

Winter ~ 2000

Memberships  
**\$15.00**

# The Thames River Angler

"Newsletter of the Thames River Anglers Association"

## Inside this Issue

News from this  
Year's Annual  
General Meeting



Committee Cuts



An Introduction  
to Float Tubes



The Fanshawe  
Bubble Project



Plus All of the  
Usual Stuff!

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## President's Report **BIG Changes for 2000!**

Randy Bailey

The TRAA Annual General Meeting for the year 2000 took place on March 8, 2000. The executive and all of the Committee Chairs were filled by majority vote and acclamation. This was made easier by the fact that eleven former positions were either eliminated or amalgamated to "trim the fat" from the TRAA's operations. This streamlining will allow us to maintain the focus and direction that has historically been a hallmark of the TRAA.

### Change was Necessary

When we had 75 to 100 members, we needed more executive positions and committees. The large membership allowed this diversification. We now have less than 40 members and can no longer afford to spread those who are actively involved too thinly. That is why the manner in which we operate the TRAA had to evolve.

There has been talk that we should make it compulsory for TRAA members to maintain a mandatory level of involvement. This could take the form of a minimum number of hours of

participation in TRAA events or projects over the course of the year. Another could be a two tier membership structure: \$15.00 for active members and \$25.00 for inactive members. However, most of those who have discussed this issue agree that no one should be penalised in any way for being a TRAA member, active or inactive. All members are important when our organisation represents TRAA concerns to the community at large.

### What's Up for 2000?

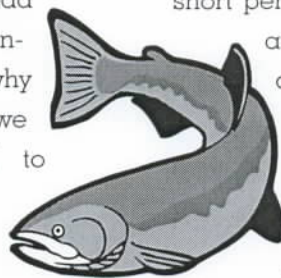
In recent history, long term projects have resulted in a waning of interest from TRAA members. This year we hope to focus on a number of projects that can be completed in a short period of time. This may foster

a sense of accomplishment and maintain a momentum that will take us on to tackling new goals. The final ingredient in the formula will be to sprinkle the agenda with some so-

cial events for everyone.

What's the bottom line? The TRAA is getting back to basics...

And we're going to have fun doing it!





## Editor's Note

Paul Noble



If you've been a member of the TRAA for about a year, I'm sure that you have noticed the "new look" to your TRAA newsletter.

We're proud of our past efforts but we felt that this publication should be more dynamic and exciting to reflect what's happening in the TRAA.

You'll still find many of the popular sections of past editions sprinkled throughout the newsletter. As long as I keep getting submissions from all of you, the quality of the content should continue to be outstanding.

However, there are those who seem to have a lot to say, but also seem reluctant to put it into writing. This is a warning: I know who you are and I'm coming after you!

Come on, let's contribute, but most of all, let's have fun doing it!

# Annual General Meeting 2000

Change...you're going to hear that word a great deal over the course of the coming year, especially when the conversation concerns the TRAA. The recent AGM on March 8th had a common thread of change running throughout the meeting.

## Oceans of Motions

Without becoming bogged down with the details of every motion, here's a summary of the more interesting changes (there's that word again!).

The positions of all five Directors have been eliminated. The task of Membership Co-ordinator will become a duty of the elected Treasurer. The task of managing the cuss box will become a duty of the elected Chairperson. The Telephone, Hotline, Newsletter, Library and Webmaster will all become a part of the Public Relations Committee.

The Fundraising Committee has been eliminated as stand alone entity. It's function will be undertaken by the TRAA as a whole as the need for extra funding arises.

All of these modifications to the TRAA's infrastructure had been discussed over the three months previous to the AGM with numerous requests for input from the general

membership. If you have concerns or would care to make recommendations regarding the organisational structure of your TRAA please notify us at a meeting or through our e-mail account. For other AGM motions, ask Paul Noble for a copy of the minutes.

## The Few, the Brave

The names of those who stood for executive positions or who volunteered for the Committee Chairs should be recognisable to most TRAA members.

Here's a rundown of those who stood and were elected or volunteered to guide us through the year 2000:

President	Randy Bailey
Vice President	Dave Jeffries
Chairperson	John Jackson
Treasurer	Archie Graham
Secretary	Paul Noble
Rehabilitation	Rick Ornato and Dave Jeffries
Trout	Randy Bailey and John Jackson
Warmwater	Lawson Jones
Social	Dave Jeffries
Public Relations	Paul Noble, Randy Bailey and Rick Ornato
L.S.F. Rep'	George Hoy

Keep in mind that these guys can't do it alone. You know what interests you, so make yourself available to the appropriate contact.



# Rehabilitation

**Rick Ornato & Dave Jeffries**

We are looking forward to a busy year 2000, chock full of all kinds of interesting projects. On December 18th a TRAA work party was formed to attempt some trial plantings of willow stakes along Komoka Creek between the cornfield bend and County Road 14. These dormant stakes (stalks?) should take root in the spring and provide a cooling canopy along this open section of the creek.

After meeting at truck stop on the 401, we carpooled to a section of Hall's Creek that was reputed to have the purist strain of willows for the job. Randy "Whatsa Willow" was in charge of selecting the appropriate flora and Paul "Clear-cut" Noble was assigned with with the duty of harvesting. The rest of us wisely stood clear and relatively unmarked.

After returning to Komoka Creek with our bounty, we carefully followed the planting instructions of George Hoy. Surprisingly, several members of the work crew had to be constantly reminded that the fat end goes in the ground and the skinny end points to the sky. Despite this, an excellent turnout made light work of it all.

Another work party was formed on January 23rd to start the cleanup and de-brushing of O'Neil Drain #1 near the hamlet of Denfield. Members fought snow drifts that were, at times, waist deep. It was difficult to determine where the steep banks of the creek began because the snow overhung its entire length. Those who were wearing waders slid down into the water in a "mini-avalanche" while

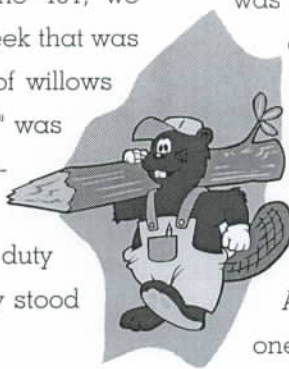
those wearing only boots clung to the dormant dogwoods for support. Despite these impediments we managed to clear the first 750 metres of deadfalls, obstructive overgrowth and other debris that restricted normal water flow.

The air was so cold that the water of this coldwater stream felt relatively warm on our hands. We say relatively because the water was cold enough to preserve the corpse of a cottontail rabbit that must have slid down in its own "mini-avalanche". The great camaraderie, the high-jinks and the promise of a free breakfast made the task enjoyable.

After working up an appetite, everyone piled into a little restaurant in Iderton to refuel. This relaxing repast was marred only by the spectacle of John Jackson laying waste to the buffet. It was like a bad traffic accident: you know you shouldn't stare, but you just can't help it!

The rest of the O'Neil Drain #1 will be dealt with on Sunday, March 19th. As an aside, the landowners in the area asked the township if there was a viable alternative to dredging the creek because they were concerned about the environmental impact of such a practice. That's when the TRAA became involved. Kudos to those people.

There are a large number of new and "doable" projects that involve everything from obstruction removal to fish habitat structure. We'll be calling you to help out!





# Trout

Randy Bailey & John Jackson

Most active members or those who are able to make it out to the general meetings should be aware that we lost this year's batch of brown trout due to a lack of short term memory. Paul Noble shut off the source water to the hatchery trays to pick the dead sac-fry and egg casings without the hindrance of water flow. This is a common practice in the day to day operation when the trays are in place. It is not, however, common practice to leave the source water off after the task is completed.

The sac-fry that survived the episode were released into Komoka Creek. Paul still retains no memory of the incident but his wife Kim was quick to point the details as she was present at the time of the crime. Despite the loss of the trout fry, members of the trout hatchery rotation crew are more concerned about the welfare of Mrs. Noble.

The break in "trout-sitting" has given the Trout Committee time to pursue other enterprises. The trout hatchery was given a serious cleanup and mothballs were strategically placed to ward off pests. This was done because the hatchery enclosure had become a haven for mice, raccoons and other undesirables.

An offer was extended by a member of the Delaware Sportsmen's Club to remove the stainless steel tank from the trout hatchery locale. This was to be accomplished by dragging the tank up the hill with a winch.

Unfortunately, we have yet to decide what should be done with the tank once it's removed. Suggestions are welcome.

Members of a work party on February 13th set up a barrier in Komoka Creek upstream of the trout hatchery. Another structure was placed a further distance down stream of the hatchery. The downstream structure had a small opening that would allow returning steelhead access to the area upstream to the barrier.



The plan was to trap these rainbow trout as they continued upstream to spawn so that we could strip them of their eggs and milt for the trout hatchery. High water levels allowed the trout to by-pass

the barrier, avoid capture and carry on with their prime directive. We will be applying to receive a small number of eggs from the MNR's Normandale Hatchery so that we are able to maintain our educational tours of the hatchery.

We have received the plans and a bill of materials from Rob Secco of SDI Builders to rebuild the bottom section of the stairs at the trout hatchery site. Rob has supplied his services free of charge. If we can't get \$15.00 out of him, maybe we should consider giving him an honorary membership.

The remainder of our 1999 CFIP grant has gone toward the materials for this project. Construction will be underway as soon as the ground thaws enough to cement in the supports.

# Public Relations

**Paul Noble, Rick Ornato & Randy Bailey**

Every TRAA member will be affected in some way by the activities of this committee. You have been touched by the work of the PR.

guys just by reading this newsletter! We occupied a table on February 5th at the General Marine Annual Boathouse Sale. The TRAA display was set up with memberships, hats, pamphlets and cards for sale or for the taking. Thanks again to the folks at General Marine for hosting this event and having us as guests.

The TRAA display was once more put into action from February 24th through to the 27th; this time at the London International Boat, Cottage and Fishing Show at the Western Fair Grounds. Those of us who worked this show reported a great amount of traffic through our booth. All of the pamphlets were handed out and hundreds of people talked to us about the TRAA's activities.

Before we go ahead and print new TRAA pamphlets, the content will have to be updated and the format may also be changed. Suggestions and submissions for the pamphlets are now being considered so that they can be published before the upcoming summer activities create another requirement for these handouts.

Our presence at shows and other events has resulted in an increasing number of organisations and special interest groups that are attracted to the TRAA and its activities. Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, school groups and others are asking how they can become involved in

our work parties. Teachers are asking us to speak to classes and school clubs. All of these groups are willing to organise into

smaller parties for field trips to the trout hatchery, the walleye hatchery and to rehabilitation sites.

When was the last time you called the TRAA Hotline? Are you getting what you need when you call it? If it needs changes please let us know. The Hotline is too expensive to be ignored.



We are once again attempting to pull together all of the TRAA's archives and library resources so that they occupy one location. This will help us organise and control their whereabouts. If anyone has any TRAA property in their possession, please contact us so that it can be made available to all TRAA members in a controlled manner. We continue to receive e-mail from surfers who visit our web site requesting more information about the TRAA and how to join as a member. Look for some cool changes at [www.anglers.org](http://www.anglers.org) this year.

All of the committees now amalgamated under the PR. banner racked up more bills than all of the other committees combined last year. The numbers will not be as lopsided this year, but some fundraising avenues are going to have to be seriously considered. We have the charitable status, so let's utilise it.

We're up for any and all ideas!



# Warmwater

Lawson Jones

It has been decided that if the walleye hatchery is to continue, a permanent rearing or growth pond must be incorporated into the operation. This is because the temperature in the current aboveground tank is too difficult to maintain. As a result, the walleye fry have to be released before they are able to grow to a viable size for survival.

There have been meetings with the UTRCA to discuss what shape or type of pond will be required. The option of a single, pond may be ruled out because it would have to be fenced and would pose some liability problems. Another idea is to build a number of smaller ponds that would pose no safety hazard to children, animals or Dave Jeffries. The UTRCA is still committed to the project and has offered appropriate machinery to construct these ponds.

We have sponsored a park bench bearing the TRAA's name to be permanently installed beside the new walkway at Sharon Creek Conservation Area. Hopefully it's within casting distance of the reservoir! Another bass transfer is likely on opening day this coming June. This is where we fish with baitless, barbless hooks and all fish caught are then transferred to a pre-approved location for release. Other projects are also being cooked up as you read this. We'll keep you posted!



# Social

Dave Jeffries

It has been suggested that regular recreational fishing trips be set up on a weekly basis once the weather turns more favourable. The emphasis will be on having fun, sampling the angling opportunities at a number of different area locations and maybe even learning a few tips from some of the more experienced fellows in the TRAA.

You don't have to know much to catch fish around this area, just ask Randy Bailey, he is living proof!

The Annual Walleye Derby is taking place Saturday, March 25th on the Thames River near Kilworth. Those interested are asked to bring \$5.00 to the Little Beaver Restaurant in Komoka by 6:00 am sharp. The entry fee covers a shore-cooked breakfast. Heck, it's worth it just to see Bob James wear his NASA inspired apron! Remember that only paid-up members are allowed access to this prestigious event so if you still owe us for Y2K, bring an extra \$15.00 dollars along with you.

We will be making a concerted effort to have some sort of guest speaker, entertainment or other diversion after the business portion of the general meetings. Maybe we can get Scott "Heimer" Roulston and Mike "Outdoor Don" Cavanagh to do their dramatic mime routine of the classic conflict between fish and fisherman. Maybe not.

Call the Hotline for all upcoming events!



# Float Tube Fishing

Rick Ornato

The float tube or "belly boat", in my mind, ranks as one of the greatest advances in fishing to date. Forget graphite rods and ultralight waders, or Gortex and polar fleece. Float tubes are the fisherman's equivalent to the Lay-Z-Boy reclining chair. In addition to comfort, it has another advantage over any other kind of watercraft: Stealth. Float tubes are virtually noiseless in the water. Add to that the ability to change your position by inches or by feet, without using your hands, and you have the ultimate fishing machine! Mobility, stealth and comfort...

Most of the newer models also come with different sized storage pockets for all of your gear. This eliminates the need for a bulky vest or bag. While many of those who know me would consider me a "gear-pig", I have a tendency toward minimalism on the water. However, one thing that I am not minimalist about is heeding common sense when it kicks me with its sensible shoes.

Float tubes fall under the category of "inflatable craft". A fisherman fairly bristles with pointy and abrasive tools that are ideal for deflating inflatable craft. You don't have to be a rocket scientist to see where I'm going with this but it seems common sense is so rare that it's often mistaken for genius, so we shall proceed all the same.

NOT SUITABLE AS A PFD  
- LIFEJACKETS ARE  
STRONGLY RECOMMENDED

If you were to purchase a new float tube, you would find the above message plastered all over the instruction booklet and packaging like graffiti on a New York subway car. Granted, some of you brawny, macho types who happen to be strong swimmers might make it to the shore of a small pond with your life if you weren't wearing waders. Personally, I'd wear a PFD. Not only do I make it to shore, but I make it with my deflated float tube and all the rest of my expensive gear.

I could go on about safety tips for pages but I won't bore you. There are a number of warnings and cautions listed in the literature provided when you open the box with your new float tube inside. You know, stuff like "Stay Out of Shipping Lanes" and "Not Recommended for Shooting Class IV Rapids". To remind myself, I repeat the mantra, "Drowning Sucks, Fish Safe", as I embark on any angling adventures. Fishing from a float tube is, without question, my favourite way to fish. For those of you who have not fished from a float tube, I suggest that you give it a try. I just happen to have two "belly boats". You pick the pond and I'll bring the tubes.

## *The Quotable Angler*

"Creeps and idiots cannot conceal themselves for long on a fishing trip."

John Gierach, from his book: *The View from Rat Lake*, Simon & Schuster 1988



# The Fanshawe Bubble Project

Paul Noble

Members of the TRAA were invited to attend a meeting at the UTRCA administration building on February 2nd to listen to a proposal by John Small, Industry Liaison, University of Western Ontario and Rupp Corriveau, Research Associate, Advanced Fluid Mechanics Research Group, UWO. Karen Maaskant was the UTRCA contact at the meeting. The TRAA was represented by members Archie Graham, Randy Bailey, Fred Smithers, Lawson Jones and Paul Noble.

The UWO, the UTRCA and Compressor Engineering Group have been working on an experimental bubble system at Fanshawe Reservoir. The TRAA has been asked to enter into this partnership as being a possible lead applicant for a \$50,000.00 grant from the Trillium Foundation.

This system has been developed as an attempt to address two main concerns at Fanshawe Reservoir: blue-green algae blooms and wave conditions which impair usage by competitive rowers.

Fanshawe Reservoir is the site of dozens of major rowing events and is also used as a practice facility for competitive rowers. Wave conditions on the lake have often disrupted their activities. The bubble system has shown, during an experiment last September, that wave action was diffused. A fully functioning model of the bubble system should result in calmer water throughout the race course.

All users of Fanshawe Reservoir are aware of the excessive blue-green algae blooms of recent years. This can be toxic to humans

and causes an imbalance in the aquatic ecosystem by reducing the amount of oxygen to other organisms.

The bubbler system will theoretically improve oxygen levels in the bottom section of the water column which should reduce the amount of nutrients that are released from the sediments. A reduction of nutrients should reduce the growth of the algae. The disturbance created by the bubbles may also mechanically inhibit algae growth.

All those present at the meeting were excited about the possible "spin-off" benefits from such a project. Yes, the main thrust of the bubbler system was originally to benefit the rowers. But it has become apparent that all user groups could benefit from the impact of improved water quality. The introduction of oxygen into small lakes and reservoirs has shown in some cases to improve the viability of the sport fisheries. Any reduction in the algae bloom would be welcome by boaters, anglers, campers, hikers and day-users, to name only a few. The UTRCA's revenues would also increase.

The grant is needed to fund a full prototype and its testing this year. The TRAA was approached because it was felt that an environmental group should be lead organisation on the application. The money will not enter the TRAA accounts and the accountancy will be administered by the UWO.

This is a great opportunity for the TRAA to show that we are a valuable partner in the improvement of Fanshawe Reservoir for all user groups.

The free publicity can't hurt either!



# The Entertainment Section

## We Have a Winner! The TRAA Membership Draw

We didn't know where else to put this announcement. Judging by those involved, it could only be entertaining. The winner of the "membership draw" for a full day of guiding with Ian James was Rick "Ramble-On" Yeadon. Those who know both Ian and Rick know them as somewhat talkative.

Nobody knows what to expect from this pairing but it's possible that some fishing might occur during a break in the anecdotes, fables and yarns.

Congratulations Rick; sorry Ian.

## 1999 Darwin Awards Nominee "Gone Fishin'"

Confirmed True by Darwin

*Ukraine (25-May-99)* - A fisherman in Kiev electrocuted himself while "fishing" in the river Tereblya.

The 43 year old man connected cables to the main power supply of his home and trailed the ends into the river. The electric shock killed the fish, which floated belly-up to the surface of the water.

The man then waded in to collect his catch, neglecting to remove the live wires, and suffered the same fate as the fish.

In an ironic twist, the man was fishing for a mourning meal to commemorate the anniversary of his mother-in-law's death.

## "Wanted: Wading Staff... apply within."

A bumper sticker seen on a 2000 Navigator.

## Fishy Recipe Two Easy Ones

In the past I have been condemned for selecting recipes that require skills that are beyond most fishermen. Personally, I don't believe that but there are times when speed is of the essence.

So here's two that fit the bill, whether you're in a hurry or culinarily challenged.

### Quick & Simple Tuna Salad

- |   |             |                      |
|---|-------------|----------------------|
| 1 | can         | albacore tuna        |
| 2 | tablespoons | finely chopped onion |
| 1 | tablespoon  | hamburger relish     |
| 3 | tablespoons | mayo' or substitute  |

Directions: Mix everything together well and spread on a piece of bread with a slice of tomato and a piece of lettuce. Cover with another piece of bread and enjoy!



### Tomato Surprise

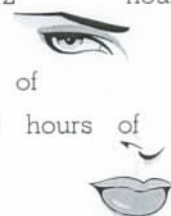
- |     |            |                       |
|-----|------------|-----------------------|
| 4   | fillets    | walleye               |
| 1   | tablespoon | oil or butter         |
| 1/2 | can        | condensed tomato soup |

Directions: Spread oil or butter around a heavy skillet and add fillets. Pour condensed soup (no water) over fish and cook until flaky.

## "No Headache, but..."

According to *Men's Health Magazine* you can burn 1500 calories by engaging in 12 hours of vigorous sex. However, you would burn the same number of calories by participating in 3 hours of fly-fishing.

Life is full of difficult choices.



# U P C O M I N G E V E N T S



Saturday, March 25, 2000

TRAA Annual Walleye Derby We'll be carpooling from the Little Beaver Restaurant, County Road 14, Komoka at 6:00 am to fish the Thames River near Kilworth. If you're not a paid-up member for 2000, cough up \$20.00 and we'll let you fish with us (and we'll give you a membership card!). If you're already a member, you can fish with us for \$5.00. We'll even feed you breakfast!

Sunday, April 2, 2000

Rehab' Work Party Meet behind Hakim Optical, Richmond Street & Fanshawe Park Road at 7:30 am. From there we'll go to O'Neil Drain #1 to complete the cleanup and de-brushing of the lower section. There is also a beaver dam that requires removal.

Wednesday, April 12, 2000

TRAA General Meeting As usual, we'll be meeting at the Canadian Corps Association Building, 1051 Dundas Street East, beside the Kellogg's plant at 8:00 pm. This the best place to catch up on all TRAA activities and this year there will be a presentation of interest after every general meeting.

Wednesday, May 10, 2000

TRAA General Meeting Let us know how you did on the Opening Day of trout season!

Wednesday, June 14, 2000

TRAA General Meeting Details regarding the TRAA Bass Transfer will be available at this meeting.

Wednesday, June 24, 2000

TRAA Bass Transfer Members will fish for bass with barbless, baitless hooks and the captured fish will then be transferred to an appropriate location for release. Always lots of fish and lots of fun!

Note: Any of the above can change so call the Hotline or attend the General Meetings.

# M E M B E R S H I P S

## We have a Winner!

### The TRAA Membership Draw

All of those who had coughed up their \$15.00 for this year's TRAA membership dues before the AGM were eligible for a free draw of a day's guided fishing with Ian James. Ian's first book, *Fumbling with a Fly Rod: Stories from the River*, is a laugh-out-loud collection of true anecdotes. We can't help but think that the winner of the draw, Rick "Ramble-On" Yeadon could have provided fodder for another chapter. Those who know both Ian and Rick are probably wondering how they'll fit any fishing in between all the yacking! If they make it back alive, we're sure they'll have more to talk about!

Visit [www.ianjames.on.ca](http://www.ianjames.on.ca) after March 30th!



## You Can Still Join or Renew

...and it's still only \$15.00!

Because you let it go so long, you missed the free draw but you can still reap the benefits of being a TRAA member. Your immediate family is also included in the membership package. Come out to a general meeting to join or you can fill out the little form below and mail it with a \$15.00 check or money order to: TRAA, P.O. Box 1415, Stn. A, London, Ontario N6A 5M2

Yes! I want to be a member of the TRAA!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Tax receipts are issued for donations over \$25.00  
(in addition to the \$15.00 membership fee!)