

Coastlines

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Second Home or Second Best?

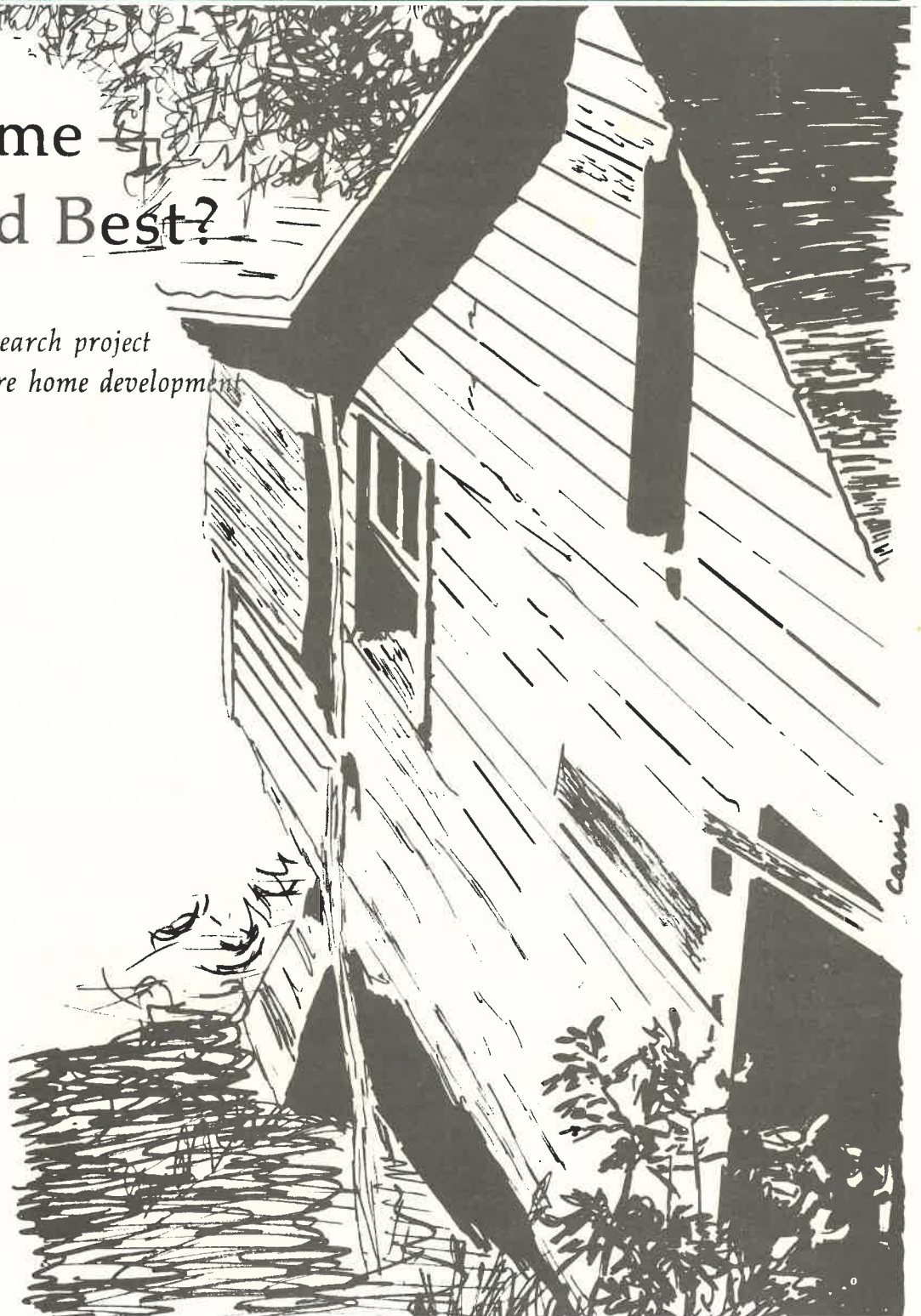
A New York Sea Grant research project probes the problems of leisure home development on the St. Lawrence.

*By Stephen Brown
Regional Marine Specialist*

Sometimes the St. Lawrence River seems to exercise a magnetic force which draws people to its borders to live, to play and, often to work.

For decades its shoreline has been a haven for vacationers and, more important, a prime location for the building of summer cottages. Today, hundreds of these "second homes" dot the river banks.

But recently, such homes have become a subject of concern among the people who live in the region. While the homes have been a major source of revenue for local communities, in some instances, they have also brought problems of visual blight, reduced access



"a truly splendid environment doesn't just 'happen'.....wherever there are people, constant care is needed to guard—against People." Clayne R. Jensen in *Outdoor Recreation in America*

to the shoreline and, numerous health problems. Because of this, in May, members of the Lisbon Town Planning Board enlisted the aid of New York Sea Grant to help investigate the problem.

Under the sponsorship of a New York Sea Grant Quick Response Research Grant,* Dr. Paul Frederic, Assistant Professor of Geography at the State University College at Potsdam, has been investigating the vacation home situation in the Lisbon Township—an area just north of Ogdensburg, New York. And, with the assistance of six students at SUC/Potsdam, he has been able to come up with some information that may be helpful not only to Lisbon planners, but to those in other townships along the river as well.

The vacation home industry is currently one of the largest in the region and is growing at an enormous rate. According to Dr. Frederic's research, the number of summer homes in Lisbon has increased by at least 13% over the past five years. Such a growth pattern is typical of the entire St. Lawrence River Valley, and some communities now have between 20%-50% of their housing stock in vacation homes.

Unfortunately few people have paid much attention to this rampant growth. Originally, vacation homes were only built on the choice sites, but as the demand for sites increased, many marginal sites were developed. Zoning regulations were often not enforced, and this has resulted in a dense concentration of homes all along the shoreline. Today, in many places, one can find development occurring in a three-tier arrangement; older homes directly on the water's edge, a middle layer back approximately one hundred yards from the first layer and, back still another hundred yards or so, a third layer of homes more recently built or mobile homes.

Dr. Frederic has found that the average summer cottage is on a lot less than an acre in size, within fifty feet of the river and has an assessed value of \$5,800. But there is a great deal of variation in the physical condition of the homes, ranging from total deterioration to fine structures of value. He and his students surveyed the Lisbon waterfront on foot, rating second homes according to a special scale and discovered that about 59% of the homes now standing are in fair/poor condition. The group also noted that many summer homes were being turned into permanent year-round residences. Unfortunately, driveways, local roadways and other facilities were not being "winterized" at the same time, placing a strain on both the individual families and the community as a whole.

Health authorities have been amazed at the low standards of living some people have put up with in their cottages. Fire and health codes have been sorely neglected by local officials, so people have built cottages of flimsy, easily kindled materials with inadequate facilities for sewage disposal. Wells and out-houses sometimes can be found side by side and, many of the homes were built too close to the shoreline. Not only have they hastened the natural erosive processes on the river bank, but

some of the homes themselves are now gradually slipping into the water.

Not all second home development is this grim, however, at least half of the ones surveyed are quite lovely. Vacation homes have a strong economic impact on communities, with the average home owner spending about \$2,000 a year on local purchases. In addition, each \$1,000 of single home construction provides 72 manhours of on-site employment for local people, creates jobs in related construction supply industries and, relieves the tax burden on year-round residents. Summer residents purchase additional services and sometimes pave the way for construction of new restaurants, or expansion of boat liveries and stores. For towns such as Lisbon, summer homes can truly be an asset.

As Dr. Frederic points out, the real problems is not the second homes themselves, but the lack of effective planning for them. And people cannot plan effectively unless they have adequate information. Hence, a major portion of his research project has been devoted to simply documenting the nature of leisure home development in the Township. Besides surveying the area on foot, he also has taken pictures of the home development from the river (in a canoe) and, from an airplane. Using these observations and photographs, one student, Linda Checch made three maps, one illustrating the positions of the homes and the others showing the percentage of seasonal homes per township along the St. Lawrence. The maps should enable Lisbon planners to make their own evaluation of development patterns.

Dr. Frederic is also preparing a formal statement about leisure home development that he will present to the Lisbon planners early in September. In the statement he will recommend that zoning and environmental controls be more strictly enforced in the future and, equally important, that the planners find ways to inform the community about the nature of second home development. Dr. Frederic himself has already been working with Sea Grant Regional Marine Specialist, Stephen Brown on some methods of enlightening area residents. They feel a slide presentation that could be used by local groups would be a logical choice, but Brown would also like to construct a scale model of the home development along the river. Such a model could be placed in local banks, stores, etc., where many people could see for themselves what is happening on their waterfront.

Dr. Frederic's report is being finalized as this article goes to press. Persons interested in receiving a copy should request one through Stephen Brown, Regional Marine Specialist at the Potsdam Advisory Service office listed on the back page.

*Note: New York Sea Grant Quick Response Research Grants are awarded for projects of a very short duration that attack immediate needs identified by local groups.

Summer Course is a Real "Eye Opener"

by Rick Sojda
Regional Marine Specialist

(artwork by Linda Hillman)

"OOOOOOO...! It's wet...and cold."
"It's stoney. No, it's getting softer. I'm sinking!!!"
"It stinks."
"I feel a breeze. It's bringing cooler air here."
"If I wasn't so tall, I would fit under these trees better."
"Yeah, but I'm above my knees in muck. You're only to your calves."
"What was THAT???"
"Just a gallinule."
"Really? What's that?"
"A bird. We'll see him later. Now, just listen. How close do you think we are to the lake?"
"Ten feet. I Can hear the waves."
"No, we're farther than that. Forty feet."

Did you ever take a group across a barrier beach and through a marsh on a nature walk?.....when everyone but the leader was blindfolded?

Three New York Sea Grant Advisory Service staff members did recently, and judging from the above snatches of conversation recorded during the excursion,

On August 19, New York Advisory Service staff and their families formally welcomed back Bruce Wilkins as Program Leader for the Advisory Services and bid farewell to O. Cleon Barber who has been serving as Acting Program Leader in Wilkin's absence. A special feast was held for the occasion at Cornell University conference facilities on



it was a rather unique experience for all involved.

The trip was only one activity of many in a six-week course entitled, "The Edge of the Lake and Beyond" sponsored by the Rochester Museum and Science Center's School of Science and Man and the New York Sea Grant Advisory Service this past summer. Designed to give both youths and adults new perspectives on their Lake Ontario coastline, the course was a first for both the Museum and Sea Grant.

The "blind" field trip helped course participants heighten their awareness of the shoreline environment through senses other than sight. Instructors Roger Allbee, Rick Sojda, and Sandy Schuman used large plastic garbage bags as blindfolds, (which later doubled as collecting bags for precious specimens) and led participants through the marsh by having them hold onto the same long piece of rope.

During another session, the 12 persons enrolled in the course looked at the complex social, economic and ecological interactions of coastal resources by playing a game created by Regional

Wilkins Back "On Board"

Oneida Lake.

Wilkins returns from a one year sabbatic leave, during which time he was associated with the Faculty of Forestry at the University of British Columbia and served as Visiting Sea Grant Professor at Oregon State University.

Barber, who was selected for the position of Acting Program Leader be-

cause of his 30 years of experience with Cooperative Extension, has been able to make good progress this past year in fostering closer working relationships among Sea Grant Advisory Service staff and County Extension personnel. He plans to return to his native Broome County and continue his work with the county legislature.

Marine Specialist, Sandy Schuman, entitled, "The Question of Cobbler's Cove." Here the students looked into the many factors that come into play when a marina facility applies for a permit to expand.

Other activities included a discussion of Environmental Impact Statements with John Stanturf, Research Assistant from the Center for Environmental Quality Management at Cornell, and sessions on the basic physical and chemical elements of aquatic ecosystems, and views of coastal development and conservation.

Class evaluations revealed that most found the course very enlightening, and they particularly liked the field trip. However, many indicated they found the range of subjects covered too broad, and would prefer to concentrate on one or two topics in any future courses.

As for the instructors, they thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to work in a "formal" educational capacity and getting to know the class members well. They hope to offer the course again sometime in the future, but will probably restructure it so that all of the sessions can be in the field.

Two Groups Will Review New York Program

Two different groups of accomplished scientists, educators and, representatives from industry will visit New York during September and October to review the program of the New York Sea Grant Institute.

The first review, the annual "site visit" for New York, this year will evaluate primarily the ongoing and proposed research activities of the New York Sea Grant Institute. It will be held at Oneida Lake on September 16, 17, and 18. Then, on October 13 and 14 a second panel will focus their attention specifically on the Advisory Service programs. This "double approach," a first for New York, is being adopted because site visit teams have, in the past, found it increasingly difficult to adequately review large programs such as New York's at one time. By concentrating on specific program segments on two different occasions, panel members should be able to critique activities more effectively and make more recommendations for improvement.

Panel members for the September

visit will be: Mr. Arthur G. Alexiou, Associate Director of the National Sea Grant Program; Dr. Eugene Aubert, Director of the Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory; Dr. George S. Benton, Vice President, Homewoods Division, Johns Hopkins University; Dr. James D. Cowhig, Deputy Director for Public Productivity for the National Science Foundation; Mr. Phillip Eisenberg, Chairman of the Executive Committee for Hydronautics, Inc.; Dr. William S. Gaither, Dean of the College of Marine Studies at the University of Delaware; Dr. Michael A. Heeb, Assistant Program Manager, NOAA Marine Advisory Service, National Sea Grant Program; Dr. Richard A. Kolf, Associate Program Director, Grants Management, National Sea Grant Program; Dr. Carl J. Sinderman, Director of the Middle Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Center, National Marine Fisheries Service; Dr. Frederick J. Smith, Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics at Oregon State University.

The Advisory Service review will be

held in Stony Brook, New York and will have as its panel members: Dr. Daniel A. Panshin, Extension Oceanographer, School of Oceanography at Oregon State University; Dr. Michael A. Heeb, NOAA Marine Advisory Service, National Sea Grant Program; Dr. Osborn Fuller, Office of Academic Affairs at Ohio State University; Mr. Howard H. Eckles, NOAA Marine Advisory Service, National Sea Grant Program; Dr. B. J. Copeland, Director of the North Carolina Sea Grant Program; Dr. Kenneth J. Roberts, Marine Advisory Program Leader, South Carolina; and Mr. Robert J. Shephard, Program Manager for the NOAA Marine Advisory Service, National Sea Grant Program.

The New York Sea Grant Advisory Service offices at Oswego have recently been relocated from the sixth floor of Culkin Hall to Rich Hall. The telephone number will remain the same. (See address listing on back page.)

Symposia Schedules Set

Further details on the two November symposia on "Man and the Atlantic Continental Shelf" are now available.

The symposium on "The Middle Atlantic Continental Shelf and the New York Bight," to be held November 3-5 at The American Museum of Natural History in New York City, will review recent research on this heavily used section of the coastal ocean. Particular attention will be given to the application of research results to questions of public policy and resource allocation in addressing marine environmental problems.

Scheduled are sessions entitled, "Agency Programs," "The Regional Setting," "Transport Systems and Processes," and "Effects of Urban Impacts," during which well known researchers will discuss such topics as "The Dead Sea," "Movement of Sludges and Other Wastes," and "Public Health Implications."

The Proceedings of the conference will be published as a Special Symposium Volume by The American Society of Limnology and Oceanography, one of the symposium's sponsors. Other sponsors are the New York Sea Grant Institute; Chesapeake Bay Institute of The Johns Hopkins University, and The Marine EcoSystems Analysis Program, New York Bight Project, NOAA. Mr. M. Grant Gross, Director of the Chesapeake Bay Institute is conference chairman.

For pre-registration information contact:

Marian N. Steinberg, Conference Coordinator
New York Sea Grant Institute, SUNY
99 Washington Avenue
Albany, New York 12210

"Effects of Energy-Related Activities on the Atlantic Continental Shelf," scheduled for November 10-12 at the Brookhaven National Laboratory in Upton, New York, is being co-sponsored by the Energy Research and Development Administration, the Brookhaven National Laboratory, the Marine Sci-

ences Research Center of the State University of New York and the New York Section of the Marine Technology Society.

Sessions will explore the characteristic physical, biological, and geological processes of the Atlantic Continental Shelf with such persons as G. T. Csanady, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute; Gordon Riley, Dalhousie University, and J. R. Schubel, Marine Sciences Research Center, Stony Brook. Special guest speaker for the evening session will be Beatrice E. Willard, a member of the Council of Environmental Quality.

For information and registration forms contact:

Bernard Manowitz
Department of Applied Science
Brookhaven National Laboratory
Upton, New York 11973

Law Center in Full Swing

The New York Sea Grant Law Center, though only a few months old, is already hopping with activity according to its director, Robert Reis.

The Center, which is located in the Law School at the State University of New York at Buffalo, is currently staffed by ten capable Sea Grant Law Fellows and a Legal Historian, Robert Gordon. Thus far this group has managed to research a number of legal problems relating to the coast and has recently published the first in a series of New York Sea Grant Law Center References. (Listed this month in "I Want More").

In addition, the group is laying plans for the publication of their first annual Sea Grant Law Journal this fall and a special seminar.

Staff at the Center will be researching additional legal problems over the coming year in an effort to support and, in some cases, direct both New York Sea Grant research and Advisory Service activities.

Watch for a special indepth article on the Law Center in the next issue of "Coastlines."

Fisherman's Insurance Bill Drafted

After two and one-half years of intensive research, members of an Ad Hoc Insurance Committee have presented to Congress a draft of a new marine insurance bill. Entitled, "Vessel Safety and Fishermen's Benefits Act of 1975," if enacted, the bill would remove commercial fishing from the jurisdiction of the Jones Act which has governed commercial fishermen since the 1920's.

According to some members of the Committee, which was composed of commercial fishermen, insurance agents and lawyers, the present system for making insurance claims has a number of limitations. They cited the following arguments in the "Summary and Findings" that was presented to Congress along with the bill:

1. Claims of injured fishermen are determined under the ever-present threat of a lawsuit with the net result that approximately one-third of the funds expended for settlement of claims go to legal fees and expenses. Benefits are based on fault and unseaworthiness, so that a claim may go completely uncompensated because a fisherman fails to prove these factors in court;
2. There is no limit to the owner's liability. Awards for injuries are not determined on the basis of a pre-established schedule relating benefits to the severity of injury and to earnings. This procedure contributes to abnormally high insurance costs in many regions and makes it difficult for a fisherman to obtain insurance protection at any cost;
3. The present system is unstable and the magnitude of claims is unpredictable, forcing insurers to require premiums high enough to accumulate reserves sufficient to meet unpredictably higher awards."

Under the proposed bill, benefits would be based on a pre-established

(continued on back page)

I WANT MORE

Further details to help solve several coastal problems are available. Each month we try to list several publications of possible interest to you; please check off those you would like and return to the Sea Grant Advisory Office nearest to you. Addresses are listed on the back page.

(Single copies of the following publications are free).

- ____S8 Fishing Lake Ontario for Salmon and Trout. 10 pp. (Produced by the N.Y. Sea Grant Advisory Service and the N.Y.S. Department of Environmental Conservation).
- ____S9 Selecting A Health Insurance Plan That Fits Your Needs. 20 pp. Mimeo. By Norman K. Bender. (For N.Y. commercial fishermen).

There is a charge for the following publications. Make checks payable to "Cornell University." (All are publications of the New York Sea Grant Institute).

- ____O9 A Detailed Magnetic Survey of the St. Lawrence River: Massena to Oak Point, New York, by Frank Revetta, John Cardinal, and William Lilley. 19 pp. \$1.00.
- ____O10 Papermaking Potential of Zostera and Cladophora, Two Marine Weeds by Bengt Leopold and Renata Marton. 12 pp. \$.50.
- ____O11 Coastal Zone Legal References (Selected) 1975. Robert Reis, Editor. (New York Sea Grant Law Center Reference #1). 169 pp. \$3.00.
- ____O12 Demographic Patterns (Mesa New York Bight Atlas Monograph 23) by Charles T. Koebel & Donald A. Krueckenberg. 43 pp. \$4.00.

SECOND MONOGRAPH AVAILABLE

The second in the series of technical monographs on the New York Bight being produced jointly by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the New York Sea Grant Institute is now available. "Demographic Patterns," MESA New York Bight Atlas Monograph 23, by Charles T. Koebel and Donald A. Krueckenberg summarizes what we presently know and can predict about Bight region population. Koebel and Krueckenberg describe the strong urban pattern of people working in a location different from the one they live in, and the pattern of population expansion into successive outer rings. Copies, which are \$4.00 each, may be obtained by checking the appropriate space in "I Want More."

UPDATE

New York Sea Grant's newest Advisory Service Specialist is Mike Duttweiler, who came on board early in July. Duttweiler, a graduate of Cornell University, has degrees in Fishery Science and Outdoor Recreation. He has served as a Research Specialist with the New York Cooperative Fishery Research Unit at Cornell, and has recently been employed as an Extension Specialist in the Department of Natural Resources at the New York State College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. Duttweiler is located at the Oswego Advisory office, and will be focusing initially on problems of aquatic weeds and coastal zone management as they relate to the Great Lakes.

The 20th Annual Atlantic Fisheries Technological Conference will be held October 19-22 at the Twin Bridges Marriott Motor Hotel in Arlington, Virginia. Papers will be given on Food

Technology, Sea Grant Research, and Ingredient Utilization. Further details may be obtained by writing to:

Roy E. Martin
National Fisheries Institute
1730 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006

(Fishermen's Bill cont.)

schedule and would be paid promptly. Expensive and time-consuming litigation would be effectively controlled, though not eliminated entirely. The injured fisherman would be entitled to legal representation.

And, vessel owners would be liable for their employees regardless of fault, but their liability would be limited to the benefits specified in the draft bill. (An arrangement comparable to many of the "no-fault" car insurance policies adopted by a number of states.) But, every vessel owner must either carry insurance protection or furnish satisfactory proof to the Government of his

financial ability to pay the specified benefits.

New York State commercial fishermen wishing to examine the proposed bill more closely and express their views on it are encouraged to write to Mr. Gale Lyon of the National Marine Fisheries Service, one of the bill's authors. In addition, a shorter document entitled, "Some Basic Principles of the Draft Bill, May 28, 1975" is also available from the same source.

Write:

Mr. Gale Lyon
Industry Economist
U.S. Department of Commerce, NOAA
National Marine Fisheries Service
Washington, D.C. 20235

New York Fishermen wishing information on current health insurance options available to them may wish to obtain the New York Sea Grant Advisory Service publication, "Selecting a Health Insurance Plan to Meet Your Needs." It is listed this month in "I Want More."

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