THE GULL ROCK GAZETTE

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THE LEGEND OF CRAZY EDDY

We were mountain bike instructors in the Summer of '94. It was a pretty coveted job that year, as the program was pretty new. We got the gig because we pitched to Lub that we could not only make it better than ever, but we would start up a new junior program as well. This doubled the number of bikes, which we just assumed as any 18 year old might, was no big deal. We had both been mountain biking enthusiasts since we could first ride, but in no way does that prepare you to run two programs, and maintain now fifty adult and junior bikes. We were in WAY over our heads. Not only had we never taught anyone to trail ride before, but we had never even taken a maintenance course! Many of our nights that summer were spent late, very late, in the office working next to Beth (we had no lights in the bike huts at that time), attempting to tune bikes. Sorry Beth. As the summer progressed things got harder and harder. The sessions with the younger campers in particular were getting really tough. First, you had to get them sorted with their bikes and helmets, then make your way up the highway to the trails. Hard work. When we got there it was not easy to keep their attention because there was always a bit of waiting for some of the less strong bikers to catch up, mosquitoes could be bad, and as the bikes got worse, this all became worse. What's the expression, desperation breeds creativity?



Well, one day we came upon a deserted hut on the trails. It was a bad day. Raining, the bikes especially bad, we'd shut down the Rockliffe the night before, even at eighteen we were completely spent. No one was having fun. We're not sure which of us started it, but the other quickly jumped on board.

"Hey you guys realize that's where Crazy Eddy lives right?"
Expected looks of confusion.
"Yeah, no one knows how old he is."
This seems to be working.
"Oh yeah, Eddy's been living in these woods for at least a century...and yeah he's like legit nuts."
Time to double down.
"Not only is he nuts, this is his land, we're trespassing, and if he catches us...well, did we mention he's crazy?"
So hungover.
"Like we've heard he kills kids sometimes!"
What? Maybe too much?

Now in context, legitimately scaring even the littlest kids was still in fashion back then, or we were just bad bad people. But, instead of being scared, they got curious. Our campers had been sitting in the rain for like ten minutes, they were bored, and soon one of them took off for the shed. It was locked luckily, but we spent that afternoon searching for Crazy Eddy, and it was amazing. We were still on our bikes, but it didn't matter whether they were not able to change their gears, it just slowed everyone down and the kids who could not trail ride as well, could keep up. We'd stumbled on magic, even tired and hungover from a night off, we could just cruise around, and yeah we were terrible instructors, but everyone was having a blast. So, we took it up a notch. We found an old man mask, rusted overalls, and a walking stick in the rec hut. Back then we'd share a van and trailer with the white water rafting program, as our seniors program would use the trails next to the Gull River rapids. Pete Smith, still one of our best buddies, was the instructor. Before he'd leave for the river, we'd have him dress up as Eddy, do a few rounds through the forest yelling at the kids, and then disappear. When Pete wasn't around, we'd get the LIT of the cabin to fake being sick, and get into the costume. It grew and soon it's all the Trailblazer section was talking about. This was fun, like way better than fixing bikes at night in the office.

So, one night, an especially bad bike night, Eddy decided to steal all the Trailblazers shoes and hide them. The next day we had Cabins 3 and 5, and the kids were really riled up. Pete does his thing, but this time, the kids turn Lord of The Flies on him. They jump off their bikes, blood in their eyes, and chase him while throwing sticks, rocks, wet shoes...whatever they had on them. It was like they were feral wild animals, and it was only by chance he managed to escape, hiding in a tractor wheel near the maintenance shed. The next morning the kids awaken to find their stolen shoes returned in a pile in the middle of Mohawk Park, with a note from Eddy, telling them they'd won this round (we are sure only a few kids went home that summer with matching shoes).

It's only in the last few years we learned that remarkably, twenty-five years later, the Legend of Crazy Eddy lives on at Kilcoo. We both agree despite starting businesses, releasing feature films, having children, this might be our proudest legacy.

Rip Ram Eddy, you brilliant shoe stealing bastard you.

JEFF "ZIPPY" KOPAS (1987-97)
SCOTT "DUNN" HERON (1989-95)

EDITOR'S MUSINGS

2020 has certainly been a year we will all remember for the rest of our lives, and as is the case with most other businesses, owners of childrens' summer camps agonized every time news came out that eventually resulted in the closing down of residential camps this summer. David Latimer was very gracious in offering to welcome friends who might be able to visit camp during the summer and he reported that his skeleton staff were completing some maintenance tasks that the presence of 300 campers and staff would have made impossible. But behind that facade I am sure the summer was exceedingly painful for him.

Despite invitations I could not bring myself to go ahead and visit, and on one occasion as I drove south from Minden and observed the no trespassing sign I was struck by a feeling of sadness and an awareness that this was something that couldn't be forced on Kilcoo through a world war in the early 40's, a polio outbreak in 1947-48 and a change in ownership of the camp in 1955-56. We can only hope that things change enough in the next seven months to allow Kilcoo to welcome its campers once again.



In part due to being confined for months by the pandemic I made a point of escaping to my favourite haven in Algonquin Park which Peter Oyler has talked about in his article in this issue and my last visit by myself at the end of September allowed me to complete the circumnavigation of the north arm of Lake Opeongo, a task which I had promised to fulfill as my part of the Amici Canoe Heads event. Amazingly, in spite of the fact that this year's event was not "live" at the Toronto waterfront, it brought in $225,536 in donations and these funds were put to use in providing many of Amici's campers with the costs of alternative recreational programs and direct financial assistance to families due to the fact that camps were closed.

Zach Parson's article "Maker of Men" is an interesting perspective following his last summer at camp and his words are almost prescient in light of what has happened this year. About a year ago Kilcoo purchased the former Plewman cottage, now called the Westview cottage. Wanting some kind of alumni reunion Barry Hoffman has recounted a meeting of 3 former staff on Thanksgiving weekend. Now, Geordie Knowles introduces the Kilcoo Professional Alumni Association. When Amici was created in 1964, Toronto sports reporter, Ted Reeve, said it was "the best idea to come down the road since Johnny Appleseed". Well, this one from Geordie, Pat Graham and Bobbie Sherwood is just as good.

Our lead article in this Gazette issue offers a lighthearted example of how staff through the years are willing to go to any lengths, no matter how zany, to provide campers with the most enjoyable experiences at camp. When I looked at the picture of the biking shed sent to me by Daniel Labbe, a staff member still working on site, the timing was noteworthy because I had just days earlier received from Jack Pemberton a 1940 picture of the stalls where horses were kept and it may well have been in the same location next to the climbing apparatus which used to be the staff parking lot and before that, the riding ring.

One outcome from the Covid virus has been the way in which Kilcoo is communicating with you the alumni. The spring issue was sent as an attachment to an e-mail and two things became apparent. First, I realized that we do not have an up to date data base with alumni e-mails. Out of approximately 1100 alumni I had only addresses for just over 800 and from those, about 120 were refused. The second thing I realized was that the camp has been incurring considerable cost every time a copy of the Gazette is sent by regular mail, a total which exceeds $5000 for every issue. Our alumni list reveals 573 of you living in the greater Toronto area, 295 living in other parts of Ontario, 88 in other Canadian provinces, 113 in the United States, and another 50 living outside of Canada and the United States. With the cost in mind I recommended that future issues be sent electronically. This issue is being mailed one last time by regular mail and I am asking anyone who has not provided the camp with a current e-mail address to please do so now so we can continue to keep you up to date with present day Kilcoo Camp and alumni affairs and ensure you are notified about alumni reunions and other news of interest. If you did not receive a copy of the spring issue of the Gazette this year or if you only received one that was passed on to you by another alumnus, it means we do not have your e-mail address. ***Please update us by sending an e-mail to pchamp@sympatico.ca with a copy to tingles@kilcoo.com.*** All future issues of the Gazette will be sent electronically only.

Despite the loss of the 2020 camp season I am convinced Kilcoo will prevail and if we are fortunate, the 2020 alumni reunion we had to postpone will take place following a successful 2021 camping season. I will update all those alumni who signed up for the 2020 reunion when we have a clearer picture as to how 2021 will look and to anyone who did not sign up last spring, if you would like to be on this reunion contact list please let me know and you will be included.

PAUL CHAMBERLAIN
1956-67



FIRESIDE CHAT

From Lub and the entire Latimer Family

Greetings from Gull Lake! It is my pleasure to write to you, in this, our final issue of a hard copy version of the Gull Rock Gazette. We are entering the "new age" of the Gazette being sent out as a digital version only. Please see Paul's note about updating your emails and communication details.

So, where to begin writing about this crazy year that we are all experiencing together? For me and my family, just like it was for all of you, it was the most unique summer we have ever had. Kilcoo had no school groups, no summer campers, and no Staff reunion. The first time in our 89 years with no camp.

When our Premier made the announcement of no overnight summer camp, it was a surreal moment. However, we decided, like all of you, to make the most of it. My family and I spent the majority of the summer on Gull Lake, though we were lucky enough to travel out to British Columbia for the first two weeks of July. I am not sure I had ever been on a vacation in the summer!

We were joined at camp by a small work crew that included Aldrin and Tanya (aka Buzz & Brador) Primaylon and family. We also had a small number of visitors come by to say hello as the summer rolled along. Sadly, my Mom, Mrs. Chief, did not make it to camp, but she is doing very well and passes along her best to all of you Alumni. Jeff & Larry and Mike & Candy and their families split the use of The Longhouse, and they all became part of our "bubble world" at camp. Also, in the wonderful outdoor bubble of camp were all the Alumni with cottages on Gull Lake, so it was nice to see some familiar faces.

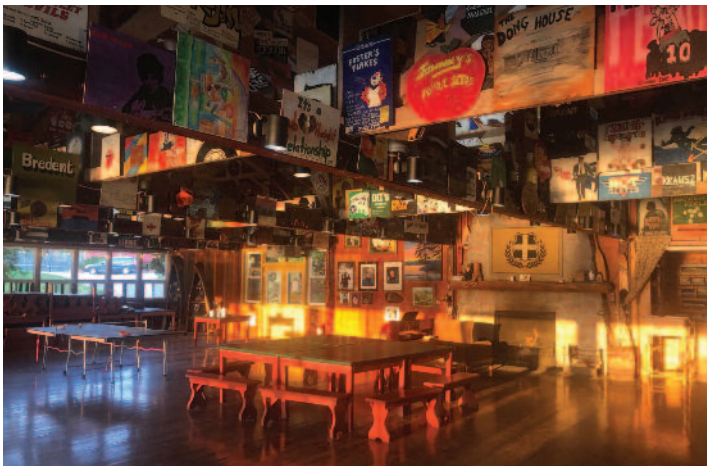
You can see from the photos attached that we got lots of work done that has never been done before. There was so much painting – Rec Hut, LIT Cabin, Kilsaw (Kent & Rick's workshop), Sail Cabin, Trip Den, Cabins 4,5,6,7,8 and mine! Buzz built a new boardwalk under the lodge, a new sailing locker, a screened-in porch off our cabin – and so much more! Camp looks awesome, and to top it all off, a new basket ball court and new surface for ball hockey. The summer was indeed a Labour of Love!

All in all, it was an experience that has made me more appreciative of Kilcoo Camp and all that we represent. I am confident about camp in 2021, and for the reunion next fall… our 90th year. So, please enjoy the Gazette and thank you again to Paul for coordinating all things Alumni. We have now rescheduled the office rebuild for fall 2021, thanks to all for your help.

Please be well, be strong and be positive. We have so much to look forward to.

RIP RAM RAZZLE SCRAM
DAVID "LUB" LATIMER









A NEW KILCOO REUNION REVISITED

Back in 2006, I submitted an article under the title "A New Kilcoo Reunion" in which I re-lated the camping experiences of four Kilcoo "Old Farts": namely Paul Chamberlain, Ja-mie McAlpine, Bob "Smoothie" Slingerland, and myself in August of the same year in Al-gonquin Park. This event occurred well after Chamberlain and I had first returned to Al-gonquin together in 1976, and had made a return trip nearly every year from that time on. After 30 years, we decided it was now time to expand the group.

Fifteen years have passed since that 2006 trip, yet the now Kilcoo-Opeongo "Old Farts" continue to enjoy their annual sojourn to the northern shores of Lake Opeongo. Little has changed on the lake during that time; water quality is excellent and wildlife is abundant, but driftwood for Pyro Paul's evening campfires is very scarce. We did suc-ceed one year, however, in finding an old abandoned MNR dock washed up on shore. When chopped up into 4' lengths it made excellent fires that warmed the entire campsite for two entire evenings.

Menus too have changed over the years and Mother Gumpert and Trip-Lite are but fond memories of the required necessities of yesteryear canoe trip foods given the no bottles and cans rules in effect today. We now 'rough it' and include 'International Nights' for five different dinners including Bob's Oriental Shrimp Stir Fry which is now a trip fixture every year.

The "Old Farts" group composition has evolved with different Kilcoo Alumni from the 50's, 60's and early 70's coming and going over the years as schedules permit. Jamie re-tired from active participation in 2010 but clearly recalls 2:00 a.m. group visits to empty bladders, washing dishes, yearly story telling and sweet talking MNR officials. Peter "Mayfield" Maybury replaced Jamie in 2011 as chief bottle washer and campsite engi-neer. Along with his great humour, Peter demonstrated uncanny ability when playing the card game "Shoot" with Slingerland as partner. Rarely did the two of them lose a game. Due to health difficulties which are currently ongoing, Peter made his last trip in 2016.

From 2010 forward the group expanded to six and has included Bill "Ernie" Kiel, John "Wonger" Dewan, Dave "Min" Minnes, John "Stoney Stone, Ken "Jonesey" Jones, and Bill "Bobe" Bobier. Kiel, always an excellent tripper and fisherman as well, brought his musical talent on guitar rarely heard at Kilcoo except at musicales when he and Sling would perform ballads and folk-songs for the entire camp. On Opeongo he and Jonesey with his uke performed some of those "oldies but goldies" around the campfire. Jonesey also performed some ribald classics never heard at musicales. Dewan, tripper first class, while only joining us for one year to date, brought his unrivalled humour and uncanny impressions of George C. Scott as General George Patton or Johnny Mathis singing his warbled version of "Look at Me". We are hoping Wonger will return.



L to R Jones, Oyler, Stone, Chamberlain, Slingerland, Minnes

John Stone first joined the trip in 2015. Stoney was unlike anyone on the trip before or since. An avid tripper, he was a human buzz saw, the energizer bunny, and if not re-quested to stop, would have collected and chopped firewood from dawn until dusk. John missed 2016, returned in 2017, and hoped to return in 2018. Sadly, cancer took John in March of that year. We did raise our cups in August of 2018 in memory of Ston-ey which assisted us all in filling a large void among the Kilcoo-Opeongo Old Farts.

Jonesey first joined our group in 2017, and although having to take a day out for a medi-cal appointment in Toronto, was forgiven for doing so when he returned with Tim's cof-fee and donuts for everyone. Yes, we really do rough it in the Park. When Min and Bobe joined the ranks, it was like watching two experts like Laurel and Hardy play off against one another. Having known one another since almost the diaper days, these two bring their excellent dishwashing talents and deep insight filled with dry humour to the myri-ad of topics and stories discussed around the evening campfires. We are counting on them for 2021.

The one veteran of 12 trips in 13 years was a guy to whom we all could turn for common sense and human insight into camp matters, staffing, stats on the Raptors or Blue Jays and life in general…..Smoothie brought laughter, love of one's fellow man, culinary ex-pertise, a willingness to always suggest or try something new, and an unmatched ability in playing cards during the late afternoons around the campsite. Bob, like Stoney had a year earlier, was already planning for 2019 when cancer took him as well, in April last year. Again last August we raised our cups in memory of "The Old Smooth One" and Stoney as well. We miss them both big time to this day.
There was definitely a huge void within the group, but with both their deaths, it some-how enabled the rest of us with the rare opportunity to speak openly and freely about our feelings and appreciate the time that we had with them and others whether it be up in the Park, at staff reunions or informal city pub nights.

Old Farts Chamberlain, Jones and I have now returned from our COVID free 2020 trip to the Park. For Paul and me it was the 18th consecutive year returning to the shores of Opeongo. Paul con-



tinues to destroy campsite fire pits, only to rebuild them to his speci-fications followed by playing Paul Bunyan to return from the bush with sufficient wood to build a small cabin. He still wears brother Clive's Scottish tam from 1947. It has not been washed once in 73 years. As well he drinks the most god awful White Zinfandel with dinner while the rest of us enjoy much finer reds or whites from those savoury Kel-ler Estate tetra packs. Yes we continue to rough it, but then, age has its privileges.

This August we inadvertently left tent poles for Chamberlain's and my accommodation in the truck and we were faced with erecting a McGuyver tent-like structure using rope, bungee cords, tent pegs, a tarp et al. It rather resembled something out of the film Law-rence of Arabia. Karma does exist however as the zipper teeth on Ken's tent door were broken and we had to jerry rig a tarp completely over his abode to keep him dry. He was faced with having to enter his humble dwelling on his hands and knees morning and night.

I continue to do meal planning and purchasing while together with Paul we try to make sure all bases are covered. Some years it is like herding cats but for the most part things fall into place each year. The Old Farts past and present continue to remember life-long friends made at Kilcoo from 50-60+ years ago, new friends made along life's journey and friends we have lost. We continue to recall stories and/or Kilcoo alumni from past to al-most the present. Some bring laughter, some deep insight and some…. tears. Now, with some of us 75 years young, we are beginning to slow down a little but shall return to the Park until age or health prevent us from doing so. We shall continue to share the memo-ries of great times together and what Kilcoo instilled in us in our youth.

Look for an update in the Fall 2025 edition.

PETER "LUIGI" OYLER
1960-66

Dedicated to the memory of Bob 'Smoothie' Slingerland (61-81) and John 'Stoney' Stone (64-73). With thanks to Paul Chamber-lain (56-67), Bill Bobier (60-73), John Dewan (56-64), Ken Jones (64-73), Bill Kiel (56-64), Peter Maybury (66-73), Jamie McAlpine (53-69) and Dave Minnes (69-79).

FINDING THE LIGHT

Since reading Michele Obama's recent book entitled "Becoming" I have been thinking more about life's journeys and realized our lives are filled with many journeys. I think that "becoming" is another way of describing what happens to us as we take the journeys that life presents to us and most importantly what we chose to do with them!



A new journey started for me last June. Light Up The World (LUTW) is based in Calgary and its mission is to eliminate energy poverty. It was established in 2001 and this small organization began delivering solar based, battery powered LED lighting systems to remote off grid villages in Nepal. Since that time LUTW has been active in over 50 countries, has served over 1.7 million people and installed almost 37,000 lights.

So how and why did I get involved. The short answer is that I responded to a call for new Board Committee members – I read their website, talked to their Executive Director and decided to put my name in. I was pleased when the then current Chair of the Board called to discuss whether I would be interested in joining the Board.

The long answer ties to my broader journey. My path to volunteering started with Kilcoo, in particular John Latimer. I had graduated from business school and would begin working at Ontario Hydro in Sep-tember of 1981. It occurred to me that this might be my last chance to go back to Kilcoo! I called Chief to see if there might be a spot for me. Fortunately, I had continued working at various day camps and swim schools and John kindly offered me a spot as a Voyageur Counsellor for that summer. Jay Haddad was our section head. I was the "rookie" of a wonderful team – John Carruthers, Mike Newediuk, Mike MacDonald, Tim Ernst, and Jamie Macintosh. All guys that had been several years behind me, but welcomed me back! That year was of course Chief's last year – it was amazing to be part of that summer – but perhaps more on that in a future article. Below is a photo from the Staff Reunion in 2014 that included many guys I spent time with in 1981 – John Carruthers, Scott McBurney, Dean Rutty (actually not there in 1981), Wally Oakes, Ray Lyons (my year as CIT), Jamie MacIntosh, Tim Ernst, and yours truly.



BILL MEEKER
1968-75; 81

Editor's note: *Anyone wanting more information about LUTW can e-mail Bill at wemeeker1@gmail.com*

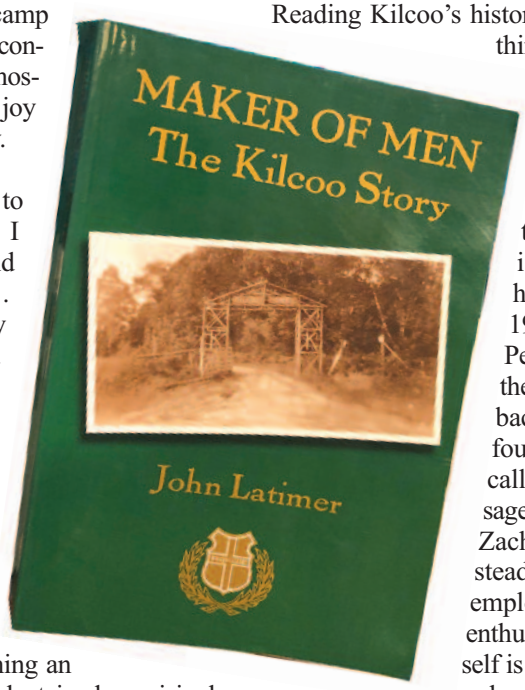
MAKER OF MEN: THE KILCOO STORY

A Recommended Antidote to the Perils of Retirement

Having retired from my Kilcoo career after the summer of 2018, I was faced several months later with something new to my adult life: A summer without Kilcoo Camp.

For the first time - since my age was in the single digits and Shia Lebouf's Transformers revolutionized cinema! - would I go without the people and activities I'd come to love.

All through my first summer away from camp, I felt odd and unsettled…like unwittingly eating a tofu dog. Eventually, I realized what I was missing was camp: serene paddles on Gull lake with the boys, playful interactions with camp friends, Chapel Point conversations and the atmosphere of Lub-centric joy and camp tomfoolery.



Searching for a cure to scratch this itch, I looked for wise and thoughtful counsel… and looked to literary genius as my muse. Upon returning back home, I saw Chief's book, Maker of Men: A Kilcoo Story.

Although I'd read it sometime before the summer of 2014, prior to becoming an LIT, I remembered and retained surprisingly little. While I'd recognize the broad strokes of where a story was going, the names, places and charming anecdotes were new. The result was spectacular: a comfort only found in someone telling familiar stories from your childhood.

The reading experience became one of vicarious summers on the shores of Gull Lake. As Chief narrates chapter by chapter, one feels almost as if he is living another Kilcoo year just through memories. Chapters about chapel, pranks and closing nights naturally prompt one's own anecdotes and recollections. This makes the "close calls" chapter difficult to read at times, with the stress-inducing siren blaring in the back of your head…doesn't everyone panic at the memory of pre-camp water evacuations? My dad is 50 and he still does! Even Kilcoo's coping with Polio in 1947 recalled our own brief Web MD-based Polio scare of 2017.

You might as well be sitting at Chapel Point telling Kilcoo myths and legends. Many of the stories have become well known and oft repeated Kilcoo lore: Dr. Odeek's Rock; the Ghost of the Narrows; Ed Devitt and Camp Comak. Others are lesser known and welcome tales, like lightning striking "The Playpen" or a recipe for Canoe Trip Moonshine!

Reading Kilcoo's history also makes one think of how things could have gone differently. What if Charlie Plewman had indeed sold the camp to the YMCA? What if "Rained Out" hadn't won the 1957 Olympics? Perhaps if we'd kept the activity of horseback riding, I'd have found my artistic calling as 2020 Dressage Olympic Medalist Zachary Parsons, instead of presently unemployed amateur nap enthusiast. The book itself is an enjoyable read, and a great reminder that the Kilcoo community is rooted in history and thus bigger than all of us individually.

People have been leaving camp for close to 90 years, and both they and the camp live on. I think Chief might have provided us with the perfect antidote for people's transition away from such a special place – if only as a catalyst for sparking one's own memories.

I only hope that this suggestion can help ease retirement for the class of 2019 and beyond. It helps guide us through the wonderful (and at times painful) truth Charlie Plewman reasserts throughout: "Once a Kilcoo Camper, Always a Kilcoo Camper."

ZACH PARSONS
2008-18

QUICK NOTES

All future Gazette issues will only be available electronically. If you think we may not have your current e-mail address please send an e-mail to pchamp@sympatico.ca with a copy to tingles@kilcoo.com This will apply to any other alumni communications as well.



We hope the alumni reunion will be possible in 2021. If you are not already on the 2020 list and wish to receive updates as we move toward finalizing plans please let us know by e-mail to pchamp@sympatico.ca



KILCOO'S HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Due to the Covid 19 outbreak camp did not welcome campers this past summers and the PAUSE button had to be placed on the building of the new office and museum. all our permits are in place and we hope to resume construction in September, 2021. Stay tuned for updates.

A MINI 2020 STAFF REUNION

While the 2020 camp season and fall Staff Alumni Reunion were not to be, there was a small gathering of 3 staffers from the 60's that actually did take place at Kilcoo this Thanksgiving.

Back in 2019, after having reconnected through various means (high school pub lunch, TV and Facebook) Jamie Hastings, Barry Hoffman and Robert Millar got together for lunch in Toronto after having been in and out of contact for over 40 years. We brought ourselves up to date on family, work, life and of course our time spent at Kilcoo so many years ago. And yes, we even talked about visiting camp at some point in the future.



L to R Hastings, Hoffman, Millar

Fast forward to 2020 Thanksgiving: Jamie has been residing in Bracebridge for the past few years and Robert had only just recently moved north to Hall's Lake after a long residency in Oakville. Barry, a Burlington resident, had rented the Westview Cottage next to the north gate, for the weekend with his family, and suggested the 3 of us get together to wander the camp and reminisce afterwards over a (socially distant) burger and beer. As we toured the camp, it felt just like a typical staff reunion on a cool fall day: the familiar entwined with the nuanced changes over the years: the Rec Hut enhanced with Peter Taylor's amazing painting, the old archery range now a hockey and basketball zone worthy of the Leafs and Raptors, the old Admin building and Tuck shop, the Rob McKinnon-designed Long House, (now Peggy's summer home), canoe dock, Lodge, the Tower, Council Ring and some reflective moments at Chapel point. (Even the McAlpine knife cuts in the old Super Senior cabin juxtaposed with the new Oasis cabins….). Jamie recalled all those early morning trucking of canoe trips to places near and far- Barry and Jamie especially recall the long trip to Temagami with Hwy 35 still under construction in 1970, and Robert re-calling all those gas tank refills he hauled to the ski boats from the old tanks behind the lodge, long since gone. Even Millar's old bunk graffiti was covered with plywood in the Hi Rise! One can only imagine…

As for most reunions, finding your name on the roster board seems just as necessary as renewing a conversation with a fellow camper you may have not seen for a year or maybe even decades. Our tour was no different. A stop at Kildoon to chat with Lub, and pose for a picture was all part of this experience.

For all of us, the time spent walking through camp with 2 fellow staffers, friends for over 50 years, made this weekend memorable. As is so often typical at "reunions" we may not see each other for a week, a year or even a decade or 5 but the friendships made at camp stay with you for life. This reunion was no different. Here's hoping we can all reconvene in fall 2021 as a full complement of alumni: Kilcoo Campers all!

"Thanks for the day Comrades"

JAMIE HASTINGS, '67-70
BARRY HOFFMAN: '61-70
ROBERT MILLAR: '58-71

INTRODUCING THE KILCOO PROFESSIONAL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

At the start of the summer as COVID was picking up steam, a small group of us were chatting about the impact on the job market. At Kilcoo, we know that when you meet someone new, you look them in the eye and shake their hand. But what if in person isn't an option and hand shakes are not allowed?

We were lucky in that we have jobs and remain relatively unaffected, but those who just graduated camp, school, or both, are entering an entirely different job landscape. Without formal networking opportunities, entering the workforce is that much harder.

What came from this is what we are calling the Kilcoo Professional Alumni Association, an extension of what Paul has created with the Alumni Association. Our Association will serve to connect new graduates with fellow camp alumni, turned young-professionals and/or experienced leaders in their industry of choice. Through LinkedIn, graduates can search for a representative from their years at camp to help connect them with an appropriate contact ready to provide career advice and mentorship.

Our mission is simple: we want to foster conversations within our network to help ease the transition to the workforce for our fellow alumni. We know the lessons and skills learned at Kilcoo are invaluable, and the memories and relationships built second to none. As such, we want the staff to feel comfortable extending their summers at camp, by connecting them with mentors once they step away.

COVID is our storm. And as we always say, at Kilcoo, you never walk alone. Please look for us on LinkedIn or reach out to us if you would like more information.

Bobbie Sherwood
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Pat Graham
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Geordie Knowles
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REMEMBERING THE PUNTER'S SWIM TEST

Inspired by memories of their good friend Dave "Red" Graham, Tim Ernst and John Carruthers traded e-mails in the May, 2018 Gazette issue. Mike Macdonald and "Red" first went to Kilcoo in 1970 and memories of that year led to Mike's article below as he remembered that year, Cabin 23, the punters test for non-swimmers and a wonderful weekend in 2018 when "Red's" friends and family met at camp to salute his memory.

Last year I traveled from San Francisco for a bittersweet weekend celebration at camp (October, 2019) to remember Dave "Red" Graham. Along with so many other wonderful memories and rekindled friendships I took away from that weekend, I came up with an unrelated Kilcoo story to share with the Gull Rock Gazette:

Cabin 23 is my favorite cabin to sleep in when I return to camp for a visit and am lucky enough to stay overnight – partly because it was the last cabin I was a counsellor in, but mostly because of it's beautiful location beside Chapel Point and the swim docks. The swim docks are in the same spot and don't seem to have changed much since I first came to Kilcoo as a camper, at age 7, except that you can walk all the way around them now where, at least the sail dock, had ropes to mark off the outer sides of the square back in those days.

The swim docks inspired considerable fear in me, in my early days at camp – because of what was, for me, the dreaded swim test on the first day of camp. I remember it as the "punter's" swimming test, because if you didn't pass it, you weren't allowed to go in any boat more mobile than a "punt" boat– a clunky squarish wooden boat that Kilcoo used to have for younger kids in the shallow areas, near the beach, and of course for punt wars. If you didn't pass the swim test, you also had to wear a life jacket anywhere around the water and a plastic poker chip necklace with a leather or gump thong threaded through it, until you successfully conquered the test - by showing your ability to swim two lengths and then tread water for 1 minute. The necklace might have been cool under dfferent cirmcumstances but …

Of course, this swim test was a great idea for the camp and the staff because it let them know who to keep a closer eye on around the waterfront. It wasn't so great for me though because I didn't pass the test on my first try. Even though I was a skinny little kid, I seemed to sink straight to the bottom as soon as I got in the water - and on that first try at the swim test I was only 7 years old after all! But I was a proud kid, and the humiliation associated with wearing the poker chip around my neck was terrible. So, with the help of my counsellor, Howie Craven, and the encouragement of my new best friend "Red" in Cabin 1, it didn't take me long to get on track and



pass the test. Nonetheless, it was something that I dreaded as I got ready for camp for my first many years there.

Through the fantastic Kilcoo swimming programs, I ultimately passed my various swimming levels – up to Bronze Cross and Leader's, which allowed me to be a lifeguard as a part-time job in high school (awesome job for a high school kid, of course). It seems I've always sunk in the water like a rock though, and I've never really loved swimming because of that…until recently. My brother Jeff (1982), and nephew Nestor (2019 – LIT), who both swim like fish and definitely don't sink, might even be impressed: I'm swimming laps these days for exercise in the California sun – maybe the saltwater in the pool helps keep me afloat, at least in my imagination.

MICHAEL MACDONALD
1970-82

IDEAS ALWAYS WELCOME!

The Gull Rock Gazette is always looking for your favourite Kilcoo memories and stories. If you need help to develop your ideas, please contact us by email at gazetteeditor@kilcoo.com, and we will help you.



Figurative view of camp in 2020



As sinks the sun...