



### **President's Corner**

*By Bruce Ellsworth*

Putting aside for the moment our annual comments about summer being over and how we're preparing for winter, I think the big news at the lake is the announcement that both the Camp Blaisdell property and the Lovett property have new owners. I'm aware that at least one has already joined the BLPA, and I hope to be able to meet them as the new year progresses, and to welcome them into the association.

What a beautiful summer! The hot weather brought both good news and bad news - it was disappointing to have to endure the prolonged dry spell and the low lake level, but it was certainly welcoming to enjoy the long hot days and warm nights. And the fishing was good, too.

It was certainly a successful year for the BLPA. The Fourth of July boat parade was larger than ever, the flares were great, the fireworks around the lake were spectacular, and the Dog House Weekend was a tremendous success. I'll add my voice to those who expressed their appreciation to all the volunteers and participants who made the weekends so enjoyable. And I can't pass up the chance to thank all the folks who spent hours at the beach on "Weed Watch" duty. That's a commitment that we all make - sometimes reluctantly - to prevent the introduction of invasive species into the lake, and it may well be the most important contribution we make to the association.

Now, about that winter. I hope everything's buttoned up and put away, and that you can enjoy the snow and cold weather while we prepare for another great summer!

### **Blaisdell Lake's Aviation History**

*By Chan Blodgett*

Blaisdell Lake has a limited but unique aviation history for a modest size lake in rural New Hampshire. Most of the activity occurred in the 1940's and 1950's.

When Camp Wabasso was in its heyday as an elite equestrian camp, an occasional amphibious plane would be moored between Bass Point and the camp as a few parents would fly in for parents' weekend. Also during the 40's and 50's Dr. Wright, a physician from Bradford, kept his Piper Cub J-3 in front of the Watkins cottage at the end of Watkins Avenue.

In the 1940's Betty Condict (later Coonley) and Lilius Putnam, said to be an ex-navy flight instructor, established the Bass Point Seaplane Base. They had two single engine float planes, a Piper Cub J-3 and a Luscomb Silvaire. This is where George Groh (whose family summered on Watkins Avenue) and I took lessons and obtained our pilot's licenses at the ripe old age of 16. The Seaplane Base was fully recognized by the FAA and was visible on the FAA flight charts.

Later Stu Jones and his family lived at Bass Point with two generations of commercial pilots in the family. In the early 1960's George Groh owned a float plane and would drop in to visit Estelle and Pat Rooney on occasion. Since that era we have only seen an occasional plane enjoy our water.

## A SUPER Weekend Led By SPECIAL People

*By Vicki Willard*

In late July, Wright's Beach was the scene for another successful fundraising weekend with the re-creation of **The Dog House**.

For those new to Blaisdell Lake and the BLPA, The Dog House was a small restaurant opened in 1947, and operated by Estelle (nee Wright) and Pat Rooney. It sat across Route 114 from Wright's Beach. The Dog House, along with "Chet Wright's General Store" was a much beloved and delicious destination for local residents. The Dog House also provided summer employment for young people, including many present day BLPA members. The restaurant closed in 1985 and was torn down more than ten years ago.

But **The Dog House** lives on!

Gail Olson, a former Dog House employee herself, inherited the recipe to the secret sauce that transforms simple hot dogs and hamburgers into "Supers" and "Specials". Gail and family including the Olsons, Baileys, Youngs, Ellsworths and now the next *two* generations have used that sauce, along with the actual Dog House grill to delight thousands of palates and to benefit worthy causes over the last 25 years. Every other year for the last 12+ years, the BLPA has been the beneficiary of this labor-intensive and labor of love endeavor.

Preparation begins weeks before the weekend event with the making of 30 gallons of sauce for the stand and sale, pre-cooking 80 pounds of bacon, and erecting the replica Dog House complete with picnic tables and tents to seat eager customers. Freshly ground beef is handmade into patties right before opening every day, and hotdogs, onions and cheese are sliced to perfection. Believe me, it takes years to attain technical perfection here.

At 5pm Friday night, people were waiting at the gate to place their orders and that continued for the 18 hours The Dog House was open for business. It requires 18 people *per hour* to keep those "Supers" and "Specials" coming off the grill including 4 cooks, 2 sous chefs, 2 order takers, 1 cashier, 4 runners, 2 beverage attendants and 3 parking attendants!

Countless extra hours are spent washing dishes at the end of the day, prepping for the next day and dismantling the restaurant on Sunday afternoon. In all, 40 volunteers, from age 6 to 82, rolled up their sleeves and made the event a success!

After selling 1000 "Specials" and 500 "Supers" and 105 jars of "Secret Sauce", the doors closed on another spectacular Dog House weekend and Gail Olson presented the BLPA with a check for \$6,218.50.

Long live **The Dog House!**

### Thank You to Our 2016 SUPER. SPECIAL

#### DOG HOUSE Volunteers

Gail Olson, Carl Olson, Sherri Olson, Stephen Olson, Jr., Zach Swinterton,

Jimmy Dunn, Kenny Olson, Tobyn Olson, Paige Olson, Dave Lavigne,

Bruce Ellsworth, Gail Ellsworth, Jeff Ellsworth, Jenn Ellsworth,

Megan Ellsworth, Tom Ellsworth, Lissa Jones, Bill Jones, Emily Jones,

Tim Jones, Dave Young, June Young, Amy Young, Andy Young,

Rick Bailey, Kate Bailey, Ricky Bailey, Larissa Callery,

Jackie Snelling, Johnny Snelling, Laura Hallahan, Bill Hallahan,

Hunt Willard, Vicki Willard, Carrie Godkin, John Godkin,

Bob Wright, Don Hall, Katie Blodgett, Erica Markson



## Updates and Information:

- **Boat Fees:** As approved by the membership at the 2016 Annual Meeting there will be an increase in boat launch fees for non-members effective January 1, 2017.

Motorized watercraft - \$15.00

Season Pass - \$75

Non-motorized watercraft - \$5.00 (No change)

- **“Clean and Drain”:** On January 1, 2017 House Bill (HB) 1589, the “Clean and Drain” bill, will be law. With this law, all boaters in New Hampshire will be required to clean all aquatic vegetation from the outside of their boats and trailers and to drain their boats every time they exit a waterbody. It is also highly recommended to allow boats and trailers to dry for 5 full days. This helps prevent aquatic invasive plants and animals from “hitchhiking” from one waterbody to another.
- **Lake Lowering:** The next lake lowering is currently scheduled for the fall of 2018. Please keep this in mind for any projects being considered.

### Contact Information for Executive Committee

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### Welcome New 2016 Members

Robin Asbury & Anne Swayze

Joseph Eisenberg & Melissa Laverack

John & Bonnie Messina

Poppi & Todd Ritacco

Cynthia Stillman

Andy & Dorothy Jeffrey

Paul & Sharon Tetu

Thanks to John Godkin for the repair and update to the Blaisdell Lake sign at Wright’s Beach. As always – thanks to John and Carrie for their great care of our beach.



## Memories of Blaisdell Lake

*By Anne Higgs*

Growing up on Blaisdell Lake in the summer was a lot of fun. We would often go to Blauert's Beach (called this because Carl Blauert owned the land). He also owned a white house on the top of the hill, one floor with a porch on three sides. Carl, like my grandfather (who had the Forster cottage built around 1900), played in John Phillip Sousa's band.

We parked on land across the lake at Vega Cottage and rowed across the lake to get to our cottage. Everything was rowed across the lake (kerosene, ice, food furniture, etc.)

Kema Lodge, Mason Blake's, Vega, George Hubbard's, and Hob+Nob and ours were the only cottages at our end of the lake. We played all over our end of the lake. We rowed, swam, sunbathed and chased turtles. And we went to sleep on the screened-in porch. We would listen to the whippoorwills and bullfrogs (which we had named!).

We played with Eleanor and Eileen Edwards and with Mimmie and Frankie Johnson (Mrs. Sargent's grandchildren) at Vega. For entertainment we played Parcheesi and did jigsaw puzzles. Others who we saw and played with were George Hubbard's grandsons. We all had boats to row and had races, etc. There were no fast boats, and when the Queen Mary was out we floated on the waves. We played on the islands, but someone was always watching us when we were in the water. When we would swim across the lake we were always accompanied by a boat, as accidents can happen so fast.

Mr. and Mrs. Sargent often had Boy Scouts up to stay with them, and my brother enjoyed spending time with them.

Across the lake next to Hubbard's and Hob + Nob (now Stony Pines) were hay fields on both sides of the road. From there the whippoorwills called.

When we would get a phone call, the Sargents would blow a horn and my mom would row across the lake to Vega to take the call.

We did not get electricity until after World War II. This was after Mr. Ellsworth had built his cabin and the electricity was brought that much closer to our property. Before that time, it came only as far as the girls' camp.

When we bought the Rose Cottage (the one on the point), it was just at the right time (1937) because in 1938 a hurricane match-sticked 40+ trees over the Forster cottage. After that we listened to wood borers in the trees that had not been put in the log boom in the lake. Still we fished, swam and played with friends. The bullfrogs still sang. Life was quiet, and we could play on the lake without concern of fast boats.

### Obituaries

John Mullen of East Lebanon, Maine passed away recently. He was predeceased by his wife, Mandy.

Jerry Grote, Jr., of Sutton, NH passed away unexpectedly on Friday, August 19, 2016. He is survived by Stacey Herlitz, his fiancé, of South Sutton, NH.

Lynn King of Sutton, NH passed away on October 30, 2016 after a short illness. She is survived by her husband, Stephen.

**Don't forget about the Blaisdell Lake Protective Association Website.** You can find previous newsletters, minutes of annual meetings and all sort of useful information at our website!! Check it out!! [www.blpoa.org](http://www.blpoa.org)

# 50 Years of Water Quality Monitoring

*By Steve Domber*

Three times a year, weather permitting and assuming boats are working, someone from BLPA has ventured onto and around Blaisdell Lake to collect water samples. This activity in one form or another has been going on since 1966 when the Board first allocated funds to test the lake's water quality. Article II.E. of our by-laws states that one of the primary purposes of the Association is to "monitor the water quality of the Lake through a testing program administered under the auspices of the applicable New Hampshire state regulatory agency and promote and coordinate any required actions necessary to maintain water of the highest quality possible". Monitoring the water quality of Blaisdell Lake is an important activity of the Association that benefits all us; both the humans and the flora and fauna we share the lake with.

Many individuals have assisted in the sampling process. According to our historian, Bruce Ellsworth, the first person to collect water samples was Eddie Condict in 1966 (50 years ago!). Then his younger brother Clint Condict took over in 1969. Clint was followed by Bill Hallahan, Leon Malan, and now myself and Chris Kelley. As I know from my own experience, there are many other individuals who help out along the way, so let me apologize for all those who have helped but which I did not mention.

Three times a year (spring, summer and fall), we test the water at every inlet to the lake; Brown, Sheep Dip, Billings, Russell, Bum Carter, and North Shore. We also test the outlet of Russell and Billings Ponds, as well as the lake's deep spot and outlet at the dam. This covers everything flowing in, what's down deep and what's flowing out of the lake. Samples are delivered the same day to the Colby Sawyer College/Lake Sunapee Protective Association laboratory in New London where the actual parameter values are determined and reported back to us. The primary parameters that we test for are pH, conductivity, turbidity, phosphorus, chloride, water clarity (secchi-disk), e. coli, and chlorophyll-A. The specific purpose and how to test for each parameter is the subject of an entire semester of a chemistry class. In lieu of a dissertation, I'll focus on two primary parameters; secchi-disk water depth and conductivity.

A secchi disk is a black and white weighted disk attached to a measuring string. It's used to measure the clarity of water and is an indication of how much "big" stuff is visible in the water; e.g. dirt and plants. In other words, it is a general measurement of how clean Blaisdell's water is. The disk is lowered down into the water until it can't be seen and the depth at which it disappears is recorded. The figure below shows the average value of those measurements at the deep spot (which is located half way between Bass Point and Lazy Lodge) for the last 20 years. Blaisdell's median value is about 6.5 meters compared to an average of 3.2 meters statewide, 5.5 meters at nearby Lake Massasecum and 3.2 meters at Kezar Lake.

Conductivity or specific conductance is a measurement of how easily electricity flows through the water and is an indication of how much dissolved or "small" stuff is in the lake; e.g. salt, carbonates, sulfides and other dissolved solids and ions. In general, the higher the conductivity the more stuff that is in the water. It is generally thought of as an indication of how disturbed the watershed around the lake is or how polluted the water is. The figure below shows the average conductivity at the surface of the deep spot for the last 20 years. Blaisdell's average value is about 64 microSiemens per centimeter versus the statewide average of 40. Nearby Lake Massasecum has an average value of 45 and Kezar Lake is 200 (lower is better).

From a scientific perspective, data and trends are always nice to have, but why should the Association spend all this effort and money on regularly sampling the water? The answers are probably as numerous as there are members, but here are several which seem relevant to me:

- It's better to swim in water that is clean and testing allows us to identify any potential contaminants or problems early,
- Many of us still use lake water in our camps for cooking and cleaning plus we all ingest a little bit of water every time we swim,
- The watershed area of the lake is relatively small compared to its volume, so water in the lake spends a relatively long time in the lake before it flows out (aka residence time) making any contaminants in the lake also stick around longer and harder to get rid of,
- Property values on clean (and weed free) lakes are higher,
- Regular monitoring allows BLPA to identify negative changes in water quality early and develop proactive plans to address the change,
- Our data becomes part of a statewide dataset which is used to develop state programs which benefit us,
- Testing costs us about \$600/year, which equates to about \$7 or 8% of your dues, but the return is potentially thousands of dollars or more if it identifies problems early on and prevents larger costs later on; an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure,
- We all want to leave our children something they can enjoy as much as we do.

So what does all this water quality data tell us? For that I'll defer to the 2015 NH DES Volunteer Lake Assessment Program Blaisdell Lake Report (<http://www2.des.state.nh.us/onestoppub/TrophicSurveys/blaisdell-sutton.pdf>) which said "Overall, water quality was good in 2015 and generally representative of Oligotrophic or high quality conditions. The improving and stable trends are a positive sign; however, lake PH levels have significantly decreased over time. The increased frequency and intensity of storm events may affect the pH through acid precipitation and flushing of wetlands systems. Russell Pond water quality may be impacted by road runoff and agricultural operation and may be an area to focus potential storm water management activities. Keep up the good work!". Overall I would say it is a positive report with some cautionary warnings regarding pH and Russell Pond storm water. The improving and stable trends are a credit to all of us who maintain our properties to prevent unnecessary runoff in to the lake and keep septic systems properly functioning. I would also add that unfortunately it only takes one bad mistake to create a big problem for all of us. So keep up the good work, continue to take actions to make it better, and remember to enjoy what we have all worked so hard to maintain.

This article only touches on a small part of water quality testing. Please feel to reach out to myself or Chris Kelley or anyone on the BLPA Board if you would like any additional information, if there is a specific topic that you have questions about, if you would like to see some more of our data, or if you would like to volunteer to help (in any way). For more info check out:

NHDES: <http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wmb/lakes/index.htm>

NH Lakes Association: <https://nhlakes.org/>

United States Geological Survey Office of Water Quality: <http://water.usgs.gov/owq/>

# Blaisdell Water Quality Data

