

# Seeley's Bay Newsletter

FISHING EDITION

Seeley's Bay Area Ratepayers Association

Issue #5, June 2010

...and check out [www.seeleysbay.ca](http://www.seeleysbay.ca)

## Noteworthy Neighbours



*Enjoying ice cream at the Nest Egg*

**Brittany Cowan** says she will always remember swimming off 'The Point' in Seeley's Bay no matter where her path leads in the future. And this multi-talented young lady will surely pursue some interesting paths. Brittany is heading off to study Arts at the University of Ottawa this fall, and hopes to be in a French immersion program.

Brittany has just been named Female Athlete of the Year at Rideau District High School where she has participated in volleyball, cheerleading, soccer and badminton. Last year Brittany recorded a CD "Stories from a Small Town Girl" with friends Emily and Helen, under the guidance of musician Jay Mittler. And over the past few months Brittany and the trio have been appearing at The English Pub in Gananoque.

Brittany credits her mom, Julie Renwick, when she speaks of her own passion for words and all things creative, and her dad, Stephan Cowan, has also been an inspiration to Brittany, especially with interests in guitar and sports.

Brittany is excited about the next stage in her life – moving to a big city with a vibrant multicultural population, and making new connections with the music scene and volleyball community in Ottawa. You might just spot Brittany this summer when you are shopping at Sweet's Freshmart, in which case, let her know Seeley's Bay is rooting for her!

## Seeley's Bay Tourism History (by Dan Roantree)

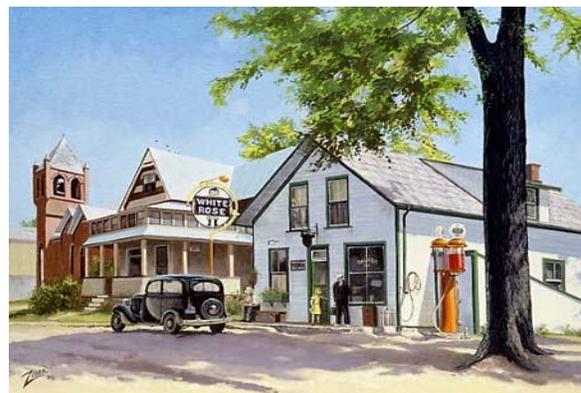
When Seeley's Bay emerged as a village in the 1860's and 1870's, it developed into a service centre for local farmers. In less than a century tourism rose from being an unknown concept in the Seeley's Bay community to an employer second only to agriculture. Just how important tourism and recreation was to the local economy was evident in the number of resorts clustered in and around the village by the mid-nineteen hundreds. When the automobile became a popular and reliable form of transportation, people from the

larger cities and especially Americans were drawn to Seeley's Bay because of its access and proximity to lakes such as Cranberry, Whitefish, Dog, South and Grippen to name a few.



*Photo credit Lakes & Islands Times Past (see below)*

Around 1930 one of the first hotels to cater to fishermen was Bob Coleman's Hotel located at 152 Main Street. In those days the clientele were fishing parties, mostly men, who ate in the dining room and took shore lunches with them on their fishing trips. They usually hired a guide who provided the boat and manned the oars. It was later called the Rideau Lake Inn operated by Gerry C. Downs and boasted modern rooms, cabins, reasonable rates, *a la carte* restaurant, home cooking, good fishing, boats, motors and guides as its attractions. The Metcalf Hotel located at 138 Main St. also catered to fishing parties and had a dining room open to the public as well as its guests. Some of the local fishing guides at this time were Manford Ralph, Maurice Murphy, Herb Mallen and Earl, Jim and Ed Free.



*Painting of 1930's era Main Street by noted artist and local resident Ted Zuber; prints available via Mr. Zuber's website <http://www.zuberfineart.com>*

### Tourism History continued....

Other resorts that served meals to its guests were: The Maples at 109 Adelaide St. established by Herb Mallen and owned later by Jack and Juanita Abrams, and Pleasant View Resort built and run by Horace and Alice Wilkinson at 137 Haskins Point Road.

By the 1940's tourist resorts were being built that were mainly house-keeping cottages making it possible for families to enjoy local fishing, canoeing, boating and the privacy of their own shelter. Moreover, the separate cottages and cabins made it possible for each family to keep tabs on its own children and to prepare its own food to keep costs down. Rideau View is one such Resort that was established by Borden Dean who had several housekeeping cottages at the end of Dean's Road. Horace Wilkinson, at 119 Haskins Point Road, built Sunny Acres Resort. He also had only housekeeping cottages. Sunny Acres is owned and operated by Walter and Rita Stoller today with full marina services. Rideau Breeze Resort and Marina was built by Harold and Irene Wheeler at 143 Haskins Point Road having housekeeping cottages as well as gas, oil and fishing supplies for sale. Today it is owned and operated by Roger White, and it is *the* spot to buy fishing licenses.

Since most of the early cottages did not have electricity, almost all cottage resorts had an icehouse on site to supply their cottagers with a block of ice for the cottage icebox every two or three days. Bill Moroughan, who lived on Adelaide Street, owned an ice-cutting machine that many people used or rented to cut ice blocks from the bay for their cottages, homes and/or business.

Other resorts established in the area by mid-century were: Melody Lodge, Burnt Hills Lodge and Elm Lodge on Carrying Place Road, and Terry's Terrace on Burnt Hills Road. Dr. Hewitt from Chicago built one of the earliest cottages in the area on Hewitt's Island. His family later owned and operated the Metcalf Hotel. The cottage is still in the Hewitt family.



Sometimes we who were born and raised in this area wonder what there is worth seeing near at hand, and it's only after we have left and returned that we come to appreciate how few places in Ontario are so favoured and how romantically beautiful these lands and waters really are.

**Old Photos Wanted** – if you have reasonable quality photos of Seeley's Bay in the 'old days', please send scanned copies via e-mail to the editor [liz.huff@sympatico.ca](mailto:liz.huff@sympatico.ca) They might be helpful for future community beautification projects or newsletters, and we could add them to the wonderful digital library being amassed through our local library system. See the current collection including the early black and white one on page 1 of the woman landing the fish at <http://www.lakesandislands.ca/>

### What's happening:

Jun 20 - **Fathers Day Brunch** @ Legion; 11-2 pm, \$8.  
Jun 26 - Bass **Fishing Derby** & Fish Fry @ Legion, \$10.  
Jul 4 - Old Time **Fiddlers** @ Legion, 2 p.m.  
Jul 10 - United Church **chicken BBQ** @ the Park, 4:30 p.m.  
Jul 25 - Russ Thompson presents recent trip re: **Liberation of Holland** @ Legion, All Welcome; 1 - 4 p.m.  
Aug 1 - Old Time **Fiddlers** @ Legion; 2 pm  
Aug 8 - **Pork BBQ**, @ Olivet Church; 4 p.m.  
Aug 27 - Lion's Club benefit concert; "**The Laws**" roots/country music; 7 pm, @ Firehall, \$15.  
Sep 25 - **Turkey Supper**, @ Firehall; 4:30 p.m.

**Seeley's Bay Athletics** - activities continue throughout the summer – information flyer @ the medical centre.

### Ratepayers' Association studies *First Impressions*

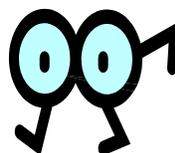
Seeley's Bay is partnering with Otonabee-South Monaghan (near Peterborough) to learn more about the first impressions our communities make on visitors as well as prospective residents and businesses. A team from Otonabee-South Monaghan will make a surprise *incognito* visit to Seeley's Bay sometime this summer and then return to present a report to all of us at a public meeting here in the early fall. A team of volunteers from Seeley's Bay will do the same thing for the community of Otonabee-South Monaghan. Our two communities have been 'matched' under the **First Impressions** program by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs because of the similarity of size and economic base of the two communities. Keene, at the centre of Otonabee-South Monaghan, is close to Rice Lake and is also a fishing mecca. **Please plan to attend the meeting** – watch for details on public notice boards in the village.

### Message from local Township Councillor

We all know that we have a great volunteer fire department. They are well trained and have the proper tools to do their job. They train every Monday night to ensure that they keep up to date on techniques and new equipment. We all have good fire insurance rates because our Fire department is known to be professional and able to do a good job. To enhance this capability the Township is building a Fire Training facility at the Township site outside Lyndhurst. It will provide rural fire fighters from Eastern Ontario with class room training as well as state of the art training equipment that will simulate real fires be they in a house or car. The facility will also be used to train fire fighters on driving on narrow country roads, the 401, intersection skills and water retrieval from a water source. Fire Chiefs from Eastern Ontario have signed on to use the facility which will be the only Fire training facility in Eastern Ontario and will be run at on a revenue neutral basis.

The start up in spring 2011 will see people attending the new facility from elsewhere, and enjoying the recreation, accommodation, food and shopping that our area has to offer.

*Charlie Kellington*



Please donate **unwanted eyeglasses** to the Lion's Club Foundation for Developing Countries. A collection box is at the entrance to the Retirement Home on Main Street in the heart of the village.

**U.S. Visitors Come for the Fishing...**



**Corey Allen at the Rideau Breeze Marina**

This lovely bass was briefly in the hands of Corey Allen, a 17-year-old visiting from New Jersey. Corey just might be hooked on fishing because he is a cousin of the famous 'fish whisperer' - Chris Johnson. According to Roger White, the manager of Rideau Breeze Marina on Haskin's Point Road, Chris Johnson catches more fish in the area than anyone else. "In fact" says Roger, "we had to change our derby rules a couple of years ago so a person could only win one category because the participants in the derby were complaining that Chris was always winning and would win every category." Chris and Corey are just two of the many Americans who have been visiting Seeley's Bay for many years, an important part of the economic and social vitality of our community.



*At left, Chris Johnson of New Jersey, the famous 'fish whisperer'. Chris is giving tips to his buddy, Shane White, co-owner of Rideau Breeze. 11-year-old Shane is rumoured to have been the very first person out fishing on the water this spring, just minutes after the last bit of ice went out of 'the bay', maybe a future fish whisperer in the making?*

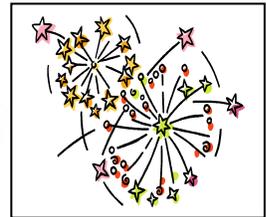
**...And Stay for the Hospitality**

For almost 25 years Bob Bolger of Pennsylvania has been organizing an annual visit to our area for over 20 of his pals, mostly retired teachers. These men love to stay with Walter and Rita Stoller at Sunny Acres Resort on Haskin's Point.



**Bob Bolger and Walter Stoller at Sunny Acres**

**Canada Day - non-stop fun 10 am 'til dark**



**Highlights:** baseball, tennis, canoe tours, basketball, horseshoes, live entertainment, craft fair, parade, mini-golf, croquet, badminton, scavenger hunt, air castles, bingo, fishing derby, Olympian, chicken BBQ, yard sale, blessing of the boats, ecumenical service, information booths, volleyball, tribute to Canadian Forces, & the BEST fireworks anywhere!!!

*This newsletter is published every 2-3 months, and now goes to over 90 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](mailto:liz.huff@sympatico.ca) Feel free to print and post a copy on your public bulletin board and/or share copies with neighbours you know who do not have easy access to a computer. Spread the word!*

**We Love the Fishing!**



**Bob Bolger's annual fishing team from Pennsylvania**

Every year when these men visit Sunny Acres, they fish all day, and have fantastic feasts and tell tall fish tales in the evening. Bob Bolger oversees the daily fish counts and then announces the winners at the final ceremony where the much-coveted plaques are awarded, for 'most fish', 'smallest pike', 'biggest sunfish', etc. All of the U.S. visitors interviewed for this story practice 'catch and release' and other good conservation techniques, in respect of our environment.