

By Bill Stevens (Originally Published in th June 2007 Newsletter)

Charles Daley Park is one of the few public beach fronts along the shore of Lake Ontario in the Niagara Region. It is owned by and located in the Town of Lincoln, adjacent to the western limits of the City of St. Catharines. Access by automobile is from Regional Road 39 (QEW North Service Road), which forms the southern limit of the park. Fifteen Mile Creek on the east side of the park is also the municipal boundary line. Sixteen Mile Creek is essentially the western park limits. This area was part of the former Township of Louth, Lots 9 and 10 Broken Front Concession. Cottage communities were once located at Fifteen and Sixteen Mile beaches along the Lakeshore Road. The cottages are gone and the road has long since disappeared due to erosion and now sits out in the lake beyond the beach. The provincial government expropriated lands for the construction of the QEW beginning in 1937 and this left a strip of land along the shoreline where the park is located. In 1960 the Niagara Parks Commission (NPC) purchased an 11-acre site between the two creeks, which included 2600 feet of sandy beach and access directly from the QEW. The site ran to a sheer bluff at the lakefront. A large 30-foot-high hill was removed to create a 500-space parking area, some of which is still present today. In 1961 the shoreline was subject to extensive remediation work. Access from the QEW was closed in 1961 with the construction of the Service Road. With the construction of some park buildings, the park officially opened on July 1, 1962 and was named after the then Chairman of the Niagara Parks Commission, Charles Daley. A small campground was added soon after. In 1972 fill from further QEW construction was placed in the park, narrowing the channel and pond of Sixteen Mile Creek and raising the ground level for additional campground area. Because of low day-use the parking lot size was reduced and some trailer sites were added. In 1962 and 1974 the NPC purchased adjoining lands, including two large ponds formed by the creeks, to encompass 39 acres and 3070 feet of beach, and this represents today's park lands. In 1990, the NPC deeded the park to the

Town of Lincoln for a nominal sum. The campground use was discontinued and the park is now only used for free day-use purposes.