



Mission Statement

1. *To protect the natural environmental health and beauty of Mary Lake and surrounding community.*
2. *To represent issues affecting its membership and their quality of life.*

PRESIDENT'S BRIEF

SPRING 2015

Welcome back to our friends and neighbors around Mary Lake. I hope everyone had a safe and enjoyable winter.

We are participating again this summer in the University of Waterloo - Faculty of Environment

Student Lake Sampling Program. The testing takes place in July in six different areas of the lake. Last year, the Lake scored well in terms of clarity, pH, nitrates, nitrites and total phosphorus. The full study can be found on our web site. We are grateful to be able to participate in this program and avail ourselves of the resources of the Waterloo Summit Centre.

As we reported via email in January, the Town of Huntsville Planning Department has finalized the Shoreline Road Allowance (SRA) closing policy which, as of the writing of this brief, still needs to be ratified by Town Council. As a result, in part, by our lobbying, the final proposed SRA closing policy will require the



purchase of the SRA for Minor Variance or Site Plan Applications only when the construction is actually taking place on the SRA or for any Consent (Severance) Applications.

In March, the MLA was able to help convince the Town to defer its decision to support GreenBug Energy Inc. to install a Hydro Electric Generation Facility at the Port

Sydney Dam/Falls, and to seek further public input. Due to the apparent lack of support from the Town, and a ground swell of public objection to the GreenBug plan, GreenBug withdrew its proposal.

We continue to vet a number of property variance applications around the Lake to help ensure that they are compliant with both the Town of Huntsville By Laws as well as the Mary Lake Plan, with the goal of maintaining the integrity of both the Lake's shoreline and ridgeline.

I am sad to report that Mary Ann Hand has resigned from the MLA Board of Directors, and as Secretary to the Board for personal reasons. I want to thank Mary Ann for her contribution to the MLA. We will definitely miss her valued input.

I am also reluctant to inform you that I have also resigned, effective the end of May, from the MLA Board of Directors and the position of President, for personal reasons. John Hogg, our Vice President, will take over in the interim as the acting President.

I would encourage any member to please consider acting as a director of the MLA. The Association could



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benefit from your help. Please follow the contacts on our website marylakeassociation.org if you are interested.

It was an honour to serve as your president the past three years. I hope you all have a healthy, happy and safe summer and please remember to be respectful of your neighbors and the shoreline by watching the size of your wake while boating this summer.

John Woodcroft, President

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Total Members	117
1 Year Membership	74
2 Year Membership	29
3 Year Membership	12
4 Year Membership	2

All the invoices and reminders have been sent out to our MLA Members identifying if their membership is now due.

Our Membership period runs from June 1st to May 31st and is considered expired if you have not paid by our Annual Meeting on July 11th. That gives all members the opportunity to pay over a two month period. We would appreciate if you would respect these dates as it is very time consuming sending out reminders after that time period.

Those that owe for 2016, 2017, 2018 have also received an e-mail stating that they don't need to pay until June 1st of those particular years.

A total of 117 members is very low for a lake with the number of homes or cottages built on our lake. Please encourage your neighbours to join if they are not members.

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You can get an application form for them off our website. Thank you.

*Elizabeth Hughes,
Membership Director*

THANKS TO JOHN WOODCROFT

As John Woodcroft announced in the President's report, he is retiring as President. John has been an unsung hero of this organization.

Like an iceberg, 90% of what John has done for all of us has been largely unseen.

The Association Board reviews every request for a planning variance, and the real impact of an application is not always clear. A recurring report to the Board from John has been, "I went into Town and talked to the planning staff..." That deep vigilance has sent a message: the Mary Lake Association takes its role as steward of the lake very seriously. The Town listens to us.

His similar dedication in working with the MNR on water levels has been critical in improving the management plan.

Thank you, John! You've set a very high bar for the President's role.

*John Hogg,
Incoming President*

REPORT FROM COUNCIL

A warm hello to all MLA members.

As a new summer approaches, I thought I would take the opportunity to introduce myself.

I live in the village of Port Sydney with my wife Lisa, son Jacob and daughter Mackenna. We are very active in the community and appreciate the beautiful place we call home.

I am looking forward to serve as your representative on Council.

If you have any ideas or concerns, please feel free to contact me anytime.

Jason Fitzgerald
705-385-1838

Jason.fitz@hotmail.com

PORT SYDNEY RAPIDS SAVED

We had some excitement in March. [GreenBug Energy](#) proposed to the Town of Huntsville that they install a micro-hydro system on Town land at the Port Sydney falls and rapids. It would have taken water from above the falls to below the rapids. During the key summer season, the rapids could be reduced by an unknown amount.

Incredibly, Town planning staff supported this and put it on the agenda of the March Planning Committee meeting.

The Mary Lake Association sprang into action as soon as we heard about this proposal. We had a long conversation with Planning staff, learning in the process that GreenBug had only seen the site in winter. We went to Mayor Aitchison. We sent a letter of protest which was circulated to all of Council, explaining why this was an egregious proposal and stressed that this rapids-killing micro-hydro system would be unacceptable to the Association, residents of Mary Lake and residents of Port Sydney. Finally, Executive members attended the Planning Committee meeting.

The Mary Lake Association was not alone in this. Lake and village residents made their voices heard to the Town. A special thanks is due to James Solecki who put up a Facebook page to marshal opposition.

Clyffe House Cottage Resort

1050 Muskoka Rd. 10, RR #2 Port Sydney, ON - P0B 1L0



Dave Scott - Owner

Office: (705)385-2714
Toll Free: (866)335-2236
Cell: (705)787-6347

e-mail: dscott@clyffehouse.com
www.clyffehouse.com

It worked.

Mayor Aitchison (attending the Planning Committee meeting ex-officio) complemented GreenBug on the quality of their proposal, then asked them to come back when they had community input. GreenBug saw the lay of the land and said that everyone could stand down. There are other places they can focus their energies, and they won't be considering Port Sydney in future. The signal they received from the community—including the powerful contribution of the Mary Lake Association—made them invest their resources in more appropriate locations. It also sends a powerful message to any future proponents of micro-hydro in Port Sydney, and to the Town.

Ontario needs more micro-hydro. The MLA wishes GreenBug well and we applaud their decision to move on when they fully realized the impact of what they were proposing. A heritage site that is an economic engine for Port Sydney and a year-after-year mecca for residents is not that place.

The vigilance doesn't stop. GreenBug is looking at another site at the Brunel Locks. If this proceeds, the MLA will be monitoring it to ensure Mary Lake water levels won't be adversely affected.

*John Hogg,
Incoming President*

HISTORY AROUND MARY LAKE

Cottagers have asked about early setters around the lake.

These excerpts are from "These Memories I Leave to You" written by Ryan Kidd and Dave Scott and available from Trafford Publishing.

Arcadia Lodge

The new owner has done a lot of work to renew what is left of the main lodge. The present building stands back from the west side of the river just north of the entrance to the MBC marina.

The lodge was originally built by Obadiah Seely in 1880. The walls were made of 2x6's edge to edge with the

siding of lapboard and shingles. Newspapers found in the walls date from 1906 and 1908. Like many of the old lodges it had fires. One was in 1910 and the second in 1940 when the top floor was burned off it.

At one point in the 1880's, Robert Dollar owned it. He is famous for the steamship line that he later operated in the Pacific Ocean. After that the Seely family owned and operated it through its early years. Byron Seeley was the host for many years although at one time the Bacon family temporarily owned it. More recently the Seely family sold to the Wallace's in the 1950's and Harry Wahl owned it until 1999.



The Lodge c 1950

During the 20's and 30's the Olan and the Knight families sold their land to MBC and it grew rapidly. The Olan's moved their lumber mill across the river to the Arcadia property and in the 1930's the MBC took over the lodge for a while because they needed the accommodation space.



c 1963

Eventually the Seely's left and moved to their farms up river. Getting to the lodge was always a problem because the road access was really difficult. It was hard to build a road around the hills behind the lodge. Most of the guests arrived by steamer and the pilings can still be seen along the riverside. As can be seen in the picture at one time there were 12 bedrooms. Today only two of the cabins are left along with the farmhouse and what remains of the lodge.



CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Greetings and Welcome Back our Local Snowbirds and Summer Visitors.

What the Chamber does for Your Business

The Voice of Business

The Port Sydney/Utterson & Area Chamber of Commerce is your voice in the business community in this area. By becoming a member, you join forces with other business owners, professionals and volunteers who share common goals and interests for the long-term economic success of this community. But most importantly, your membership and support demonstrates a commitment to your local community that often goes beyond business.

We strive to make this area the best place in Canada to do business, work, live and play in a rapidly changing business environment. This Chamber of Commerce is a politically independent, membership based, volunteer driven, not-for-profit organization whose mission is to lead and serve the business community.

- We provide information resources to new and existing businesses
- We offer many advertising opportunities

- We help to promote your business to local residents and visitors
- We provide business networking events every month
- We partner with other Muskoka Chambers, groups and organizations to work together on joint initiatives
- We offer great service benefits to members –
- All members listed in business directory
- Business Directory listing
- Networking
- Member Benefits
- Advocacy
- Advertising Opportunities

Our Chamber of Commerce organizes several events throughout the year:

- Canada Day Celebrations
- Winter Carnival
- Community Wide Yard Sale
- Christmas Tree Lighting Service
- Presents the Award for Citizen of the Year
- Presents Awards for Business of the Year

Even if you do not own a business and want to become a volunteer within the community, then give our office and call and let's chat. We offer a great way to meet new people.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and Management Staff we would like to wish you all a safe and happy summer.

*Port Sydney/Utterson & Area
Chamber of Commerce*



MARY LAKE WATER LEVELS

As you may have noticed, the lake levels on Mary Lake were fluctuating greatly in the month of May.

Concerned with these rapid fluctuations, and my inability to get real-time lake level data from the WaterOffice web site, I called the MNR.

The rapid changes in lake levels were caused by lack of real time lake level data with the Mary Lake at Port Sydney monitoring station. Technicians had been dispatched to fix this problem, but it was taking time and had some challenges due to the various levels of government involved in the fix.

The short term work-around for this lack of data was sending employees out to take manual readings, which had its own challenge.

However, I'm happy to report that the real-time data issue was fixed during the week of May 25-29.

Over the next few days, I expect the MNR will work to put the lake levels back to their expected seasonal levels.

If you are interested in looking at the lake levels yourself, they are available at the following web site:

<https://wateroffice.ec.gc.ca>

Dave Lawson, Director

MLA MEETINGS FOR 2015

Annual General Meeting – Saturday, July 11th (9AM) at Port Sydney Hall.

Board of Directors – Saturday, May 30th (9AM)

Board of Directors – Saturday, October 3rd (9AM)

PORT SYDNEY REGATTA

Set for 10AM Saturday, August 1st at the Port Sydney Beach.

THANKS TO BILL BECKNER

The Mary Lake Association wants to send out a big “thank-you” to Bill Beckner who sets out and pulls in the channel markers at the north end of the lake at the start and end of each boating season.

Thanks Bill!

ARTICLES OF INTEREST

Our board members wanted to point out a couple articles of interest this month.

SIX TAX MISTAKES COTTAGE OWNERS SHOULD AVOID

This article, courtesy of the Globe and Mail, outlines various tax mistakes we should all try to avoid with cottage ownership. Please click [here](#) to view this article.

DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN TO YOU!

This article, courtesy of Cottage Life, outlines what we should all know about the changing landscape of cottage insurance. Please click [here](#) to view this article.

WEBSITES OF INTEREST

- FOCA (Federation of Ontario Cottager's Associations) www.foca.on.ca

- FOCA Property Tax Committee
<http://www.foca.on.ca/property-tax>
- Muskoka Water Web www.muskokawaterweb.ca
- Town of Huntsville www.huntsville.ca

MLA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

<u>Executive</u>	<u>Directors</u>
John Hogg, President	Dave Scott
Susan Bobyk, Treasurer	Ryan Kidd
Dave Lawson, Secretary	Elizabeth Hughes
John Woodcroft, Past President	Wayne Kurtz
Vice President (Vacant)	Judy Kurtz
	Monique Heemskerk



Picture from the Spring 2015 Board Meeting

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More info at www.marylakeassociation.org