

The Panel on the Future of the Trent-Severn Waterway
185 King Street, Suite 100
Peterborough, Ontario
K9J 2R8

Dear Panel:

First of all, we were very pleased and proud that the first meeting of the 16 forums on the future of the Trent-Severn Waterway was held July 3, 2007 at Kawartha Settlers' Village in Bobcaygeon.

Bobcaygeon was the first of 45 locks constructed from Trenton to Port Severn from 1833 to 1920. The history of our community and that of our former county of Victoria, now the municipality known as the City of Kawartha Lakes, is linked very closely to that of this world-reknown waterway. 5 of the locks are within our community, making us connected to the waterway in many different ways.

Humans have been using these waters for thousands of years. The Europeans who came here several generations ago were able to fish, farm and harvest the forests and then establish water-side communities because of the access to the area which the waterway provided. Much of our current economy depends on the tourists who flock to our region to enjoy the natural beauty and recreational activities which our waters afford.

While the economic, environmental and social aspects of the TS waterway are important to us and to our future, we at Kawartha Settlers' Village, wish to emphasize the importance of its cultural heritage. We are concerned that its history may be regarded as a minor factor by many to be only recognized by a plaque or two.

We see a growing interest in the history of our area. We are experiencing an increase in the annual attendance at our site and events. This summer's well-attended 150th Anniversary of Lindsay, the celebration of the centennial of the Kirkfield Lift Lock and the successful Doors Open 2007 as well as our own Harvest of Quilts Show and last week's popular Wine and Food Festival are all good indications that visitors and tourists alike are curious about the story of our past and enjoy events that are held in historical settings.

Our recommendation is simple:

Increase and improve ***the historical interpretation sites*** along the TS waterway. The human dimension needs to be showcased better. We need to boast more about the magnificence of this major engineering feat. But we also need more venues in which to tell the story of aboriginal traders; timber barons and millers; fishing guides, yachtsmen and steamship crews; summer cottagers, water sportsmen and artists and all the many villagers and farm folks whose lives and personal histories have been affected by this amazing resource: the Trent-Severn Waterway. Keep the cultural heritage component alive.

The Board of Directors
Kawartha Region Arts and Heritage Society
Kawartha Settlers' Village
85 Dunn Street
Bobcaygeon, Ontario
K0M1A0

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Passed at the September 19th Board meeting

