

# Weiss Point: The History, The Place, The People

## A Personal View

Dave Bouttell  
December 2008

### Foreword

At the 2008 Annual Meeting of the Weiss Point Residents' Association held on August 3 at the Burbidge Property, there was a suggestion made that one of the original members write a brief history of the Point and the Association. I volunteered. Little did I then know that this project would take on a life of its own; like a gas, it filled as much space as I was willing to allow it.

It is nearly 200 years in this area since the First Nations encountered the first white squatters, quickly to be followed by the first true settlers who were given free land grants. The seasonal settlers started to arrive about a century later.

Our own pilgrimage to the land we know and love began in August 1976 when John Savigny lead us along a pot-holed Highway 506 (prior to the bulldozed, blasted, realigned and resurfaced major highway we now travel) to the village of Ardoch, thence onto Smith Road and eventually to the Weiss Farm Road, overgrown with grass and weeds which reached above the hoods of our vehicles. The journey was formidable, but we found our little piece of heaven.

By Thanksgiving 1976 our purchase from George Weiss was complete and our first real visit as owners began. That weekend, along with a pair of loons, we were the sole residents of Weiss Point and its bays. By Saturday afternoon we had had about 15 cm of snow. Trees were down; we were cut off for two days. There were no telephone or hydro lines to come down; we didn't know we were cut off, and we didn't care. We had a wonderful weekend of fall colours and building snowmen. On Thanksgiving Monday morning, with the help of a chainsaw purchased "just in case" the previous week, we removed six fallen trees and, reluctantly, returned to work on Tuesday morning.

By the summer of 1978 there were enough of us (Burbidges, Elliots, Wohlgemuts, Latimers and Bouttells) to meet informally over a coffee and discuss the maintenance of the road. The first official meeting, with scribbled minutes and Treasurer's Report, took place in 1982. The Weiss Point Residents' Association was born.

The rest, as they say....

Dave Bouttell  
September 2008

## Weiss Point:

Weiss Point is located at approximately 45° 52' N latitude and 76° 57'W longitude, at an elevation of about 266 m. Now called the Township of North Frontenac, the area was formally known as the Townships of Clarendon and Miller, and is still referred to as such in many legal documents. Our residents own property within an area defined as Concessions X and XI, Lots 17, 18 and 19. The original Road Allowance between Concessions X and XI has now mostly been closed (i.e. purchased from the Township by adjacent land owners), along with the relevant shore allowances.

Most of the properties and their access routes belonged to the Weiss family for most of the period 1930 - 1970. No record of an official naming of Weiss Point was found; presumably as a result of family ownership the name came into common parlance. A table showing the original owners of the properties can be found as an addendum (page 13).

The Karl Weiss (1856-1930) family arrived from Germany via the USA in 1912. There were four children: Joseph (1884-1963), who eventually moved to Detroit; Catherine (1896-1972) who married a Gutheinz, hence the name Gutheinz Road off Hwy 506; George, father of Grace Kaoukis, still one of our residents; and Anton (Tony) (1900-1975). By 1935 Tony had purchased the property across from the Point, had built the original Twin Oaks Lodge along with a couple of cabins, and was in business. Other cabins were built in subsequent years. At about the same time George acquired the farm property we all travel across, and lived there for many years. By the early 1970's much of the property belonged to Mary Savigny (the farm) and two American owners (most of the Point). The exceptions were the very end of the point (Woolfrey), part of the north shore of the point (Kaoukis, nee Weiss) and the small point on the bay (George Weiss, now Bouttell).

Tony Weiss continued to play an active role at Twin Oaks Lodge until his death in 1975. The original lodge building was enlarged; more cabins were built, along with a boathouse and accommodations for seasonal workers. During the early years of the WPRA, Tony's daughter Mary and her husband Arnold McNeil ran the Lodge. They both passed away relatively recently (Arnold 2004, Mary 2007). Tony's granddaughter Carla, assisted by her brother Donnie, is now in charge. Tony's other daughter, Rosie, now in her 80's, continues to assist a few days a week in the kitchen and still masterminds the traditional Friday Night Fish-Fry. The plans offered now are reduced (e.g. no lunches); less advertising means fewer guests, with most being returnees. When the WPRA first came into being, dinner was available at the lodge for non-residents by prior reservation; many of our cottagers have availed themselves of that service.

In its heyday the Lodge was a busy place, often serving well over a hundred meals to guests and staff three times a day. Visitors came from all over North America, some even arriving by floatplane. Many were returning visitors, drawn by the hunting, guides, fishing, good food, fun and poker, often late into the night. One acquaintance, Lesley McCambridge, then a teenager living in Madoc, spent the summer of 1962 working at Twin Oaks with her two friends, Marie Foley and Bev Ketcheson. She described it as hard work, but said it was a well-run and nice-looking resort with a likeable boss who retained a slight German accent. She also described how a German singing group came from Kitchener and entertained in the lounge. The signatures of many such workers from decades ago are still to be seen on the walls of the residence. Rosie recalls a Thanksgiving when, under Arnold's direction, about a hundred and thirty were served a Turkey Dinner, first the guests, then they, in turn, served the staff. According to Lesley, Arnold made the best beer batter in the world.

Meanwhile, Tony's brother George had purchased the Point and Farm property. The farm consisted of a barn, farmhouse and sugar shack. The farmhouse eventually burnt down, the barn collapsed and only the metal parts of the sugar shack remain. George planted apple trees; occasionally bears still seek out the sweet decaying fruit of the now-wild trees. The maple syrup

produced on the property was sent to relatives in Kitchener for sale. The date of the buildings is unknown, but nails found around the sugar-shack were of the old hand-made square variety, so they may well have preceded George's ownership. The property had some shoreline to the north and to the west. There was even talk that he also might set up a lodge. Many of George's descendants remain in the Ardoch area. By the early 1970's, however, the farm was in the hands of Mary Savigny. Over the next thirty or so years Mary gradually severed lakeshore lots and sold acreage to existing adjacent owners. She and her husband, John, retained one lot for their own use (Bonhams) and were frequent summer visitors until 2003.

## Weiss Point Residents' Association: Events and Issues, 1976 – Present

### Road Maintenance

When the current wave of settlers (cottagers) arrived, the road from the end of Smith Road to the Road Allowance between Concessions X and XI was owned by Mary Savigny. Each property owner had right of way, but was also responsible for maintenance. As soon as it was formed, Mary vested that responsibility within the WPRA. Non-payment of dues could result in a lien being placed on the property. In 2005 John Hagerman bought the last of the Savigny properties, including the road. Annual fees, a diligent Road Committee and many hours of work over many years by Doug Watkins and his sons have resulted in a road arguably superior to Smith Road, and at less cost! Winter maintenance is currently in the hands of Ivan Hermer, a resident of Smith Road.

In the early years Smith Road was ploughed to the Fergus Campbell residence, to the east of Young's Lake. Concerted action by WPRA and the residents of Elizabella Lane and Markin-Spa Lane in the late 80's resulted in ploughing to the end of the Smith Road, much appreciated by winter visitors and, eventually, permanent residents.

### Hydro and Telephone

Although access to hydro and telephone lines was readily available via nearby properties, resistance to the granting of a right-of-way meant a long wait for service. Eventually access via Fernleigh Lodge was obtained and a submarine cable was laid to the end of Weiss Point. Our connection was completed October 15 1989. Because of a labour dispute at Bell the telephone cable installation was delayed. Normally laid concurrently with hydro, it eventually arrived by barge from Fernleigh in June 2005, with connection in Spring 2006. Our own connection was set for a morning in May. The installation crew was a little late.

“Have you been waiting long?” asked the foreman.

“About 30 years”, I replied.

Over many years the WPRA played a crucial role in lobbying to obtain these services. Kashwakamak Lake Association supported WPRA in pressuring Bell for telephone service.

### Tornado June 16 1986

On this date a powerful tornado moved across much of Eastern Ontario. Environment Canada confirmed its touchdown in Maynooth (14.30 h) and Elphin (16.57 h). The path included Weiss Point. Severe damage was caused to trees and hydro lines behind and next to Twin Oaks Lodge, and the path of destruction continued across the Kropf (Mobberley), Illingworth (Roy), Lennox (Parker) and Savigny (Hagerman) properties. Residents described the road as not only impassable, but unrecognizable. Most residents cleared their own access, but a crew of professional loggers (organized by John Savigny at no cost in return for the lumber obtained)

took over a week to clear the rest of the debris. Al Lennox never did return to his property (now Parkers). He sold it and purchased property at Meixner's Point (Elizabella Lane). It was at this property that his son, Gord, was tragically killed in a cottage fire on the night of August 2 2008.

### Ice Storm January 1998

Although Weiss Point was really on the fringe of the ice storm, some tree damage was reported. Emergency supplies were flown out of Sharbot Lake by helicopter to areas to the east of Kashwakamak. Many trees and hydro lines were down around Ardoch, resulting in the closure of roads and the blocking of driveways. Government emergency funding was later available and was used to widen the path of roads (notably highway 506) so that future storms and fallen trees would not impede the movement of emergency vehicles.

### Microburst August 2 2002

In the early hours of August 2, a violent storm and confirmed microburst hit the area. According to Environment Canada, the storm started near Gravenhurst and proceeded easterly to Lanark County. Benjamin Strong was killed by a falling tree in Cloyne, and an 11 year-old girl was injured at Woodcrest Resort Park. A 200-year-old pine forest next to the Pioneer Museum in Cloyne was destroyed. Our own family tells how the lake seemed to rise up to the front steps of the cottage and the rain blew horizontally through the building. Many trees around Weiss Point were uprooted, particularly along the shorelines. The remains of the root systems can still be seen along the south shore of the lake for about 2 kilometres. Some driveways were impassable for many hours and power was out for four days at the end of the hydro line. By August 5 two new hydro poles had been installed and power was back on.

### Lake Kashwakamak

Kashwakamak, or Kashawakamak as it is sometimes called, was carved out of the Pre-Cambrian Shield during the last Ice Age. The progress of the glaciers can be clearly seen on topographical maps and through satellite imagery. Kashwakamak was one of many lakes formed at that time. Meaning "Long Lake", and often referred to as such by the local population, it stretches some 17 kilometres from the inflow at the portage from Georgia Lake near Myers Cave to the dam at its easternmost tip.

The First Nations people had many trails through the area, but the first record of European intrusion is of a squatter, Thomas Prendergast, near Fernleigh about 1836. By the 1840's a survey of the area had been made, and squatters, lumbermen and their families were at the eastern end of the lake. Access was by water only. "River Drives", or the floating of logs down to the Ottawa River during the spring run-off, were the only means of delivering their product to market. These drives continued until just after World War I. The shipyards of England were the first big users of Kashwakamak pine logs, 16-24 feet long and one-foot square. The demand for this pine continued until about 1880, when steel plate replaced wood. In the meantime, railways were expanding and the need for ties grew. Kashwakamak was able to provide hemlock, cedar and tamarack. In the 1870's a man named R.T.Haskell was living near Ardoch and operated a steamship on Kashwakamak. A photograph taken in 1896 shows a group of large thatched buildings and a crowd of loggers near the dam. Many logs were either rejected or escaped and can still be found, cut and ready for market, at the bottom of the lake around Weiss Point. The work was hard and dangerous; monuments in local cemeteries attest to the memory of those who lost their lives in the pursuit of lumber for a far off land. The last river drive on the Mississippi was in 1921. During this period Kashwakamak and Ardoch were a hive of activity.

By the 30's the next wave of settlers, the seasonal visitors, were starting to arrive. One of the first cottagers, a resident of Rochester, New York, recalled driving a dirt road from Belleville.

The lodges also started to appear. Kashwakamak had its fair share: Twin Oaks, Fernleigh, Evergreen and Aragain were still operating when the WPRA was born.

### The Dam

Water level is controlled by a dam at the easternmost end of the lake, where it once again becomes the Mississippi River, made famous by its inclusion as a question in Trivial Pursuit. The primary purpose of the dam is downstream flood control during spring run-off. It, along with some other dams, comes under the auspices of the Mississippi Valley Conservation. The first logging dam was constructed during the 1860's. Evidence also exists of a log dam (photograph, 1921) on Farm Lake. The Mississippi River Improvement Company purchased the original logging dam and all its rights from James and Alexander Brown in 1909 for \$100. Ontario Hydro became involved soon thereafter, with construction of the current dam taking place in 1910. A photograph in the National Air Photo Library taken on October 1 1934 clearly shows the original shoreline around Weiss Point.

At least twice since the WPRA came into being maintenance work has been done to prevent leakage around the dam. In 1988 extensive work was done on the concrete surfaces of the weir. Ownership and operation of the dam was transferred to the MVC in January 1991. They in turn undertook a repair program to reduce seepage around the dam, but with little success.

The retaining logs are normally replaced about the beginning of April, depending on run-off and conditions. The stated aim of the MVC is to maintain water level at 261.13 m.

### Smith Road

According to the census of 1871, Napoleon Lacouline was the first settler on the road. Mrs. John Smith, with her four sons and a daughter, arrived in Canada in the mid 1800's. She was Irish, her husband English. He was supposed to follow her to Canada, but never arrived. The Smiths were in the area by 1868. Charles Smith (1843-1913), presumably a son, obtained about 200 acres on the road and an island in the river on September 29, 1875. Subsequently, William Smith (1836-1902) built a house on his brother's farm. Little additional information on the family could be found. The Smith property is currently owned by one of our members, Marilyn Harris.

### Early Settlement and Land Grants

Any settlers in the area prior to 1860 were referred to as squatters. By the 1840's residents were petitioning to be able to purchase land. In 1847 a surveyor named Harper defined timber limits or grants along the Mississippi River. The following year a group applied for the construction of a school. In 1852/53 Thomas Gibbs conducted a survey for the construction of the Frontenac Road and reported settlers in present-day Ardoch. Further surveying was done along the Frontenac Road (T.F.Gibbs, 1859), in Miller Township (Harper, 1857-1862) and in Clarendon Township (J.Snow, 1862). All Free Land Grants in Clarendon and Miller were quickly snapped up. An application to the Commissioner of Crown Lands in Montreal was required in order to obtain a Location Ticket. Applicants were required to settle on the land within a month, clear twelve acres and erect buildings. After four years the applicant received a patent entitling him or her to full ownership and right to sell. One of the first applicants was Bramwell Watkins, arriving in 1860; he was Reeve when the two townships were incorporated in 1867. Clarendon was named after George Villiers, 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Clarendon, a British Cabinet Minister. Miller was named after Hugh Miller, a Scottish geologist. Typically the first true settlers were either from Upper Canada or were Irish, English or Scottish. A few were American or German. Mostly they were

farmers; census data show that the largest crops were wheat, oats, potatoes, turnips and maple syrup. There were no roads in the area prior to 1859. The railway never came to Ardoch or Plevna, but there were stations at Lavant, Clarendon and Robertsville, with the line opening on December 29, 1884 and running until 1960.

### Ardoch

No matter where our point of departure, we all arrive at our cottages through the village of Ardoch. Originally called variously Millburn, Milltown or Melbourne, after the British Prime Minister, the Post Office was opened on June 25 1865 with the records showing it officially located in Ardoch. The name was apparently linked to the birth towns of both Scottish (Stevenson) and German (Jacobi) settlers. Ardoch quickly became a thriving community, the centre of many services. The first official settlers in the area were the Watkins and the Hendersons (1860). The Henderson family operated a tannery in Ardoch. A sawmill was operating on the Mississippi by 1865. Many hostelrys were established. The Watkins were well known for their hospitality. They, near Malcolm Lake, and the McDonalds and the Dunhams all ran small hotels in the vicinity. Most settlers arrived by horse or on foot. Progress was slow, so there was much need for meals and overnight accommodation. Watkins and Smith built an Orange Lodge, selling it to a cheese maker in 1895. It was productive until 1939. By 1865 a sawmill and a gristmill were located on Malcolm Lake Creek. A smithy was set up in 1885 and operated for many years. By 1909 one of the largest sawmills in Ontario was operating in Ardoch; it burnt down September 6 1924. Also in 1909 a by-law was passed allowing for the construction of a telephone line through the township. A garage was in business in the village by the early 1920's.

The first school was built south of Ardoch in 1867, eventually to be replaced by one on Smith Road. It can still be seen to the north at the top of the rise at the beginning of Smith Road; it is now used as a seasonal residence. St. Killians R.C. Church was established in 1894, with the summer church, big enough to accommodate the seasonal influx of cottagers, being built in 1967. St. John's Anglican Church was established in 1894.

Ardoch was in the eye of the National News in August and September 1981 in what became known as the Manomin, or Rice War. In 1979 a naive civil servant in Ottawa granted a commercial company a wild rice harvest permit for the Mississippi River, downstream from Ardoch. The wild rice seed had been brought from Rice Lake many generations earlier by Mary Whiteduck of the Algonquin First Nations, the Manomin Aboriginal Kayaba, or Rice Guardians; it had been harvested and re-seeded by them using traditional methods ever since. When the commercial harvester arrived in 1981 it was greeted by a determined group of First Nation and other local resident protesters. For 27 days, in an attempt to defuse the situation, Ardoch was in the national eye, temporary home to numerous negotiators, OPP cruisers, helicopters and reporters. The harvester finally retreated when no local person, native or otherwise, would grant launching rights for the machine over their private land. The event is commemorated in a plaque, erected next to the bridge in Ardoch in 2004.

Ardoch was obviously a much busier community decades ago than it is today.

### The Journey

For many cottagers, getting there is part of the whole cottage experience. The residents of Weiss Point are no exception. Lengthy debates, occasionally arguments, rage over which route to take, where the seasonal road works are, the best coffee en route, where to get the cheapest gas, when the blueberries and local pies will be available, what is needed from the cheese factory, or, perhaps most important of all, which bubbly to bring in order to celebrate that first beautiful day by or on the dock.

Most of our residents come either from the west (Kitchener, Toronto, Napanee) via the 401, 37 and 7 highways, eventually arriving at Kaladar or Flinton, and thence via 41 and 506 to Ardoch. Others, from the south and east (Kingston, Ottawa) make their way via highways 37 or 7, through Perth, Sharbot Lake and highway 509 to Clarendon Station and Ardoch. From either direction, we are all familiar with many little communities along the way.

Sharbot Lake grew in stature as the town at the intersection of two major highways (7 and 38) and two railways (The CPR and the Kingston & Pembroke Railway, known to aficionados as the Old Kick and Push). The railways closed in the 1960's, but it remains a popular tourist town and serves as the centre of secondary education for a large area. Clarendon Station, easily missed at the junction with the Ardoch Road, lost its railway line, but is well known for the Blue Skies Festival of country and folk music held every summer. It is sadly remembered as the site of a disastrous house fire in 1987, which claimed several lives. Coxvale was established in the late 1800's but never became a large community. It is now used mainly as an access point to Gull Lake.

Though not on a route for most of us, Plevna plays an important role in our cottage lives. Founded in 1861, it was originally called Buckshot, after a local Algonquin family. In 1877 its name was changed to Plevna after the Plevna Pass in Bulgaria. It alone, of the surrounding villages, has grown into a major service area during the time of the WPRA. The grocery store, restaurant, enlarged LCBO, well-equipped and stocked hardware store and lumber yard and Township offices have made Plevna a Mecca for both tourists and locals alike.

Arriving from the other direction, one passes through Kaladar or Flinton. Kaladar, like Sharbot Lake, sits at the intersection of highways and once boasted a railway. The name is based on Scottish Gaelic, the English version of which is Cawdor. The construction of highway 7 as a make-work project in the 1930's meant the death knell for the railroad, though it continued into Kaladar until the 1960's. Gold and sulphur were mined in the area until 1964; local village names such as Actinolite and Sulphide reflect this heritage. Flinton, named after the lumber baron and Senator Billa Flint, who died in 1894, is the heart of blueberry country and is home to an Annual Bluegrass Festival. It is home to a large Catholic Church and a Ministry of Transport Office. To shop, however, one must travel to Northbrook. According to one lady, picking blueberries was the only summer occupation for students in the area. They were taken out in vans and dropped off for the day to compete with bears for the provender of the bush. Most lived to tell the tale. Northbrook, known as Dunham's Place in the 1840's, was home to gold mines with almost mythical names such as "Star of the East" and "Golden Fleece"; the mines were near the Skootamatta River, and operated from the 1880's until after WWI. It still has a grocery store, a bar, a motel, medical services, restaurants, and most importantly, at least two stores which attract local pyromaniacs bent on celebrating May 24, July 1, or even November 5.

Cloyne, named after Cloyne in Cork, Ireland, was founded in the 1820's. Now the location of a school, municipal office, hardware and grocery store, it was a centre of tourism dating back to 1889 when Doctor Weston Price bought the famous rock and built the Bon Echo Hotel. The Rock, a natural fault line in the earth's crust, stands 120 m above the Mazinaw and is an impressive sight from the highway and the air. Bought by Flora Denison in 1910, the hotel became an exclusive resort and the hub of the Walt Whitman Society. The American poet visited frequently, and many other authors and artists (including members of the Group of Seven, John Labatt, Yousuf Karsh) were attracted by the ambience of Bon Echo. The hotel burnt down in 1936. Cloyne is the closest village to Lake Mazinaw and the headwaters of the Mississippi River, which flows 169 km to the Ottawa River. Legend has it that the river name is a corruption of

Mazinazeebi, meaning Painted Image River. This may refer to the petroglyphs found on the Rock in Mazinaw.

One has to slow down to cross the bridge at Myers Cave, close to the beginning of Kashwakamak. Named after an early squatter (Myer or Meyer), its claim to fame is a hidden cave of silver, searched for by many but found by none. The rate of flow in the river, however, is an early indicator as to the height of water in Kashwakamak. Fernleigh, known as the Gateway to Kashwakamak, is the earliest settlement in Clarendon and Miller Township. Settlers arrived via squatter trails in the 1840's. Soon it would boast a store, a sawmill, turpentine production facilities and a cheese factory. The cheese factory burnt down in 1907. There are now no businesses operating in Fernleigh, though it still provides access to Twin Oaks and Fernleigh Lodges.

### The People

No history of the WPRRA would be complete without the history of some of the people involved. In these situations one runs the risk of errors by omission, but three names come readily to mind. The Weiss family, primarily because of their name and the original property ownership, has already been detailed. The other two prominent names are the Watkins and the Savignys.

### The Watkins

Doug and his wife June (nee James) were fixtures on Smith Road from the time the first WPRRA residents arrived. Sadly, Doug passed away on April 23 2007, but the name lives on in his two sons and daughter, who, along with their spouses and children, all still live in the Ardoch community. As has been mentioned earlier, Doug's great-grandfather, Bramwell, was the first "white man" in the area, first settling at Malcolm Lake, where the family still owns property, then acquiring property on Smith Road. Bramwell was Reeve and Township Warden for many years, reading the official address of welcome to Queen Victoria's daughter Princess Louise on the occasion of her visit to Kingston in 1879. The community service tradition continues in his great-great-grandson Lonnie, now Councilor for the Township of North Frontenac.

First known to our residents as the Road Superintendent, Doug, and his wife June, quickly became the source of all local knowledge to the newcomers at the Point. Mentor, historian, raconteur par excellence, water-diviner, hunter, trapper, guide, mine of local lore...it was impossible to pass the house without dropping in for advice, a loaf of freshly-baked bread or simply a chat around the woodstove in the little room decorated with two pictures: Bramwell Watkins and a map of the original Free Land Grants. A natural wordsmith, Doug had a wealth of homespun expressions to call upon. One of his favourites was: "He can't tell sheepshit from putty", an expression directed at anyone who did something stupid, but mostly reserved as a comment about other road superintendents. Doug would soon become our own private road superintendent (the excellent state of our road today is due to his efforts, expended over many years) and unofficial cottage-watcher. No vehicle would pass by his door unnoticed.

In an emergency, for a road report prior to a winter trip, or for access by snow machine or help from young, strong arms, Doug or Lonnie or Rodney were but a phone call away. We called upon them once to bring the tractor and winch to haul out a 4 wheel drive Jimmy that was stuck deep in the snow in our laneway. The embarrassed driver was sitting at the wheel while Lonnie and Rodney pushed the lever and, as if playing with a Tonka toy, extracted the vehicle.

Doug stood by, smiled wryly and said: "City boys".



Except for an occasional visit to Iqaluit, Doug preferred not to stray too far from home; “North of 7” was his territory, and, “by the holy jumpin’ Jاسus”, did he know it! He knew everybody, and everybody knew him.

But, above all else, Doug was a fiercely proud father and grandfather.

### The Savignys

John (RCAF, from St.Catherines, Ontario) and Mary (WAAF, from Sheffield, England) met in Dover, where they both worked on radar in the tunnels of the famous White Cliffs, the first line of defense in the Battle of Britain. They married and started their family in Dover, moving to Toronto at the end of the war. A year of sedentary life in the big city convinced them that a more rural existence was for them. They moved to Northbrook in 1947, where John opened a radio repair and refrigeration service business. There was much demand for walk-in fridge and freezer service in the many lodges in the area. Soon after their arrival, John was doing some repairs at Bon Echo. The owner, Merrill Denison (commemorated with an historic plaque on Highway 37 at Tweed), was a well-known author of radio plays for NBC and CBC, and was to write definitive histories of many Canadian companies, including Ontario Hydro, Massey Harris, the Bank of Montreal and Molson’s Brewery. He needed a copy typist. Mary had worked for Dame Edith Sitwell in England, so she was hired immediately. They became good friends. In 1959 Denison donated the 2000 acres of Bon Echo to the Province of Ontario; it subsequently became the Provincial Park. John assisted him in the severance and sale of some other properties on the Mazinaw, effectively starting a new career; it grew to become Savigny Real Estate, first in Northbrook, later at the corner of highways 41 and 506. John was also a founding member and sponsor of the Land O’Lakes Tourist Board. Upon his retirement the business was taken over by his son, David, who, in turn, retired recently; it is currently run under the name of Michael J. Hunt.

John and Mary moved from their house on Story Lake (the oldest continuously inhabited house in Addington; more than 150 years) to Kingston to be closer to “services” and also, Mary claimed, so John would have a garage large enough to house his collection of over 300 antique radios, and thousands of old parts. In Kingston they were also close to the Royal Military College. Both John and Mary kept in regular contact with old comrades from WWII, and attended numerous reunions both in Canada and in Europe.

Most, if not all, of the original residents of WPRA bought their properties through Savigny Real Estate, and John was also responsible for many re-sales. Specialising in lakefront property, John had a wealth of knowledge about the geography and people of the area, extending throughout Lennox and Addington and Frontenac Townships, from Kaladar and Sharbot Lake in the south, up to Denbigh and Plevna in the north. He also had an eagle eye for detail; he once wrote to me stating that he had found a spurious reference to our property in the Land Registry Office in Kingston. It transpired that a legal secretary in Hamilton had mis-typed the lot number on a registration document; our cottage was now in the hands of someone else! A call to our lawyer and, subsequently, a letter to a lawyer in Hamilton soon rectified the error.

As the old Weiss Farm landowner, Mary sold property to many of our current members. John and Mary were to be seen frequently on the Point in a business capacity, at the annual meetings or just enjoying life at their spot on the lake (now Bonhams), which they kept up until 2003. Mary was an avid and accomplished artist and was a founding member and exhibitor at the Bon Echo Annual Art Show, held each July. We well remember them for our annual bridge tournament; John would arrive bearing bottles of Old Stock and a flashlight (it was always pitch dark on the way back to their trailer); Mary always enjoyed a gin and tonic in the old English tradition. John died in December 2003, Mary in June 2006. A true and loyal new Canadian, Mary was a Yorkshire girl at heart. She was not one to keep her opinions to herself. Soon after John’s

death she moved into a retirement home in Kingston. Over lunch in the dining room, she told us of her first Sunday dinner at the residence. The roast beef, Yorkshire pudding and gravy were decidedly sub-par, so she wrote the chef a two-page letter of admonishment, and included instructions as to how to improve. The next week the other residents were delighted and thankful.

“How did you do it?” they said.

“You gotta tell ‘em”, replied Mary.

Doug, John and Mary were all an integral part of what is now our summer (and increasingly spring, fall and winter) playground.

All three are sadly missed.

### Addendum: Record of WPRA Meetings

<u>Year</u>	<u>President</u>	<u>Host Location</u>	<u>Number of Properties Represented</u>
1978-1981		Informal Meetings	
1982	Peter Burbidge	Wohlgemut	7
1983	Peter Burbidge	Burbidge	5
1984	Peter Burbidge	Latimer	5
1985	Ross Elliot	Bouttell	5
1986	Ross Elliot	Lennox(?)	7
1987	Norm Harris	Harris(farm)	9
1988	Norm Harris	Burbidge	13
1989	Norm Harris	Latimer	13
1990	Norm Harris	Bouttell	7
1991	Dave Bouttell	Elliot	12; Stan Johnson, Reeve
1992	Dave Bouttell	Kropf	9
1993	Dave Bouttell	Bennett	12
1994	Tim Parker	Latimer	12
1995	Tim Parker	Martin	14; Stan Johnson, Reeve; Doug Watkins
1996	Tim Parker	Bouttell	16; Doug Watkins
1997	Earl McClure	Aldus	15
1998	Earl McClure	Burbidge	12? (not recorded)
1999	Earl McClure	Meisener	15
2000	Al West	Meisener	19
2001	Al West	Vig	19
2002	Al West	Latimer	17
2003	Dave Osborne	West	18
2004	Jane Latimer	McEvoy	16
2005	Jane Latimer	Roy	21
2006	Mike Blamire	Mobberly	15
2007	Mike Blamire	Latimer	17
2008	Mike Blamire	Burbidge	20

### Addendum: Original Property Owners

Concession X, Lot 17, 92 acres (Benn, Sager et al.):

Originally owned by A. Brown (1879), assessed to G. Johnson (1895), later owned by George Young (1913).

Concession X Lot 18, 101 acres (Hagerman et al; the old Weiss Farm):

First granted to William Thompson (1886).

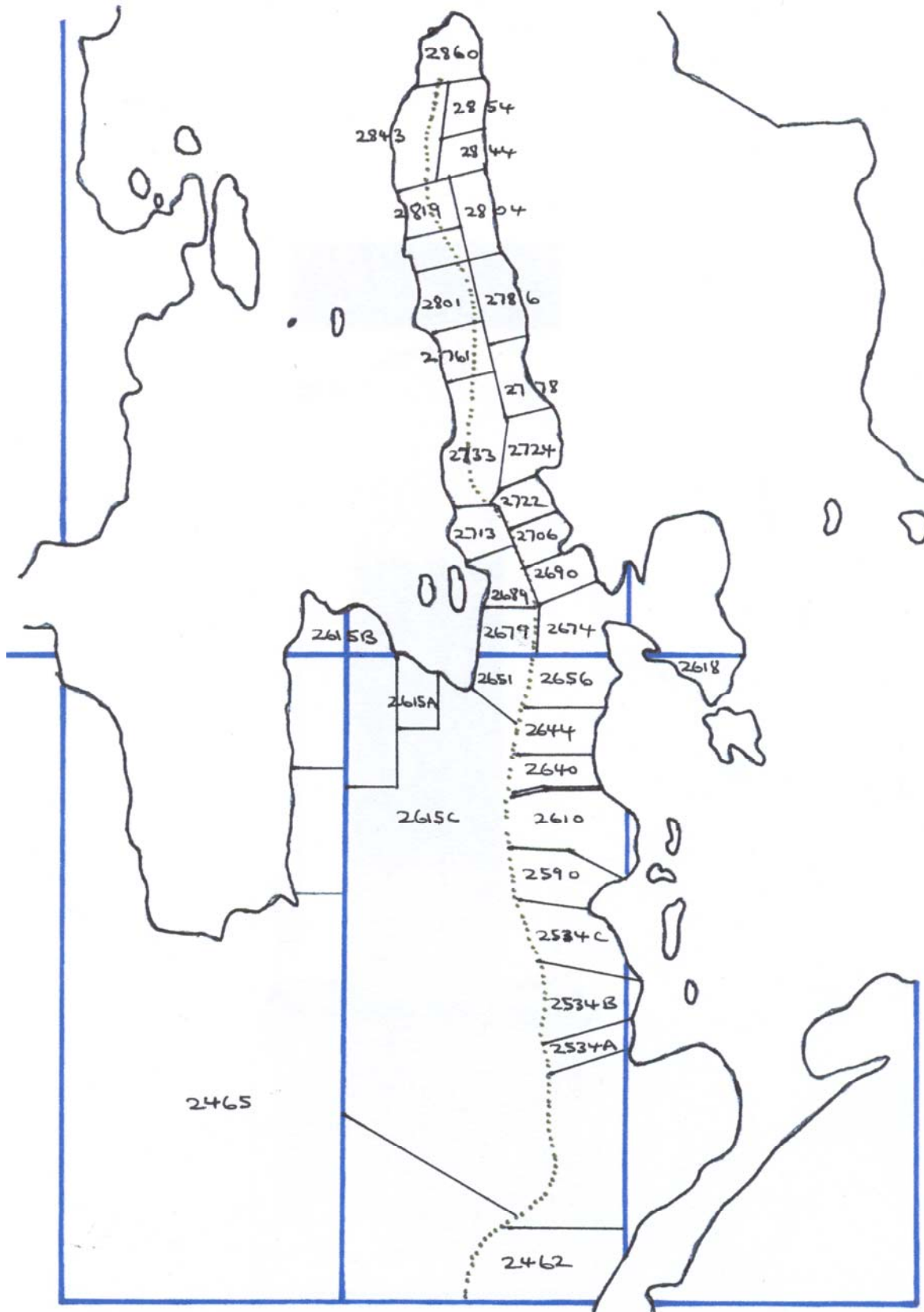
Concession X Lot 19, 63 acres (Buckingham, Aldus et al., and Elizabetha Lane):

Assessed to John Robinson in 1895, but by 1913 ownership had been transferred to George Young.

Concession XI, Lot 18, 46 acres (Weiss Point):

The earliest record found was James Burk, 1913.

Addendum: WPRM Map of Lots



Addendum: WPRA Current Registered Owners (2008)

2462	McClure
2465	Sager
2534A	Aldus
2534B	McClure
2534C	Buckingham
2590	Hatton
2610	Turner
2615A	Bonham
2615B	Bouttell
2615C	Hagerman
2640	Emmel
2644	Blamire
2618	Vlasic/King
2651	McKague/Osborne
2656	West
2674	Mobberley
2679	Parker
2689	Vig
2690	Roy
2706	Martin
2713	Aulenback
2722	Remington
2724	Kaoukis
2733	Vagners
2761	Echlin
2778	Harris
2786	McEvoy
2801	Latimer
2804	Ward
2819	Wohlgemut
2843	Burbidge
2844	Voak
2854	Elliot
2860	Woolfrey

N.B. Some lots are not yet assigned a number

## Bibliography and Credits

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Savigny, Mary: Bon Echo: The Denison Years, Natural Heritage, Toronto 1997

## Distribution

Originally intended for members of the WPRA, this document may soon be viewed at the Web Site of the Kashwakamak Lake Association ([kashwakamak.ca](http://kashwakamak.ca)) and a copy will be lodged in the Cloyne Museum.

## And Many Thanks to:

Lesley McCambridge (nee Brintnell) who reached back to her teenage years working at Twin Oaks Lodge and replied so promptly to my request, then replied again and again, as the memories came back.

June Watkins, who unquestioningly accepted my request for an interview and helped me put the Smith Road into perspective and loaned me Doug's map for copying.

Rosie Tooley (nee Weiss), who opened her door to a complete stranger and graciously gave me more than an hour of her time, allowing me to pry into the private lives of the Weiss family and answering my questions about the early days of the family and Twin Oaks Lodge.

## And Finally My Apologies:

...to those people and places omitted from this project; it could have been many pages longer.

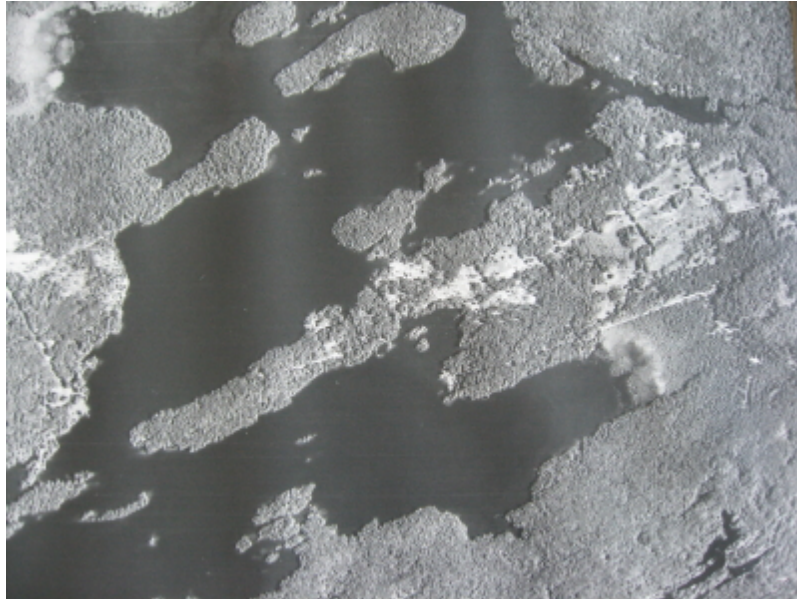
...for any errors of spelling, dates, locations etc: sometimes the research produced conflicting facts, sometimes my memory just faded...mostly the latter.



Map showing original land grants and ownership along Smith Road.  
Compiled by Norm Harris, presented to Doug Watkins.  
Proudly displayed in the Watkins home.



Original Oil Painting by Mary Savigny:  
The Bay, from the Bouttell property, facing West.  
Foreshortened, and with artistic license, in the words of the artist.  
Presented to the Bouttells by the Savignys upon their departure, August 2003



Photograph of Weiss Point June 1987  
The whitish areas near Twin Oaks and in the centre indicate the path of the tornado, June 1986  
National Air Photo Library, Ottawa



The Dam: August 2008  
Photograph by the author





Weiss Point from the Air: August 2008  
Photograph by the author



Weiss Point from the Air: October 2004  
Photograph Courtesy of Geoff Scahill, Pine Lake



Connected to the Rest of the World! The Bell cable barge at Weiss Point: June 22 2005  
Photograph by the author



Doug Watkins witches the Bouttell well: July 2005  
Photograph by the author

- G** • What Canadian province does the Mississippi River flow through?
- E** • What Beach Boy's family had to get permission from Ronald Reagan to have him buried at sea?
- H** • Did the Pony Express employ ponies?
- AL** • What pop artist's entertainment publication is called *Interview*?
- SN** • What's the opposite of an Electra complex?
- SL** • Who was the first football player to rush for a mile in a season?

Weiss Pointers Know This One!  
Photograph by the author