



**LAKE CLEAR  
TREASURED  
MEMORIES II**

**ONLINE SEQUEL**



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**1123 Lake Clear Road**  
**Lake Clear Treasured Memories II**  
**Submitted by Agatha Ryan – April 5, 2014**

In 1954, Fred Murch & his wife Catherine (who raised me) and lived in Arnprior decided it was time to look for a piece of land to build their own cottage. They took a drive down Lake Clear Road and there right beside the beautiful lake was vacant land. After finding out who owned the land, they approached Tom Kilby (Don Kilby's father) and asked would he sell them a piece. Lo and behold he agreed and so Fred, a carpenter by trade, with some help from a friend built the first cottage on what was called "Kilby's Shore". I guess he got Tom on a good day; as the story goes many local people tried to buy a piece of that land with no success.

It was a 3 bedroom with a large living-dining area and a screened-in porch across the front from which you could view the gorgeous lake and a many a moonrise. It had wooden shutters that could be put down in case of rain or cold. There was no bathroom or running water. A big wood stove was there for cooking and warmth. I remember mom baking in that oven and there was a reservoir that could be filled up for warm water. We did have electricity.



Wasn't long before we had neighbours – Dinny & Barb Helferty, Orland and Connie MacNamara, and Tess Foy.

Fred loved to fish and so he and Dinny enjoyed fishing together. Sadly, at too young an age, Dinny had a heart attack and died. Barb couldn't see herself being at the Lake without him and so her brother, Ken Mask, took possession of the beautiful home and is still there today.

I was only 18 when our cottage was built. I remember every Friday night driving to the cottage for the weekend and then spending holiday time. A real must was to stop at Strickland's store for homemade bread and sticky buns. My entertainment was walking down to Foran's Lodge (now Opeongo Mountain Resort) and hanging out with friends listening to the jukebox and enjoying a snack and a coke. Occasionally, we went to the



dance Saturday night at Lake Dore. Mostly, we just enjoyed relaxing by the water, going for a boat ride and stopping at the “Spinning Wheel” on the other side of the lake for a treat. I remember going with Fred in the boat when he went fishing. I would take a book to read. We didn’t want him to go out alone.

Many card games took place and the odd house party and of course we had lots of visitors.

In 1960, I fell in love and married Ernie Ryan. It wasn’t long before our children Colleen, Paul and Mary were born. Friday nights we packed up the kids and car and headed off to Lake Clear.

In 1968, Fred took a massive heart attack and died but left behind a beautiful memory: “Mountain View Cottage”.


Ernie and I and our children spent our weekends and holidays at the Lake. How the kids loved to go for boat rides with their dad and explore the islands and the Osprey Nest. As they got older water skiing took place and of course a “must” was to go to the “Cliffs” and jump into the water. Going for walks in the bush was an adventure too.

A few changes took place too – we put in running water and a bathroom and vinyl siding . (The windows you see were installed in 2002.)



Tess Foy died, and her nephews Pat and Emmett Grier took over that cottage. They had children. Our children now had friends. We watched a new generation grow up.

It wasn’t long before wedding bells were ringing – our daughter Colleen married Paul Beanish and then grandchildren arrived, Matthew and Devon. Next, son Paul married Nadine and there were Steven, David, Nick and Isabelle. Then, Mary married Gary Champagne and there were Kelsey and Colin. Our family had grown.



I had a wringer washer and didn't have to spend hours at the Laundromat. It sure was a conversation piece – the young ones had never seen one of those working. It made me happy to see our children and grandchildren enjoying the cottage.

In 2001 my hubby Ernie got cancer and died. Life at the cottage was different for me.

As I close, I must say I have been fortunate to be able to have seen 4 generations enjoy a bit of heaven at the cottage Fred Murch built in 1954. Hopefully, my family will enjoy many more years there.

I will keep these memories close to my heart.

**Nov. 28, 2015**

Hello,

I had noticed that there was a mention or two of René Landreville in the Lake Clear Treasured Memories book so I thought you might like to have the attached photo of René, with myself and little dog, Amber.

Taken summer 1991 by Ron Grinham on Wieland Shore Road.

Tracy Lee Pitre





## Submitted July 2019 by Dawna Lacroix

In the 1950's, our parents rented cottages at Opeongo, Foran's Lodge, which was known as St. Cyr's. Once the children arrived, they preferred to cottage across the lake. As kids, we headed every summer to Sandy Beach during the 60's, 70's, and early 80's.

At times, my family would fill as many as five cottages at once. We were a big gang. It was interesting as there was always something going on as everyone was busy going about their own business. For the most part, we all enjoyed lazy afternoons on the beach together. Whenever the adults would get too hot, they'd take a quick dip to cool off in the lake. Whereas, the kids spent most of their time in the water playing or horsing around.

Meanwhile, my husband (future husband, I should say as we did not marry until 2011, but for simplicity in these stories, I will refer to him as "my husband") and I went our separate ways, until we met up again. In 2009, the year after we met, we once again returned to Lake Clear to cottage at both Sandy Beach and Opeongo Mountain Resort. Since then, we have not missed one summer.

Below are some memories from "my husband"

### Pickerel Bay

As boyhood quickly passed and manhood approached, eight male cousins grew closer and of course, much more competitive. Each clan had their counterpart, as there was only seven years difference between the youngest to the oldest.

They were all fortunate enough to spend two weeks each summer at their favourite cottage rental on Lake Clear, nestled in the Opeongo Mountains in Ontario. At times, this was quite an adventure.

Those endless summer days were spent fishing, swimming, and lazing on the beach listening to the hum of the cicadas, high up in the pines. With this many boys and so few girls, it was like a chapter from "The Lost Boys". The girls that did grace our shores were either stalked or shunned, depending on how well they fit in with the daily plans. Tattletales were left behind, as there was usually something devious planned. One of the older cousins was infamous for finding trouble. His nickname was "The Devil". His auburn hair and convincing manner suited him well.

Some summers were quieter than others. As each of the boys matured, summer often meant jobs, girlfriends, and other priorities.

We missed a few summers along the way, only to return again and again. We still rent a cottage at Lake Clear each summer. We bring our families there and imagine them bringing theirs some day too.

One summer, following the death of my grandfather, we made the long trip to Lake Clear. Most of the parents stayed in nearby Ottawa, to pay their respects, and the older boys were left with their cousins to explore the city. I was brought up to the lake to stay with my aunt and her husband's family, who also had cottages there. Although, we called them all cousins, aunts, and uncles, some of them were not really related.

I was used to the excitement of the gang and found it strangely serene. The men were off fishing and the ladies were either preparing endless meals, cleaning up the debris, or on the beach watching their children.

I was almost nine years old and too young to head off exploring on my own. I sullenly wandered the stretch of beach and soon came across a little girl playing in the sand. She was five years old and cute as a bug. She wore a little yellow bathing cap with applied flowers. She was busily building a sandcastle, while her brother regularly stomped it flat again. She squinted in the sun, smiled, and asked me to join her. We spent that afternoon building castles with turrets and moats, while thwarting the dragon that was her brother.

"I guess I am a knight ... " I said, and she added that she was a princess.

We spent the remainder of the two weeks together. She cooked up plan after plan. I still remember her rushing to our station wagon, as we left to go back home, with a brightly coloured note with her name and address. I was to write her when I got back. She wanted to be sure that I spelled her name right. She wrote in big block yellow crayon letters D.A.W.N.A. Although I never did write her, I never forgot her name.

Some of my fond memories at Lake Clear:

#### A Tomboy's Paradise

As a tomboy at Lake Clear, the days were never long enough as I would try to cram in as many activities as I possibly could into one day. There was certainly no time to get bored. As a young girl, one of my favourite past times was catching sunfish off the old wooden bridge by the boathouse at Hurd's Creek. Of course, we always put the fish back into the water. I also remember spending lots of time in the weeds catching frogs. One time, my mom and I were trying to catch a garter snake, but it got away on us. My mom was probably relieved.

My dad would often take the family for boat rides down Hurd's Creek to see all that nature had to offer. I would love to look down into the water and see the fish swimming by the boat. Painted turtles were easily spotted on logs as they basked in the warmth of the sun. There were plenty of cattails, water lilies, and dead trees to be seen everywhere. The lilies were extremely fragrant. It was so very peaceful; you felt like you were in another world.

The water was always refreshing on a hot summer day; we couldn't get enough of it. It was perfect even for the shortest of us, as we could go out quite a good distance from the



shore before it began to get deep. The bottom of the lake was nice and sandy without any weeds; you could easily see your feet on the bottom as the water was crystal clear. It was fun jumping off our air mattresses into the water with a big splash. On windy days, we loved diving into the waves head first.

Meals were most often eaten outside in the fresh air at the picnic table. The main thing on the menu was hotdogs and hamburgers. Mom would set the table with plates of sliced tomatoes, cucumbers, and cheese, along with a bowl of radishes. As well, jars of pickles and olives were put out to enjoy. The wicker plate holders were a real lifesaver to prevent us from dropping our food. While eating, we had to brush the hungry flies away; some days were worse than others. Mom only had to call us once to the table; we were more than ready to eat with our healthy appetites from playing outdoors.

I spent hours walking up and down the beach along the shoreline looking for pretty rocks to bring home as mementos. Each rock was unique in its own way. The smooth pink ones with small metallic specks reminded me most of Lake Clear. If I was especially pleased with what I'd found, I would run and show it to someone to admire, most often it would be "my husband" as we spent much of our time together. Other times, we would take a hike into the woods to pick raspberries, but by the time we'd reach the cottage, there were only a few remaining. They never lasted long as they were so good; I would often eat them straight off the bush.

We would often go for boat rides around Lake Clear. Sometimes we would stop off at Turner's Island to collect some rocks and minerals. To this day, I remember how pretty they were. The colour of rocks, known as calcite, were salmon orange to pale pink with long maroon to brownish red or dark green crystals embedded in them. It was always tricky getting out of the boat to tie it up, as there was no sandy shoreline, it was nothing but rock, you had to go slow and easy. Getting back into the boat was no easy task either, someone would need to hold the boat steady while you carefully climbed back in.

When heading out onto the lake, you had to pay close attention to the weather as it could change on a dime. My cousin and I got caught out on the lake once in the middle of a fierce storm as my poor mom and aunt anxiously waited for us on shore.

I loved fishing on Little Lake Clear to catch "mud pout". We always caught a good handful as we knew the secret to bring them in. You had to be extra careful taking them off the hook. One time in particular, back home in Ottawa, "my husband" and I had quite a feast. I insisted on cooking the fish myself. His mom helped to get everything organized so it would be good and handy. "My husband" jumped in to offer a hand as needed, but for the most part, I cooked the fish on my own. Between the two of us, it was done to perfection.

Under a million stars on a clear night, we would all enjoy hotdogs and marshmallows over the campfire, as "my husband" would play his guitar in the background. It was a great time for storytelling and to share some good jokes amongst the family. Other nights, a gang of us would gather around the table to play a game of cards or Yahtzee. There was plenty of chatter and laughter as everyone was in good spirits.

In the still of the night, while laying in bed, I always enjoyed hearing the eerie call of the loons across the lake. This was often the last thing I would hear before falling asleep for the night.

This time shared with family at the lake is cherished by each of us. If you would ask any one of us to recall our memories of Lake Clear, we would surely look back with great fondness as these treasures remain close to heart. I count my blessings to have been fortunate enough to share it with family and friends over the years.

Most all of these memories were shared with “my husband” as we were kids. As good friends, we enjoyed each other’s company. Today, we are now creating treasured memories with our son. Over the years, our son has had his friends up at the lake for the whole week. My brother has brought his family a few times for a visit. He has three daughters. During those times when it was a full house, it was real busy, even hectic, but I wouldn’t change it for the world. Other times, we’ve had friends come stay overnight with their kids. Of course, like us, everyone fell in love with the beauty of Lake Clear.

Written by Dawna Lacroix

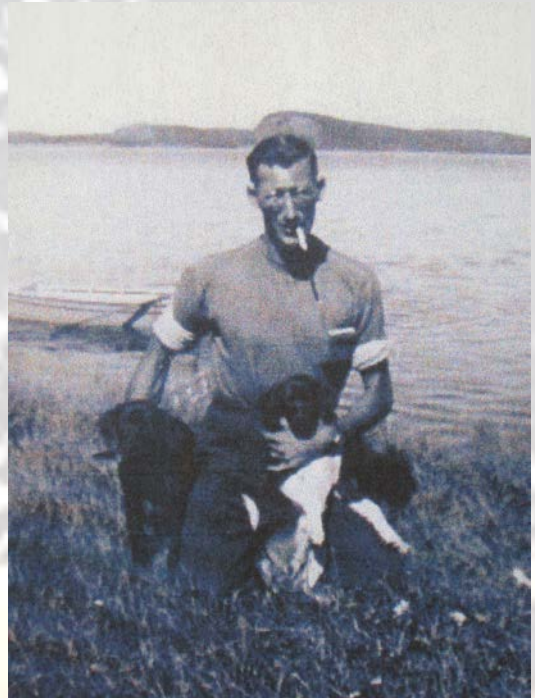


Good Catch (Sandy Beach)





Joan Smith 1954



Ron Smith 1954, Foran's Lodge



The Princess





Picnic Along Buelow Rd



Morning Glow, Opeongo Mountain Resort



Peaceful Hurdman's Creek



Windy Day on Sandy Beach





A Beautiful View



Golden Sunrise





Little Rock at Twilight



Pretty in Pink

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