

# Steenburg Lake

## "SHORELINE NEWS"

Summer 1988 - 2nd edition

Steenburg Lake Community Assoc.

### List Of Coming Events :

- Bingo** - Every Thursday night - Limerick Ctr. 7:30 sharp  
**July 16th** - 100th Anniversary of St. Ola United Church - Barbeque, Limerick Ctr. - tickets \$6.50 each see Peg Moffatt.  
**July 23rd** - Bake & Craft sale 9 - 5 - St. Ola Orange Hall by Firemen's Aux.  
**July 23rd** - Horseshoe Tournament & Beef Barbeque - Limerick Ctr. tickets \$6.00  
**July 30th** - Rock Bass Derby - Steenburg Lake (see details below).  
**July 31st** - Sailing Regatta - Steenburg Lake (see details below).  
**July 31st** - Steenburg Lake Cottagers Assoc. meeting and dinner - Limerick Ctr. - bar opens at 6:00PM - \$7.00 per person, children under 12 - \$3.00. Tickets are limited so get yours early, see Peg Moffatt or Anita Wadell. If you wish to contribute a door prize call Anita Wadell.

**Correction:** Spring issue #2 of Shoreline News - Cottage Life Magazine. You will receive only the one free issue. If you wish future copies you have to subscribe

**Rock Bass Fishing Derby** - Sat. July 30th, 8:00 to 4:00  
Age group - up to 13 years of age.  
Registration required: Maple Landing- cottage #72, East shore- cottage #165, North shore- cottage #24.  
Prizes are for the "MOST FISH CAUGHT" in the categories of Rock Bass and Sunfish. Your catch only. Return to your registration station to have your catch counted before 4:00 PM. Stations close at 4:00 PM.  
Prizes: 1st - Tackle box, 2nd - minnow bucket, 3rd - lures.  
Winners will be announced at the annual dinner and prizes awarded.

**Sailing Regatta**- Sunday July 31st - start time 2:00PM  
Location - Bay in front of the Marina. All those that wish to participate in the regatta must attend a meeting at cottage #30, Friday evening 7:30PM. The rules will be reviewed and numbers assigned at that meeting. There will be two classes: Sunfish and the like and Windsurfers. It will be a triangular course covering the entire bay. Winners will be announced at the annual meeting. -

**Ontario Star delivery to your dock** - Available July and August - Sat. & Sun. only. Call 474-5486 or the Marina.

### Around the lake - Photos of bygone days



St. Ola siding - Going home, canoe and all



Wood bridge over Beaver Creek -(remnants of wood pilings still visible)



Lakeview Hotel - Opened in 1910- built and operated by Harry Fitzgibbon

## BEAVERS ON THE LAKE

Beaver are the largest North American rodent. Lacking a pituitary gland to control growth they continue to grow until felled by territorial fights, by predators, or by disease. Prior to the last ice age, prehistoric beaver reached the size of a bear. The modern record is 110 pounds. A more usual size is in the 30 - 40 pound range. A mature female may have up to 4 young in a litter and may have a second or even a third litter before the first have left the lodge.

Some amateur urban biologists consider the beaver a very intelligent animal because it attempts to control its environment with dams. Not so! This is to confuse intelligence with inherited behavioral patterns. Compared with the dolphin, dog or pig, the beaver is a dum dum. Once a beaver has chosen a site for a dam no amount of 'pulling' will discourage it from rebuilding and it usually has to be killed before the dam can be completely destroyed. In Alberta where beaver dams are appreciated for water conservation a method has been devised for installing culverts in a dam to control water to predetermined levels and foil the beaver from flooding even more and more land. Such culverts have been in service for the last seven years and are still functioning. They are expensive and not too practical in bush country.

Beaver require stable water levels for several reasons hence the need to build dams:

- To protect the underwater entrances to the lodge.
- To maintain uniformly damp floors in the lodge to keep the webbing in their feet from drying and cracking.
- To preserve and provide access to the underwater feed beds through the winter.

Beaver are normally only seasonal workers and spend the summer loafing, eating quantities of aquatic vegetation, or sitting on mud 'castles' built along the banks, (again to protect the feet), preening. Then in the fall they go back to work repairing dams, lodges, and cutting and storing a supply of branches anchored below the water surface in the lake or pond. These 'feed beds' are their winter supply of bark.

Beaver have to consume large quantities of bark to obtain the nutrient in the cambium layer. Thus they discharge the resultant large amount of fecal matter in the water. Unfortunately they harbor an intestinal parasite that is dangerous to man. Symptoms of infection are called 'beaver fever', typical of fever but not responding to fever treatment. So drinking water from a beaver pond can become a mild form of Russian Roulette. Chances of infection in large bodies of water are probably no greater than for any of a myriad of man's ailments, due to the much greater dispersal.

A few years ago a colony of beaver moved into the spring fed reservoir that supplied Trenton with drinking water. The council commissioned a licensed trapper to remove

them. When an emotionally misguided anti-trapping group stole the traps, it hit the news headlines. But when no Bridgett Bardot came forward to attract media attention and whip the zanies into a frenzy the media lost interest in the case and it's assumed law and order prevailed.

Live trapping and transplanting nuisance beaver by the Ministry was attempted in the past until it was found the practice more often destroyed two beaver instead of one. They are very territorial and the transplants would be attacked by any resident population. With teeth that can fell an 18" dia. tree in short order they are vicious fighters and fight to the death. After such encounters the victors too often die from their wounds.

Our section of Bass Creek had been a thick cedar swamp without sufficient deciduous trees to support beaver. After it was timbered, second growth appeared and in 1923 a beaver cutting was found in the creek. Last summer (1987) was the first in a long time that dams haven't had to be 'pulled' on the creek. With the dry weather and the planks across the culverts, sections of the creek dried up and there was no current. The beaver promptly moved into the lake with the resultant damage to waterfront properties.

If the emotionally motivated urban animal activists succeed in killing the fur trade, which is their stated aim, several consequences will result over and above the well publicized damage to the native peoples:

1. There will be increased welfare required for urban residents as well as hinterland native peoples.
2. As happened when the wolf bounty was removed there will be increased government expense to control nuisance animals.
3. There will be a direct loss of revenue to Government which collects license fees from trappers and a royalty payment on every pelt.
4. There will be a significant loss of foreign exchange affecting the value of the Canadian dollar as most fur is exported.

All of this translates into higher taxes. Perhaps not too convincing arguments for people who don't pay taxes in the first place.

If the 5000 plus annual harvest of beaver in the Bancroft District are let to reproduce, cottagers had better start stockpiling chain link fencing to protect their trees.

June 1988

John Brett McGeachie