

Lake Todd Times

Issue # 4

October 2000

Lake Todd Sign

The Selectmen in Bradford have requested the Highway Department to erect a "Lake Todd" sign on or near the Route 103 bridge. Everyone who responded to our September newsletter agreed with the idea. Two of the board members disagreed because of their concern that it would attract more people to the lake. The Executive Board wants to be responsive to your ideas, and we appreciate all who responded.

Lake Lowering

The lake is in the process of being lowered, but it is going down very slowly. The lower level will provide an opportunity to clean out some of the weeds that plague our beaches. No one should lose water, since it will only be lowered by about 19 inches. If you do have any water problems, please call Peter Fenton to close the penstock.

Nature News

Our "Loony Tunes" have quieted down, and Baby Loon is taking flying lessons from Mom and Dad. Flapping of wings and skittering across the water are part of the preparation for their travel to their winter habitat on the coast. They usually leave when the ice begins to form on the lake. Mom and Dad Loon may leave first, with Baby Loon following at his or her own discretion.

We look forward to our loon parents returning as soon as the ice is out in spring

A LITTLE HISTORY

The Railroad Crossing Lake Todd

Bradford was a busy town in the 1850's, with a growing population of 1,341. At first there were only short railroad lines, and the early cost of building those lines was \$20,000 a mile. The line linking Concord and Claremont was completed in 1872.

As years passed, the Boston & Maine put 4 trains a day through Bradford: Down at 8:15 a.m., up at 11:00 a.m., down at 5:00 p.m. and back up at 7:00 p.m. The B & M crossed Lake Todd at what is now Rte. 103; the trestle was where the bridge now crosses the lake.

Blasting through the huge granite walls of Newbury Cut was an engineering feat. When it was accomplished, the train often stalled on its way through the cut because of heavy, drifting snow, sometimes 10 feet deep. Train crews tried to shovel their way through, but often flat cars and another engine would come up from Concord and dig the train out, putting snow on flat cars, backing down the track to Lake Todd, and dumping the snow into the lake.

The end of an era was December 16, 1954, when the last passenger train rolled through Bradford.

Note: If you want a short walk downtown from Lake Todd, the old railroad bed is easy to find off 103 to Gillingham Drive, flanked by 2 large boulders and continuing through the woods to the First Baptist Church Cemetery.

Faces on the Lake

Good Neighbors. A lot of you know Norman Lehoullier as the fisherman who is out on the lake almost every evening. If we don't see or hear the green boat leaving Gillingham Drive we wonder if he's okay! Norman and Mary and 2 other couples first came to Lake Todd in the winter of 1966 to rent three cottages on Birch Lane that summer. Norman and Mary had 5 children and the other couples each had 3. Fortunately they left the 11 children home that day, because when they got here everything was snowed under. Did that stop those hardy souls? Of course not! They trudged through snow up to their knees to ensure that the cottages were big enough for their large group. That was the start of a love affair between the Lehoulliers and Lake Todd. They came back every summer. In 1980 they rented a house on Gillingham Drive and bought it in 1982. Norman and Mary are both retired from Reed & Barton and they live in Taunton, MA. Their 5 children are spread out among several states. They have 3 grandchildren and two more due this month.

Norman loves to fish, eat out, fish, play cards, and fish. Mary loves to read, eat out, play cards and do crossword puzzles. They enjoy Brickers in Claremont, Foothills in

Warner, and the Two-Fers at the Appleseed Restaurant. Norman and his brother Bob are always there to help neighbors with docks, rafts and boats, or even to "turtle-sit"!

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Bob Doherty is Norman's half-brother. Bob and his wife Joanne first discovered Lake Todd in 1986, a couple of months before they were married when they came to visit the Lehoulliers. They fell in love with the area and rented at Birch Lane until they bought their house on Gillingham Drive in 1972. Bob is a Guidance Counselor at King Philip Regional High School in Wrentham, MA, and they live in North Easton, MA. They have two married children and a grandson, Jake, and they all love the swimming, fishing, and boating on Lake Todd. Bob and Joanne both enjoy the outdoors and love to bicycle, hike, and play cards. While Bob's favorite hobby is long bike trips, Joanne's passion is her job as a Children's Librarian at the North Bridgewater Library. Her favorite pastime at Lake Todd is reading, and you can often see her on their front lawn or beach, engrossed in a book. Isn't that what is known as a "Busman's Holiday"?

Goodbye For Now!

This will be the last Lake Todd Times this year, but we plan to resume again in May. We hope you have enjoyed our ramblings. Some of us are snowbirds and will be heading south soon. Some families will be closing up their cottages for the summer. We wish you all a happy holiday season and a wonderful winter!

Good News . . . The ban on lead sinkers, begun last January, appears to be working! There has been only one loon killed by lead sinkers in New Hampshire this year, compared to about 10 per year in the last decade. Lead sinkers and jigs can slip off fishing lines and sink to the bottom of the lake or river. Loons then scoop them up, mistaking them for pebbles they need to grind their food. Loons also eat fish that have swallowed the weights, and either way it will kill an adult loon in as little as two weeks. Of course, some of the mortality rate reduction may be attributed to the poor weather this past summer and less people fishing (with the exception of Norman, who doesn't use lead sinkers. Thanks, Norman!)