

## Culverts Comments

by Lorne Bowerman

We received a number of well thought out comments on the article in the November newsletter about the new culvert. Some thought it was installed higher than the old culvert. Some thought it was installed lower than the old culvert. The Township said it was installed within a few millimetres of the old culvert.

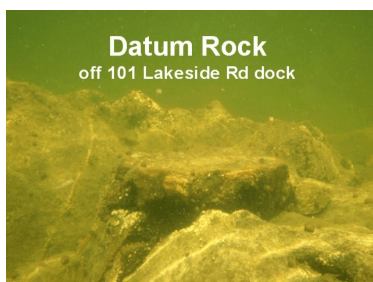
One problem with some of the depth measurements provided was that they were done in moving water at the culvert. It can't be done. There is always an action like a bow waves in a moving boat.

So is it up? Is it down? The answer is we do not know.

The time we will find the answer is when the lake drains to the point where there is no more flowing out through the culvert. Then we can go to our favorite measuring place and do our measurements.

The rock that I have been measuring since 1995 is off the point near the 101 Lakeside Rd dock. It is a big rock with an flat anvil shaped part on top. That anvil shaped part was 7.87 inches below the old culvert bottom. That is an average of many measurements done when there was zero flow. It is pretty accurate.

So when the lake goes down so that there is no



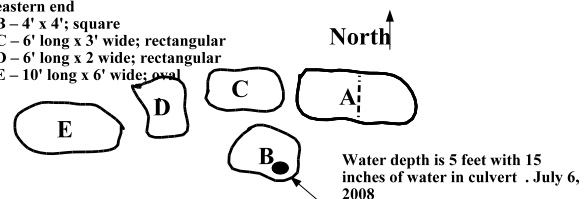
flow out of the culvert, then I will measure the water depth over that rock and I will know whether the new culvert is up or down.

There are some other rocks which could give us an indication. They are the group of six rocks off the northmost island. There is more information on these in the Water Level report on the LMP button of the Association web page.

You might ask when or how often does the lake cease to have outflow. It happened in 1995,

### GROUP OF SIX ROCKS OFF NORTHMOST ISLAND JUST OFF THE CHANNEL BETWEEN THE NORTHMOST AND CENTRE ISLAND

Rock Top Profile in Feet  
A - 10' long x 6' wide; 6' square western end, then sloping to bottom at eastern end  
B - 4' x 4'; square  
C - 6' long x 3' wide; rectangular  
D - 6' long x 2' wide; rectangular  
E - 10' long x 6' wide; oval



Rock Tops Relative to Culvert in inches  
A - Square top is 10 inches below culvert bottom Buoy was on rock B  
B - Top is 18 inches below culvert bottom  
C - Top is 20 inches below culvert bottom  
D - Top is 16 inches below culvert bottom  
E - Top is 20 inches below culvert bottom

Prepared by Lorne Bowerman 2008

1996, 1997, and 2002. It came very close in 2001 and 2007; close enough that we could take pretty accurate readings.

So we will have to wait for the big day. It will come. Perhaps when it does we should declare a "Zero Flow Day" and have a holiday and a big party. Or a small party. Or a kayak regatta. Or a swim-a-thon.

The measurements done so far for 2010 show the lake is not nearly as high as it was last year. This year's data is up on the website and is still relative to the old culvert.

### **Lake Management Plan Progressing**

After three years of consultation and research, preparation of a draft Lake Management is now under way. Lorne Bowerman, Kathleen Sullivan and Ted Manning have been leading the work to write a draft version which should be ready for all to see later this Spring. We have been able to find most of the information which we need, but will be asking for further input from lake residents to fill in the missing bits. The Plan contains information on the flora, fauna and ecology of the lake, the history of land use around the lake and an assessment of the issues of concern to lake residents.

Putting it all in one place will let each resident better understand the Lake, and also provide feedback and additions which will be built into the final version. The Plan also identifies solutions - ways that the ecology can be better protected, steps to obtain more assistance in monitoring the state of the lake, and opportunities to provide better information to everyone on the Lake and its conservation. We hope to have a good discussion on what actions will be most suitable to sustain the lake. The next step will be a more thorough consultation - providing everyone with a chance to comment and suggest how we can best work together to conserve the Lake in the best interests of all.

The Lake Association has also been working to get the Conservation Authority, the Municipality and other key bodies involved, both to help in getting key information, and as potential partners in the implementation. Completion of the Plan will make it easier for Patterson Lake residents to access programs to monitor such things as water quality, invasive species, lake weeds, local fauna and to support those who want to naturalize their shoreline or undertake erosion control.

We hope that everyone will participate fully in this process, and help us keep Patterson Lake as one of the cleanest, most natural and pleasant lakes in the Province.

### **Community Participation in the Process - Historical Highlights**

(Editor's Note. This is an excerpt from the forthcoming Lake Management Plan)

The need for an Association to represent the common views and wishes of the property owners of Patterson Lake was identified when a number of property owners assembled in the Robertson Lake Snowmobile Clubhouse on August 16, 2003 to express concerns regarding the lake, including a potential purchase by an Ottawa developer of a large tract of land on the south side of the lake. The informal group, (about 40 people including residents from all roads) brought together by contacting all road committees, talked about a number of issues, including lake water quality and levels and development. This led to the agreement that representatives of all road committees would meet to discuss establishing a Lake Association. The main advantage of having a Lake Association is that it facilitates quick reaction to any situation. Within the lake community, it also provides a platform to support the communication and discussion and resolution of issues that affect property owners. It can also represent lake interests to the wider community and various political levels.

The five road associations agreed that the formation of a Patterson Lake Association (PLA) would be beneficial. Whereas the road associations focus on road maintenance and snow clearing, the PLA addresses other key issues. At the first meeting of the PLA Executive, held on August 30, 2003, it was agreed that there would be five vice-presidents, each representing a road. One of the vice-presidents would be elected by the Executive to hold the position of President. The key issues at the time were water quality, lake level, commercial development, hazard marking buoys, mineral rights and the documentation of the history of Patterson Lake. Communication would be through regular newsletters and a website.

The Township was subsequently notified of the formation of the Association. The Township

Council indicated that it would keep the Executive informed of any developments that might affect Patterson Lake. It is beneficial for the Township to have this relationship, particularly in resolving matters that impact all the property owners.

In terms of bringing value to the community, the PLA from 2003 through 2005 assisted in the placement of hazard markers for boaters, had MVC change its water quality testing procedure to take samples from multiple areas of the lake, represented property owners at OPP meetings and participated in lake networking meetings with other lake associations where issues common to lake living are discussed.

The concerns regarding a large development project abated but lake level continued to be a critical issue. High waters that naturally occur in the spring can cause serious erosion problems. Low water levels in July and August affect the enjoyment of the lake by residents on the eastern side. The Executive ensured that the culverts were kept clear of beaver dams and debris by creating a schedule of representatives who would be responsible for taking the necessary action required to maintain the lake level at some established point. The actual method of cleaning could be to call the Township, call on local neighbours, or involve the entire lake.

For years there was a cycle of some property owners clearing debris throughout the year, blowing up beaver dams and dredging Fairs Creek in order to increase the outflow from the lake. Other property owners would purposely block the culverts with added debris and even with cement. The PLA wanted to find a sensible solution to the low water problem in July and August, one that was amenable to the majority of property owners. After much discussion with the road association representatives, it was suggested that the desired mid-summer lake level be set at ten inches above the bottom of the north culvert. Even though the majority of property owners agreed with this level, the few property owners who disagreed were invited to a meeting to express their concerns. This

resulted in a compromise of eight inches. This was a tremendous step forward in finding a rational resolution to this issue which was a true community-based solution. The results of a survey document that was sent to all the property owners showed very strong support for the PLA to manage the lake level, particularly if it could reduce the incidence of extremes of either high or low water which affected enjoyment of the lake..

The PLA Executive incorporated in August 2006, in order to become a more formal organization and, further, to develop a Lake Management Plan to help insure the ongoing health of the lake and to address issues identified by the lake community. In the Fall of 2006, a questionnaire was sent to every property owner with the intention of formalizing the community's vision for the lake for the next twenty years.

Throughout the time since its incorporation, the PLA has continued to monitor lake levels and water quality, Communication with all property owners is done through a Newsletter in the Spring and Fall and at the annual General Meeting. Discussion of key issues relating to the lake has been on the agenda of all Annual meetings.

One example of the value of having a common voice occurred recently when the PLA worked closely with Township staff to ensure that a new culvert installed to replace the previous aging culverts was installed with no impact on lake levels or the environment. They also advised the Township which property owners might be inconvenienced during the replacement project so that they could be properly notified. Another recent example is the success of the first annual Patterson Lake picnic. Under the auspices of the PLA, it was planned and executed by a group of property owners who came together from each road and is a fine example of the importance of group collaboration.

On June 13, 2009, property owners were invited to participate in a workshop which would provide a forum for their input into the Lake

Management Plan. They identified and prioritized their key areas of concern regarding the lake. This provided the basis for the LMP. Property owners were given the opportunity to provide more detail on the prioritized areas of interest at the next Annual General Meeting held on September 6. As we proceed with the Lake Management Plan, input from the property owners will continue to be sought. It is critical that everyone has the opportunity to provide input.

### **Septic System Re-inspection**

(Below is some information that came from the Lake Networking Network minutes of April 2010 that is of interest to all of us.)

*It is understood that Septic Re-inspections may be mandatory in Ontario after 2012.*

*With the current voluntary re-inspection programs, only after owners have not complied with three requests to have their septic system re-inspected, can it be enforced as it is then deemed a health issue. It was pointed out that not all those pumping out septic systems have a licence (costing \$5,000) to inspect.*

*It seems that there is inconsistency regarding septic system record-keeping by municipalities and in some cases records were actually destroyed in the seventies.*

The best advice we have had on when to have your septic tank pumped is to have it done when the sludge level reaches one-third full. There are a number of septic tank pumping companies around. If you join with a number of neighbours the cost is reduced considerably.

### **Membership Dues**

Howard Stanley, Treasurer

We ask for your support in funding the expenses incurred by your Association, since all Board members are volunteers. The majority of our expenses is the production and mailing of the newsletter, distributed three times per year.

The \$20 membership dues may be paid at our Annual General Meeting on Labour Day Weekend or sent to:

Howard Stanley  
313 Hinchey Ave  
Ottawa ON K1Y 1M1

Cheques should be made payable to **The Patterson Lake Association of Lanark Highlands**. Membership receipts will be sent out with the newsletters.

### **Another Unusual Spring**

The warmth of March this year allowed the lake ice to melt very early. Our typical departure date has been April 21. This year it went out about April 5, plus or minus a day or so depending where you are on the lake.

We were able to paddleboat out to take our first lake level measurement on April 3. The ice was very black and punky that day. We were able to do the ice breaker thing with the paddleboat. Great fun!

I got bitten by a black fly on April 3, or something that left a black fly type of bite.

The new lake level graph is up on the website. As noted before, I do not have a real base reference yet because I do not know how high my measuring rock in relation to the new culvert. It will come.

### **Newsletter**

This Newsletter was edited by Lorne Bowerman. As usual, Connie did the proof reading and polishing. Comments, suggestions, or articles are welcome.

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