and good insulation, so that we knew we would always be able to be comfortable. We have been happy with our system and love the fact that the cottage is definitely more cost efficient and not such a drain on our annual finances. Now if we could only do something about the taxes! It only took about 6 years for the system to pay for itself. Now solar and wind equipment is even better and cheaper to purchase, so the payback period would definitely have shifted in the cottage owner's favour. We are very happy with our system and we would strongly recommend this option to others.



## **There's No Place Like Home!**

**- Tamara Bain**

*Continued from page 6*

Last summer one of many issues we faced was what to do with our empty beer and liquor containers. The Port Loring LCBO was no longer accepting them, the Argyle Lion's Club collected them as donations but the closest place we could return the empties for refund was at least a half hour away. Then in the fall the Port Loring Legion, Branch 415 obtained the franchise under The Beer Store and created a depot to accept empties for refund. They have set up a sea can in the parking lot of the Legion hall and are currently open Wednesdays and Saturdays 11-2. Although your empties are refundable, why not consider donating it back to either the Legion or the Lion's clubs? Their bills are the same as pre-Covid but fundraising has been virtually non-existent.

The restrictions last summer kept The Argyle Farmers Market from running and will likely be a no-go this year as well, but there are a few new businesses in the area; The Cedar Trail in Golden Valley has beautiful produce grown all year long in their greenhouse. Dual Rill Farms continue to offer fresh farm eggs, poultry and beef products and are expanding their shop. Polly at Rupert's Variety keeps as many grocery items as she can fit into her shop and both lumber supply stores have expanded their stores as well. One very popular attraction is the Trash and Treasures. The hard-working group of volunteers ran the T&T throughout the summer as best they could while complying with restrictions and still managed to raise a record-breaking amount of funds for the areas' Fire Halls. Their walls are practically bulging with donated items right now as they have not been allowed to open, but I know once restrictions are lifted, they will be just as successful!

We are a strong, resilient group of people here in the Argyle area. The global pandemic has slowed us down, but we will emerge at the end of all this stronger and more united in our common goals; continuing to be champions for our beautiful area, grow our town by supporting our local businesses and looking out for each other as a community.

This virus has changed us all irrevocably, but I believe we have a renewed sense of 'We are all in this together...'

Our roots run deep here, the beauty that surrounds us has made the last 14 months more tolerable and although our wallets may be lighter, our spirits are stronger.



# The Back Page

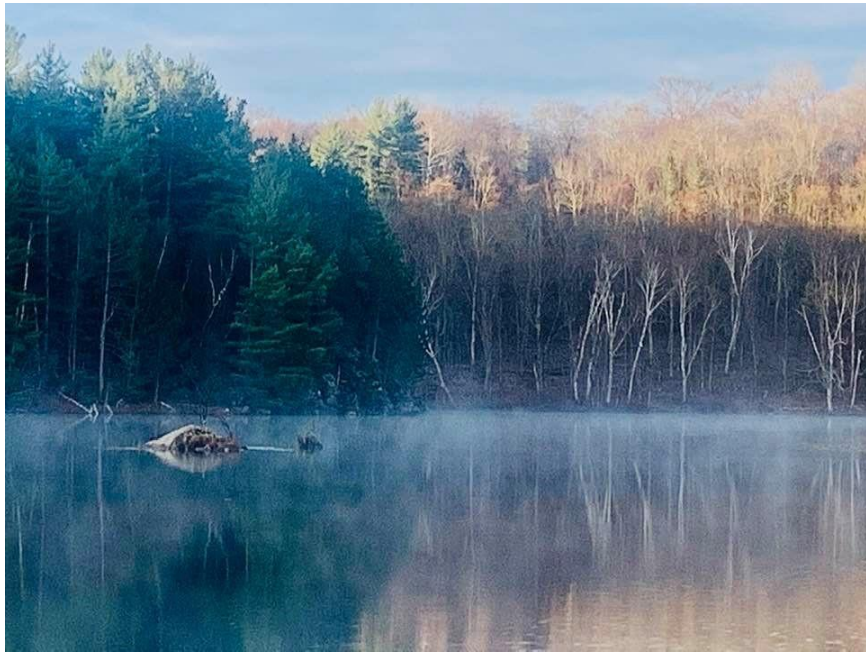


Photo credit - Spring Mist over Duck Lake by Ruthie Willson

How many of these 25 Cottage Country words can you find?

J A F I B S C S O L A R Q F D  
 Z N S T C Z H R M D F L T R O  
 F T R I L L I U M G Z I R O C  
 D P P K C J W A I J D L O G K  
 U J I A R N S T E I N Y U H O  
 C S C P K A Y A K S L P T E B  
 K O K I G E N B P W A A A R O  
 Y I E C H W H J E I N D D O A  
 B C R N L S Z X A M D W P N T  
 I A E I E O B X G M I O O P P  
 R N L C L F R Y L I N S L I A  
 C O W W A C L I E N G P E K D  
 H E C V K C W P N G V R A E D  
 E T N Z E M S K K G X E K R L  
 S T J T C O T T A G E Y V F E

- |          |          |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| pickerel | swimming | arnstein | trillium |
| cottage  | lily pad | landing  | paddle   |
| loring   | tadpole  | kayak    | heron    |
| birches  | canoe    | solar    | osprey   |
| duck     | boat     | picnic   | eagle    |
| trout    | dock     | frog     | lake     |
| pike     |          |          |          |

## Duck Lake stickers have arrived!

Each paid membership will receive one of our newly obtained stickers.

Use it as you wish. Could be adhered to a boat window, car bumper, laminated and placed on your dashboard, the possibilities are endless.

Another great way to show your membership and pride in our lake community.



Any pictures or articles you would like considered for our Fall newsletter please email to the editor - Deborah Hart.



