

Seeley's Bay Newsletter

Seeley's Bay Area Ratepayers Association

Issue #4, April 2010

...and check out www.seeleysbay.ca

Noteworthy Neighbours



Russell Thompson and Muriel Knapp split their time between Florida, their home on Haskin's Point Road and the cottage on Dog Lake.

Russ is a warm and engaging man who has made a great contribution to Seeley's Bay, by founding a good business, by his involvement in the Legion and the Masonic Lodge, and through countless other acts of good citizenship.

Later this month Russ is off to Holland with his son Steve, grandson Jason and Jason's wife Michelle. This will be Russ's third return visit to commemorate the liberation of Holland by the Canadians. Russ was part of that liberation, when as the Dutch say "freedom was regained so we could speak, listen, go, feel free, stand, unite and gather because there was no curfew and the shortages problems were soon solved."

Russ's grandparents had Loyalist roots in the Napanee area but his dad went west and worked as a blacksmith in Dauphin, Manitoba on the railway line to Churchill. Russ learned his electrical trade from his brothers in Manitoba. When he came east to help out his wife's family with their fishing lodge business, he began to do electrical work for cottagers around the lake. Eventually he got a big contract with a home manufacturer in Portland, and wired hundreds of pre-fabricated homes. Within a few years he had five men working for him.

Today, Thompson Electric is a very well-known and respected firm, made stronger still by the leadership of Russ's son Earl, and now Jason. The firm specializes in major commercial projects, and currently provides 50 good jobs to families in Seeley's Bay and beyond.

What's happening:

Pitch-In; pls. volunteer to clean up village – April 24
Fish Fry & Bluegrass @ Legion – \$12., Apr 24
Old Time Fiddlers @ Legion – May 2 & June 6
Mother's Day Brunch @ Legion - \$8., May 9
Chicken BBQ @ Fire Hall upstairs; \$10/\$5 – May 22
Father's Day Brunch @ Legion - \$8., June 20
Bridge @ Community Hall, Mondays, 'til June 7
Euchre @ Legion, Thursdays, light lunch, \$5., 7:00 pm
Darts @ Legion, Fridays, light lunch, \$3., 7:30 pm
Healthy Activities throughout April and May, thanks to the **Seeley's Bay Athletics**, include clogging, gentle fitness, walking, chair yoga and more – pick up the flyer with details at the medical centre.

This new column will regularly provide a little insight into the history of the Seeley's Bay area. Most of you will know Dan Roantree, a retired educator, Leeds and Thousand Islands Township "Citizen of the Year" in 2009, United Church organist, school bus driver, and local history guru.

Why Is There A Tepee In The Park?

In about 1825 Justus and Ann Seeley moved onto lot four in the eighth concession of Leeds, which is the land on the north side of Mill Street and circles around the bay. When the Seeleys arrived there was no bay of course because the Rideau Canal had not yet been built so just a stream was running through marshland. Local lore suggests that after the Seeleys established themselves on their land they built a structure resembling a Native tepee from which they ran a trading post or store doing business with the local natives and white settlers. The bay and the village are named after the Seeleys. When Canada celebrated its 100th birthday in 1967, a new park was established along Haskins Point Road and is still called the **Seeley's Bay Centennial Park**. At that time a group of local citizens formed a Centennial Committee to plan special events for the community, and they decided to build a large tepee in the new park to replicate the tepee from which Justus and Ann Seeley did business 140 years earlier. In it was placed the epitome of modernity, a colour television set – hence the motto of the local celebration – "Tepee to TV".



Hardware Store Revival

Robert Hogan and Marla Howard are working hard right now to revive the hardware store on Main St. They hope to be open by late May with fishing supplies, some basic hardware and a fun new second hand section. Over the coming months they will gradually rebuild the stock and add a broader variety of goods and services. Many readers will be familiar with the business contributions that Robert Hogan has made to the area, and for many years Marla owned and operated a hardware store in Ancaster, Ontario. Right now they have two requests from everybody – first, be patient this season as this is a ‘work in progress’, and secondly, be sure to drop by to let them know what you need.

New Hours at the Library

Tuesdays 1- 5:00
Thursdays 1- 8:00
Saturdays 1- 5:00



Sure Signs of Spring



Message from local Township Councillor

I was at a recent meeting of the Rideau Heritage Route Tourist Association as the Township’s representative where 30 or so reps from Kingston to Ottawa were present. During the Executive Director’s comments, she showcased the Community Bulletin Kiosk that Barry Davies and Mel Johnson project-managed and constructed at the Seeley’s Bay docks. There was huge interest by many in the room on how we did it; they wanted to do the same thing in their communities.

It is interesting how a dream became a reality in a small community like Seeley’s Bay because one person had a vision and got the buy-in of the community. I was at another meeting in Gananoque and the person came up to me and expressed her excitement of the number of events that our Seeley’s Bay Canada Day event is going to have on July 1st. Again another dream that became a reality because of Danny Roantree and his committee of visionaries.

As I travel throughout the county of Leeds and Grenville, I am proud to be a resident of this fine community because we have so many citizens who adhere to the rule “Let me” as opposed to “Why me?”

Charlie Kellington



photo courtesy of Rick Couper

Everybody’s fishing for ‘crappie’

Canada Day 2010 – The dedicated volunteers working on the local celebration of our national holiday have already started planning; please speak to Karen Simpson at the post office if you can help in any way with this event.

This newsletter is published every 2-3 months, and now **goes to over 80 households** in the area. To sign-up to receive it by e-mail, and/or to publicize community-oriented events, please write to the editor at liz.huff@sympatico.ca