

# TREES 'N' TRAITS: WHITE PINE – “FLEXIBILITY”

Neil Baldwin

Have you found *your* tree yet? Or, more specifically, have you found something of yourself revealed in a tree? We are mid-way through this nine-part series which asks your indulgence in musing on whether certain trees might reflect your core traits.

A friend reading these articles noted, quite rightly, we are all hybrid trees. Yes, indeed, though most hybrids have a primary stock much in the same way we can use both our hands but one tends to be dominant, more preferred, more natural.

So what about White Pine, might that be your tree? One of the fundamental characteristics of this tree is flexibility. It is seen in their long soft needles (bundles of five) which, unlike the long soft needles of Red Pine (bundles of two), do not break when they are bent. White Pine limbs also have a robust

ability to tolerate snow load then eventually return to their original orientation once it's melted. The tree is even flexible in habitats, preferring humid, well-drained soils yet occurring everywhere from rocky ridges to sphagnum bogs. Though to really appreciate their flexibility is to be at a plantation of tall White Pine on a breezy day (always use caution near older trees when windy) and see them swaying in unison. White Pine will mesmerize you with a lovely dance, like a company of ballet danseuses moving in synchronization. And as an added bonus, the sound of the breeze moving through White Pine needles is like the ocean breeze. If, by the way, you have not yet noticed how each tree species has a particular sound when air blows through its leaves then pay attention, close your eyes, and you will be in for an marvellous treat.

Can you identify with the ability to absorb load and bounce back? Can you be soft and not break even when someone is bending your needles? Do you like to move in harmony with those around you? If so perhaps you are a White Pine and you may wish to seek out the company of this tree when you need to recharge. Or, even if you're not a White Pine temperament, why not see if some time spent around them might cultivate your flexibility?

One great spot for White Pine companionship is the Bognor Marsh (access off Cty Rd 18 east of Rockford). Another, if you would like to meet some particularly wise old trees, is the north end of Isaac Lake if you paddle southwest across the bay from the boat launch you will come to a tip of land with a mixed grove of trees that are unmistakably sacred. Next month: Beech. **■**

## OWEN SOUND EMANCIPATION FESTIVAL

Blaine Courtney



The OSEF is celebrating its 153<sup>rd</sup> anniversary this year and is still discovering new ways to tell our stories. Over the past 12 months we have reached out and formed new community partnerships which have resulted in exciting additions to our programs for the July 31–August 1 Festival weekend.

Our Speakers' Forum on Friday evening at Grey Roots Museum & Archives will offer 3 “must see” segments: We have obtained Lynn Ball's exhibit of photos from the Selma March which he took as a 22-year-old Canadian photographer covering this historic event 50 years ago. This is certainly a huge honour for us. We will also pay special tribute to Tommy Earlls, “Canada's

Man with the Horn” and include a selection of music and photos honouring his career. We are quite proud of our “Owen Sound Son” whom we lost last fall. The evening's final offering will be our 1<sup>st</sup> annual Les MacKinnon Memorial Keynote Presentation: Elizabeth Abbott, an historian, author and accomplished speaker will discuss her latest works and offer insight into the history of slavery in the Caribbean and its impact on the sugar cane industry.

Saturday at Harrison Park will include all of the traditional picnic events with craft vendors, unique food offerings, Kidz Zone with games and races, a dominos tournament, live music and tons of family “catch-up” time. The day begins with the Ancestors'

Breakfast which will once again include a special ceremony at the Cairn featuring oral tributes, moments of reflection and the erection of a photo and story board offering everyone a chance to post family history they would like to share and ancestors they want to honour by doing so. Displays, with permissions granted, may be included in the publication of a local Black History book which is currently being worked on. This is your chance to assist in ensuring our history is accurately preserved.

Please plan to be included in our celebrations as we honour our ancestors and the freedom they earned for us. For more information on these and other 2015 Festival events visit [www.emancipation.ca](http://www.emancipation.ca). **■**

## Making Sound Music

John Dickson

The Owen Sound City Band is one of Ontario's oldest established community bands. Celebrating its 95th anniversary this year, the Band was founded by William Iles in July, 1920, shortly after the city's incorporation. Through the years and through the changes we have continued to provide the soundtrack to the Scenic City, playing for parades, regular concerts in parks, radio broadcasts, fundraisers, regional town fairs, schools and senior centres.

The City Band's repertoire is quite diverse with ancient gems from our library along with newer acquisitions. At any concert you may expect to hear a Dixieland medley, Irish tunes, hits from the Swing Era, a little Rock 'n' Roll, songs from Broadway and the movies, and TV show themes. Marches, folk, country, popular and sacred melodies are featured regularly plus an occasional vocal performance by singers in the Band.

Members of the Band include players under ten and over eighty, from all over Grey and Bruce counties. Some re-join us each summer when they are vacationing in the area or home from university. If you would like to perform with us please get in touch or drop by to meet us. The Owen Sound City Band will kick off its summer **Concerts in the Parks** events with a 6:30pm performance on Canada Day at Kelso Beach Park. Monday Concerts in Harrison Park are 7:30pm on July 6, 13, 20, 27. There will be a Concert at Queen's Park Bandstand on Thursday July 16 at 7:30pm. August Concerts in Harrison Park are Mondays August 10, 17, 24, 31 and start at 7:15pm. There will also be a Concert at Queen's Park Thursday August 13, 7:15.

We look forward to seeing everyone in the Parks this summer. Concerts are free. Everyone is welcome! For more information please visit [www.owensoundcityband.org](http://www.owensoundcityband.org) and check out our Facebook and our band blog for more photos and mp3 samples. **■**