

## KAPIKOG LAKE COTTAGE OWNER'S ASSOCIATION

# Kapikog Tracks



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## President's Message by Stuart Ferrie

Another cottage season has come to an end for most cottagers, with the leaves down, boats out of the water, and lake freeze up at hand. I hope that you and your family have enjoyed the 2025 year and made lasting memories of good times. From the perspective of the Cottagers' Association, we had a tremendously successful Spring Get Together, the first summer Fun Day since Covid, and a well attended Annual Meeting. Lake Water Testing is ongoing. The Association has also taken steps to improve the mailing list and the quality of the Newsletter. One thing that remains to be addressed is the number of volunteers who are active in the Association. If you are interested in getting involved please do not hesitate to contact the Association using this email address: [info.kapikoglake@gmail.com](mailto:info.kapikoglake@gmail.com).

Nothing happens without volunteers.

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Photo by Terry Forth

While the 2025 year is coming to an end, the 2026 cottage season starts in the winter for many cottagers. The air is fresh and clean, the snow can sparkle in the sun or moon light, and the snow and frozen lakes can make hiking, snowshoeing, or cross country skiing a great experience. Safety in the winter is just as important as in the summer, although the risks are sometimes different. Ensuring the ice is safe if you go on it is one obvious factor to be aware of. It is better to be safe than sorry so please take care.

One factor that can impact the safety of the ice is use of a bubbler or de-icer. If you use one of these devices, please carefully read the article in this newsletter regarding their use, and also follow the links provided to obtain even more information. Improper use of these devices can have catastrophic consequences for everyone.

On behalf of the Association, I wish you and your family the best for the holiday season, and an enjoyable 2026 at the lake.



Photo by Terry Forth



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## Councilor's Message by Dan MacLeod



### Kapikog Seasonal Roads

We have had a dusting of snow, so winter is on the way.

At its September 18, 2025 meeting, Council reviewed a staff report focused on requests from Kapikog Lake residents to upgrade several seasonal roads for year-round maintenance. The Township of The Archipelago's long-standing limited-service philosophy restricts expanding road services beyond those existing in 1980. Potential winter maintenance may be available under a special clause in the Township's Official Plan, for four Kapikog Lake roads—the Kapikog North Road, Munro Drive, Joyce Lane, and the Kapikog Dam Road. These roads will require upgrades and involve approximately 37 properties.

Council will consider using the Local Improvement Charge policy—where benefiting property owners share project costs—as the path forward, pending adoption of a formal policy to guide such requests which is expected to be on Council's November agenda. Council will vote on the Local Improvement Cost (LIC) policy in the November session.

The benefitting residents will be paying for any upgrades to make the roads suitable for ploughing. What those costs are, have yet to be determined. There must be a 66% agreement between the residents for the process to go forward. Cost and ongoing maintenance have not been determined, snow ploughing is not automatic.

The South Shore road is not included in this process, as it is not provided for in the Official Plan since the notwithstanding clause applies only to the above-mentioned four roads. By formalizing the LIC process, the Township will be better equipped to manage future infrastructure requests, such as seasonal road upgrades, through a structured, accountable, and fiscally responsible approach. Approval of this policy supports the Township's long-term commitment to sustainable service delivery, financial stewardship, and community transparency.

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Planning concerns have not all been resolved as there are too many variables at this time.

As always, if there are any questions or concerns, please contact me.

I also want to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a healthy and Happy New Year

Regards,

Dan MacLeod

647-549-5474

[dmacleod@thearchipelago.ca](mailto:dmacleod@thearchipelago.ca)

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## Let Us Know about Email Address Changes

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The Association's primary method of communicating with members and other lake residents is email. This makes it particularly important that you notify us of any changes to your email address.

If your email is going to change, you need to let us know before you stop monitoring it.

Send your new information by emailing us at [info.kapikoglake@gmail.com](mailto:info.kapikoglake@gmail.com).

Please include your name, civic/EMS number, road name, new email address and the date it comes into effect.

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## Save the Date!



### Spring Get Together

A spring social has been planned for Sunday, May 17th, 2026 from 2:00pm to 4:00pm (Sunday of the May long weekend). The location is the Mactier Legion (Branch 507), 11 Elizabeth Street, Mactier.

### Annual General Meeting for the Association

Saturday, August 15th, 2026 from 10am to Noon. The location is the landing parking lot (58 Kapikog Lake Rd).



Photo by Andrew Sixt



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**SOLD OVER LIST**

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## Use of De-Icer Systems in Winter by Stuart Ferrie

Some cottage owners use a de-icer system (often called a bubbler) in winter to try and protect in-water infrastructure (e.g. boat-houses) from ice damage. If done carefully, these devices can be effective, but they do present dangers to people that must be carefully monitored and mitigated.

A de-icer works by releasing air bubbles below the water surface around the infrastructure to be protected. The air bubbles rise to the surface, stirring up the water, and bringing warmer water from the lake bottom to the top. This warmer water is above the freezing point, and keeps ice from forming in its vicinity, leaving a pool of open water, which would not otherwise exist. Other systems use a submerged propeller to create the same effect.

Last winter on Kapikog there were concerns due to the large amount of open water that at least one of these systems was creating. If you plan on running one of these systems, please ensure it is set up in such a way as to minimise the amount of open water created. Open water is only needed within a foot or so of the structure to be protected. The open water can create a safety hazard to anyone using the lake, and responsibility lies with the operator of the de-icer to ensure it is safe.

In the event of an accident, the penalty to the operator of the de-icer under the Criminal Code of Canada Section 263 (1) can extend up to a conviction for Manslaughter.

Here are a few of the safety measures that the operator of a de-icer should take:

- ⇒ Ensure it is installed by, or with the advice of, a professional experienced with these devices
- ⇒ Ensure a large, clear warning sign is posted by the hole created in the ice, stating "Danger Open Water"
- ⇒ Have an amber or blue, (not red) light installed to mark the location at night
- ⇒ Ensure the system is set to open up the minimum amount of open water necessary
- ⇒ Use a timer and thermostat so the system only runs when absolutely necessary
- ⇒ Have someone check the system periodically to ensure it is running properly and that the safety warnings remain in place.

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The following are links to several relevant Ontario based articles about the proper use of de-icers (below the Links is the website address for those who prefer not to click on links). If you are thinking of using one of these devices, the Association urges you to read them carefully.

[About Bubblers \(Muskoka Rate Payers\)](https://muskokaratepayers.ca/did-you-know-about-bubblers/)

<https://muskokaratepayers.ca/did-you-know-about-bubblers/>

[Bubblers - Safety Considerations \(FOCA\)](https://foca.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Bubblers.pdf)

<https://foca.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Bubblers.pdf>

[Important Safety Considerations for Bubblers \(GBA\)](https://georgianbay.ca/important-safety-considerations-for-bubblers-2/)

<https://georgianbay.ca/important-safety-considerations-for-bubblers-2/>

[Bubblers - Important Safety Considerations \(Cade Insurance\)](https://cadeinsurance.com/2018/11/04/bubblers-important-safety-considerations/)

<https://cadeinsurance.com/2018/11/04/bubblers-important-safety-considerations/>

[Should you install de-icers at the lake? \(Cottage Life\)](https://cottage.life.com/general/should-you-install-de-icers-at-the-lake/)

<https://cottage.life.com/general/should-you-install-de-icers-at-the-lake/>

## Little Free Library

As some of you may have noticed, there is now a Little Free Library at the landing. It's a place where you can leave a book you've finished or take one you'd like to read.

Please contribute only books you think others will enjoy. Books for all ages are welcome.







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## Children's Fun Day ☀️ By Terry Forth

During several of our recurring KCLA Board meetings, since the current board has been formed, we have discussed many ways of how to both reinvigorate the existing membership, as well as ways to attract new members from the lake. One of these ideas, was to reach out to a broader demographic than the members that have been attending our spring get-togethers and AGM's over the past few years. Specifically, we were interested in attracting some of the younger members of the community.

What better way to do that, than to reach into our past, to improve our future! That was the impetus of how Fun Day 2025 came to be, after many years of hiatus, since before the pandemic.

I volunteered to take this project on (as my sister had done decades before), with the help of my family (my wife Sandra, my daughter Andrea and her friend), along with the indispensable assistance of Stuart Ferrie and his friend Jan. We reached out to the membership, requesting an RSVP to gauge the level of interest, so that we could prepare accordingly. We purchased all the necessary hardware, including a small marquee tent to provide shelter from the preferred weather outcome (ie Sunny). Stuart provided some buckets, which acted as a delineation between the area where the kids would be playing within the confines of the government parking lot.



Although we did not receive a large turnout (7 children from 4 families, along with their parents) in our quasi-inaugural Fun Day, it could be seen as a good thing, in that we weren't overwhelmed by the participants, on our first attempt at running this event.

We provided both Arts and Crafts, along with activities that had the kids running around as well as practising their aim with water guns, and the small bean sack toss, etc.



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The universal feedback we received was positive from the kids and parents, although we are looking at incorporating some improvements for next year, after what we learned from running the 2025 event. One such example, is to include activities for the parents who attended, as they ended up joining in the same activities as the kids did.

Looking forward to Fun Day 2026, we are anticipating more interest after the success of this year's event, and would very much appreciate anyone that would be interested in volunteering, as this is necessary to ensure that next year's event will prove to be even more enjoyable than this years! Please reach out to me if you would be interested in helping out at [terry.kapikog@gmail.com](mailto:terry.kapikog@gmail.com).

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## Water Testing Program by Andrew Sixt

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### Activities Over the Summer

Since the spring newsletter Stuart Ferrie and I have collected water samples and have been taking Secchi water clarity measurements, as part of the Lake Partner Program (LPP). The water samples have been sent to the Dorset Environmental Science Centre Laboratory.

In addition, the Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve staff have been on the lake twice doing their water sampling, measurements and studies.

All of this information goes into the Township of the Archipelago Environmental Report. In the spring newsletter I will report on what was found for Kapikog in 2025.

### Water Chemistry

While the Association doesn't prioritize coverage for chloride and calcium levels to the same extent as phosphorus, I thought readers might be interested in learning more about

why the Lake Partner Program cares about chloride and calcium levels. If you are such a reader, please read on.

### Chloride

Freshwater lakes and rivers in the Kapikog area naturally contain low concentrations of dissolved salts, including chloride (Cl). Chloride is an essential element for lake ecosystems, but elevated concentrations can be toxic to aquatic plants and animals.

The primary cause of unnatural levels is from de-icer's such as road salt. Fortunately, Township staff have told me they do not use pure road salt. There is about 3 to 5% added to the road sand to prevent clumping to minimize environmental impacts.

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Starting in 2020, water samples from Kapikog were tested for chloride. Over these years the levels have been stable, varying between 0.9 mg/L to 1.0 mg/L. This level is well below the 5 mg/L level where scientists report starting to see a negative impact on aquatic life. In summary, the chloride levels and trends reflect good water quality.

## Calcium

Calcium occurs naturally in soils because of weathering rocks and atmospheric dust deposition. When in the ground, it's absorbed by growing trees or leached into water ways.

Calcium is an important nutrient to aquatic organisms as it's necessary to build shells, skeletons, exoskeletons and body coverings. Some aquatic animals are more sensitive to depleting levels than others. For example, *Daphnia* (commonly referred to as water fleas) are very small zooplankton that are very sensitive to declining calcium levels and need above 1.5 mg/L to thrive. *Daphnia* are an important part of a healthy lake as they feed on algae and become a food source for small fish.

Kapikog's calcium level has averaged 1.8 mg/L and has been relatively steady since 2020, when levels started being measured. This level is above the threshold of 1.5 mg/L when scientists believe sensitive aquatic species may be at risk. As a comparison, the average is 4.1 mg/L for other lakes in the area.

In summary, there are no concerns with the

level or trend, although Kapikog's calcium level is lower than most lakes in our area.

Historically, calcium levels in Ontario shield lakes have decreased from their natural level because of acid rain and wood removal.

There are some recommendations from the LPP on increasing calcium levels. The first is increasing naturalized areas around lakes to re-establish calcium sources (more on this in a future newsletter). There is also ongoing research in the Muskoka area involving spreading wood ash in the forests to boost maple tree health and the calcium levels in lakes. The authors of the study recommend lightly sprinkling your wood ash around maples and other hardwoods, in forested areas away from the water (since wood ash contains phosphorous, place it so that surface run off does not go directly into water ways). Please consider these measures.



Photo by Andrew Sixt





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## Kapikog History by Erik Loorand and Andrew Sixt

### The KAH-PEE-KOG Club

As mentioned on the Kapikog website, a group called the KAH-PEE-KOG club once visited Kapikog Lake.

In 1900, Wright Patterson wrote a series of articles called the *Chronicles of the Kah-Pee-Kog Club*. The articles syndicated and appeared in several American newspapers.

According to the introduction, this club was an American inter-state group of men who met once a year to enjoy a fishing vacation on

the lake. For those who are not aware of this, the original name of Kapikog was “Kah-Pee-Kog”, first appearing on the original survey maps, in 1880.

The articles are light reading and are a look back in time. Based on the sketch and text in two of the articles, what Wright calls “Crown Island” is most likely Ematee Island. The first article starts on the next page.



Photo by Terry Forth



# Chronicles of the KAH-PEE-KOG CLUB

By Wright A. Patterson.

NOTE—The Kah-pee-kog club is an Inter-State organization of good fellows and good fishermen, so they say, who meet once a year in the wilds of Canada for a fishing expedition of from two weeks to a month in length. The members are but ordinary citizens of Uncle Sam's territory who once a year invade the Queen's domains for a good time. They come from all portions of the Union and congregate at a little lake in the Canadian wilds where the gamy bass strike hard and often. Who they are is of no interest to the reader, but they do many things and tell many stories that are interesting and entertaining to those who love a vacation time in the woods and on the water.—EDITOR.

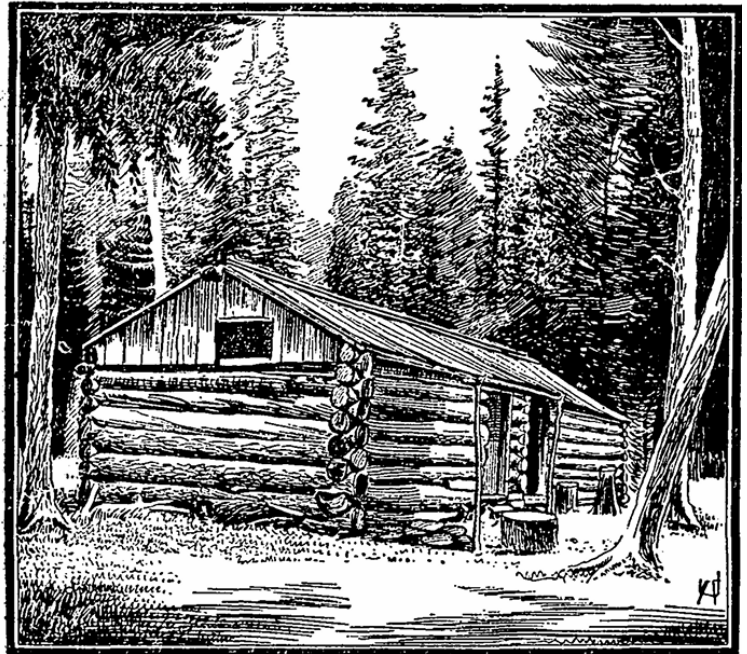
VACATION time had come again. I knew it, for had not the edict of Boss Fisherman Smith arrived? It was short, as all of his edicts are, but it was pointed, and said: "Meet in Toronto August 4."

That wasn't much, to be sure, but it was enough, and the morning of August 4 found a considerable gathering of American citizens in a hotel lobby in Toronto, garbed in old clothes, and their most treasured possession a fishing rod and reel, with the other accessories that go to make up the angler's equipment.

They filled half a parlor car on the Grand Trunk train going north to Penetang, and their conversation had nothing to do with those standard themes, politics or the weather, or even the scenery, beautiful as it may have been, but turned to fish; to the relative merits of large and small mouth bass, to muskellunge, to pike and pickerel, to wood and steel rods, to reels, to lines and hooks, to everything upon which the opinions of fishermen may differ.

"One would think fish the only thing worth living for," said a matronly woman, who had evidently tired of the long harangue, but her sarcasm was lost on that crowd; the queen herself could not have turned that conversation into other channels. Those men were out for a good time as they understood it, and fish were their aim and object. Nothing else mattered much.

It is considerable of a journey in point of time from Toronto to Kah-pee-kog, and in previous years these fishermen had gone by way of Muskoka Wharf and Barnesdale, but some one had proposed that a new route be tried, as it might save time, and the suggestion was promptly acted upon. For that reason the boat line running north from Penetang through Georgian bay carried a larger number of passengers than usual that 4th of August last, and the dinner ran short.



ON THE TOP OF CROWN ISLAND STANDS THE LOG CLUB HOUSE.

"What matters a dinner," said philosophical Zuckmeier, "when black bass are awaiting us for our supper."

But the way was longer than Zuckmeier anticipated, and it was not until the next afternoon that our canoes and baggage, and, last but not least, our fishing tackle, was unloaded at Sweet's camp at the mouth of the Moon river, to which point it had been transported from Sans Souci in the old yawl of the genial King, an Indian of the Canadian Indians. Up to that point there had been nothing to do but talk, and so many opinions had been aired with such vigor that it was a relief to hear the last of them, and forget all differences in an effort to accomplish the remainder of the journey to Kah-pee-kog by the canoe method.

Did you ever paddle a canoe? If you did, what was your sensation the first time you set foot in one of them? I can guess that if the foot was not set in properly the first sensation was a wet one. At the last meeting it had been voted, not unanimously by any means, but voted just the same, that in the future skiffs be barred. There was malice aforethought in the resolution that barred skiffs, though the worthy member that proposed it gave as his reason the increased muscular tax of portaging them, but a few of us could see behind all that a desire to laugh at our expense when we went into the water.

"It is bad enough," said Yorker, "to have to navigate one of those things without loading it to the last notch." But the load went in just the same. How else was it ever to reach the clubhouse on Crown island in Kah-pee-kog? There were blankets and provisions, suit cases and grips, fishing tackle and fishermen all going the same road, which to some of us seemed a downward path to the bottom of the lake.

Up through Lake Healy headed the long procession of canoes. Boss Fisherman Smith headed the procession, and our good guide Alex Fraser, of Foote's bay, Ontario, with Ullmark in tow, acted as rear guard. Two-thirds of the members of that party watched anxiously two or three canoes in the line. I say anxiously, because they were anxious that they should go over and the occupants get the expected ducking. Something of the kind was needed to break the strain caused by the arguments of two days' duration. But the strain had to be broken in other ways, the canoes did not go over. Smith headed in through the long winding channel to the portage way between Healy and Kah-pee-kog, and here Ullmark was in his glory.

It was his first trip, and he learned one word on that trip that he will never forget. It was "portage." He sat on the bank and talked of portage while other members of the party worked off the strain of continued argument by carrying canoes and baggage across.



The sun was still an hour above the western granite hills when Boss Smith's canoe pushed its bow out of the narrow channel, and the broad waters of Kah-pee-kog spread out before us, with Crown island and the clubhouse directly in front.

The golden rays of the sun sparkled on the dark waters of the lake, waters made darker along the western shores and around the islands by the shadows thrown by the great granite rocks and the tall pine trees towering heavenward.

"Nowhere else does the sun shine as it does on Kah-pee-Kog," said Ullmark, the recruit, whose artistic sense was touched by the beauty of the scene, and that remark saved him the hazing he would otherwise have got.

Ten minutes more and canoes were being unloaded at the foot of the high bluff of which Crown island is composed, and upon the top of which stands the log clubhouse. Provisions and baggage were hurried up the hill and into the cabin, and then all waited anxiously for the summons that was to come for some one to accompany Boss Fisherman Smith upon an expedition in search of the bass for supper. It was as a sought-for privilege, the casting of that first line of the year, but the rules of the club gave the Boss Fisherman the right to name his companion, and the rules were inexorable.

"While the guide is getting a fire started and other portions of the supper prepared, and the rest of you are arranging the sleeping quarters, Zuckmeier will accompany me after fish for supper," said Smith.

And so it was Zuckmeier. Lucky fellow, provided he got the fish, but decidedly otherwise if he did not, for he would have to eat perch for supper if he did not himself get a bass.

An hour later, when the sun had sunk behind the granite hills, Smith and Zuckmeier returned. There were but four bass in the canoe with them, and Smith had caught them. Three small perch accompanied the bass to the kitchen, and these Zuckmeier ate without a word. The rules of the club would not even permit him to tell of the big one that got away.

The first fish had been caught; camp was established; the first meal had been eaten; the rule of Boss Fisherman Smith was over until the day of departure came, and as each man rolled himself in his blanket that night it was with a determination to catch more and bigger fish than anyone else in the part before the vacation days on Kah-pee-kog lake were over.

But the fish they caught, or did not catch, as the case may be, and the tales they told, are other stories for another time.

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