

# Lake Todd Times

Issue

October 2008

## Another Successful Social

Our Lake Todd Social on Saturday, the 16th of August was scheduled to begin at 1:00 p.m., and at precisely 1:00 p.m. it began to pour. Within a few minutes the phone was ringing concerning the status of the party, but at that point it was too late to call it off, so we waited it out, and as luck would have it, within 15 minutes the rain stopped. Some of the more adventurous souls arrived by water, such as the Galing family (new to the lake) just managing to beat the rain. We were also fortunate to see a few new faces, including Dick and Phyllis Ormiston and Caroline Krummel, as well as those among the missing in recent years, namely Joyce Sinagra and Ellie Daniels. As per usual, the food was without any nutritional value and consequently delicious. And it was special to get to meet and converse with our neighbors on Lake Todd.

This is a very low-key and fun time, so for those of you who missed out, we will try and get you an early heads-up on the date for 2009. Please come and join us!



John & Elaine Warren

## The Flashboards

by John Warren

You may have heard us talk about the flashboards, and probably have at least a vague idea of what they are, but it would not hurt to go into a little detail. These are boards which are either inserted or removed from cutouts or indents in the spillway of the dam. They are 12' long by 8 1/2" wide and fit in slots at the top of the spillway. Their function is either to raise or lower the surface water level of the lake by 8 1/2" if the water level flowing out is less than the height of the spillway. We could accomplish the same thing by using the penstock, but it is not as effective as the boards and would have to be monitored frequently.

Why do we do this? Lowering the lake level allows property owners to facilitate work on docks or walls along the shoreline, but much more importantly, it gives us a cushion against the heavy rains and snow melt in the coming spring. Raising them, by contrast, mitigates the effects of dry spells during the summer which can negatively impact swimming, boating, and dug wells (for a number of (continued on page 3)

## Highway Clean-Up

John and Elaine Warren were very grateful to be joined by their neighbors for our highway clean-up on August 30. Workers included Patty Dugdale; Mike, Courtney, Caroline and Shane Beaton; and Phyllis and Dick Ormiston. Our final cleanup will take place on Saturday, November 1, at 8:30, and as usual we will meet at John and Elaine's house, 69 Route 103, at 8:30 a.m. Please join us in helping to keep our area beautiful!

## Neighbors on the Lake



Phyllis and Richard Ormiston want to thank everyone for making them feel so welcome on Lake Todd. Their family includes their son J. Lee, his wife Kasey and their two children, Andie and Tucker, as well as their son Todd and his wife Elizabeth, and their children Maddie and Chase. They love being near their children, who live next door, and watching the beautiful lake. They are both originally from Stamford, New York. Phyllis is a retired teacher. Richard retired from

farm machinery sales and now works three days a week as a purchasing agent for a nursing home. Richard attended Ithaca College, while Phyllis attended SUNY Oswego. Richard's hobbies include gardening and golf, while Phyllis likes sewing. In addition, they both enjoy volunteer work, reading, and spoiling their grandchildren. We are very fortunate to have the Ormistons as part of our wonderful Lake Todd community!

## Water Quality Testing

By John Warren

One of the most important aspects of any lake is its water quality, and for many years the Lake Todd Association, now the Village District, has tested the lake for various components which ultimately give us a report card on its condition. The bottom line on the wellbeing of the lake is whether we can swim, fish, or boat with safety, as well as the health of plants, fish and the food chain endemic to the lake. Each year at the annual meeting we give you a brief overview of the testing results, but we, at least during my time here, have not given residents any background information on the how's and why's of the testing. This article is an attempt to do just that.

The testing is done three times a year, usually during a period from June through October, depending on the schedule of the testers and a member of the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) who assists us with the final event. We do the testing in cooperation with the Volunteer Lake Assessment Program (VLAP), a division of the NHDES, which provides overall guidance and the testing labs.

All the testers from the lake are volunteers and trained by the VLAP; they run regular sessions yearly and also provide other related items of interest, such as the weed watchers program, and in this regard any residents of Lake Todd who want to attend these programs are more than welcome. Our current testers are Bob Doherty, Norm Lehoullier, and yours truly, but I should mention that Joanne Doherty was pressed into service early this year and is none the worse for wear having done so.

You need a boat with a motor as we do traverse a good portion of the lake, starting at the "deep spot" about 100' southeast of the little island. There we drop a Kemmerer bottle to depths of 3 and 6 meters, bringing up about a gallon of water which will indicate Conductivity, pH (acidity), Alkalinity, and Turbidity, and total Phosphorus. Samples from these depths are also mixed to get the results for Chlorophyll. We also use a Secchi disk to determine water clarity by noting how deep the disk is before losing sight of it. When the VLAP folks accompany us they also check dissolved oxygen and temperature at one meter intervals from a depth of six meters to the surface. Lastly, they collect Phytoplankton and Cyanobacteria, which are a general indicator of lake quality.

VLAP provides detailed instruction as to how to collect the sample, the proper bottles to store them in, and a questionnaire as to conditions of the lake at testing, time of day, date, and who actually did the sampling. We also test Andrew Brook and Reservoir Brook as they are the prime feeders of the lake as well as the outlet at the dam, essentially for the same tests as the "deep spot." All the equipment specific to the testing is loaned to us by the lab at Colby College in New London, and we return these items as well as the samples promptly following collection, as they are subject to deterioration over time. The annual overall cost of the entire program is approximately \$300 and is for lab fees only.

VLAP provides us with a detailed Biennial report which is available to any of the littoral owners on the lake, and provides current as well as historical data. As for the actual results of the testing, item by item, and their significance, we will bring them to you in another issue of the Lake Todd Times.

## The Flashboards

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residents this is their main source of water and too little water in the lake can dry them up).

We install the boards during Memorial Day weekend and remove them during Columbus Day weekend, in order to maintain consistency in the timing. In the past, one of our volunteers walked along the top of the spillway and did what was necessary without any form of safety device, but we now use a harness and lanyard (courtesy of Bruss Construction) and clip up to a cable running across the dam. This is easy to use and much safer.

## Have a Safe and Restful Winter

This will be the last issue of the Lake Todd Times until May of next year. Please remember, if you have anything of interest to share with your neighbors on Lake Todd, forward it to me at [normslake@yahoo.com](mailto:normslake@yahoo.com). Have a wonderful winter!

## The Brick Mill House of Bradford, NH

By John Warren

(Part 2 of 4)

Ruth-Ann was born in Liberia, West Africa of missionary parents and from there was sent to Toronto, Canada to live with her grandmother until her parents returned from their mission. She liked Toronto, but it wasn't the liveliest place to be. Known as the "City of Churches" it was a far cry from the beckoning call of the wonderful world on the other side of the border. She read the Saturday Evening Post, Seventeen Magazine, and her very first research paper in the eighth grade was on Abraham Lincoln, all the while having no true intention of becoming an American citizen.

She has been a professor of Irish History at Boston College for the past 14 years, following in the footsteps of the venerable Jesuit, Martin Harney. She loves the school, and since she writes, publishes, and is the only teacher of this class, she has every intention of staying indefinitely. She holds the students in the highest regard as the school provides an atmosphere and demands that they commit to some cause in the world beyond themselves, not necessarily Christian, but a *raison d'être* nonetheless.

John Harris grew up in Rockford, Illinois, did his undergraduate stint at Wheaton College, joined the Army, and eventually the family construction company. He moved to Evanston, Illinois, became involved with the civil rights movement and then was inspired by a book Ruth-Ann had given him for his birthday in 1961, *Independence for Africa*. At that time, Northwestern University had an African Studies program, and as luck would have it, the Harris family had enough money for one year's tuition. Things went well, he got a fellowship and went on to earn his PhD in Economics and African Studies, followed by a Ford Foundation grant to Nigeria for 1 1/2 years.

In 1966 the family moved to Winchester, MA as John had been hired by MIT. He took leave and went to Kenya in 1968 and 1969, followed by Indonesia in the early '70's, and his last stop was becoming head of the African Studies Center at Boston University in 1975. He continues as a professor of Economics. John and Ruth-Ann have a terrific arrangement with their respective schools, each instructing for one semester, then the rest of the year is spent in research, travel, and relaxation — why retire under this regimen?

- To be continued in the spring!

