

THE LAUREL LAKE LEDGER

LAUREL LAKE ASSOCIATION

20th ANNUAL NEWSLETTER SPRING 2007

THE HURRICANE OF 1938

September 21, 1938 marked the fifth consecutive day of rain at Laurel Lake. Streams flowing into the lake were overflowing their banks. The lake was high from the stream runoffs. Waves lapped at the underpinnings of the docks that surrounded the lake. With so many days of rain, the ground was saturated. The white pine groves in the hills around the lake were now very vulnerable to any potential wind damage. Indeed, as the day progressed, the winds began to strengthen. As well, the falling rain intensified.

Unbeknownst to most New Englanders, a major and very intense hurricane was bearing down on this part of the country. Weather forecasters believed the storm would go out to sea once it pasted the North Carolina coast because of the warm waters of the Atlantic Ocean. They were wrong. The storm hugged the coastline and moved rapidly northward. After passing Cape Hatteras, the hurricane's sustained wind speed increased from 20 m.p.h. to 50 m.p.h. Barometric pressure plummeted as the storm bore down on Southern New England. By mid-afternoon, the barometer at the Keene Evening Sentinel was



White's Grove, Laurel Lake after the Hurricane of 1938



reading 28.45. It couldn't registered any barometric pressure below 28. The other factor was the wind velocity. The wind velocity registered between 75 to 90 miles per hour as the hurricane tore through Southwestern New Hampshire. What forecasters had predicted to be a mild storm was now a raging monster by the mid-afternoon of September 21.

The 1938 hurricane was a fast moving but deadly storm. From 3 p.m. in the afternoon until 9 p.m. that evening, it created havoc throughout New England. Most histories about this storm dwell with the death and destruction in Long Island, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. However, the destruction of property, buildings, and trees by flooding and the wind was just as great in New Hampshire and Central Massachusetts. The main reason for this is the unusual track that the hurricane took. Unlike the great hurricanes of 1635 and 1815 which tracked to the northeast after landfall, the '38 hurricane tracked directly north up the Connecticut River. This put Laurel Lake and Fitzwilliam squarely in its deadly path.

The storm's impact on the area was tremendous. Power lines and telephone lines were down. Roads throughout the region were washed out and damaged. Whole communities including Keene were isolated for days. The old growth forest (trees over 200 years old) in the Pisgah area of Winchester, NH were destroyed. In New Hampshire one half of the state's entire white pine forest was blown down. In all, throughout New England, 5 billion boardfeet of timber was toppled.

There was no exception to the damage created by the hurricane at Laurel Lake. The Swim club's raft and docks were smashed to splinters by the wind and waves. In the 1984 history of Fitzwilliam, the late Sy White recalled his ride home from work in Gardner to the farmhouse on





Keene Avenue. There he discovered the big barn had been blown off its foundation. However, the White family faced a greater challenge. Many of the large white pine trees on their property had been uprooted or snapped by the hurricane's fierce wind. What could have been a disaster turned into a financial bonus for the family. For the previous ten summer seasons, Henry White had been renting tenting sites to summer visitors. Many folks had become permanent renters and had erected tent platforms on the sites they rented. With so much timber down, two portable sawmills were brought in and the trees were turned into lumber. Because the boards were cut in non-uniform widths, the lumber would become known as "hurricane timber." In the spring of 1939, the renters bought the lumber and that summer, many of the tent platforms were transformed into permanent cabins.



A former tent platform



"Hurricane Timber"

By the first anniversary of the hurricane, White's Grove had been changed forever. The temporary seasonal housing was now a memory of the past. With the proliferation of year round permanent structures, people were more committed to their summer residences. This, in turn, brought in new people to build new camps from the hurricane timber. The Whites would continue to sell their lumber for the next five years until it ran out. In the end, the major significance of the 1938 Hurricane for Laurel Lake was the establishment of a new community at the North end of the lake which continues today.

Steve Olson

2007 SUMMER EVENTS - LAUREL LAKE ASSOCIATION

JUNE

2nd - 9:00 AM - The Board of Directors will meet at the house of Anne Korjeff on Howeville Road.

2nd - 5:30 PM - The 7th Laurel Lake Association Pot Luck Supper will be held at Camp Fleur de Lis dining hall. Enjoy an evening with friends and neighbors by starting the season off at Laurel Lake. Bring your own drinks and a dish to share. Coffee, silverware, and paper goods will be provided.

JULY

3rd - 9:30 PM - Celebrate the Fourth of July with the traditional lighting of flares around Laurel Lake. Flares are available from Board members and the Depot Store.

7th - 10:30 AM - The Annual meeting and the family picnic will be held at White's Field.

14th - 3:00 - 4:00 PM - The Boat Parade. "D" is the letter this year. Concert after the Parade.

AUGUST

11th - 11:00 AM - The 17th Annual Canoe/Kayak Race

SEPTEMBER

1st - 1:00 PM - The Dresser-Freidman Regatta (Rain Date: the 2nd)

8th - 9:00 AM - The Board of Directors will meet at Camp Fleur de Lis

8th - 5:30 PM - The 8th Laurel Lake Association Pot Luck Supper will be held at Camp de Lis to celebrate the finale of the 2007 Summer season.



Potluck Supper

The first festivity of the summer season begins on **June 2** at 5:30 p.m. The Laurel Lake Association will be hosting the 7th and 2007 Season Opening Pot Luck Supper in the dining hall at Camp Fleur de Lis. This is now a traditional event that was started during the 2004 summer season. Six pot luck suppers have been held over the last three summers and have been very successful. Besides the great homemade dishes of chicken, beef, pasta, salads, and, of course, the desserts, this is a wonderful event for people to socialize. This is a fabulous way to start off the season with the spirit of community that is Laurel Lake. It is also a great opportunity to enjoy an evening with folks from around the lake and the town to reflect upon the events that have occurred in the past nine months. Bring your own drinks and a dish to share. Coffee, silverware, and paper goods will be provided. Looking forward to seeing a lot of folks.

Parade of Boats and Concert

Many of you may recall that last year's Parade of Boats was cancelled because no permit had been issued to hold this event. A last minute decision was made to cancel the event because of a possible infraction of the law and liability concerns. As it turned out, the State of New Hampshire needs to be told what events will occur on a body of water. With that in mind, the Association's Board of Directors has made sure that all summer boating events for this year have the required permits.

So, once again, this July the Laurel Lake Association will sponsor a parade of boats. Each year a different letter is chosen as the theme and entrants decorate their boats based on something that starts with that letter. The parade is held in the afternoon and after the parade a concert is held in the early evening. The concert is put on at the lakeshore and all boats are welcomed. In the past, folksinger Rich Kumpu has performed in concert.

This year will be the 12th annual boat parade and concert. The letter this year is "**D**" - Donut, Dog, Desperado, etc. This year the event will be held on July 14 with the Parade from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. All participating boats should gather in front of Perry Nadeau's dock on the West Side of the Lake just before 3:00 p.m. The Concert will be held from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Laurel Lake in *YANKEE* Magazine

In the May/June 2007 issue on page 220, there is a food article entitled "Good Times, Great Food." It is about four friends reuniting during a summer's afternoon at Laurel Lake. There are some great photos of the lake in the article. The recipes look pretty good too! Now, your only challenge is to guess which cottage it might be on the lake. Good luck.



LAUREL LAKE ASSOCIATION
Treasurer's Report Submitted by Don Austin
Year Ending September 30, 2006

	<u>2006</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>Change</u>
Balance - October 1	8068.70	8045.31	23.29
Receipts:			
Membership	1173.00	1188.00	-15.00
Interest	8.32	8.17	.15
Flares	454.00	519.00	-65.00
T shirts, etc.	245.00	478.84	-233.84
Advertising	0.00	0.00	0.00
Maps	0.00	0.00	0.00
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Sub-Total	1880.32	2194.01	-313.69
	<hr/>		
Total	9949.02	10239.32	-290.30
Disbursements			
Ledger	268.80	410.20	-141.40
Water Testing	487.85	563.48	-75.63
Stamps, etc.	7.40	60.83	-53.43
Annual Meeting	158.00	161.15	-3.15
N.H. Lakes Assoc.	125.00	125.00	0.00
Boat Parade	0.00	150.00	-150.00
Donations, etc.	0.00	0.00	0.00
Canoe Race	134.31	441.66	-307.35
Pot Luck	28.17	176.50	-148.33
Sun Fish Regatta	0.00	81.80	-81.80
	<hr/>		
Total	1209.53	2170.62	-961.09
	<hr/>		
Balance - September 30	8739.49	8068.70	670.79
Certificate of Deposit	10451.64	10220.70	230.94



16th Annual Canoe and Kayak Race

It was more like a day in September than a day in mid-August when the 16th Annual Canoe and Kayak Race was held on August 12, 2006. 45 adults and kids in 29 canoes and kayaks participated in the Kid's Race, the 5 mile race and the 2.5 mile race. The conditions were not ideal for the paddlers as a strong Northwest wind created wind swept waves at the south end of the lake. Still, all the participants in the race persevered and complete the course. At the end of the race, the annual canoe Tug "O" War event was held and, as always, was a great deal of fun. The race concluded with an awards ceremony and raffle prizes given away. Many local families on the lake donated prizes. As well, raffle prizes were donated by a number of businesses including the Depot Store, Bottom's Up, Sunflower Café, Bullock's Farm Stand, Harvest Thyme Herbs, the Dragon Palace, Summers Back Country Sports and Mohegan Sun.



2006 Canoe and Kayak Results

THE CHILDREN'S RACE - 3/4 Mile:

Girl's Canoe - Helen Conan / Sarah Wainwright
 Boy's Kayak - Conor Olejarz

THE 2.5 MILE RACE:

Men's Canoe - Paul Knowlton/ Scott Dion
 Family Jr./Sr. Canoe - Tom Carey/ Amanda Carey
 Men's Kayak - Ted Dubinski
 Women's Kayak - Laurie Crider
 Tandem Kayak - Dan Mahoney/ Bruce Hill

THE 5 MILE RACE:

OC-1 Racing - Larry Douglas
 Jr./Sr. Canoe - Dan Acaro/ Dave Acaro
 Men's Kayak - David Vandorpe
 Tandem Kayak - Jon and Anne Rose

TUG"O"WAR:

Evan Woodruff/ Ray Berthiaume



THE DRESSER-FRIEDMAN REGATTA

The annual Dresser-Friedman Regatta was held on September 2, 2006 at 10:00 am at the south end of the lake. It was a grey overcast morning with a strong Northeasterly wind. This was courtesy of tropical storm Ernesto which had enough wind to move the sailboats from shore to shore. The 2006 participants finished in the following order:

1. Patrick McNamara
2. Eric Samuels
3. Jeff Prunier
4. Bill Chase

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

The final membership numbers for the 2006 membership year are:

283 Adult

18 Children

12 Youth

313 Total members in 153 Households

The number for 2005 were: 288 total members in 140 Households.

As a result of a mailing we did in the fall, 106 people in 48 households have already paid their 2007 membership dues.

As always thanks for your continued support.

Submitted by Perry Nadeau

THE MONSTER OF THE QUARRY

Close to Laurel Lake are the Webb Hill Quarries. There, in the early fifties, a young filmmaker, Donn Brackett created the film, **Death at the Quarry**. It was the story of murder and mayhem created by a monster inhabiting the quarries. A local townie sought out the monster and left it for dead in the waters of the quarry. Critics, at the time, remarked how well the film captured the spirit of the Golden Age of the horror films of the 1930s. Over the years, the film became a much talked-about cult classic. By the beginning of this decade, it had become the stuff that legend and myth are made of.

Cut to Labor Day, 2006, the pageantry of a film screening premiere fills the night air of Laurel Lake. Guests arrive; some wearing tuxes and gowns while others are in shorts and jeans. The fashionable arrive in stately golf carts while others walk the dirt road carpet. Excitement fills the air. The premiere screening of **Death at the Quarry II** is about to commence. Anticipation is high. The question in everyone's mind is "did the monster survive?" Only Mr. Brackett knows the answer.



A Walk Around Laurel Lake

For many people living on or near the lake, a walk on the roads around the shoreline is a daily event. The natural stands of white pines, hemlocks, birch, oak, and maple trees are enjoyable to look at. They provide shade from the heat of the summer sun and shelter from misty rains. They also attract birds like scarlet tanagers, cardinals, robins, sparrows, blue jays as well as birds of prey. All of these things make a walk around the lake an enjoyable time. Still, there are some trees, shrubs and bushes that can make the walk even more interesting.

It would be remiss not to start with the Mountain-laurel bush for which the lake is named. Surrounding the lake, this thicket-forming shrub can grow to the height of 20 feet. Around mid-June, large pink and white flower clusters bloom for a period of two or so weeks. While the plant is considered to be one of most beautiful native flowering shrubs, it is believed that the honey from the flowers is poisonous. It is also known as the “Calico-bush” or the “Ivybush.”

Less common around the lake is the Rosebay Rhododendron. Of course, Fitzwilliam is known for Rhododendron State Park which has the most naturally occurring bushes in New England. However, a few of the “Rhodies” migrated outside of the park. A relative of the Mountain-laurel, the plant can reach a height of 20 feet. Unlike the laurel, the branches spread out and up from the trunk. In early July, it blooms with flowers about an 1 1/2” wide. The flowers can be either a waxy white or light pink in upright, branched, rounded clusters. The honey from the flowers is poisonous. The Rosebay Rhododendrons at Laurel Lake can be found on the corner of White’s Grove Road and South Pond Road as well as on Keene Ave. It is also known as “Rosebay” or “Great-laurel.”

Another unusual resident is the Black Tupelo tree. The tree can grow to the height of 50 to 100 feet. It can have a diameter of 2 to 3 feet around. Unlike most trees whose branches grow up, the Tupelo’s branches grow outward horizontally to the ground. Another odd feature is that the leaves on a single branch will turn to a brilliant scarlet color in mid-summer. In the fall, all the leaves on the tree will turn this color. As well as being an ornamental and a shade tree, it is also a honey plant. Many birds and mammals will eat the tree’s juicy fruit. There are two locations where the tree can be found at Laurel Lake. One is a single tree at Sandy Beach in White’s Grove at the north end of the lake. The other is a stand of Black Tupelo trees on East Lake Road between the Perry-Price cottage and the Townsend cottage. The tree is also known as “Blackgum” or “Pepperidge.”

On Howeville Road, at Camp Fleur de Lis, a stand of Sassafras trees grow opposite the Treat House. This aromatic tree can reach a height of 30 to 60 feet. The diameter can be around 1 foot around. It can also grow as a thicket-forming shrub. The easiest way to identify Sassafras is in the summer by its leaves. The leaves are 3 to 5” long and about 2-4” wide. They are elliptical, usually with 3 broad and blunt lobes. They have the appearance of a “three-fingered” hand. The roots and the bark supply oil of sassafras which can be used to perfume soap, make tea, and flavor root beer. The origin of the tree’s name is American Indian.

The other odd tenant to be found at Laurel Lake is Canada Yew. This is a poisonous shrub which sits very low to the ground. It has short needles and the plant’s seeds can be found in a small scarlet cup. This patch of Canada Yew is located in the stonewall on the left-hand side of Keene Ave just after East Lake Road.

Thanks to Roger Olson for identifying several of these different plant species.

Steve Olson



2006 - 2007 OFFICERS

Bruce Knight - President	Perry Nadeau - Vice President
Liz Young/ Anne Korjeff - Secretary	Don Austin- Treasurer
	Craig Heatley - Past President

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

James Baldwin	2009	Phil Walling	2007
Jeannette Gardner	2009	Charlie Brackett	2008
Barbara Green	2006	Anne Korjeff	2008
Cal Perry	2006	Debbie Nance	2008
Jack Dumont	2007	Steve Olson	2008
Rob Prunier	2007	George Graf	Honorary
Terry Silverman	2007	Marguerite Albertini	Honorary

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Steve Olson	Editor Laurel Lake Ledger
Barbara Green	Water Testing Committee
Debbie Nance	Weed Survey
Barbara Dumont	Nominating
Jack & Barbara Dumont	Annual Meeting/Family Picnic
Charlie Brackett	Canoe/Kayak Race
Rob Prunier	Dresser-Friedman Sunfish Regatta
Rob Prunier	T & Sweatshirts & Hats
Perry Nadeau	Membership/Boat Parade/Boat Rules
Don Austin	4th of July Celebration
Jack Aukstikalnis	Boat Ramp
Elizabeth "Chip" Baker	Swim Club Representative



Laurel Lake Water Test Results for 2006

Last summer our monitoring group participated again in the NH Volunteer Lake Assessment Program (VLAP). Water samples were collected in June, July and August for testing at the state laboratory in Concord. The deepest spot was sampled, as it has been for the past eighteen years. Several beaches were tested for the presence of fecal coliform bacteria. We also continued monitoring a number of sites along the Keene Avenue tributary, and took samples from a new area of interest on East Lake Road.

During May of 2006, New Hampshire received a record amount of rainfall that caused excessive soil erosion in most watersheds and increased nutrient loading to surface waters throughout the state. There were also several significant rain events in June, resulting in high water levels and turbidity in many lakes throughout June and July. Transparency readings were lower in early summer, but improved later in the summer when there was less rain.

Some of the parameters measured in deep spot samples showed no significant change since monitoring began in 1989. These were:

- Chlorophyll-a concentration (approximately equal to state median)
- Phosphorous concentration in the upper and lower water layer (both remain less than the state median)
- Conductivity (increase indicates pollution within watershed)

Other measurements, that were not statistically analyzed, were also similar to historical data. They were:

- Dissolved oxygen concentration
- pH slightly acidic (5.8 to 6.4)
- Acid Neutralizing Capacity (less than state median; indicates that the lake is extremely vulnerable to acidic input)
- *E. coli* concentration at the north beach, south beach and Swim Club (well within state standard for safe swimming)
- Dominant phytoplankton species are common golden-brown algae
- Cyanobacteria (present in small amounts)

There has been statistically significant change in transparency measurements at the deep spot since monitoring began. **Transparency has significantly decreased (worsened) on average by approximately 1.4 percent per year during the period from 1989 to 2006.** Heavy rainfall carries stormwater run-off with sediment into the lake. No doubt, alteration of the shoreline over the years by increased development has resulted in more sediment being carried into the lake. To prevent further decrease in clarity, efforts should continually be made to stabilize the lake shoreline and disturbed soils within the watershed, especially dirt roads adjacent to the lake and the tributaries that flow into it.

The total phosphorous concentration continued to be elevated in samples taken from all the locations along the Keene Ave. tributary. These sampling stations have had a history of elevated and fluctuating phosphorous concentrations and turbidity, which suggests that



erosion is occurring in this area of the watershed. Although results have not conclusively identified the sources of phosphorous and turbidity, DES biologists suggested that the unusually high water levels and amount of rainfall during the spring and summer of 2005 and 2006 may have caused the extensive wetland system in that area to release phosphorous-enriched water into the tributary.

E. coli concentrations (an indicator of fecal contamination) were also elevated in some of the Keene Ave. tributary samples. An August sample had concentrations greater than the state standard for recreational waters that are not designated public beaches. DES biologists recommend that the Lake Association conduct a round of rain event sampling along the tributary to help identify the source of the elevated phosphorous and *E. coli* concentrations.

E. coli concentrations were quite elevated at a new sampling site on East Lake Road at the lake shore. Monitoring will continue at that location, and a rain event sampling was recommended as well.

We will greatly miss Craig Heatley, a faithful member of the Water Testing Committee, who passed away late last year. Over the years, we spent many pleasant summer mornings in his boat with Craig at the helm, collecting samples and catching up on activities in town and around the lake. His frequent smile, chuckle and dedication to the job will be fondly remembered.

Volunteer lake monitors in 2006 were Craig Heatley, Craig Heatley, Jr., Phyllis Lurvey, Mary Ann Perry, Perry Nadeau, Dana Wasserbauer, Arnie Anderson and Barbara Green.

Note: Information in this report was included in the 2006 Biennial Report for Laurel Lake, Volunteer Lake Assessment Program, NH Department of Environmental Services.

Contributed by Barbara Green



Summer 2006 Weed Survey

The entire perimeter of Laurel Lake was inspected from a canoe between 9:00 AM and 1:45PM. The sun was shining and the water was calm with just a little wind toward the end of the inspection. The predominant weed found was Pipewort (comments by lake dwellers as we passed indicated that they thought there more weeds in general in front of their cottages this year than in the past.) There were lighter concentrations of Floating Heart. This was the first year we had noticed Bladderwort. There seemed to be two areas of concentration - one each the west side and the east side of the lake. There were occasional small patches of Burr Weed, Wild Celery, and Pond Weed around the perimeter. None of these weeds are exotic. No exotic weeds were found!

We will do another weed watch this summer in August. If anyone would like to help, please get in touch with Debby Nance at dndesign@comcast.net or home phone 978-927-6877 and after Memorial Day at Laurel Lake 603-585-6893. If any of you would like more information on the weed watcher program and/or exotic weeds, you can go the web site:

www.des.state.nh.us/wmb/exoticspecies/

Weed Watchers: Debby Nance and Gretchen Prunier with consultation with Barbara Green.

Submitted by Debby Nance

IN MEMORIUM

The Laurel Lake community lost a number of people who contributed significantly to the lake for many years.

Craig B. Heatley Sr.

Craig Heatley Sr. died on December 30, 2006 in Keene NH. For the past twenty years, he had spend his summers at Laurel Lake at his waterfront cottage on East Lake Road. He was very active in the Laurel Lake Association. He was President of the Association from 2000 to 2004. He also participated in the yearly water testing survey of Laurel Lake. At the time of his pasting, he was the Past President of the Laurel Lake Association.

Brenda L. Hoag

Brenda Hoag died on April 14, 2007 at her home in Worcester, MA. She is survived by her husband Bill. They have owned a cottage in White's Grove for over twenty-five years. During the eighties and the early nineties, Brenda was extremely active in the Laurel Lake Association. She was instrumental in keeping the organization alive by attracting new members to the Association. She was also known for her whirlwind morning walks around the lake. Her presence on Sandy Beach in White's Grove was always a joy to have around. She will be missed.



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2007 Laurel Lake Association Membership Form

Each Household of paid-up members will be mailed a copy of the **Laurel Lake Ledger**

Membership Dues are \$5.00 for Adult Memberships and \$2.00 for children under 18

Members

Last Name	First Name	Membership Type	Amount
		A=Adult Y=Young Adult 13-18 C=Child under 13	A/\$5.00 Y/\$2.00 C/\$2.00
_____	_____	A Y C	_____
_____	_____	A Y C	_____
_____	_____	A Y C	_____
_____	_____	A Y C	_____
_____	_____	A Y C	_____
_____	_____	A Y C	_____
Total			_____

Permanent Address

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone Number _____ E-Mail Address _____

Summer Address

Same as above

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone Number _____

All Applications and checks should be mailed to:

Laurel Lake Association
Perry Nadeau
5 Sunrise Lane
Fitzwilliam, NH 03447

Solicitor Laurel Lake Ledger Canoe Race Other _____

Thank you for your contribution

Visit us on the world wide web at <http://home.earthlink.net/~pnadeau/LaurelLakeAssn/>