"Share the Gift of Summer Camp!"

THE GULL ROCK GAZETTE

Volume 22 Issue 1 - Published by Amici and Kilcoo Camp - Spring 2015
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EMERGENCY ON THE WATERFRONT (A TELEPHONE GAME GONE BAD)

I had the good fortune of working at Kilcoo for ten summers from 1969 to 1979. In large institutions like schools, hospitals and summer camps (all of which I have had the pleasure of being a part of) I have come to learn and value clear communication. When it gets taken for granted or becomes inefficient it can lead to unfortunate results. I would like to share the following camp story to illustrate how my communication assisted an emergency situation, but also led to a traumatic experience for Peggy Latimer, our "Mrs. Chief".

The majority of my time at Kilcoo was spent as a swim instructor and part of my job was evening tower duty. It was a summer evening in 1974 and I was on duty. As usual, shortly before 8p.m. I began signaling to the boats to start heading in for the day. Geoff Kelk came down to the dock and climbed the tower to see how things were wrapping up. We were planning to head into town after I was finished for a little 'ETO' (extra time off). Tom Reed was on the Sail Dock helping the last of the boats come in. Paul Hutton and Randy Kline had brought in the ski boats and had gone up to their cabin. The swim areas and all the docks had emptied.

Everything was quiet when Geoff and I heard the sound of an airplane engine coming from behind us. We found ourselves looking at the underbelly of the plane as it passed over us at about 60 feet and headed towards the right side of Long Island.

Geoff is quite familiar with small pontoon planes. He had spent a substantial amount of time flying with his father, who was a pilot, to and from their cottage on Georgian Bay. I remember Geoff commenting that the plane looked very similar to his father's but he wasn't expecting a visit from his Dad that evening. Many planes flew over the camp from time to time but to see one flying as low as this one and this late in the day was quite unusual. As Geoff and I stood fixated on the plane we noticed that it begin to bank to the left as it passed over Long Island. We lost sight of the plane briefly behind the trees, but the sound of the engine started to get louder again.

Seconds later we saw the plane flying quite low through the Narrows towards Braeside. We heard the plane's engine roar as the pilot tried to gain altitude. As it struggled to climb, the nose of the plane fell forward as if something had tripped it and it plunged, nose first, into the water. We realized that the plane had caught its pontoons on the power line that stretched across the Narrows from the mainland to the island, about 30 feet above the water. The impact of the plane in the shallow water was sudden and hard. Our focus immediately shifted to the welfare of the pilot.

When I worked the tower there were two phones located in a red box. One connected to the beach swimming area and the other connected to the Latimer's cabin. The camp doctor, Mike McCulloch's cabin was 10 yards away from the Latimer's but did not have a phone. It was imperative that we find the doctor, inform him of the situation and notify Paul or Randy to drive him out to the crash site.



MAYDAY!

A Toronto pilot escaped with only a broken nose and scratches last Wednesday when his Cessna 180 aircraft crashed into hydro wires while attempting to land on Gull Lake and nose-dived into four feet of water.

Shaken, but still conscious, the pilot, Jaspeter Kephammel, 47, swam 100 feet to a nearby island where two speed boats from Camp Kilcoo carrying the camp's supervisor, Tom Reed and Dr. Michael McCulloch reached him.

The injured man was rushed to Minden Red Cross hospital, then transferred to Ross Memorial hospital in Lindsay where he was treated for a broken nose and facial lacerations.

Kephammel, owner of Charles Flying Service of Mississauga Lake was landing near Kilcoo Bay at 8.30 p.m. where he planned to visit a friend when the accident occurred.

The private hydro line stretches from the mainland near Braeside Motel across the water to a cottage on Long Island, R.D. Campbell, area manager of the Minden branch of Ontario Hydro said Friday that Hydro has an ongoing program of reducing wire hazards, but that this particular stretch of water was considered far too narrow for anyone to attempt a safe aircraft landing.

Damage was estimated at $30,000. Investigation was conducted by Constable Dennis Potter and Corporal J.W. Dunn of the OPP's Minden detachment as well as a special team from the Federal Ministry of Transport Aircraft Accident Branch.

The crash seemed to have gone unnoticed to most people in the camp except for Tom, Geoff and myself. The beach was deserted. I called the Latimer's cottage and when no one answered, I panicked. It was too far to run to get help so I reached for the backup technology of the time - the big red megaphone.

I called towards the Hi-rise cabin where the ski instructors lived and caught the attention of Paul Hutton (one of the ski instructors) and Dave Jamieson. In order to expedite matters, I shouted something to the effect that a plane had crashed in the Narrows and that someone needed to get the doctor out to the crash site in a ski boat. I am sure that many campers heard my urgent message bellowing from the big red megaphone!

Paul and Dave responded quickly and began to search for Doctor Mike. Tom was back on the sail dock quickly untying the "Beast" (our 15 horse power aluminum run about). After Tom, Geoff and myself got into the Beast and headed out you could feel the tension in the boat. We were all wondering what we might find when we got to the plane. We were somewhat relieved when were passed by the ski boat carrying Dave, Paul and Doctor Mike!

By the time we got to the plane it was empty. At first we didn't notice that Paul had taken the ski boat over to the shore of Long Island and that Mike was attending to the pilot. We later learned that he had managed to leave the plane and swim over to Long Island despite his injuries. The pilot was taken back to the camp and was eventually taken to Lindsay by ambulance. He had sustained a broken nose and serious lacerations to his face when his head slammed into the plane's dashboard on impact.

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As Tom, Geoff, and I headed back to the sail dock I remember discussing that we had been sitting in an aluminum boat beside an electrical cable in the water and we might have been electrocuted! We learned afterwards that by design, electrical wires strung over water automatically short out if broken.

As Geoff and I headed up to the Latimer's cabin before we left for town, I remember feeling pretty pumped up about how quickly we had gotten help to the pilot. We were heroes! Why not visit the Latimers and collect our congratulations for a job well done? I was wrong…

The first person that we saw when we opened the door was "Mrs. Chief". When she saw me her face went red and she lit into me with a rage. What had I done wrong?

Do you remember the telephone game that we often played at section campfires? A staff member creates a sentence or two and the message is whispered from one camper to the next. By the time it reaches the person who made it up the words and meaning have changed into something quite different than the original.

Well, as the drama was unfolding on the waterfront, Peggy was at Indian Council on the far side of camp, somewhat insulated from the regular goings on. As she made her way back across Mohawk Park a camper rushed up to her and said frantically, "Three campers have been run over by a motorboat!"

As Peggy calmed herself down she described to Geoff and me the horrible thoughts that had gone through her head when she got the camper's version of the events.

The telephone game, which began with my megaphone message from the tower, had ended with Peggy in Mohawk Park.

In pre-camp each summer as part of preparing the waterfront staff, we review and discuss all our safety procedures. During this preparation for the new season it was hard not to think of the impact on the Kilcoo community and the future of the camp if we experienced the loss of a life. I can't imagine what those moments were like for Peggy as she made her way back to her cabin, before she was informed of what really took place.

There were several lessons learned that day but a big one was the importance of communication. "Get the Doctor to the ski dock! A plane has crashed in the Narrows!" had somehow become: "Three campers have been run over by a motor boat!"

The big red megaphone will always have a place on the waterfront. Perhaps if this had happened today, a text message or a cell phone call might have kept the telephone game where it belongs – around the campfire.

"Thanks for the day, Comrades!"

DAVE MINNES 1969-79

KILCOO ON MY MIND

In some ways my summers at Kilcoo seem so remotely in the past and in other ways just like yesterday. I can still see the late afternoon sun shining on the old lodge as for the first time I made my way up the steps to the lake side door and then to the table I was about to share with my counsellor and 7 cabin mates. The first sing song featured "Off We Go", "Green Grow the Rushes Ho" and "The Ford Song"(that's "the cutest little car", not Toronto's former mayor), songs never heard any more. The after dinner time was not called "EP" in those days and featured many more cabin groups locked in friendly battles with other groups on the baseball diamond or in the pool as follow up to dinner time grand announcements, "We the amazing Chipmunks of Cabin 8 challenge the weak and lowly…" As is the case now, Taps was always played to bring the noise and commotion of a busy day to an end.



The Lodge, 1949

As befitted a camp still in remembrance of a world war we were awakened each day by Reveille played in my day on the bugle by Peter Segsworth and following what seemed like minutes later by the same bugle playing "Come to the Cookhouse Door, boys" and down to the lodge we ran for the regular cold cereal, oatmeal porridge, toast and Tang.

Morning activities were many. The archery range was located adjacent to the baseball diamond (perhaps not the best idea) and the air was constantly punctuated by the rounds being fired at the nearby shooting range. Not so easily heard were the reports from the bb range where the Bantam campers strove for excellence in marksmanship. The beach area was busy with the camp's non swimmers always wearing their stigmatizing poker chips and the punting area was filled with what resembled the old loggers' pointer boats as the campers used them to chase and crash one another. The lake in that area seemed deeper than it is now.

The canoe dock provided a mix of old Peterborough canoes and newer Minto canoes of which only two or three of the latter are still in use, and the old canoe "house" teetered on its foundation with its only use seeming to be the storage of the large oil drums which provided flotation for the swim docks out by the tower. I remember the first year the drums were replaced by 12 foot long Styrofoam floats at a cost of $26 per.

Salt pills were the norm for July lunchtime meals and ice cream was the special dessert for Sunday's lunch.

Yes many changes; but Chapel Point looks just the same except for the taller trees and a few additional fallen tree trunks and it has exactly the same meaning for campers and staff as it always has. Gull Lake still looks and feels the same and the enthusiasm you feel when you step on the property is just the same. Truly one can still say that once you are a Kilcoo camper you are always that, and at the end of it all we can still share in the same sentiment, "Thanks for the day, comrades."

ANONYMOUS KILCOO CAMPER

FIRESIDE CHAT

From Lub and the entire Latimer Family

This is the most exciting time of the year for us "Camp People", as the new season is finally here… I am sure all of you former staff members remember that feeling, with Advance Camp getting under way, and within a matter of weeks the summer will be upon us... As you can tell, I am super pumped for Kilcoo's 84th year on Gull Lake! I love the Gull Rock Gazette and Paul has done another fantastic job of putting it all together and I sure hope it rekindles some great memories for you.

Rob Chisnall and George Hendrie arrived at camp after Easter Weekend, and they are hard at work setting up the Aerial Course for another season. Sadly, the Aerial Course has but a couple of fleeting years left, as Rob gets closer to retirement. But we also have our new Aerial Park running on its second year, so for now, we have two awesome courses! Rob Sakamoto and Doug Higgins will join the crew in the third week of April for Primordial Camp, which encompasses the little nitty gritty details of opening Kilcoo after a long winter. Primordial is the final stretch before things really get ramped up with our long standing tradition of Advance Camp. James Madell, our Waterfront Director, will lead the 12 man crew over weeks of school groups and preparation for the summer ahead. The boys are very excited to get up to camp and get the season rolling!

You will all be happy to know that Kilcoo is full for the summer once again in all of our sessions. We are particularly excited about tripping this year as we are sending a one-month trip to the Nahanni River; two two-week trips to Vancouver Island for hiking and sea kayaking (my boys TJ & Charlie, who are now Voyageurs, are very excited for this trip in July); our usual hiking trips in Lake Superior Provincial Park; and finally a white water trip in August… It's going to be awesome! We have the usual programming activities, the only difference being we have to share the Minden Wild Water Preserve with the Pan Am Games; they have exclusive use of the site for many days in July, so we'll see how that affects us. Otherwise, we are excited for the campers to get up to camp to enjoy all that Kilcoo has to offer.

Brooke, my daughter, is heading back to Tanamakoon for two weeks. Beth is getting a break and heading out west with Brooke and some friends to Greg Guatto's "tipi" in Canmore, AB. Mrs. Chief will be up at the Longhouse most of the summer. Mike will be in and out all summer. Jeff and Larry are expecting a baby in July, so their hands will be very full… As usual, life is never dull with the Latimer clan... it's terrific!

I want everyone to know that you are more than welcome to stop by for a visit at camp any time. Come stay for a meal and relive "the glory days", but please avoid the first, last or Visitor's Day and please let us know! The campers love the connection with the alumni; it is a huge part of our culture that we celebrate every day at camp. I was so energized by the warmth (literally) and vigor of the 2014 Reunion. That beautiful weekend will be remembered for a long time, certainly at least until the next reunion on September 22nd to 24th, 2017! Please have a great spring season, enjoy the Gazette and as always…

RIP RAM RAZZLE SCRAM

DAVID "LUB" LATIMER

EDITOR'S MUSINGS

Every season at Kilcoo is a little different. As a camper and later as a staff member I had the opportunity to spend some time there in December and I have on several occasions in January been up to take pictures for the Gazette. Arriving there on March 11th was a little different as the snow, in some places over a metre (3 feet) deep, was well into the melting process after an extremely cold February. In places on Gull Lake it looked like the ice was close to breaking up, but in Miner's Bay there were still ice huts with cars parked beside them on the ice over deep water.

My first look at the new combined cabins 7 and 8 surprised me. Having looked at the original longhouse that stood in the same spot until 1960 and the direction the two replacement cabins had faced since (more or less toward the lake) I was quite struck by the orientation of this longhouse #2 (hopefully that is how it will be christened) as the picture shows. Looking inside I noticed space for 10 campers in each section which is more than the normal 6 campers per cabin back in the 50's. It made me wonder if the lodge will have enough room as more campers are added with each replaced cabin.



The new Cabins 7 & 8

In submissions for articles and biographies from alumni a common theme seems to be a reflection on the impact Kilcoo has had on people's lives, and perhaps more than anything else that is the imprint or legacy of the camp. Developing the capacity for strong leadership and good citizenship seem to in part at least be a product of the camping experience and for the sake of our society I only hope the same influences are felt among people who have attended any of the many summer camps that offer quality programs.

Several of our alumni have in their adult lives continued to be, or have become involved in a variety of other camping programs similar to that reported by Bill Meeker, and in future issues I hope to have articles from others who have chosen camping as their life's work or charity of choice. It certainly is refreshing when people carry on their love for camp into the years beyond and when so many of you sign off on your articles or biographies with "Thanks for the day comrades."

PAUL CHAMBERLAIN

ALUMNI FATHER/DAUGHTER WEEKEND

To be clear… Kilcoo is never going co-ed… but having said that, I am proposing an Alumni Father/Daughter Weekend in the Fall of 2016. Anyone with camp aged daughters would be welcome, from young campers to the age of Staff. I have already chatted with a number of guys who love this idea. So please let me know if you would be interested… lub@kilcoo.com

SUMMER CAMP IN SPANISH

What do Kilcoo Camp and El Hogar de Amor y Esperanza have in common? That is a tricky question even if you have a bit of Spanish. El Hogar de Amor y Esperanza translates to "The Home of Love and Hope". That should give you a clue to the connection.

In February 2014, my wife and two daughters returned to El Hogar to take care of 65 children who live in an orphanage in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. El Hogar was established almost 35 years ago to rescue the poorest children in the City of Tegucigalpa from a life of poverty and hopelessness. They started by bringing in 5 boys from the street. This year, the program will support four different schools and about 250 children.

The children come from horrendous living situations - physical and emotional abuse, living on the street, exposure to drugs and prostitution, and the danger of street gang violence. There is no social safety net in Honduras.

El Hogar provides a chance for these children to escape the cycle of poverty by getting an education, having a safe and loving home, as well as building the confidence to be the best they can be. There are four centres – an elementary school for children 6 to 13, a technical school for graduates to learn a trade, an agricultural school for graduates to learn farming and ranching, and a girls high school residence that will allow girls to pursue careers in teaching, nursing, and administration.

My entire family has been active in camping and we understand what difference the camping experience provides to children and young adults. Our return to El Hogar was like "summer camp in Spanish" for children who had no family to return to for their summer holidays. We organized sports, games and crafts. We were there to show them that we care enough to travel to their home and spend





time with them. It also gave the teachers a one-week break for professional development before the new school year started.

Our daughters Alexandra and Meredith led many activities that they had learned during their time a Camp Tapawingo and Tim Horton's Foundation Camp. My wife and I brought the experience we had from Camp Kitchikewana and of course Kilcoo. You can imagine what it would be like for four people to look after all those children for a week – can you imagine what it would be like in another language? Fortunately we all have some Spanish knowledge but hand signals and hugs went a long way!

The link between Kilcoo and El Hogar is obviously the difference they make in children's lives. When you consider AMICI, then the picture becomes even clearer. By going to Kilcoo I learned how important the camping experience was to my own personal development. Seeing what AMICI is doing for kids in Ontario, you get an appreciation for what summer camp can mean to children less fortunate than ourselves. Traveling to Tegucigalpa gave me an appreciation for the difference El Hogar is making for children who face extreme poverty - it has completely changed my worldview. I now appreciate so much more what we have here in Canada and what I was able to experience at Kilcoo.

The accompanying pictures capture a few of the precious moments from our week – Alex with a crowd of kids playing with flags they had just made and Meredith with two of the sweetest young boys who had recently arrived.

If you want to learn more about El Hogar, you can visit their website at http://www.elhogar.org, or e-mail me at wemeeker1@gmail.com.

A postscript to this story is that my wife Jenn and I traveled back again last month (for the 7th time) to do it all again – it was wonderful.

BILL MEEKER
1968-81

REMEMBERING ART LYON (KILCOO YEARS 1957-1968)

Many former camp friends were shocked and saddened to hear of the passing of Art Lyon shortly before Christmas. Art and his brother Kirk first attended Kilcoo in 1957 where Art later worked as a counsellor and Archery Instructor until 1968. Kirk offers the following remembrance of his beloved brother.

Art died at his home in Ottawa on December 4, 2014. He is survived by his partner Lynn (Tremblay MacDonald), his brother Dr. Kirk Lyon, his sister in law Dr Barbara Stubbs, his niece Alexandra and his nephew Greg.

Art loved politics and it loved him back. In his work, he travelled the globe. He had a knack for making people feel comfortable with his big wonderful laugh and his sense of humour. He took a sincere interest in everyone he met and he showed kindness to all. Art also loved Canada and Kilcoo. The experiences, lessons and friendships of camp were never forgotten and would help to shape the rest of his life.

KILCOO'S CANOES: A REBUILD IN PROCESS

We have reported in past issues of the Gazette on the work being done by Marc Russel to refurbish/rebuild the camp's canoe fleet and now one look at the canoe dock during the summer reveals the great strides he has made towards revitalizing Kilcoo's canoeing tradition. Marc also welcomes new business and for any alumni who own canoes that might need some work or in the market for a new canoe, you cannot do better than Marc. Contact Marc through his website glbw.ca

As we enter into the sixth year of the Kilcoo Canoe Project, we have just completed refinishing and providing minor repairs for the First Generation of "Kilcoos." Hard to believe that these ten canoes are already five and six years old! Apart from some cosmetic damage and general wear to the gunwales and keels all the canoes are still in excellent shape, which shows not only the toughness of our new boats, but also how well they are being cared for by the campers and staff.

Kilcoo is lucky to have four vintage Chestnut Canoe Co. boats: three 18' "Prospectors" (repaired and refinished 2009-10), and one 16' "Bob Special" (donated to camp in 2013, repaired and refinished 2014). The "Prospectors" were also refinished this past winter. Two suffered some broken ribs (fifteen in total, probably delayed effects from the big storm in 2013), but none so dire as to require replacement – right now. They have been reinforced and will be replaced next time their canvas has to come off, in a decade or so.

Also in use are two unique Red Cedar "stripper"-style canoes, "The Needle," (a 21' racing canoe, repaired and refinished 2013), and the 16' Woodsong canoe custom built for, and later donated to Kilcoo by alumnus Chuck Bayless. Lastly, we recently unearthed ("removed from the Longhouse garage rafters) a great find in superb condition: Ruth Wilson's (of Ruth's Island) own 16' canoe, a rare example of a "double-diagonal" planked hull.

The older half of the fleet are a random assortment of our last five original Minto Marine canoes, some poorly-made Nominingues, and a few unknown others. These fifteen canoes are beyond restoration or not worth the cost. We lose, generally, two old boats per year. Brian Hamilton and Kent Taylor repair them as possible but more often repurpose them as the half-canoe shelves that grace the rooms of many alumni.







When not building for Kilcoo, Gull Lake Boat Works has kept busy doing custom builds and lots of repair work for private boat owners and for other camps, like Mi-A-Kon-Da and Taylor Statten Camps (whose neglected fleet of "Laser2" sailboats we are currently providing with heavy repairs). Kilcoo's four classic "Invitation" sailboats were repaired and refinished last spring, and we hope to soon restore Kilcoo's last all-wood sailboat, "The Sinbad," which is currently slumbering in storage.

For the upcoming summer, Kilcoo will continue adding to its numbers of both Lake canoes and Trip canoes ("Trip" boats are made with slight modifications for wear resistance and easier repair). We will have four new canoes: Lake#11, "Brian" (for Brian Hamilton, Kilcoo's longtime Site-Ops boss), and Trip#08 to #10. So, as of next summer Kilcoo will have 21 "new" canoes, eleven Lake and ten Trip. This means that we are about halfway though the fleet rebuild. Thanks to everyone who has shown support and interest in the project thus far – it was great to see so many of you at the Reunion last September.

Okay – back to work…. Thanks for reading!

MARC RUSSELL
1990-2010

Next Kilcoo Alumni Reunion: September 22-24, 2017

DO YOU EVER FORGET YOUR FIRST YEAR?

I was having coffee here in Calgary one morning with a great camp friend, Cal Hammett (I was Cal's LIT in Cabin 10). He was asking me what camp was like these days, since my two sons Theo (11) and Charlie (8) have been at camp now for a couple of summers. "What's changed?" he asked, "I haven't been back for 25 years. Brent Knightley was my counsellor and Drew Szandtner was my LIT. I think. Gosh, it was so long ago..."

I have similar conversations with so many Kilcoo campers, whenever and wherever we meet. Be it a chance meeting in the airport, or in the mountains skiing (this is where Cal and I discovered we both lived out West), or at a reunion every three years, the conversation is always nostalgic. Our time at Kilcoo was undoubtedly some of the best time of our lives. I'm very lucky to now be living vicariously through two curly haired boys who, as the snow starts to recede in March, start chattering about camp: the number of days until camp, the fact that both boys are going for a month this year, and that Charlie will have his birthday at camp (sorry Lub, I think he's expecting a parade and fireworks...), and what is the Bushpede going to be like, and will we be Iroquois like Dad was (Tingles, take note please...).

All this discussion has made me reflect back on my first year at Kilcoo, 1984 - Cabin 6 - born in the USA - arguably the greatest first counsellor in the history of Kilcoo, Scott Merrick, (Sorry, Mike Adamson you're a close second). It was the start of a very proud 15 year career at Kilcoo in which I was lucky enough be a member of Outward Challenge, a counsellor, a section director for Trappers and Pathfinders, and part of the Advance Camp crew. I grew up at Kilcoo; even my parents will attest to this. I learned how to sing and speak in front of crowds, how to deal with adversity and keep a smile on my face, how to cheer myself hoarse and encourage others to bring out the best in themselves and others.

And to think it almost never materialized. The campers in my family went to Pioneer Camp. That was where I was going, I decided. My Mom just happened to ask a friend of hers, the mother of Chris Omelon (who would eventually becoming OC staff with me) about camping and she was adamant that Kilcoo was the only place for me.



I will never forget that day in 1984, arriving at Armour Heights Public School and seeing all the buses lined up. I didn't know a soul. My mom recognized another friend of hers, and they put me on the bus with her son, Corey Williams. Corey had been to Kilcoo before and filled me in. I was incredulous as, just as Corey had described, the bus doors opened to a pandemonium of signs on paddles, kids and counsellors yelling numbers, and general chaos erupting. I caught sight of the Cabin 6 sign and the blonde mane of the one I would come to revere for the coming month, Scott Merrick. In my eyes he was twelve feet tall and built like Hercules. David Aspinall, my LIT, was super keen and energetic; they were a great pair. I met Hal Hannaford, the director, and my Section Director Murray Wickwire and all those who would shape my first month at Kilcoo into a life changing event.



We were a bunch of first year campers, including Ryan McCormick and Mike Brock who would eventually become an LIT and staff member alongside me. I will never forget our canoe trip – the tent without a floor resulting in all of us outside the tent, and we were wet come morning. And Scott running full tilt with the canoes over a portage while we struggled under the weight of the canvas packs. Tump strap - was that what the headband of a torture device was called? And of course, Scott would have 6 canoes over the portage before we were across.

Not surprisingly 2 weeks flew by. Once Visitor's Day had drawn to a close and my parents had brandished me with my water gun for the ensuing water fight. They were a bit miffed that they barely got a hug before I was charging down toward the waterfront where the staff had begun getting the fire hose set up. It was clear that my days at Pioneer Camp were over before they had begun.

I'll never forget my first Olympics. To this day, the smell of the kerosene is burned into my memory. Watching my mighty Zuke, Steve Zukiel, wear the American flag for a cape - swimming and running, playing soccer, and boiling water; I loved it all. I remember cheering for the USA in Voyageur Water Football, thinking these guys were as big as NFL linebackers. Hal came and sat down beside me and informed me that he'd been cheering all week for the sixth team in the Olympics, from Chad. "Wanna hear their cheer? I love Mom, I love Dad, I am cheering for the team from Chad, Chad, Chad!"

And just like that, it was time to start packing up and saying goodbye to what would turn out to be many lifelong friends. One of my most cherished things from camp was an autograph book my parents tossed into my trunk (because it was on the list, and still is). These are hilarious to read now and over my time at camp I have several notes from campers and staff. They remind me of some incredible years with amazing friends and leaders who influence my life even to this day.

I love pulling up to the gate in late June every year and seeing the guys in white, the handshakes and the excitement of another summer in the paradise we call Kilcoo. I watch my boys settle in, meet new cabin mates, and hug their buddies from the summers prior, and then get my quick hug before they are off into 'camp-mode'. And I know that not only will they have a blast for the month of July, it will shape much of their lives to come. And that is about the coolest thing I can think of. What's changed? To those who haven't been back, stop in if ever you are passing by. You'll be amazed that in 25 years, so much has remained the same. Thanks for the day, comrades!

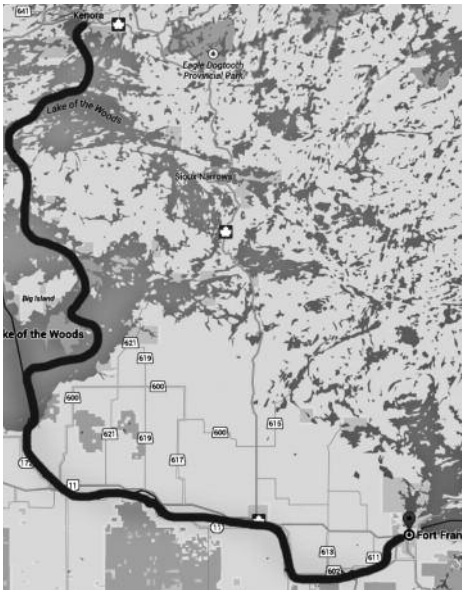
TODD HOUSTON
1984-1997

REMEMBERING A SPECIAL CANOE TRIP

In my years at Kilcoo as both a camper and staff member, I found myself gravitating more and more to canoeing and tripping as the activities of choice. There is something magical about a great day on the water followed by reflective time by the shore as the sun sets (okay, we'll ignore those nights of torrential rain, wet wood, smoky fire pits and mosquito fleets of increasing heft and volume).

In the alcove of the lodge is a wall holding many photographs of people and events past and present. One such photo tucked into the corner brings back memories of a trip long ago. The date is July 30, 1965 and we were destined for a canoe trip the furthest anyone had ventured from camp up to that time - Ft. Frances, Ontario. This trip was Kilcoo's participation in a camping association sponsored event to prepare routing and campsite locations for a planned Voyageur style canoe race planned for 1967 from Rocky Mountain House Alberta to EXPO 67 in Montreal in celebration of Canada's Centennial. Many other camps all over the country were involved in this exercise. Kilcoo was tasked with the route from Ft. Frances, down the Rainy River and through Lake of The Woods to Kenora, one of the great historic canoe routes.

Our trip involved some prep in camp with essential camping gear and freeze-dried food (think early vintage Gumperts and powdered bug juice) being packed and transported with us. Some fresh food would be purchased along the route. We even learned to reduce bread volume by opening bread bags, placing them between 2 sheets of plywood, compressing and resealing the bags! Needless to say, these flat morsels would become a challenge as the trip progressed.



Arriving in Fort William for an overnight stay, we repacked our gear to prepare in the hallways of the hotel while arriving guests looked on, a bit confused. A 10 hour train trip to Ft. Frances followed on a classic milk-run through some dense bush. The conductor wisely assigned our group to our own car— more for the benefit of the other passengers!

The canoes rented from a local supplier were launched and we gathered for a group photo in the declining light and rain in the local cemetery (strange choice of venue?) and headed out on the 1st of 12 days of some both easy and strenuous paddling.

My recollection of the time was of a very polluted river due to poor effluent controls by the 2 local paper mills which made the water a dirty brown colour. This resulted in the heavy use of purification tablets. What would the Voyageurs have thought of this "progress" of society?

Our expectation was there would be 2 portages, but our trip leader (Paul Chamberlain) and his 2 staff associates (John Hammett and Pat Johnston) scouted the 2 sets of rapids and we shot them both. In all my years, I have yet to complete any other trip with NO portages!

The river was covered in a mere 2 1/2 days due to a favourable current, but the Lake was to be another story. August of '65 was extremely hot which necessitated many of us dunking into the Lake as we paddled just to stay cool and hydrated. The biggest obstacles turned out to be idiots in large boats with twin I/O engines, heat, and a centuries old algae plume in the lake. Watching Chamberlain/Hammett/Johnston collecting water by holding a bucket inverted while they dove under the algae was both amusing and scary. Oh, did I mention our first attempt at a reflector oven baked cake resulted in sand ticks being embedded in the rising dough...not very tasty!

The most remarkable part of the trip was our scientific selection of campsites for the upcoming centennial race. Each site was analyzed by its approach from the lake, followed by Hammett or Johnston locating at least 2 empty Hamms beer cans on the site...no beer cans - no



site! I kid you not! One site, while loaded with Hamm's empties, was rejected as we had actually entered and camped in the US illegally which we discovered somewhat by accident when we went looking for food in Baudette, Minnesota. We got lost only once amongst the 10,000 islands of Lake of the Woods thanks to Chamberlain's navigational sense, quite remarkable considering the maze of islands.

Some great campsites were had (and a couple of not so great) I especially remember a large rocky island in mid-lake with a great breeze blowing; a welcome respite from the heat. It felt more like a Caribbean outcrop!

After 12 days we ended up in a grassy campsite within sight of our destination (Kenora) 2 days early. Some locals however told us it had been a former city dump! Scratch another campsite! Arriving in Kenora, we split up on the train platform: Bev Armstrong was headed west to his new home in Vancouver while the rest of us boarded the train eastbound to take us back to Union Station in Toronto, a 36 hr journey. Chief boarded in Sudbury to ride with us the rest of the way home. Our trip was not like the incredible trips Kilcoo now takes to the wilds of Quebec, Yukon and NWT, but for us it was a great experience. It was my last trip as a camper (no more midships!) but the start of an ever-increasing focus on tripping for me. Canoe tripping always brings us back to our basic lives of food, water, shelter, camaraderie and nature, without the interruptions and distractions of life today. All this memory from a single photograph!

As a postscript, I was strolling through the cemetery in Ft. Frances in August 1985, 20 years to the date after the start of our trip. I was working as a tech rep for Domtar visiting the paper mill in Ft. Frances. As the evening wound down I stopped by the Rainy River downstream from the paper mill, and glanced at a clear flowing stream with clean grassy undergrowth. I reflected on the trip to be sure, but silently thanked my industry for cleaning up the river… the Voyageurs would be proud.

BARRY HOFFMAN
1961-70

LIFE AFTER KILCOO

JIM YARMON (1958-63)

First, a nod to the Kilcoo experience. Chief's trust and confidence in his staff certainly helped develop our own self confidence and leadership qualities. I'm not sure how many teenagers I would trust to take my sons on a canoe trip today. I credit my Kilcoo experiences with helping me get ready to take entrepreneurial risks.

After Kilcoo I went to college in New Hampshire and graduate school in New York City. I worked in real estate finance in New York, then moved back to Toronto, got married, worked with my Dad in real estate investment and development, then moved to Anchorage, Alaska in 1980. I continued in the real estate industry in Anchorage, and eventually did a few deals in the Mountain West states. I was also a principal in a vc fund based in Anchorage. It would take a few beers at the next staff reunion to explain how I ended up in Alaska.
Nadene and I have 2 sons living in the "Lower 48". Still playing old timer hockey, downhill skiing, enjoying the outdoors in Alaska.

PAUL ROMANO (1973-1981)

Paul completed a 23 year career in Canada's Army after graduating from the Royal Military College in 1987. He served as a Signals Officer and was posted in Germany, Calgary, Petawawa, Halifax and Kingston, and retired in Ottawa in 2004. Paul is now working as the Product Line Director at Med-Eng, the world's largest manufacturer of Bombsuits, which protect an EOD technician when approaching an explosive device (as seen in the movie the Hurt Locker). Paul's firm handshake, while looking the person straight in the eye, still serves him well to build relationships and trust, every day.

ANDREW MEDLAND (1987-97)

After Kilcoo, I graduated from Queen's and started traveling; first through Bay Street and Calgary as an investment banker, then with a backpack around the world, then to Montreal to start up my own fitness company, on to Dartmouth for an MBA, and to Dubai for 5 years as a strategy consultant. Three years ago I settled back in Toronto as a consultant with Oliver Wyman. Along the way I met an absolutely incredible woman, Jeanne. We bonded through our shared love of camping and the outdoors and married in 2009. We're now learning plenty through our two children, Olivia, 4 and William, 2. Our camp experiences continue to have a resonating impact on our lives and Jeanne and I look forward to sharing this with our kids. As the Chairperson for this year's Canoe Heads for Kids, I'd ask if you can join me and impact the lives of many more children by participating in Canoe Heads or sponsoring someone who is.

IDEAS ALWAYS WELCOME!

If you have ideas for articles of interest for future issues of the Gazette please contact us at gazetteeditor@kilcoo.com. If you have a good topic idea, we will do the follow up research; if you want to write an article please put on your creative hat, and if you have some photos to accompany your piece, please send those along as well!

BILL LOVE (1962-69)

My years at Kilcoo were far too few. I became a staff member in the Pathfinder section in late summer 1966 and left after the summer of 1969 to go away to school in Switzerland. I was Music director for that brief period and one third (more like one sixth) of the immortal 'Orville's Hormones' along with Bill Bobier and Gord McGiverin. After returning to Canada, it was off to school doing a B. Math at the University of Waterloo and working weekends and summers in the Haematology lab at St. Joseph's Hospital in Hamilton – about as far from the beautiful waters of Gull Lake as I could be. In 1973 it was off to Medical school at the University of Western Ontario, then post graduate work at the University of Toronto and then the real world as a Urologist in Burlington Ontario where I remain.

My love of music and the outdoors have never left me. Ken Jones will be pleased to learn that my kids gave me a ukulele for my last birthday and my first thought was of him as I opened it.

My wife Jane and I are one of the last threads of the Kilcoo /Gay Venture bond. We dated in the summer of 1968 and married in 1975. I logged a lot of miles hitch hiking between the two camps. Joe's taxi was an occasional necessity on a particularly late night. On our 40th anniversary, given the opportunity to go anywhere at all, my kids Kevin, Robert and Norah chose a family canoe trip in Killarney – campers to the end!

My second life at Kilcoo began with my sons Kevin and Robert – both Kilcoo 'lifers'. Through them, I am constantly looking back fondly and reliving my experiences at camp. I am thrilled to think that it will not be long until Kevin's son Charlie and Robert's son Ryan and who knows how many more of my soon-to-be six grandchildren are given the same opportunity that I am so grateful to have had.

JON PURDY (1983-1992)

My memories of Kilcoo started at an early age when my older brothers, Dave, Sandy and James, would return from a summer on Gull Lake with stories of camp-wide games, raucous singsongs in the lodge, Sunday talent shows and Indian councils, and jumps off the tower. The one thing in common from all of them was the consistent "I had the best time this summer" and it was with excited anticipation (and a bit of fear) that I started my own Kilcoo experience in the summer of 1983. I was nervous as I entered Cabin 6 but quickly made friends with Xavier Vidal and Jay Baechler and the 3 of us continued in the same cabin throughout our time as campers and remain friends to this day. It's those long term friendship and feeling of comradery that made my experience at Kilcoo one that I treasure. I've passed on my love of camp to my two boys Drew, age 10, and Cameron, age 8, who both will be going to Gull Lake this July to build their own life long relationship and learn the words to "We're All For One". Thanks Kilcoo for the memories and friends.

I'm currently working in the Sporting Goods industry for the global footwear and apparel company, New Balance as the head of Marketing, and live in Toronto with my wife Karin and our two boys. We enjoy spending time at the cottage on Lake Rosseau any chance we get and feeding our love of travelling with the kids to new and interesting destinations around the globe.

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