

John Fraser entertains

by Sue Russell

GBLT hosted its fourth annual Winterlude with guest speaker John Fraser, the well known author, journalist, speaker and Master of Massey College. Nearly 100 people came to hear his highly amusing talk about Surviving Georgian Bay. He learned early on how to survive the climatic elements of the Bay but it has taken him somewhat longer to learn about surviving among the extended family of his in-laws, the McCallums.

It was a successful social evening too, as people from up and down the Bay met up with their friends and neighbours. The Badminton & Racquet Club put on a fine array of snacks, sandwiches, tea and coffee, and the bar was open to all.

Winterlude is proving to be a popular event in mid-winter for Bay folk to catch up with neighbours' news and start thinking about summer. And John Fraser encouraged us to continue to enjoy the Bay and work towards its preservation.



Rocks on Little McCoy Island in Point au Baril are cut like large chunks of ice from eons of freezing and thawing



Sandy Boyd and Bill Montgomery enjoy a laugh with John Fraser at Winterlude 2005

Stewardship of Lands a priority

by Sue Russell

As the Land Trust acquires more land it is imperative on us to help protect the land from unwanted predators. Predators can be people who trample on endangered plant species, children who collect blue striped skinks, campers who light fires and put up tents or picnickers who leave their garbage behind. So GBLT has initiated a Stewardship Program.

By July 1st there will be a steward assigned to every one of our properties who will be on the lookout for these predators. Stewards are friendly cottagers who are there to help you enjoy your time on these protected islands and they can be identified by their distinct baseball caps. Each steward will have a manual describing the property and outlining his/her responsibilities in stewarding the land.

To assist these stewards there will also be on each of our properties one or more signs indicating the ownership of the land. They are just a reminder to visitors to help us protect the land. The Georgian Bay Land Trust believes that the visitors will appreciate the islands' beauty and enjoy the natural surroundings while protecting the forest floor, the sedges and wild flowers and the nesting sites of the water birds.

Stewardship of land under conservation is being done throughout North America. Our Stewardship Committee has been in touch with many other Land Conservation organizations and compared notes on the best method of caring for our properties.

Please enjoy our properties. Bring your cameras and take away only your memories. Don't even leave footprints.

OLTA Workshop

by Wendy Cooper, Executive
Director of GBLT

On Saturday, April 30th, 2005, the Ontario Land Trust Alliance, a provincial umbrella group that supports member land trusts in Ontario, held a regional workshop entitled, "Doing it Well or Doing it Better – Land Monitoring & Stewardship". Kim Gavine, Program Manager for the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation and former Board member of the Couchiching Conservancy and Lisa McLaughlin, Stewardship Coordinator for the Ontario Region of the Nature Conservancy of Canada led the workshop.

Many members of Southern & Central Ontario's land trusts, as well myself, attended the workshop to learn how to tackle issues of compliance management and ecological monitoring for both conservation easements and lands owned by land trusts.

As part of the workshop, participants received a copy of the newly published OLTA Manual on Land Stewardship, which provides some guidelines on how to organize and run a successful stewardship program. This manual will provide excellent guidance for GBLT's newly developed Stewardship Committee, which is tackling the development and implementation of a Stewardship Program for GBLT. It is focusing on ensuring that all GBLT properties are well cared for and respected by the public.

Issues covered in the workshop included the importance of putting aside funds for stewardship, something that the GBLT has been very active in as part of the Conservation Campaign underway in partnership with the Nature Conservancy of Canada. It also covered the importance of developing baseline reports to help identify the ecological and historical features of a property; and balancing ecological monitoring with restoration activities, compliance monitoring on conservation easements and ongoing

Life in the Biosphere

Now that our Bay has been given the honorary designation of a Littoral Biosphere Reserve what, may we ask is a Littoral Biosphere Reserve and what difference will this make to me? According to UNESCO we are in a living laboratory where conservation activities are combined with ongoing economic and community activities. These reserves are experiments in sustainable development and their experience is showcased to the world.

This all started when a group of members from the Georgian Bay Association Foundation nominated our area to be considered as a biosphere reserve. They had to prove that Georgian Bay is ecologically significant, has opportunities for sustainable development and that it has political support from all relevant communities. Letters of support were written and the nomination process went to Canadian officials for approval before being sent to UNESCO in France where the final decision was made.

Since UNESCO started this program in 1970 there have been 459 biosphere reserves designated in 97 countries. Canada has 13 of them, from British Columbia to Nova Scotia.

The word littoral describes where the water meets the land and Georgian Bay has thousands of miles of convoluted shoreline not including the 30,00 islands.

The reserve is not like a wilderness area or parkland but is

a special geographic area recognized for its unique environment. There are no formal boundaries and the boundaries are flexible and can even change from time to time as more communities wish to join or drop out. The Georgian Bay area is very large stretching from Port Severn in the south to the French River and as far west as the Limestones. The eastern boundary is highway 69/400.

This area is very special as it is considered to be the largest fresh water archipelago in the world. Over 100 types of different habitat have been identified supporting at least 170 species of breeding birds, 44 species of mammals and 34 species of reptiles and amphibians, many of which are at risk.

This biosphere reserve encourages appropriate development as it provides sites where long term environmental research and monitoring can take place. It supports education and training of all kinds and encourages regional cooperation on conservation and developmental activities. It tries to boost economic development and improve the quality of life

To run the biosphere reserve there is a volunteer board of directors who coordinate the different projects. These volunteers represent the many communities around the Bay including First Nations, cottagers, permanent residents and boaters and are known as the Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve Inc. If you are a member of any of these communities you too can be come involved. You are welcome to attend their annual meeting, and make suggestions for activities and projects that are compatible with the biosphere reserves.

This article has been adapted from an article by Becky Pollock printed in the Parry Sound North Star, April, 2005

maintenance of properties.

The Georgian Bay Land Trust looks forward to incorporating the great amount of information provided at this workshop into its Stewardship Program.

If you would like more information on GBLT's Stewardship Program or would like to get involved in the stewardship of GBLT lands, contact Wendy Cooper at 416-440-1519 or info@gblt.org or visit our website at www.gblt.org.

GBLT's beautiful web site

by Sue Russell

The Land Trust is very fortunate to have a willing and talented engineer who has volunteered to maintain our website. Matthew Murphy, who summers in Cognashene, has already added a great deal of information on our web site. You can catch up with all the current events as well as the past and future ones so easily by keying in to GBLT.org.

Our past site master, Carl Spiess did a remarkable job for many years for which we are very grateful. Carl set up the site originally and continued to update the material regularly. When he retired Nick Jones took over and with a crew of students from Centennial College redesigned the site. Nick moved out west and our new web master Matt appeared and is doing a great job for us.

This summer there are many activities going on in the different areas of the Bay. Find out what is happening in your area by visiting our web site.

Also on the web you will find news of our land acquisitions, history of our organization, and easily used donation forms.

Summer's activities

Once again the Kemerer family in Cognashene will be producing **Shakespeare on the Rocks**. This year's production is *The Tempest*. and let's hope it doesn't tempest on the day, which is **Saturday August 6th..**

Each year this presentation becomes more popular. There are lots of added benefits to attending this theatre under the cedars. It's not just the atmosphere and the sound of lapping waters and sighing trees, but also the refreshments at intermission, the door prizes awarded to the right ticket holders, visits with neighbours and friends, and of course donations to the Land Trust.

Tickets are available in advance by phoning your Cognashene representative, Sue Russell or Chris Baines (see back page for phone numbers) or the Kemerer family themselves at 705 756 2129

After the success of our **Nature Walk** last summer in Sans Souci the GBLT is planning to have at least four of them this summer, one each for members and friends in **Bayfield-Nares, Sans Souci, Go Home Bay and Cognashene**. Planning for these event is still underway so please check our web site to find out how you can join us. These walks are an opportunity to learn about Georgian Bay's natural environment and how the GBLT is helping to protect it.

Remember that **Great Silent Auction** last year and the year before? Well we are doing it once more at the **Sans Souci Community Centre**. The usual kind of items will be available - cottage necessities, cottage frivolities, objets d'art as well as true art - oils watercolours and mixed media paintings. The more valuable items will be auctioned off in a live auction. All the items are donated by the owners, which means the Land Trust will enjoy 100% profit. Everyone is welcome and bring a friend. You never know what you may find or what you realize you need. It is being held on **Saturday August 20th**.

Please check on our web site for verification of these dates.
gblt.org.

Check out our
updated website
Want to know what's
going on?
Want to know what
went on?
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will be happening?
Key in to
gblt.org



Our web master, Matt Murphy, has volunteered to keep our web site up to date with the latest news. Past events, present events and futures events are all featured.

Dates to mark on your calender

**August 6: Shakespeare
on the Rocks**

**August 20: Auction, Sans
Souci**

**TBA: Nature walks for
Cognashene, Go Home
Bay, Sans souci,
Bayfield -Nares**

Donors

In our next issue we will print the names of all our donors in 2004.

Donor Categories:

Supporting donor: less than
\$150.00

Donor: \$150 - \$499

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We would like to see your name
on our next list of donors

**Please remember to
renew your donation
Your ongoing support
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TRIBUTE GIFTS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED IN MEMORY OF:

W.G. (Bill) Bigelow

Cognashene
March 27, 2005

Bob Kohler

Cognashene
March 5, 2005

Catherine P. Lloyd

Sans Souci
Feb 28, 2005

Margaret Wishart

Go Home Bay
Feb. 4, 2005

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