

“Our Glimmerglass”

A Newsletter from the Otsego Lake Association



Vol. 2013 – Issue 2

www.otsegolakeassociation.org

Summer 2013

Board of Directors: David Sanford, Carolyn Mook, Paul Lord, Scottie Baker, Mickie Richtsmeier, Pati Grady, Carl Good, Martin Tillapaugh, Mary Crouthamel, and Joseph W. Zarzynski. Directors represent the Towns of Middlefield, Otsego, Springfield and the Village of Cooperstown plus two At Large. **Officers and Support:** Wayne Bunn (President), Mickie Richtsmeier (Vice President & Secretary), David Sanford (Treasurer), Joseph W. Zarzynski (Newsletter Editor), Tom Horvath, Ph.D. (Technical Advisor), and Tim Pokorny (Webmaster)

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING -- SATURDAY, AUGUST 17, 2013

CAMP MINNETOSKA (former Girl Scout Camp) on OTSEGO LAKE

759 COUNTY ROUTE 31 (EAST LAKE ROAD), COOPERSTOWN, NY 13326

3.1 MILES NORTH OF COOPERSTOWN BEYOND THE “ROAD CLOSED” SIGN

ROAD IS OPEN TO LOCAL TRAFFIC – FOLLOW OUR SIGNS

COFFEE, DONUTS & “DOUGH BOYS” AT 8:30 AM - MEETING STARTS AT 9:00 AM

MAIN TOPIC: “OTSEGO LAKE NOSTALGIA”

Members and non-members are invited. **Special events:** Slide show of historical camps (Cindy Falk) with contemporary views (Richard Duncan), update of research on early overnight children’s camps (Sue Friedlander), stories from Cooperstown Graduate Program’s Community Stories Project (Will Walker), scanner available to record photos you may wish to share, underwater archaeological finds (Paul Lord), silent auction, and Lake Citizen Award. Share the history and stories of your camp, relate your experiences at one of the many youth camps (Pathfinder, Girl Scouts, Ethical Culture, Hyde Bay, Chenango and Otsego), renting boats from Willie Thayer, fishing for Otsego Bass, summer activities on the lake, ice fishing, winter carnivals on the lake in the early 1970s, etc., etc. – the list is endless! Bring a lake related item to “show and tell”. Ask questions about various things or happenings on the lake. This format should provide for a very interesting and informative program on Otsego Lake. We encourage everyone to attend and participate. A special thanks to the faculty and staff of the NYS Historical Association, Cooperstown Graduate Program, Sue Friedlander, and Clark Foundation.

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Welcome to the Summer Edition of the Otsego Lake Association newsletter. I hope to see all of you at the OLA Annual Membership Meeting on Saturday, August 17th. As usual, coffee and

donuts will be served at 8:30 AM with the meeting starting at 9:00 AM. We are normally finished by 11:00 AM which still gives you plenty of time to enjoy the many lake activities afterwards.

“Otsego Lake Nostalgia”, the main topic of this year’s Annual Membership Meeting, should make for a very interesting and informative program. We encourage everyone to attend and tell us about the history and stories of your camp, relate your experiences at one of the youth camps (i.e. Pathfinder Lodge, Girl Scout Camp, Ethical Culture Camp, Hyde Bay Camp, Camps Chenango and Otsego, etc.), renting boats or buying gas from Willie Thayer, fishing for Otsego Bass, summer activities on the lake, ice fishing, winter carnivals on the lake in the early 1970s, etc., etc. – the list is endless!! Bring a lake related item to “show and tell” like we used to do in elementary school. See [page 1 for more details on the location and events planned](#).

Membership Renewal: If you did not renew your OLA membership or join for the first time in the fall of 2012, please do so using the membership application in this newsletter. All memberships, except those done in the fall of 2012, are now up for renewal. Please do so as soon as possible in order for us to strengthen our organization and move forward with our various projects.

Only Meeting This Summer: The August 17th Annual Membership Meeting will be the only one this summer. In the past, we have held meetings in June and August but, due to the rather low attendance, we have decided to meet only one time during the summer months while the majority of the lake residents are here.

President To Retire: After serving as President of the Otsego Lake Association for the past 5 years, I have decided to retire from that position but still be involved in OLA. I have certainly enjoyed serving as President and working with a great Board of Directors and OLA members but, by my own “rule of thumb,” it is time for someone new to take over. Thank you for all of your past help and cooperation in making the OLA a great organization to protect and preserve Otsego Lake – truly a local treasure!

Invasive Species “Solutions”

By Paul H. Lord

Nearly every issue of our OLA newsletter has contained information about invasive species that threaten to change the ecology and pristine aesthetics of our Lake. We now know that any visible amount of green material could choke our lake with Water Thyme (*Hydrilla*) which has been confirmed in the Erie Canal, some ponds by Binghamton, and in the Cayuga Lake inlet. We know that any small amount of water could be holding the larval stages of Quagga mussels which will dominate Otsego Lake’s bottom in depths far greater than Zebra mussels will settle sucking the microscopic algae out of our water and changing the Lake fundamentally. We know that any small amount of mud on a boot bottom or in a kayak or canoe could introduce Asian clams that will quickly reproduce and fill the few sandy beaches around Otsego. We know that Spiny waterfleas are rapidly spreading across lakes in the State changing the community of small animals and plants that feed our larval fish. (These Spiny waterfleas are apparently spread by fishing equipment first used in an infected lake and then used in an uninfected one.)

There are “solutions” all of us can use to thwart these potential invasions. Consider the disinfectant buffet depicted in the picture (pg. 3). A few minutes soak in a concentrated solution of salt (NaCl) or salt substitute (potassium chloride; KCl; less corrosive and more lethal) or in bleach or a more concentrated solution of vinegar will kill these invasives. Boats, kayaks and canoes should never be moved from waterbody to waterbody without being **cleaned, drained, and dried**, but how can you be really certain you have removed every bit of water, sediment, or, even, green growing stuff? If you can’t, employ one of the solutions: salt, salt substitute, bleach,

or a concentrated vinegar solution. Pour some in your bilge and in your kayak compartments, and rinse your fishing tackle in your favorite “solution” (see illustration below).

“Solutions” That Stop Invasive Species

- Buffet of Disinfectants

- Bleach
- Vinegar
- Salt
- Salt substitute



Otsego Lake History and Science Tidbits

By Joseph W. Zarzynski, RPA (Register of Professional Archaeologists)

In the summer of 1901, the Otsego Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution erected the historical marker that now stands near the spot where in 1779, General James Clinton’s American forces built a dam across the mouth of the Susquehanna River. The dam was deliberately busted and over 200 bateaux (30 ft. flat-bottomed boats) loaded with supplies and troops floated down the river. This military operation was part of the Sullivan-Clinton campaign to pacify the Iroquois tribes in western New York that were loyal to the British in the American Revolution (1775-1783). The marker included a 10-inch iron siege mortar affixed to a boulder. *The Otsego Farmer* newspaper reported the mortar weighed 1,971 pounds and was 30 inches long. It was a Civil War-era (1861-1865) artillery piece from Fort Foote in Maryland.

According to an article in the August 6, 1935 issue of *The Otsego Farmer* newspaper, New York state conservation scientists measured the water transparency in Otsego Lake at 6 meters. Canadarago Lake’s water transparency was 2 meters, Gilbert Lake was 1.8 meters, and Goodyear Lake was slightly less than Gilbert Lake; 1 meter is 3.28 feet.

On July 24, 1904, George Pitcher and Leon Carr drowned at Otsego Lake when the boat they were in with three other occupants overturned in the deepest part of the waterway. Three men survived the boating accident. Over two years later in late August of 1906, Pitcher’s decomposed body was recovered. Fishermen drawing a seine (net) snagged the corpse. Pitcher’s skull was decomposed, but he still had the derby on his head that he was wearing when he fell into the lake. A gold watch with Pitcher’s initials was found in the net and was used to identify him.

The Glimmerglass Daily reported on July 21, 1913, that two seine fishermen seeking Otsego bass pulled in a decomposed human skull. Authorities discovered the brain was still inside the skull indicating the body had been in the lake no longer than 3-4 years. The remains unfortunately were not identified and were buried on a point near where the grisly find was made.

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**OTSEGO LAKE ASSOCIATION
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION – 2013**

Please complete this application whether you are renewing or joining for the first time.

NAME: _____ **DATE:** _____

PREFERRED MAILING ADDRESS:

Street City/Town & State ZIP Code

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____(Only used for OLA announcements)

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES (Check One): ___ Renewal ___ New Members

___ Individual \$25.00 ___ Couple \$35.00 ___ Business \$50.00

___ Annual Endowment \$75.00 and Up

___ Additional Donation \$ _____

Please make check payable to Otsego Lake Association and mail form and check to:
David Sanford, Treasurer, Otsego Lake Association, P.O. Box 13, Springfield Center, NY 13468

**OTSEGO LAKE ASSOCIATION – HELPING TO PROTECT AND PRESERVE A
LOCAL TREASURE**

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