



THE STONY LAKE HERITAGE FOUNDATION

STONY vs. STONEY: LET'S DEBATE IT!

The Pavilion, July 19, 2016 2:00 p.m.

## Selected background materials

(prepared by Blair Mackenzie, updated with additional reference material located following the debate)

## 1. Early references

1. In 1835 the Federal government commissioned N. H. Baird to carry out a survey of the waterways from Rice Lake to Lake Simcoe, with a view to establishing a route for what would eventually be the Trent Canal system. I have not seen a copy of this survey, but the references I have seen to it are consistent that in it, Mr Baird referenced 'Stoney Lake'.
2. In 1836, "Backwoods of Canada" by Catharine Parr Traill was published. On page 147, a map appears which references 'Stoney Lake'. A scanned copy of the original 1836 edition is available online at Library and Archives Canada ([collectionsCanada.gc.ca](http://collectionsCanada.gc.ca)). One cannot be sure whether the 'Stoney' spelling reflected a choice made by the author, or her publisher, or both.
3. In 1848 Sanford Fleming (later Sir Sanford Fleming) prepared a map of what is today Peterborough County and more. In it we find 'Salmon Trout Lake' and 'Upper Stoney Lake'.
4. In 1852, "Roughing it in the Bush" by Suzanna Moodie was published. Suzanna Moodie was the sister of Catherine Parr Traill. In Suzanna Moodie's book, chapter 5 is devoted to 'A Trip to Stony Lake'. A scanned copy of most of the original 1852 edition is available online at Library and Archives Canada ([collectionsCanada.gc.ca](http://collectionsCanada.gc.ca)). Here as well, one cannot be sure whether the use of 'Stony' reflected a choice made by the author, or by the publisher, or both.
5. In 1853, "27 Years in Canada West" was published by Samuel Strickland. Samuel Strickland was the brother of Catherine Parr Traill and Suzanna Moodie, and a leading citizen of Lakefield. In chapter XIV the book references 'Stony Lake'. A scanned copy of the original 1853 edition is available online at Library and Archives Canada ([collectionsCanada.gc.ca](http://collectionsCanada.gc.ca)).
6. In 1873, Ontario deputy surveyor general Thomas Devine issued a map referencing Stony Lake.
7. In 1882, "Picturesque Canada" was published. This was a scholarly work, edited by G.M. Grant, then the Principal of Queen's College, Kingston. One of the many illustrations in it is of 'Stony Lake, near Peterborough' and there are multiple references in the text to Stony Lake.
8. In 1883, George M. Roger and E. B. Edwards, both Peterborough lawyers, jointly purchased Island 18 (i.e. Juniper Island) from the Crown. The deed referred to Island 18 as located in 'Salmon Trout Lake or Stoney Lake'.
9. During the period that surveying and construction work on the Trent-Severn Waterway took place in the Buckhorn, Burleigh Falls and Fenelon Falls sector (roughly 1882-1887), there were multiple references to 'Stony Lake' in the Parliamentary record (Hansard and supplementary estimates) but none that I could find to Stoney Lake.
10. In 1907, Messers Roger and Edwards conveyed the lands that are today owned by the ASLC to James Acton, Henry Sutherland and Samuel Henderson without charge, in trust for a

corporation to be incorporated as “The Stony Lake Cottagers Association”. The deed references ‘that part of the Island in Stony Lake known as Juniper Island...opposite the Township of Dummer in Stony Lake according to the Map or Plan of The Otonabee River and its Lakes prepared by J. J. Hazlett of record in the Department of Indian Affairs...’

It can be argued from the above and other early references that the Stoney spelling predominated in the years roughly before 1850 and was gradually displaced thereafter by the Stony spelling.

## **2. The official name of the Lake**

**Q: Does the Lake have an official or government-approved name?**

**A:** Yes: Stony Lake. This name officially applies to all of what is locally called Clear Lake, Stony Lake or Stoney Lake, and Upper Stoney Lake.

Official Canadian place names are determined by government. In Ontario, official place names are determined by the Ontario Geographic Place Names Board, subject to the approval of the Minister of Natural Resources. The Ontario registry of place names is available online at the Government of Ontario / Ministry of Natural Resources website. Board decisions are used by government ministries and agencies in the preparation of maps and other documents. The Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names accepts the decisions of the Provinces and enters these into the Gazetteer of Canada. The official name (i.e. Stony Lake) was adopted by the Place Names Board in 1953. Prior to that time, the lake did not have an officially sanctioned name.

**Q: What if anything compels individuals, businesses or other non-government entities to use officially approved place names or officially approved spellings?**

**A:** In principle, nothing compels individuals to use officially approved place names. (Certain specific contexts, such as identifying where you live on a passport application, might require otherwise.) It would be routine for an individual, if asked where he or she lives, to say that he or she lives in (e.g.) Rockcliffe Park, rather than Ottawa, or The Beach or The Beaches, rather than Toronto. Neither Rockcliffe Park nor The Beach / The Beaches has any official status in Ontario as a place name. Curve Lake First Nation prefers to refer to Petroglyphs Provincial Park as Kinomaage-Waapkong (“The Rocks That Teach”). The same principle would hold true for officially adopted spellings.

**Q: Was the Ontario Geographic Place Names Board justified in choosing Stony Lake as the official name?**

**A:** It depends on who you consult. Edwin Guillet believed it to be a mistake. Alan Rayburn has a somewhat different take on it:

## EDWIN GUILLET

The distinguished historian Edwin Guillet was the author of *The Valley of the Trent* (1957) along with many other works. In 1969 he wrote a letter to the editor of the *Globe & Mail* as follows:

### Stoney Lake

Your use of the spelling "Stony" for Stoney Lake (Tests Find Stony and Clear Lakes Polluted--Dec. 4) is originally the error of the Ontario Water Resources Commission, and, as the name is historic, it should be corrected.

Prior to 1835 the name of the lake usually appeared on maps as Salmon Trout Lake or Rock Lake, and later maps usually called it Stony Lake, probably following the English editions of Susanna Moodie's *Roughing It in the Bush* and Samuel Strickland's *Twenty-Seven Years in Canada's West*, whose publishers used the grammatical spelling. The following authoritative sources indicate that the authentic spelling is "Stoney":

(1) Surveyor N. H. Baird, whose Report of 1835 uses it throughout; (2) the map of 1835 of Inland Water Communications, Public Archives of Canada; (3) *The Gazetteer of Canada*, the authority of place-names; (4) the Toronto Public and University of Toronto Libraries; (5) the Stoney Lake Navigation Company, which goes back almost a century and has never used the other spelling--its steamer was always Stoney Lake; and (6) the first English edition of Catharine Parr Traill's *The Backwoods of Canada* (1835), which contains a small hand-drawn map with "Stoney Lake" on it, apparently sent over for the purpose.

There may be 50 Stony Lakes in Canada but only one Stoney Lake, just as Stoney Creek in the Niagara district is never spelled otherwise.

Edwin C. Guillet

Toronto

*Globe & Mail Dec 9/69*

[Regarding the above letter, please also see also Note 1, page 9.]

## ALAN RAYBURN

Alan Rayburn is the former Executive Secretary of the Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names, and the author of *Naming Canada* (1994). He has written extensively for *Canadian Geographic Journal* on Canadian place names. He is the author of *Place Names of Ontario* (1997). In that book, he had this to say about Stony Lake:

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Stoney Point appeared on a map in 1862, and the post office took that name three years later. From 1876 to 1902 another post office called *Chevalier* also served the community. In 1950 the postal name was changed to Pointe-aux-Roches, but the police village continued to be called Stoney Point. In 1996 the council of the municipal township of Tilbury North requested the official recognition of the two names for both the community and the post office.

**Stony Lake** This lake in the Kawartha Lakes was identified as *Lake Cheboutequion* on a 1790 map and as *Salmon Trout Lake* on 1862 and 1875 maps. It was shown on maps of 1879 and 1905 as *Lake Shebauticon*, likely from the Mississauga *jibatigon*, 'passages for canoes between islands.' However, an 1873 map by Ontario deputy surveyor general Thomas Devine had Stony Lake, and this name prevailed.

**Stormont** This county was named in 1792 for David Murray, 7th Viscount Stormont and 2nd Earl of Mansfield (1727–96), who held many official posts, including justice general of Scotland and president of the British Privy Council. The title dates from 1621 and was taken from Stormont Loch in Perthshire, Scotland. The family home is Scone Palace near

Perth. Originally one of the counties in *Lunenburg District*, Stormont became part of the united counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry in 1852.

**Storrington** This township in Frontenac County was named in 1845 after the English village where Sir Henry Smith (1812–68), speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the province of Canada, 1856–60, was born. Storrington is located in Sussex, 25 km northwest of Brighton.

**Stouffville** This community in the town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, York Region, was named in 1832 for Abraham Stouffer (1776–1851), a native of Pennsylvania who settled here in 1804 and built saw and grist mills on Duffin's Creek. It was united with Whitchurch Township in 1971 to form the town of Whitchurch-Stouffville. Pronounced 'STOH-vil.'

**Straffordville** Located in Elgin County, 18 km east of Aylmer, this place was known as *Sandytown* before 1851. That year local miller Robert James McNaughton wanted the first post office to be named McNaughtonville, but others objected to his conceit. McNaughton then proposed Straffordville after Sir John Byng (1772–1860), who had been created the Earl of

### 3. The name of the Association

**Q: What is the official name of the ASLC?**

**A:** Association of Stoney Lake Cottagers Inc.

**Q: Has that always been its official name?**

**A:** No. The Association was originally incorporated in 1907 as The Stony Lake Cottagers Association, Limited. It was incorporated as a corporation having share capital. In 1950 the Association was re-incorporated as a corporation without share capital, under the name of Association of Stoney Lake Cottagers Inc.

**Q: Was the original choice of spelling ('Stony') inadvertent?**

**A:** The available evidence suggests the spelling was a deliberate choice. As noted above, in 1907 the owners of Juniper Island donated a portion of the Island to the founders of the ASLC. The donors of the land, G. M. Roger and E. B. Edwards, were both Peterborough lawyers. Mr Roger had served as Mayor of Peterborough and was later appointed as a County Court Judge. Mr Edwards had served as the Peterborough City Solicitor. Messers Acton, Sutherland and Henderson, representing the ASLC, were senior local businesspeople. The donors would have known (see p. 2 above) that the deed they received in 1883 referenced Salmon Trout Lake or Stoney Lake, and the gentlemen who incorporated the ASLC would presumably all have had direct experience of the Stoney Lake Navigation Company and its steamboats including the *Stoney Lake*. In the circumstances, it unlikely that their collective choice in 1907 of the 'Stony' spelling in both the deed and the incorporation documents was accidental. It is far more likely to have been deliberate, and to have reflected prevailing usage as they perceived it.

**Q: Was the switch to the 'Stoney' spelling in 1950 inadvertent?**

**A:** It was no accident. There was a heated debate, chronicled in "From Burleigh to Boschink" by Kay Hooke and Christie Bentham. It is interesting to note that just a few years later, ASLC board minutes were once again being kept using the 'Stony' spelling.

**Q: Is there any need for the spelling used in the name of the Association ("Stoney") to match the spelling ("Stony") used in the Canada and Ontario registries of approved place names?**

**A:** None whatever. The name of the Association is a matter for the members to decide, within certain broad limits none of which are likely to be relevant here.

**Q: Has the issue of the spelling come up at membership meetings since 1950?**

**A:** It appears to have been raised during at least three annual meetings held since 1950:

- Undated notes from an ASLC annual meeting indicate that Edwin Guillet attended that year's meeting and discussed the origin of the name of the Lake. (Sue Dutton speculates that the meeting might have followed publication of his book, "The Valley of the Trent", in 1957.) Mr Guillet contended that the preferred spelling was Stoney. The meeting notes continue as follows: "A lively discussion ensued and it was finally resolved that those that want to spell it with an e may and those without an e may do so too. The meeting ended at 12:00 o'clock. This being the largest turnout at a meeting in recent years."
- The minutes of the ASLC AGM held in July 1963 record that there was 'a spirited discussion with respect to the spelling of the name of the Lake – whether it should be Stony or Stoney'. The minutes of the meeting record that many of those present favoured Stony, but the matter was resolved by pointing to the incorporation documents from 1950.
- By 2000, the ASLC 's by-laws were so out of date that they had to be replaced. This necessarily brought the issue of the spelling of the name of the Association back before the members. A lively debate ensued. Jack Matthews moved that everything stay as it then was. The name of the Association would remain Association of Stoney Lake Cottagers Inc.; the signage on Juniper Island, which uses the Stony spelling, would not change; the Association would use its formal legal name in those circumstances where by law it was required to do so; and everywhere else, the Association could use its discretion. This motion was seconded and carried with a substantial majority, and the new (and current) by-laws were adopted on that understanding.

#### **4. Dictionaries**

**Q: Is 'stoney' recognized as a dictionary word?**

**A:** In all but two of the dictionaries I have consulted, 'stony' is either the preferred spelling or the only recognized spelling. One dictionary that unequivocally accepts 'stoney' is the official Scrabble dictionary. The Scrabble dictionary does not give citations for the words it accepts. The Dictionary of Canadian English (1967) accepts "Stoney", but only when capitalized and used as an alternative term for native Canadians of the Assiniboine nation, based in Western Canada.

**Q: What if you consult a dictionary from the 1800s?**

**A:** A fascinating question. The best known dictionary in English prior to 1800 was Samuel Johnson's dictionary, published in various editions starting in 1755. In the 1792 and 1828 editions, scanned original copies of which are available online, only 'stony' is accepted and the references given include Milton, Dryden, Spencer and Swift. Two leading English-language dictionaries of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were Webster's in the United States and the Oxford English Dictionary in England. In the 1828 edition and the 1848 edition of Webster's American Dictionary of the English Language, scanned original copies of both of which are available online, only 'stony' is accepted. In 1857, Richard Chenevix Trench published a devastating critique of the dictionaries of the day and initiated a movement in England that led to a complete re-examination of the language from Anglo-Saxon times onward. The result, the extraordinary Oxford English Dictionary (OED), was published in ten volumes in stages between 1884 and 1928. The OED only accepts 'stony'. The extensive entry in the OED under 'stony' lists many earlier spellings including stoni, stonie, stoany, stanie and stoney. The 'stonie' spelling, for example, can be found in the 1611 version of the King James Bible, an scanned original copy of which is available online.

**Q: How significant is it that 'stoney' is not the preferred spelling in standard dictionaries?**

**A:** The significance, if any, is debatable. A great many place names are not dictionary words. Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa and Banff are simple examples from an extremely long list. Note that place names that are not dictionary words often have some form of historical derivation, e.g. Vancouver commemorates Capt. George Vancouver, Montreal comes ultimately from Mount Royal, and so on. There is some evidence to suggest that Stoney Creek, Ont. was named after an early settler by that name. I have not heard of any similar association which might explain the 'stoney' spelling in our context. It seems more likely that 'stoney' is simply an alternative spelling of 'stony', an adjective which would easily come to mind when contemplating the Lake, especially before water levels were raised. The 'stoney' spelling was clearly still in use, although very likely in decline, at the time confusion started to become evident.

A preference for using the 'Stoney' spelling today can be seen in part as a way of commemorating those early settlers and writers who chose (or whose publishers chose) to use the 'Stoney' spelling. It also commemorates some of the more romantic aspects of the history of the Lake, such as the *Stoney Lake* and other steamboats operated by the Stoney Lake Navigation Company. A preference for using the 'Stony' spelling can be seen in part as a way of commemorating those who established the ASLC in 1907 and through whose efforts and foresight we today enjoy the lands at Juniper, the Pavilion, the Store and the Boathouse. Arguably, each spelling celebrates and draws attention to different but important aspects of our common heritage.



## 5. Other usage

**Q: What spelling have other organizations around the Lake adopted?**

**A:** The Upper Stoney Lake Association clearly favours the Stoney spelling. I understand that both St. Peter's on the Rock and the Stony Lake Yacht Club have consistently used the 'Stony' spelling. The Stony Lake Heritage Foundation has consistently used the 'Stony' spelling. The Stoney Lake Sprint prefers 'Stoney'. I am unable to supply a list of other organizations that have been active on the Lake over the years or to confirm what spelling (or spellings) they respectively used.

## 6. Historical Atlas of Peterborough County

One resource to be treated with a bit of care is the Historical Atlas of Peterborough County. It has the appearance of being an early atlas of the County, but it actually dates from 1975. The Forward to the Historical Atlas explains that in the 1870s and 1880s, illustrated historical atlases were prepared for many of the counties in Ontario. Unfortunately, none was ever prepared for Peterborough. The Historical Atlas of Peterborough County was sponsored by the Peterborough County Historical Society as a Centennial project in an attempt to fill that gap. In the Atlas, every effort was made to write the history of the area as it would have been written a century earlier. However, the Historical Atlas is ultimately the product of modern hands.

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Note 1: In his 1969 letter to the Globe & Mail, Edwin Guillet cites the Gazetteer of Canada in support of the 'Stoney' spelling. This is difficult to understand. I have a copy of the Gazetteer as published in 1974, and for our lake, it accepts only 'Stony'. The Ontario place names directory (being the basis for Ontario place names in the Gazetteer of Canada) is available online and the online database shows only 'Stony', giving 1953 as the official adoption date. Mr Guillet's letter references, without explanation, "the Toronto Public and University of Toronto Libraries". That too is difficult to understand, as libraries rarely take positions on issues like this on, but instead act as neutral repositories. Finally, Mr Guillet's letter references the spelling used in a book by Catherine Parr Traill, with no mention made of the fact that in books written just a few years later by her sister (Suzannah Moodie) and by her brother (Samuel Strickland) the 'Stony' spelling is used. All in all, it is hard to see Mr Guillet's letter to the Globe & Mail as a balanced piece of historical research.