

Dan Beresh recalls some Upper Long Lake history and event.

I'm writing this note to confirm my memory of the condition of Upper Long Lake from 1966 when I and my family moved into our Lake Front Home at 1879 Long Pointe Dr.

In 1966, Upper Long Lake was overgrown with weeds. There were many areas of the lake and Canals that were impossible to boat or swim in. The weeds came to the very top of the water and only the center of the lake (deepest part) was navigable. The residents living along the ULLE,C-Canal could not navigate thru the canal weeds and the adjoining bay (in front of the current Turtle Lake property).

For many years the weeds in the lake were controlled by chemical treatment. Some of the chemicals were so toxic that notices were posted to not swim or use the lake for up to two week periods.

In the summer of 1966, chemicals caused a fish kill on the lake that killed off thousands of fish that washed ashore around the entire lake. My beach and your empty lot property had thousands of dead fish that had to be disposed of as the odor was overwhelming. I dug a 6 ft. by 6 ft. by 5 ft. deep hole between your property and my property and completely filled the hole with dead fish.

The C-Canal property owners were also faced with a shallow water condition in the canal that further complicated their navigable use of the canal. Around 1969 the C-Canal property owners contracted and had a contractor pump out the bottom of the C-Canal to a depth of around six feet. The bottom sediment was pumped onto the C-Out lot island.

Around the same time (1969) the same canal pumping was done for the other two canals leading into Upper Long Lake. These two canals also pumped the bottom sediment onto their respective islands. Recently (2008-2009) these two canals have been dredged to around six feet and the sediment was physically removed by the contractor to comply with current DNC laws. The canal owners paid for the dredging of the two canals.

The C-Canal property owners chose not to participate in the latest dredging activity even though a preliminary engineering cost study was performed by the Lake Board.

The Upper Long Lake Board was formed around 1985. A decision was made to stop chemical treatment of the lake in favor of Weed Harvesting of the lake. A decision was also made to allow limited chemical treatment of certain areas of the three canals as the Harvester Equipment could not be used in these sections of the canals.

Bloomfield Township also took over the administrative collection of the monies from property owners on the lake and those that have access to the lake.

Because of limited access to Upper Long lake for weed removal, it was determined that the ULLE, lot #64 (Out lot) would be used for weed harvest removal.

It should be noted that the continued implementation of the weed harvesting effort has provided improved navigation and improved swimming and fishing in the lake.

Senator Cousins owned an existing Mansion on the south east portion of the lake. He farmed this land and had cows, farm animals, and horses that came down to the lake. The farm animals were nice to see however, the farming and animals added to contamination of the lake. This property was developed into the current Wabeek community.

Lesli Green owned the Mansion on Turtle Lake and the property that today is developed into the two gated communities of Turtle Lake and Heron Bay. Both of these communities have frontage on Upper Long Lake.

It should be noted that Turtle Lake and Heron Bay do not have boat launching facilities for their Lake Front residents to launch their boats. Around 2000 ULLE provided these two communities with a written agreement to allow limited boat launching at Lot #64 (C-outlot and marina). These two communities made a substantial onetime payment to ULLE for C-Lot road and marina improvements to. In addition these two communities pay annual fees for boat launching privileges to ULLE/ C-group.

The Weir (Dam) located on private property on Club Drive (Forest Lake) was recently rebuilt (2008). Bloomfield Township also negotiated with the private home owner to determine long term ownership and control of the Weir.

The Lake board representatives monitor and measure the water level and determine the seasonal need for opening the Weir to allow excess water to run off into the adjoining water shed across Forest Lake Country Club. This water eventually leads downstream into the Rouge River. The Lake Board has done a very good job of maintaining the water level for optimum seasonal boating and lower winter levels. It should be noted that prior to the Water Board Control, the water levels were not controlled and summer water levels were too low which caused exposed lake bottoms in front of lake front homes, and mechanical damage to boat out-drives and propellers.

Around 1985, permits were granted for a Ski Course to be placed in Upper Long Lake. The Ski course has time limitations to exclude early morning, evening and weekend use. The Ski Course has provided an additional recreational feature for the residents to enjoy.

Around 1980 the surrounding Upper Long Lake communities issued self sticking labels (3inches by 6 inches) in different colors for Upper Long Lake residents to affix to their individual water craft. The different colors identified the different Upper Long Lake communities. This effort was made due to the fact that many unauthorized boats were launching onto Upper Long Lake. Boats without the authorized labels

were approached and asked to leave the lake as they had trespassed across private property. It should be noted that today, all boat launching sites have chained and pad locked entrances to prevent unauthorized launching.

Although Upper Long Lake is a private Lake, some home owners have become concerned with the safety of boating on the lake. These residents have contacted the Oakland County Sheriff's water control/enforcement department to allow them to occasionally access the C-Out lot to allow them to launch their small watercraft onto the lake to perform water craft safety inspections and boat registration.

Around 1969 to 1970 a water ski jump was erected and anchored off the southern tip of the C-Canal. This ski Jump fell into disrepair and was removed from the lake.

Around 1970, ULLE conducted a major clean up of debris from the lake. Many rusted out 50 gallon drums, used for rafts, were removed along with sections of docks, rafts and litter.

Currently there is a Lake Board supported manual effort to remove Phragmiti Plants from the C-Island. This effort will probably help the C-Island Phragmiti control for the short term, however, the Upper Long Lake Bays around Turtle Lake and Wabeek leading to Lower Long Lake, are full of the invasive tall grass/weed and will present an ongoing challenge for the Lake Board to control.