

McGregor Bay Association

Newsletter 2026

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Many thanks to all who have contributed!

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| • Environment | Doug Whitton, Eleanor Pardoe |
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| • Newsletter | Gillian Woodrooffe |
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| • Junior Sailing Program | Holly Higgens |
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| • Social/AGM | Karin Lauderback |
| • Water Quality | Ian Cook |
| • Website | Eric Grant, Anne Harvey |
| • WRFN Liaison | Doug Whitton |

Our Mission Statement

To protect and enhance the environment of McGregor Bay, to encourage and promote the respectful enjoyment of its unique natural setting and to represent the interests of all its residents and other stake holders.

President's Report

Ian Cook



This is my first President's message, having taken over from Eleanor Pardoe at our AGM last August. My sincere thanks to Eleanor for so capably piloting the McGregor Bay Association over the past few years.

I'm still something of a relative newcomer to the Bay, having "only" spent the past 20 summers here and "only" owning a cottage in Iroquois Bay for the last 11. Even so, over that time, my appreciation and respect for these lands, these waters —and for the people who spend time here runs as deep as those whose families who have been coming for generations.

Our Board of Directors Goal

Your cottage association is overseen by a remarkable group of board members and committee chairs and volunteers, who like all of us, share two common goals - to protect the waters and lands we love and to enhance the enjoyment of this unique area. I think the association does a great job at this, given its comprised of a relatively small group of volunteers. I would like to thank each and every one of them for their commitment and dedication.

The Volunteers Who Run Our Programs

For many of you, the main connection you have with the MBA is our AGM in mid-summer, where a good representation of our membership enjoys an update on our activities, votes on important issues, and enjoys fellowship, a great meal, and maybe a pint, afterwards. Karin Lauderback has done a fantastic job of organizing this big event for several years. She is handing the reins over to Kathie Lindner, new to the board this year. Welcome Kathie and thank you so much Karin for putting together a wonderful event each year.

Your Association does far more than host the AGM and Annual Social. Board members also lead a wide range of valued MBA programs. Holly Higgins, together with her daughter Hannah, Bryan McDonald, and Eric Grant, run the junior and senior sailing programs. Doris Cowan coordinates the ever-popular Dessert with a Dash, a popular social and educational event. Andy Betterton has taken on responsibility for maintaining our safety equipment, including the vital fire pump stations — with thanks to Ed Schillimore for his many years of dedicated service and his continued support. Bryan also leads the team behind the Water Festival and the Red Sand Beach picnic, while Gillian Woodrooffe organizes the always-enjoyable kids' craft days.

Communication

Communication is at the heart of what we do in the Bay. We are in regular contact with our local municipality through our reliable rep Laurie Cook. Doug Whitton maintains our important connection with the Whitefish River First Nation, as well as liaising with the Georgian Bay Association as a member of their executive. Jackie Toombs provides a calendar of events (and it's a full calendar!) at the start of the season and sends out an e-mail weekly showcasing the upcoming events. Gillian does a great job putting out the newsletters. We post regularly in the Friends of McGregor Bay Facebook group. Eric and Anne Harvey maintain our website – www.mcgregorbayassociation.ca. In addition, Anne makes sure MBA news updates are sent via eBlasts to all the members.

Monitoring our Environment

All natural areas face challenges these days and McGregor Bay is no exception. Warming temperatures and increased use of the bay means that our pristine waters can't be taken for granted. Your association has a water testing program in place to catch early signs of water degradation. Phragmites is a nasty invasive reed that can choke out whole bays if left unchecked. Doug has initiated an ambitious program to identify, control and eradicate it before it gets out of hand.

The Georgian Bay Association

The GBA does a great job identifying and addressing “bigger picture” issues like development pressure, cruise ship encroachment, dock foam remediation and the proliferation of “floating cottages”. Our connection with the GBA is important and valuable, as is the relationship we have with the Federation of Ontario Cottage Associations. Issues that arise further south in Georgian Bay may not seem relevant to us at this time, but there are signs that they are heading our way. Having guidance from the GBA in these areas is helpful to the MBA.

Membership

This year we would like to make a big push to increase membership. As outlined above I think we do a good job communicating with our members, but reaching out to the many cottagers and other folks in the bay who are not members is a challenge. By far the best way to increase membership is through word of mouth. So, if you have a neighbour or friend in the bay who is not signed up, please reach out to them and invite them to join. Direct them to our website or to one of your board members. Let them know they will be supporting an association that has their interests and the interests of the bay at heart, and that membership will increase their enjoyment of this wonderful watery corner of paradise.

While I haven't yet had the pleasure of meeting everyone who comes to the Bay, as your new president, I look forward to connecting with many more of you in the seasons ahead.

~ Ian



McGregor Bay Association's Statement of Respect

The McGregor Bay Association acknowledges that we are in the traditional territory of the Anishinaabek of Whitefish River First Nation who will continue to exercise inherent rights regarding these lands and waters as they have over the millennia. We honour the respectful relationship that the First Nation held and continues to hold in nurturing these natural surroundings. We recognize that their ancestors have exercised an inherent right to these lands and waters over the millennia and will continue to do so with the generations to come as reflected under the Bondhead Treaty of 1836, the McDougal Treaty of 1862, and the Robinson-Huron Treaty of 1850. As allies and partners within this territory, we are grateful for the opportunity to live, work and play here and acknowledge a shared responsibility to continue our relationship of respect and reciprocity to these lands and waters for the generations to come.

~ Miigwetch



Photo: Sue Miller

Financial Report

Tom Carmazzi

Hello everyone! It has been an unusual winter, with weather patterns not following recent trends. I hope you have adjusted accordingly and enjoyed the change. Regardless of the conditions outside, I am already thinking about this summer and the Bay. I am so fortunate to be a part of the MBA community!

Let us take a quick look at our financial performance, first in 2025, then our expectations for 2026.

Our Financial Performance of 2025 as Compared to 2024

*The Good News: We broke-even in 2025 after a loss of **\$1,617**, in 2024!*

- This favorable improvement was the result of our increasing regular membership fees by \$30 which contributed \$4,560 in additional revenue as our number of regular members were constant at 152.
- The creation and mailing of the Newsletter was less expensive by \$804.
- Legal fees of \$1,477 related to the final payment to the attorneys for by-laws compliance, did not repeat.
- Internet fees declined by \$605.

The Not-So-Good News:

- Our overall contributions declined by \$4,356 partly due to an unusually low level of voluntary contributions in 2025.
- Our interest income decreased by \$901 as rates continue to drop.
- The AGM costs were a little higher in 2025 by \$726.

Although we had planned to do a little better in 2025, it was a significant improvement from the loss of 2024. Thank you for all your efforts!!!

A Look at our Expectations for 2026 Compared to 2025


- When all our numbers are crunched, we are forecasted to make a little money in 2026 - **\$170**. This is directly related to our plan to increase our number of regular and extended members by 8 and 12, which will result in \$1,620 in incremental revenue. We prefer to take the approach of increasing revenue by growing our network of friends over increasing membership fees. Our thinking is that we have a lot to offer, especially to the 60 % of cottage owners who are not members. Obviously, to achieve this goal, we will need everyone's assistance to bring our friends on board!
- Unfortunately, interest income will continue to decline as rates on our CD's decrease. This is a \$1,535 negative impact on Revenue.

- We are expecting a rebound of Voluntary Contributions of about \$600 which will offset the expected slight increase in our costs of 1.3%.
 - Regarding our costs: a third of our expenses are paid to the GBA and FOCA, with 90% of that amount going to GBA. The GBA is our representative to all levels of government, backed by 17 organizations, like ours, and over 3,000 cottage owners. FOCA provides valuable updates on local issues from water levels to licensing. While at times these benefits may not be obvious, they provide the umbrella of protection for our community.
- On the Balance Sheet you will notice the Phragmites Fund of \$10,322. In our meeting last August, we highlighted the threat of the invasive Phragmites to our environment. To address this threat, the WRFN contributed \$7,322 in 2025 and MBA added \$4,000 to create this fund. While last year, only \$1,000 was spent, this year we expect to use the balance of these funds. This is a conservative cost estimate, and additional funding may be required maintain the biodiversity in our waters.

The committee chairs have done a wonderful job working within our means. We could not have accomplished all this without all the volunteers at each event!! Never underestimate your impact!! You all have done an amazing job! Thank you!!!!

In closing, thank you for your continued financial support of the MBA. We would not be able to do what we do without YOU!

~ Tom

| | | | | STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENSES | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|----------------------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|---------------|
| | | | | 2026 Bud | 2025 | 2024 | |
|  THE MCGREGOR BAY ASSOCIATION FINANCIAL STATEMENTS December 31, 2025 & Budget 2026 | | | | Revenue: | | | |
| | | | | Revenue from memberships: | | | |
| | | | | Regular members | \$ 24,000 | \$ 22,800 | \$ 18,240 |
| | | | | Extended family members | 3,850 | 3,430 | 3,045 |
| | | | | Associate members | 90 | 90 | 360 |
| | | | | Friends of the Bay | 200 | 200 | 150 |
| | | | | Less: PayPal fees | (425) | (414) | (470) |
| | | | | | 27,715 | 26,106 | 21,325 |
| | | | | Other revenue: | | | |
| | | | | Members' voluntary contributions | 6,000 | 5,401 | 9,182 |
| | | | | Contributions directed to Rainbow Fund | 100 | 100 | 675 |
| | | | | Investment income | 1,225 | 2,760 | 3,661 |
| | | | | US exchange | 450 | 497 | 527 |
| | | | | | 7,775 | 8,758 | 14,045 |
| BALANCE SHEET | | | | Total revenue | | | |
| | | | | 35,490 | 34,865 | 35,370 | |
| | | | | Expenses: | | | |
| | | | | Membership dues - Georgian Bay Association | 10,400 | 9,880 | 9,815 |
| | | | | Newsletter & membership directory | 5,000 | 4,754 | 4,089 |
| | | | | Facilities rental - Parish Hall | 6,000 | 6,000 | 6,000 |
| | | | | AGM, picnics, social events | 6,200 | 6,777 | 6,051 |
| | | | | Insurance | 2,900 | 2,658 | 2,606 |
| | | | | Fire protection | 200 | 160 | 289 |
| | | | | Membership dues - FOCA | 1,340 | 1,232 | 978 |
| | | | | Legal Fees - By-laws | | | 1,477 |
| | | | | Website | 350 | 339 | 339 |
| | | | | Navigation aids | 600 | 762 | 500 |
| | | | | Dessert with a Dash, nature activities | 100 | 68 | 456 |
| | | | | Accounting Fees | 600 | 593 | 565 |
| | | | | Postage & office supplies | | | 1,469 |
| | | | | Bank charges | 130 | 129 | 139 |
| | | | | Subscriptions | 1,300 | 1,509 | 2,114 |
| | | | | Water testing | 100 | - | - |
| | | | | Sailing & kayaking | 100 | | 100 |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | Total expenses | 35,320 | 34,861 | 36,987 |
| | | | | Operations - excess of revenue over expenses | | | |
| | | | | 170 | 3 | (1,617) | |
| | | | | Members' equity from operations, beginning of year | | | |
| | | | | 17,893 | 17,893 | 19,510 | |
| | | | | Members' equity from operations, end of year | | | |
| | | | | \$ 18,063 | \$ 17,896 | \$ 17,893 | |

Membership Report

Anne Harvey, Membership Secretary

As spring approaches, we all start looking forward to our summer time in the Bay, particularly after such a harsh winter in many parts of our countries. Our McGregor Bay Association does a lot with an all-volunteer team — from maintaining navigational buoys, fire pumps, and emergency resources, to hosting beloved community events like Dessert with a Dash, the Red Sand Beach Picnic, and the Water Festival. Members also support ongoing work to protect the Bay's environment, including monitoring water quality and staying ahead of invasive species threats.

That said, our membership numbers haven't yet bounced back to where they were before the pandemic. Last year we counted 152 Regular members, 98 Extended members, 1 Business member, and 4 Friends of the Bay. We'd love to see those numbers grow.

If you haven't already renewed your membership, now is a great time. And if you know neighbours, friends, or family who share a love of the Bay, please spread the word — there's no better recruitment tool than a personal recommendation.

Membership options are as follows:

Regular — \$150.00 | One voting member per property - includes Newsletter, weekly in-season eblasts, and dinner at the AGM

Extended — \$35.00 | Additional member tied to a Regular membership - includes Newsletter and weekly in-season eblasts

Business — \$90.00 | Includes ad space in the Newsletter

Friend of the Bay — \$50.00 | Open to renters or anyone with a connection to the Bay

You can update your contact details and pay dues through PayPal on the McGregor Bay website www.mcgregorbayassociation.ca. Payment is also accepted by e-Transfer from a Canadian bank account, or by cheque made out to McGregor Bay Association and mailed with a completed membership form to:

Anne Harvey
1206-222 Jackson St. W.,
Hamilton, ON L8P 4S5
Canada

See you in “The Bay”!

~ **Anne**
mbamemberships@gmail.com



Photo: Gillian Woodrooffe



NEMI / Ward 1 Update

Laurie Cook

Winter is gradually loosening its grip on our beautiful area, but a few last vicious bursts of ice and snow are dampening hopes for an early spring. I always feel badly for the robins that show up so optimistically and find only frozen worms!

And despite vast amounts of snow, water levels are projected to be even lower than last year. Fingers crossed they're wrong, but many of us have seen these fluctuations over the decades and if we know one thing for certain, nature cannot be controlled.

Another thing sadly out of our control is the price of gas and this summer looks to be an expensive one for those wanting to do any boat tripping (or even just getting out to our islands!). Fortunately, in Ward 1 our taxes are going up a modest 3.8%

2026 is a municipal election year and Canadian property owners are eligible to vote on Oct 26th in person, or by mail. Please check that you're on the Voter's List contact Pam Myers, Clerk of the Town of Northeast Manitoulin and the Islands. By email: pmyers@townofnemi.on.ca. Or by phone - (705) 368 3500 ext. 228. The following website has excellent information on municipal elections: <https://www.amo.on.ca/about-us/municipal-101/municipal-elections>

NEMI has a lot of interesting events and opportunities planned for 2026 and the town website (www.townofnemi.on.ca) and Facebook page have up-to-date listings.

The Centennial Museum in Sheghuindah will be opening in mid-May with various art shows and children's activities throughout the season, including a Northern Ontario Artists Association (NOAA) juried art show in June and the Manitoulin Fine Arts Association show in August. The beloved Fall Fair will be held on Sept. 19th, and tours of the Shguiandah Archeological Site will be ongoing. Contact the museum for ticketing information (705) 368-2367 or go to their webpage at <https://www.townofnemi.on.ca/p/centennial-museum-of-sheguiandah>

Household Hazardous Waste Day will be held on July 11th at the Recreation Centre (mark your calendars!) And check the NEMI Facebook page for details.

Landfill hours expand to include Sundays from 10a.m. to 5 pm starting the 3rd week of May and ending the 3rd week of October. Year-round operations continue to be on Tuesdays and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Recycling rules have changed to now include more items - please check the Town website for the full list.

As always, our wonderful NEMI Public Library offers more than just books. There are programs and events galore - with many geared towards children and seniors. The lending library continues to offer tools and equipment for members to borrow and use at home. The list of tools is extensive - please call the library at (705) 368 2044 for more information and conditions or check their webpage at <https://nemi.olsn.ca/>. To borrow tools, you will need a library card – which all Ward 1 residents are entitled to have. To apply for one, come to the library, and please bring a bill or tax receipt showing your location.

Other notable dates of community events include:

- The Manitoulin Trade Show at the Recreation Centre on Hwy 6 from Friday May 29th to May 31st.
- The first Community Safety Day on June 6th
- Comic Con on June 12/13, also at the Recreation Centre
- The annual Community Picnic will be held on July 12th at Low Island Park. Everyone is welcome and there are numerous children's activities.
- July 31 to Aug 02nd is Haweater Weekend in Little Current
- The very popular Tugboat Rendez-Vous will be returning on August 14/15
- Pride Weekend will be August 14th to the 16th, complete with a joyful parade and free community BBQ.

And for anyone looking to stay physically active over the summer - remember that NEMI has some beautiful trails to explore and the Rec Centre has various programs - including pickleball. Check with the Town office for details (705) 368 3500.

Enjoy your precious time out in the Bay, and to all our returning American friends, a warm welcome back! As always, contact me with your comments or concerns by email: hlaurie.cook@yandex.com or by phone: (705) 282 7076

All the very best for a wonderful summer,

~ **Laurie Cook**

Councillor Ward 1, NEMI



Dessert with a Dash

Doris Cowan, Chair

Dessert With a Dash continues to be a highly popular Monday evening event among McGregor Bay cottagers. Most evenings last summer there were more than 30 people in attendance. As in the past, we gather and enjoy a potluck assortment of desserts at 6:30 p.m. followed by a featured talk at 7:00 p.m., unless otherwise noted.



Above: Jack Wood gave a talk about how the geology of McGregor Bay gives insights to the story of Earth's processes that helped shape the waterways, mountains and islands of McGregor Bay. **Photo: Doris Cowan**

Below: Gavin Nyhoff spoke about his experience working at a nuclear power generating plant in New Brunswick. At age 22, he is the youngest person to give a presentation at Dessert with a Dash! **Photo: Sue Miller**



Once again, I would like to extend a big thank you to our year's speakers and to Anne Harvey for sending weekly DWAD reminders.

This year's organizers, Margaret Beard and Doris Cowan, invite you to select from the smorgasbord of topics below. Choose any- or all - and once again be prepared to be thoroughly entertained!

Monday June 29

McGregor Bay Book Talk and Exchange

Bring a favourite book and be prepared to describe enough plot details to tempt us to read the book. Then we'll lend or exchange our books.

Monday July 6

Hiking Nepal with Kim Epskamp

In the spring of 2025, Kim Epskamp traveled to Kathmandu, Nepal, before embarking on a 16-day trek to Annapurna Base Camp, nestled in the shadow of Annapurna, the world's tenth-highest mountain. The journey also included a four-day stay in Pokhara, Nepal and a visit to Taipei, Taiwan. Rather than focusing solely on the physical journey, Epskamp's hour-long presentation will centre on a series of short, occasionally humorous stories that capture the memorable experiences and fascinating people he encountered along the way.

Monday July 13

Mountain Climbing with Matt Stanich

For many years, Chuck Stanich and his son Matt have climbed many mountains. Matt will share stories about some of his adventures.

Monday July 20

Storytelling - Celebrating the Abbots Family, Louis Nees and Dorothy Harvey

Four individuals will be celebrated by three speakers with stories about their time and impact in the Bay. This year we will be spotlighting the lives of Marion and Ernest Abbot (Jean Broberg and Shirley Perrin's parents), presented by Jean's son David Good. Followed by stories about the memorable Louis Nees, told by one of his children. Finally, Rev. Peter Wall will talk about one of the Bay's endeared artists, Dorothy Harvey.

Monday July 27

The Great Loop by Sailboat – presented by Eric and David Grant

The Great Loop is a continuous 8,000–11,000 km waterway that recreational boaters can travel, circling the eastern U.S. and part of Canada. It extends from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico and includes the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway, heritage Canadian waterways and canals, as well as inland rivers of America's heartland. In 2024, from April through November, Eric and Dave—along with their crew—set out to complete this route by sailboat. The highlight of the trip was bringing their sailboat "Nimbus" to the Bay for the summer. Eric and Dave will describe the boat, the route, the challenges, the rewards of the trip.

Monday August 3

Folk Concert with Marty Rosen This concert will begin at 6:30 pm

Although Kentucky based folk singer Marty Rosen, he has been working for the past two years on expanding his repertoire beyond some of his favourite artists, such as Stan Rogers, Ian Tyson, Ron Hynes. He also likes to showcase artists unknown outside their home regions throughout the English-speaking world. He and his wife spend part of each year at Meldrum Bay on Manitoulin Island.

Monday August 17

A Tale of Two Landscapes: How Ancient Rocks Shape Today's Plants in McGregor Bay and Manitoulin's South Shore—presented by Andy Fyon

Andy is a retired director of the Ontario Geological Survey and a geologist by training. His interest lies in the relationship between plant type, plant community and how they are influenced by the geological substrate. An avid photographer, his photos can be found on Facebook, Instagram and his website www.ontariowildflower.com. For his talk, he'll compare aspects of the flora of Iroquois Island with some unusual flora on Manitoulin Island and how the bedrock geology has influence on the distribution of some flora.

<https://www.facebook.com/andy.fyon>; <https://www.instagram.com/andyfyon/>; ontariobeneathourfeet.com; ontariowildflower.com .

Cottages of a Century or More....

Many cottages in the Bay have reached — or will soon reach — the 100-year mark. To help preserve the Bay's heritage, we are planning a special presentation at ***Dessert with a Dash in 2027***. We may even create a video recognizing some of our oldest properties.



Yarrow Cliff was built in 1925 by George P. and Genevieve Robinson and has remained in the family ever since. **Photo: Eric Robinson**

To make this possible, we are asking Bay families to share the history of their cottages. A committee led by **Eleanor Pardoe** (eleanor.pardoe@gmail.com) will begin collecting information about these vintage cottages this summer. Committee members include **Margaret Beard, Gail Robinson, Mattia Kerr Thillaye, and Holly Higen**s.

Together they will gather information on more than 30 properties that we believe will be 100 years old. If you would like to assist, we would be delighted to have your help. Please feel free to send information to any of the committee members listed above.

Many Thanks!
~ **Doris**

Celebrating McGregor Bay's Heritage

Doris Cowan

Last year marked the first **Dessert with a Dash** evening dedicated to honouring some of McGregor Bay's citizens who have made a lasting impact on the Bay. We know there are many others who have also left a legacy, and it is our intention to recognize these individuals in the years to come. Our hope is to make this an annual evening devoted to celebrating the Bay's legacy citizens.

Last year's program drew a large audience, and many attendees who had not previously known these individuals found the evening both engaging and informative. Fortunately, the event was recorded and uploaded to the MBA website. To view it, visit our website at <https://mcgregorbayassociation.ca/>. Click on the **Archive** tab, and then select **Dessert with a Dash** from the drop-down menu. We hope that future talks about memorable Bay personalities will also be recorded and added to the website, so even those who cannot make it to the Bay can enjoy them from home.

If you know of individuals who have left their mark on the Bay and would like to share their stories, please let me know and I will add them to the list.



Voices of the Bay



This summer, the **McGregor Bay Association** invites you to join in on **Open Mic Nights at the Parish Hall**.

Every Second Tuesday:
July 7 • July 21 • August 4 • August 18
7:30 – 9:00 PM. (Sign-up begins at 7:00 PM)

Poets, singers, songwriters, musicians, spoken-word performers, and short story tellers are all encouraged to take the stage and share their talents.

Don't be shy... but don't be long-winded either! Come perform or simply come to listen and enjoy an evening of creativity and community.

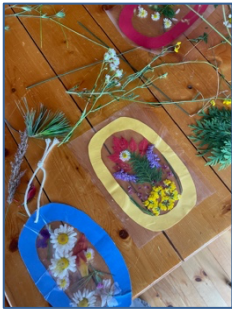
Sky, Water, Cloth: A Creative Women's Weekend

McGregor Bay | July 25–26, 2026

Join a gathering of creative women in the Bay for a weekend of making, learning, and good company. Participants will explore a variety of artistic practices, including **eco-dyeing, bookmaking, drawing, and handkerchief embroidery**.

If you are interested in taking part, please contact **Jody Pilon** at Jodypilon@gmail.com to be added to the mailing list for further information.

Hosted by Lyn Starke and Gail Robinson, with guest presenters.



Kids and Crafts

Gillian Woodrooffe

Twice last summer some of the Bay’s younger set gathered to get creative and socialize. New creations and new friends were made. Each time, the kids used their imagination and combined objects of nature with art supplies to construct items of beauty.



I would like to thank Krista Barr for her continuing role as a program leader. Last year she helped the kids create these beautiful “sun catchers”.



Kids’ Crafts workshops are returning! Three Monday afternoons in July 2026 have been set aside for creative fun and hands-on activities for our younger Bay visitors. Krista will be coordinating the first. We are always on the lookout for “new blood” for our program. If you are interested, contact me (gwoodrooffe@gmail.com) and we can discuss further!



The McGregor Bay Garden Group

Susie Griffith

This summer we hope to spruce up the landscaping around the Parish Hall. Andy Williams has already got us started by building new flowerboxes for the front of the hall. We’ll be looking for volunteers to help fill and plant them, as well as tidy and improve the garden beds around the property. Anyone who enjoys gardening - or simply give a lending hand – is most welcome.

Our **Spring Workday** is planned for **Tuesday, June 9**, with **Thursday, June 11** set as a rain date.

Additional days may be added if needed. A few other dates to keep in mind:

- **August 11** – Potluck at Gail Robinson’s
- **August 17** – *Dessert with a Dash*, featuring wildflower and geology enthusiast Andy Fyon
- **September 15** – Fall Workday

If you would like to be added to the garden group email list, please contact me at susie.griffith@icloud.com

Hope to see everyone in the Bay this summer!

~ Susie



Gardener’s Potluck Lunch:

From Left to Right: Rosemary Grenside, Lyn Starke, Leslie Menikoff, Susie Griffiths, Lee Williams, Melissa Marolf, Lynne Stanich, Gail Robinson, Doris Cowan, Margaret Beard, Leigh Baumgartner, Lindsay Williams



Andy Williams puts finishing touches on planter boxes.

Sailing Races in McGregor Bay

Eric Grant

Each Saturday at 1:00pm, there are sailboat races sponsored by the McGregor Bay Association. The races are sailed around a course and are handicapped depending on boat type. The races have a long history in the Bay and have introduced the sport of sailing to many a McGregor Bay visitor. In its heyday, there were often more than 10 and sometimes 20 boats competing. Unfortunately, participation has waned but in the last few years. However, recently there has been a rising interest and some new boats and skippers have started to join the fun. All skippers, crews, and boats are welcome!

It is my hope that we can continue to attract new sailors to the Saturday races. If you're racing with the Juniors on Wednesdays and you'd like to begin racing with a bit more structure and attention to the rules, come join us. The participating skippers will try to accommodate new sailors as crew, which is a great way to learn. Alternatively, if you have a boat that you've been enjoying sailing and would like to try your hand at racing, come on down to the store docks on Saturdays in July plus August 1 (the August 1 race will be the Outer Bay Race, and will start from Cantwell's Island).

Sailing is exciting and the people are welcoming. While we're all trying to be the fastest around the course, it is all in great fun. The smiles of the racers, new and old, was infectious last year! I hope to see more of you on Saturdays this year!



Eric and Elaine Grant competing in the Outer Bay Race in 2025. Bryan McDonald skippered the winning boat in an incredibly close race beating the second-place boat by mere seconds!

Photo: Sue Miller

Junior Sailing Recap

Hannah Higgs, Captain of the McGregor Bay Junior Sailing Club

Last summer, the McGregor Bay Junior Sailing Club had another exciting month of sailing races. It was smooth sailing for all of our dockmasters, skippers, and crew as kids from all over the bay "learned the ropes" and mastered the art of sailing around the beautiful bay.

The 2025 Junior Sailor of the Year trophy was awarded to Taylor Benson. This honor was well deserved, as Taylor consistently excelled in weekly races, while also supporting and encouraging her crew. Her leadership and strong performance made her stand out in a talented group of sailors.

This summer, I will be handing the helm over to Taylor and the Quinn family, who will be hosting the junior races. With a promising group of returning sailors and new participants, we're looking forward to another season of friendly competition and growth.

We encourage all families with aspiring young sailors to join us for Junior Sailing on Wednesdays in July at the church docks. It is always a blast, and no previous experience is needed.

If you have a Pico sailboat that you would be willing to lend the junior team for race days, please reach out to the Quinn family.

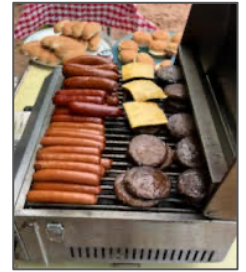
Red Sand Beach Picnic



Under bright summer skies, the Red Sand Beach picnic was filled with laughter, games, and good company. A spirited tug-of-war (won by the men) and a crowd-pleasing fire pump demo added to the fun, while a familiar menu of burgers, hot dogs, and cookies was perfectly complemented by Mimi Towel's fresh salads. *Photos: Bryan McDonald.*



Photo: Terry Goan



Water Festival Highlights

Fun in Every Frame



Photos: Gillian Woodrooffe

Saint Christopher's Church News



Another wonderful summer is behind us, with 560 parishioners attending services in 2025. In the absence of a student minister, our community rallied—thanks in large part to the Very Reverend Peter Wall—and Sunday services continued all summer at 10:30 a.m.

We are grateful to all who led worship, including Peter, Dr. Dean Jobin-Bevans, The Reverend Dr. Robert Wainwright (University of Oxford), Reverend Benjamin Gillard, and Jesse Clapperton, lay reader at the Church of the Ascension in Sudbury. It was also a joy to welcome back former student ministers to lead services. We were especially pleased to host Archbishop Anne Germond in July, when she led a service followed by a potluck lunch.



Wednesday afternoon Bridge is a popular “fun-raiser”.

Last year’s fundraisers featured mystery dinners hosted by Veronica Stier, St. Christopher’s sponsored Friday Potlucks, Wednesday Bridge, Trivia Night, and Euchre Night. Our beloved Parish Community Hall also played host the many MBA events.

Community is at the heart of our church, and everyone is welcome. A calendar of events is posted in the porch of the Hall, along with a roster of St. Christopher’s board members. Please reach out with questions, ideas, or if you’d like to help.

Our first potluck of 2026 is Friday, June 26 at 5:30 p.m. Last year’s June potluck had 11 diners—let’s beat it!

The pipes in **Parish Community Hall** were replaced at the end of the 2025 season. Thank you to everyone who contributes to the **St. Christopher’s Building Fund**. If you wish to donate—simply note “Building Fund” on your cheque and it will be applied to the hall and docks maintenance fund. Every year, something needs repair or replacement, and your generosity is greatly appreciated. A special thanks as well to **Murray at Stillwater** for keeping the church boat at his marina.



Morning yoga class guided by Carol Philips. Participants donate \$10.00 to the Church’s general fund



The church owns a series of linked docks and keeps them in good repair for community use.



Who is the Lady Behind the Counter? *Margaret Beard, of Course!*

Margaret is many things—dedicated, generous, an organizer, a Bay historian, and a key Parish member, especially in her role as Parish Kitchen manager. Not only does she oversees the post-service coffee hour but is also there to help out with most church and association events. We extend a heartfelt **thank you** for her devotion to all things McGregor Bay.



Trivia 2025 – 18th Year Recap

Sue Miller

Thank you for joining us for the *Trivia 2025, Coming Of Age, Eighteenth Year!* In addition to the usual categories, Trivia 2025 covered categories related to Tallest, Shortest, Hottest, Coldest, Cottage Boardgames, and Coming of Age. Last year we introduced the progressive “Who Am I” questions at the end of each category, offering bonus marks for earlier game identification! How many categories would it have taken you to identify topics related to the early fur trading industry, an iron rich lumber saw known as “The Beaver”??

We had returning champions this year! Congrats to Chuck, Lynn, Lyn, Hal, Jennifer and Carl. Who will Suzy choose to play with this year?? *Photo: Sue Miller*

We had 24 show up last August for this brain-teasing, memory testing, random fact-finding fun evening. Thank you for coming out once again, to carry this tradition forward, for the laughter and fun evening in the support of St. Christopher. Thanks also to those who joined us for the first time, we hope to see you back.

Join us again this year for more fun, laughter, and brain teasing. Returning categories will be Balls of Fun and Christmas in August, and the progressive clue bonus. New this year *might* be loons, sidekicks and cars themes!

Fire Safety in McGregor Bay: *Prevention Is Our Best Protection*

Andy Betterton



310-FIRE (3473)

This is the primary number for reporting forest fires in the region of Ontario north of the French and Mattawa rivers

Life in McGregor Bay is something special. Our island cottages offer beauty, privacy, and a deep connection to nature. But that same remoteness means something critical: In the event of a fire, traditional emergency response takes longer time. And when it comes to fire, time is everything.

That’s why fire prevention and fireproofing aren’t optional here — *they are essential*. Every cottage owner plays a role in protecting not only their own property, but the entire Bay. Below are practical steps every property owner can take to reduce risk and improve fire resilience.

1. Start with the exterior of your property: Create a defensible space.

Fire needs fuel. The more combustible material around your cottage, the greater the risk.

Clear the Immediate Zone around your cottage structures.

- Remove dry leaves, pine needles, and brush from around foundations.
- Grasses often grow up around our cottages despite much of our surroundings being rock. If this is the case at your property; it would be good to trim or remove it.
- Store firewood piles away from buildings.
- Store propane tanks or boat gas away from buildings. Ideally, have a separate building for all combustibles, including paints, varnishes, and other flammable materials.
- Consider taking advantage of the NEMI hazardous waste day to eliminate accumulated paints, solvents, batteries, and outdated pesticides. The date has not been determined yet, but we will communicate it when published.

2. Fireproofing Your Cottage Structure.

If a fire occurs nearby, your cottage's survival may depend on how well it resists embers and radiant heat.

Roofing Matters Most

- Metal roofing offers excellent fire resistance.
- Asphalt shingles rated Class A are preferable to untreated wood shakes.
- Regularly clear debris from roof valleys and gutters.

Wind-blown embers often land on roofs first. Avoid all burning when there is anything stronger than a breeze.

Decks, Siding, and Skirting

- Look under decks and stairs — if it can burn, remove it.
- Consider enclosing open skirting to prevent embers from blowing underneath.
- Use fire-resistant siding materials where possible.

Even a small ignition under a deck can quickly engulf a structure.

3. Chimneys, Fire Pits, and Equipment

Island living often includes wood stoves and outdoor fires.

- Be aware of the current fire risk level and any Municipal fire bans that may be in place.
- Keep your fire small and always stay with your fire.
- Keep a bucket of water, a pump, or an extinguisher nearby when using fire pits.
- Never leave fires unattended.
- Fully extinguish campfires — stir, soak, and repeat.
- Unobserved roots in rock cracks can smolder for days and track fires from campfires to buildings, as has been the cause of previous fires in the Bay.
- Inspect and clean chimneys annually and consider installing spark arrestors on chimneys.

5. Chainsaws, generators, and fuel storage also present risks:

- Store gasoline in approved containers.
- Keep fuel away from ignition sources.
- Let the machinery cool before refueling.

6. Fire Pumps

Because McGregor Bay cottages are water-access only, consider how you would respond in the first critical minutes. The following are important recommendations:

- Make sure you know where the nearest association fire pumps are.
- Become aware of how the pumps are set up and try it yourself. Pump demonstrations will be scheduled a couple of times during the coming summer.
- At last year's Town Hall meeting, we were asked about how a cottage owner can purchase their own fire pump. Suitable pumps are available at Princess Auto, Home Hardware and other hardware stores. The nearest Princess Auto location is in Sudbury, and they sell a gas powered 2" high-pressure water pump with a fire kit for \$749.
- If you purchase your own pump, ensure the hoses are long enough to reach all sides of your cottage.
- Additional hoses are also available for purchase in different lengths.
- If you do plan to own your own pump, test your equipment at the beginning of each season.
- To simplify winterising, I would suggest using an "Engineered Ethanol Free 4-Cycle Engine Fuel".



7. Inside the Cottage: Early Detection Saves Time and possibly lives.

- Install smoke alarms on every level and every sleeping cabin.
- Test alarms regularly and replace batteries annually.
- Keep fire extinguishers in the kitchen and any other areas that may have open flame or wood stoves.
- Have an extinguisher available in every building.
- Consider a fire suppression blanket for your kitchen.
- Create and review an evacuation plan with family and guests. Make sure visitors understand that emergency response times are different on the islands.



An example of a portable water pump that is sold at Princess Auto.

8. New Threats

Lithium-ion battery fires pose a new, growing threat that cottagers should be aware of.

- These power sources are not only found in laptops and phones but are now very common in a wide variety of household maintenance equipment, such as leaf blowers, lawn mowers, vacuum cleaners, E-bikes, and E-Scooters. They will become more prevalent as watercraft and ski boards also start to use the technology.
- Manufacturers of E-bike lithium-ion batteries suggest always charging where people are present.
- Charging overnight in an unoccupied garage or boat house allows a potential fire to start unobserved and quickly become uncontrollable.
- Make sure to monitor the charging of your batteries. Often, serious fires occur when batteries are charged for too long, well after they are already fully charged.
- Batteries that are damaged or are becoming deformed should be discarded as hazardous waste.

9. Community Awareness: We Protect Each Other.

Fire on one island property threatens neighbouring cottages. Prevention is a shared responsibility.

- Check on neighbouring properties early in the season.
- Report unsafe burning.
- Share equipment or planning where possible.
- Encourage new owners to adopt best practices. In a place like McGregor Bay, we are each other's first line of defence.

Ready or at Risk? A prepared property owner has a greater chance to stop a small fire before it spreads.

Final Thoughts

In McGregor Bay, we're beautifully remote. That's part of the charm. But it also means we're the first responders, at least for those critical early minutes. On the mainland, fire trucks may arrive in minutes. On an island, the response time of any outside help depends on distance, weather, and access. That reality means the most effective fire department in McGregor Bay is us. A few hours of clearing brush, upgrading materials, and checking equipment can make the difference between a close call and a devastating loss.

For more information, check the following web pages:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/forest-wildland-and-outdoor-fires>
<https://www.townofnemi.on.ca/p/fire-department>



Photo: Gillian Woodrooffe

Water Quality in McGregor Bay

Ian Cook

The health and quality of the waters of McGregor Bay are essential for almost everything we do in the bay, from swimming to fishing to, for many of us, drinking the water! The McGregor Bay Association has been monitoring water health for years. Recently this has been done through a Citizen Science initiative called the Water Rangers. In 2025, a small group of volunteers continued to monitor water quality regularly during the cottage season. The data are available for all to see on the Water Ranger website. (www.waterrangers.ca). I'm pleased to report that the data continued to indicate extremely high-quality water in all parts of the bay tested. This testing is not possible without volunteers, and we need more. If interested in helping out, contact an MBA board member.

How many of you provide drinking water to your cottage by drawing water out of the lake, and running it through a water treatment system? If you do, you may want to have your drinking water tested to ensure it is safe. This can be done via our local Public Health Ontario Lab, at 1300 Paris St., Suite 2, Sudbury, P3E 6H3. Call them in advance at 705 564 6917, to get details on obtaining sample bottles, and collection methods. I did this at our cottage last fall and was happy to be informed that my drinking water is safe. It does provide peace of mind.

How many of you treat wastewater at your cottage with a holding tank, and how many use a septic tank and leaching bed system? In our bay, many of these systems have been in place for years or decades. Over time, these systems can fail and discharge untreated sewage or wastewater directly into the bay. This will be of particular concern for the cottager and their neighbours, since this will be occurring right where they swim or draw water. The Sudbury and District Public Health Unit can also assist with your septic issues. Info about caring for your septic system can be found on their website: <https://www.phsd.ca/health-topics-programs/sewage-systems/caring-septic-system/>. If you are concerned that your system may be malfunctioning, call Public Health Sudbury and Districts at 705 522 9200 or toll-free 1 866 522 9200 and ask to speak to a public health inspector



Photo: Bryan McDonald

Holding the Line: Fighting the Phragmites Threat to McGregor Bay's Wetlands

Doug Whitton

Before you know it, the ice will have thawed, and the wetlands will be green once again. Unfortunately, within them grows the invasive phragmites- a grass-like plant that we continue to work to control and remove.

Over the past couple of years, McGregor Bay Association's volunteer cutters have built strong momentum in cutting these invasive plants. Their energy and enthusiasm have been acknowledged by other organizations and organizers who are also working to control them in the region. We are well positioned to expand our efforts and refine our methods.

2025: Mapping, Cutting, and Planning with Intention

The 2025 season was marked by steady, deliberate effort. The crew from the Whitefish River First Nation (WRFN) Lands Department continued detailed mapping of the invasive phragmites stands throughout the Bay, improving our understanding of where the plant is established and where it is spreading. MBA's cutting efforts have focused on water-accessible sites, where early action can prevent small patches from becoming impenetrable and difficult to control.

This work was made possible through a grant from the Invasive Species Centre, funding that strengthened collaboration with Whitefish River First Nation (WRFN) and allowed the effort to progress with purpose rather than urgency.

In late fall I met with Whitefish River First Nation (WRFN) Lands to develop a Control Plan for 2026. It reflects a shift toward managing the landscape with foresight. Mapping, prioritizing, tracking, and adapting — will allow us to work with the land thoughtfully.

What's Working: The Strength of Local Commitment

There is something distinctive about stewardship in a place like McGregor Bay. Access is rarely simple. Weather intervenes. Sites are scattered and often remote. Yet volunteers continue to show up — with boats, tools, and a willingness to do difficult work in shallow water and uneven ground.

Managers overseeing the broader initiative have offered high praise for the dedication, effectiveness and community building of McGregor Bay volunteers. That recognition speaks not only to hours contributed, but to the quality of care being exercised. In treated areas, Phragmites expansion has slowed. Smaller patches have been addressed before they could mature into something more formidable. In conservation work, success is often measured in absences — the spread that did not occur, the habitat that remains intact.



Georgian Bay Forever's Nicole Carpenter demonstrates a Raspberry Cane cutter used to cut phragmites on land and in the water.

A Changing Framework: New Roles and Expanded Capacity

The Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) now manages the Phragmites Management Area and administers funding going forward, providing long-term stability and strategic oversight. We have joined forces with Bay of Islands Community Association <https://bayofislands.ca/> and the WRFN to focus on the unique challenges of water access control methods. This will streamline grant funding. On the ground, the Manitoulin Streams Improvement Association will lead field operations, coordinating crews and implementing control plans across Manitoulin Island - creating efficiencies and shared expertise across regions.

For the McGregor Bay Association, this transition opens an important door. Future seasons may include the hiring professional crews to cut large patches on land, supplementing volunteer efforts where infestations exceed what a small team can manage. Volunteer energy remains central, but this additional capacity will now ensure effective intervention is available when needed.

Looking Toward Summer 2026: Scow Bay

Attention is already turning toward the large, expanding patch in Scow Bay. WRFN is applying for funding to explore the most effective control methods for this site. The objective is clear: contain its expansion and prevent it from overtaking the bay.

Scow Bay presents unique challenges — ecological sensitivity, water-access-only locations, and the need to protect native plant communities while suppressing this aggressive invader. Any funding will support the development of best practices tailored specifically to the conditions of McGregor Bay wetlands. The aim is not simply removal, but refining techniques suited to northern waters and complex shorelines.

A Long View

Managing invasive species is not a single season undertaking. It requires continuity, observation, and patience. What has emerged over the past year, is a more coordinated, better-supported approach rooted in partnership and local commitment.

As the season unfolds and the wetlands green once more, the work continues - quietly, often unseen from a distance. But it is work that safeguards the essence of this place — the open water, the layered shoreline, and the intricate life that depends on both.



Photo: Sue Miller



Save the Night - Turn off the Light: How to Keep the Night Sky Dark

Jeff Somerville

Many of us retreat to “the Bay” to enjoy its beauty and reconnect with nature among a like-minded community, cherishing this place where change unfolds at a pace closer to what nature intended. Here we find serenity, and many of us rediscover a sense of harmony with the outdoors that can be difficult to maintain elsewhere. Conservation is an ethos that animates us as we enjoy and protect McGregor Bay for those who will come after us—usually from external pressures, but also from within.

Light pollution unfortunately is but one of these threats, and the recent headlines are not encouraging. These carry headlines like “Under Attack: How Humanity is losing the Night Sky” and “SpaceX wants to launch a million satellites...that could impact the atmosphere and the night sky.” One could be excused for feeling powerless in the face of technological “progress”.

But light pollution is something that all of us can contribute to reducing. In fact, the MBA has recently done so, working with Lafarge to reduce its light pollution (see MBA Newsletter 2023 p.3 “Dark Sky Project”). And in recent years a range of protections and recommendations have been put into place by NEMI, Killarney Provincial Park and others -recognizing the intrinsic value of darkness to nature, to all of us. But sometimes products catering to the conservation movement, even with the best of intentions, can have unintended consequences as they become irresistible to us.

By pairing low energy bulbs with solar energy, a new product category blazed into our lives in the form of easy and cheap outdoor lighting. No longer tethered by wiring or hydro bills, we are free to light up our pathways, our docks – really anything in our outdoor environment! These lights are cost effective, conveniently available and simple to install. Most use renewable energy and harness highly efficient LED bulbs. These features have led to very quick adoption and variety; in fact, you can now buy solar “firefly lights” with 8 colour modes to creatively “beautify” your outdoor nighttime environment for \$24.99 on Amazon!

Strangely, many of these new fixtures do not come equipped with an off switch.

Meanwhile, improved energy efficiency has made it inexpensive to leave outdoor lights on all night—an ironic twist on the conservation goals that inspired them. Unintentionally then we find that LED outdoor lighting products are now a significant contributor to the loss of our dark skies every year- more than ever before lights are just left on. The Federation of Ontario Cottage Associations (FOCA) finds that these, in conjunction with the replacement of incandescent bulbs, have greatly multiplied light pollution to the tune of increasing it 2.2% per year, with all the consequences that follow.

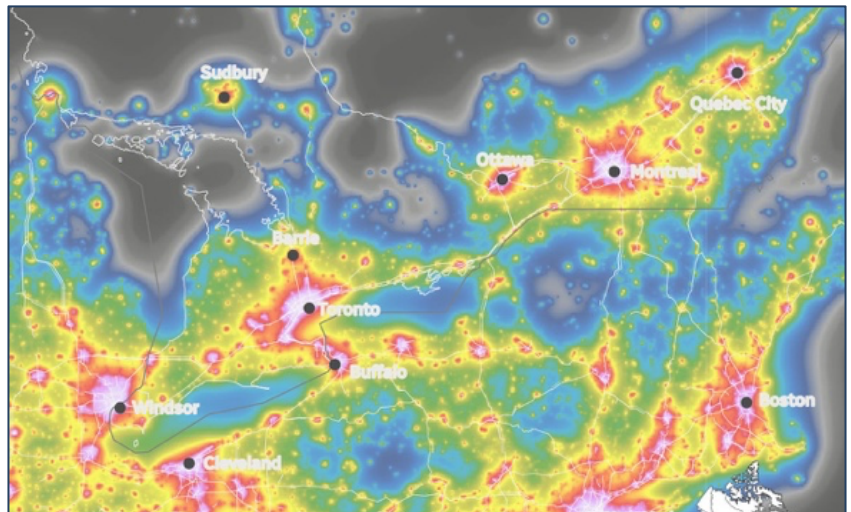
The impacts are widespread—and shall we say very visible!

The loss of the night sky is more than an eyesore. Excessive, misdirected lighting disrupts ecosystems shaped by natural darkness, affects migratory species, and interferes with human circadian rhythms. It dims our view of the stars and may even contribute to the disappearance of fireflies. It also fuels a growing stream of short-lived lighting products and waste.

Unlike urban expansion or satellite proliferation, light pollution is something we can control. Through simple choices, we can reduce—and even eliminate—its effects:

- Use less lighting; choose durable and efficient products.
- Opt for low-wattage, warm (amber) light; avoid blue/white tones.
- Install timers or motion sensors to limit use.
- Use shielded fixtures that direct light downward.

Perhaps, most importantly, light can be a nuisance, a hazard, and even a form of trespass. While convenient and often attractive to us, it is not always in harmony with the natural environment we covet here. None of us meant to introduce a new form of pollution into the Bay—but protecting it, starts with a simple action: turn it off.



How bright is our sky? This map of southeastern Ontario, parts of Michigan and Pennsylvania and the New England states illustrate how artificial light has transformed the night.

Further reading:

<https://www.cbc.ca/newsinteractives/features/loss-of-the-night-sky>

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/science/spacex-data-centre-one-million-satellites-9.7117772>

<https://bayofislands.ca/2022/09/21/lost-in-the-light-taking-action-to-address-light-pollution>

Eventually, Everyone Hits a Rock

Kim Epskamp



My father always said, “*Eventually, everyone hits a rock*”. Every time he said it, I’d bite my tongue. I’d been coming to McGregor Bay for 59 years and had never once hit a rock with my boat motor. Not once. But on June 26, 2025, at approximately 7:00 p.m., my streak ended.

We’ve been vacationing in McGregor Bay since I was 11. Nestled in the northern reaches of Georgian Bay, part of Lake Huron, about 400 miles north of Toronto. McGregor Bay lies within the La Cloche Range, a landscape defined by ancient white quartzite ridges, glacially polished granite, and the iconic Canadian Shield. The scenery is raw and elemental: rounded “whale-back” islands, jagged peninsulas, quiet coves, and skerries—those submerged reefs and rocky outcrops that can spell disaster for the inattentive boater. The last glacial retreat, some 12,000 years ago, sculpted this region into a breathtaking mosaic of rock, pine trees and water.

This area has long drawn those who seek beauty and solitude. Artists like Tom Thomson and the Group of Seven found inspiration here. Settlers like Alexander McGregor established their lives amid the wilderness. And today, a network of cottage communities, most without road access, relies on boats to bring in everything from groceries to building supplies.

Our island, officially labeled TP 2019 on the map, sits roughly 20 miles from Birch Island, where we leave our car. When we first made the journey decades ago, the boat ride took over an hour. These days, with more horsepower and faster boats, we’ve shaved that time down. But in many ways, we’re just as remote as ever, flanked by the protected lands of Killarney Provincial Park and the rugged terrain of McGregor Island’s Crown Land.

The small bay where our island resides has no official name, but we call it *Isaac’s Bay*, named for Isaac Nagum, a First Nations man who once lived across the water. The government burned his cabin down because it stood within Killarney Provincial Park. The irony is painful. Isaac’s ancestors lived on this land long before there was a Canada, let alone a park boundary. Isaac once took us fishing, but that’s a story for another time.

Navigating McGregor Bay is never without risk. The shoals are everywhere, and the water levels can fluctuate by up to a meter (three feet). What’s safe to cross one summer might be impassable the next. Deviating from a known route, especially at speed, is a gamble. Even the most experienced locals can get caught off guard.



Photo: Gillian Woodrooffe

Take Chief McGregor, for instance. Years ago, he gave my father a lift back to our island. About five kilometers from home, my dad warned, *"We should head a little more to the right—there's a shoal here."* Chief McGregor waved him off. Moments later, the boat slammed into a rock, shearing the lower unit clean off the outboard motor. Perhaps that's when my father started repeating, *"Eventually, everyone hits a rock."*

As for me, my rock encounter was more humbling than harmful. I had just finished a two-hour "steam", a Canadian term for a sauna, at Emmett's cottage, not far from my hiking partner John Woodrooffe's place. These steams are as much about community as they are about heat and sweat. That evening, there were around twenty of us. I was the last to leave.



I'd forgotten to give John a few things during the steam, so I hopped in my boat to swing by his dock. I had barely pulled away from Emmett's when I hit it. Emmett was onshore, frantically waving and yelling, trying to warn me. I didn't hear him, partly because I was wearing ear protection, and partly because I'm deaf in my right ear. But what I did hear was the unmistakable grind of the lower unit brushing against rock.

Fortunately, I was idling at a crawl. The propeller was untouched, and there was no real damage, just a scuff on the boat and my bruised ego. It wasn't negligence so much as a moment of inattention. Or maybe it was just the law of averages catching up to me.

After 59 years, I suppose it was inevitable.

Eventually, everyone hits a rock.

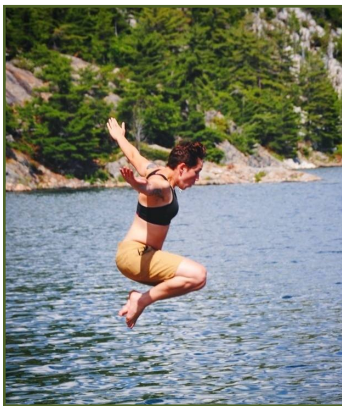


MaraDeniz Stokes Çakır



Our beloved MaraDeniz Stokes Çakır ended their 30-year-long journey in this world on October 2, 2025. They are survived by parents Betsy Stokes and Mesut Çakır of Princeton, NJ, sibling Evren Çakır of Philadelphia, partner Jari Jones of Belleville, NJ, and an abundance of chosen family. They were predeceased by grandparents Don and Sybil Stokes, who first welcomed them to McGregor Bay as a baby. We will feel Deniz’s presence whenever we gather there as a family.

Summers in the Bay provided Deniz with a respite from the world’s troubles. They woke up to the scent of pine needles warming in the sun. They marveled at both the burst of flavor in a single wild blueberry and the multitudinous flavors of potato chips available in Canada. They leapt fearlessly from rocky cliffs into cold water and climbed out to be warmed again on the rocks. They caressed frogs and snakes. They delighted in the curious calls of Sandhill Cranes and Common Loons, and thrilling howls of Algonquin wolves. They gazed at the Milky Way and the Perseids meteors on clear nights. They devoured books. They adored hopping into the boat to visit longtime family friends.



Connie Campell



Connie (Curlis) Campbell, (1945-2025) passed away Sunday, July 13th 2025, in Ohio. Connie loved to spend summer days at the island in McGregor Bay, where she and Daryl built a home and memories for their family. She was a part of the church, garden group, and quilting club. She loved gardening, kayaking, and watching the 'sparkles' every evening. Her children and grandchildren are grateful for the legacy she provided with lessons in driving the boat, picking the best blueberries, and finding the right rock to sit while reading a book. They look forward to honoring Namma each year at Camp Bell. Bay friends also remember Connie sharing her skills and a lot of fun as she directed dramas in the parish hall. Online condolences may be left for the family at www.shookfamilyfh.com.

Editor's Note:

Many years ago, I gave Connie a stack of old wool blankets from our cabin that we no longer needed, knowing she'd find creative ways to use them. A year later, she arrived at our dock with a small package. Inside was a cushion she had made from colourful squares cut from those same blankets, carefully embroidered with our island number—a truly thoughtful gesture and something I will always remember her by!



Jim Frank



James Russell Frank (Jim) (1941-2026) passed away on February 13, 2026, at the age of 85. Jim and his wife and Betsy honeymooned in the Bay, camping out in Scow Bay in tents during a week of rain and cooking in wet skies over 60 years ago. Their sons, together with Betsy and Jim, expanded his parents' cottage, adding turbo, solar, and propane. They filled their cottage with warmth, beauty, art, and family and friend gatherings for decades, making many happy memories. Saint Christophers' will miss Jim's contributions to the art events held every summer, and those who have his beautiful hand carved boxes, shelves and furniture have true family treasures. Love and prayers go to the Frank family from their many McGregor Bay friends.

The Watt-R-Weasel (Re-printed from 2019)

Jim Frank

I bought this cedar strip boat from a Michigan neighbor decades ago. It was hardly worth fifty dollars, but as a future project I took it anyway. It's a chronic thing among Bay people that we buy stuff for future projects that often never happen. At one time, this cedar strip Cinderella was going to be converted into a display case, but I was never mentally able to cut it in half.

In 2017 the refurbishment began. This 1930 something rowing craft would become a modern, solar powered, space age, hydrodynamic, electron exchanging green monster. The Watt-R-Weasel was born.

Don't be fooled by the canopy. This baby will do Mach .0069. It is powered by energy waves from the sun which crash into a silicone panel thus causing electrons to move around. By magically controlling the movement, we end up with an Electric current. Of course, there is a far better science explanation for solar panels work; however, given the current state of our government-in-denial, here in the lower 48, "*Magical*" probably is the best term for now



The panel is rated for 130 watts, which runs through a controller to a 100 amp/hr sealed gel battery. The motor is a 12-volt 55 pound thrust Minnkota. At full throttle with full sun the discharge is very nominal which means many hours of usage. At cruise throttle the charge will actually keep up with the discharge. Yes, it is rather quietly slow, but at my age slow is good. The nicest feature is there is no need to start anything. Get in... push the throttle forward.... and forward it goes.... Magically, of course.

The Painter

In memoriam to Jack Meanwell

On the island over the way
Lives the old painter. Always has.
In summer mornings, you see
Him picking berries in the shade.
By noon, he's in his shack
Sitting before the blank sheet.
He gazes out the big window,
Goes to the door, then sits again.

By and by, he picks up the brush.
Rocks and water, water and trees,
Clouds and light begin to appear.
Looking at islands, he paints islands.

A strange one to talk to—
Won't say a word about anyone
Or much about anything.
All that is, is only what it is.

What people do, all they can do.
If someone gets sick, or even dies,
How can you know it's a bad thing?
Could be an end or beginning—nothing

We've seen anyway. He is simple. To him
There aren't many things, but one—
Rocks and water, water and trees,
Islands and clouds, clouds and light.

~ Adrian Frazier

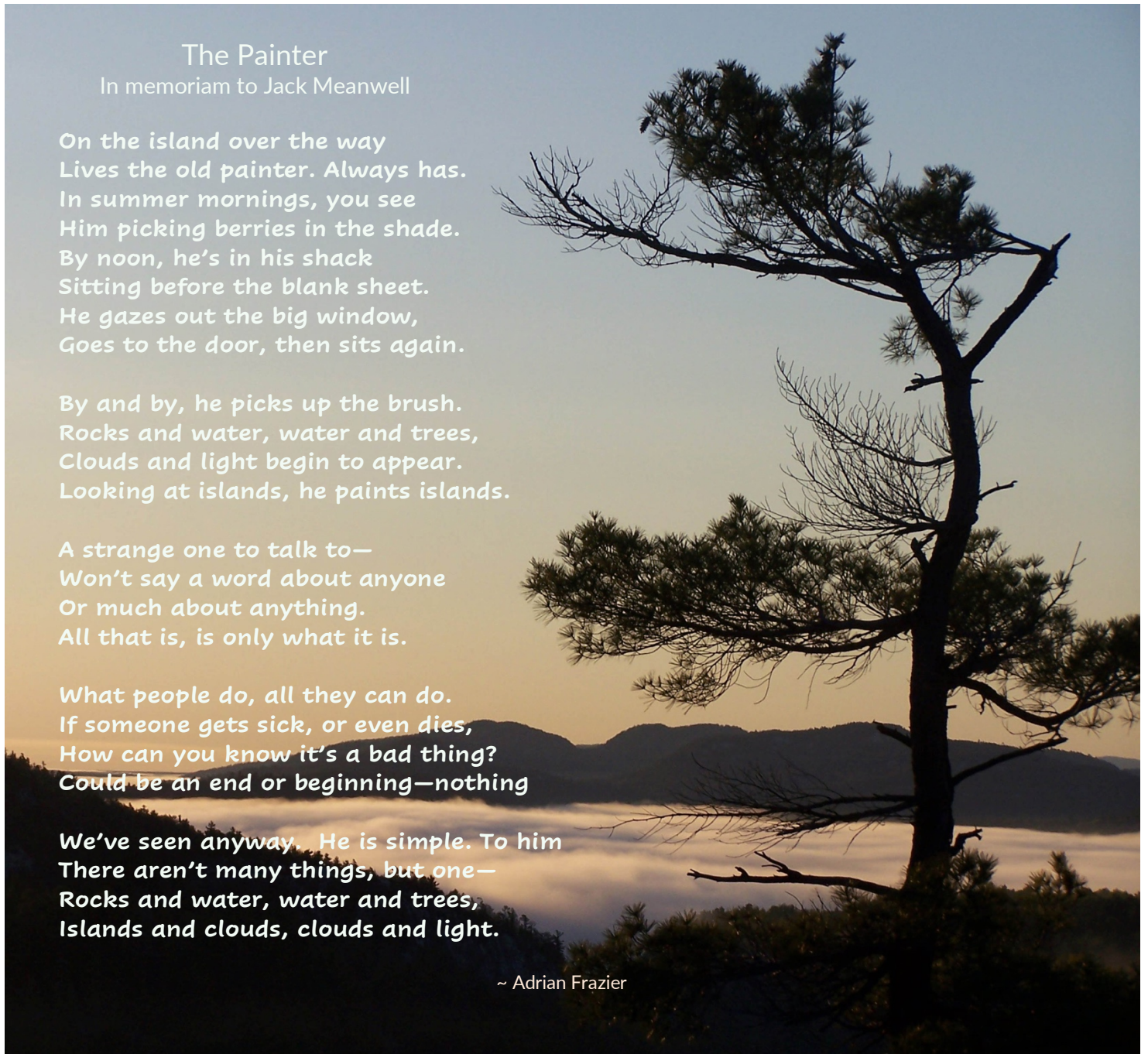


Photo: Jon Butler