



## MRPOA River Ripples Fall 2005

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT

First, a special note of appreciation to **Jeff Mole** and **Mary Thompson** for their years of service. Jeff, as Past President and our first Honourary Life member, continues to serve the Board by sharing his wealth of knowledge of the River.

On your behalf, I extend great appreciation to **Anna Mallin**, our secretary and legal counsel, for her dedication to MRPOA and most specifically for her work to incorporate our organization. Incorporation provides a greater level of protection and responsibility for your Board. It also offers new opportunities for projects and funding.

I am excited about the commitment of all the Board members:

**Christine Anderson** has 'jumped into river life' and has assumed Mary Thompson's role as *treasurer*. She even promises to keep the little green book going.

**John Baird** will be contacting and recruiting *Road Captains* to expand the *Cottage Watch Program* and increase our membership.

**Brian McDonald** organized and guided an exceptionally smooth expanded *water testing program* and has agreed to continue next year.

**David Stoddart** is seeking out the folk who volunteered to assist in the organization of *MRPOA events* for next year. (If you are interested in assisting with the Regatta, Corn Roast, Golf Tournament or Sailing Regatta, contact David.)

Your Board met on September 24 and October 29. Tentative plans are to add a 'Trunk Sale' to our list of events in mid-August, so members can set aside all their unused unwanted stuff which may be just what someone else wants. MRPOA will also host a Bala pick up location for the Muskoka Heritage tree sale in the spring.

Other issues which have been addressed are appeals to Township Council for the eradication of **Giant Hogweed** from its road allowances by whatever means are required. Council has agreed to remove it by mechanical means in the spring. Hogweed is a real danger because it is so easily accessed by unknowing adults or children.

There has been follow up work done on the issue of *invasive species*, particularly zebra mussels, but also spiny water flea. Fortunately, zebra mussels have not acclimatized to our calcium deficient and cold water temperatures, so to date do not survive in Muskoka. Since most invasive species arrive as a result of human transportation, caution should be taken by all when moving boats from one water body to another (e.g. from Georgian Bay to the Moon River).

The *boat launch committee*, chaired by **Sandy Currie** has reported on the condition of the Bala Boat Launch Ramp. The report will be discussed at the Township Council's Management and Services Committee on Nov. 15.

**Swimmer's Itch** is an annoying parasite which arrives on our waterfowl. The eggs are carried by snails and once hatched seek their host waterfowl again, but sometimes they end up on people by mistake. The parasite cannot survive on humans but can cause a nasty rash in their attempts to 'move in'. The important advice to towel vigorously and/or shower immediately after being in waters which might have the parasite is based on the fact that they do not begin to 'burrow' until the body is out of the water.

More importantly, the parasites come from the waterfowl and are trying to return to the waterfowl, so **DO NOT FEED THE WATERFOWL AS THEY FOWL THE WATER.** Waterfowl, particularly geese, can be discouraged from your waterfront by permitting a 'natural shoreline' growth as they do not like to have to move through tall grasses to get to your lawns.

MRPOA has forwarded a letter of concern about the final draft of *Muskoka River Water Management Plan*. Although the Ministry of Natural Resources has granted Swift River Ltd, the only proponent, the right to proceed to seek approvals to construct a *hydro generation station at the Bala North Dam Site and to 'take over' the management of the Bala South Dam*, there is no reference to this eventuality in the MRWMP. There will be an *Environmental Assessment* process through which the public will have the opportunity to express concerns, but in my experience there is seldom ever a public concern which cannot be mitigated or ignored and few approved proponents are denied projects as the result of the EA process. In the past, the MNR and Ontario Power Generation have worked co-operatively with MRPOA to address water level and flow concerns in this rather complex riverine/lake like body which also has the constriction of the chutes. MRPOA believes that the MRWMP should specify operational limits for a hydro generation plant, if developed, which respect the rights of all living beings below the Bala dams without any opportunity for drastic impacts on their habitat.

Thank you for your support and I do hope that you will take the opportunity to keep your new executive informed of issues and concerns.

*Patricia Arney, President*

### **CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers for a Committee to assist the board in participating in the Environmental Assessment of the Swift River Proposal for power generation at the Bala North Dam, contact Patricia Arney or Anna Mallin.

### **HYDROGRAPHIC MAP**

Prompted Vic Harding, we are considering creating a hydrographic map of the River to mark the shoals and rocks which lie in wait for the unwary boater. Please indicate on the Survey (on the back of the Membership Renewal Form) if you can help in this effort by pointing out the rocks/shoals in your part of the River. Counselor Stewart Martin says Twp Council will help by providing basic maps.

### **NEXT MEMBERS' MEETING**

tentatively scheduled for June 10, 2006

## **MEMBERS' DIRECTORY**

A Directory of 2005 members who consented to their contact information being listed in the Directory was made available at the September 2005 AGM and during the Cranberry Festival (at the Balacade). A number of members have requested that the list be made available electronically.

Because of privacy legislation, we will NOT make the directory available electronically or on our website unless and until the members have given permission to do so.

However, to meet members' requests, we are circulating membership renewal forms this Fall, which will allow members to give permission for inclusion of their Bala contact information in the Directory. We plan to issue a revised Members' Directory in June, circulate it electronically, and make it available for pick-up at the June Members' Meeting.

We do not plan to circulate the directory by mail because of the postage costs - a \$20 membership fee provides for a very tight budget!

## **BOAT LAUNCH RAMP**

At MRPOA's request, the Township has left the floating dock at the Bala Boat Launch Ramp in place throughout October. Thanks to Sandy Currie for his interest in this matter.

### **2006 EVENTS**

May - Plant Sale - to be scheduled  
May 22 - Start of Water Testing  
Saturday, June 10 - Meeting of Members  
Sunday, July 30 - Regatta  
Sunday, July 30 - Corn Roast  
August - Jazz Cruise - to be scheduled  
Trunk Sale - Saturday, August 5

### **MEMBERS' SURVEY**

Please complete the members' survey on the reverse of the membership application form!

**SEASONS' GREATINGS!  
SEE YOU ON THE MOON!**

**AGM - SEPTEMBER 4, 2006 - BALA COMMUNITY CENTRE - 10:00 A.M.  
PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY!**