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O F T H E C I T Y

July/August 2012

## the grandeur of Parkwood

**GEORGIAN BAY**

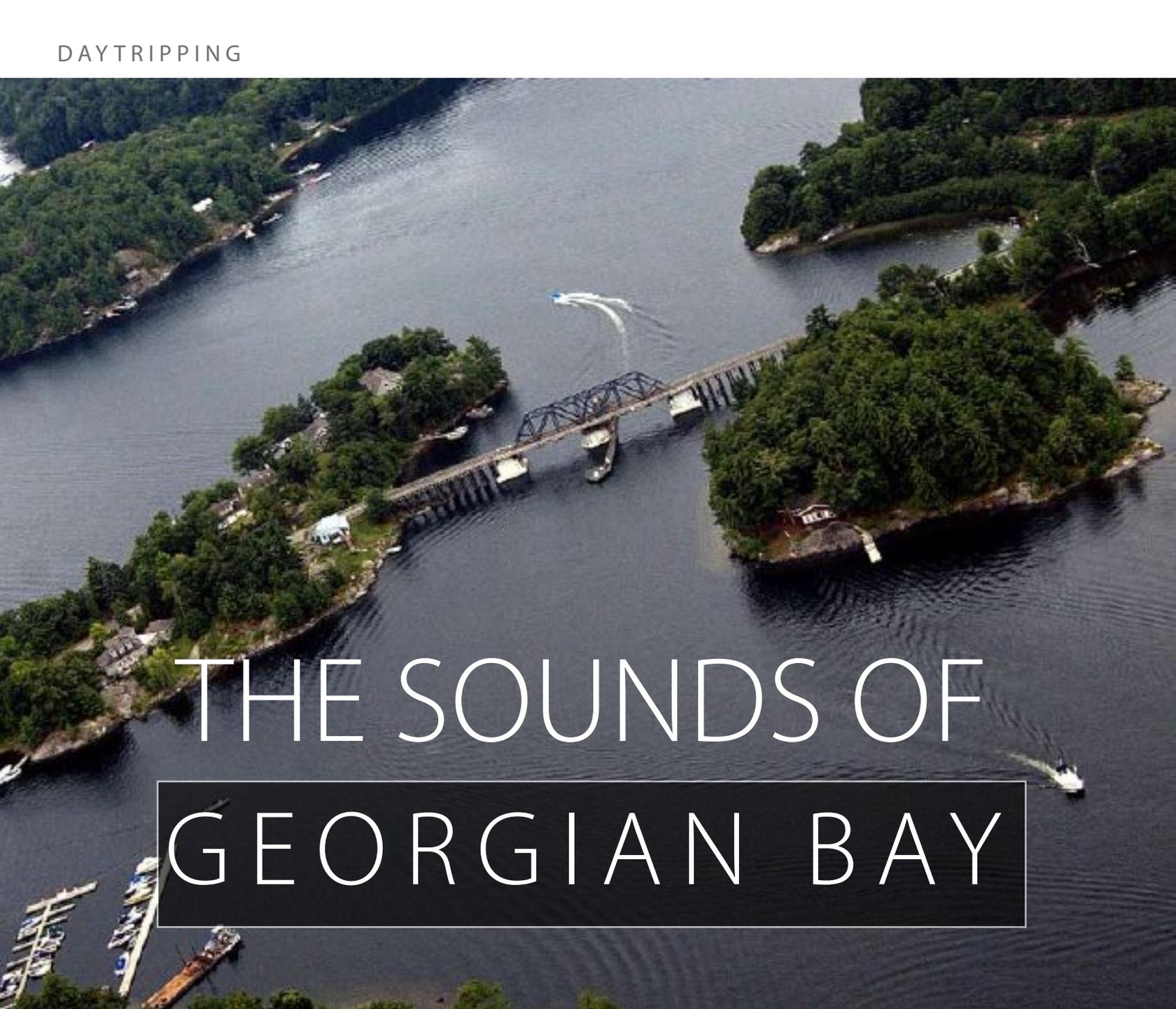
*The sounds of the summer*

**MARCA PASTA**

*A slice above*

**SUMMER VINTAGE**

*Wines for entertaining*

An aerial photograph of Georgian Bay, showing a large body of water with a prominent bridge crossing a narrow channel. The surrounding land is lush with green trees and some buildings. Several boats are visible on the water, including a speedboat leaving a white wake and a larger boat near the bridge. The title 'THE SOUNDS OF GEORGIAN BAY' is overlaid in large white letters on a dark rectangular background.

# THE SOUNDS OF GEORGIAN BAY

STORY AND PHOTOS BY **A. G. Luke & J. D. Durand**

**THE SHORT CHIRPING WHISTLES** of osprey and the tremulous wails of the loons echo over the rippling water, as motoring boats and humming sea planes permeate the sounds of nature. These sounds abound on the bay yet the key sounds of Georgian Bay are the waterfront communities of Parry Sound and Owen Sound.

To begin our day, we explored the Bay Street strip. At the end of Bay Street is the Bobby Orr Hall of Fame, arguably the best NHL defenseman to ever lace up a pair of blades. A native of Parry Sound, Bobby played for the Oshawa Generals as a junior and the Boston Bruins for a decade,

leading them to a pair of Stanley Cup victories. The well respected and humble individual was the youngest to be inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame in 1979. In the same year, he was the recipient of the Order of Canada for demonstrating an exceptional level of talent and service to Canadians. This interactive museum offers virtual reality hockey games and features rare memorabilia.

Farther along the street one can find a couple of eateries to satiate oneself, Kudos Kuisine for a fine dining experience and the popular Bay Street Café. The Bay Street Café sits directly

Parry Sound's Rose Point Swing Bridge sits at the juncture of key canoe routes of Canada's aboriginal people.

As Canada's largest sightseeing vessel, the three-deck Island Queen offers a bird's eye view of the 30,000 Islands of Georgian Bay.

across from the docks harbouring Georgian Airways and the Island Queen cruise vessel.

Parry Sound sits at a junction of canoe routes frequented by early aboriginals and Voyageurs in search of fur rich regions. For a closer look at some of the 30,000 Islands, we boarded the triple-decker Island Queen. As Canada's largest sightseeing vessel it can carry 550 passengers offering two- and three-hour cruises. The two-hour morning cruise reveals the rugged beauty of the inner islands with their windswept pines. An afternoon outer island wilderness cruise exposes secluded waterways and granite-sculpted Precambrian Shield. Referred to as the "sixth Great Lake," it has the world's largest concentration of islands and was awarded Biosphere Reserve status in 2004 by the United Nations.

We appeared to be threading the needle at one point as the Island Queen navigated through the "Hole in the Wall". This is the narrowest part of the channel at 34 metres (111 feet) and only 4 metres (13 feet) deep. We passed Huckleberry Island on the starboard side and Wall Island, a former Ojibwa burial ground centuries ago, on the port side. We observed the natural habitat of the indigenous fowl, as well as the occasional man-made inukshuk.

Following a morning on the water, we were prepared for some air time. What better way to enjoy lunch and at the same time partake in a Fly & Dine experience. Since 2002, Georgian Bay Airways has partnered with Henry's Fish Restaurant in Sans Souci Township. It seemed appropriate to pre-order some pan-fried pickerel; after all, we were flying to Frying Pan Island. We flew at approximately 305 metres (1,000 feet) above the rocky and forested islands for about ten minutes, or 21 km (13 miles), as the crow flies. This proved to be a good aerial view of cars crossing over and boats motoring under the Rose Point Swing Bridge connecting to Parry Island. Nicole and Keith Saulnier operate three sea planes which fly an average of 1,000 passengers a season, being shuttled for this



lunchtime experience. "Since its inception, the Fly & Dine remains one of Georgian Bay Airways' signature tours. We have added the option to Hike & Fly on Wreck Island which has gone over extremely well," Keith explained to us.

Arriving at Henry's we selected a table overlooking the docks whereupon we were served our fresh golden-brown pan-fried fish. Henry's, managed for over two decades by Paul and Joanne Elliott, is also a federally registered airport for various sea plane airlines.

The next morning, we enjoyed a scrumptious breakfast at the aptly named '40 Bay Street' Bed & Breakfast. The cozy century home offers three rooms with all the amenities and a quaint sun-porch on which to relax at the end of the day. Jovial proprietor and hostess, Susan provides fresh fare aplenty for her guests. To aid digestion of our delectable morning meal, we decided to go for a stroll along Parry Sound's Fitness Trail connecting parks, beaches and historical sites.

Diagonally across the bay is Owen Sound, just a three hour drive southwest. The annual weekend Summerfolk at Kelso Beach Park draws close to 12,000 people of all ages. »



Parry Sound's Fitness Trail connects parks, beaches and historical sites.



Rocky Raccoon Cafe welcomes patrons from across Canada during the summer months.

The popular Music and Crafts Festival has numerous musical performers and artisans. We visited the food village and sampled some of the cornucopia of culinary creations. Meandering through the park grounds one can pause for musical entertainment at a half-dozen venues and encounter various craft vendors along the way.

It was nice to see Summerfolk had adopted green initiatives, composting and recycling with a solar-powered dish-washing station. A Quench Buggy was available on site providing free potable water for those with refillable

bottles.

Rocky Raccoon Café served their festival fare on reusable dinnerware. Owned and managed by award-winning Nepalese Chef, Robin Pradhan, his “global cuisine” is a refreshing addition to a local epicurean experience. “The city is the cultural hub of the region with major festivals and events all year long,” Paulette Peirol of Owen Sound Tourism conveyed to us. “There is always something happening here.”

During further exploration we visited the three main waterfalls in the area. North of town is the Indian Falls Conservation Area. A short hike through the woods revealed a horseshoe-shaped alcove highlighting the veiled falls. South of here, the Pottawatomi Conservation Area is home to Jones Falls cascading down a 12 metre (40 foot) rocky slope. We continued along the Bruce Trail which led us to the Sydenham River and Inglis Falls plunging 18 metres (60 feet) over tiered rocks into a deep gorge.

North of Inglis Falls the 777 km (483 miles) Bruce Trail leads one into Harrison Park where you can find the historic Freedom Trail. The symbolic Black History Cairn Memorial is located here, recognizing Owen Sound as the most northern terminus on the Underground Railroad. An estimated one hundred thousand slaves escaped to Canada between 1830 and 1865. The Cairn contains stones from Africa, slave and free states, and Canadian border points to the journey north. This summer, the 150th annual Owen Sound Emancipation Festival (OSEF) will be held in Harrison Park on the Civic Holiday (formerly Simcoe Day) weekend.

Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada, John Graves Simcoe (1752 – 1806), was instrumental in the gradual abolition of slavery by legislating The Slave Act (1793). A re-dedication ceremony of the Cairn with new commemorative stones will be held in this popular 99 acre parkland. “The Festival is a testament to the city’s multicultural roots and the importance placed on it by the Black community, many of whom can claim they are descendants of slaves,” explained Blaine Courtney (OSEF Chairman).

Back in town at the Billy Bishop Museum and former home of Canada’s premier World War I fighter pilot, is an African-Canadian tribute display entitled “Breaching the Colour



Owen Sound's Indian Falls

Barrier". The Victorian structure located in a National Historic Site, houses Billy's sixteen military medals, dedication exhibits and memorabilia.

As sure as the regional winds resound and awaken your senses, the invigorating breeze beckons your return to the Sounds of Georgian Bay. 📍

PRACTICAL INFORMATION:  
 PARRY SOUND  
 Georgian Bay Country Tourism:  
[www.gbcountry.com](http://www.gbcountry.com)

30,000 Island Cruise:  
[www.islandqueencruise.com](http://www.islandqueencruise.com)

Henry's Restaurant:  
[www.henrysfishrestaurant.com](http://www.henrysfishrestaurant.com)

40 Bay Street B & B:  
[www.parrysoundbed&breakfast.com](http://www.parrysoundbed&breakfast.com)

Bobby Orr Hall of Fame:  
[www.bobbyorrrhalloffame.com](http://www.bobbyorrrhalloffame.com)

OWEN SOUND  
 Owen Sound Tourism:  
[www.owensound.ca](http://www.owensound.ca)

150th Annual Emancipation Festival:  
 August 3 – 5, 2012  
[www.emancipation.ca/owen-sound/](http://www.emancipation.ca/owen-sound/)

Summerfolk Festival:  
 August 17 – 19, 2012  
[www.summerfolk.org](http://www.summerfolk.org)

Billy Bishop Home & Museum:  
[www.billybishop.org](http://www.billybishop.org)

Rocky Raccoon Café:  
[www.rockyraccooncafe.com](http://www.rockyraccooncafe.com)

Days Inn & Conference Centre:  
[www.daysinn.ca](http://www.daysinn.ca)

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