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## Protecting Our Natural Heritage

Crowe Lake Waterway Association, P.O. Box 192, Marmora, Ontario K0K 2M0

### In Memory of

#### Bob Gapes 1944 – 2010



Bob has been a great asset to our community during the years that he and Lynn have resided here. He has been an active member in St. Andrew's United Church. Bob has also been a strong supporter of Snofest and all our activities as a director of the Crowe Lake Waterway Association.

His love of the environment and birds along with his smile and easy laughter will be missed by us all.

#### ICE FISHING ON-LINE DIARY

Article submitted by: Robert Taylor

The Peterborough District of the Ministry of Natural Resources is anxious to receive data relating to the winter fishery in our Zone FMZ 17.

Anglers can provide important information relating to angler preferences, catch and harvest (including nil results) by participating in the on-line angler diary program.

Please visit [www.fmz17survey.ca](http://www.fmz17survey.ca) and complete the survey after each time you go fishing this winter. It only takes 5 minutes to provide valuable information.

### 33rd Marmora Snofest February 4,5,6 2011

Come and enjoy all the programs that make up this long running event. This is a full weekend of activities planned to entertain the whole family!

For more information web, link is :- [WWW.marmorasnofest.ca](http://WWW.marmorasnofest.ca) or call 613 472 3571

**Crowe Lake Matters!**

## Word from the President

On Dec 19<sup>th</sup> we lost a strong member of our executive with the sudden death of Bob Gapes. Bob and Lynn have always supported all our projects. Bob will be greatly missed.

We have just finished a very active year for your Association. We entered the July 1<sup>st</sup> parade for the first time and that was very well received. Let me know if you or members of your family are interested in being part of our plans for the 2011 Parade. We can always use help both young and mature. Just call Gord Callan at 613 472 3529 or drop an email to gordoncallan@sympatico.ca . This year we provided a display at the August 1<sup>st</sup> weekend and will plan to bring in another display for 2011. This presents another opportunity to help.

I visited Tim Pidduck at the Crowe Valley Conservation Authority. Tim has prepared a very interesting piece for this newsletter. I was interested to follow up on the unusually high water level in the Crowe and Beaver creek in late Nov. and early Dec. Tim has taken the time to give us an indepth look at our watershed .

Please make plans to send in your membership early in 2011. Would you consider encouraging your neighbours to join? The high cost of fuel means that the expense of maintaining our markers is higher and the easiest way to cover this increase is with more members.

We want all boaters to consider the problems that your boat's wake causes on the Crowe river and Beaver creek shorelines. Please slow down so that you reduce your wake. This is especially important for heavier boats and party boats as they push through the water producing heavy wake waves.

Well we have just started to put up our Christmas decorations and prepare for another family Christmas on Crowe Lake. Yesterday we watched as the ice grew out from the shore and then overnight the whole lake froze. This is the earliest freeze up in many years. I predict that we should have good ice for the winter fishing derby on Sat Feb 19<sup>th</sup>. Remember that this is the free fishing weekend. If you are a summer only resident consider having a winter picnic. Just remember to dress warmly and cook hot dogs and beans. It can be a fun winter experience. The ice last year was perfect for skating on the lake.

One last thought. I want to congratulate Bob and Florence Drummond who celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in Dec. They have been long time members and supporters of the Crowe Lake Waterway Association and we wish them many more years of happiness and health together.

On behalf of all the executive of the Crowe Lake Waterway Association I want to wish you a Happy New Year. Now let's look forward to the next year on the Crowe.

Gordon Callan

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ICE CONDITIONS permitting...

# CROWE LAKE ICE FISHING DERBY

organized by Crowe Lake Waterway Association

## PIKE ONLY

## "CATCH 'EM AND KEEP 'EM"

Sat., Feb. 19, 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Derby coinciding with MNR & OFAH  
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For Further Information  
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**Crowe Lake Matters!**

Page 3



## Report from Tim Pidduck

### General Manager

### Crowe Valley Conservation Authority

If I may, before I launch into the main topic of the article I would like to review water levels and the CVCA's strategy to manage water levels on Crowe Lake this past summer and recent water management strategies in the Crowe River watershed.

In many respects, this summer was very similar to last year. The variables that effect the management of the Crowe dam were "in line" with last year. That being said, every year is unique in terms of weather and therefore the predictability of what will occur during the summer can become difficult. Weather that deviates from normal weather patterns proves to be the greatest challenge and certainly adds to the complexity of operating a dam. However, we do know through past experiences that Crowe Lake in an average year will behave in a fairly predictable manner. That is, the lake level will begin to recede without rain from about the middle of July and onward. Fortunately, Crowe Lake is the last major lake in the Crowe River watershed and receives the benefit of being (usually) the last lake to suffer from prolonged dry conditions in the summer and variations in water levels are usually slight. Knowing this oft repeated occurrence over the many years the CVCA has managed Crowe Lake levels, the Authority staff still strive to maintain a "healthy" water level heading into the summer after the spring freshet.



Photo by John Crofts - Group A First Place

This buffer is the best the Authority is able to do to mitigate the effects of a protracted hot dry spell in the summer and prevent low water levels in typically the second half of the summer and early autumn days before the managed fall draw down period. In fact, there was concern expressed by staff that the prolonged dry spring this year was going to have an earlier than expected impact on Crowe Lake. This could have resulted in lower than normal averages heading into the summer months and squeezing the Authority's ability to have adequate water levels at the beginning of the recreational season. Fortunately, we received some very timely rain late in the spring to alleviate those fears.

Like last year, this year we received enough rain at the right time in the summer to extend the buffer into the normal dry period. Since that time, the lake has naturally receded with very few adjustments as the area received enough rain at the right time to carry the lake through to the early fall. Admittedly, there may have been some spikes along the way, but as always, adjustments were made as quickly as possible to correct the variations.

As the fall approached, all seemed well in hand from the Authority's perspective. The fall drawdown period began as per usual and the Authority was on target to attain lake levels for the fall and upcoming winter months. Although milestones were reached, due to precipitation received in mid-October, further adjustments were made to bring Crowe back into line and the Authority was again comfortable with the levels by the middle of November. The water level was at 182.290m GSC (Geodetic Survey of Canada Datum – metres above sea level), within our "sights" for winter water levels.

*Continued on Page 5*



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Photo by Glenn Caverly - Group C

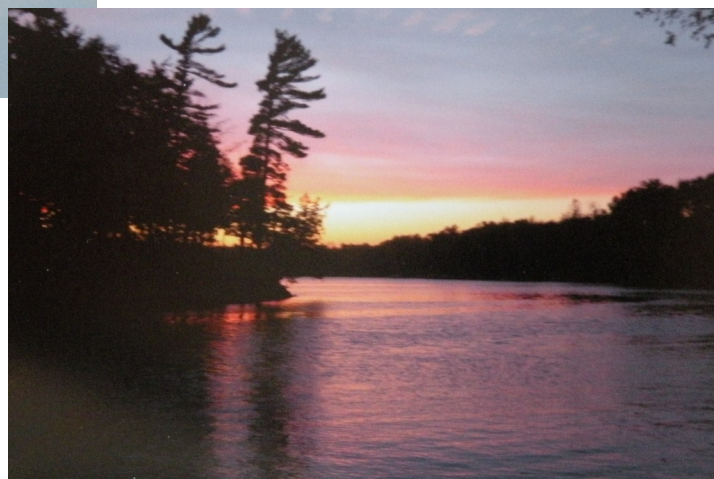


Photo by Glenn Caverly - Group B

*Continued from page 4*

As usual though, mother nature throws curves at you when you least expect it. During a 36 hour period at the end of November, over 60mm of rainfall was received on an already saturated ground. The end result? The watershed experienced water levels not seen or attained at this time of year in our watershed and Crowe Lake did not escape the deluge. At the end of it all, (and we are still feeling the effects of it) Crowe Lake peaked at 182.671 GSC. In comparison, this past spring's freshet resulted in a peak of 182.630, 4.1 centimetres *lower*. As well, the flow rate for the Crowe River at the dam this December peaked at 97.7 cubic metres per second, whereas the spring flow rate this year peaked at 71.6, a significant difference of 26.1 cm/s. Makes you wonder what's around the corner?

Well, for this remainder of this article, I'd like to focus my attention in this issue on "change is in the air" or as a manager of a water based organization, should I say "change is in the water", which is quite possibly a glimpse of what just might occur around the proverbial corner.

As with any organization that has a mandate to follow, a course to chart or strategy to act upon, there comes a time when change is inevitable. Usually, the force of change is a result of social, economic or political pressures. This reality is no different for the Crowe Valley Conservation Authority. Please bear with me as I take you back to the underlying pressures exerted on the province and this area for the formation of the CVCA.

As some of you may know, the CVCA was born out of a collective desire by 13 municipalities/townships in 1958 as a response to the Hurricane Hazel disaster. On 15 October 1954, the most famous hurricane in Canada struck with ferocity at the heart of Southern Ontario. High winds and torrential rains pounded at the province for 48 hours. Thousands were left homeless, 81 people were killed and estimated property damage in today's dollars was over 1 billion.

The province and local people in our watershed came together and took action. A partnership was formed, funding was made available and the Conservation Authorities Act provided the necessary structure. There was great expectations the new organization would at the very least warn people of impending disasters thereby helping to save lives, protect people's property and reduce social disruption.

The system has worked. In fact, the CVCA celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2008. During those 50 years, the conservation authority has implemented a flood forecasting and warning system, we have built dams and we have worked closely and continue to do so with our municipal and provincial partners. In fact, CAs across the province expanded their roles as time has gone by with outdoor education programs, acquired conservation areas and various other services. Dollars and cents were invested in the conservation authority infrastructure (including the CVCA) in the 1960's through to the 80's.

*Continued on Page 8*







## THE SUMMER HOUSE - A CROWE LAKE LANDMARK

Built in 1949 and now 62 years old, the summer house at Glen Allan Park has survived many battles with the pressure of winter ice on the lake and remains a focal point for the whole shore. It is prominent on the park's signage and brochures.

During the depression years, Vern and Hazel Caverly camped with their young family at many lakes in Eastern Ontario and the New England States. Their flivver towed a home-built trailer and boat which carried all their gear including two tents.

Fishing was an important pastime and a welcomed source for fresh meat on the table. On one of these trips in 1937, they visited Crowe Lake well-known for Muskie and Bass fishing. They met Walter Revoy who made his living guiding and fur trapping. His small humble home was close to the original iron bridge on Beaver Creek. The walls on each side of his doorway were covered with Muskie heads nailed on by the gills. Awesome! Walter's son Willie carried on the family tradition as a fishing guide.

While fishing and looking for a campsite, Walter showed Vern and Hazel the beautiful natural clearing and sand beach which was to become Glen Allan Park. Walter claimed he was the custodian of the property and allowed them to camp there. He showed them the cow path trail to the site, barely accessible by car.

The Caverlys returned the next summer. One afternoon a motor boat came along the shore with two men in it who were trolling and talking loudly over the noise of the motor. One was sharing his idea of building a hotel on the very site where they were camping. This conflicted with Vern and Hazel's thoughts and dreams of building a camping park on their favourite site and prompted them to try and buy the property.

The owner was a businessman from Quebec who was quite willing to sell. He had never seen the property and it was likely purchased as a tax sale foreclosure.

The tract of land was about 120 acres which included about a mile of shoreline extending part way down Crowe River. Later a 50 acre parcel was added to it.

Glen Allan soon became a popular camping park for some while one room cabins with a screened porch satisfied the needs of others. Then larger cottages with two bedrooms formed a line of 12, stretching along the shore. Travel trailers also became popular with many setting up for the summer season. It was the place to be for summer picnics and swimming on a Sunday afternoon. Some wanted to purchase a lot to build their own cottage and the sale of these lots provided funds for building the park.

Meanwhile, back to the summer house. It was a refuge from the rain or a thunderstorm and relief from the glare of the sun. Many of us have warm memories of gathering at the summer house for a visit and chat while enjoying the sunset over the lake.



In the photo, Jean Caverly on the left is wearing shorts and is barefooted. Cousin Margery Ennis in the middle and friend Pat Brady of Marmora on the right are wearing dresses and shoes which is more normal for the era.

Other buildings have come and gone over the years. The summer house lives on to this day as a landmark of times past with many memories for all who have enjoyed it over the years.

**Written by Jean (Caverly) Barlow, Glenn Caverly, Bob Caverly and Norma (Caverly) Crofts .**





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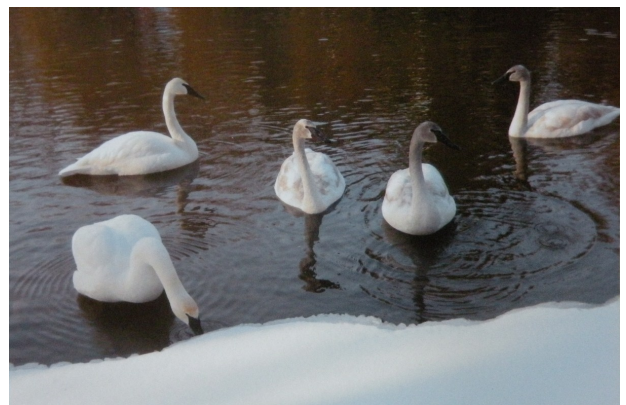
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Photos by Glenn Caverly - Group C



Photo by M. Prentice - Group B





However, “change” abruptly appeared in the mid 1990's. The provincial government mindset shifted. Provincial funding cuts to conservation authorities swept across the province in 1995. The CVCA's provincial funding was cut by 70%. The province was quite clear some funding would be distributed to the CVCA, but not at levels seen prior to '95. The province assured CAs funding would be provided for the core mandate of the Authority, the flood warning and forecasting system and routine/minor maintenance of our dams and weirs. But, in my humble opinion, it is a grossly inadequate system for financially challenged areas like rural Ontario. Even now, 15 years after the new financial structure or formula was put in place, we still have not seen the current provincial government fund CAs to 1995 levels. Our organization and hence our municipal partners, (your municipality plus 9 others in the CVCA watershed) continues to bear the weight of those decisions made 15 years ago.

What has this meant to the CVCA? First and foremost, enormous financial pressures have been placed squarely on the shoulders of our organization and hence our municipal partners. Yes, we've survived thanks to our municipal partners picking up the slack, but we've had to make difficult choices. For example, the Authority terminated our only educational program - our Spring Water Awareness Program, which was regularly brought to schools like the Coe Hill Public School. Our planning department was eliminated and recently, we have had to temporarily close a campground and day use facility for 3 consecutive years. The Crowe Bridge Conservation Area was only reopened with the assistance of the Municipality of Trent Hills and Friends of Crowe Bridge. As well, there has been no funding to update the aging flood forecast and warning system. Our infrastructure is showing signs of wear and tear, as dams built in the 60's are approaching the end of their life cycle and require significant maintenance or repairs. Staffing levels were cut in half and we are still below that complement. It is a strain on my staff and our resources.

Is this change fair? Is it fair to ask a small rural population to carry the burden of a geographically large watershed over 2000 square kilometres in size? Probably not, but it is our reality as cries for assistance have fallen on deaf provincial ears. The “change” brought to bear on this conservation authority is not going to vanish. We are simply experiencing the lasting effects of decisions made by politicians over a decade ago and continue to do so. The province had vision once in the late '50's, and 60's, but that time has past.

Continued on page 9



Photo by Sue Prentice - Group B First Place



Photo by John Crofts - Group C First Place





Photo by Norma Crofts - Group A

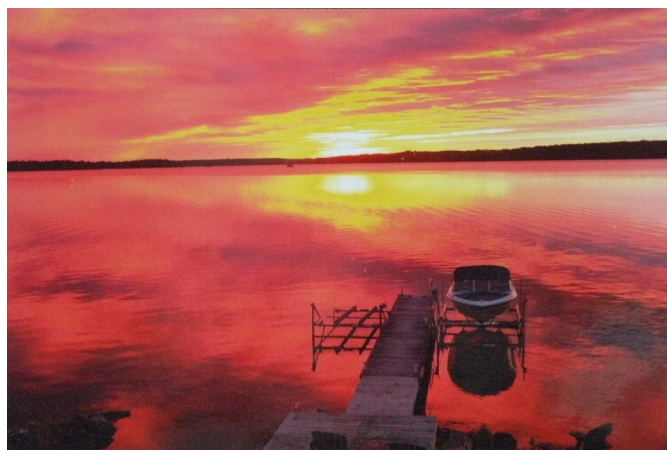


Photo by Leo Gallant - Group B



Photo by John Crofts - Group C

*Continued from page 8* We still have and enjoy, use and respect this watershed, the lakes, rivers, streams and wetlands that make up this ecosystem. That fact remains steadfast. I firmly believe our watershed, with Crowe Lake anchoring the watershed, is one of the most pristine watersheds in southern Ontario. I think many of you would agree, we are indeed fortunate.

Well, you may ask, what does all of this mean for the CVCA, your municipality and perhaps most importantly, what about Crowe Lake and all of its tributaries and wetlands which make up its watershed.

Without continued and improving support, the CVCA will face challenges that will place enormous strain on our organizational resources. This will have a significant impact on our watershed community, including the infrastructure man has created and the environment that is the foundation which everything ultimately depends upon. In short, the provincial will or vision of the past has vanished and the vacuum which has been created needs to be addressed for the benefit of the community. We need to ensure we maintain or even improve upon the ecosystem so dear to your hearts. Yes, you may think that there is little that can be done to assist or help to make the necessary changes, but if you think about it, over the long term, there is much that we can strive to achieve.

Let's look at it this way, if we do nothing and not accept that changes need to be made, we won't have a promising future for the community in which we work, play, live in or visit.

We have to agree as a society in general or at the very least, within the watershed community of the Crowe Valley, that the past practices will not work going forward. In just a short period of time of 150 years or so, (compared to the life cycle of an average lake like Crowe), man has decided to alter the ecosystem of Crowe Lake. By placing fill, hardening shorelines, removing natural vegetation and building a dam, Crowe Lake has permanently changed. In fact, one could easily argue, the eutrophication of the lake or the life cycle of Crowe Lake has been detrimentally altered. Because previous generations had not either considered these impacts or did not have the knowledge to understand the long term impacts of these changes, they have, in a very short time created a situation that will be felt for who knows how many generations to come.

What's to be done? I don't have all the answers, as it will take a community effort and it may seem painful or hard to swallow at times, but changes are necessary and time is of the essence because we aren't positive when external climatic, political or social forces will **demand** change.

*Continued on page 10*



We need to invest in understanding the lake ecosystem, especially in lieu of global warming and subsequent changes to our weather. Science based research will lead to a greater understanding of the health of lakes like Crowe and the Crowe Valley watershed. The CVCA, as watershed managers, with the right funding, tools, research capabilities and working with our member municipalities like Marmora and Lake, would provide that environmental base. Water management could very well be a complicated and highly politicized issue going forward. We need to know and understand what could possibly occur perhaps not tomorrow, but very likely not too far in the distant future. We will all need to be pulling in the same direction to understand and coexist with the Crowe Lake environment, its watershed and the communities in which we live. With partners and adequate funding support, we could achieve results we are all looking for in this neck of the woods, which is a safe, clean water environment/ecosystem with Crowe Lake as one of the jewels of the Municipality of Marmora and Lake.

The Authority also recognizes in order to help facilitate this goal and to protect people and their property from the harmful effects of flooding, Ontario Regulation 159/06 needed to be implemented and has been in effect for the past four years. It too was a significant change for the community and is a part of the change society is in the throes of accepting. We now know better that building in the flood plain, placing fill in lakes or destroying wetlands is not a wise activity and can have detrimental effects on people and their property as well as

have a significant impact on the environment. Unfortunately, in the past and leading up to the time of implementation of the regulation, the harmful effects were ignored. Once again, we now know better and have enacted change for the better. Our Regulation 159/06 is just but one of the pieces of the puzzle.

Decisions made by your municipal leaders to assist with support of the CVCA will be vital. Burying our heads in the past is not the way forward. The only constant is change and the required vision to tackle issues in a productive, positive, timely manner will certainly test the strength of the community.

It takes courage to tackle the changes we need to make, but collectively, moving in the right direction will pay enormous dividends for future generations. Be part of the effort, knowing that we've done everything possible will grant many of us the fulfilment we can enjoy and ultimately pass onto the next generations who will be able to live and enjoy the Crowe Lake community as you have done.

As you buckle down for winter's sojourn, take a moment every once in a while and think about our corner of Ontario. You never know what a little brainstorming will accomplish!

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank the Crowe Lake Waterway Association for the opportunity to engage your members and hopefully provide some insight to our current role and hopes for the future. The community of Marmora is in a unique position at the "bottom end" of the Crowe River watershed.

**Tim Pidduck**

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