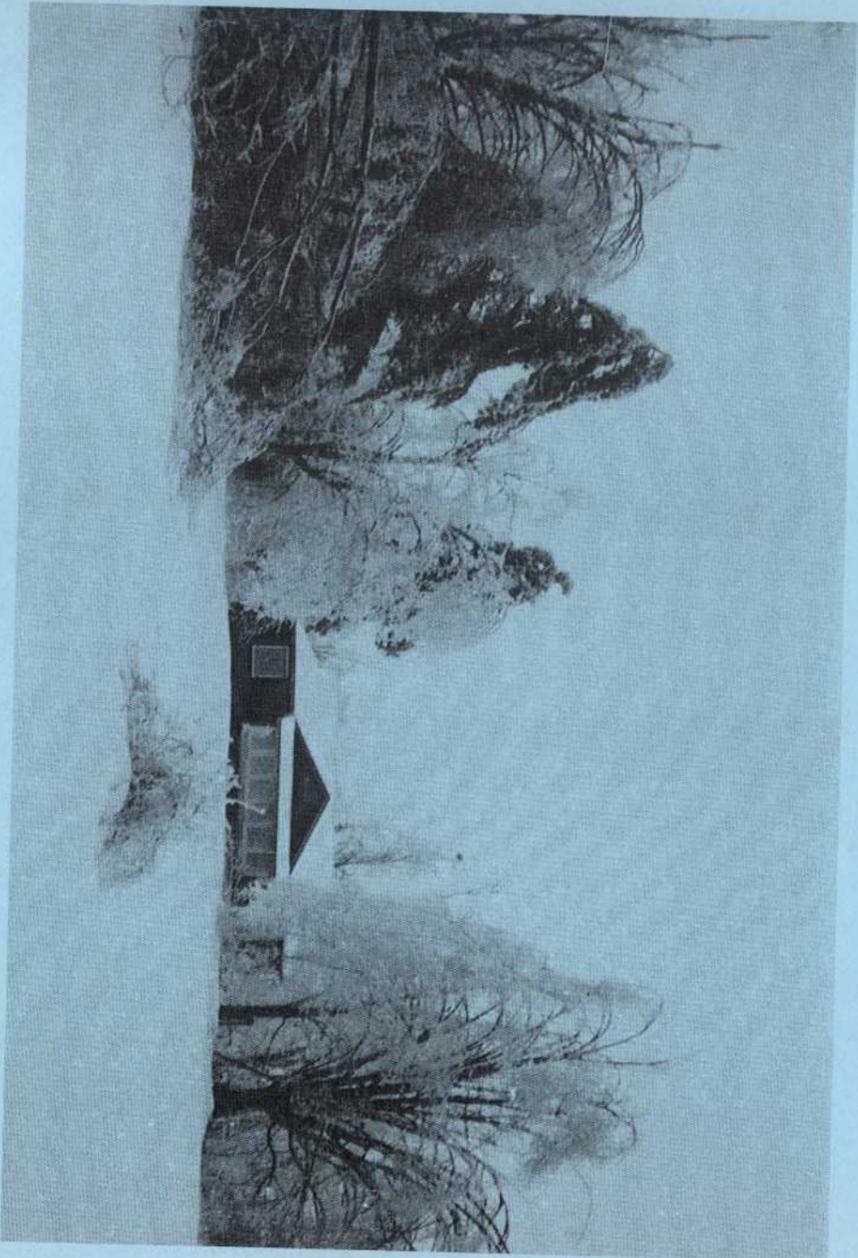


*Queen's University Biological Station
Annual Report and Newsletter 1998*

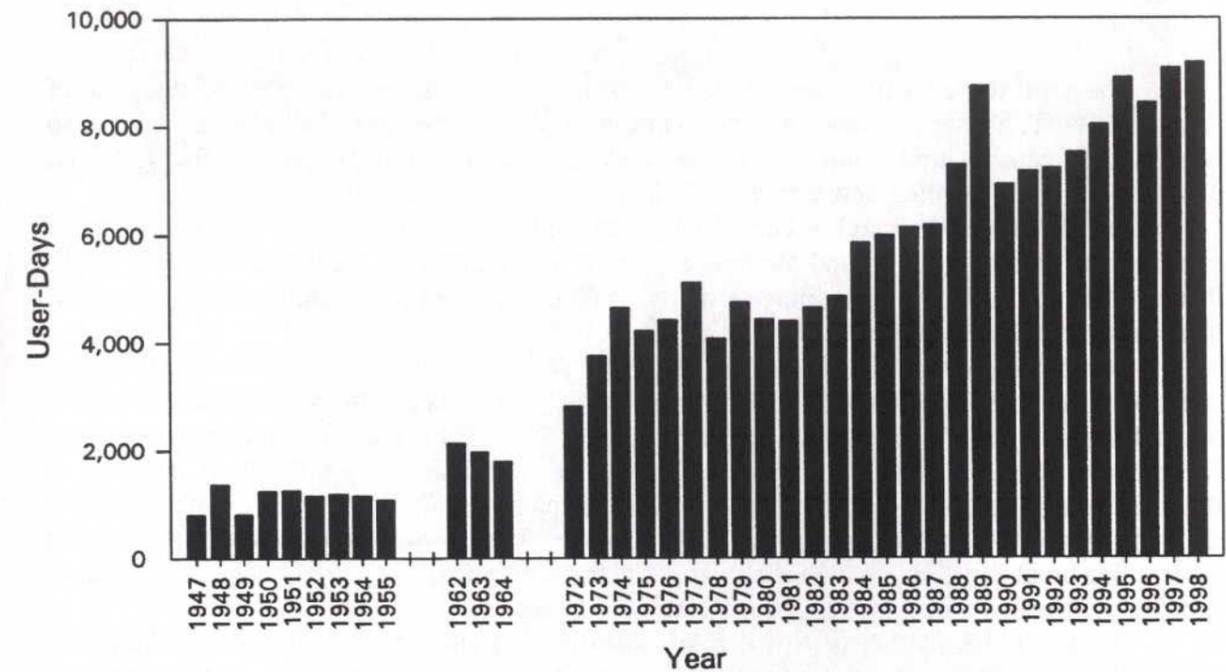


Director: Dr. Raleigh J. Robertson

Manager: Frank J.S. Phelan

Introduction

It seems that each year the first sentence in the Annual Report has been "19xx was the busiest year yet experienced at Queen's University Biological Station". 1998 was no exception, with some 9174 user-days recorded (1% increase from 1997 - user-day data are displayed in tabular form on pp. 58-59). On average, 42 researchers (professors, graduate students, honours students and assistants) were in residence throughout the summer. Abstracts of 1998 research projects and the personnel involved are contained in the following pages (pp. 21-56).



In teaching activities, QUBS hosted 13 modules (17 weeks worth of modules, since several of these were of two weeks duration) in the Ontario Universities Program in Field Biology (OUPFB). Seven of these modules were presented by Queen's instructors, six by instructors from other institutions. Titles and enrolments for modules held at QUBS and the OUPFB in general are found in Tables 1 through 3 (pp. 18-20). In addition to the modules mentioned above, Dr. Ed Kott (Wilfrid Laurier University) brought his field course for senior undergraduates to QUBS for two weeks in late summer.

The demand for small conferences, meetings, workshops and field trips by non-Queen's groups remains high. However, QUBS is only able to accede to requests when not in conflict with teaching and research uses and in limited fashion in the colder seasons, because of the seasonal nature of our logistical support and accommodation. In 1998, as in 1997, only a small number of these events were hosted at QUBS. We anticipate that the proposed new central building will improve the ability of QUBS to respond to such requests by extending the available

season with logistical support available year-round (see below re. Biodiversity Centre).

QUBS continues to be an important destination for a variety of field trips, especially those associated with fall and winter term courses. When asked about key experiences at university, alumni often cite field trips and field courses as most memorable, stimulating and influential experiences. This exposure to field work is a vital component of study of biology and often is the stimulus that encourages students to pursue a career in the biological sciences. A summary of conference, meeting and field trip use of QUBS in 1998 appears later in this report (p. 57).

Ice Storm

The year started with a devastating ice storm. Freezing rain fell over a huge area of Eastern Ontario, Western Quebec and Northern New York. The ice built up rapidly over a 36 hour period, causing tree limbs and whole trees to bend with the weight and finally break, dropping limbs or toppling entire trees. High winds exacerbated the situation.

January 7 (Wednesday) - This Wednesday night was unbelievable, with the sound of crashing and smashing all around the house. Every few minutes we would hear another crash, then another until it was hard to imagine there would be any trees left standing. Power was off, then on again all through the evening.

January 8 (Thursday) - Power off for good about 1:30 am. In the morning, the scene was one of general devastation. It was difficult to see any distance with so many trees and limbs down, bent over and fully ice-covered. Venturing out to check the buildings and the station road was difficult and hazardous. The wind was still strong and limbs were still falling. Despite all the tree damage, most buildings suffered only minor damage. Cabin 2, the old tank house and the Sumac Cottage pumphouse received major damage. The hydro lines are in tough shape, with several line breaks and several broken poles. The transformer pole at Earl Cottage was shattered and the transformer lying on the ground (see photo, page 3).

Worked for the better part of the day ensuring that we had water (a hole in the ice by the boathouse) and cooking equipment (Coleman stove and propane barbeque). Cut enough trees off the station road to permit passage of the tractor. Checked out our generators - all working! Means of providing power to the furnaces in the Manager's House and White House using the big generator were devised. Television stations and radio stations are down - either with reduced power or antenna damage - hard to get news about the outside world. Floyd is fine with the small woodstove in the Assistant Manager's House.

January 9 (Friday) - After another day's work, the station road was finally clear of trees and sanded well enough to allow us to drive out. Checked on our neighbours and friends. The big generator is used once in the morning and once before bedtime to bring the Manager's House and White House up to temperature. People, especially farmers, are desperate for generators, so we loan out one to run milk pipelines for some local farmers and one to run sump pumps at Chaffey's Lock. We keep the big one, but load it into the back of the red truck so that it can be moved easily. We are fortunate to have lots of gasoline. Without power, the service stations cannot even pump gas.



