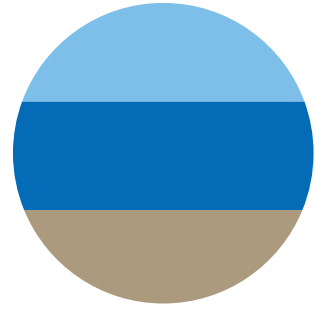


# GEORGIAN BAY FOREVER



WINTER 2011

THE LATEST AND GREATEST FROM GEORGIAN BAY FOREVER

## VITAL SIGNS?

ATTEND OUR SPEAKER  
SERIES FOR THE LOW-DOWN  
ON GEORGIAN BAY'S  
ECOLOGICAL HEALTH

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Georgian Bay Forever is a voluntary community response to the growing need for major research and education projects to sustain the Georgian Bay aquatic ecosystem and the quality of life its communities and visitors enjoy.

We help monitor the Bay's well being, throughout the seasons, year after year.

We fund the research needed to protect the environmental health of Georgian Bay and the surrounding bodies of water. Using our research findings, we inform and educate the general public and governments about any threats to environmental health and propose possible solutions.

Through conferences, workshops and seminars we are educating the Georgian Bay community. By teaming up with reputable institutions we enhance the credibility of our research and we strengthen our ability to protect what's at stake.

Georgian Bay Forever, formerly the GBA Foundation, is a registered Canadian charity (#895311066 RR0001). We work with the Great Lakes Basin Conservancy in the United States, as well as other stakeholder groups all around the Great Lakes.

Deeply rooted and broadly drawn, Georgian Bay Forever is steered by lifelong devotees to the Bay. We are committed advocates, educators, environmentalists, realists, idealists, and of course, residents.

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U.S. citizens wishing to make a donation to support our work can do so by giving to:

Great Lakes Basin Conservancy
PO Box 504, Gates Mills OH
44040-0504
USA

(Please add a note saying: "For Georgian Bay Forever")

This newsletter is just a snapshot of our work. For the most up-to-date information on our projects, longer versions of newsletter articles and the latest on breaking news about Georgian Bay, please become a regular visitor of our website.

www.GeorgianBayForever.org

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By David Parkes

Building for future generations
Without your support, we can't tackle the present and future problems



That's Ian Stewart on the far right as he poses in a 1930 photo with his sister and brother at Nares Inlet. What will the family photos of our grandchildren's children on Georgian Bay look like?

Inside this newsletter, there is a memorial tribute to the late Ian Stewart. The article speaks about Ian's love for Georgian Bay and his many accomplishments to keep Georgian Bay such a special place.

While I knew of Ian's reputation, I didn't know him personally. But when reviewing the contents of this newsletter, I was struck by an amazing photo of Ian that his family shared with us.

The picture (which we've printed above) shows six-year-old Ian, sitting in a boat with his sister and brother. The snapshot was taken 80 years ago at Nares Inlet, near his family's cottage, and the beauty of

Georgian Bay Forever deals with present & future threats

water, trees and islands (even in glorious black and white) is as clear as the joy on the faces of the children.

Eighty years ago. Let that number sink in for a minute - and then think of your own family snapshots. We all have pictures like that. Is it you in the boat as a kid? Or your children? Or your grandchildren?

Now think about this: what will a picture of your children's children's children look like when it's taken on Georgian Bay 80 years from now?

Georgian Bay Forever exists for that very reason.

An environmental charity like Georgian Bay Forever deals with present threats. But we have also been trying to build a respected and financially sound organization that will be around to face the problems of future generations.

One way we're trying to do that is by creating a Patron's Circle. This long-term stewardship program is made up of individuals who

have pledged to make a minimum contribution of \$5,000 a year for a minimum of three years.

I'd like to thank those who have joined our Patron's Circle so far. We plan to publish the names of our initial Patron's Circle members in the next newsletter, and list their names on our letterhead.

We're also continuing our traditional direct mail fund-raising campaign and it's been successful. Thank you to all our donors. Without your support, we wouldn't be able to tackle present or future problems.

And as you'll see in this newsletter, there's lots to tackle.

Dr. Gail Krantzberg writes about how the Great Lakes are facing a "tipping point" and how organizations like ours can make an impact.

Patsy Cross sheds light on plans for a new and expanded water quality testing program in Georgian Bay Township that could be the model for testing in all parts of Georgian Bay.

Chris Baines gives us the latest on the long campaign to get action on water levels.

And finally, I hope you will be able to join us on March 26 for a conference focused on the health of Georgian Bay's waters entitled "Georgian Bay - Vital Signs." Our keynote speaker will be Lana Pollack, Chair of the U.S. Section of the International Joint Commission who was recently appointed by President Barack Obama.

Georgian Bay Forever continues to make great progress on the many projects we're involved with today. But we're also building a solid organization that will still be around to protect the Georgian Bay that will be the backdrop to your grandchildren's family photos years and years from now.

David Parkes is president of Georgian Bay Forever. He is a cottager in Sans Souci and the owner and operator of David Parkes and Associates Inc.

# Great Lakes, Future Stakes



By Dr. Gail Krantzberg

Water does not abide by politics.

This is something the governments of Canada and the United States recognized more than a century ago, first with the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909, which led to the creation of the International Joint Commission, and then again in 1972 when then prime minister Pierre Trudeau and president Richard Nixon signed the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA).

That important agreement – which committed Canada and the United States to “restore and maintain the chemical, physical and biological integrity of the waters of the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem” – resulted in substantial remediation and restoration of the region’s freshwaters.

Real progress has been made on the Great Lakes since that agreement was signed almost 40 years ago. In the last decade, scientists have documented a return of spawning Lake Whitefish in historically degraded rivers,

## Ideally, a new agreement would let a charity like Georgian Bay Forever have a say in water quality and ecosystem health for Georgian Bay

the resurgence of cormorant populations, the rediscovery of sturgeon populations and the remarkable and wondrous return to the region of nesting and fledging bald eagles.

But there are still serious problems facing the Great Lakes.

There is compelling evidence the ecological health of the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem is at significant risk and could be approaching a tipping point. A 2005 report by top scientists said there is “widespread agreement that the Great Lakes presently are exhibiting symptoms of extreme stress from a combi-

nation of sources that include toxic contaminants, invasive species, nutrient loading, shoreline and upland land use changes, and hydrologic modifications.”

All of this comes as Canada and the United States are renegotiating the GLWQA – an updated agreement that needs to include new and improved ways for citizen groups like Georgian Bay Forever to be involved in making sure governments live up to their commitments.

A review of the GLWQA commissioned by the two governments concluded in 2007 that the agreement “is outdated and unable to address current threats to Great Lakes water quality.” The reviewers found that contemporary approaches to water resource regeneration – such as watershed planning and implementation – would strengthen the Agreement. So too would adding language associated with climate change, aquatic invasive species and urbanization.

Reviewers also pointed to the critical need for a new GLWQA to have a mechanism that would allow more meaningful public and partner participation in the development and implementation of a renewed agreement.

If that happens, there would be an important role to play for organizations like Georgian Bay Forever and the myriad of sister agencies around the Great Lakes that carry a similar mission of protecting and regenerating their freshwater ecosystems.

Ideally, a new agreement would incorporate ways for a charity like Georgian Bay Forever to have a real say in water quality and ecosystem health for Georgian Bay. This could be done by having a citizen petition process embedded in the Agreement and by ensuring that place-based programs under a new agreement make a commitment to engage non-governmental organizations like Georgian Bay Forever in planning and implementation.

Last year, senior officials from Environment Canada, Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Environmental Protection

Agency discussed these governance provisions of the Agreement in a broad context, including more localized approaches to the nearshore environment, contaminated sediment and groundwater. And work began on other specific issues such as nutrients, toxic substances, aquatic invasive species, habitats and species and climate change impacts.

A number of recent and significant voices have emphasized that governance reform in the Great Lakes is critical to future ecosystem recovery and well being in the Basin. They focus on a number of features that would help build a governance framework around a set of clear responsibilities with means for concerned citizens to hold governments accountable.

### These include

- Regular reporting on progress in achieving the objectives of the Agreement with indicators directly related to specific commitments.
- Independent third-party review of science to evaluate progress in meeting the purpose of the Agreement.
- Provisions for a citizen petition process to investigate and report on harms to the environment and human health.
- Methods for sub-national governments to share responsibility for the implementation of the Agreement.
- A renewed commitment to bi-nationalism.

One of the limitations of the original agreement was that it was mostly concerned about chemical pollution. The growing threats to the Great Lakes are due to cumulative insults to our landscapes. A new agreement must address the more complex threats to the Great Lakes, especially climate change – without question one of the biggest threats to the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem.

Most climate change impact assessments project warmer air and water temperatures,

*There is compelling evidence the ecological health of the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem is at significant risk and could be approaching a tipping point. A new Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement between Canada and the United States is needed to address the complex problems facing the Lakes.*

changes in the amount, form and timing of precipitation, less ice cover and a shorter ice season, lower net basin supplies and – as people on Georgian Bay certainly know – reductions in water levels in the Great Lakes Basin.

We must adapt the tools that we have, like the GLWQA, to address this and other emerging threats. The GLWQA should be revised to approach solutions using integrated watershed resource planning and implementation.

If the GLWQA is to fully embody the ecosystem approach, the governing responsi-

bilities and relationships need to change. A shared vision that evolves through a new GLWQA is a way to align roles and responsibility and clarify accountability and leadership.

Optimism that the Great Lakes will be revitalized under a revised and modern GLWQA will result if we collectively engage and press those drawing up a new agreement to methodically and inclusively renovate the GLWQA, be transparent in the process and be bold in thinking about new collaborative approaches to protect and enhance this global treasure.

This is a lengthy and difficult journey. But if we get involved by talking to senior negotiating officials, engage them in our collective priorities and take our time to get it right, we can make the Lakes Great. •

*Dr. Gail Krantzberg is a professor and director for the Centre for Engineering and Public Policy at McMaster University. Prior to this she was the senior Great Lakes policy analyst for the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and director of the Great Lakes Regional Office of the International Joint Commission. Full scientific references cited in this article can be found at GeorgianBayForever.org*

WHAT ARE  
GEORGIAN BAY'S...

# VITAL SIGNS?

FIND OUT FROM THE EXPERTS AT GEORGIAN BAY FOREVER'S SPEAKER SERIES

FEATURING PRESENTATIONS FROM EXPERTS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE BORDER, INCLUDING LANA POLLACK, WHO WAS RECENTLY APPOINTED BY PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA AS U.S. CHAIR OF THE INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION.



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# More funding, time needed to study water levels issue



By Chris Baines

Progress continues on the various International Joint Commission studies looking into the issue of water levels on the upper Great Lakes.

My role on the IJC's Public Interest Advisory Board (PIAG) is to provide stakeholder input from a Georgian Bay perspective on a special IJC board study looking at what changes, if any, are needed in controlling the outflow of water from Lake Superior.

Superior's outflow is controlled by man-made structures in the St. Mary's River and any change would obviously have an impact on the single body of water that makes up Georgian Bay, Lake Huron and Lake Michigan.

water on Georgian Bay wetlands – are feeding into the process.

We don't know what the Study Board will ultimately recommend. But in my opinion, it will be a very tough challenge to influence

**“Georgian Bay is under a lot of stress...”**

the Study Board to recommend that greater volumes of water should be released to increase the water levels of Michigan-Huron.

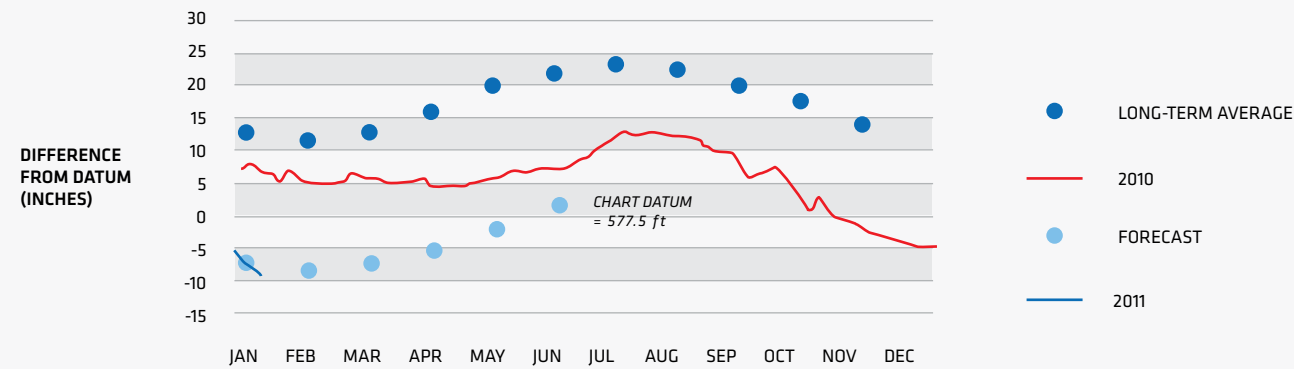
get now have to shoehorn the Restoration Study into the original timelines and budgets. You can imagine your response if such a large challenge were thrown at you midway through a project.

Where do we go from here?

I will be attending a workshop in February specifically to sketch out next steps for the Restoration Study and try to develop a strategy and process to deal with this challenge.

It is critical that adequate time and resources be provided to this very valid examination of remediation of Michigan-Huron-Georgian Bay water levels. I will be strongly advocating for that and will urge all other

## Tracking Water Levels Lake Michigan - Huron



The goal of the Lake Superior Study is essentially to advise the IJC Commissioners if the “range” of flow out of Lake Superior should be adjusted and if so by how much.

There are many stakeholder interests – shipping and companies using water to generate hydro electricity are the largest – who will have input. At the end of the study early this summer, we will conduct a number of public meetings to explain the recommendations of the Study Board to potentially change outflows and under what circumstances.

A number of studies about conditions on the middle Great Lakes – including Dr. Pat Chow-Fraser's research on the impact of low

There has also been some progress on a second IJC-directed review known as the “Restoration Study” in which the Study Board was asked to “explore the feasibility and implications of various levels of water restoration” on Michigan-Huron from 10 to 50 centimetres.

While news of this directive was both a surprise and a delight for those of us who have been concerned about low water levels on Georgian Bay, unfortunately the IJC Commissioners did not provide additional funding or time for the Study Board to look into this issue.

This means all the engineers and well-meaning scientists involved with completing the Lake Superior Study on time and on bud-

stakeholders to do likewise.

The answer to our water levels problems lies not in the results or recommendations to the Lake Superior Study, but in the seriousness and thoroughness of the Restoration Study.

The staff and experts involved in all aspects of the Lake Superior Study have been focusing – rightly so – on the completion of their task. The Restoration Study is a huge new task that deserves appropriate focus, resources and attention in order to provide a reasoned and thorough response.

Stayed tuned. •

Chris can be reached at christopher.a.baines@gmail.com

# Help us help make a difference



By David Sweetnam

Georgian Bay Forever is looking for some volunteers to help with its 2011 summer programs. Can you help us help Georgian Bay?

## Wetlands Research

Once again this summer, Dr. Pat Chow-Fraser of McMaster University will have a team of researchers on Georgian Bay. This wetlands research program is one of Georgian Bay Forever's major funding projects.

The McMaster team needs some Georgian Bay families to lodge them when they travel

What does a host family need to provide the four to six researchers? Hosts generally need to pick up the team from your local marina. Sleeping space is needed along with some freezer space for water samples. Ideally, a host family would be able to loan the researchers a boat or canoe. The team brings its own food and bedding.

## Water testing

Volunteers are needed this summer for the Water Quality testing program in the Township of Georgian Bay. Volunteers will

## Adopt-a-Wetland

Our Adopt-A-Wetland stewardship program is expanding. We are looking for local champions and community association participation to help us monitor and protect the high quality wetlands of Georgian Bay. There are two levels of participation: Community Champions and Adopters.

Community Champions will receive our “train-the-trainer” instruction at a one-day spring workshop. Once their training has been successfully completed, they will return to their local associations and provide training and support to the local Adopters. Champions



## Getting involved in these projects is rewarding and fun

will liaise with their communities to provide schedules for in-field training at local area wetlands, identify and prioritize the wetlands their communities want to protect and recruit volunteers from within their associations and assist in fundraising activities to maintain the program in their area. Ongoing support will be available throughout the summer from McMaster University and Georgian Bay Forever staff.

Adopters are individuals, families or groups that undertake to study and protect their local wetlands areas. They will be provided with in-field training as well as field guides and access to web-based data recording tools provided by McMaster University. This is a great opportunity for a family project that can span generations and teach all about the integral and important role our wetlands play in the ecosystem.

Getting personally involved in these projects is rewarding and fun – just ask anyone who has hosted the wonderful researchers from McMaster or had the ability to teach children about the amazing things you can find in a local wetland. •

If you can help with these projects, please contact David Sweetnam at [executivedirector@georgianbayforever.org](mailto:executivedirector@georgianbayforever.org) with the subject line indicating the program you are interested in.

to different parts of the Bay. This summer, the team will be in northern Georgian Bay to continue its work on the impact of low-water levels. They will travel to the North Channel, McGregor Bay, Killarney, Beaverstone Bay, Parker Landing and French River areas.

(A second part of the research – a reassessment of the fish communities following a decade of low water levels – will be held in other parts of the Bay. Stay tuned for more information on the locations of that research.)

be given training in the testing procedures and on how to use the equipment. Testing is performed throughout the summer season as specified in the testing protocol. Typically tests are performed in five to seven locations every couple of weeks depending on weather and wind conditions. This program has been going for over a decade and the data is very important to the long term study of Georgian Bay's aquatic ecosystem. Please contribute your time to this crucial program!

# A new focus on water testing on Georgian Bay

By Patsy Cross



communities and a strategy for moving toward remedial actions.

Georgian Bay Forever hopes the programs developed to address coastal water issues in the Township of Georgian Bay will be the basis for expansion to other areas of Georgian Bay.

Talks about the new testing program started after a District of Muskoka Watershed Council meeting in late November, which was attended by Councillor Paul Wiancko of the Township of Georgian Bay, Patsy Cross of Georgian Bay Forever, Peter Seybold of Muskoka Lakes Association and Judi Brouse of the District of Muskoka. This led to a meeting in mid December hosted by the Township of Georgian Bay, including the District of Muskoka, Georgian Bay Forever, Georgian Bay Association, a number of cottager associations (both coastal waters and inland lakes) and several consultants.

The objectives of the meeting were to initiate a program that will lead to the development of a water quality program for:

- Routine monitoring of the Georgian Bay Coastline.
- Routine monitoring of Township of Georgian Bay inland waters.
- Remedial action program for identified "hot spots" in the Township of Georgian Bay.
- Implementing protocols that can be standardized across the District and meet acceptable peer review.

At this initial meeting, participants shared information about existing programs and perceived needs for future water quality monitoring programs.

Further meetings are scheduled for later this winter to further clarify the needs of each participating organization and their existing monitoring activity, study design, methodology and data storage. This will be followed by a round table discussion to look for relevant standardization and opportunities for co-operation.

In preparation for this meeting, and in recognition of some basic differences between inland lakes and coastal waters, a meeting of water quality participants from coastal communities in the Township of Georgian Bay – chaired by Georgian Bay Association – was held Jan. 12.

This meeting addressed the more specific needs of coastal water quality monitoring, including study design differences between

## The revitalization of the water quality program will refocus resources expended on water quality in Georgian Bay

inland lakes and coastal waters due to basic limnological characteristics, the need to move identification of hot spots to remedial actions, the role of the community volunteers in future monitoring programs and the need to develop a strategy for moving toward actions and solutions to protect and enhance water quality.

There is a great deal of knowledge and energy being brought to bear on development of a strategic and effective water quality program which includes many participants, from monitoring volunteers, to cottage and regional associations, to government at various levels and experts in academia and the private sector.

The revitalization of the water quality program will refocus the resources expended on water quality in Georgian Bay. •

*Patsy Cross is a volunteer for Georgian Bay Forever. She has a MSc from the University of Toronto in Limnology and spent the majority of her career in Calgary as a water quality specialist in Alberta Environment for 10 years and later as a private consultant, including 15 years with her own company dealing mostly with rural surface water quality issues. She is a cottager from Go Home Bay and now lives in Barrie.*

# Ian Stewart: A champion of Georgian Bay

By Peter Frost



Georgian Bay recently lost a great friend with the passing of Ian Stewart, a successful business man, politician and environmentalist who spent more than 80 years on the Bay.

In fact, Ian was much more than a friend of the Bay. He was a champion of its unique environment and the Georgian Bay way of life.

Ian Cassels Stewart was born in 1924. His mother's family, the Cassels, were among the very first cottagers in Nares Inlet in the early 1900s. Ian and his family have played a prominent role in the history of the area ever since.

Ian was actively involved in the affairs of not only Nares Inlet, but also Bayfield Inlet just to the north and, eventually, all of Georgian Bay.

Following a serious fire in Bayfield Inlet in 1957, a number of cottagers organized an association to look out for local interests, including fire protection, but also to encourage communal activities such as sailing, canoeing and swimming regattas.

Ian was a central figure in this early organization that became the Bayfield-Nares Islanders Association. As early as 1958, Ian chaired what became our annual "Swimming, Diving and Canoeing Regatta" and was from the beginning a familiar figure on the Committee Boat for the sailing regatta.

The BNIA rotated presidents between Nares and Bayfield, and Ian was elected president in 1974, the second Nares cottager to

hold the office. Following his retirement from the presidency, Ian remained a BNIA director until running for Reeve of the Archipelago in 1985.

However, upon his retirement from his duties as Reeve in 2000, Ian once again returned to the BNIA and became an Honorary Life Director. In this role he often prefaced his remarks by saying "As you know, I don't have a vote. However..." and went on to greatly in-

## Ian was a winner. He got things done.

fluence the outcome of the discussion.

Ian remained active in the affairs of the BNIA until illness this fall made it difficult to attend meetings, and even then his emails continued to flow as he diligently fulfilled his role as Chair of our Nominating Committee.

Ian twice served on the board of the Georgian Bay Association – once in the 1970s and then again for several years when he came on to head the organization's governance committee in 2002.

He had tremendous influence on Georgian Bay during his 15 years as Reeve of the Township of the Archipelago. Current reeve Peter Ketchum fondly remembered his predecessor at a memorial service held recently for Ian.

"Under Ian's leadership, the core values identified in the founding of the Archipelago

were enshrined in the township's mission to maintain forever a community that would live in harmony with nature," said Peter.

"Ian was a winner. He got things done."

Ian died on Dec. 26. He is survived by his wonderful wife Marlene, his children Kathleen, Sarah and Beth and their families, including five grandchildren.

Georgian Bay was just one part of Ian's very busy life.

He was president and later chairman of the board of The Stewart Group Ltd., a successful Canadian company that has been around for more than 100 years. Ian was also an avid sportsman who served as Chairman of the World Squash Federation and was an original inductee to the Ontario Squash Hall of Fame. He was a fixture at Blue Jays games, loudly cheering on the home team from his front-row seats along the first baseline of the Rogers Centre.

There was a good chuckle from the large crowd at his memorial service when the words Ian used to describe himself were read aloud: "Often wrong. Never in doubt."

Ian Stewart loved life and he loved Georgian Bay. His family has named Georgian Bay Forever as one of the charities that would receive donations in his memory. Those who would like to honour Ian's memory can do so at [GeorgianBayForever.org/Donate](http://GeorgianBayForever.org/Donate) •

*Peter Frost is a long-time cottager from the Bayfield-Nares area of Georgian Bay and a lifelong friend of Ian Stewart's.*

**“WE PAY  
INSURANCE  
TO PROTECT  
OUR COTTAGES.  
WHY THE HECK  
WOULDN'T WE PAY  
TO PROTECT OUR  
SURROUNDINGS?”**



**Doug Cooper**

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