



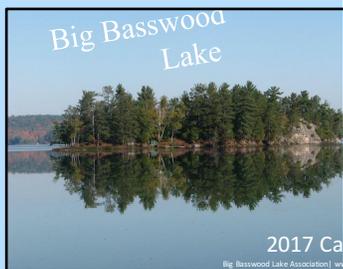
# BBLA Newsletter

Fall/Winter 2017

## Chairman's Letter

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It has been another enjoyable summer on Big Basswood Lake for all of our friends and neighbors. This fall has been particularly pleasant, with many warm autumn days and a beautiful extended summer.

Your lake association continues to be very active. We have grown to a record membership thanks to the hard work of our membership chairman, Mike Hunting and the other members of the board. Please see the article on membership and continue to tell your fellow property owners on the lake about the initiatives the association is undertaking on their behalf and how important it is for them to join up.

As with last year, we separated our summer meeting activities into two separate events – the Annual General Meeting held on July 30<sup>th</sup> this year and the Sweet Sowerby Social held on August 23<sup>rd</sup>. Feedback to the format of holding two separate meetings has been very positive and the board is currently planning to continue this format for next year.

A number of very important issues were covered at the AGM including:

Boundary Land Claim by the Thessalon First Nations. We were joined by Mayor Gil Reeves to explain the nature of the land claim and to discuss the status. I continue to stay in touch with the Ontario Government negotiator on this claim, Mark Richard and will let you know as we learn more about the process for the negotiation and what it may mean to us as property owners on the lake. Please see the fact sheet that has been published by the Ontario Ministry later in this newsletter.

Maeve Coccimiglio announced our 2017 photo contest. Our 2015 photo contest/calendar was very well received and we are, therefore, holding another photo contest with the winner having their photographs included in our next photo calendar.

Water quality/septic inspections. Big Basswood Lake continues to enjoy the highest water clarity of any inland lake tracked by the Federation of Ontario Cottagers Association Lake Partner program. Bob and Marilyn Kellum continue to work hard to monitor our lake clarity and have also undertaken a new initiative to monitor the lake phosphorous levels. Please see an update on water quality later in this newsletter.

To ensure that we maintain the water quality that we all accustomed to, it is critically important that all septic systems on the lake be maintained in good working order so that septic effluent does not enter the lake. We have announced an intent to undertake septic inspections around the lake and are still working hard to scope out this effort and determine how to properly fund it.

## Membership Report

Wow! Another record. We now have 113 paid members...and counting. Thank you, everyone for your support. Especially our board members.

We have approximately 230 residences on the lake so we still have less than 50% of the property owners. With the pending land claim it is an important time for our

property owners to be involved and show their support. So please talk to your friends and neighbors and encourage them to join our association.

Now might be a good time for all lakes in the area to form one large association with common goals. Our board will be discussing this issue in the coming

months.

Again, thank you for your support.

Mike Hunting,  
Membership Chairman

## Chairman's Letter

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The Sweet Sowerby Social was held in August as a more informal, community event. We had several speakers join us – Bill Tibble from Tulloch Engineering to talk about shoreline erosion and shoreline buffers and representatives from the MNR to talk about permitting and conservation reserves. We very much appreciate the participation of these individuals/organizations and have a report on the event later in this newsletter.

We also have a number of ongoing, general interest initiatives underway including an ongoing Loon Survey by

Dixie Olmstead. We've also noticed a definite uptick in interest in the history of Big Basswood Lake as a result of the information gathered last winter on the Canadian Camp Club – as reported in our summer newsletter. Nancy Bakemeier is spearheading a board committee to start to collect some of this historical information. Finally, please see the report reprinted from the Northshore Sentinel on the major construction project currently underway at Melwel Lodge.

I attended the fall FOCA seminar in Toronto on November 4th and have

included a report later in the newsletter on that meeting.

We hope that you will find the information in this newsletter interesting and informative. The board will continue to work over the winter on many of these initiatives. If you have any feedback or suggestions for us, please contact me or any member of the board directly - our contact information is included at the end of this newsletter. Enjoy your winter and we will look forward to seeing you in the spring!

Larry Allcorn - Chairman

# Photo Contest 2017

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## Shoutout to all Shutterbugs

### *A Lake For all Seasons*

### *Second semi- annual Big Basswood Lake Association*



**Who?** All dues paying lake association members and their families are eligible to participate. Both professionals and amateurs are welcome!

**What?** A picture on Big Basswood Lake in any season. Be sure to include date and location of your picture on the lake.(Coles Bay, southwest shore)

**When?** July 31<sup>st</sup> 2017 to June 1<sup>st</sup> 2018.

**Where?** [www.bigbasswoodlake.ca](http://www.bigbasswoodlake.ca) at [contest@bigbasswood.ca](mailto:contest@bigbasswood.ca)

**How?** All images must be less than 15MB and in JPEG format and must include your personal identification Name, phone number or e-mail address so winners can be contacted and pictures verified.

# Septic Inspections

As announced at our AGM, it is the Lake Association's intention of going ahead with septic inspections in 2018.

As property owners on Big Basswood Lake, we are justifiably proud of the clarity and cleanliness of our water. According to the Federation of Ontario Cottagers Association Lake Partner data base, Big Basswood is cleanest, clearest inland lake in Ontario.

As we spoke about at the meeting, we are in the process of making changes to measure phosphorous levels in the lake with the first results expected back in the spring of 2018. Elevated e Coli and elevated phosphorous levels are direct contributors to the breakout of algal blooms in the warmer summer months – a problem that we want to do our best to continue to avoid.

Elevated phosphorous can most often be traced back to 2 sources – agricultural impact on water flowing into the lake and leaking septic systems. We know that we do not have any appreciable agricultural runoff in Basswood so it becomes imperative that we focus on the proper functioning of the individual property owner's septic systems to maintain our water quality.

For the past 3 years, we have supplied septic tablets which, when flushed into the septic system, show whether there is any effluent leakage from the septic into the lake. We propose, beginning in 2018, to supplement this with visual septic system inspections on all septic systems on Big Basswood Lake.

The intent is to contract a local engineering firm to review the records of each septic, or other waste disposal system, on the lake and then to do a visual inspection of each system by visiting each property on the lake. The inspection will be done according to a checklist that has been developed for like inspections on other lakes and a written report of potential issues will follow.

We are currently in the process of scoping out this project including resolving timing, funding and resources required to complete the inspection.

We have been in touch with Huron Shores and they support the aims of this endeavour

Please stay tuned for updates in the spring of 2018.

## Mark These Dates for 2018

Spring Board Meeting	June 25th, 2018
Annual General Meeting	July 15th, 2018
Sweet Sowerby Social	August 15th, 2018
Fall Board Meeting	September 17th, 2018

# Canadian Lakes Loon Survey

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According to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, juvenile loons are really on their own after mom and dad leave at about 12 weeks. The parents head off on migration in the fall, leaving juveniles to gather into flocks on northern lakes and make their own journey south a few weeks later.

Well, the juveniles were still hanging out on Big Basswood Lake as late as October 16<sup>th</sup> this year as a group of 25 was sighted that day out on Cole's Bay by Ron and Lynda Trivers.

Speaking of loons and our lake, 2017 marked the first year of BBLA participation in the Canadian Lakes Loon Survey. You might have noticed and discussed this at our table on Saturdays at the Sowerby farmers market.

The Loon Survey is a program of Bird Studies Canada that has, for more

than 30 years, collected data on more than 4,500 Canadian lakes.

Loon observations, the presence of loon nests, eggs in nests, and hatched chicks reported by Association volunteers were summarized for the months of May, June, July, and August and submitted to Bird Studies Canada. Given the size of the lake, for reporting purposes, it was divided into 5 sections: northwest, southwest, center, northeast and southeast.

Bird Studies Canada does not ask for the total number of loons seen in a survey area for a month. They ask instead for the maximum number of adult loons seen over the days of the month. So, if an observer looked for loons on 10 days in a month, and on one of those days saw 6 birds, but never that many on the other 9 days, they would report 6

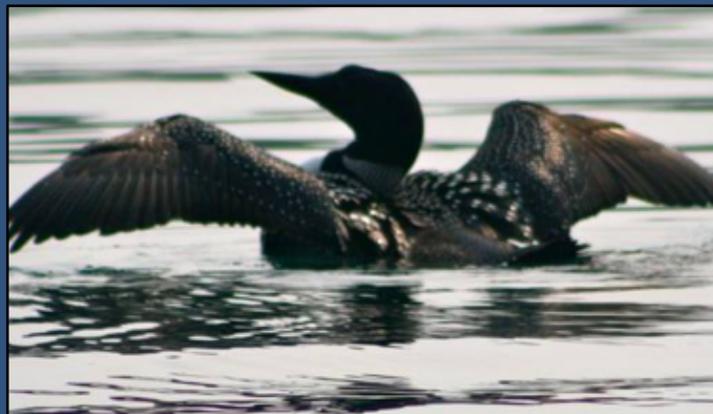
loons for the month.

You're probably wondering by now how many loons were reported. For May and June, none. We didn't get organized and running until late in June. For July there were six. August was our banner month with 51 loons reported. Two nests, each with two eggs, were also seen, but no hatched chicks.

Thanks to all who contributed to this effort including Maeve Coccomiglio, Phil Conley, Jill Glaser, Mike Hunting, Marilyn Kellum, Lynda Trivers, and 4 unnamed reporters from the farmers market table.

In 2018 we hope to get going by May and have more volunteer loon surveyors in action.

For more information contact Dixie Olmstead



## The Sweet Sowerby Social

Shorelines were the featured topic at the Sweet Sowerby Social presented by the Big Basswood Lake Association this summer. The program included presentations on preserving natural shorelines, the permitting process in place for shorelines and specific information about the Conservation Reserve Areas on Big Basswood Lake. There were approximately 50 people from the area present for an informative evening, a bit of socializing, and of

course, a wide array of tasty treats.

Bill Tibble, who is an Aquatic Ecologist and the Environmental Lead for Tulloch Engineering, presented information on the preserving natural shorelines and the mitigation of shoreline erosion. Bill presented us with examples of how to recognize issues with the shoreline, what the caused those issues and how they could be reduced and/or prevented. Although there are 3 levels of

intervention - vegetative, manipulative/ bioengineering and structural - Bill's focus was on the solutions that could be done naturally using shoreline vegetation. He presented 9 vegetative solutions, of increasing complexity but all including the maintenance of a natural shoreline buffer. Thanks to Bill and Chris Kirby, manager of Tulloch's Thessalon office for their participation and very informative talk.

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## Lake Partner Water Quality Testing

As most of you know, BBLA has been testing water quality indicators for the Lake Partner Program since 1999. This year samples were sent to measure Total Phosphorus from both the East Basin and the West Basin. Those results are pending.

Secchi depth readings

were taken monthly May through October. The last reading, taken October 26th, was 12.3 m.

In a summary of water clarity trends from the Lake Partner Program data across the Province, most lakes have remained unchanged since the program's inception in 1996.

Some lakes on the Canadian Shield are, however, changing. An increase in dissolved organic carbon has been linked to a decrease in water clarity. This year the water is being tested for carbon as well.

The 2017 results will be released by FOCA late 2017 or early 2018.

For more information from FOCA on the Lake Partner Program and Secchi Testing Please visit:

[https://foca.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Secchi\\_Summary\\_September\\_2017.pdf](https://foca.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Secchi_Summary_September_2017.pdf)

# The Sweet Sowerby Social

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Peggy Wilson, Partnership Specialist from the MNRF, was in attendance with Hailey Edson and Nick Hayward from the MNRF. Hailey presented an overview Shoreline Permitting. An activity needs to be registered with the MNRF if it involves certain wildlife and natural resources. A permit is required to build a new erosion control structure or alter or expand any existing structure. In water work on Big Basswood is only permitted June 16 through August 31. General

information can be found at <https://www.ontario.ca/page/natural-resources-approvals>. For specific shoreline permitting information check out <https://www.ontario.ca/page/natural-resources-approvals>.

Big Basswood Lake has two Conservation Reserve Areas. Nick provided information about the program and the two areas on Big Basswood. The Basswood Lake Hemlock Conservation Reserve (C256) is on the west end of the lake on the south shore.

This area protects hemlock forests approaching old-growth status. On the north shore of the east basin is Basswood Lake Conservation Reserve (C257). This area protects red oak forest communities. The Voyageur Trail also passes through this reserve area. Nick explained that the Public Lands Act created the Ontario Living Legacy. The Conservation Reserve Areas are on Crown Land and were established to protect natural heritage areas



For More information on Big Basswood Conservation Reserves, please visit:

[www.ontario.ca/page/basswood-lake-hemlock-conservation-reserve-management-statement](http://www.ontario.ca/page/basswood-lake-hemlock-conservation-reserve-management-statement)

[www.ontario.ca/page/basswood-lake-conservation-reserve-management-statement](http://www.ontario.ca/page/basswood-lake-conservation-reserve-management-statement)

# Melwel Lodge Dining Hall

## Basswood's historic Melwel Lodge looks forward to next stage of upgrades



*Melwel Lodge founders Weldon and Melba Moore, right, are shown in 1995, in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Lodge sitting on the porch of the dining building.*

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October 18, 2017

**BASSWOOD LAKE** – This week, the office and dining room building at Melwel Lodge will be demolished to make way for a new 4,400-square foot complex. The new structure will be designed to accommodate up to 150 event guests, geared to hosting wedding receptions and conferences, as well as smaller gatherings.

When founders Weldon and Melba Moore - whose names formed the resort's now iconic trade name - opened the lodge in 1945, Melwel offered the American Plan, very popular with guests at the time and for the next many years.

Renting one of the Lodge's cabins included housekeeping and meals in the central dining room.

Over the generations, the American Plan became less popular with guests, as destination lake stays evolved with consumers' changing demands.

Since 1981, when the Moores first sold Melwel to a Sudbury couple, the property has changed hands a few times and managers have tried different hospitality models, as guest expectations changed.

Eventually, in 2007, the Lodge was sold to Dale Harrison, a Sault Ste. Marie-born Toronto stock analyst, looking for an investment in this area.

Mr. Harrison owned a cottage on Lake Huron in the Thessalon area and had been introduced to Big Basswood Lake by an engineer with whom he'd been working.

At the same time, a friend from Toronto was investigating the Muskoka area for a potential vacation home and Mr. Harrison suggested he consider looking at the North Shore of Lake Huron.

Stumbling upon the Melwel property then available for sale, Mr. Harrison and his friend partnered on the purchase of the Basswood property, which featured a west-facing view and private bay.

Immediately, the new owners began upgrading the cabins and converted a conference centre into a large cottage. By 2008, the cottages had been upgraded to meet contemporary guest expectations.

By 2015, Mr. Harrison bought out his partner and, as sole owner, continued the move to upgrade the complex with a review of the original dining building.

Built over 70 years ago and without a foundation, Mr. Harrison says the dining building simply couldn't be upgraded.

He hopes to reconcile current building code standards with the lakefront location and the significance of the building in the Melwel heritage.

Mr. Harrison says the new building will incorporate some of the fixtures and artifacts of the original structure.

Following the scheduled October 18 demolition, it's anticipated that site preparation and foundational work will begin immediately.

Framing will commence as soon as the slab foundation work is complete and Mr. Harrison hopes the structure will be closed in by late fall.

While Mr. Harrison lives in Vancouver and visits regularly, an on-site manager will oversee the new construction on his behalf.

Mr. Harrison doesn't anticipate that the new dining room building will ever feature a daily restaurant, as it once did in the past.





## FOCA Fall Meeting

The Big Basswood Lake Association continues to actively participate in the Federation of Ontario Cottager Associations meetings and activities. As members of our lake association, you automatically become members of FOCA as a portion of your annual dues are paid to FOCA.

In addition to their excellent website ([www.foca.ca](http://www.foca.ca)), the monthly elerts and the annual newsletter, FOCA holds twice yearly formal meetings – in the spring and fall. The fall meeting was held on Saturday, November 4<sup>th</sup> at the Boulevard Club in Toronto and was attended, on your behalf, by Larry Allcorn.

There were about 120 attendees at this meeting representing cottagers associations throughout Ontario. The theme of this fall's seminar was "Strong Associations for Future Generations".

The agenda included:

**Welcome and Overview** by Terry Rees, FOCA Executive Director - an update on current news and projects ongoing at FOCA.

**Keynote Speakers:** "The Water Brothers". Alex and Tyler Mifflin shared some insights on challenges facing the world's fresh water resources based on their experiences from filming their "Water Brothers" TV show for TVO.

**Break Out Session:** "Finding and Engaging New Members and Younger Volunteers". This was a round table discussion to explore ideas on how a younger generation of volunteers could be engaged in the work of lake associations. The ideas gathered at the individual tables were summarized by Terry Rees and will be published as a resource document for FOCA member associations.

**Panel Discussion:** "Other Voices Discuss Youth and Volunteer Engagement"  
. Jacob Rodenburg – Executive Director of Camp Kawartha and author of "The Big Book of Nature Activities"  
. Thomas McAuley – Chair of "Emerging Leaders for Biodiversity"  
. Mike Hendren – Executive Director of the Kawartha Land Trust

**Launch of FOCA's 2017 Video Project: "Lake Associations"**. An excellent short film by videographer Chelsie Xavier-Blower who is a graduate student of Fleming Colleges Environmental Visual Communications Program. This film will be made available as a direct link from the FOCA web site.

As usual, this was a very productive day, not only for knowledge gained from the formal presentations but for the opportunity to meet and network with other lake association member. I spoke offline with Terry Rees about some of the current projects and challenges that our lake association faces and we are planning a follow up phone call to discuss in more detail on how FOCA might help.

Note that these meetings are open to all members of FOCA, not just lake association executives so if you find yourself in Toronto with nothing to do in early spring, please consider attending spring FOCA AGM – currently scheduled for March 3<sup>rd</sup>.

# Boundary Land Claim

The lake association continues to be in touch with Mark Richard, the negotiator from the Ontario Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation. He supplied the following fact sheet in September which gives background and status on the negotiations and informs the association that, as of mid November, his department has nothing further to report on the status of the negotiations. We will continue to stay in touch with him over the course of the winter for further updates.

## **Thessalon First Nation Boundary Claim Negotiations**

### **Thessalon First Nation**

#### **Fact Sheet #1**

*September 2017*

#### **Thessalon First Nation**

Thessalon First Nation is located on the north shore of Lake Huron, 100 kilometers east of Sault Ste. Marie.

Thessalon First Nation and the Government of Ontario are working together to resolve a boundary claim through negotiation. The goal of this process is to conclude a fair and final settlement that will foster reconciliation and resolve the outstanding claim regarding the land promised to Thessalon First Nation under the Robinson Huron Treaty.

#### **What is the Thessalon Boundary Claim?**

In 1850, as a result of expanding mining around Lake Huron and Lake Superior, the Crown entered into treaties with the local Ojibwe First Nations. In the Robinson Huron Treaty, First Nations surrendered the majority of the watershed of Lake Huron and Georgian Bay to the Crown. In exchange, the Treaty set aside specific reservations for the exclusive use of each adhering First Nation.

Thessalon First Nation claims that it received a substantially smaller reservation than it was promised under the Robinson Huron Treaty. It claims this was due to an error in translation between Anishinaabemowin and English by the Crown treaty commissioners when describing units of measure. Specifically, while the written version of the Robinson Huron Treaty indicates that Thessalon First Nation ought to have received a reserve *four miles square*, it claims to have understood that it would be retaining an area of *four leagues square*. Thessalon First Nation believes the French league is about three miles. Therefore, while the written version of the Treaty described the Thessalon First Nation reservation as 16 square miles, Thessalon First Nation claims it understood the Treaty promise to mean it would retain 144 square miles.

#### **The Negotiations**

Thessalon First Nation and Ontario agree that the best way to resolve this claim is to work together to find effective, fair solutions.

In June, 2017, Thessalon and Ontario signed a Negotiation Framework Agreement, setting out the rules and goals of the negotiations.

# Boundary Land Claim

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Preliminary negotiations are going well, but much work remains to be done. Much of the land within and around the claim area has been sold by the Crown, over many decades. Both Thessalon First Nation and Ontario recognize the rights of private property holders.

Consultation will take place alongside the negotiations. The rights and interests of members of the public who are concerned about, or could be affected by a settlement will be taken into account by Ontario and Thessalon First Nation. There will be public consultation meetings, meetings with local municipal leadership, and consultation with other Indigenous communities.

## **Land**

There will be a land component to the settlement. The settlement may also provide money in lieu of lands that can no longer be returned to the Thessalon First Nation. Private property will not be expropriated. Current access to private land will also be maintained. Any acquisition of private property relating to the land component of the settlement will be on a willing-seller / willing-buyer basis.

## **The Benefits of Negotiated Settlements**

The timely resolution of this claim through negotiation is in everyone's best interest. When compared to litigation, a negotiation process offers much more room for flexibility, imagination, respect and reconciliation. Negotiations also allow other affected people to make their concerns known. Negotiations can lead to "win-win" situations that balance the rights and interests of all concerned.

Settlements can bring benefits and certainty to Indigenous communities and their neighbours, and can bring new business opportunities to local economies.

For more information, please contact:

Mark Richard, Negotiator  
Ontario Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation  
Tel: (416) 326-1853 Fax: (416) 326-4017

Or email:  
[Thessalonfnclaim@ontario.ca](mailto:Thessalonfnclaim@ontario.ca)

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