

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING WEDNESDAY, MAY 7 AT 7:30 P.M. CAPTAIN WILLIAM SPRY CENTRE 10 KIDSTON ROAD

Following the business meeting and election of the Board of Directors for the coming year, guest speaker **Cameron Deacoff** will discuss aspects of urban lakes and water quality. Cameron is an Environmental Performance Officer with HRM. This is an opportunity for us to learn more about these issues and their relationship to Williams Lake and its watershed, including Colpitt Lake. As well, Melanie Dobson has prepared a short slide show of scenes and activity around the lake. The AGM is also an opportunity for us to review the year's activities and bring forward our concerns and observations.

The WLCC welcomes everyone who shares the WLCC's mandate to preserve the health of Williams Lake. The Board needs your input and also new members. Is your area represented on the Board? The WLCC depends on its volunteers. Please contact any of the Board listed at the end of this newsletter to volunteer or suggest a name. We encourage you to attend the AGM and look forward to seeing you on Wednesday, May 7.

WEBSITE

We are proud of our redesigned and updated website. Among other items it includes links to the newsletters and a printable membership form. Many thanks to Jane Gallinaugh and Stewart Cameron for their work in producing and maintaining our web pages. We are considering adding a gallery page so if you have a suitable photograph please send it along to any of the board members at www.williamslakeecc.org

ANNUAL CLEAN-UP

The annual clean-up of the lakeshore area will be held in the early fall, date to be announced. We have had enthusiastic participation from the younger generation during past clean-ups and expect another successful event this year. Ideally, of course, there would be nothing to clean up, but in the meantime many thanks to those who don't litter and who do pick up rubbish as they find it during the year.

UPDATE ON THE ARMCO GOVERNOR'S BROOK DEVELOPMENT

Armco has commenced construction on the first two phases of the Governor's Brook Development. These phases will include a mix of R-2 and R-1 lots, trail head parkland development and the bridge across the McIntosh Run connecting the site to Drysdale Road. Construction of these phases is scheduled to be complete by the end of July 2008 with home construction commencing this September. Habitat for Humanity is hoping to have two lots within this phase for their building program. Please contact WLCC if environmental issues arise with the ongoing work.

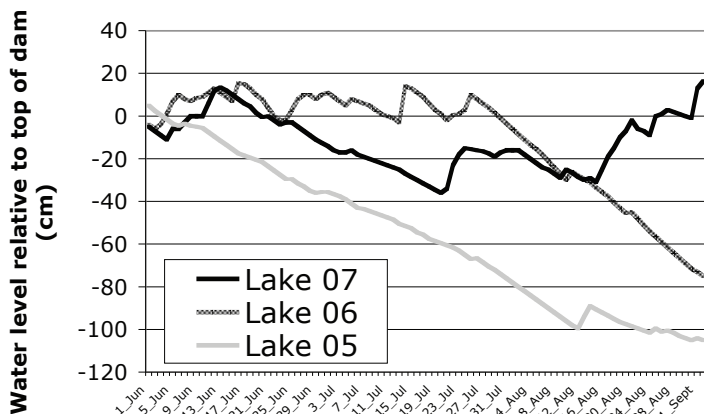
UPDATE ON DEVELOPMENTS ALONG WILLIAMS LAKE ROAD

Heavy rain in the summer and fall contributed to problems with dirt from both the Ravenscraig and Sagewood developments either side of Williams Lake Road washing into Williams Lake. Under normal circumstances the holding pond near the lake on the north side of the road can hold the run-off long enough to let the silt settle before the water proceeds into the lake. Unfortunately, when rainfall is as heavy as it was this past year, the holding pond can be overwhelmed. Buffers were placed towards the end of Ravenscraig Drive to help divert the run-off from that site to the storm drains. The developer has indicated this problem will be lessened once final paving on Ravenscraig is complete. The storm drains need the final higher road surface to function properly.

On a more positive note, many local youngsters have taken advantage of the restored quarry slope for tobogganing this winter. Dog walkers and those out for Sunday strolls are enjoying the landscaping along Ravenscraig and the view from the track leading up the restored hillside.

On March 6, HRM finished accepting tenders for construction of the Ravenscraig Sportsfield on the large flat area adjacent to Williams Lake Road. According to the HRM website, two bids have been filed. The construction date has not been announced but hopefully we will have a green field by the fall. Financing for the trails that would link the Williams Lake Road Park land to the adjacent Sir Sandford Fleming Park as called for in our community-based plan for this site has yet to be discussed by HRM.

Williams Lake levels 05-07



LAKE LEVELS AND RAINFALL

The water level in Williams Lake in late summer and early fall was the highest the WLCC has recorded in the past 5 years. This reflected the unusually high rainfall in mid-July through August, as anyone who was on holiday here during that period will probably remember.



Photo courtesy of Graeme Rucker

THE DAM

The dam at the southeast end of Williams Lake has a long history. It dates back to the 1700's, when it was used by the forestry industry as a control for a wood conduit to the Northwest Arm. In the early 1800's it served the needs of a gristmill on the site of the present Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron and later of a sugar-cane mill while at the same time allowing ice production for Halifax, an activity which continued well into the 20th century.

In our time the dam has been an important community resource for both residential and recreational uses. After some local residents undertook to repair it in 1968 the NS Water Resources Commission (WRC) requested that they form an organization so that the WRC would have a responsible body with which to deal. The WRC established the lake level at 61.12 ft., installed a water-level bench mark and gauge near the dam, and made the WLCC responsible for maintaining the water level not more than 1 ft. above the established height.

The history of dam repairs since our founding is lengthy. The WLCC has repaired the dam four times, the last time being 1994. This required raising increasingly large sums for materials and labour, over and above the generous donation of their professional skills by engineers resident in the area. The province and the city also provided some support. Finally in 2005/06 the WLCC at its own expense commissioned an investigation of the dam structure at a cost of almost \$20,000. We learned, as had been suspected, that over 200 years of water, flowing not only over but also seeping under the dam, had completely eroded the substructure below the visible part. The engineering firm estimated the cost to meet today's standards at several hundred thousand dollars. The WLCC continues to explore alternatives to such a major undertaking and awaits word from the NS Dept. of Environment and Labour concerning the issues involved.

The question arises: "who owns the dam?" The WLCC does not, nor is it clear who does. What is clear is that since 1968 much effort, skill and money have been very generously contributed by many area residents and also others who live further away in efforts to maintain the dam and the welfare of Williams Lake.

FORTY YEARS AGO

This year is the 40th anniversary of the founding of the WLCC, which is believed to be the oldest organization of its type in the province. It was founded in 1968 not only because local residents wished to fix the dam but also to work together to preserve the health of Williams Lake for the benefit of all. This is the mandate stated in our Memorandum of Association. The WLCC has been registered continuously with the NS Registry of Joint Stock Companies.

Important and on-going issues have been pollution, including road salt, efforts to ensure that development respects the lake and its watershed, public access to the lake, water levels and dam maintenance. Since its founding the WLCC has interacted with all three levels of government in these regards.

The WLCC has conducted regular lab testing of the water in Williams Lake for many years, and more recently also in Colpitt Lake, for health and swimming safety. Since its earliest years the WLCC has informed the public about matters relating to the lake and its watershed by means of newsletters and bulletins distributed to members, area residents, and the media. We also provide a forum for people to voice their concerns about whatever falls within the mandate of the Williams Lake Conservation Company.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2007-2008

Stewart Cameron • Redwood Avenue
Melanie Dobson • Wyndrock Drive • 477-0688
Jane Gallinaugh • Litchfield Crescent • 405-6165
Kathleen Hall • Hall's Road • 477-4159
Alison James • William's Lake Road
Martha Leary • Redwood Avenue • 420-1520
Andrew Ross • Wyndrock Drive • 477-7906
Kay Singleton • Birchview Drive
Anne von Maltzahn • Wenlock Grove • 477-3353

WLCC MEMBERSHIP

WLCC membership is \$20 per household and can be paid at the AGM or by returning the attached form. (The form is also available through our website at www.williamslakeecc.org)

Heather Watts's history of the Williams Lake area is \$5 when renewing or joining, additional copies are \$10 each. The mandate of the WLCC is to protect the health of Williams Lake. **Everyone who shares this goal is welcome as a member!**

MEMBERSHIP FORM \$20. (\$80. FOR 4 YEARS)

To: WILLIAMS LAKE CONSERVATION COMPANY, % A. von Maltzahn
15 Wenlock Grove, Halifax, NS B3P 1P6



NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____