"Share the Gift of Summer Camp!"

THE GULL ROCK GAZETTE

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KILCOO'S TRIPPING LEGACY 1932 – 1965

While Kilcoo was never intended to be primarily a tripping camp in the order of a few of the camps situated in Temagami and other wilderness areas, tripping has still been a feature of the camp program and a part from which many alumni possess some of their fondest memories from experiences good and bad.

The original "out trips" were quite limited in scope. Travel in 1932 was by rowboat to such distant points as Rackety Ranch, Sandy Bay and Trout Rock just beyond the narrows. Then, once the first Peterborough canoes were purchased, campers ventured to other lakes located along the Gull River system.

Jack Pemberton recalls trips for the oldest campers in the late 30's which travelled as far north as Lake Kennisis where the camp established an outpost. Groups with their canoes were taken by truck and dropped off at Hawk Lake from where they paddled to Kennisis and then used 3 or 4 days for the paddle back to camp. Other trips 4 days in length went as far as Buttermilk Falls between Halls and Boshkung Lakes which, not coincidently, was situated beside the co-ed Camp Calumet.

Stewart Coxford remembers that southbound trips in the early 40's for the Junior campers went to Moore Lake while the older campers went as far south as Bobcaygeon. Shadow Lake was also a favourite destination. In those days Stewart comments that there were no maps, no life jackets, and campers slept "under the stars" or in simply constructed canoe shelters. There were also very few cottages and with most of the shoreline being "crown land" suitable campsites were easy to find.





Around the beginning of the 40's Kilcoo began sending trips to Algonquin Park with the most covered route being the circuit from Lake Opeongo to Canoe Lake traversed in 6 or 7 days. Until 1957 this trip was reserved for the oldest and most skilled of campers only, the Seniors.

In those early decades there were no sleeping bags. Tom Lofft tells of bedrolls consisting of a blanket folded and fastened with large blanket pins. Relating from one of those trips that inspires life long memories Tom explains how the "bedrolls" were used to line the sides of the leather packs to protect campers who carried them on portages from the sharp edges of the cans filled with corn, preserved fruit, and processed meat. On this particular trip where the packs also included flour, sugar and bacon, a can of corn syrup opened and its contents drizzled down through the bedrolls and the food. The camper who had packed this pack came close to being left behind on the portage right where he had fallen. Bill Abbott remembers that trip menus from the early 40's included a lot of dried foods with canned carrots and beans, and powdered milk. Often there were potatoes to boil and pancake mix was a must. Bug juice, or Freshie, was the staple drink. Bill remembers trips where rain was widespread and because it brought infestations of mosquitos the campers were taught to make and smoke "bummies" with pine needles wrapped in toilet paper.



During world War II "mess kits" with knife, fork and spoon kits became available as did "jungle hammocks" which could be slung between two trees and allowed, usually the counsellor, to sleep suspended a couple of feet above the ground.

Tony Watts remembers trips around the end of the 40's where the normal three canoe group locked gunwales, raised groundsheets mounted on paddles, and let the tailwind on lakes like Kushog help them save considerable time, all the while eating dried prunes or apricots. On the return trips from the north the campsite on the slope next to the Minden Power Dam was a usual last night stop followed by the portage across the swinging bridge over the gorge.

Continued on page G6...

EDITOR'S MUSINGS

From talking to Kim and Pat in the camp office over the past few months I have become so aware of how a camp's reputation relates to the success of registrations, and for 2013 Pat might even be a little concerned that Kilcoo has been too successful when he anticipates cabin arrangements and space for all groups at meal time. July was filled before Christmas and August early in the new year. Lest one think filling the camp is automatic you need merely look at how long it took Kilcoo to boast a full camp in the years following the 1947 Polio epidemic and alumni Grayson Burke and Peter Ruys de Perez can attest to the hard work and patience required to build a camp client list when starting out as they did with Cedar Ridge. I have looked at several well regarded camps and their struggles to acquire and keep campers during the economic downturn of the past five years, whereas Kilcoo has been blessed through its great staff and wonderful program(even without water skiing) to have weathered the storm. Alongside Kilcoo's operation, Marc Russell continues to toil for his Gull Lake Boatworks. Always interested in any business camp alumni might bring his way when looking to restore their own canoes, Mark has been busy repairing many of the camp's Kevlar canoes and the second war canoe, and by December of this year he hopes to have 5 more new cedar strip canoes to add to the Kilcoo fleet.



Kilcoo's canoe tripping is the major theme of this issue and not surprisingly is a subject area where I find it easiest to elicit submissions from readers. In presenting the first of what I hope will be several accounts of pranks at camp I must point out that the statute of limitations has long since passed so feel free to send in your accounts. In virtually every submission I receive from alumni, the positive impact of camp on their lives is so apparent. Amici's list of donors each year also provides evidence that a great many alumni feel the desire to "give back". And so once again this year, with a stronger guarantee of a light canoe I will once again venture forth on Lake Ontario in the Canoe Heads event. I would like to call on other alumni who spent summers at Kilcoo in the 60's to join me in this assault on the Toronto waterfront in part to share the carrying load for me but also to show the young participants who form the majority that paddling and portaging is not just their preserve. I received incredible support last year which I will not be actively seeking this year, but I would encourage any of you who do support Amici's amazing work to consider using the Canoe Heads event to make a donation. You can go to Amici's website and on the Canoe Heads page look for the team containing any participant you know to whom you might direct your contribution. My name will appear on the Gullbob team.



In each issue I publish brief autobiographical accounts from alumni I am able to contact by e-mail, but there are many of you whose e-mails I do not have. If you would like to offer your own post-Kilcoo life update please don't wait for my call, but e-mail your "story" to gazetteeditor@kilcoo.com or mail it to the Kilcoo office. I am often told these are a favourite part of each issue. For those of you who might be considering joining the throng at the 2014 alumni reunion (September 26th to 28th weekend) having your e-mail address would make it easier for me to keep you updated on the plans. To conclude, the fall issue of the Gull Rock Gazette will mark the Gazette's 20th year of publication and I hope to have contributions from each of the editors who have made the Gazette possible since 1994. Have a safe and great summer everyone.

PAUL CHAMBERLAIN

THIS, TOO, WAS CAMPING!

I was a camper from 1936 to 1939, a CIT in 1940 and counsellor in 1941 and 1942. In 1942 "Goon" and I were counsellors of 16 kids from 5 to 8 years of age. One of the boys was mentally challenged and a bed wetter. After 4 nights he had wet all of his bedding, so I put him in a cot with a rubber ground sheet under the bed sheet, elevated the head of the bed and placed a bucket under the foot of the cot to catch the urine. This system worked well and to our good fortune the boy was sent home a few days later.

The same summer we had the boy who went to the kybo and dropped his flashlight down the hole and fell right in while trying to retrieve it. We had put all the kids to bed but when I checked them soon after, that camper was missing. The kids told me he had gone to the kybo, so I went out to get him and found him down in the hole. I ran back to the cabin to get Goon because I could not lift him myself and we each put an arm through the hole, lifted him out, and took him to the lake, and that night he learned to swim. (I know his name but do not want it published.)

In 1942 I went to college and then joined the U.S. Navy but came back to Kilcoo in 1947 as canoe trip counsellor. The longest trip that year was 6 days and we went south to Sturgeon Lake north of Lindsay. In 1948 and 1949 we made several trips to Algonquin Park which were between 6 and 8 days. On the last trip in 1949 we were paddling through rapids when one of the canoes hit a rock and was damaged. We went ashore and stayed for the night. The next morning I walked through the woods to meet the Kilcoo truck when I noticed a plane circling the area, and it turned out that it had been sent by the staff at Kilcoo to find us. The plane came close to pick some of us up and the damaged canoe was left behind. That was my most exciting canoe trip.

The Dixon family has a long tradition at Kilcoo (perhaps the longest of any family) which began in 1936 and still continues today. My brother Hank was a camper and counsellor for several years and his two sons, Paul and Sam also came as campers. My 4 sons, Peter and Jim attended as campers and staff members as did Tom and Andy. Three of our grandsons, Jeffery, Eric and Andy were campers in 2012.

MO DIXON

KILCOO'S SHOULDER SEASONS – ADVANCE AND POST CAMP

Current staff member, Ian Reeser, writes about present day Advance and Post Camp both of which are quite unlike they were 50 years ago. At that time the first few staff members arrived after university exams were finished at the end of April and the next 6 weeks were characterized by raking, painting, the painful use of creosote, pentox and solignum (all a danger to exposed skin) followed by installation of docks and the preparation of sailboats for use. Post Camp lasted but a few days because as soon as the camper buses departed in August the staff en masse brought in the docks, carted mattresses to Doward's workshop or the rec hut, and moved all the canoes to the lodge. There were no school group visits, though in the 60's Chief began taking some Senior campers to "Winter Camp" between Christmas and New Year's (yes, Gull Lake was reliably frozen over by then). For those of you familiar with this period, Ian's account will be totally new.

Many wonder what goes on at camp during the "shoulder seasons". We have all heard about Advance or Post camp, but what is really going on? This off season is arguably my favourite time to be up at camp, be it school groups, stags, rookie dinners or just a "quiet " dinner with the other staff.

I want you all to imagine camp barren and empty, since that is what it looks like in mid April when the first staff members arrive. It falls on the 10-12 guys who work Advance Camp with the help of Brian and Kent to not only get camp open and ready for the summer, but to also host the over 300 school children who pass through the gates each spring. Advance camp runs from the beginning of May until mid-June, with the first two weeks dedicated to what is affectionately known as Dark Side. Dark Side describes all of the jobs that are required to get camp open for the season, such as opening up the cabins and raking all of the leaves that fell during the fall. After those first two weeks the real "show" begins with the arrival of the school groups. Mostly in grade 7/8, these school kids are given as close to the summer Kilcoo experience as possible, but they only get 4 days. Whether it's a canoe trip, camp fire or a Kilabaloo, these school kids get it all. However, just because there are kids in camp doesn't mean the work stops, and while most of the staff are working with the kids, there are always a few continuing to work on Dark Side. This is all a build up for the chaos that is Kilcoo in July and August.

Post Camp is very similar to Advance Camp, but instead of getting camp ready, it is time to put everything away. Post Camp starts right where the summer left off with Greenwood College and 300 students, but with only 14 staff, needless to say it is rather busy during their 10 days. After that, camp starts to adopt a much slower pace as we continue through the different school groups. The fall is always marked with one of three traditions: father-son, mother-son or a reunion weekend alternating among one of the three each year. Once Thanksgiving weekend is over come the final 7-10 days of putting camp away, moving all of the sailboats and Kevlar canoes into the rec hut, moving the docks over to Braeside Bay, taking the sign off of the highway, and boarding up the cabins. It's a wierd feeling leaving at the end of Post Camp, but working during this shoulder season has by far been one of the most rewarding experiences in my years at camp.

IAN REESER
(1997 - 2012)

FIRESIDE CHAT

From Lub and the entire Latimer Family

It is a cold late March day at Kilcoo as I write this edition of the Fireside Chat. Beth, the kids, the dogs, my brother Mike and his kids, and I are all up to celebrate Mrs. Chief's 77th Birthday along with Easter Weekend! We hiked across the lake and past Ruth's Island to visit Scott & Catherine Russell, who live above the Ghost of the Narrows, and are part of a group of alumni who have returned to Gull Lake to enjoy the cottage life – Currie, Ball, Walker, Levitt, Oakes, Krausz, Larsen, etc! It was a stunning day with a huge blue sky and it seemed crazy to think that in 3 weeks' time Advance Camp would be getting started in the middle of April, thus officially starting our 82nd year! The spring promises to be full of raking, painting, school kids, and so much more. It is a unique time at Kilcoo and the 12 AC guys are very eager to head up. I am so excited for the summer to begin and everything looks awesome. Kilcoo filled up faster than ever, and we had to turn the newly rebuilt The Hole into a camper cabin in the Pathfinder section! We are also sending another group of our oldest campers up to the Nahanni River for a 3 ½ week experience and the Sail Cabin campers are off to Lake Superior Provincial Park for a two-week hiking trip. The staff is a very familiar group, and with only a few exceptions, all have "grown up" at Kilcoo and fully understand all of our "core" values… trust, compassion, sense of fun, tradition. The passion and loyalty that this group feels about Kilcoo is remarkable and it bodes well for another great summer up here on Gull Lake.



The loyalty and support of the alumni is an amazing thing and it means so much to me. The alumni is so important for the past, present and future of Kilcoo Camp. Everywhere I go I hear so many wonderful stories and it is amazing how wide the "Kilcoo net" falls. Please feel free to drop in and visit if you are driving by this summer. It is so great for our present day campers to see and meet the alumni up at camp and to hear their stories. I also think it is really nice for our alumni to see the camp "in action". All we ask is that you give us a call ahead of time and don't plan on staying the weekend, there aren't any extra bunks!! If you don't get a chance to visit, please check out the website (www.kilcoo.com) our Facebook page, Kilcoo Camp, or our twitter feed @KilcooCamp Now we may be wading into the waters of social media a little bit, but don't worry, we have no intention of operating a "live video feed" or allowing kids to have their cell phones at camp! We wholly embrace the traditions that are so important to Kilcoo, and it is even more important than ever that the campers "unplug" during the summer.

Thanks again to Paul and Mike for their efforts with the Gull Rock Gazette and thanks for your amazing support and involvement in Kilcoo Camp. Finally, on behalf of Kim and Tingles in the office, and my family of course, we would like to say we are all so proud of Kilcoo Camp. It is crazy to me that this will be my 29th year as Director and TJ & Charlie are going into their 6th summer as campers at Kilcoo, while Brooke is into her 3rd summer at Tanamakoon. I also want to say how much I appreciate Beth's support in this crazy place. I must also thank my brothers Jeff and Mike, for their continued love and support of Kilcoo. We talk often of the Kilcoo Family and this truly starts with my own, it is very special. Enjoy the Gazette and have a great spring… Rip Ram Razzle Scram!

DAVID "LUB" LATIMER

NOT ALL TRIPS HAVE HAPPY ENDINGS…

During my early years as a Kilcoo camper, starting in 1946 at the age of ten, I have a vague recollection of "overnight" canoe trips. Maybe a little further than Long Island, but not much. Determined that I would become a serious tripper, my father sent me to Cochrane's camp located on Lake Temagami, about 150 km north of North Bay. Known as Camp Temagami it passed into history about 1970, but it was in a prime wilderness location to learn a lot about canoe tripping for the next three years until I turned 15.

Given my new found expertise by the age of 16, Chief Plewman was kind enough to hire me on staff at Kilcoo starting in the summer of 1952, and to place me in charge of taking about ten campers, plus a counsellor in training, on canoe trips which plied the highlands of Haliburton. In those days the cottagers had not yet arrived in droves and most lakes offered secluded waterways and campsites. By my third year our trips lasted 10 days which required serious packing.

There was a real art in portaging those old Peterborough canoes. It was great when we got a new one, usually a 16 footer, canvas and cedar strips. They were light to carry but only when they were new. The older weather beaten Peterboroughs were as heavy as sin and it took a stalwart tripper to lash two paddles parallel to the gunwales, turn the canoe over, slide under it and carry the beast with the weight centered on the paddle blades resting on your shoulders. While it might have been easier for two campers to carry each canoe, this was to be avoided since there would be endless doubling back over the portage and a delay in reaching the planned campsite.

Reaching the campsite after a long day paddling was always welcomed. Swimming and diving in the late afternoon sunlight was always a pleasure. Great care was taken in setting up the tent on a spot free of rocks. Otherwise there was much effort to find pine boughs to make a soft mattress for the sleeping bags or bedrolls. Dinner followed by a campfire under the stars was just the best.

If memory serves, my last trip in August, 1954 saw us make our way from Minden up to our final outbound destination at Havelock Lake. We then made our way back to Kilcoo during the remaining five days. And it was here that my canoe tripping world came to an abrupt halt. As our canoes touched up on the sandy beach, some young campers ran up and asked if we were the ones who had set the fire.



We were not aware that on leaving our overnight campsite on Horseshoe Lake the campfire had not been completely doused despite taking our usual care. Somehow, tree roots below the fire pit had caught fire, smoldered and then burnt underground, going across to a stand of trees before breaking out into the open. Much to the chagrin of the lady who owned the property and was planning to build a cottage, she could no longer do so in the forested surroundings. Chief Plewman pointedly made the suggestion that I forego my $100 summer salary as a counsellor in order to make reparations. I was prepared to do this if that was what he wanted but felt that I would have to leave camp without delay in the hopes of returning to Toronto to get a job before going back to finish my last year of high school. Chief Plewman relented and I finished out the summer at Kilcoo, subdued to say the least.

When my late father was engaged in the practice of law, he loved to relate the story how two summers later, Mr. Charles Plewman accompanied by a representative of Kilcoo's insurance company attended at his office advising him that the insurers had paid out a considerable sum as compensation to the lady who owned the burnt property. They wanted Mr. Haines to assume the responsibility for reimbursing the insurers for their loss. My father, engaged in the practice of tort litigation advised Chief and his cohorts that parents were not responsible for the torts of their children. As for the threat that they might have to sue me my father advised them that his son had no money although he had now entered university and joined the Royal Canadian Air Force student officer training program in the hopes of paying his education costs. Were they to sue they might force his son into bankruptcy and of course, receive nothing. Chief and his insurance representatives left, subdued to say the least!

BRUCE HAINES (1946-48; 1952-1954)

KILCOO SAUNA CLUB REUNION - STEPPING BACK IN TIME

At eleven o'clock each night, after staff feed, a group of us would head down to the Kilcoo sauna. It was a chance to stop after a busy day and to enjoy 20 minutes of conversation and perspiration! At the conclusion of our "meetings" we would splash off with buckets of water and head back to our cabins for a great night's sleep. There was a core group of about ten, and other members would come and go. We each had a plaque engraved that hung in our dedicated seat (all on the top shelf, of course), and these still hang around the perimeter of the window beside the door. People must sit and wonder. Eventually, we all moved on, and we kept in touch. For many years, we would meet back up at camp in the winter for a reunion. But as families were born, and lives became busy, it was increasingly difficult to find a time for us to meet.



Three years ago, we decided to dedicate a set weekend in February to convene at camp for our yearly reunion. We play hockey on the frozen lake, hike around the property, visit Chief's memorial, drink scotch on the tower, enjoy a big steak dinner, watch the Leafs, and at 11:00pm, we head down to the hot sauna. It somehow takes us right back to our camp days! This is a very special opportunity for us, and we are incredibly thankful that David and Beth allow us to visit camp each winter!

MICHAEL ADAMSON (1979-1997)

THE SPARK

RECORD BREAKING CAMPERSHIP, SUMMER 2013!

With the support of so many generous donors and partner camps, 170 excited children will attend camp this summer through Amici sponsorships. That is the highest number of campers to go to camp in Amici's history, and it wouldn't be possible without you.

Amici welcomes three new partner camps for the 2013 season. Thanks to Camp Ponacka, Camp Walden, and Lake Scugog Camp for their partnership, and their commitment to making a difference in the lives of Amici campers this summer, and for many years ahead. Amici now partners with 30 accredited overnight camps throughout Ontario and we look forward to expanding to work with more partners in the future!


Courtesy Camp Mi-A-Kon-Da

Thanks also to the incredible team of Campership Committee volunteers, who have played a huge role in helping review and process camper applications. This year's Committee was the biggest in years, and the involvement of each volunteer speaks so deeply to their commitment to sharing the gift of summer camp with deserving children. This year's volunteers include Alexandra Campbell (Cedar Ridge Camp), Janette Downie (Camp Wenonah), Melissa Duff (Mi-a-kon-da), Laura Flynn (Camp Queen Elizabeth), Luke Gibson (Kilcoo Camp), Tim McMartin (Kilcoo Camp), Josh Palmer (Red Pine Camp), Josie Richardson (Camp Tanamakoon), Erika Siren (Oconto), Lynsey Tait (Camp Tanamakoon), Derek Vandramin (Kilcoo Camp) and Steph Wilson (Arrowhead Camp). Thanks to each of you!

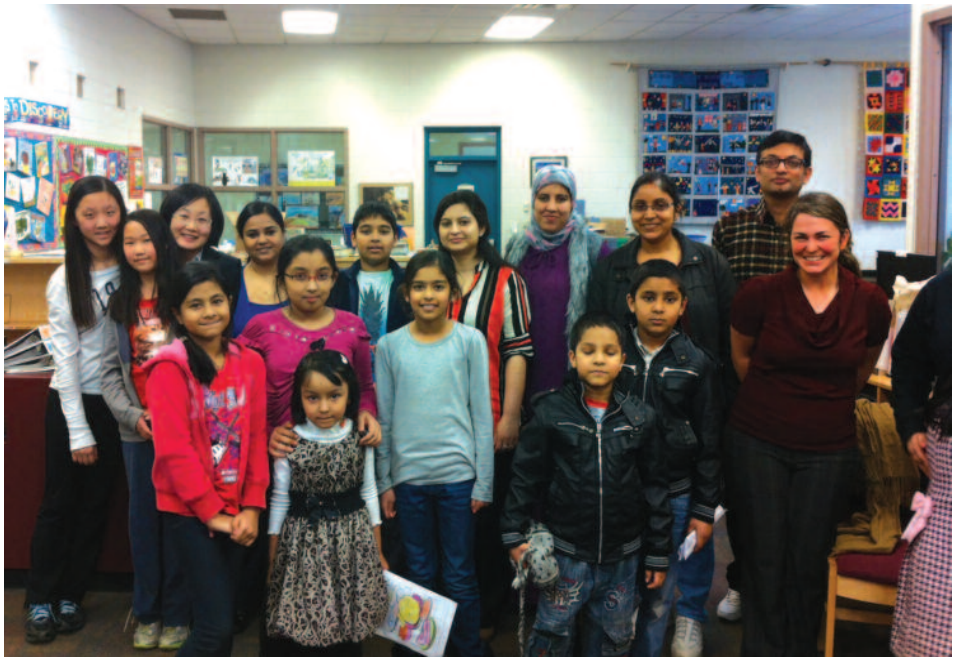

Courtesy Camp Wenonah

RBC FOUNDATION SPARKS A CHANGE

RBC Foundation and Amici recently announced a new partnership to provide $35,000 in summer camp bursaries to Amici campers. Each bursary will sponsor a two week summer camp experience for children from five RBC sponsored After School Programs in high priority areas of Toronto.

The After School Programs are offered by the San Romanoway Revitalization Association, Thorncliffe Neighbourhood Office, St. Alban's Boys and Girls Club, Community Matters, and St. Stephen's House.

We offer heartfelt thanks to our friends at RBC Foundation for making a summer camp experience a reality for 30 deserving children. And we look forward to building upon our new relationships with the After School Programs.



CANOE HEADS FOR KIDS – SATURDAY, JUNE 1



Canoe Heads for Kids, returns to the Toronto waterfront on **Saturday, June 1!**

Canoe Heads for Kids is a 20 km paddle and portage event through downtown Toronto. Teams of summer camp enthusiasts will carry and paddle their canoes past some of Toronto's most famous landmarks, with the goal of raising money to send more children to camp this summer.

The Steering Committee, of Willie Macrae, Tim McMartin, Will Nelson, and Stuart Snyder, have been hard at work recruiting team captains and participants for this year's event. Their goal is to beat last year's total of $80,000 raised in support of Amici.





This year's event starts at Harbourfront Canoe & Kayak Centre, where teams will embark on the portage that takes them past the Distillery District, Financial District, Roundhouse, CN Tower, and along the Martin Goodman Trail. Guests are invited to join the fun at a lunch reception at Sir Casimir Gzowski Park (near the Humber River), before the participants paddle on Lake Ontario back to Harbourfront.

For more information about how you can register or donate to Canoe Heads, please visit www.canoeheadsforkids.com.

DID YOU KNOW...

Brett Wilson

- This Fall, Amici was chosen by CBC's Dragons Den's W. Brett Wilson to take part in a unique birthday celebration. As stated by Mr. Wilson "I challenged 55 people to help me continue to make a difference in our world by recommending a worthwhile Canadian charity to which I would make a personal donation of $5,555." Jeffrey Latimer, selected as one of the 55 people by Mr. Wilson, recommended Amici Camping Charity as the charity he wished to support. We are grateful for both Jeffrey Latimer's and W. Brett Wilson's role in supporting Amici Camping Charity. In honor of his birthday, Mr. Wilson gave away a total of $305,525 to charity. Thanks to the $5,555 donation in honor of Mr. Wilson's birthday, we can continue to give children the gift of summer camp.



Brett Wilson

The Funding Network

- On Tuesday November 6th, 2012 Amici was chosen as one of the three charities to present at The Funding Network's charitable marketplace. The Funding Network's model is based upon working with charities that projects create a fairer, healthier and more sustainable world. After all deliberations and pledges from all attendees had taken place, Amici was rewarded with over $12,000 to help support 12 deserving campers in Leaders in Training Programs for Summer 2013. Both CBC's Scott Russell and Khamil Alhade, a past Amici camper, spoke on behalf of Amici at the event. For more information please visit http://tfntoronto.com/

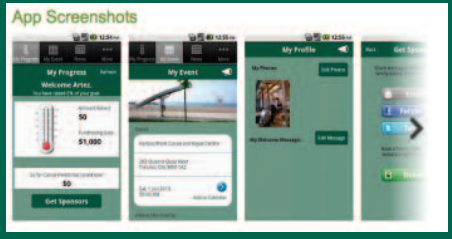


Scott Russell, Mike Stewart, Kate Horton, Angela Adediran and Khamil Alade



CANOE HEADS FOR KIDS MOBILE APP

New for 2013 - The Canoe Heads for Kids Mobile App! Participants can track and process donations, connect to social networking sites to share fundraising updates, view personalized event day information and access their phone's address book to seamlessly send emails to friends and family. This app is free to download for all registered participants at the iTunes Apps Store and Google Play for your Android Smartphone.



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WELCOME TO AMICI, TORY!

We are happy to welcome Tory Dale to Amici as Development Coordinator.

Tory brings strong professional, volunteer and academic experience in many areas, including volunteerism, programming for children, working with families, administration and marketing/communications. She holds a Bachelor of Education from OISE (University of Toronto), a BAHon from Queen's University and a Certificate in Arts Administration, Communications and Marketing from Humber College. As a volunteer, Tory has worked extensively with various programs for children and youth, including City of Toronto, Camp Cucumber and Camp Oochigeas. Her summer camp experience includes many years as a camper and staff member at Mi-A-Konda, Tanamakoon and Upper Canada College Tennis Camp.



As the Development Coordinator, Tory will be responsible for supporting Amici's administration, fundraising and communications initiatives, as well as volunteer-driven annual and community events. Tory joins Program Manager, Mike Stewart and Executive Director Kate Horton as a full-time member of the Amici staff team.

She can be reached by email at: Tory@amicicharity.org. Welcome Tory!

AMICI LAUNCHES YOUNG PROFESSIONALS COUNCIL

Amici is excited to announce the formation of the Young Professionals Council. Toronto's emerging leaders will utilize their professional skills, creativity, passion and social networks to share the gift of summer camp with underprivileged children. Holding several events this year, this council will raise awareness and funds to a cause that matters to all members.



Tim Usher-Jones and Bronwyn Wilson, Co-chairs Young Professionals Council

"Camp provides the safe environment and the bonding my son desperately needs for a healthy transition into his teenage years and has become a home away from home that he wholeheartedly looks forward to. Once again, I cannot thank you enough for your generosity for this invaluable gift you have given our family."

AmiciCamper (Kilcoo Camp)



Follow us on Facebook and Twitter to stay in the loop on upcoming Amici events.

facebook

Amici Camping Charity

@amici_charity

"My brother and I met all kinds of new friends and cherish the memories that will last a lifetime. We would never have been able to experience this if it weren't for Amici."

AmiciCamper (CampCouchiching)



Courtesy Kilcoo Camp

PURVES CHRISTMAS PARTY SUPPORTING AMICI

The Tradition of giving and support continues for the Purves family this past holiday season. This winter marked the 5th annual Purves Christmas Party honouring Amici. In lieu of gifts, party goers generously made donations to Amici. In the words of Chris Purves "At the party I was able to talk to people about the amazing experiences Kilcoo Camp has given me and how Amici can help give youth the same."



COMMUNITY EVENTS

- The tradition of giving and support continues for the Purves family this past holiday season. This winter marked the 5th annual Purves Christmas Party honouring Amici. In lieu of gifts, party goers generously made donations to Amici. In the words of Chris Purves, "At the party I was able to talk to people about the amazing experiences Kilcoo Camp has given me and how Amici can help give youth the same." Thanks to the Purves family: Mary, Jamie, Chris and Carole for including Amici in your holiday celebrations!

- Thank you to Greg Kasparian and Kristen MacDonald for making Amici part of their wedding celebrations this past March 2013. The couple made a generous donation to Amici in honor of their special day.

- Another thank you to Katie Beadon and Walter Bradley Gooderham for supporting Amici in their wedding celebrations this past March 2013, asking gifts to be directed towards Amici in honor of their marriage.

- A big thank you goes out to Liam Andrews. In honor of his birthday, Liam asked that family and friends direct all gifts to Amici. Thank you Liam for your continued support of Amici!

- Happy 75th Birthday Brian Blackstock! In honor of his birthday this past year, Mr. Blackstock asked that gifts be made in support of Amici. Thanks for your support!

FROM OUR CAMPERS AND THEIR PARENTS

"My son and I would like to thank everyone at Amici for giving him the opportunity to enjoy summer at camp. The experience has left him with many memorable experiences that not only were fun but left him with numerous learnt skills. He had the pleasure of meeting many new friends and building his confidence he never would have achieved without the camp experience and the counsellors' guidance."

- Amici parent (Camp Tawingo)



Courtesy Camp Wenonah

"My daughter really blossomed and learned a lot being at camp. She was able to pass levels in activities and showed great pride in herself for being able to accomplish something because she decided to not give up on herself. These types of life lessons are amazing to for her exper-ience.

- Amici parent (Glen Bernard Camp)

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNER CAMPS

Arrowhead Camp - www.arrowhead.on.ca

Camp Awakening - www.campawakening.com

Camp Can-Aqua - www.canaqua.ca

Cedar Ridge Camp - ww.cedarridgecamp.ca

Camp Couchiching - www.campcouchiching.com

Frontier Trails Camp - www.frontiertrailscamp.com

Glen Bernard Camp - www.gbcamp.com

Camp Kandalore - www.kandalore.com

Camp Kawartha - www.campkawartha.ca

Camp Kennebec- www.campkennebec.com

Kilcoo Camp - www.kilcoo.com

Camp Kirk - www.campkirk.com

YMCA Camp Kitchikiwana - http://www.ymcaofsimcoemuskoka.ca/kids-camp/overnight-camps/

Lake Scugog Camp* - www.lakescugogcamp.org

Medeba www.medeba.com

Mi-A-Kon-Da - www.miakonda.com

Camp Nokomis - www.campnokomis.com

Camp Oconto - www.campoconto.com

Onondaga Camp - www.onondagacamp.com

Camp Otterdale - www.campotterdale.com

YMCA Camp Pinecrest - http://www.ymcagta.org/en/camps/overnight-camps/pinecrest-overview/index.html

Camp Ponacka* - www.ponacka.com

YMCA Camp Queen Elizabeth - www.campqueenelizabeth.ca

Camp Tanamakoon - www.tanamakoon.com

Camp Tawingo - www.tawingo.net

Camp Wabikon - www.wabikon.com

Camp Walden* - www.campwalden.ca

YMCA Camp Wanakita - http://www.ymcahbb.ca/locations_wanakita.cfm

Camp Wenonah - ww.campwenonah.com

Camp Winston - www.campwinston.com

* Welcome to our new partner camps!



Courtesy of Camp Nokomis

PRANKS AT KILCOO – Episode 1… summer 1965

The Victim impact statement:



It should be stated from the outset that I was an innocent victim of unfortunate circumstances. The perpetrators as it turned out, were not out to get me; rather, they victimized the wrong person. Apparently they concocted this plan as a means of exacting their revenge for a wrong done to them. So, while I was doing my best to support the Musicale (Kilabaloo) these two villains were busy shutting down any possible entrance to my cabin. They picked the perfect time to commit this heinous act because the noise coming from the lodge drowned out their sawing and hammering. When my roommate and I returned to our cabin, imagine our dismay on finding our quarters sabotaged and to make matters worse, it was dark and we couldn't see the damage that had been done. My roommate cursed for several hours in that it took that long to pry numerous ropes, nails, two by fours, four by eights and the like from our cabin on the hill; but this was only one of the foul deeds committed against us that summer and again I had been the innocent victim. On another occasion, our furniture and our belongings found their way to the top of the tower. I have recently heard from said roommate - his memory dulled with age - all he seems to remember is thinking that our only problem that night was a locked door. He obviously forgot the boarded up windows , the missing stairs, and the one hundred metre rope that tied this little prank into a complete package. My cabin mate recently asked me if it was too late to get even. I really doubt that getting even at this stage is possible! And, he maintains that he, not I, was the innocent victim!

Perpetrators' Statement to Authorities

Back in 1965 the two "victims" shared a remote staff cabin overlooking the Voyageur campfire area. For a variety of reasons the two unnamed perpetrators had determined that the time had come to undertake some clandestine activity in the vicinity of Chapel Point, namely the target cabin. Clearly, committing a dastardly deed such as that described by the "victim" was totally out of character, but such is camp life.

Completing their activity successfully required the absence of the "victims" for a long period of time from their cabin and an occasion when they themselves would not be missed by the rest of the staff or Chief. The musicale on visitors' weekend proved to be the answer to this dilemma since all camp staff were present or performing for the campers and their parents. Prior to the date in question, several 2"X 4", 4" ardox spikes, staple guns and appropriate tools from the handicraft shop were borrowed and placed underneath the rear of the cabin, undiscovered in the lead up to the musicale.

The perpetrators performed their numbers during the musicale and in between their appearances, exited the lodge, ran to the cabin via a circuitous route, and worked at their grisly task. Wood was measured, cut and hammered into place across the cabin door frame. When a musical activity at the lodge stopped, work stopped so as not to draw suspicion. This step was repeated three or four times until work was completed. This included exiting the cabin via the windows, stapling the screens back in place, and nailing all the shutters down after removing the heads off the spikes, inserting them up into the lower frame of each shutter and them slamming them shut. All of this was accomplished while the decibel level in the lodge equalled that of a jet take off after which both returned to the lodge on time for the conclusion of musicale – never missed. The goal had been accomplished. Needless to say, the two "victims" were not happy campers (sic) when they made their discovery later that same evening.

It has been rumoured that it was approximately three to four days later when access to the cabin was regained and it was only decades later that the perpetrators finally confessed their well planned undertaking of that summer's day in 1965 – long after the statute of limitations had expired.

VICTIMS OF THE ACCUSED

KILCOO'S VALUES REMEMBERED

The years have certainly gone by very quickly since my last summer at the paradise on Gull Lake, with my personal highlight being the traditional August "Kilcoo Olympics". As the chosen leader of the New Zealand team, we came within mere points of standing on the podium as victors, but as true sportsman, settled for second place behind Australia.

Driving home to Toronto after that summer was extremely difficult, as I realized I would not be returning. Needless to say, the opportunities were numerous for a young 20 something at the time, but the choice was made to begin my career in financial services. Thirty-five plus years later and having carved out a network of commercial business associates, I am still actively working in the same field.

After raising three beautiful daughters, and having extended the family to include two step children and two grandchildren, life over these past years has been hectic but very rewarding. Taking various character building attributes that came from Kilcoo, I have been blessed with countless benefits. I still enjoy paddling my cedar strip canoe with my wife on Benoir Lake where we spend much of the spring, summer and fall. Those crackling campfires are still very much a tradition when we sing songs from the past and roast marshmallows. The cry of loon can often be heard and the serenity is endless.

My extra time outside of the commercial business has led me to volunteer with the Out of the Cold program while also serving on various boards and committees that are connected to the United Church. A dream of both my wife Kathi to volunteer overseas has just been realized. We head Africa in Feb 2013. On a mission to assist in the education and development of children in Tanzania. We are delighted for this opportunity to experience the cultural diversity yet see the beauty of the landscape in a different part of the world.

In the winter months I still lace up the blades to skate with some associates at St. Mikes where I attempt to stop the rubber from hitting the twine. For the love of the game, I've played on international rinks in Europe on 3 separate occasions. I would still like to challenge Peter Oyler to an 'Oldtimers' game where we can connect with the Kilcoo fraternity of the past.

In my many activities it is the extensive friendships which began at Kilcoo Camp so many years back that have enriched my life and defined and shaped the person that I have become as husband, parent, grandparent, community volunteer and sportsman. Thanks for the day and all its blessings, comrades.

KEN CLARKE(1961-1974)

...continued from cover

At some point during the late 40's, early 50's longer trips were trucked up to Round Lake in the northern part of Algonquin, and over a 9 day period these Senior camper groups worked their way back to Canoe Lake by way of the Petawawa River and villages named Brent and Kiosk, or even all the way back to camp through Smoke Lake and a series of lakes into northern Haliburton, or alternatively, the Oxtongue River to Lake of Bays and then the long highway portage to Lake St. Nora.

There were also some trips that were sent out for reasons other than just a camper trip led by the counsellor and CIT. John Graham mentions that in the 40's when he "graduated" from being a Senior camper he became a steward for a year and John remembers a three day trip to Bobcaygeon in 1949 led by the canoeing instructor whose motive for the trip seemed to have something to do with a girl friend. Dave Linton recalls receiving an emergency call in 1961 to take over the counsellor-less Super Senior cabin group and being given instructions for a canoe trip with Chief's demand, "Just get them out of here, I don't care where, just gone."

The 1950's saw the arrival in the tripping room of Gumpert's dried (mostly powdered) foods, from pancake mix to scrambled eggs, a variety of puddings, bug juice and hot chocolate. Kraft macaroni and cheese dinner was a staple as were the various canned meats that had an assortment of often reviled names. Chuck Bayless took time to notice that the left-over "meats" when dropped in the lake even sent the fish scurrying to deeper water. Often crushed bread was used for sandwiches (that depended on how well it was packed) and heavy canvas tents provided a respite from getting wet when it rained – as long as you didn't touch the interior of the tent wall during the storm. As a staff member I later found out that painting the tents with a toxic smelling waterproof solution was part of every advance camp.





Continuing with his memories Chuck wonders if many campers were lucky to be so safe in their tripping days since there were no maps, no cell phones or GPS indicators, and he wonders if trip organizing skills were just passed on by word of mouth. He has very fond memories of his last year or two at camp in the late 50's when Warren Castle became the first staff member designated as "The God of Tripping". Warren was posted in Algonquin Park where he spent the month taking first one trip out and then at the pick up point receiving the next cabin group with whom he retraced his path. Al Setterington remembers canoeing toward Balsam Lake in the early 50's and seeing campsites littered with Poison Ivy.

The summer of 1965 marked a "watershed" year for tripping at Kilcoo as for the first time trippers were transported long distances to access the route they were to follow. Chief John Latimer was president of the Canadian Camping Association at the time and its major project leading to Canada's centennial year was to have member camps trace the voyageurs' route across Canada. In so doing Chief signed Kilcoo up in 1965 to explore the route from Fort Francis at the head of the Rainy River, to Kenora at the north end of Lake of the Woods. Today these trips would receive no great notice given present day excursions to Nahanni National Park, Lake Superior Provincial Park and rivers like the Dumoine in Quebec. But at that time it was quite an event worthy of newspaper coverage in both Toronto and Fort William. While we expected the Rainy River to be pristine it was in fact filled with minute wood chips from the Boise-Cascade Mill in International Falls and Lake of the Woods was totally algae infested. Jeff Currie remembers we caused quite a stir among U.S. customs officers in the town of Rainy River on the south side when we beached our canoes and set out in search of a store to purchase ice cream cones. However, the trip was a great experience not to be outdone by the two day train trip back to Toronto at its conclusion.

Tripping at Kilcoo Camp had taken big strides over its first 36 years and while the various destinations, equipment used, and foods eaten might not impress today's trippers with their light nylon tents, freeze dried food and safety ensuring communication devices, the fact is that every Kilcoo camper who experienced the adventures of Kilcoo canoe trips over those 3 plus decades harbours the same good memories and learning experiences that today's campers do. Mosquito bites, mud covered shoes and wet clothing have been easily replaced by the memories of some of the most cherished aspects of time spent at camp.

A main motto of Amici's is "Camping – it's in you for life". Well personally I would borrow that line to say, "Tripping – it's in you for life." Two of my countless memories of Kilcoo trips: a July 1963 trip on Twelve Mile Lake sleeping in a fetal position in a pack to keep dry following a violent rainstorm and August, 1963, log burling with camper Christian Dobbs on the Oxtongue River after paddling all day in heavy rain (he lost, but we both fell in) – these two and so many others retained as treasured memories 50 years later.

PAUL CHAMBERLAIN (1956-1967)

…THANKS FOR THE DAY, COMRADES

Kilcoo alumni spread out in many career and geographical directions following their years at Kilcoo. In the articles by Ken Clarke and Scott Russell this is most evident. Scott's ruminations about his Kilcoo experience are very clear in a blog he wrote as he left for Sochi, Russia to check out the site of the 2014 Winter Olympics for the CBC, just as Ken Clarke's appreciation of his time at Kilcoo was obvious as he anticipated his departure for Tanzania with a church related charity venture. As we as campers often closed the day…



Geoff Kelk, Ian Currie, Bill McIlroy, Scott Russell, Tim Currie, Dave Hamer

When I was a hockey-playing kid my father had only two bits of advice: "Be a good teammate," he urged. "And for goodness sake if it looks like you aren't going to make to it to the NHL find a sport you can do for life." Wise words from a man who was often too busy professionally to pursue sport the way he wanted to.

And so it was that I found myself poised for the annual 'guys' ski trip. It was going to have to be a quick one because last-minute arrangements for an exploratory voyage to the next Olympic city of Sochi, Russia had cut into my plans.

Still, the commitment to join five, lifelong, friends on an excursion to Vail, Colo. was not negotiable. Two days of skiing at the site of the 2015 world alpine championships, not to mention the home of World Cup superstar Lindsey Vonn, were not to be missed. Even for an "aging athlete" and in spite of the fact that I'm beginning to question my ability to stay the course in a sport I've only seriously practised in my middle-aged years, it was a no brainer.

In our other lives we appeared as a broadcaster, an insurance executive, an international banker, a lawyer, a high school teacher and a professor of kinesiology. We had gone to summer camp together and first met about 45 years ago. These were the same fellows who were my swim instructors, my cabin mates as well as the guy who first taught me about the ecosystem and how to paddle a canoe at Kilcoo.

In our ski garb, we were suddenly young again, teammates and little boys all thrown into the same boat and ready for an adventure. The fact that some of us were retired and another was a grandfather did not come into play. There was only skiing and the magnificence of the post-dawn rush on what was to be a bluebird day. It had snowed all through the previous night, and for the first time in what had been a lean season, Vail luxuriated in fresh powder.

The Tuesday morning lift lines overflowed as the faithful migrated 2 1/2 hours north from Denver, eager to undertake what was natural to them. We were headed to the legendary "Back Bowls" led by the most proficient of our group. "It's not often in life you get the chance to ski powder like this," he declared. And then the three words you come to dread when you don't trust completely in your own abilities: "Just follow me."

Up to an elevation of 11,220 feet we went. The landscape was breathtaking in more ways than one. The snow at the threshold of the peaks was unmarked as we became like the first explorers in a one-in-a-million day. The altitude was such that it forced a difficult flow of oxygen to the lungs. Never mind, there wasn't a moment wasted as we were off in search of immortality and the unadulterated feeling of exhilaration that presents itself all too infrequently.

Before I had time to chicken out, we had dropped over a vast cliff into a basin which had runs with menacing names like "Dragon's Teeth," and "Chopstix." I alarmingly realized that this was the first time I had attempted to ski on anything other than a nicely groomed "blue cruiser," marked by symmetrical, corduroy-like lines drawn in the snow. It was too late.

My boards were sinking fast and so was I. But I heard the whoops of joy that the other trailblazers let out as they floated by. Snow flew all around me and my leader looked like a pro on his descent. I resisted the temptation to give up, partly because there was no turning back. Mostly though, there was no other way out. But at the midway point, he waited. "You're doing it," he shouted. "The skis will check your speed. Let them run!" And so I did.

It wasn't pretty and once complete I wasn't overjoyed on the lift ride back to the top. Still, I had made it to the bottom and left a freshly marked trail on the face of the mountain where no one else had been. It was an accomplishment to be sure. "Now that you've done it, you'll be a hundred per cent better the next time out," our leader said by way of consolation. It went a long way toward easing the burning pain in my legs and the more hurtful bruising to my pride.

I don't know why I didn't give in to the overwhelming inclination to quit or to retreat to the easy slope on that morning. Perhaps it was the sound of my father's voice echoing in my head. "Be a good teammate and find a sport you can do for life." It was true, I wanted to be with the rest of the guys and I didn't want to give up on something which has been such a joy to me. I really do love skiing, and to think that there would be a "next time out" was tremendously encouraging.

In order to make my plane for Russia and the Olympic city I had to leave Vail a day early. Meantime my buddies, undaunted, had another crack at the "Back Bowls" and a rendezvous with the endless fields of play that the mountain afforded their aging but rejuvenated bodies.

On the bus ride back to Denver I got a text message from my friend, the one I have known the longest and the organizer of the trip. "Thanks for the day comrade," was all he wrote. These were the very same words we all said each night as the lights went out at Kilcoo those many years ago. Nothing had changed.

SCOTT RUSSELL (1971-1983)

LIFE AFTER KILCOO

A brief comment on what some of you have done since your summers at Kilcoo. More will be included in future issues of the Gazette. For alumni who have not submitted anything we invite you to send us details about yourself; to others, please update us if these reports or what you sent before is out of date. Send any information to gazetteeditor@kilcoo.com.

SCOTT KENNEDY (1962-1971)
The 40 plus years since I left Kilcoo, at times looks like a blur of fond memories, career satisfaction and a life well lived. I am married to a lovely woman, Sandy, my partner these past 22 yrs. With our three dogs, we live on a small lake 25km north of Thunder Bay. Between us we have three kids, all grown and flown, and 5 grandchildren. My work life has been spent in the finance industry – from CIBC throughout Ontario to finally settling with the Credit Union system, running credit unions first in St. Thomas and for the last 23 years, Thunder Bay. I have also been fortunate enough to sit on the elected Boards of the provincial, national and now international levels of the credit union system, a source of much personal satisfaction, and a role I continue to this day.

JOHN REYNOLDS (1949-1960)
At one point in the 50's there were four Reynolds brothers at Kilcoo at the same time – a record I believe still stands. When I finally took academics seriously, it began a 21 year journey at two Canadian and four American universities graduating at each step. My work careers (9) often raised the question, "Can't you hold a job!" I have a very understanding wife who has stuck with me for 51 years through all these physical and career moves. We have three daughters and three grandchildren. Although scientific research was my calling it took a variety of jobs to raise a young family: silversmith, university professor, lawyer, police officer, college dean, consultant, editor, long haul truck driver, and transportation logistics manager. At 65, I finally decided to stop working for others and set up my own research company in the areas I had studied for years–earthworms and soil science. At this writing I have published 300 papers in 12 disciplines, in 56 different journals and 36 languages.

TOM RICHMOND(1958-1971)
Tom and his wife Jane of 35 years have resided in Calgary and area since moving to Alberta in 1978. Tom has for the last eighteen years been involved in the chemical distribution business as it relates to the Oil and Gas Service Industry. He and Jane have two sons, Michael and Scott both of whom attended camp . They spend time enjoying their two grandchildren, and travelling to warmer climes to escape the prairie winter. He still feels connected to Kilcoo and looks forward to attending reunions and renewing old friendships. Many fond recollections not only of summer months but some memorable pre and post camps.

READ BOECKLER (1959-65) My story is simple. Married, moved to Chicago, raised a daughter and son, have five grandsons, sold medical supplies for thirty five years, and both my wife and I are retired. I play hockey three nights a week. I learned my hockey at the Fort Erie arena just over the border from my home in Buffalo. My dad would drive seven players and equipment with no seat belts up to the customs agent say "hi" and drive off. Those were the days. I also work as a pilot giving my time to Honor Flight Chicago taking WWII veterans for free to see their Memorial in Washington, DC. My last flight in October, 2012 was my 43rd.

JOHN SHERRATT (1973-1984)
John has lived in Belleville, Ontario since 2002 with his wife, Martha and two children, Cam and Katie. He owns 2 local radio stations – 95.5 HITS FM and COOL 100 which has a country format. Recently, along with 2 partners, he obtained a licence to operate a radio station in Uxbridge, Ontario. In addition to running these radio stations, John enjoys boating, skiing, snowmobiling and spending time at the family cottage on Stoney Lake. John's son, Cam, will be a 3rd year staff member at camp this summer and is currently finishing his 3rd year at Queens. John's daughter, Katie, is in grade 12 and will be graduating from Albert College this June.

JOHN GRAHAM (1943-1948)
Kilcoo days were so important to my development and came at a point where my identity was being shaped. After camp I attended medical school (1952-1958) at Queen's, postgraduate training in Psychiatry and research in medical education, after which my academic career led to the University of New Mexico. I continue to write and teach in my field, though my present passion is a program for college student mentors to help disadvantaged third graders to read. You can learn more about this at matchnm.org . Whether learning to carve a totem pole with Bill Whitehouse or working with young campers away from home for the first time in life, my ability to work, have fun and learn from experience took form at Kilcoo.

MAURICE BENT (1948-1956)
Mo graduated in Medicine from the University of Toronto in 1962. After internship, he trained in Orthopedic Surgery in Toronto and at the University of Western Ontario in London. Initially worked at Toronto Western then joined the staff at North York General Hospital in 1971. In 1984 was named the Chief of the Division of Orthopedic Surgery and continues in that position. Mo has four children and twelve grandchildren. Two boys attended Kilcoo as campers and staff and so far, three grandchildren are at camp. Mo and his wife Pat of fifty years enjoy downhill skiing in Fernie and Whistler B.C. and have travelled widely in South America, China, the Middle East and most recently for a month in the Himalayas. Retirement beckons in the next year.

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!

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