



DRIFTWORDS

SERVING THE RIDEAU SINCE 1911 • POONAMALIE TO NARROWS LOCK

Spring 2003

What's Inside

Report from the Board

President's Pen

Environmental Programs

Recreation, Youth and Children's Programs

Fireworks Crisis

RLEF

The BRLA Board of Directors

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2003 A Year of Transitions

Report from the BRLA Board of Directors

After a long, cold winter we are all looking forward to a warmer, active summer on Big Rideau Lake. Over the past few months, significant changes in BRLA programs have occurred. Your directors wish to bring you up-to-date and we also invite your comments and suggestions.

Incorporation of Centre for Sustainable Watersheds (CSW)

Over the past decade, a large multi-faceted environmental lake stewardship program was nurtured by the BRLA. Staffing grew to fifty people (mostly seasonal) with a budget over \$350,000.00. Project finances were obtained from a wide variety of government, foundation and private sector sources.

This ambitious program has now been spun off and established as a not-for-profit corporation - Centre for Sustainable Watersheds (CSW). The CSW is governed and funded independently of the BRLA and its scope includes the waterways of the Rideau, Catarauqui and the Mississippi valleys including the Rideau Lakes. It has its own Board of Directors, staff and financial resources. The purpose of the CSW is to conduct research and extension programs on watersheds and their management. The objectives are protecting lakes and rivers, healthy water supply, productive agriculture and a growing tourist industry.

Members of the BRLA should be proud to have "spawned" this unique enterprise which is of direct benefit to us all. The Board heartily congratulates CSW Directors and staff and their sponsor, the Rideau Lakes Environmental Foundation (RLEF) for this significant accomplishment.

The transfer of non-core BRLA environmental activities to the CSW has led to restructuring of BRLA programs and budgets. The benefits derived from association with the large package of funded environmental research projects are, in large part, no longer directly available to us. However, lake environmental programs on the Rideau will continue in 2003, funded by individual donations through RLEF and implemented by CSW's professional staff.

Furthermore, BRLA continues to have an active Environmental Committee (See related article), which sets priorities for the

Associations environmental activities. The success of these projects is made possible from continued funding to BRLA from RLEF and we will also rely on the help of committed volunteers and a strong membership base for BRLA.


Integration of BRLA and Rideau Lakes Club (RLC)

Another significant "happening" of 2002 was the return of children, youth and recreation programs into the mission of the BRLA. Many BRLA members have supported the programs developed by volunteer members of the Rideau Lakes Club (RLC) over the past 7 years (more than 75% of RLC members have also been members of BRLA). This excellent program, carried out at our Cow Island property in recent years, has now become an integral part of the BRLA. At the 2002 AGM, members voted to refocus on recreation and social programs and at the same time, three RLC coordinators offered to join the BRLA Board to assist with this transition as well as the overall mission of the BRLA.

Many of us have fond memories of growing up on the Rideau. Here is an opportunity to help children and grandchildren to enjoy our lake and build their own memories!! In addition this Program provides employment to local youth enabling them to stay on the lake during the summer, as they earn funds to support their educational goals during the academic year.

See the article inside for a fuller description of the Recreation, Youth and Children's Programs for 2003 but generally, these will include:

- Children's activities (7-12 years)
- Youth activities (13-17 years)
- Sailing programs
- Social events (both adult and family-oriented events)
- Annual regatta.

							Mark Your Calendars
							BRLA
							Annual General Meeting
							July 12th 2003 10 AM
							<i>Portland Community Hall</i>

This Year's Budget

Fortunately, we are able to begin 2003/04 without a deficit from the previous year and, more importantly, no unfunded liabilities (See article below). The primary source of revenue is from membership fees (66%). In this transition year, your Directors have agreed to allocate our expected revenues on the following programs:

- Lake Safety (installation and removal of 104 shoal markers)
- Environmental Program (monitoring loon nests, bass spawning, water quality)
- Recreation, Youth and Children's Programs
- Membership Services (newsletters, Cow Island, Dry Dock services)
- Canada Day Fireworks (Saturday, June 28th).

With regard to Dry Dock (30 Colborne St.), our short term plan is to retain this "presence" in Portland as we explore new uses and sources of additional revenue. Your advice and suggestions will be sought on the retention and use of this property, particularly at the next Annual General Meeting (Saturday - July 12th 2003).

Your Directors have unanimously agreed to recommend a \$60.00 membership fee to support the programs mentioned above. We hope that you agree that this a **good family investment** in the Association, in the stewardship of Big Rideau Lake, in our community and in the future of our children and grandchildren.

We would encourage you all to mark Saturday July 12th 2003 for the BRLA Annual General Meeting. We rely on you, our members, to provide us with valuable feedback, direction and support.



PRESIDENT'S PEN



There are several articles in this edition of Driftwords which describe the 'new look' for BRLA, as mandated at the 2002 Annual General Meeting. The magnitude of the changes to our association is best reflected in the April 1/ 03 – March 31/04 budget. Our projected revenues drop from approximately \$380,000 to \$51,000 with 80% derived from three sources:

Membership fees (480 @ \$60.00)	29,000
RLEF contribution	7,500
Proposed rent - Dry Dock facility	5,500
Other (fund-raising, grants)	9,000
Total	51,000

The primary budgeted expenses consist of the following:

Salaries (Dry Dock, Recreation, Youth & Children's Programs)	8,000
Environmental programs	7,525
Insurance	6,275
Fireworks	4,500
Shoal Markers	3,200
Dry Dock (Mortgage, taxes, expenses)	7,550
Cow Island (Tax & maintenance)	2,400
Driftwords, Web Site & Promotion	3,980
Administration & financial review	3,200
Boat	1,600
Program Supplies	1,000
Contingency & Reserve	1,770
Total	51,000

Although the directors have approved a balanced budget there are very few optional items in the expense category which can be eliminated, if the revenue projections are not met. It appears to me, that the fireworks display is the most likely "sacrificial lamb". This event has always generated divergent views – members either love the show or loath the expenditure – and we hear those opinions regularly.

Members are being asked to support a fee increase of \$10 and a **special appeal for fireworks** from those who wish to support this annual celebration. These decisions have not been taken lightly by the Board of Directors and I would prevail on each member to continue the support which has sustained the BRLA and carried the organization through greater challenges in the past.

You are urged to further demonstrate your interest by attending the Annual General Meeting to be held at the Portland Community Hall at 10 AM on Saturday, July 12, 2003.

Rich Bradley

The BRLA Annual Fireworks Display

Saturday June 28
At Dusk off Cow island

Donations
would be
great!



CANADA DAY



Environmental Programs for 2003

BRLA's Continued Commitment to the Environment

Tracking and promoting the health of the Rideau Lake has always been at the forefront of BRLA initiatives and is in keeping with its mission as a lake association. Over the years, BRLA's dedication to our lake's environmental welfare has taken various forms, through the implementation of a number of significant projects involving fisheries research, shoreline and wetland resource evaluation and the promotion of friendly waste water technology, to name but a few.

With the creation of CSW (Centre for Sustainable Watersheds) and the transfer to it of all of BRLA's non-core environmental activities, BRLA will be getting back to environmental basics. While BRLA will no longer be responsible for the large scientific research projects which were undertaken in past years on the basis of government funding, it has by no means departed from its environmental goals and objectives. These goals have been and continue to be: encouraging and promoting environmentally sound practices to enhance water quality; the promotion of public awareness concerning environmental matters relating to the lake, and governance premised on the highest standards of stewardship, taking into account the lake's history, its resources and its importance for the future.

With the continued financial support of RLEF (Rideau Lake's Environmental Foundation) and thanks to an ongoing close working relationship with CSW, BRLA will continue its work in and active promotion of what we have grown to consider BRLA's core environmental programs:

- water quality monitoring and testing;
- fisheries awareness; and
- wildlife monitoring and data collection.



Water Quality

BRLA has a long history of water quality monitoring, the results of which was compiled into a historic report completed in August 2002. BRLA wishes to continue its water quality monitoring (for dissolved oxygen, temperature, conductivity, pH, chlorophyll and depth) and reporting this year. We will do so with the assistance of CSW whose capable staff (former BRLA staff!) will provide analysis and reporting services.

The water quality awareness program which was initiated by BRLA last year will continue in 2003. This involves shoreline visits to lake residents to discuss water quality issues and actions which could improve the lake's water quality.

Sustainable Fisheries Awareness Programs

In the past, BRLA has worked closely with the Ontario MNR on fisheries education and awareness programs. These programs, which are largely completed (early bass fishing, lake trout stock conservation, catch and release tournaments, and fish and wildlife guardian program) can be maintained at minimal cost.

BRLA will also be maintaining its successful "Take a little lead out" program to help teach about alternatives to lead tackle such as bismuth or tin, and to offer incentives for exchange. In 2003, we aim to continue the program at Dry Dock and Rideau Ferry.



Volunteer Monitoring and Data Collection

Lake residents and BRLA members are those who have the greatest interest in ensuring that the lake's environmental health is maintained. This is so because the health of the environment has a direct impact on human health, recreation and property values around the lake.

While BRLA's association with CSW will ensure consistency in some of the long term monitoring projects, BRLA will need volunteers to commit to gathering data on the lake. Community monitoring programs help residents contribute to BRLA's lake protection goals while at the same time providing them with an opportunity to learn about the health of the lake. BRLA's Loon Watch is an excellent example of a successful citizen's science program. For over 10 years, BRLA has been asking residents to help collect information on Rideau Lake loons. There are other programs that can be implemented with the assistance of volunteers who can help collect data, including water quality, fish spawning, biodiversity and land use, to name a few. CSW has offered us the services of a qualified staff member to act as a coordinator to promote the monitoring and data collection programs and work with volunteers in areas where there is a demonstrated interest.



Fireworks Appeal Fireworks Crisis!!!

You may know that BRLA has, for years, sponsored and funded all costs for the annual Canada Day Fireworks at Cow Island. Perhaps, you have enjoyed these events over the years. With costs rising to \$5,000 annually, it is no longer reasonable to draw this amount from membership dues.

The one way to ensure that the Cow Island Canada Day Fireworks will continue beyond 2003 is to make your vote count now!! You will see the spot on your membership form for **additional donations** -- an extra \$5 from every BRLA member would go a long way to ensuring this tradition will live on for years to come.

Fireworks are held the Saturday night prior to Canada Day -- (June 28th this year) . You can let us know if Canada Day Fireworks at Cow Island are important to you -- by adding your financial support for this on your membership application.



While there is every indication that BRLA will be able to maintain its core environmental programs and services, its new streamlined environmental budget means that we will need, more than ever, to rely on the help of committed volunteers this and future years.

BRLA members who wish to volunteer their services or ideas about these environmental programs are encouraged to contact Board member Noëlle Caloren (613) 231-5076, 283-5294 OR Committee Members Sarah Rosolen & Stacy McLean at CSW (613) 272-5136, info@watersheds.ca).

First Annual Portland Biathlon

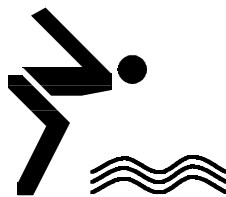
Saturday July 19 2003

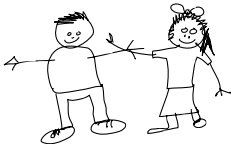
For details please Email Colin Horsfall.

The Annual August 2, 2003

on Cow Island

Registration at 10:30
Regatta begins at 11
A M





Recreation, Youth and Children's Programs Return to the BRLA

At the 2002 AGM, BRLA members voted to add a greater focus on recreation, youth and children's programs, recapturing the historical balance of the BRLA's mission on three pillars – the environment, social and recreation, and shoal markers. The Rideau Lakes Club (RLC) and the BRLA agreed to join forces and to integrate the RLC programs under the banner of the BRLA. Through this past Fall & Winter, planning for this integration has come together. We believe that the many families who have subscribed to the RLC activities over the last seven summers are a tribute to program quality, volunteer commitment and resurgence in interest by lake residents in recreation activities for all ages. Under the BRLA, the scope of the Recreation, Youth and Children's program will better reach all BRLA members.

These programs of the BRLA will be centred at Cow Island - a unique space - donated to the BRLA, years ago, for "the enjoyment" of all. Many adults who spent childhood summers on the Rideau Lakes will remember the children's day camps, swimming, tennis and sailing lessons and races, family socials and, even weddings, which took place on Cow Island. With shifting demographics and lifestyles during the 60's & 70's, these activities dwindled away. For a time, Cow Island was rented to a private boat club.



Three summers ago, Cow Island was returned to the "enjoyment" of lake dwellers through an agreement between the Rideau Lakes Club and the BRLA. These activities will now continue under the auspices of the BRLA. The island is available to all members for swimming, picnics and volleyball. Organized programs have included Children's Day Camp, Teen Activities, Social Events, Sail Racing

and Training. Dinner cruises to Rideau Ferry and afternoon bridge games have also been part of the fun.

Through its members and volunteers, RLC built docks and a beach volleyball court on the island and resurfaced the tennis courts on Colonel By Island. (A dream of many is to eventually have our own BRLA tennis court at Cow Island.) Volunteers help put in the docks and do the Spring clean up. While the cottage is rustic, to say the least, it pro-



Recreation Programs . . . continued

This summer we will continue to build on the success of these programs and, at mailing time, BRLA plans to offer the following:

Children's Program

7-12 years. 3 mornings/week through July & August. Crafts, games, swims, sports, theme weeks

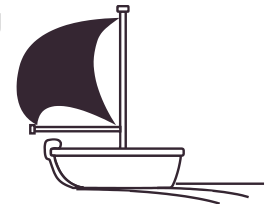
Youth Program

Teens: 13-17 years • "Wacky Wednesday" afternoons e.g., boat trips to Perth, golf tournaments on the lake, wind surfing, tennis, progressive dinners by boat, poker run by boat, murder mysteries, marshmallow roasts and wake boarding • Friday evening dances and movies and more.



Sailing Program

Weeknight & weekend racing Bring your own boat or come out and crew; beginners and "pros" welcome. Sail Training Week. Boats and instructors from Ontario Sailing Association have come to the Big Rideau to offer sailing classes for children and teens. In 2001, we also ran an adult learn-to-sail program with the Ottawa Sailing School. Race training & a regatta is generally held over the August long weekend.



Social Events

Socials are generally organized 3-4 times per summer e.g., family-oriented corn roasts & BBQ's. In 2002, 92 members enjoyed the first Annual Fresh Salmon Dinner on Cow Island. There are also regular, unplanned gatherings of adult members with and without kids, on any day or evening at the Island.

Recreational Tennis & Beach Volleyball

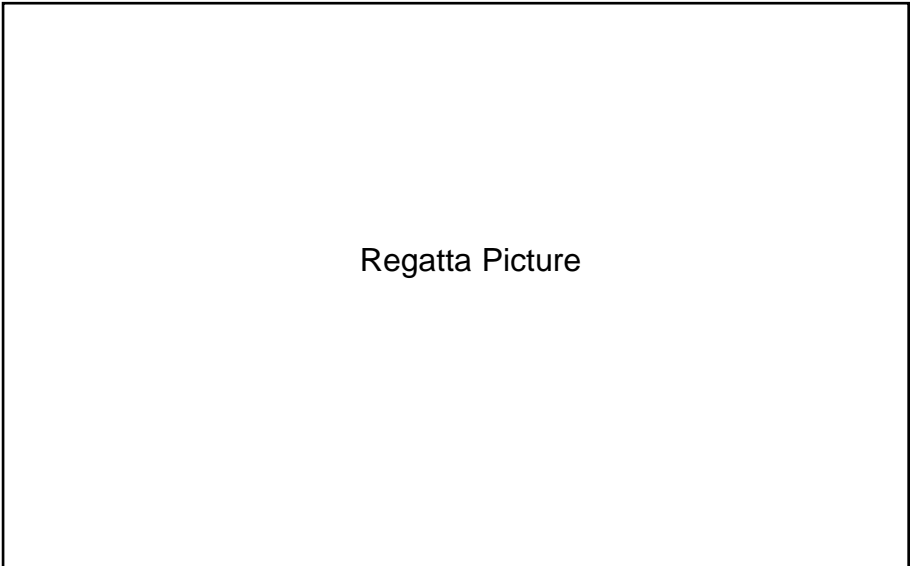
On Colonel By Island, the tennis courts were refurbished a few summers ago. A sign-up sheet is available on Colonel By to reserve courts. On Cow Island, a beach volleyball court was built in 2001.



If interest was shown for instruction in tennis by a volunteer we could hold

tennis sessions and round robins this summer.

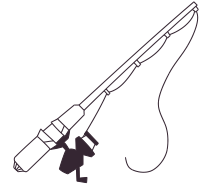
The Children and Youth Programs are run by a staff of local university students and teens. The staff will be expanded this year to also assist with BRLA membership and Dry Dock services.



Recreation Programs . . . continued

How to Connect

With activities now integrated into the BRLA mandate, your BRLA membership entitles your entire family to enjoy the facilities of Cow Island and to join these programs. Some programs are offered on a cost recovery basis. For example, freewill donations are usually gathered at social events and there is a fee for Sailing Courses. The suggested contribution to children and youth programs is \$5/day and many families offer more. However, these fees should not be a barrier to any children who wish to participate. These funds are needed to cover the costs of the youth staff who are running the programs, boat gas, craft and other supplies. Our local marinas (Len's Cove & Bayview) - generously provide water taxis from the Portland docks to ensure all interested children and youth have transportation to and from Cow Island on program days.



We believe this summer will be the best yet and recapture the enjoyment and traditions of family and friends gathering together at Cow Island!! As the pictures show, this is a grand tradition and one worthy of recapturing. See you at the Cow Island opening!!

For further information or to volunteer ideas re the Recreation, Youth & Children's Program of BRLA Contact Board Members: Rosemary McCarney (416) 929-2309, mcarney@streetkids.org OR, Henry Copestake (613) 230-4059, 272-2068, hcopestake@cyberus.ca.



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Membership: 613-233-3767

Dry Dock: 613-272-3629 sea-
sonal

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Rideau Lakes Environmental Foundation Update (RLEF)

Individual donations through RLEF's Fall appeal again ensure that \$7,500 is available for Environment Committee projects on Rideau Lake this season. Your giving to RLEF qualify for a charitable tax receipt and 100% of those dollars support valuable environmental work on your lake that would otherwise not be done.

You may forward your donations to:
P.O. Box 159, Portland ON, K0G 1V0.

