

The Lac Sir John Community Newsletter

Summer 2017

From the Editors:

Greetings to all;

This newsletter is intended to keep you informed about social activities and general information of interest to Lac Sir John residents.

Messages from the president of SIJOLM, Merv Trineer, related to the SIJOLM corporation, will be sent to you separately. The annual AGM of the SIJOLM corporation will take place on October 21, 2017 (9:00-12:00 at the Gore Community Center). Be sure to plan to attend.

This newsletter, and all the other activities at the lake, are voluntary efforts. All of you are invited to get involved and contribute to lake community activities.

If you have news related to lake social activities and general information, or something historical to share about the lake community, please send it via email (in either French or English) preferably in MS Word to the editor sanastass@gmail.com.

After three years of preparing this community newsletter, Susan Anastasopoulos will be stepping down as editor later this year. It is hoped that others will come forward to continue the newsletter, a lake tradition that goes back about half a century.

Susan Anastasopoulos (editor)

(translators: French version) Caroline LaPierre, Vincent Gruber, and Nicole Hebert

SECTIONS appear in the following order:

Recent Social Activities: (pp. 2-5)

- **Corn boil**
- **Sailing club**
- **Lake symposia**
- **Entrance gardening volunteers**

Upcoming Social Activities (pp. 5-6)

- Dinner club
- Restaurant outings
- Christmas dinner

News about residents (pp. 6-8)

- News
- New faces
- In memoriam; etc.

Past memorabilia; history, stories and legends of Lac Sir John (pp. 8-9)

- History feature: Who was Sir John Johnston?

Miscellaneous notices, announcements and information (pp.10-11)

- Local newspapers
- The *Gore Express* and Gore activities
- Cross-country skiing and snowshoeing

Flora, fauna and the environment (pp. 11-14)

- A cottager's diary of wildlife observed out the window in late winter- spring 2017
- A brief wildlife report
- About our fish
- Forest tent caterpillars (*Malacosoma disstria*)
- How safe is our lake to swim in 2017?
- Guarding against invasive species
- Composting and water saving equipment available at the Gore municipal office

Map of Lac Sir John in 1980 (p. 15)

The Lac Sir John Classifieds Bulletin (p.16)

RECENT SOCIAL ACTIVITIES AT THE LAKE:

The **August Corn Boil** finally took place at Boathouse Beach on Aug. 20, after being rained out on both Aug.12 and Aug. 19! Many lake residents attended with their family and guests. If you missed it this year, be sure to plan to join us next August for this wonderful chance to meet and mingle with your neighbors. Thanks to the many lake neighbors involved in organizing this event.

This year, Terry Brew volunteered to organize the Corn Boil with the assistance of many of the usual faithful group of lake volunteers. Many thanks to Merv Trineer, our SIJOLM president, for procuring six new picnic tables and provided the corn; also, for organizing the placement of the portable toilet. Henri Andres mowed the grass and set up the new tables. Many thanks also to Gillian Barlow's son, Nic, daughter, Debbie, and son-in-law Chris Robitaille for boiling the corn, starting the barbeque fire, stocking the supply tables, etc. Gillian conducted the raffle. The raffle tables were stocked by people donating as they arrived. Oksanna Pohlod emailed out the announcements.

Help is always needed for this event, so would be welcomed if offered; please call or email Terry Brew [1-518-260-1395](tel:1-518-260-1395) mrtjbrew@aol.com if you are willing to assist in any way for next year.

The Lac Sir John Sailing Club (2017)

Sir John's Lake Sunfish Racing Championship began in 1967. For the last 51 years, sailors have competed for this annual trophy, while fans and supporters cheered them on from the shores of our beautiful lake. I

Our 2017 sailing season was notable for the addition of Ron Cole, his son Doug and friend Mike.

We enjoyed as many as 6 racers this season, with several expressions of interest for next year.

We had some great winds that made racing exciting. We continue to seek new sailors. We would welcome anyone interested in sailing to join us. We have managed to secure extra boats as needed to allow newcomers the opportunity to join in the fun. We are also in a position to offer coaching in how to sail and race.

Races take place every Sunday afternoon, weather permitting, between 2 – 4 PM beginning the first Sunday in July until the Sunday of Labour Day when we have our wrap-up celebratory party. All residents of Lac Sir John are welcome to participate, and also to attend the party as "Friends of the Sailing Club".

For more information please contact Doug Dempster at [\(613\) 299-8485](tel:613-299-8485) or Christopher Vroom at [\(450\) 562-6556](tel:450-562-6556).



The 51th Annual Lac Sir John Sailing Party!

You are warmly invited to join us for the annual party of the Sir Johns Lake Sailing Club. We welcome sailors, future sailors, friends and supporters of our sailors and those who just like to watch the races or come to sailing parties! A nominal contribution will be requested to defray food costs.

Time: 16:30 -18:30 hours on Sunday 3 September

Location: At Doug Dempster`s, 1150 Chemin de Lac Sir John (Entrée 1)

Vous êtes chaleureusement invité de nous joindre pour le parti annuel du club de voile de Lac Sir John. Les marins, les marins futurs, les amis et les supporters de nos marins et ceux et celles qui aiment regarder les courses ou assister au parti de voile sont tous le bienvenu. On demande svp une contribution minimale pour le coût de la nourriture.

L`heure : 16 :30 -18 :30 heures dimanche le 3 septembre
Lieu : Chez Doug Dempster, 1150 Chemin de Lac Sir John (Entrée 1)
Rain or shine-Pluie ou soleil
RSVP to douglas.dempster@hotmail.ca or text-texte [613-299-8485](tel:613-299-8485) (cellular-cellulaire)
by/avant 31 Aug/aout.

The **Lac Sir John Symposia**. This discussion group meets during the summer months at various participants' houses. Symposia themes cover a wide range of topics. A few readings and discussion focus questions may be sent in advance. Discussion commences at Happy Hour, accompanied by wine, ouzo, etc. and nibbles. Traditionally, a potluck dinner follows. Last year's symposia topics were "**Democracy, Autocracy and Radicalism**" and "**Wine and cheese pairings**". This summer's first two topics are "**Spices**" and "**Where are we going as a society? Are Enlightenment values and institutions becoming obsolete?**" All are welcome! If you would like to participate contact Susan Anastasopoulos at sanastass@gmail.com.

The **Entrances' Gardening Group**. Many thanks to our volunteers who maintain the attractiveness of our three entrances. Helene Parenteau and Joanne Michel at Entrance One, Terry Brew and Gillian Barlow at Entrance Two, and Miep de Groot, Oksanna Pohlod, Janet Donald and Kathy Cole at Entrance Three. New volunteers always welcome. If you would be willing to volunteer, please contact Susan Anastasopoulos at sanastass@gmail.com who will put you in contact with the others.

UPCOMING SOCIAL ACTIVITIES AT THE LAKE:

Lac Sir John Dinner Club: The dinner club is inviting new members to try out this activity. The dinner club is open to all and a great opportunity to get to know more of your neighbours, as well as dine fantastically. It meets on the last Saturday night of the month (September, October, November, January, March and May). Diners are assigned at random to various houses and a different theme of international cuisine is chosen for each dinner. The host house prepares the main course and coffee. Others bring hors d'oeuvres, salad or dessert, as well as their bottle of wine.

If you would like to try out the dinner club, please contact Oksanna Pohlod oksannap@hotmail.com by mid-September.

Restaurant outings: The Dinner Club organizers will attempt to organize several restaurant dinners open to all members of the Lake Sir John community: a December Christmas Dinner, and another outing in late April. We need volunteers to take responsibility for each of these restaurant outings including choosing the restaurant, making the necessary arrangements, writing the announcement for lake residents, and receiving their reservation requests by email. Please contact Oksanna Pohlod or Susan Anastasopoulos if you would be willing to help arrange for one of the restaurant dinners. This year we had a spring outing at a wonderful setting at the auberge Val Caroll in the Harrington area.

The annual Lake Sir John Christmas Dinner

Everyone in the lake community is invited to join together in our winter celebration – our annual Christmas dinner party to be held in December. Family members and guests are welcome. Watch for the announcement of the place and time, which have not yet been determined.

The Lachute Garden Club

Six or seven of us Lac Sir John gardeners are now members of the Lachute Garden Club, which meets on the third Wednesday of the month. We maintain the flower garden at La Residence; have luncheons, outings, guest speakers, etc. Would you be interested in this activity? Contact Susan Anastasopoulos and she will put you in contact with the organizer.

NEWS ABOUT THE RESIDENTS:

News

Gaetan and Sylvie Danduran have fully reconstructed their home after having suffered a serious fire last spring.

Canine physical therapy at the lake: You may have been surprised to encounter Marie France's dog, Lucky, taking long swims across the lake for recommended physiotherapy after an injury.



Several of our long-time residents can now be visited living in Lachute's seniors' residence, Le Medallion D'or, but they also occasionally spend time at their Lac Sir John houses: Ross and Lorraine Preville and Shirley Dempster. Carmel Sweeney will soon be returning to Lachute and joining them at Le Medallion D'or. Shawn Grennan is at La Residence in Lachute.

Especially warm wishes to our nonagenarians, John Bishop, Shawn Grennan, Carmel Sweeney, Doris McTavish, Ernie Borrows and Shirley Dempster.

New Faces at the Lake

We wish to welcome our new neighbours and hope they will soon be joining a number of the lake community activities.

Caroline LaPierre and Vincent Gruber have recently moved into the former LeBlanc/Decarie house at Entrance Two.

Sylvie Duceppe and Marc Perreault have recently bought a lot near Entrance Three and have already installed their new dock.

We may have missed mentioning some new residents. If you have recently moved to the lake in the last two or three years, please send us a very brief introductory note about yourself to the editor for the next newsletter.

If you would like to participate in a small informal welcoming committee for new residents, please contact sanastass@gmail.com

In Memoriam

Four of our long-time lake residents, Ross Cole, Lorne Barrett, Patty and Michael Fraser have recently passed away. We will miss their presence and long remember them.

(If we have accidentally omitted anyone, please let us know so we can mention them in the next newsletter.)

PAST MEMORABILIA: HISTORY, PHOTOS, STORIES AND MISCELLANEOUS DOCUMENTS FROM OUR LAKE COMMUNITY:

As an addition to the newsletter, residents are invited to share memorabilia from our lake community's history. If you have an interesting old document or photo, etc. please send it to the editor by email (sanastass@gmail.com) or (mbowen@videotron.ca) to be included as an attachment to the next newsletter. We encourage you to contribute by sending us a very short (one paragraph) story account of a lake memory or a lake tale (in French or English) that could be of interest to newcomers and/or long-time residents.

History feature: Lac Sir John? Who really was Sir John Johnson?

According to Joseph Graham's 2005 book, *Naming the Laurentians*, our lake was named Sir John's Lake in 1842 to honor Sir John Johnson following his death in 1830. In 1814, Sir John had purchased much of the Seignury of Argenteuil, which contained our lake. (Louis XIV's governor general of New France, Frontenac, had originally granted this seignury to the Charles Charles-Joseph d'Ailleboust of Paris in 1682. It was first sold to his son, Pierre d'Argenteuil, then to Pierre-Louis Panet, then to Major Murray and finally, the northern part of the Seignury of Argenteuil was sold to Sir John Johnson.)

Although Sir John spent his later years settled in Montreal, it is doubtful whether he ever actually visited our lake.

Sir John Johnson's father, Sir William Johnson, Second Baronet of New York, was a shrewd businessman and served as Superintendent of Northern Indians in New York colony in the 1750's and 60's. He was the main trading partner for the Mohawks. He apparently maintained high ethical standards in his dealings with the Iroquois and acted as their chief liaison with white society. His house was often filled with visiting Iroquois house guests. He was honoured to be named as an Iroquois chief.

Sir William bought a European indentured servant, Catherine Weissenberg, who was effectively his slave; but he married her on her deathbed. John Johnson was their son. After Catherine's death, when John was 10 years old, Sir William took a Mohawk consort, Mary Brant, sister of the famous Joseph Brant. Young John was sent on a grand tour of the British Isles and he was knighted at court in London in 1767. Sir John accompanied his father on military campaigns and became a respected military leader. Eventually in 1774, Sir William left his vast estate of 200,000 acres to Sir John, as well as the baronetcy of New York.

Sir John served as Provincial Grand Master of New York colony from 1771 to 1775. When the American Revolution broke out, Sir John decided to remain loyal to Britain. He was arrested in New York, but with the help of his Iroquois allies, he fled to Canada, arriving half-starved; there he offered his service to the British. His wife, Mary Watts, was held in New York under house arrest. With the help of Tony, their black slave, she and the children escaped and arrived at British lines. After the war, once settled in Montreal, Sir John was appointed commander of the British Indian Department. Disappointed that he was not named lieutenant governor of Upper Canada in 1791 as had been expected, he moved his family to London, England, but returned to Montreal four years later. He served as Provincial Grand Master of Canada for 46 years.

Sir John was supervisor of resettling Loyalists in Lower Canada and was a member of the Legislative Council of Lower Canada, heading the Indian Department. He continued his intense efforts to provide the Iroquois with their needs and to serve as guardian of their rights and interests. During the War of 1812, he commanded the Six Township Battalions. Just after that war, he purchased 54,000 acres of the Seignury of Argenteuil (which contained our Lac Sir John). He built a sawmill and gave land for churches, hoping to attract settlers to his seignury. After the British conquest of New France, Britain had maintained certain seignorial rights from which Sir John, as seigneur, benefited. (In 1854, parliament abolished the seignorial system and the County of Argenteuil was created.)

Most of the above information is summarized from *Naming the Laurentians*, *The Dictionary of Canadian biography* and *Wikipedia*. There is some conflict of information on this history between the various sources. By Susan Anastasopoulos

MISCELLANEOUS NOTICES, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INFORMATION:

Local newspapers:

Lots of information about the Lachute area, Argenteuil and the Lower Laurentians is available in the local newspapers. To learn about many local activities, events, etc. you can pick up the free editions of *Main Street* (monthly in English – available at Campbell’s depanneur, IGA and the shopping mall) and *Argenteuil* (weekly in French – available at the corner gas station).

The Gore Express and Gore activities:

The mayor of Gore, Scott Pearce, has invited all Lac Sir John residents to participate in the activities held at the Trinity Community Center at 2 Cambria Road, Gore (just 4 kilometers north of our Entrance Three). These include exercise classes for seniors on Mondays and Thursdays 11:00-12:00 (\$2.00 suggested donation). (During the summer, the exercise classes are held in Wentworth at 10:00.), a seniors’ luncheon by the Gore Seniors Network, “Eat and Greet”, on the last Monday of each month at 12:30 (\$5.00 suggested donation) (Sept. through May), and classes in dance, Tai Chi, Yoga, Qi Gong, art courses, etc.

This February, the Gore Seniors’ Network inaugurated its new seniors’ lounge, located on the lower level of the Trinity Community Center. This senior’s center will be available for use as a drop-in center and for numerous functions. It contains a book lending library, a computer with internet access and lovely couches, chairs and lamps. Check with the municipality for the opening hours of the senior’s center.

You can learn about all the Gore activities in the Gore community newspaper, *The Gore Express* published monthly on the Gore municipal website www.cantondegore.qc.ca. You can read all the past monthly editions of *The Gore Express* on this Gore website. This publication is also an excellent source to learn about environmental issues concerning the Laurentian lakes.

Last summer the Gore Family Trail was opened. Its main segment, near here, includes a spectacular 170-meter wooden boardwalk through the forest that is accessible all year round with maps and signs to help hikers find their way.

Lake Sir John residents can take their dogs to the new Gore Dog Park located in the Municipal Park next to the soccer field.

There is a running club on Wed. evenings 6:00-7:00 that meets at the municipal park in Gore, 45 Cambria road. Contact Darina Belanger for information: 438-821-6715.

There is a classical music and meditation hour on Sundays at 4:00 at the Holy Trinity church in Gore, 4 Cambria Road.

Cross-country skiing and snowshoeing:

All Argenteuil residents aged 50 or over are invited to participate in guided excursions of cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. Every Wednesday at 1:15 when snow conditions are favorable beginning in mid-January. Meet at the "Centre La Randonnee at the Oasis Golf Club, route 327, near Brownsburg.

The above activities and many more are announced in *The Gore Express*.

Clement Boisvert's visiting wild turkeys



Flora, fauna and the environment:

A cottager's diary of wildlife observed out the window in late winter- spring 2017

Feb. 20 A reddish coy-wolf crosses the stark white frozen lake in front of the cottage. (A coy-wolf is a new species which first appeared in the 1990's in Algonquin Park – a mix of coyote and eastern wolf and possibly domestic dog.) On Feb. 27, the coy-wolf crosses back again. Or is it only a large red fox?

March 26 A black mink stands out against the white iceberg on which he is floating. Also spotted that day are two black squirrels, one red squirrel, one black and white cat, one grey and white cat, a woodpecker, a blue jay, chickadees and a nuthatch.

April 6 I hear a song sparrow sing. Or is it a field sparrow?

April 23 Most of the lake ice is gone and an American black duck swims along the shore over to the mouth of the outlet stream from Kenny Lake.

April 24 The last bits of ice have melted here and the loon is back.

April 25 The tree sparrows arrive.

April 29 A black and white warbler rests for hours on my window sill from its tiring migration flight.

May 1 The season's first hooded merganser couple find my "duck rock".

May 2 A robin perches on my bedroom window sill.

May 10 A loon couple arrive at my beach.

May 22 Victoria Day. My "canaries" are back – two beautiful male goldfinch at my bird feeder.

May 23 The great blue heron alights on "duck rock" before the cottage.

May 28 At dusk, two otters swim past.

May 30 The forest tent caterpillar infestation is suddenly intense: the old oak tree, the quaking aspen and the linden trees have already lost all their leaves.

June 2 The season's first humming bird appears. The loons are now calling at night.

June 3 The geese are honking in the early morning. We rescue a turtle crossing Chemin du Lac Sir John North.

June 5 Two large hawks, perhaps northern harriers, pursue our new chipmunk. The chipmunk survives the assault.

June 13 This diary ends! We decide to go away until the caterpillars cocoon. We give up and leave the world to the caterpillars. They say that caterpillars cocoon on St. Jean-Baptiste day. *(by Susan Anastasopoulos)*

A brief wildlife report: Summer 2017 has been great for herons, mergansers and loons.

About our fish: How's the fishing this summer? Notice anything new?

Forest tent caterpillars (Malacosoma disstria)

We have deliberately chosen not to include any pictures of these dreadful caterpillars or our defoliated trees, as no one wants to see them ever again!

According to the July *Gore Express*, these caterpillars have a 7-11 year cycle. They are the most widespread defoliator in North America. Defoliated trees will produce foliage next year, but will be weakened. What can be done? Remove curled leaves containing the nests when possible. Encourage birds, spiders and predatory insects with flowers and feeders. A spray of one teaspoon dish detergent in one liter of water may protect ornamental bushes, roses, etc. Although the biological insecticide, bacillus thuringiensis (B.T.) is effective, neither chemical nor biological products should be used near lakes, streams and wetlands as these products are non-selective and will damage other fauna as well.

How safe is our lake to swim in 2017?

For the third year we have used a simple, cost-effective and reliable water test to determine the quality of our lake water for swimming. We want to know if our water is safe to swim, especially off the seven Sijolm beaches. (*See the attached lake map for the SJIOLM beach names.*) The bottom line once again is that our lake water is extremely safe for swimming.

The accepted standard for water safety is a count of less than 1000 coliform bacteria and less than 100 E.coli bacteria per 100 millilitres of water. Coliform is a large family of bacteria typically used to measure food and water quality. E-coli is one type. E.coli are fecal bacteria from mammals that are the best indicators of problems such as diarrhea, ear infections or stomach upset that may arise from polluted water. More on recreational water quality can be found at www.hc-sc.ca, and information on the water testing method is at www.bluewaterbiosciences.com.

This year we took 12 water samples on Sunday 6 August. Samples were collected 30 metres off the shore and from 30 centimetres below the surface. Peter Nicholson and Doug Dempster read the results after a 24 hour incubation period on 7 August.

Recall that this was a year of double the normal rainfall and only average temperatures. The prior week had a number of heavy rainstorms and maximum daily temperatures were in the 22-25 degree range, much less than in previous years at this time in early August. Many of you will have noticed that the lake seemed cooler when swimming this year. The run-off of rain water therefore played a more important role than did heat in water quality.

What did we find? Our average observed results across all sample sites, compared with results from 2015 and 2016 are shown below:

	Standard	2015	2016	2017
Coliform Count	1000	25	35	24
E.Coli Count	100	8	5	7

It is the E.Coli count that is most critical for the health of swimmers. The highest individual sample E.coli count this year was 13, compared to 19 in 2016 and 46 in 2015. This lower average count was likely due to the cooler temperatures. There were no apparent hotspots. Our average E.Coli count continues to be more than ten times lower than the standard, so our water is indeed very safe for swimming.

It appears once again that we are not hurting water quality as water flows through the lake. From the inlet of the lake after the highway 329 bridge to the outlet before the causeway, the coliform count dropped from 19 to 8 and the E-coli from stayed the same at 5.

We would like to congratulate the residents around Spring Beach. For the second year the E.coli count here was only 3, so the water quality is excellent this year. We noted in particular the vegetation pattern on the beach that controls water run-off.

As a note of caution, these results are for swimming. The standard for drinking water is zero E.coli. Lake water should be treated before drinking it.

As a final caveat, these results are performed by volunteers and this is only our third year of testing. We will need to continue to monitor trends and should expect year-over-year variances as weather and conditions change. We need to remain vigilant and to maintain our septic systems.

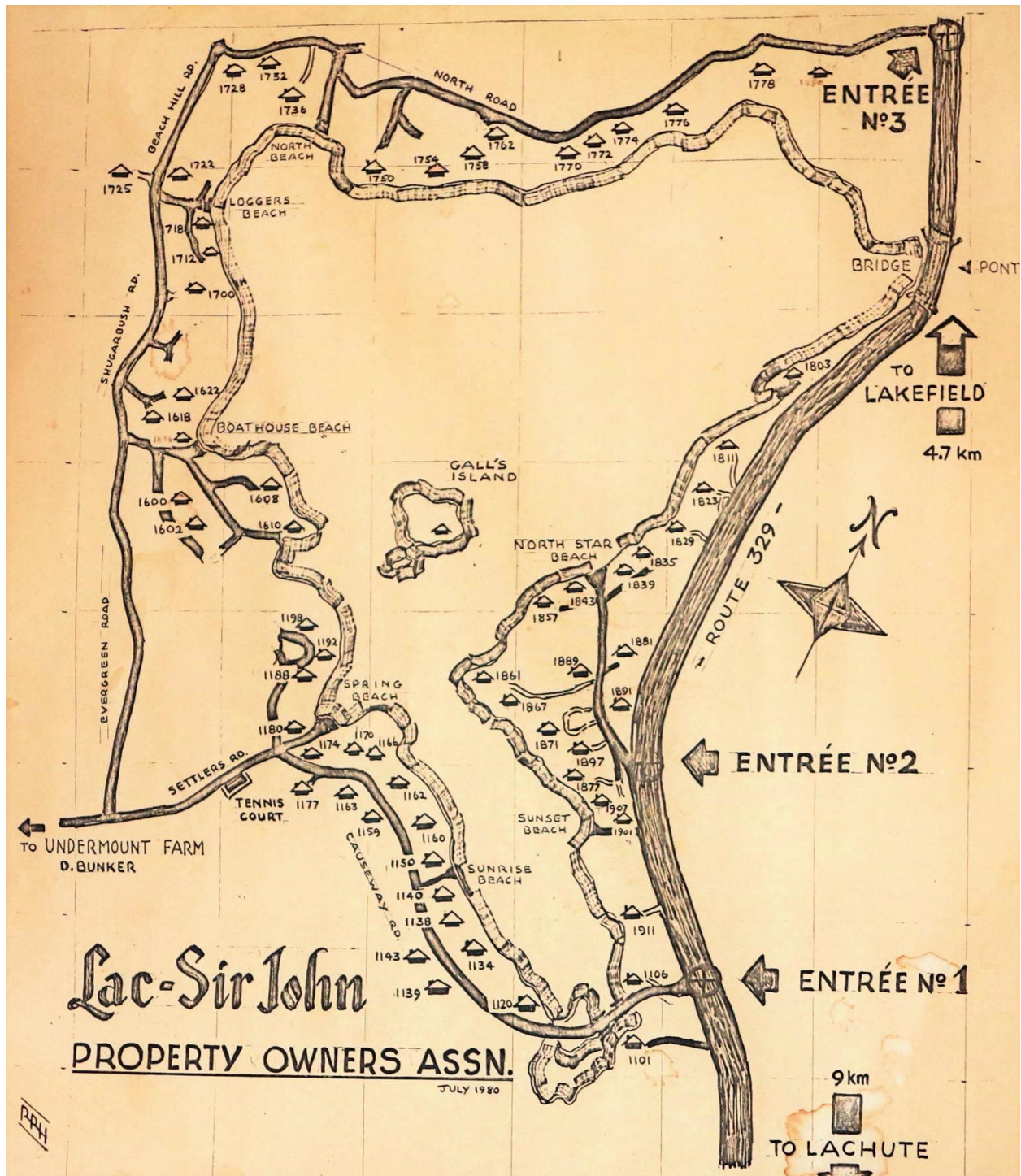
By Doug Dempster and Peter Nicholson

Guarding against invasive species:

We all need to be vigilant against invasive species such as the Eurasian water milfoil, an aquatic plant that can completely transform a lake. The Gore municipal office has a small guide available for you on aquatic exotic invasive plants (AEIP). These plants often enters lakes and rivers on kayaks, boats, paddle boards, paddles, and other water paraphernalia which have previously been in an infested body of water. Before you or your guests put such an item into Lac Sir John, apparently the recommended procedure is to power hose it first and treat the surface with javex. The Lac Louisa Owners Association has produced a video regarding local invasive species. www.youtube.com/watch?v=jMS4ikifall. Please pull out any invasive plants you come across and destroy or dispose of them in the garbage.

Composting and water saving equipment available at the Gore municipal office:

Kitchen bins for compost (free of charge); Composters \$20; Rain barrels \$50. Contact Etienne Le Corff at 450-562-2025.



Above is the map of our lake in 1980. Was you house there?

THE LAC SIR JOHN CLASSIFIEDS BULLETIN.

Are you looking to BUY, SWAP or SELL at the lake? Do you have SERVICES YOU COULD OFFER your neighbours or HELP WANTED?

LET US KNOW BEFORE SEPTEMBER 18, 2017 AND WE WILL THEN SEND OUT A SPECIAL EDITION CLASSIFIEDS BULLETIN WITH YOUR INFORMATION/REQUEST AND CONTACT INFORMATION.
(mbowen@videotron.ca)



Need help? You can often find needed help with a job by contacting Lori's Links (450-224-7472) www.lorislinks.com. The municipality of Gore is also putting together a list of people who could do various jobs for seniors.

If you would prefer not to receive this newsletter in the future, please notify one of the editors.