

Communications Report  
By Hilde Clark

Last summer, in order to better serve the membership, the Board restructured the 103-year-old Pointe au Baril Islanders' Association [PaBIA] to more accurately reflect what PaBIA does today.

By creating the specifically named Communications Portfolio, the Board intends to actively engage our membership by being transparent and open. But our intentions remain: to “unite together those interested in Pointe au Baril as a “water access” community for the purpose of protecting, preserving and promoting the interests of property owners, residents, cottagers and tourists in the Pointe au Baril area”. To accomplish this PaBIA wishes

To Provide(in alpha order):

- Awareness of issues
- Access to information
- Appreciation for breadth and depth of concerns
- Attentiveness to bubbling concerns affecting our area/membership
- Comprehension of the issues
- Discernment for means of problem solving
- Familiarity with issues in surrounding bay communities
- Insight into decisions made
- Knowledge of the facts
- Opportunities for learning
- Responsiveness to issues within our control
- Understanding of broad based questions
- Voice at the table with government

To Communicate:

- Yearbook
- Quarterly Newsletters
- Emails (snail mail where needed)
- Sandwich boards
- Bulletin board on MP Office hut
- Access to Board of Directors and those teams of folks dedicated to their area of interest
- AGM – Annual General Meeting (Summer)

To always be alert for such major matters such as:

- Environmental issues
- Government issues
- Land Use Issues
- Boating and Safety Issues

I would like to urge each person to spend some time going through the information this Yearbook has to offer. No, I don't mean just the pictures, although I will admit that is lots of fun! But more importantly, there are many people who do many things, often behind the scenes, to help make your summer safe and rewarding. Between the covers of this book, the concerns of the day that affect each of us in Pointe au Baril are spelled out. Do you ever wonder what goes on behind the scenes? You might be surprised by what you learn...and potentially what you can do about it.

A bit of perspective: I know that for years, there were many benefits of our island paradise I took for granted – that the markers shielding my boat's propeller would protect me against costly repairs; that the trees were healthy and green; that everyone knew that bright lights shining off an island can blind a night time boater; that everybody knew that going by a person's dock at full speed in a narrow channel could play havoc with the boats tied up at the dock; that garbage was taken care of (but I must admit we didn't have as many plastic bottles or non burnable containers to be concerned about); that the Hole-in-the-Wall

was always pristine and clean; and that the island area had a finite population and therefore manageable building density (but I was not focused on the problems down in southern Georgian Bay where the density of cottages and number of boats were increasing at such an alarming rate that problems were moving north toward Pointe au Baril.) As you page through this Yearbook, you will see that these and many more are all very real issues to which PaBIA continues to devote a great deal of time and energy.

All of this is to say that things never stay the same, nor do they happen in a vacuum. Over the years there have always been folks who, once they observed problems, worked with this community of concerned citizens to do something about the issues being faced. We can thank those who came before us by carrying on that tradition - to protect and preserve this incredible area by not taking any of its benefits for granted.

But to do that, we need knowledge – and it is the hope that this Communications portfolio will provide the means by which everyone can develop a greater understanding of the area. For most of us, Pointe au Baril isn't like other vacation spots where we go for just a week, once. Rather, it is a place that is in our blood and draws us to return, year after year; so it behooves us to take care of her.

If you have ideas for better ways of communicating with the community, I want you to bend my ear! Looking forward to hearing from you either via email or in the summer!