



The Buck Lake Association Inc.

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"To enhance people's enjoyment of Buck Lake now and for future generations"

Buck Lake News – 2008 December

Principal writer: Roy Mills

President's Message

Elmer Green plowed the lane for the first time a few days ago. Winter's here! The long-range forecast is for lots of snow but a warmer winter than last – not good news for those of us anxiously hoping for a real cold snap, glassy black ice and the prospect of clear, unimpeded skating for miles on our favourite lake. If/when we get good skating this winter, we'll send out the news by e-mail.



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In this Newsletter we are starting what we hope will become a regular feature – “Buck Lake Lore”! Crawford MacIntyre is chairing a group that is just beginning to search out and write down some of the many stories that people have about the lake. This first episode is about a ghost, a murder, and a Buck Laker who was the last man hanged in Frontenac County. The long-range goal is to produce a record of the history of Buck Lake, hopefully in a format that will be entertaining as well as informative.

If you have stories about interesting events or people who have lived and worked at

Buck Lake, or know of people who do, please write them down and/or contact Crawford through the BLA website or by 'phone at 613-273-8056 so we can follow up.

Finally, on behalf of all your Directors, have a wonderfully happy holiday season, a good, healthy and safe winter, and the best of years in 2009.

Duncan G. Sinclair

Board of Director's Report

The Board has met twice since our last newsletter, on October 4th and November 29th. Following is a brief summary of agenda items and discussion:

- **Membership numbers (new and renewed) have reached 143 but with an expected 2 to 3 past due accounts coming in we might match or exceed the 2007 membership of 146.** Board members were asked to make personal contact with those lapsed members they know. Typically past due members have forgotten to make the payment or were unaware they were past due. There may remain some confusion among members as to the calendar year membership period. Membership's renewal reminders for 2009 will be included in the first newsletter of the New Year. Thanks were expressed to Ralph Wirsig for his work on the membership database and his up-dates to Board on membership issues.

- Waste management issues were discussed at both meetings. The Township of South Frontenac has not approved a Waste Management Plan although it has been in the works for some years. The BLA remains concerned about service gaps such as the lack of service for those Buck Lake Islanders who pay a levy (Loughborough and Storrington) but receive no pick-up service. Bedford residents could be faced with having to use the Salem site after 2009 when the Massassauga site is closed. The Board will make waste management a priority focus for the BLA in 2009.
- The Community Outreach/Social Committee prepared a summary report for the Board regarding the Annual BLA Picnic. Member participation was down slightly in 2008 to approximately 100 and costs were increased a bit due to fixed overhead costs. More participation creates a better chance to break even. Board members did investigate alternative sites for an annual social gathering such as the Scofield Camp and the Boy Scout Camp on the South Branch but reported that each site presented challenges that did not warrant a decision to move our picnic from Harris Park in the Village. Although driving to Perth Road Village continues to be a long journey for some members it is still the best site available. The park has been booked for August 22nd, 2009 for our next gathering. The Committee is already working on plans to make the annual picnic a special event for all members, their children and grandchildren.
- The Ministry of Natural Resources and the Great Lakes Institute are both involved in various types of research on the lake at the present time. Trout stocks are being monitored as they present a perfect barometer of lake health. The MNR is also doing detailed water monitoring by measuring temperature and oxygen levels in a number of deep holes in both arms of the lake. The Great Lakes Institute through the University of Windsor is studying a number of area lakes including Buck, by testing bottom silt for chemical contaminants. The Board has established liaison with both initiatives and will report information to members as available.
- Director Wayne Myles and the Friends of the Lake Committee presented a detailed five- year timeline for a lake study to begin in 2009. The Board approved the proposal by motion and directed that funding be included in the 2009 budget for Year One and that additional funding sources be investigated as soon as possible. A report from the Friends of the Lake is included in this newsletter and a detailed report of the Five Year Plan will be featured in the February Newsletter.
- The Board received a detailed financial report at the November meeting and considerable progress was made toward preparation of a budget for 2009. A year-end financial report for 2008 as well as the budget for 2009 will be presented in the February Newsletter. The BLA is in sound financial shape thanks to the support of our members and advertisers and prudent management by the Board.
- Considerable discussion has focused on initiatives for the BLA in 2009. Although the Board has not finalized a list, it will probably include most of following: the implementation of a lake study/plan, mapping and marking lake shoals and navigational hazards, distribution and erection of speed warning signage, addressing municipal concerns such as waste management and parking/safety issues at the Causeway/Boat Launch as well as the on-going plan to initiate a Buck Lake history project.
- As a final note from the Board, President Duncan Sinclair reported at the November meeting that the Official Plan Review of the Township will not come to a vote at Council until early in 2009 and that the public meeting that must precede a vote by Council has not been scheduled as of this date. The Board will up-date members as new information becomes available.



Friends of the Lake Committee Report

The Friends of the Lake Committee continues to work on behalf of the Buck Lake residents to discover more about our lake. Over the past three months we have been collecting information about the work that former Board members completed in preparation for the development of a lake plan. Many thanks for the great contribution that past members of the Board and other interested lake residents made over the years. Our committee has learned a great deal about the lake through your work.

We are moving ahead on producing an annotated map of the Buck Lake area that marks the location of interesting sites such as pulpit rock, the osprey nests, the waterfall at Slide Lake. If you have points of interest for visitors that are on your summer tour of the lake, let us know and we will add them to the map. We plan to have the map available by next summer.

Over the year ahead we will begin to develop a lake plan. We will work together with a consultant to identify information that will help to set the foundation for the plan. By the time summer 2009 arrives, we hope to have completed a project that focuses on the water quality of the lake. We will present the results at an educational event similar to the one we held in July 2008 that focused on the lake trout study.

If you have any information for our map project or for our work on the lake plan, or if you are interested in helping on the committee, please contact Wayne Myles at wayne.myles@queensu.ca.

Municipal Property Assessment

MAC property assessment notices should have been received by all Buck Lake property owners outlining the current value assessment status of your property for the 2009-2012 property tax years. All members are asked to read the notice very carefully. It is packed with information regarding the phased-in adjustments over the next four years as well as how to access additional information about how your property's current value was established.

- A **Request for Reconsideration** (Appeal) must be filed by **March 31st 2009**. Phone numbers, mailing addresses, website and email contact information is clearly outlined on the notice.
- Check the accuracy of property summary on the notice.
- See a profile for your property and compare it similar properties in your area...go to www.mpac.ca and connect to the link AboutMyProperty. You have a User ID and Password provided on the bottom right corner of your notice.
- Talk to you neighbours and friends on the lake and compare your numbers.
- Check out two websites that focus on sharing and networking assessment information specifically about cottage and lakefront properties...www.captr.org and www.wraft.com.

High Speed Internet

The **Frontenac Community Futures Development Corporation** is pleased to have financially supported a number of projects to expand broadband coverage in the County of Frontenac. If you cannot access adequate internet service for your needs please provide the Frontenac CFDC with your contact

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OmniGlobe Broadband	888 365 6664
WTC	613 547 6939

For more information call 613 372 1414 or e-mail anne@frontenacfdc.com

Buck Lake Lore!

Big John's Haunt

Every once in a while we hear strange noises in our house. The floor will creak or a window rattle as the friendly ghost who lives with us does his thing.

In the mid to late 1800s "Big John" Richardson, a bachelor, lived and farmed here on the east side of top end of the north branch of Buck Lake. His nearest neighbour, Elijah (Lige) Vankoughnet, lived opposite on the south branch with his wife and many children, not far from where the culvert is now. As Big John was reclusive, abstemious, industrious and successful, Lige was a gregarious, hot-tempered, light-fingered drunkard who lived from hand to mouth and was disliked, even feared, in the small Buck Lake community. The two had nothing in common. But often times when Lige would ride his pinto pony home from the taverns of Westport or Newboro he would be irritated to find Big John at his kitchen table having tea with Maria, the missus.

According to George Norman (who told us this story shortly after we had purchased his brother Bruce's property on Neva Lane), Lige's jealous animosity toward Big John came to a head in mid-August, 1881. Maria gave birth to a child with a cleft palate. Big John had a cleft palate! Lige put two and two together, got five, grabbed a shotgun (which, ironically, he had stolen from Richardson a few days before), rode over to Big John's, called him out and, in the yard midway between the house and barn, shot him dead.

To cover up his crime, Lige then set the place on fire. But before doing so he swapped his pinto pony for the fine bay horse Big John had in the barn. When John's body was discovered a few days later, the police turned over the body of the horse found in the burned-out barn, saw it was a pinto, and the jig was up! It was found out later that Lige had sold the bay horse in Elgin for \$27 (four gallons of whiskey sold at the time for \$1) and had disappeared. Subsequently, using candy as a reward, the police found out from his children that Lige was hiding out on Birch Island; Maria rowed out there every evening to bring him his meals.

Lige was caught, tried twice (the first was declared a mistrial), and was sentenced to death. He was hanged in the jailhouse in Kingston on 27 June, 1882, the last man hanged in Frontenac County.^{1,2}



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Some months after George Norman told us this story, we were at home with Tom, our middle grandson, then only 5 or 6, when the wind caught a door and blew it shut with a loud bang. Startled, Leona and I exclaimed, “what’s that?” Tom, sounding just like George Norman, turning from his play said matter-of-factly, “Oh nothin’. It’s only Big John Richardson!”

¹ Robert Clare. Elijah Vankoughnet’s devilish tale of jealousy and murder, *Kingston Whig Standard*, January 13, 2000

² Christian Barber with Terry Fuchs. Their Enduring Spirit, The History of Frontenac Provincial Park 1783-1990. Quarry Heritage Books. 110

Duncan G. Sinclair

And Finally...



A final list of tidbits at year-end:

- For the year-rounders who need a place to walk, every Tuesday between 5 and 6 pm at Perth Road Public School you can stretch your legs and meet others. Sponsored by the Public Health Unit.
- Take the Plunge Cover Photo Contest is sponsored by FOCA and is for an upcoming publication on Lake Planning. The photos should promote waterfront stewardship and must be in a jpg format. You may submit as many entries as you wish to lakeplanning@foca.on.ca by January 1st, 2009.
- We plan to publish our next newsletter in February 2009. Please forward content or comment that would be of interest to our members to our email box – info@bucklake.ca We would be very appreciative for your contributions.
- Best Wishes to all members and friends of the Buck Lake Association for a healthy and happy Holiday Season and we look forward to your continuing participation and support for the BLA in 2009. Let there be Peace on Earth!

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