

Dear South Channelers,

As I write this I am in Florida and 10 days until March, when the 21st marks the first day of Spring. Then the sun will be working its magic on all the ice-bound lakes and rivers of our part of the world, and some brave souls will be dropping a boat in and dodging chunks of ice trying to get to their cottage on the channel.

Snowmobiles have made possible almost year round enjoyment of our bay. Be sure to read the reports in these pages by the Wheelers and Blundys, who get as big a kick out of their bay properties in winter as in summer. Don and Marion charmed the gathering on February 3 at the Georgian Bay Land Trust annual Winterlude in Toronto...and have happily submitted some of their presentation for this edition of "On The Waterfront".

A couple of things occur to me - one has to do with path lights people increasingly use to mark the way from cottage to dock...it might be 100 feet...no problem in the service of safety. But then why leave them on all night? Our own cottage has enough of the blinking green light at the osprey nest approaching Pina Blanco and Manchip Island without path lights, which never get turned off. Now, I know this isn't as serious a visual environmental problem (e.g. as wind turbines), but it does distract from the pristine 'nightness' of our precious places.

Another thought sometimes comes to me having to do with floating docks and the almost universal complaints of the damage big boats do to them. Could it not be an inescapable problem brought on by the docks themselves? By that, I mean, when I first came to Georgian Bay in the early 1950's, all docks were solid, made of rock-filled cribs. They often suffered in the relentless waves and had to be worked on come spring, and took no note of changing water levels, but at least they didn't dance a jig at every passing launch. So, what I am saying is that 'progress' sometimes is less than 100%.

Claudette Chabot, our so valued executive member, informed me of the following venture.

The G.B.A. Annual Spring meeting will be held at Leaside Gardens, Toronto on Tuesday, April 5 at 6:30 p.m. Two speakers well worth hearing will be

Christopher Baines and Dr. Bruce from the International Joint Commission. They will be dealing with the study of that body on Climate Change and its  
Affects on Water Quality and Water Levels.

You are welcomed, indeed urged, to attend if you live anywhere in the area. They will have the authoritative and last word on this vital topic for all of us.

I had a newsy letter in the Fall from Wayne Jefferey, whom some of you will recall was a key figure in the founding of our association back in the early 70's, but never lost his hearty interest in us, and maybe we'll see him at our annual meeting this summer. (Don't forget to vote on this very subject when sending in your current membership.)

Meantime, our thanks once more to Robin Argenta, whose wisdom and energy puts this newsletter together. And best wishes to all of you until we meet again on the bay or the streets of Parry Sound.

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