

The Thames River Angler

Newsletter of the Thames River Anglers Association

Spring 1999

~HIGHLIGHTS~

Editor's Note

President's Message

Committee Reports

Opening Minds

How to Wash Your Car

Amazonian Angling

R U Wired?

Plus All the Usual Items!

President's Message – Randy Bailey

Anyone familiar with the TRAA over the past decade or so knows that we have committed many hours to the protection and enhancement of Komoka Creek. This stream is now recognized as possibly the best example of a Class 1 cold water stream in South-western Ontario. Short sighted land use practises have turned most of our other cold water tributaries into nothing more than drainage ditches. Komoka Creek is once again threatened with the same fate as her sister streams. Massive, urban-style residential development is soon going to increase the population of the tiny hamlet of Komoka by approximately 250 percent! A large portion of what was an extremely permeable landscape will be transformed into rooftops, manicured lawns, paved streets and parking lots. How will the storm water from all of these impermeable surfaces be managed? I challenge the developers, the consultants recommending the best management solution, area residents and elected officials to have the guts and the foresight to maintain the current integrity of Komoka Creek.

It's a quality of life issue for all the inhabitants of the Komoka area.

Editor's Note – Paul Noble

For the first time in years, the majority of this newsletter represents the authorship of many. I believe that the texture and diversity of this issue illustrates the positive impact of contributions from various TRAA members. Some of the submissions were nothing more than random thoughts put to paper and others were manifestos! Thanks go to all those who offered your humble editor the fodder to produce this issue of the Thames River Angler!

The format and content may change as this publication evolves. I'd like to have more opinion pieces, letters to the editor, classified ads and so on. You may actually see photographs, drawings, colour and other graphic imagery. All of this, of course, will be dependent upon budgetary constraints.

So keep those cards and letters coming. We welcome all comments, suggestions, cheers and jeers.

"Anything else you're interested in is not going to happen if you can't breathe the air and drink the water. Don't sit this one out. Do something. You are, by accident of fate, alive at an absolutely critical moment in the history of our planet."

Carl Sagan, Astronomer & Writer

Trout Committee – Ralph Lass

The brown trout fry continue to grow in the circular holding tank at the TRAA trout hatchery and will continue to do so until June. This additional growth period should increase their size to a point that will allow us to fin clip them. The purpose of the fin clipping is to aid in monitoring them after their release into Hall's Creek near Ingersoll, Ontario. The rainbow trout are at the "swim up" stage and have been removed from the trays to swim freely in the trough. Because these fry no longer have an egg sac to sustain them, the commercial belt-style feeder has been brought out of mothballs to feed them. This is because we still require the more dependable TRAA-built feeder for the brown trout. Stony Creek near Fanshawe Park Road and Highbury Avenue in London is the tentative release sight for this batch of rainbow trout. If you haven't seen the trout hatchery in action, contact us by e-mail, telephone or approach us at the May 12th general meeting and we'll set you up with one of the "trout sitters" for an informal tour. There have been a number of successful tours of the trout hatchery by some very diverse groups. We had 7 members of the Komoka/Kilworth Resident's Association checking out the trout hatchery and some of the TRAA's rehabilitation work. There were also 2 separate groups of children out for a tour and you can touch on those experiences by reading my article Opening Minds further on in this newsletter.

Warm Water Committee – Lawson Jones

The walleye hatchery is now up and running due to the efforts of Michael Mathews, Lawson Jones and Fred Smithers. They cleaned the bell jars and tanks, fit the pipes back together, installed a new filter, turned on the water and added formaldehyde to sanitize the system. A separate holding tank has been set up with pond water and plankton to attempt growing the walleye fry prior to release. Lawson Jones and Archie Graham obtained approximately 200,000 eggs from two female walleye on April 7th from the Dunnville Anglers Club. On May 1st a dozen TRAA members were treated to a tour of the working walleye hatchery. It was interesting to see how only a couple of degrees in water temperature affected the hatch rate of the walleye. The eggs in the cooler water of the bell jars were still waiting to hatch. A separate aquarium was set up with water only a few degrees warmer and the tiny fry were already clearly visible swimming about and munching on plankton. This was also the case with the holding tank outside the hatchery. The fry were already hatched and foraging for food because the tank water had been slightly heated from the sunlight. The experimentation will continue as we attempt to find the best solutions for raising walleye fry. After the tour of the walleye hatchery, TRAA members executed an extensive cleanup of litter on both shores of the river below Fanshawe dam. With this done, we rewarded ourselves with a couple hours of angling.

Public Relations Committee – Randy Bailey

Paul Noble and I attended a meeting of the Komoka/Kilworth Residents Association on March 15th to inform them of the TRAA's activities on Komoka Creek. We learned that both groups had the same goals with respect to concerns of the environmental impact of impending residential development in Komoka. We supplied them with as much information as we possibly could and offered them a tour of the hatchery and a stream walk. They took advantage of our offer on April 10th (see the Trout Committee report).

At least 8 TRAA members attended an open house at the Komoka Community Centre on March 22nd that was sponsored by Middlesex Centre planners for stakeholders in the Komoka area. They displayed maps of the three major residential developments slated for Komoka and asked attendees to fill out a rather arbitrary questionnaire regarding Komoka Creek's health and flooding tendencies. Fortunately, the meeting ended with a lively question period that illustrated everyone's concern with the future of Komoka Creek. Both the planners and the consultants, Aquafor-Beech and Beak International, had to admit that they were still far from a satisfactory storm water management solution for the coming urbanization of Komoka. Preliminary best management practices for controlling the negative impacts of storm water from these developments will be presented at a meeting tentatively scheduled for 7:00 PM on May 20th at the Komoka Community Centre. We will be there.

The TRAA achieved national exposure during a short piece on the Thames River on CBC national radio. Paul Noble talked briefly about the health of the Thames River and Ian James talked about some of the angling opportunities. As usual, some of the best stuff ended up on the editor's floor!

The TRAA was also part of a feature article in the Komoka Banner. This article referred to the work we've done rehabilitating Komoka Creek and the environmental significance of the Komoka Creek watershed area. The article also covered our obvious concern over how the impending development in Komoka will affect this uniquely significant trout stream.

Social Committee – Dave Jeffries

Almost two dozen members attended the TRAA Walleye Derby. Although a few walleye were caught this year, the real reason everyone showed up was apparent when the breakfast horn was blown. Hungry anglers consumed piles of eggs, mounds of bacon, mountains of hash browns and stacks of toast beside a crackling fire. Bob James, sporting a metallic apron that he claimed would withstand the heat of a solar flare, served up more bacon and hash browns than we could handle. Archie Graham was preparing the eggs any way you liked as long as it was over easy. In addition to the 6 walleye there were a number of other species caught. One, a 10 pound channel catfish dubiously hooked by Paul Noble, kept the "peanut gallery" busy with comments, conjecture and catcalls during

the 10-minute fight. Les Howey proved to be the overall winner with both the longest and the most walleye. Be sure to get out to the May 12th general meeting to find out more about the next event: the TRAA Rainbow Derby. Be at the June 9th general meeting for information on the opening day TRAA Bass Transfer. This event features members only angling for bass to be transferred to a pre-approved location for release. Let us know if you have any other suggestions for TRAA social activities!

Rehabilitation Committee – Rick Ornato

George Hoy, Randy Bailey and I recently did a stream walk of Komoka Creek to evaluate the condition and effectiveness of past rehab' work as well as identifying sites for this coming season's projects. It was inspiring to see the how successful previous TRAA ventures were as effective, natural, habitat improvements. George Hoy and all those who helped him on these undertakings should be congratulated. There is, however, still more work to be done and I will need the support of all TRAA members. Initially, there will be work parties for general de-brushing and debris removal. We will then probably move on to the more interesting job of structural improvements to the stream. Stream rehabilitation is what makes the real difference in an aquatic ecosystem, so if you want to make a significant contribution to the health of a local watershed, make yourself available for these fun outings. Work parties will be announced in advance and supported by the Telephone Committee.

~The Quotable Angler~

"Perhaps fishing is, for me, only an excuse to be near rivers.
If so, I'm glad I thought of it."

Roderick L. Haig-Brown
From his book *A River Never Sleeps* (1949).

Opening Minds

by Ralph Lass

It's long been known that education is the key to community-based environmental awareness. Because of this, the TRAA has changed the role of its hatchery facilities from a fish stocking capacity to that of an educational tool. Over the past couple of months we have conducted a number of tours of our trout and walleye hatcheries. Of these tours, I was involved with two separate groups of kids that visited the trout hatchery. One was from a public school class and the other was Girl Guides.

Both groups were very excited with anticipation and after rushing in, the next reaction was silent amazement. They simply stood and gawked for a few awkward moments. Then the questions flew from their mouths, as everyone wanted to know everything at once! It was no surprise that most of the queries centered on the fish and their habits. They were fortunate because the timing was right to see both brown and rainbow trout at various stages of development.

Although the school kids and the Guides each represented different age groups, what they had in common was a keen interest in learning every aspect of what was presented to them. I believe that they probably learned more about trout habits, life cycles and habitat requirements in one hour than most people absorb over a lifetime. Watching their minds open as wide as their eyes was well worth all the hours of work that many members of the TRAA have put into this trout hatchery.

These tours should not only continue but should also increase in frequency. Whether it's the mind of a child or an adult, it is definitely a terrible thing to waste.

Do You Wash Your Car at Home?

"So what if I do?" If you do, you're probably wasting far more water than a commercial car wash. Worse than that, washing your car in the driveway can introduce soap, oil and engine grime into the environment. "How's that happen?" Well, when the job's done at home, all that crappy water flows down your driveway, into the gutters and then into your local creek or river via the storm sewer system. "What about the water treatment facilities?" Unfortunately, these treatment plants are completely bypassed by the storm water sewer system. In the city of London, everything that goes into a storm sewer ends up directly in the environment. "Does this mean conservationists have dirty cars?"

Conservationists know that a commercial car wash uses litres and litres less water than the do-it-yourselfer. A commercial car wash also uses a filter system that removes soap and oil from the crappy water before sending it through the sanitary sewers to a water treatment facility. "Car washes cut into my beer money! And besides, washing my car is the only exercise I get all week!" If you absolutely must wash your own car, try using very little or no soap. "What else?" Use a spray release nozzle to reduce water waste and subsequent runoff. "Is that all?" Wash it on your front lawn – your manicured monoculture acts as a sponge, sucking up the soapy water before it hits the gutter. Two bonus payoffs: you water your thirsty lawn and the soap aids in controlling those nasty grubs that are munching your grass!

Wadda-Ya-Catch in the Amazon River?

by Ross Strickland

I spent a week this past January in the Amazon region of Brazil. The group that I was with went fishing for piranha. We were supplied with 8-foot poles made from local tree branches with monofilament line, small leaders and long-shanked hooks baited with cubes of meat as the terminal tackle. After flipping in the line we slashed the water with the poles to attract the fish. This proved effective as all 14 of us caught piranha.

The guide demonstrated the pattern of piranha tooth penetration by inserting a leaf in its mouth. These fish, with their full mouth of sharp teeth, rip the flesh of animals that enter the river either on purpose or by accident. Piranha school to inflict many simultaneous bites on their hapless victims. During the high water season the piranha can no longer be caught on meat. As the Amazon River rises 25 to 30 feet to peak in June, the nuts and fruits of submerged trees become the primary food source for piranha.

The Amazon River system supplies 20% of the world's fresh water and is large enough to be fished commercially. Freshwater fish weighing 700 pounds are caught on hand lines, towed to shore and beached. The bones of these fish are large enough that a popular dish served in local restaurants is fish ribs!

After fishing for piranha, we went out again at night. This time we were after a type of alligator the Brazilians call caimans. All 14 of us, in a 20-foot, flat-bottomed canoe, went out into the darkness after these potentially 12-foot long fish eating caimans. The guides used battery-operated spotlights to easily spot the red eyes of the alligators. The guides then reached in, grabbed the small bay alligators and taped their mouths so that we could pass them around. Although the locals eat caimans, these ones were released.

The Wired Angler

Do you have an e-mail address that you would share with the TRAA to improve efficiency and reduce costs? If so, please drop us a note at traa@anglers.org and let us know the following:

Would you like your e-mail address included on the TRAA membership lists?

Would you like the Thames River Angler e-mailed to you?

Would you like the Phone Committee to contact you by e-mail rather than telephone?

Would you like a copy of each Hotline message e-mailed to you?

Do you have any other ideas?

All of these options have the potential to increase communication and efficiency while decreasing expenses for your TRAA.

Membership Notices

All TRAA members who have not paid their dues of \$15.00 by the May 12th general meeting will lose their good standing and the benefits that are a part of that good standing (this newsletter being only one – Ed.).

The same applies to your OFAH membership dues of \$23.00 single and \$33.00 family. If they are not paid by the May 12th general meeting, you will not be able to renew at the reduced TRAA rate.

You can pay at the May 12th meeting or post your dues (cheque or money order) to the address below.

Contact Information

Here are some sources of information for the Thames River Anglers Association:

TRAA 24-Hour Hotline (519) 457-4122

TRAA Internet Site www.anglers.org

TRAA E-mail Address traa@anglers.org

TRAA Snail Mail P.O. Box 1415, Station A, London, Ontario N6A 5M2

TRAA Newsletter Published Quarterly

The best way to stay informed is to attend the TRAA General Meetings. These occur on every second Wednesday of every month at 8:00 PM. The location is the Canadian Corps Association, 1051 Dundas Street, London, Ontario.

Upcoming Events

Wednesday, May 12, 1999

General Meeting for the Thames River Anglers Association

Please note that these meetings commence at 8:00 PM. Following the meeting, Hal Schraeder, Area Biologist for the Aylmer District of the Ministry of Natural Resources, will be the featured as our guest speaker. Hal is a knowledgeable and engaging speaker – don't miss it!

Saturday or Sunday, May 15 OR 16, 1999

TRAA Rainbow Trout Derby

You will have to show up at the May 12th general meeting to find out if we're going on the Saturday or the Sunday! On one of those days we'll meet at the north-east corner of the Masonville parking lot at 6:00 AM. From there we'll drive to the Maitland River and commence angling for the elusive steelhead. Fishing in pairs to measure each other's fish will be the order of the day. This is because we don't want the fish abused just to prove you caught it! However, dispatching one for the table is your personal decision.

Thursday, May 20, 1999

Meeting: Storm Water Management Proposals for Komoka

Aquafor-Beech and Beak International, the consultant hired by the council of Middlesex Centre, will present their proposals for the management of storm water from the first three urban-style residential developments slated for the town of Komoka. This will have a negative impact on Komoka Creek regardless of what solution is chosen. However, it is imperative that we sustain pressure to make sure that the least invasive option is selected and maintained.

Wednesday, June 9, 1999

General Meeting for the Thames River Anglers Association

After regular business, attendees will be treated to a presentation on successful techniques for bass fishing. This is also the venue to find out about the opening day TRAA Bass Transfer (see Social Committee report).

Wednesday, July 14, 1999

General Meeting for the Thames River Anglers Association

This meeting will be one of those rare "remote location" events, so keep calling the TRAA Hotline after the June general meeting for details. These are always fun and informal meetings that invariably end up with everyone fishing.

The Entertainment Section

A Row Over Rowing

One spring-like day in March, an unnamed TRAA member (not Ralph Lass) suffering from an advanced case of cabin fever dragged his rowboat out onto his front lawn. He sat in the boat and began rowing like a madman. He thought that this "dry land" training would help get him in shape for the upcoming season.

While this "training" session was in progress, another unnamed TRAA member (not Bob James) happened by. This TRAA member berated the now sweating rower with stern words about the appearance of the activity.

"Do you think this type of craziness is going to help the reputation of the TRAA in our community?" The hapless rower could think of nothing to say and just sat in his boat in the middle of the lawn. Now shaking with rage, the other TRAA member continued. "You're lucky I can't swim or I'd come out there and kick your butt!"

Fishy Recipe - *Pasta with Smoked Salmon, Dill & Capers*

This dish can be served as an appetizer or as a light lunch when divided among six people (224 calories, 7.5 grams fat, 30.5% calories from fat). When treated as four portions (336 calories, 11.3 grams of fat, 30.5 % calories from fat), serve with grilled red pepper and asparagus for a satisfying and healthy dinner.

Ingredients

½ pound Pasta, fresh, capellini or angel

½ cup Sour cream, non fat

½ cup Yogurt, non fat

¾ cup Milk, 1%

2 tablespoons Capers, drained & chopped

Zest of one small lemon

¼ cup Parmesan cheese, grated

6 ounces Salmon, smoked

1/3 cup Dill weed, fresh, finely chopped

1/3 cup Green onions, finely chopped

Salt & Black peppercorns, cracked

Directions

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook pasta until al dente.

While pasta is cooking, combine sour cream, yogurt, milk, capers and lemon zest into a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil. Remove from heat and stir in the Parmesan cheese, smoked salmon, dill and green onions. Season with salt and cracked pepper to taste.

Toss the cooked pasta with the sauce.

Divide among four to six plates. Garnish with a lemon wedge and a sprig of dill.

Serve immediately.

The Thames River Angler

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Summer 1999

~HIGHLIGHTS~

President's Message

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Editor's Note

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Committee Reports

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Bud's Dock: *an Epic Saga*

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Smoked: "*Match Style*"

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Amazonian Angling

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R U Wired?

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Plus All the Usual Items!

President's Message – Randy Bailey

We have now reached the halfway point in this calendar year. TRAA general meetings have included guest speakers, demonstrations and many other interesting items. It becomes particularly disheartening when we have a guest speaker and I have more fingers than the general membership in attendance. We have changed venues to try generating interest, but that did not seem to work. We incorporated angling into a meeting but again, there was limited attendance.

Remember that we are all volunteers with a common goal. If there is something else that interests you, tell us. If the meetings are too long, speak up. If the meetings are too boring, speak up. If the meetings are missing anything, speak up. If you have ideas, please feel free to call me.

The bottom line is that without participation by our general membership, the planning and execution of projects will never happen due to the lack of manpower. Members have never been more informed about TRAA events than they have been this year. The newsletter, Hotline and the Telephone Committee have all been active keeping you informed. Most TRAA general meetings are at the same time, the same place, on the same day every month.

See you in August.

Editor's Note – Paul Noble

Ahhh, it's summertime. All of southwestern Ontario is a sauna and everyone takes his or her holidays to once again escape the weather. What a strange bunch we are; going south to escape the cold in winter and heading north to cottage country to retreat from the heat. It's been said that Canadians talk about the weather more than any other nation on Earth. That's probably because we have more weather than any other country!

And it's this smorgasbord of weather that is quintessentially Canadian. Everything about our country is varied to the extreme. We have a massive expanse of diverse geological features filled with a relatively small population of people who represent a huge number of different cultures. We have the most modern metropolitan cities that are separated from each other by immense expanses of agricultural lands and wilderness areas.

Diversity also comes to mind when thinking of our sport fishery. The fact that we have the privilege to pursue virtually every "gamefish" on the planet within our own borders is proof of that diversity. New Canadians are amazed at the manner in which the common carp is maligned in this country. Many of these people come from places where carp are "the only game in town". I don't share the disdain that my fellow Canucks have for the carp...but it's nice to know that I have the option!

Trout Committee – Randy Bailey

The brown trout fry were released into Halls Creek, near Ingersoll, on Sunday, May 29th. Approximately 15,000 fry were divided between two predetermined locations. The creek temperature of 12 degrees Celsius shortened the acclimation period. The eggs were obtained from the MNR Normandale hatchery in on November 15th. This batch of brown trout was in our hatchery for a total 193 days. I would like to congratulate all the volunteers who made the trips out to the hatchery on a daily basis on a job well done.

The rainbow trout fry were released on Saturday June 5th. As with the browns, the fry were divided for release into two different locations. About 10,000 of them went into Dingmans Creek adjacent to the Delaware Sportsman's Association clubhouse. We had participation from their club with the release. The second batch of 10,000 was transported to the upper reaches of Stony Creek off of Sunningdale Road between Clarke Road and Highbury Avenue. Again, the stream water temperature was around 12 degrees Celsius. The rainbow trout were in our hatchery for a total of 107 days. Once more, congratulations to those volunteers who made the daily trip out to the hatchery.

On another note, we need to repair the water intake at the hatchery in the coming month of August. We also need to repair the stairs in certain spots also along with the railings. These work parties will be planned in advance so everyone will have sufficient notice to help out. Dates and details are in the "Upcoming Events" section of this newsletter or you can call the TRAA Hotline. Everybody will also be notified a few days in advance of each work day by the Telephone Committee.

Warm Water Committee – Lawson Jones

June 26th was opening day of bass season and about a dozen TRAA members found themselves angling for largemouth bass in a number of different ponds owned by Dr. John Wilson of Hyde Park. As usual, everyone was using baitless, barbless hooks because all of the bass were being placed in our transfer tank. The fishing seemed slow but when it was time to go, we had accumulated 84 largemouth bass. These fish were then transferred to Sharon Creek Reservoir and released with only one casualty.

Another bass transfer will be scheduled for some time in September. This time we'll be angling for smallmouth bass in the TRAA brood pond.

Rehabilitation Committee – Rick Ornato

It's work "party time" again and we have a number of jobs to do. The cornfield bend in Komoka Creek that was reconstructed two years ago needs to be back-filled and replanted. There are barriers in the creek preventing the migration of spawning fish to the nursery areas that must be removed. Plantings of stream-bank vegetation are required above County Road 14 to prevent erosion and provide shade. When a lot of people show up to these work parties, the sessions are fun and easy. You also get a hands-on learning experience! Check out the dates under the "Upcoming Events" section of this newsletter or call the TRAA Hotline. All members will also get reminder calls from the Telephone Committee.

Public Relations Committee – Randy Bailey

On July 11th we participated in an open house hosted by the Friends of Sharon Creek. This event was held at Sharon Creek Conservation Area and featured a number of fun activities. Fred Smithers, Lawson Jones and Michael Mathews took the time to attend and helped educate kids on how to bait a hook, remove a fish, tie a hook and cast a fishing pole (without letting go of it).

Another informal demonstration of simple angling techniques took place on July 10th at Fanshawe Conservation Area. Fred Smithers and Randy Bailey shared some tips with about a dozen kids. Both venues attracted a lot of exposure and attention. We hope to participate in another one at Fanshawe Conservation Area again.

Local guide and artist Ian James has acknowledged the TRAA in his upcoming book *Fumbling with a Fly Rod-Stories of the River*. Published by HarperCollins, this collection of humorous short stories will be on bookshelves everywhere in the early spring of 2000.

R U Wired?

Do you have an e-mail address that you would share with the TRAA to improve efficiency and reduce costs? If so, please drop us a note at traa@anglers.org and let us know the following:

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Would you like a copy of each Hotline message e-mailed to you?

Do you have any other ideas?

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Drop us a note at traa@anglers.org. Please put this newsletter down and do it NOW!

It's Bud's Problem, Now *by Bud Bryant*

I am confident that this will be the final chapter in the case of the "Missing Dock". After four years in dry-dock this trouble-making dock is finally floating again (in its final resting spot, I hope). For the newer TRAA members I'll review the dock's history as I remember it.

TRAA members built the dock in 1993 to replace a dock that had been burned by vandals in Sharon Creek Conservation Area. The dock was constructed of cedar in two sections of 6 by 10 feet each. The dock was then put into Sharon Creek Reservoir and secured by chaining it to an existing concrete structure. Within a week the chains had been cut and the dock was in the middle of the reservoir being used as a diving platform. We brought it back in. The next time we checked it had a burn mark on it.

But this was nothing compared to what laid ahead. One of our members made the trip out to Sharon Creek C.A. to check on the dock. Dock? What dock? The reservoir was scoured but there was no sign of the dock. We called the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority (Sharon Creek C.A. is in their jurisdiction) and they said that they didn't remove it. Randy Bailey kept hinting that we should check the Parry Sound district, particularly in the vicinity of my cottage. A good theory, but it wouldn't fit in the back of my Mazda pick-up. End of story? Nope.

Jim Romph reported the dock as stolen to the Ontario Provincial Police. A few weeks later a TRAA member went fishing at Sharon Creek Reservoir and...lo and behold our dock's back! Jim and I went out, towed it back across the reservoir to its original location and again, chained it to some posts. To our amazement, the dock stayed in that spot for the rest of the summer. But wait, there's more.

In the late fall, Jim and I towed the dock into a sheltered bay and tied the dock to t-bars that we had driven into the middle of the bay. The following spring we went to move the dock back to its original spot and... oh no, it's gone again! The t-bars are there but the ropes had been cut. Again we searched the entire reservoir. As we were passing one of the three homes that back onto the reservoir, we noticed a dock. It can't be ours because it's been back-filled along one side to make it look permanent. Upon closer inspection we realise that it is ours. Now what? We could call the O.P.P. or approach the homeowner. Well, there's two of us: me, a little sh!t (cuss box is up a buck) and Jim the burly truck driver. We decided to knock on the door and felt lucky when no one was home. We were pondering our next move while driving out when a car passed on its way in. We went back in and told the guy he had our dock. He said, "I found it floating in the middle of the lake and didn't figure it belonged to anyone." Needless to say, we got it back again. By this time, pretty well everyone in the TRAA had seen (or not seen) enough of this dock and we decided to sell it.

This time it did end up in Parry Sound. I have enclosed a snapshot of the finished dock that can be passed around at the general meetings. I hope everyone has a good summer and if you're near Parry Sound, look me up!

Smoked on the Water *by Paul Noble*

Every Sunday morning at 7:30 am, there is a gathering of anglers at various sites throughout the city of London. They pay \$6.00 for the privilege to be told that they can fish from one spot only. After this location is arbitrarily chosen for each angler, they dutifully toddle off to the riverbank with mounds of equipment mounted on various types of wheeled conveyances. All of this may sound odd to most Canadians, but in Europe this type of "match" fishing is enormous, much like bass tournament fishing is in the U.S. But this is Canada, eh? That's why, when the "regulars" of these English Style Derbies challenged TRAA members to a friendly match on July 11th, we accepted without hesitation.

Granted, they have rods that are twice as long as ours, but we've all been lead to believe that size isn't everything. Sure, they may target the heaviest fish swimming in the Thames River: the common carp (something we usually catch while fishing for something else). Yeah, they happen to have long-handled nets to deal with the four foot difference between the bank and the water surface, special slingshots to chum the area in front of their location, unique "bait-runner" spinning reels and numerous other doo-dads. But hey, we have our own tried and true techniques and equipment, right?

The early morning of July 11th was already warm and muggy. All anglers knew the fishing would become difficult when the sun hit the water. As the group assembled it was apparent that the TRAA team was greatly outnumbered. Being members of both sides in the challenge, Glynn Williams and George Allen were added to the TRAA camp. The TRAA's cause was also bolstered by the enlistment of professional angler and television personality Lonnie King.

It was difficult to stifle our snickers as we watched our fishing foes struggle down the bank with their heavy cargo after we had easily scampered down with our minimalist gear. We could hardly suppress our amusement as we witnessed perfectly good baits being flung out to the depths with no lines and no hooks. As if chumming would work in a freshwater river. After carefully measuring and weighting their fishing "systems", they cast these bizarre rigs after the chum.

As TRAA members watched their motionless rod-tips, one of the "regulars" just happened to hook a fair sized carp. Then another...then another. Then another one of the "regulars" hooked his first carp. Then another. For TRAA members, this was quickly becoming a spectator sport. When it came time to tally the weights, Team TRAA was nearly tripled by the "regulars" of the English Style Derbies. If you remove guest Lonnie King and double agent George Allen, Team TRAA was blanked. Yes-sir-ee, a grand total of zero. Dave Jeffries actually had a measurable catch but decided to kill it for lunch (only fish suitable to be released alive are eligible).

TRAA President, Randy Bailey, has negotiated another chance for Team TRAA to redeem itself sometime in September of this year. Regardless of the trouncing we all had a great time. We also learned that "visiting techniques" can quickly find a place in the arsenal of those willing to accept them.

For instance, there's a certain reversed float method that should be deadly on steelhead...

Upcoming Events

Sundays, July 25; August 1, 8 & 15, 1999

English Style "Match" Derbies

Meet at these venues at 7:30 am: July 25th, Springbank Dam; August 1st, Harris Park; August 8th is the "Thames Championship", Greenway Park; August 15th, Fork of the Thames. After the draws you fish from 8:00 am until noon. The \$6.00 entry fee (\$10.00 for the Thames Championship) is used to provide prize money. These events foster good fun, good sport, and good fellowship.

Saturday, August 7, 1999

Trout Committee Work Party

Repairs to the source water intake pipe for the trout hatchery and maintenance to the stairs leading down to the hatchery enclosure will commence. Please meet at the trout hatchery at 8:00 am and wear rubber boots. Don't forget the bug dope and sunscreen! Refreshments will be provided.

Wednesday, August 11, 1999

General Meeting of the Thames River Anglers Association

Come out to the Canadian Corps Association building on Dundas Street, right beside the Kellogg's plant at 8:00 pm. After the business portion there will be a cooking demo' showing just how easy the recipe in this newsletter is for anyone to pull off.

Sunday, August 15, 1999

Trout Committee Work Party

Repairs to the intake pipe and the stairs at the trout hatchery will continue. Please meet at the trout hatchery at 8:00 am and wear rubber boots. Don't forget the bug dope and sunscreen! Refreshments will be provided.

Sunday, August 28, 1999

Rehabilitation Committee Work Party

Please meet at the trout hatchery at 8:00 am. Waders or rubber boots and work gloves are advised. Insect repellent and sunscreen are recommended. Refreshments will be provided.

Wednesday, September 8, 1999

General Meeting of the Thames River Anglers Association

It's steelhead/salmon time again! At the August meeting you learned how to cook 'em...wanna know the latest on how to catch 'em? Come on out to learn how to look like a genius on the water!

Sunday, September 12, 1999

Rehabilitation Committee Work Party

Please meet at the trout hatchery at 8:00 am. Waders or rubber boots and work gloves are advised. Insect repellent and sunscreen are recommended. Refreshments will be provided.

Contact Information

Here are some sources of information for the Thames River Anglers Association:

TRAA 24-Hour Hotline (519) 457-4122

TRAA Internet Site www.anglers.org

TRAA E-mail Address traa@anglers.org

TRAA Snail Mail P.O. Box 1415, Station A, London, Ontario N6A 5M2

TRAA Newsletter Published Quarterly

The best way to stay informed is to attend the TRAA General Meetings. These occur on every second Wednesday of every month at 8:00 PM. The location is the Canadian Corps Association, 1051 Dundas Street, London, Ontario.

Fishy Recipe – *Australian Grilled Fish*

Ingredients

2 fish fillets*

¼ cup lime juice

1 tablespoon olive oil**

1 teaspoon Dijon mustard

2 teaspoons fresh ginger root, grated

¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper

to taste black pepper

*The fillets should be about 8 ounces and 1 inch thick each. Use fillets or steaks of salmon, steelhead, swordfish, halibut or tuna.

**Do not use "extra virgin" olive oil. It will break down at high temperatures and may impart an undesirable flavour.

Directions

In a glass or ceramic bowl, combine all the ingredients except the fish to create a marinade.

Marinate the fish, covered and refrigerated, for 45-60 minutes. Turn the fillets 2-3 times.

Preheat the grill over white-hot coals (or on "High" for gas grills). Brush the grill liberally with olive oil.

Grill the fish, brushing it with the remaining marinade. Continue grilling until cooked through and opaque in the centre. Turn fish after 4-5 minutes. Grilling times vary depending on your grill and the heat source.

Some guests may appreciate squeezing fresh lemon on their entrée.

Serve with a crunchy green salad, a crusty fresh roll and a crisp white wine.

(I tried it with salmon fillets...awesome! Ed.)

The Entertainment Section

A Poor Man's GPS

One summer day in July, two unnamed TRAA members (not Les Howey and Jeff Adam) found themselves fishing a bass tournament in a rented boat. They were thrilled to find a location unknown to the rest of the field that produced fish after heavy fish. When it was almost time for the weigh-in, both men agreed it was a good spot to re-visit the next day. "How do you think we should mark the location for our return tomorrow?" asked one TRAA member (not Jeff). The other TRAA member (not Les) rummaged through his tackle box, produced a marking pen and drew a large "X" on the bottom of the boat. The TRAA member without the pen (not Jeff) frowned. "That won't work!" he exclaimed, "What if we get a different boat tomorrow?"

A Fish by Any Other Name...

Most of us have always thought that the collective noun "school" applied to all fish, but apparently we were wrong: the Old Farmer's Almanac refers to a "hover" of trout, a "smuck" of jellyfish and a "troubling" of goldfish.

When you think about it, trout do appear to "hover" when holding a position in a stream and jellyfish would make a "smuck" sound if dropped or dashed upon rocks. However, it is difficult to perceive goldfish as "troubling".

Then again, there were those fraternity initiations...

He Should've Paid Off the Fish

After an entire day of flogging a river famous for angling adventure, the unsuccessful fisherman complained to his gillie, "You must be the worst fishing guide on earth!"

The guide sighed and replied, "Sir, that'd be too much of a coincidence."

"My Kid can Out-fish Your Honour Student!"

- A bumper sticker seen on a 1979 pick-up truck.

The Thames River Angler

Newsletter of the Thames River Anglers Association

Fall 1999

~HIGHLIGHTS~

Editor's Note

*

President's Message

*

Committee Reports

*

Komoka Storm Water Update

*

**Rick Ornato Says:
"Fishing is for the Birds"**

*

**Dave Jeffries on Safe Wading
(This is Not a Joke!)**

*

Plus All the Usual Items!

Editor's Note – Paul Noble

Welcome to the fall edition of your newsletter. Many people proclaim autumn to be their favourite season and I confess to sharing their affection for this time of the year. On a clear day the eccentric mix of vibrant, flaming foliage contrasted by an almost painfully crystalline blue sky can take your breath away. When your breath returns, it is to the sweet, crispness of a cool, dry breeze. But the autumn days I like best are the dull ones. The swollen, leaden clouds stumble ponderously across the sky, carved by an ebony matrix of leafless branches. Beneath this moody canopy, the landscape takes on earthy, muted shades of rust, old gold, burnt umber and crimson. Dull days are also favoured for pursuing the last of the year's fishing opportunities. In the lower light, fish feel safer and compromise their allowances of encroachment. The water has little or no glare, affording the possibility of "sight fishing". The rivers are less congested by others and this can improve our odds of success. Yes, I'm there with a rod and reel, but the aesthetics of the day often divert my attention from the fish. The pungent odour of earth-musk, the sombre colours of a forest put to bed for winter, the dark slow-motion deepness of a river made viscous by the cold; these are the drugs that push me into trances of reflection. Some people meditate...I go fishing.

President's Message – Randy Bailey

Statistics state that only 10% of the members in a volunteer organisation actually become active beyond submitting their annual dues. The attendance at November's TRAA general meeting definitely supports these data. Although we fit this statistical pigeonhole, it is a fairly recent trend for the TRAA. Up until two years ago, we were easily running at a 20% participation rate in the general meetings. And, we were getting 10% or more out to the work parties! Social events such as fishing derbies used to be enormously popular but for our latest two derbies 3 and 4 people, respectively, showed up. There are key positions within the TRAA that have been abandoned or were never filled. The TRAA has not evolved to reflect the dwindling support of its own members and the strain is beginning to take its toll on those who have remained active. I think the time has arrived for the Thames River Anglers Association to evaluate its future role in the community and re-structure accordingly. What types of changes are coming? Well, let's just say that a few fundamental philosophies within the TRAA will be altered. All recommendations from TRAA members as well as interested partners and stakeholders will be seriously considered at an executive level. Those recommendations accepted by the executive will then be presented at a TRAA general meeting to be approved by those in attendance for passage into our by-laws. Please understand that we do not underestimate the value of our inactive members. When it comes to presenting our concerns regarding issues within our community, a large membership commands respect. We just need to adjust the TRAA's focus and operations to reflect the recent levels of involvement.

Trout Committee – Randy Bailey

We received permission from the Ministry of Natural Resources to obtain 30,000 brown trout eggs in the green stage from MNR's Normandale Hatchery. Rick Ornato picked up the eggs on Friday November 5, 1999. After being transferred to the TRAA trout hatchery, they were placed in three of the four trays for incubation. Historically, the tray nearest the water inlet has had the highest mortality rate and so we left it vacant. We determined that there were three reasons for the rate of failure in the first tray: it seemed to have the largest amount of air built up under it; the water flow was too heavy when the other trays were receiving appropriate circulation; there appeared to be more silt accumulation than in the other trays. So far the adjustments appear to be having a positive effect on egg survival. The date and the site for the release of this batch have yet to be determined. Suggestions are welcome from any of our members, partners or other stakeholders.

This is the current rotation for tending the trout hatchery:

Monday: George Hoy, Ross Strickland; Tuesday: John Jackson; Wednesday: Dave Jeffries; Thursday: Ken & Jeff Van Steensel; Friday: Lloyd Graham, Rick Ornato; Saturday: Fred Smithers, Randy Bailey; Sunday: Archie Graham & Paul Noble.

If you'd like to be the back up on either Tuesdays or Wednesdays, please call Randy Bailey. No experience is necessary!

This year, we will be attempting to maintain or increase the focus of the trout hatchery as a tool for public education. It is imperative that the trout hatchery and its facilities support activities such as tours by special interest groups. Committee members have identified several areas that need to be improved. The stairs leading down to the trout hatchery need to be rebuilt or replaced to provide easier and safer access to the facility.

Rehabilitation Committee – Rick Ornato

There were two work parties this fall that concentrated on collecting and installing natural deadfalls at designated areas in Komoka Creek. The design of these deadfall structures will create both stream deflection and effective cover for young trout. Although there was a significant amount of work accomplished, much more was possible if these parties were better attended by members.

When it comes to Komoka Creek, most of the focus of the Rehab' Committee seems to be on bank stabilisation. There will be some trial plantings of willow stalks on Komoka Creek between the cornfield bend and County Road 14 this fall. There will also be ditch-grass seed mix purchased for planting in the spring.

Warm Water Committee – Lawson Jones

It has been decided at a committee level that some major modifications to the walleye hatchery operations are needed to make this project feasible for continuation. Committee members have stated that the work involved does not justify the end result. Radically fluctuating water temperatures in the small growing tank are impossible to control. As a result, the walleye fry are released into Fanshawe Lake too soon and essentially become fish food. To continue the walleye programme, a larger holding pond is essential to allow the walleye fry to grow to a point that might ensure a better chance of survival upon release. There is plenty of open space behind the existing hatchery site for a small pond and the UTRCA has given us the permission to use it (they even offered the use of their backhoe to dig the hole). Other requirements would be a water pump, some sort of pond liner, water plants or some other type of cover to control water temperatures. As always, involvement by TRAA members is also a necessity.

The TRAA's continued involvement in Sharon Creek Conservation Area is being honoured by the Friends of Sharon Creek. A park bench dedicated to the TRAA will be erected on a new walkway being created at Sharon Creek Reservoir (this is the result of tireless work by Lawson Jones, Michael Matthews, Fred Smithers and the rest of the Warm Water Committee! - ed.).

Update: Komoka Development *by Randy Bailey*

Aquafor Beech completed its final report and recommendations in regard to the management of storm water runoff from proposed residential developments in the Komoka area. All stakeholders have accepted the report. A copy of the report was sent to the TRAA from Kathy Saunders at the Middlesex-Centre administration office.

Upon reviewing the proposed plans, we were quite pleased to see that many of our concerns had been addressed. The plan incorporates many lot control measures, conveyance measures and end of pipe measures that will minimise the impact of storm water runoff into Komoka Creek. Many of the proposed controls will help infiltration of surface water back into the ground before it reaches Komoka Creek. They are also looking at building a dry pond for end of pipe collection and turning it into a park-like setting.

We have done a great job in supplying the necessary information about Komoka Creek. This had a direct impact on the decision making process as to the value of Komoka Creek. Our attendance at the meetings was also instrumental in educating the local interest groups, the landowners and the developers. The report is available to members for review. Inquiries can be made at any TRAA general meeting.

Wanted:

Free lunch with no strings attached! *by Rick Ornato*

Sunday afternoon was the second last day of our fall fishing trip on the Bayfield River. It was slightly overcast and I was working a spring wiggler in and around some boulders hoping to entice a cruising steelhead. The water was semi-clear so fish movement was visible but still required all of my attention. So there I was, in this idyllic setting, fishing and just generally getting in touch with my chi, when it happened.

I was startled out of my trance by loud splashing and what could only be described as a guttural scream. I glanced back toward our camp (about 50 metres downstream) to see Steve fighting a fish...or to be more exact, fighting over a fish. It appeared that this same salmon had also been earmarked for the menu of one of the local seagulls. The salmon, seemingly embarrassed at being involved in this freak show, executed a couple of rolls, spins and jumps. The salmon's acrobatics resulted in the hook being thrown into the seagull. The canny fish escaped and, in a manner of speaking, flipped Steve the bird.

Steve did manage, however, to land the seagull and release it unharmed.

True story - swear to god.

~The Quotable Angler~

“Here is one of the world’s great truisms – the genuine fisherman never argues with his impulse; he just goes, blissfully ignoring family ties and the call of business. He goes, even if in the backwoods of his mind he knows that his fish will cost him a hundred dollars a pound. Fishing, then, is a passion, but the man who called it an incurable lunacy went too far, for the fisherman is the sanest of the sane. Of all men he is the most keenly aware that being everlastingly busy is neither a good rule of health nor a sound business policy.”

Dr. William Sherwood Fox

Former President, University of Western Ontario (1927-1947)

From his book *Silken Lines and Silver Hooks* (1954)

“I’d Rather be *Spawning*”

A bumper sticker seen on a 1999 Pathfinder

A Safe Wading Primer

by Dave Jeffries

Wading is a dangerous way to fish if you do not know or follow some simple rules. We have all heard the stories of unwise wading fishermen. I would hazard a guess that we all have a few stories of our own to tell. I've had my share of blunders and there's two I'd like to share with you.

A few years ago I was chasing the elusive steelhead on the Rouge River behind the Toronto Zoo. I was wading alone, having already fished this stretch numerous times. Yes, my misplaced confidence replaced common sense. It had been a very wet spring and the banks of the river seemed softer than they had ever been. As I approached one of my favourite honey-holes, I failed to take stock of some obvious warning signs. The sand bar that I normally stand on wasn't as firm as usual but I decided to fire off a couple of quick casts before moving on. Three steps and I found myself crotch deep and mired. I looked around for help but was hidden by the 80-foot cliff behind me. Fortunately I was able to slowly work my way to solid enough footing to get myself unstuck. Walking away, a strange sound caused me to turn in time to witness the cliff face break off, burying my footprints on the sand bar under a tonne of sand and mud.

Then there was the trip to the Maitland River in the fall of 1997 with my buddies from the TRAA. I had separated from the main group and was standing in the river changing streamers. I put my fly box back in my vest and it promptly popped back out when I began to cast. I tried chasing it down the river but fell face-first into the cold water. Being a slow learner, I restarted the chase twice again and both times found myself wallowing in the Maitland's icy current. The box got away and my day of fishing was over. Needless to say, I was once again lucky to avoid anything more than just a frosty and bruised ego.

So here are a few safe wading tips from a reformed wading idiot:

- I. Our local freestone streams and rivers are easier to wade with felt soles or felt soles with studs.
- II. Wear polarised sunglasses to cut the glare so you can see the bottom. Remember that water will also distort your depth perception.
- III. Wear a wading belt around the outside of your waders to stop them from filling with water if you get in too deep.
- IV. A wading staff is helpful in unknown waters or if the river is unusually high and off-coloured. However, don't use it as an excuse to venture where you normally wouldn't without a staff.

"A Safe Wading Primer" continues ...

... A Safe Wading Primer

- V. Make sure your waders and/or boots fit you properly. Boots that fit too tightly restrict blood flow and you lose the feeling in your feet. Boots that are too loose don't support your foot and you risk injury or missteps.
- VI. If you're a weak swimmer or are fishing alone, you should consider some type of flotation device. Some vests and wader suspenders come with an EFD (emergency flotation device) built into them.
- VII. If you enjoy fishing alone, consider attaching a "referee-style" whistle to your suspender and learn how to signal an SOS.
- VIII. Be sure you're dressed appropriately for the cold. The first stages of hypothermia make you stupid and uncoordinated.
- IX. Familiarise yourself with the area that you're fishing and the possible danger signs. For example, if you're fishing downstream from a dam, pay close attention to any fluctuations in the water level and position yourself for a quick exit.
- X. Fish with a partner or within sight of other anglers. If you must fish alone leave word where you are planning to fish and what time you will be returning.
- XI. Don't wade after dark. Take the high-and-dry road back to the car!

I guess it goes without saying that your biggest ally when wading is common sense. Use it and heed it; after all, it's just a fish!

Things That Make You Go Hmmm...

"Whoever came up with the concept of a 'put and take' fishery was probably the same person who decided we had to destroy a village to take it."

A Korean War Veteran, who wishes to remain Anonymous

Upcoming Events

Sunday, November 28, 1999

Rehabilitation Committee

We will be walking a stretch of the O'Neil Drain #1 to determine the amount of work would be required to de-brush and remove in-stream obstacles as an alternative to dredging. If you want to attend or want more information, please call Rick Ornato or George Hoy.

Wednesday, December 8, 1999

TRAA General Meeting

This is the last general meeting before the second millennium and, more importantly, before the Annual General Meeting! See you there!

Contact Information

Here are some sources of information for the Thames River Anglers Association:

TRAA 24-Hour Hotline (519) 457-4122

TRAA Internet Site www.anglers.org

TRAA E-mail Address traa@anglers.org

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TRAA Newsletter Published Quarterly

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The Entertainment Section

Fishy Recipe - *Salmon Burger*

Easy to make and really good for you!

Ingredients

16	ounces	canned salmon, flaked
4	cloves	garlic, finely chopped
2		small onions, finely chopped
2	teaspoons	dried dill
3		egg whites
4		whole wheat buns
		Dijon mustard

Directions

Mix all ingredients except buns and mustard. Form into 4 patties. Spray a large skillet with non-stick spray and fry patties over medium-high heat until cooked through. Place on buns with mustard and eat. Experiment with other toppings such as tomatoes, cucumbers, etc. Makes 4 servings.

Life is a Game of Priorities!

Two wealthy socialites were fishing where Airport Road crosses the South Thames River. One of the ladies suddenly stopped fishing, removed her hat and stood solemnly in the river as a funeral procession passed over the bridge. After she replaced her hat and resumed fishing her friend remarked, "I've never known you to be so reverential, Patricia." To which her companion replied, "So true, Rosalind. But it's the least I could do after 42 years of marriage."

How did *You Bust Your Rod?* *by Paul Noble*

I repair fishing rods as a hobby and as a source for “walkin’ around” money. I’ve learned to ask for the story of the rod’s demise or injury. Some readers may recognise the following anecdotes and that’s because they’re all true!

“The bonefishing was slow so I began teasing a large crab with the rod tip when...”

“I was playing a 30 lb. salmon with my 5 foot ultra-light when...”

“The 40 lb. test monofilament got wrapped around the propeller when...”

“I was in the middle of a back-cast and a truck was passing behind me when...”

“I walked into a wasps nest and was swinging my rod at them when...”

“The line was out of the trunk and the hook got caught in the revolving wheel when...”

“I was yelling at a biker for fishing right in front of me on the Credit River when...”

“The bull came right at me so I jumped from the 20 foot cliff into the stream when...”

“I was using the butt section of my rod to dry my socks over the campfire when...”

“We were trolling in canoes and missed the portage around the Class IV rapids when...”

“Graphite rods are the same colour as asphalt and so I was backing up my truck when...”

There’s Something Fishy About This!

The jealous sculpin was becoming irritated by the pretty little darter who was flirting with her ex-boyfriend. Overcome with envy she finally demanded, “I want my stickleback!”

Little Known Nuggets of Useless Information

The wind-swept country of Scotland is the birthplace of golf and fishing for Atlantic salmon. These facts may explain why it is also the birthplace of whiskey.

The Thames River Angler

Newsletter of the Thames River Anglers Association

Winter

1999

This Issue's ~HIGHLIGHTS~

President's Message

Editor's Note

The Quotable Angler

The Annual General Meeting

*Our Recipe for Brownies
Needed 30,000 Eggs!*

Warm Water Report

Fanshawe Lake-Shocking

Upcoming Events

Contact Information

The Entertainment Section

President's Message

Dave Jeffries, the 1998 President of the TRAA, should be thanked for his effort over the past year. Dave, a relatively new member, was introduced to this role with a promise of unwavering support from the rest of the executive and the membership. He struggled valiantly through 1998 with very little support.

This past year has been one of transition for the TRAA. It is common for an organisation to experience a periodic "hiccup" in its growth or evolution. Our membership numbers are at an historic low. We have lost some focus in regard to our overall philosophy. Many of our projects have become shelved and/or stale.

However, the TRAA remains a respected entity in this community despite these apparent problems. Successful organisations are able to seize perceived problems and turn them into opportunities. Let's make 1999 the year that the TRAA capitalised on its opportunities. Between you and me, it's possible!

Randy Bailey

Editor's Note

There are those who will write letters of thanks, complaint, praise, or just to say hello. This has been largely replaced by the telephone call. There are those who may have actually written essays, but this probably occurred during school years. Many people, because they don't do it regularly, feel awkward writing even a memo. Is writing becoming a lost art to the common person? I can't believe it for a second.

It's a lot like riding a bicycle. If you've been out of the saddle for a while, it's a bit wobbly at first, but it quickly smoothes out and becomes fun!

So give it a try! Give me your letters, tips, quotes, stories, poems, reports and jokes. I'll take your words on disk, tape, paper, cardboard, napkins, birch bark, and so on. If you are still hesitant to compose your own words, try saving articles from magazines, newspapers, periodicals and other publications.

I'm eager to look at most information with an angling or environmental bent to it. It's really tough to edit a blank piece of paper.

Paul Noble

~The Quotable Angler~

"...Throughout the whole of religious tradition, rivers have been gods. Water has been the soul. And water is life, the ultimate life. Maybe that's what we brought out of the African deserts - the notion that water is life. I think that's a sort of staple. It appears in every religion, doesn't it? That spring sources and flowing water are the spirit...are life. In *Revelations* it issues from under the throne of God, pure as crystal. The divine influx. Somehow we make that connection."

Ted Hughes, Poet Laureate of England from 1984 to 1998

Commenting on why, in the title piece from his collection of poetry, River, he calls the river a god, immortal. From an interview shortly before his death on October, 28, 1998

Trout Committee

The TRAA received 30,000 brown trout eggs from the Ontario Ministries of Natural Resources (OMNR) hatchery at Normandale.

They are presently in the sac fry stage and swimming freely in the hatching trough. Within the next week or two, the yoke sac will be fully absorbed and they should be actively feeding. This is described as the "swim up" stage. We will then transfer the fry into the two circular tanks and begin the process of helping our "babies" grow.

The planned release site for this batch is Hall's Creek, near Ingersoll. This year, the release will have a small twist to it. We are actually going to fin clip the little fellows to aid in identification for future studies.

The TRAA has approached the OMNR with a request allowing us to collect rainbow trout eggs this spring from Komoka Creek. The time frame this is usually the middle of February to the middle of March. We must make a concerted effort if we want to be successful in this endeavour. *We need the involvement of all club members.*

Ralph Lass

Warm Water Committee

Hats off to all those involved in the retrofitting of the walleye hatchery. The original design of the walleye hatchery proved to be quite functional. With the experience of only a few successful hatches, members of the Warm Water Committee decided that refinements would be beneficial. Another walleye hatch is planned for this spring.

Also planned are transfers, habitat improvement, and other projects.

This committee has really taken off and this coming year should be exciting. It's great to see that the key people responsible for our success thus far are going to continue their winning ways.

Lawson Jones

Wadda-Ya-Catch in Fanshawe Lake?

The question might be "What *don't* you catch in Fanshawe Lake?"

In the fall of 1998 the OMNR, the TRAA and other interested parties did an electro-fishing survey of Fanshawe Lake. The main purpose of the exercise was to assist the Royal Ontario Museum in looking for a hybrid species of sucker. A specimen was successfully located and catalogued.

We also found smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, panfish, young of the year walleye, and an abundance of coarse fish. Some rather large northern pike appeared on a previous outing, but this time they managed to elude us.

The young of the year walleye were a very pleasant surprise. Although it has been documented that natural reproduction occurs in the area, it is reasonable to assume that some of these fish may have originated in the TRAA walleye hatchery!

Upcoming Events

Wednesday, February 10, 1999

General Meeting for the Thames River Anglers Association

Please note that these meetings now commence at **7:30 PM**. Following the meeting, Ian James is back by popular demand and will speak about his first full season on the Thames River. What he has to say about his experience may surprise you!

Wednesday, March 10, 1999

Annual General Meeting for the Thames River Anglers Association

This meeting is for you, the members, to come out and cast your vote to elect those whom you wish to represent the TRAA during the year of 1999. And, again, please note that the meeting will start at **7:30 PM**.

Saturday, February 6, 1999

Annual General Marine Boathouse Sale

We will be setting up a small display to show some of our accomplishments. TRAA hats, keychains and memberships will be available. Members can sell their unwanted fishing tackle at the TRAA booth. The hours are from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM. We need enough people to represent the TRAA at the show from start to finish. Contact Dave Jeffries at 686-8931 if you wish to help.

Thursday, February 18 through Sunday, February 21, 1999

The London Boat, Cottage and Fishing Show

This is another event that is fast approaching. It has been confirmed that the TRAA will have a 10 x 10 foot space. This exhibit will consist of plaques, awards, and display boards to give our club more local exposure. We will also look at the prospect of having the slide presentation that was produced for the River Rendezvous '97 Conference. We will be selling memberships, hats, and keychains. Handouts will include TRAA business cards and pamphlets that briefly outline what the TRAA is all about.

It is imperative that we have sufficient members to represent the TRAA at the booth for the weekend. There will be more information and a sign-up sheet available at the February 10th General Meeting. This could be a very valuable tool in generating some local interest as well as helping to increase our membership numbers.

Contact Fred Smithers at 455-2586 if interested in helping out.

Contact Information

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TRAA E-mail Address	traa@angler.org
TRAA Newsletter	Published Quarterly

The best way to stay informed is to attend the TRAA General Meetings. These occur on every second Wednesday of every month at 7:30 PM. The location is the Canadian Corps Association, 1051 Dundas Street, London, Ontario.

Fishy Recipe

Grilled Tuna Steaks with Citrus Butter

Ingredients

1	tablespoon	butter, softened
1	tablespoon	olive oil
1	tablespoon	lemon juice
1	tablespoon	lime juice
1	teaspoon	black peppercorns, ground
1 ¼	pounds	tuna steaks, 4 pieces

Directions

Combine all ingredients but fish in a small bowl. Place each steak on a hot grill and spread some of the citrus butter on each piece. Grill for 5 minutes and turn. Spread on remaining citrus butter and grill for 6-7 minutes or until done. Grill some red and orange bell peppers as a side dish.

The Entertainment Section

TITILLATING TABLOID TRASH: MINNOW BUCKET GRAVEYARD!!

Despite recent overwhelming proof, Scott "Hiemer" Roulston is sticking to his previous stories. "It just disappeared" and "I don't recall using your minnow bucket", have been the types of excuses used by Mr. Roulston to explain the disappearance of a number of minnow buckets over a period of decades. A posse of former fishing buddies descended upon Mr. Roulston's property and located the grizzly remains of their beloved bait buckets buried beneath one of his many garden sheds. One search party member, Randy Bailey, was heard muttering, "All this time I thought he was just an innocent, absent minded fool. Now we know better." No one dares to wonder what could have possibly motivated Mr. Roulston to engage in such a heinous crime.

Although an inexplicably large number of minnow buckets have mysteriously disappeared while in close proximity to Scott Roulston, the remainder of the above feature story is fictitious and is meant solely for the entertainment of the readers of this newsletter.

TIPS AND ADVISE

"If you string Christmas lights on your rod, the heat from the bulbs keeps the ice out of your guides." *Rick Yeadon, Full-time Trucker, Part-time Steelheader*

"There's nothing like the warmth of an ER waiting room after a cold day on the river!" *Les Howey, after burying a "Flatfish" in the back of Scott Roulston's head.*

"Never go winter float tubing in a kilt!"

Ian James, Scottish-Canadian Guide, Artist and Writer