



# DriftWords

Serving the Rideau Since 1915, Poonamalie to Narrows Lock

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I hope this finds you already enjoying your summer on the lake.

### **The Annual General Meeting**

I encourage everyone to attend this year's Annual General Meeting on Saturday, August 20th at 9:30 AM in the Portland Community Hall – refreshments will be served starting at 9:00 AM.

There is a major issue to be discussed - the future of Cow Island.

As noted in the last issue of Driftwords, the Board believes Cow Island desperately needs attention and we see two options:

Option 1 - invest in it

Option 2 - sell it!

Currently, it is underused, suffers physically from benign neglect and could soon become a liability borne by you, the members.

The Board believes that to keep the island, we need to make a significant financial investment along with an investment of members' time and energy to make it safer, more welcoming and accessible.

While we may have the resources to do this, we wonder if we have your support to make such investments. Without that support we have to consider Option 2.

At the AGM we will present more details and ask for an informed debate on the steps moving forward. In the meantime we ask you to consider the issues, things like:

If we spruce it up, will the island be used more?

What sort of improvements are required to make it a destination for more members?



## Check out our Members' Section on the website!

We now have a password-protected section on the website available only to current members of the association. The password was provided on your receipt for your membership payment but if you can't find it, just let us know and we'll pass it along.

Our goal with this Members' Section is to keep our lake community informed about issues and events going on, and to build communication and dialogue among our members. Currently we have 5 main sections:

- Membership Emails - links to the emails we've sent this year
- Lost & Found - members are invited to post about items that have gone astray
- Local Government News - from the 3 townships in the area
- Board Updates & Reports - information from various directors about issues we're working on (e.g. OMB hearing, houseboats)
- Members' Forum - more below



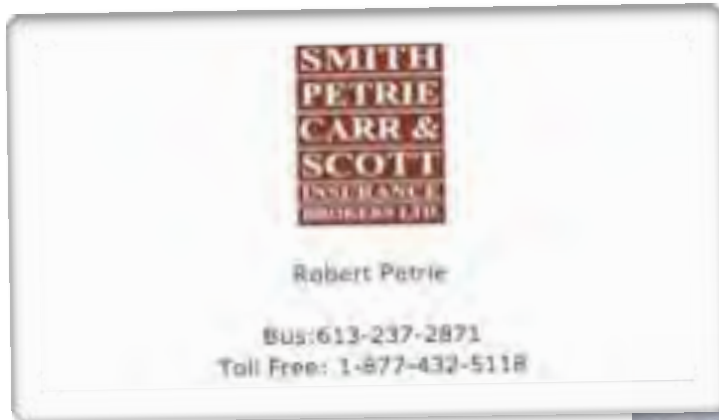
- Does the island need electricity?
- Should we encourage overnight camping?
- If there is a core group interested in continuing using the island and who would be prepared to bear the costs associated with its renovation and maintenance?
  - If the island was sold, would that mean the end of Day Camp, Sailing Camp, Summer Sounds and fireworks?
  - If so, can we find alternate locations for our Cow Island programs?

And the list goes on.

If you want to chat beforehand, please contact me by phone at (613) 878-4212 or email at

[president@bigrideaulakeassociation.com](mailto:president@bigrideaulakeassociation.com)

Brian Hawkins  
President



### Lake Safety

The shoal buoys are maintaining position with some adjustments due to wind drag and boater's using them to tie up to while fishing. Boater are reminded that damaging, moving or in anyway interfering with Private Navigation Buoys is a Federal offence.

The lake level is lower than normal at this time of year due to lack of spring runoff from a light snow winter. Boater's are reminded to exercise extra caution while out on the lake.

The Canal Navigation buoys off the Narrows and the one near Tar Island, with the possibility of others are off station. They have been noted in the NTM (Notice to Mariners). They will be reset when the Parks Canada Barge is seaworthy. Caution must be taken by all boater's.

## We want to hear from you!

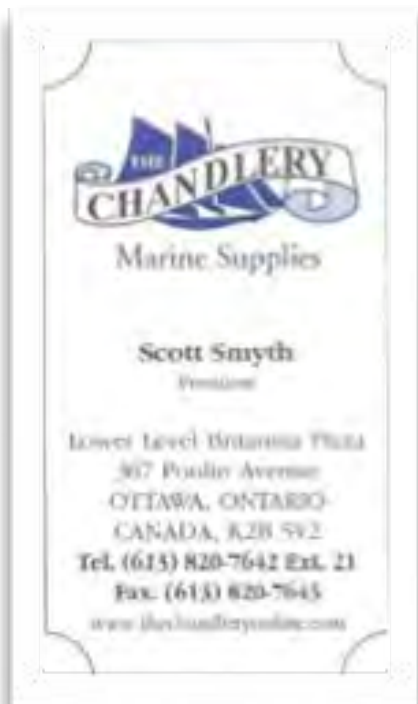
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One of the features we really like about our new website is the opportunity for members to connect with each other. We've started a Members' Forum where we'll be posing questions in the hopes of starting conversations about issues of interest to us on Big Rideau Lake.

Right now, we have two questions started:

- What does your road association do about insurance?
- 
- How was your boat ride home from Fireworks 2016?

We would love to hear your comments, experiences and questions so log in soon and let us know. And if there's an issue you would like to see discussed, just let us know at [communications@bigrideaulakeassociation.com](mailto:communications@bigrideaulakeassociation.com).



Boaters are reminded that alcohol can NOT be consumed while operating a boat. ONLY Boats with a fully functional Galley (kitchen) and a Head (toilet) are allowed to consume alcohol while anchored or tied to a dock. If you are caught under the influence, you may have your motor vehicle license suspended or revoked just like you were driving a car.

Lastly, all boater's are reminded that they are NOT allowed to travel at a speed in excess of 10 k within 30m of shore. Also wake damage caused by boater's can result in fines and liability for the damage.

## SAFE BOATING – SAFE SUMMER



## BRLA Environment Committee Update

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While summer moves on and we see excessive blooms of algae plaguing the lake, the Board of Directors and the Environment Committee continue to address other lake environmental issues. None of the issues are easy to resolve because of their complexity and range of opinions and mandates among interested parties.

### **1. BRLA member concerns with Bass Fishing Tournament impacts:**

The BRLA Environment Committee started to address this issue in the New Year by contacting tournament organizers. Communications were not well responded to but one major organizer did respond in a constructive manner and the dialogue continues with that group. The Chair of the Environment Committee under BRLA auspices organized two

## Heirloom from 1915 Regatta Race

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Sandra Shore sent us a couple of great pictures from time gone by on the Big Rideau. Her great uncle, Harrie Dukelow, placed second in a race which was held August 2, 1915. Here is the trophy as well as a picture of Harrie at the helm of the Minx.



meetings to bring concerned lake residents together with the tournament organizers with the aim of charting a path forward to address the issues. After the two preliminary meetings a Working Group was formed with co-chairs drawn from the lake residents. The working group will now move ahead outside of BRLA auspices and as an independent effort, however a BRLA board member will remain part of the Working Group and represent BRLA. As well, the BRLA Environment Committee will continue to press OMNRF to modify their tournament permit requirements to include requiring that tournament caught fish are returned to a central part of the lake they were caught in and not to some far flung spot. This separation was done due to the wide array of parties that are, and could be, part of the Tournament Working Group which will likely extend far beyond just the BRLA membership. For further information please contact the co-chairs at [bigrideauworkinggroup@gmail.com](mailto:bigrideauworkinggroup@gmail.com).

On Monday, July 25<sup>th</sup> at 7pm: A public meeting will be held at the Parks Canada offices in Smiths Falls. This meeting will begin the collaborative dialogue with cottage residents and bass fishing tournament organizers on how to share the lake. Please email the address above to confirm your attendance.

### **2. Cormorant populations and impacts on Owl Island in Big Rideau Lake.**

Counts of cormorants and other observations continue. This year in two widely separated counts the maximum number of cormorants counted at the island breeding colony was 69 along with 5 nests. This compares to 63 counted and 8 nests from 2015 and a 2010 record of 50 plus birds. Essentially this shows a fairly stable population at the island breeding colony over the past several years that realistically probably numbers somewhere under a hundred birds in total. But of course there are also the cormorants around that are not associated directly with the breeding colony and they can be seen here and there throughout the region on whatever rocky islet or convenient dock they choose to perch. Their numbers appear to be growing but we have no data. Starting at the beginning of September we can, as usual, also expect the arrival of the southward migrant cormorants coming from the north and numbering up to a thousand or more birds. All of the cormorants are usually gone by late October with the breeding birds expected back by



## BRLA Membership

Our push is on for members to renew this year prior to our AGM which is on August 20th. As of July 12<sup>th</sup>, we have 270 members but want to go well beyond our 309 membership of last year!

It's easy to renew. Just go online to the BRLA website, and click Renew and complete the form; OR, you can renew by mailing us the completed form with your credit card particulars (VISA, MasterCard or Amex) or with a cheque for \$75.00 made payable to BRLA, to: Big Rideau Lake Association PO Box 93, Portland, ON K0G 1V0. Please also reach out to your neighbours who are not members, to join. They can also access our website and complete the membership application.

Thank you, John Callan  
Director, Membership

early May next year.

The island utilized by the breeding colony in Big Rideau Lake this year is showing quite severe and intensified impacts on the vegetation from many years of contamination from bird guano. The cormorant habit of breaking off branches while nesting is also quite evident.

The subject of cormorants on Big Rideau Lake will be on the agenda at the August AGM. The Board of Directors and the Environment Committee are hoping to hear from the membership on their views with regards to a path forward on the management of cormorant impacts on Big Rideau Lake.

Until that meeting, the Committee will continue to be directed by the Board's view that the BRLA's position on the management of the cormorant population on Big Rideau Lake must be Based on science and data.



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### *Letter to the editor of the Westport Review Mirror*

I read Richard William Earle's letter to the editor with interest. He concludes that "...we were pleased with the final decision.....". That is good because BRLA is very pleased as well.

Readers should not be misled by some of Mr. Earle's statements. For example, he states "This approval took months of back and forth with the Township planners and the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA) to be able to submit the final application that was approved with conditions by the Committee of Adjustment (COA)". He fails to mention that the Rideau Waterway Development Review Team, (which includes Parks Canada, RVCA and CRCA) wrote to the Township COA and recommended that the application NOT be approved.

Rather than examining Mr. Earle's letter paragraph by paragraph, it is better to focus on the facts and on ways that the Township's future planning decisions can benefit from the guidance provided by this OMB decision. There are at least five key differences between the initial decision of the Township COA and the decision the OMB reached after careful review of the evidence.

1. Mr. Earle wanted to reduce the normal 30m setback from water to only 8m. RVCA inspected the property and concluded that poor site conditions actually warranted a water setback of at least 40m. Nevertheless, the Township COA granted the applicant's request to reduce the water setback to 8m. The OMB increased the setback to 15m, subject to more stringent conditions, and pointed out that the Township's Official Plan (OP) never allows a reduction below this 15m minimum standard.
2. The Township COA decision required a tertiary sewage treatment system but not all tertiary systems remove phosphorus, the key nutrient that affects lakes. The OMB decision included a condition requiring phosphorus treatment.
3. The COA decision did not require a landscape plan; the OMB required "a landscape plan illustrating the revegetation of the naturalization buffer that shall be created within the first 15m of the shoreline, and the landscape plan shall be incorporated into the Site Plan approval."
4. In spite of the significant physical constraints present on this lot, the COA did not require a grading and drainage plan. It did not even require a survey to accurately demonstrate how the proposal could fit on the property. The OMB has addressed this shortcoming by now requiring that a grading and drainage plan be prepared by a Professional Engineer and be incorporated into the Site Plan approval.

5. The COA did not require the Site Plan to be registered on title. Even the Township's lawyer admitted at the OMB hearing that this practice should be followed. The OMB rectified this problem by requiring the Site Plan Agreement, Site Plan, Landscaping Plan and Site Grading and Drainage Plan to be registered on title. (It is interesting to note that of the three municipalities which abut Big Rideau Lake, the Township of Rideau Lakes is the only municipality which does not make registration on title a routine practice. The other Townships recognize that this is the only way a future purchaser will be made aware of the Site Plan's requirements.)

The Township's COA could have asked more questions, required more information to help guide its decision and could have incorporated these conditions in its initial decision. Had the Township COA been more vigilant in applying the planning principles as required by its Official Plan, with a view to achieving the protection of the Township's most valuable asset, its waterbodies, an appeal to the OMB would not have been necessary.

The OMB made some important observations which should assist the Township in its future decisions. "The Board concludes that the current debate is bound to be repeated. The Board would be remiss in not warning that the Township's initial interpretation of the OP's relevant provisions was unreliable." (pg 7)

The OMB's 21 page decision (available on the BRLA website) provides a thorough analysis of the Township Official Plan's applicable policies. These policies are the result of many years of studies, experience and revision. Until about 25 years ago, 15m minimum water setbacks were the norm. Municipal leaders recognized the need for greater care in developing waterfront areas if these important water resources were to be protected for the long term. A minimum water setback of 30m was established along with other important provisions such as the 10% maximum lot coverage for waterfront lots.

It is important to remember that the 30m standard is a minimum requirement. Where slope, soil type, soil depth and vegetation are less than ideal, the setback should be increased. The OP recognizes that the 30m standard can be difficult to meet on some existing undersized lots. It provides for the possibility of reductions but requires an environmental impact study to carefully evaluate the site and propose mitigation measures. The OMB's decision has provided an important reminder to the Township that this is an essential part of the Township's "due diligence" responsibilities. The OMB states "The solution, however, is not to sidestep the OP with contrived shortcuts". (pg 14)

The OMB also reminded us that the Rideau Canal's inscription on the list of World Heritage Sites is an important consideration when evaluating development in shoreline areas.

The BRLA appeal was instrumental in achieving these much needed improvements to the final decision. BRLA did not get it wrong with this OMB appeal. It got it exactly right.

*Peter Hannah*  
Portland



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## Calendar of Events - Summer 2016

July 1	Canada Day Fireworks
July 2	Fireworks clean-up.
<b>Update</b> - July 4-22	Day Camp - first three weeks of July
July 16	Summer Sounds on Cow Island
July 25-29	Sailing Camp
<b>Update</b> - July 30	Family Aquatic Regatta on Cow Island
August 20	BRLA AGM in the Portland Community Hall

Check our our website for more details

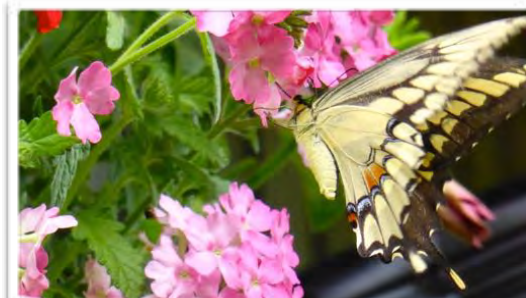


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**Searching for....!**

I am searching for the builder of (and plans for) this lovely 18' (?) sailboat dinghy that was sailed on Big Rideau Lake for many years by my Great Grandfather, Admiral Kingsmill. My father brought her down to Toronto in the early '60s, and has regretted selling her ever since. These photos were taken in front of Grindstone Island.

My father turns 80 this year, is now actively sailing on Lake Simcoe - but I was hoping if you recognized this type of boat or where she was built you could let me know. Marianne Kingsmill.

Please email:  
[president@bigrideaulakeassociation.com](mailto:president@bigrideaulakeassociation.com)



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## Cow Island Nostalgia

In August 1956, the Ottawa Citizen published a feature focusing on Cow Island. If my calculations are correct, Cow Island became an entity of the BRLA 60+ years ago. Initially known as Gallagher Island, the owner put a cow on the island to provide milk for his vacationing family, hence the name, Cow Island.

The cottage on the island was named “Crestview”, an apt name given the crests of waves hitting its shoreline under strong north westerly winds. In the latter years of the ‘50’s, Cow Island became a frequent picnic spot. Teenagers on the lake sought a gathering place, it was the preferred spot for Saturday night, dancing and enjoying hot dogs. Many teenagers met at dusk, started up the generator, and danced to their hearts’ content in the many rooms in the original cottage. Besides these gatherings, cottagers and their children would come to Cow Island for basketball, table tennis, darts, and to play cards... the favourite card game was “Spit”.

Here are a few images from that article written in the Ottawa Citizen. Pictures of Cow Island taken by Ottawa Citizen Aug. 11, 1956.

1. This picture shows Don Hewer, Director of Cow Island on the left and W. V. Morwick of the BRLA on the right. The original name of the old cottage is Crestview in the background.  
Picture 2: Left to Right: Susie Ault, Judy Hewer, Doug Kirkland (with hat), Peter Marsh (with dog). Peter's family cottage was on Trout Island), Christie Crain, and Murray Ault. This picture was taken at the porch of the old cottage.



### THE OTTAWA CITIZEN

OTTAWA, CANADA, SATURDAY, AUGUST 11, 1956



## Lazy-Hazy-Crazy Days of Summer on Big Rideau Lake!

Dad takes on his boys at Cow Island Day Camp - also donated new ping pong supplies for the cabin - big thanks to the Smee/McPhail family!!





# Big Rideau Lake Association



## Family\* Membership Registration - \$75

\* Family is defined as up to 2 parents and their children under 21 years of age.

Please complete all sections of this registration and pay by:

	Family Membership	\$ 75.00
Additional Donations	Day Camp	\$
	Environment	\$
	Fireworks	\$
	Lake Safety	\$
	Recreation	\$
	Summer Sounds (2/\$25)	\$
TOTAL		

### OPTION 1: Mail

- Cheque | Send this completed form and your cheque made payable to BRLA, to: Big Rideau Lake Association PO Box 93, Portland, ON K0G 1V0
- Credit Card (VISA, MasterCard, Amex) Send this completed form, with your credit card details to: Big Rideau Lake Association PO Box 93, Portland, ON K0G 1V0

Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry \_\_\_\_\_ CSV (Security Code) \_\_\_\_\_

Name on card \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

### OPTION 2: Online

- Go to the BRLA website, [www.bigrideaulakeassociation.com](http://www.bigrideaulakeassociation.com), click Membership/Join or Renew/Join or Renew and complete the form.

Membership is for a 12 month term starting April 1st each year.

This registration starts April 1, \_\_\_\_\_ (Insert Year)

- New Membership     Renewal
- Boater                 Cottager                 Resident

Family Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's First Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
(last name if different from Family Name above)

Children's Names \_\_\_\_\_

## PRIMARY RESIDENCE

Street # & Name \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Province/State \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

## COTTAGE RESIDENCE

Street # & Name \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Cottage Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cottage e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Tay Valley / Rideau Lakes / Drummond/North Elmsley  
*Township (circle one)*

## BOATER — MARINE RESIDENCE

Boat Name \_\_\_\_\_

Marina \_\_\_\_\_

Boat Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_