

Commemorative Collection



Various Authors & Sources

Volume III – 2006

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Prepared by: Andrew Campbell

1943 Sese kinika Photos

Submitted by: Arlene Wright

Photo Descriptions:

1. 1943 – Myrtle Wright, Cassie Fee, Ret Thomson, Adeline Gratton, Alice Bradley, Bessie Cramp, Arnley Wright
2. 1943 – Arlene Wright, Myrtle Wright, Cassie Fee, Ret Thomson, Alice Bradley, unknown, Bessie Cramp, Adeline Gratton Front: Don Wright, Udy Thomson, Jack Fee, Wes Bradley
3. 1943 - Udy Thomson & Jack Fee with freshly caught fish
4. 1943 - Wright Cottage



Bill Wiggins

Submitted by: Pat Lambe Hertzberg

Anyone who remembers Wigg would have to agree that Bill Wiggins was a true "Sesekinika character". Any history of the lake wouldn't be complete without a mention of Wigg.

Bill and Kay Wiggins (and their children Bruce and Val) owned the cottage on A-7 where Signy Campbell now cottages. Because Val was my age and my friend, and because their cottage was right across the bay from ours, I saw a lot of the Wiggins.

Bill was a colourful character, who loved to compete, loved the show, and would do anything to put a smile on your face! I don't think he ever shaved at the lake. My memory of him is one with a permanent week of stubble on his face. He spoke out of the side of his mouth, just like our ex-Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, and a cigarette often hung from it, bouncing up and down as he spoke. When I was a six year old, I was in awe of this guy ...he was so full of fun, and free-spirited. Only after growing up did I realize how difficult it must have been for his wife Kay who had to reign in this wild man, and remind him of his responsibilities.

Bill loved fast boats and owned one of the fastest on the lake. It was a 25 horsepower motor on a small wooden boat. It was in part because of Bill Wiggins that our Lake association was formed. He wanted to have an annual Regatta where boats could race one another, and children and families could compete in swimming, canoe and row boat races. The first Annual Sesekinika Lake Regatta was held in 1954. It was organized by the executive of the newly formed Sesekinika Lake Cottagers Association.

One vivid memory of Bill was on a May 24th Weekend when the water was quite high. Our cribbed dock was completely submerged under water. The dock extended out from the boathouse, and there was a flagpole at the very end of it, which definitely looked odd without a visible dock! Bill came over for a visit, but before docking the boat he must have noticed that we were all on our front porch ...so he had a ready audience! With a big grin on his face, he yelled "hey Lambes, WATCH THIS!" ...He then proceeded to open the engine full tilt, and drive the boat between the flagpole and the boathouse (right over the dock, which was perhaps 6 inches under the surface of the water!) We all gasped and screamed at the sight. The only reason he didn't kill himself in the act, is because he lifted the motor at the very last second before reaching the dock.

Bill Wiggins had a permanent, mischievous smile on his face. We all thought he'd meet his demise doing some dare-devil act, but he didn't. His shows were perhaps better calculated than we gave him credit for. God rest his soul.

Cramp Thornham History on Lake Sesekinika

Submitted by: Polly Thornham

The official Sesekinika Lake history of the Cramp/ Thornham family began in 1937, but it really began before that.

My Mom, Florena and her sister Pat, were best friends with two other sisters, Tennessee and June Cooper. The Cooper family owned the cottage now owned by Steve and Pat (Lambe) Hertzberg on A-2.

The Cramp girls, especially Pat, spent so much time at the Cooper cottage that my Grandfather, Dave decided to buy his own cottage at Sesekinika. In 1937, "The Greenhorns" was purchased from Mr. Kingston, an hotelier. (There are still hotel dishes in use at the cottage). A pair of painted green moose antlers hung over the front porch for some time, denting the Cramp family's "newcomer status".

The next generation- David, Susan, John and I- spent many whole summers at the lake. We learned to love swimming, canoeing, boating in grandpa's green and orange putt putt (one of several dis pro inboards on the lake at that time) and the very fast fifteen horsepower cedar strip outboard. We also learned to sail in the little white sailboat with the red sail. At an early age we also learned cribbage and bridge at Aunt Pat's knee.

My Mom learned how to wash diapers using a washtub and washboard. They are still at the cottage, though retired. Aunt Pat still uses a wringer washer, however.

When we reached our teens, Mom and Dad (Jack) felt it was time to find a place of their own, with room to dock our "Whiz-Ski-Jack" with the 40 hp motor.

Our new cottage, "Thornham's Yoke" had been owned by two well-known Sesekinika families: the Wiggins and the Robertson's. It had a great dock for skiing, partying and an occasional late night skinny-dip, as long as no one turned on the dock light from the cottage.

My sister, Susan, saw her chance to become a landowner after our parents bought the north half of island A-7, with its little cabin. She bought it in 1970 and has entirely transformed it over the years since it became "Sue Lookout".

Eventually, my parents saw the wisdom of relocating to the mainland, to make their retirement years easier. They sold "Thornham's Yoke" to the Campbell's. It is now known as "Sig-n-Al Point", and Scott and Andrew have learned to love the lake as we do.

My parents purchased the lovely property next to Ed and Gayle Havrot's neat round cottage. It was a great decision, for many reasons, not the least of which was the presence of Ed and Gayle. It was also a good location to receive the grandchildren, Jamie, Suzie, Christy and Emily- generation four. My parents also made the inevitable transition from ski boat to pontoon boat.

The most recent acquisition was in 2000 when I decided to provide fulltime cottage life for my own family. Our cottage at the north end of island Al once belonged to Mrs. Brown, who spent many peaceful summers there. The Barnacals added two wings to the cottage- a labour of love, which we appreciate. We are beginning a new set of lake traditions in "Whiskey-Jack Lodge". Our whole clan now has four cottages at Sese kinika.

Naturally, our numbers have changed over the years. We have brought spouses Nancy, Joyce and George into the family and into life at Sese kinika. We have lost our Grandparents, Dave and Bessie Cramp, and more recently, our Mom, Florena. Their love of the lake and fond memories enable us to feel closest to them here. Our Dad, Jack, and Aunt Pat continue to enjoy their cottages every summer.

David's children have added three, in generation five: Jamie and Sarah's Abby, and Suzie and Chet's Claire and Neve. We're already introducing them to the lake.

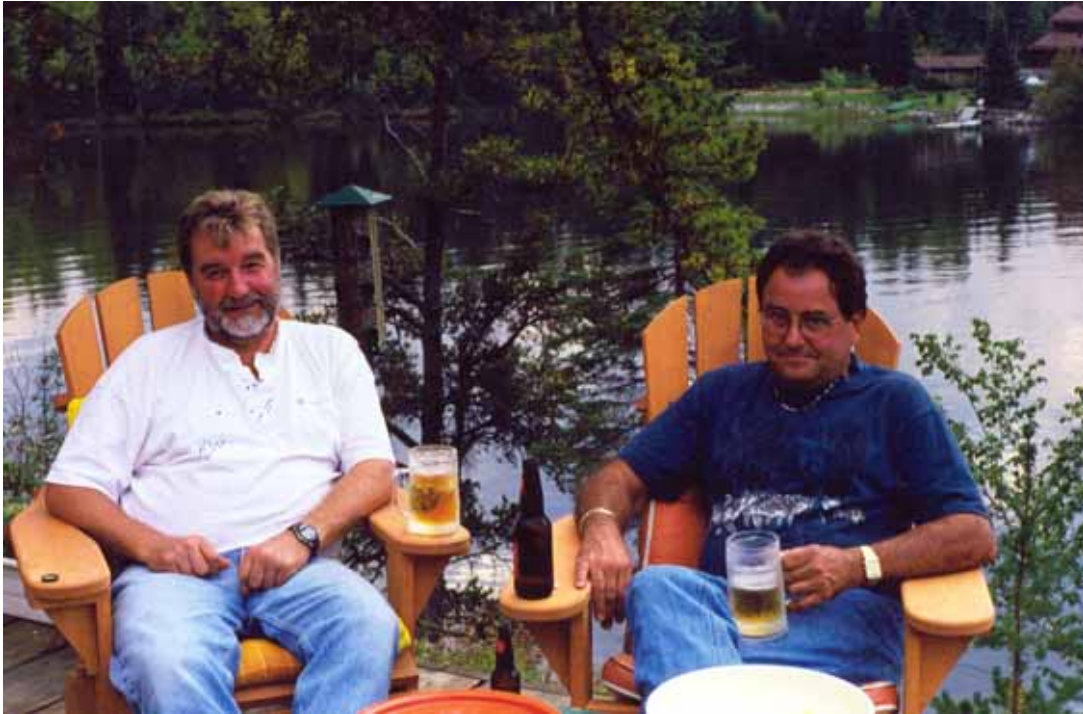
Cramp Thornham Photos

Submitted by: Susan Thornham

1. 1936 – Florena in front, Eunice Schneider, cousin, in the middle + Pat in the stern. This photo was taken around 1936 by Margaret Thomson, cousin of Udell Thomson (Mary Celia's Father). She was an artist and painted many scenes of Sese kinika before she returned to her home in England. After she died in the late 70's or early 80's, Mary Moodie brought this photo back along with other items and Mary Celia gave them to me in June 1982.
2. 1937 – Barbeque on Thompson's (Moodie's) front rock.
LTR – Jack Fee, Florena Cramp (Later Thornham),
Udell Thomson (Mary Celia's father), Ralph,
Neelands (Peter and Norah's father).
3. 1945 – Arnley Wright with 18.5 LB pike and David Thornham.
4. 1959 – John and David Thornham sailing
5. 1964 – Susan Thornham eating cone from Ses store in background.
6. 1979 – Thornham's cottage on the mainland Bill Burgman, Herb Pearce,
?, ?, Alex Lamb, Kay Pearce, ?,
7. 1981 – Susan and Scott in kayak
8. 1995 – Old Canadian Gothic #2
9. 1998 – Retired
10. 1998 – Lake Scene
11. 2001 – Lake Sese kinika Prop owners meeting
12. 2001 – Lake Sese kinika Prop owners meeting
13. 4 generations – Circa 1974









Sesekinika Lake Property Owners' Association
50th Anniversary Commemorative Collection Volume III 2006
Visit <http://www.sesekinika.com/stories>

Down Memory Lane – Sese kinika

Submitted by: Lloyd McGregor

I came to Sese kinika in the early thirties, I think it was 1934 but I could be out a year either way, I had purchased the Marina from Chris Sornson who had owned it for many years. The building was on, what was known then as Boys Scout Point on the south side of the track where Tony and Joan Heikkila eventually moved.

The downstairs part of the building contained a workshop where motors were repaired and woodworking was done to repair boats. At the back of the workshop was a single room where Sam Ivers lived. Sam worked for Chris and I kept him on.

Sam owned the little white house that I now have and rented it to Chris. The upstairs had a kitchen, living room and two bedrooms; it was nice and bright and was a nice place to live. At the back of the building was a large shed where boats were stored through the winter.

The local village people were not too friendly to me when I first arrived. I was just a kid and an outsider.

There were six passenger trains through the village each day. About nine each morning was the local that went south to Englehart, with one car dropped off in Swastika that went to Kirkland Lake, Larder Lake and on to Rouyn and then Noranda. Because it was faster and the Kirkland Station was so far from down town, most people used the bus from Swastika to Kirkland. This train returned through Sese kinika just before five in the afternoon. You had the best part of the day to shop or do business.

In the afternoon, trains 46 and 47, also known as the mail trains went through the village. The train from the south came in around two. There was a mail catcher post beside the track where our outgoing mail would hang. An arm on the mail car would catch the bag off the post and the postal clerk on the mail car would pull it in. Mail for Sese kinika was thrown out on the platform at the station and was picked up for the postmaster. The postal clerk on the train would sort our mail immediately and even if a letter was going to Burks it would likely be put in the bag in time for the Burks drop off. Our mail from the south could be sorted in about twenty minutes and could be picked up the post office, across from the station. A train going south went through around four. If you had a letter to answer off the train going north, you could answer it and have it on the train going south where it would be delivered in Toronto or Ottawa the next morning.

Many of the local people went to the station when the south train came through; it was on one of these occasions where I first met Mr. Westergard. Unlike the rest of the villagers he was very friendly. He seemed very intelligent and well read and could be depended on to be at the station the day the Family Herald and Weekly Star came in (this was a family type paper with Canadian and world news, farm news, stories and articles on industry and farm. I believe it was published in Winnipeg).

The four trains I have mentioned could all be stopped in Sesekinika by waving a flag. There was the Northland that gave overnight service to or from Toronto/ it would stop if you were going to North Bay or beyond but you had to phone the dispatcher at Burks or Swastika to arrange a stop. The phone was an ONR phone in a box outside the store in front of the post office.

It was the second spring I was here, that I got to know Mr. Westergard a little better and found out more about him. He was a "homesteader". The government would give you 160 acres of land if you cleared 10 acres, seeded it and lived on the property for at least 6 months out of the year. Westergard had done all this and was living there the year round. Westergard had a good barn, had quite a few cows, and his own bull. He drove a car and had a nice market garden. When his land was ready for planting in the spring the suckers were running. He would spear suckers with a manure fork, and heave them out on to his garden. He would put the suckers underneath his rows and use them for fertilizer. His farm was right beside Kapakita creek, on the side next to the Village. The cows he milked by hand and separated the cream by letting it rise in the bottle and the pouring it off. He made butter and used a lot of cream himself.

He had whiskers like Santa Claus and his skin was shiny and smooth like a bowling ball. People thought it was the cream that made his skin so smooth and shiny. I guess he kept hens too. In any case he made weekly trips to town with his produce to supply his steady customers. On one occasion I had to go to his house. After being in it, it was difficult to call it a house. The outside walls sat on timbers lying on the ground. Tongue and groove lumber was nailed to 2 by 4 studs which were not covered on the inside; there was no ceiling and just a dirt floor. A large stove sat in the middle of the building. That was all one big room. There may have been a pipe through the roof at one time but when I was there, there was no pipe. The stovepipe went up to the rafters; the smoke circled around till it found a hole in the roof and went out.

The Westside of the house must have heaved with the frost or the Southside sank, because 2 large poles were propped against the Eastside to help keep it standing. The place was scantily furnished with just the bare necessities but around the walls were piles of copies of "The Family Herald" and the "Weekly Star" which served as a library and insulation.

One of Westie's better customers in town was Walter Little our local member of Parliament. One weekend the Littles ran out of butter. It was a lovely day and Walter and his wife Hannah decided to drive out and get some. He saw them coming and met them before they got to the house. But according to Walter he certainly did not look like the gentleman he was when he went to town. The Littles got the butter that day, when Westie pulled it out of the creek, where he kept it cool. But it went to the garbage when they got back to town. The Littles continued to buy from him until he quit delivering, but never ate any more butter.

Everything went well with my business. The first summer, with the help of my father and a great friend, Bill Klick, and Mary Ann Cloutier's Dad, we added 10 docks and 10 lofters, which gave us a total of 20. The lofters were used for storing boat cushions, fishing tackle, paddles, oars etc., in some cases even outboard motors.

The second summer I bought 10 rowboats and 5 outboard motors. There was a good passenger boat with the business, when I bought it, but eventually I bought 2 more.

We thought up fancy names for all the good fishing places on the lake. We would take fishermen there to fish from the shore. The fishing was good. Pike would average 6 lbs and pickerel 3. It was not uncommon to see 12 lbs pike or 6 lbs pickerel.

The lake was cottaged by people from Englehart, Iroquois Falls, Timmins, Kirkland Lake and Americans, mostly from Ohio. They mostly traveled by train. The cottages, we found, had sports clubs in them and they would ask the Lands and Forest to restock the lake and for some reason they would. Growing fish is like growing potatoes: you can only grow so many pounds per acre. As time went by you might catch more fish, but they keep getting smaller and smaller, till they are down to the size you catch today.

Things did not go so well with Mr. Westergard. I don't know whether he got old or lazy but he gave up cutting so much hay and had difficulty carrying on through the winter.

His car had given up and he ended up with 2 bulls, which he harnessed to do his farm work. He still kept a lot of cows, but in winter started cutting down on their feed. Each week he would give them a little less and by spring, before they went out on grass, he was giving them hay by the handful. He said he had shrunk their stomachs.

One spring, after heavy snow all winter, it started snowing again, and Westie was completely out of hay. With great difficulty, with 2 burlap bags over his shoulder, he walked, out and bought a small stack of hay that was in Vie McGregor's backyard. (Vie was no relation of mine). He went back home and fed the hay to

the bulls. The next day he hitched the bull to the sleigh, intending to get out to the stack, but the snow was just too heavy and he could not make it.

He walked out again himself and carried more hay back. The next morning he brought out one bull, with extra burlap bags. He let it eat at the stack, while he filled the bags, tied the bags to hang over the bull's back, got back home and fed a little hay to all the cows.

The next day he drove all the cows out to the stack and let them eat before driving them back home. By this time the trail was getting a little packed down.

Then he made a trip with the empty sleigh, maybe 2 and finally was able to move the whole stack. Even with the extra hay he lost several cows from starvation. Westie himself started the winter with 2 burlap bags filled with rolled oats that he had shipped in from the manufacturer. Unless the weather was good and the trail was good, he seldom came out during the wintertime, but lived with his milk, cream and rolled oats.

Another personality I most mention in these flashbacks is Lillian Ashly. When I arrived in Sese kinika she was the Postmistress and had her office and living-quarters behind Ollie Olson's store, across from the station. She was a good-looking woman, very energetic, quite talkative and friendly if a bit on the gushy side.

In the summer she had flowers growing on the North and East side of the building. Her flowers were lovely; she always had a bouquet or 2 in the Post Office. When the Mail train came in from the South, the men with their wives would go over to cross the lake, the women would go first to the General Store for provisions and the men would go in to pick up their mail.

Lillian would start right in to get you to admire the flowers. Then she would actually put the flowers in your hand as if she were giving them to you and saying how much your wife would love to have them. After getting your mail and telling her how much you appreciated the flowers and were about to leave, she would say: "That will be \$1 or 75 cents." (Or whatever).

I think every married man in the district got hooked at least once with these flowers.

There was no power or telephone on the lake till after the war. For refrigeration people used ice. At the back of Ollie's building was a large ice house. In the late fall the icehouse would be cleared out to get ready for the next "crop".

Out in front of the station the water would be tested and if Okayed the ice would be kept cleaned off like a skating rink until there was about 12 inches of blue ice; this would generally be a couple of weeks before Christmas. With a hand-operated ice saw, blocks were cut about 24 inches long, 12 inches wide, with a

depth of 12 inches. These blocks were taken to the ice house and packed in, keeping those 18 inches from the walls. When they were all in, 18 inches of sawdust was put around the walls and on top. When the ice was sold, the 24" length was cut in two, which gave you a block 12 by 12 by 12, which would nicely fit into the icebox in the house or cottage.

There was no sign of melting and sometimes the blocks would even freeze together and had to be split apart. When enough ice was taken out to fill the ice house behind Ollie's store, Lillian, the Post Mistress, would come down to the lake in a sexy bathing suit and a towel, jump in and have a swim, crawl back on the ice and go back home. She seemed to enjoy it. But I could never understand why.

1940-60 Sese kinika Photos

Submitted by: Arlene Wright

1. 1956 – Polly & Susan Thornham at Wright's
2. 1959 – Back row: Ret Thomson, Dr. McBain, David Thornham, Jimmy Thomson, Faith Wright, David Moodie, Mrs. McBain, Ralph Neelands
Middle row: Pat Thomson, Celia (Moodie) Topping, Myrtle Wright, Bessie Cramp, Cassie Fee
Front row: Ian Moodie, Polly Thornham, Minister
3. 1955 – Ian Moodie, Celia (Moodie) Topping, Jimmy Thomson, Mary (Moodie), Patty Thomson, David Moodie
4. 1942 – Arnley Wright
5. 1965 – Mary Celia Moodie, Arlene Wright, Myrtle Wright, Cassie Fee, David Moodie



1940-60 Sese kinika Photos Continued



Emergency Landing on Lake Sesekinika

Submitted by: Johana Janssen

Not many people know that an airplane landed on Sesekinika, in blizzard conditions. In this story I will tell you all about it.

It must have been fifteen or twenty years ago; I don't remember the exact year, but I know it happened close to Christmas, because I was in my kitchen doing some Christmas baking. On that specific day it was snowing very hard; at times there was a complete white-out. The snow had kept on coming down thick and heavy all day long and the radio warned people to postpone their travels and stay at home. Visibility was very poor.

After I turned off the radio I became aware of the persistent sound of a motor; it sounded like a small airplane circling around in the area. But who would be out flying on a day like this? The sound came and went. I looked out the window, but saw only the swirling snow. The trees, the island, the ice surface of the lake, everything was hidden by the thickly falling snow. The sound of the motor slowly faded away. I went back to my baking. My daughter, Marlene, was helping me in the kitchen. We talked about the possibility of a small aircraft flying around in these kind of weather conditions and decided that the plane must be lost and that the pilot was desperately trying to find a landmark.

After a while we heard the motor again. Judging from the sound, it seemed that the plane was flying much lower. I went outside to listen. Just then the plane came roaring down to land on the lake; I caught a glimpse of it through the snow. The plane passed by our roof, missing the chimney by about three feet. I ducked; it seemed so close, that I was afraid it was going to hit. It touched down on the lake in front of our house and taxied out of sight in the blink of an eye. My husband came running out of his shop, where he had been working, and our son, Eric, from his room upstairs. They jumped on Eric's snowmobile and went after the plane. Within two seconds they also disappeared out of sight.

Marlene and I went back to our cookies; there was nothing to be seen or to be done anyway. After half an hour the snowmobile came back, followed by a Cessna 200. The pilot parked his machine in front of our house, turned off his motor and got out. Then a woman got out from the passenger's side, wearing high heels, a party dress with mini-skirt and a light jacket! She sank to over her ankles into the slushy snow with her high heels. Harry brought them in the house, where the woman dried her feet. I gave her some hot coffee and a chair next to the woodstove in the kitchen, so she could warm up. The couple came from Ville Marie in Quebec and was on their way to Hearst to attend a Christmas party.

They had gotten lost in the snowstorm and had flown around for a few hours, trying to find their bearings. They were almost out of gas. The pilot said his needle was on empty. Harry got out an Ontario map to show the man where he

was. They had been lucky to land on Sesekinika, where there are people living, and not on Kapakita or Wewigimok, where they could have frozen to death, with nobody nearby to help them. The pilot asked Harry if he could buy enough gas to bring him to Kirkland Lake Airport. He got that and poured it into his tank. Then he had a heck of a time getting his machine unstuck, because he parked it right in a patch of slush. When the snow finally stopped, just before dark, they flew away and we never saw or heard from them again!!

Gordie MacDonald

Submitted by: Peggy MacDonald

Ahhh...what can I say about my Dad and his love for the cottage? It is funny how much, I realize, that I'm sure I do not know. One thing for sure that I do know is that he did love that place. It was his solitude and sanctuary. As he got older and more set in his ways – OK – completely set in his ways – it was the one place that always was consistently and exactly the way HE wanted it to be.

It is true that pictures tell a thousand words. When I look through them, I think that they tell the story of my dad at the “cottage”. The early ones of my Dad and Uncle Bill when they were about 4 or 5 and sitting there smiling with Ann Sails, must be about 1928. They had some fine times with the Sails' and we heard about them like they were still there long after they had gone. It was “the Sails” place to us, until the Seguins came and became the new neighbors!

Much of the good times were told to us as kids, stories of people from our place and the comings and goings of the cottagers around the lake. I wish I had been around in the early 40's when it looks like the building of

West Sesekinika Road was quite a party. At least it looks like the 40's. Another favorite of mine is a winter shot of a crowd at the village store all dressed in cross country ski gear; many are faces I do not know, aside from my Dad's.

Who can forget the bridge parties? As I kid, I remember trying to fall asleep with company over, the smell of rye on ice mixed with cigarette smoke and the familiar sound of cards shuffling. Of course, there was constant brouhaha's and lots of “– what the hell were you thinking playing that hand?”

Through it all there were of course, the constant cottage repairs, maintenance, additions, deletions, decks, docks, bedrooms and sheds. My Dad always said to us that he intended to build a home there and tear the cottage down some day. So, when he did, we were not surprised.

The building of the place was a communal event which many around the lake, I'm sure, can still remember. Everyone helped. My Dad mostly cooked, and served beer and rye. It took longer than it should have taken to build but, in the end, it was his place and he was so happy to have it finished. He took to baking as a past time and would bake bread and oatmeal cookies, then go to deliver them around the lake providing an excellent excuse to visit. The last 10 years or so of my Dad's life were spent full-time at “the lake” winter and summer. His stubbornness was exaggerated by the fact that he was out on that island in the dead of winter, still using the outhouse, stoking the fire and baking oatmeal cookies.

I know that my Dad loved to entertain and loved to be at the lake. I'm sure there are many other people who could tell stories of "adult" things that happened there, but as one of his kids, I was not allowed into that other life. From my perspective, all I know is that there was no other place that he felt totally at home than at "the lake".

Being away from the pressures of life is natural at Sesekinika. It is the one place that really never changed. Dad knew the rocks and the currents and the seasons. He had a long history on Sesekinika and a need that could only be found in this special place.

After seeing much of the world and living a very "exciting" lifestyle for a long time, Sesekinika was where that 4 year old came back to live and just be himself, by himself. It became that special, secret place that cottagers treasure. He will always be there, too. There is so much of him in and around the cottage. I know for me that anytime I eat an oatmeal cookie that may be just a bit too dry and crumbly, it makes me smile.

Ingimundson-Campbell – Summers on Sesekinika

Submitted by: Signy Ingimundson-Campbell

Our family connection to Lake Sesekinika started in South America. Sig Ingimundson (my father) and Jack Thornham were engineers in Sao Paulo, Brazil in the early 1950's. The Thornham children and I went to the school for foreign students and became friends.

Upon returning to Canada, the Thornham's moved to Matagami Noranda, Quebec, while the Ingimundson's settled north of Toronto near Thornhill, Ontario.

In 1968 my parents, Sig and Evelyn Ingimundson met the Thornham grandparents Dave and Bessie Cramp and their daughter Pat Cramp in Delray Beach, Florida. The news was shared that Susan Thornham and I were teaching in Burlington Ontario. We were unaware that the other was there. My parents told me the news and Susan and I became reacquainted.

I visited the Thornham's cottage with Susan on Lake Sesekinika. Many fun filled afternoons were spent water skiing and "discing" from the island between the Lambs and the Wolfs. The disc was a circle cut from a red pin pong table and remains in use by our family to this day. We held the rope attached to the boat and were pulled through the water. Depending on your confidence/ and or skill you would ride on your stomach, knees or standing on your feet, sometimes even with the family pet and barstool.

In 1970, Susan Thornham and I moved to teach in Thunder Bay, Ontario. Scott Ingimundson Campbell was born on April 14, 1978. That June, Susan and I brought Scott to Sesekinika. After the long drive from Thunder Bay and the short boat ride across the Lake in the middle of the night to the Cramp cottage, Scott was made comfortable in Aunt Pat's bureau drawer for the night.

In the fall 1978, Florena Thornham called Al and me with an offer to sell the south end of the island A7. She and Jack had purchased a cottage on the mainland beside Gail and Ed Havrot. We were obviously pleased! Jack Thornham was very conscientious in teaching me how to look after the camp, especially the water system. At that time the pump was under the cottage. The operative word is under. One or both of us were forever bumping our heads when getting water to prime the pump or retrieve a needed tool.

Sig Andrew Ingimundson Campbell was born March 5, 1981 and spent more than one afternoon nap in the bottom of the boat to keep cool and was lulled to sleep by the waves in the boathouse.

The two brothers, Scott and Andrew spent their summers at Sesekinika. We enjoyed brush fires by the shore or fishing off "the little island" in front of the cottage, along with the best fishing on the lake off the end of our dock.

Sailing was always an adventure on Sesekinika - lake of many islands. The flying junior sailboat and I would get blown down and had to be towed home when the wind changed.

A summer would not be complete without visiting the osprey's nest or fishing in front of Coney Island.

Another annual happening for Scott and Andrew was the ritual evening boys channel swim with Mr. Armstrong our neighbour. Sometimes this was preceded by a visit to "Deadman's Cabin". The "swim" was sometimes followed by the boys jumping off the boathouse roof.

In the summer, the island's population was increased by four domestic ducks which we purchased at the New Liskeard farmers market. The ducks imprinted on the boys and followed them everywhere, even after Scott in the kayak or Andrew who was swimming.

Every year we invited the Moodie/Topping young people over for a swim/water ski/discing day. A summer would not be complete without a "poker party" or two. Change purses, jars, cans with money magically appeared from winter hiding places. Occasionally we played cards to the wee hours of the morning when Aunt Pat's "banana boat" could be heard putting home after her late night bridge game.

The logs along the front of the cottage have had to be removed and were expertly replaced with sliding doors by Robb McKelvey. A new deck was also installed. The wonderful summer memories of the past will give way to the exciting adventures of the future. We treasure our times on Lake Sesekinika.

Ingimundson Campbell Photos

Submitted by: Signy Ingimundson-Campbell

1. 1983 - Andrew Ingimundson-Campbell, Marcie (Moodie) Topping, Jamie (Moodie) Topping & Scott Ingimundson-Campbell
2. Scott Ingimundson-Campbell and Susan Thornham Discing
3. Scott Ingimundson-Campbell, Signy Ingimundson-Campbell and Andrew Ingimundson-Campbell Discing
4. Annual Dock Party with Moodie's
5. Allan Ingimundson-Campbell arrive at Sesekinika on the ONR
6. Andrew & Scott Ingimundson-Campbell Sailing
7. Signy Ingimundson-Campbell Sailing
8. Susan Thornham, Unknown, and Allan & Scott Ingimundson Campbell
9. Sesekinika Thunderstorm









Island Raids

Submitted by: Claire Schonfeldt

Many a fun evening was spent by the Mckelveys' and the Schonfeldts' planning ways to raid the American visitors across the lake on the island.

The Schloz never seemed to be alarmed or anxious in wait for what they knew would always come noisily in the night. This was of course because they could hear every word we were saying across the lake and this gave them ample opportunity to be prepared for our "surprise attack" on their property.

So the fun began. We, "the enemy" would canoe over in the still of the night bearing pails of water, giggling...."quietly". Of course they were always waiting.....lined up around the perimeter of the island armed with many more water pails than we could carry in our canoes. The evening always ended with both sets of water warriors enjoying great food, drink and foolery. A great memory!

Lake Sesekinika Ice Out Dates

Submitted by: Sesekinika Lake Property Owners' Association Newsletter

1962 May 5	1982 May 8
1963 May 6	1983 May 14
1964 May 6	1984 April 28
1965 May 10	1985 April 29
1966 May 12	1986 N/A
1967 May 8	1987 April 20
1968 April 24	1988 May 5
1969 May 9	1989 May 15
1970 May 6	1990 May 1
1971 May 12	1991 N/A
1972 May 15	1992 N/A
1973 May 27	1993 N/A
1974 May 21	1994 May 8
1975 May 10	1995 May 11
1976 May 5	1996 May 21
1977 April 29	1997 May 9
1978 May 15	1998 April 21
1979 May 14	1999 April 28
1980 May 4	2000 May 8
1981 May 3	2001 April 29

Memories of Sesekinika

Submitted by: Arlene Wright

Since I've spent every summer of my life at Sesekinika, some of my earliest memories are the stories my parents told Don – (my brother) and me. Because I am deluged with memories, perhaps the best way to start down memory lane is right at the beginning: the road to the lake.

In the 1930's the road was a challenge both to Dad, the driver, and to his children, Don and me. It was narrow, almost one lane, bumpy, logs were laid over the low spots, and it had two ruts for the car to follow; grass grew between the ruts. The driver hoped never to meet another car since it meant backing up to a spot wide enough for the two cars to squeeze by each other. To children the road was a game: who could grab the most branches from the car window. But the road took us to the village where my memories of Sesekinika people began.

The village, populated mainly by Scandinavians, had the most interesting and unusual people; all of them honest, reliable, hard-working, and soft-spoken with a distinctive drawl and accent.

Upon arriving in the village, the first building awaiting you was the general store. Inside Olie, Olaf Olsen the owner waits to greet you. Olie was Norwegian, a tall, slim, good-looking gentle man who, to me, was always the same age - old. He had bushy eyebrows and a lot of salt-and-pepper hair which never thinned or turned grey. His glasses sat half way down his nose. When he looked at you, he lowered his head a bit and peered at you over the top of the glasses. Nothing about Olie ever changed, not even his glasses.

He never rushed either in movement or speech. Actually, he didn't have to. People talked; Olie listened. People moved; Olie sat. When he did speak it was short and in a slow drawl: "wa-a-11 yaass." His cash register was an old box. He seldom had to move from his seat behind the counter. Customers wandered around and piled their order in front of him. Although we always thought of Olie as old fashioned, he was probably the most progressive man in the north he had the first self-serve store in the area.

The inside of the store was large. There were counters on three sides, shelves and boxes were behind the counters. In front of one counter was a bench to sit on. In the spring and fall, a pot-bellied wood stove was set up with a card table close by. There, in the evenings, Olie and his friends played bridge. The store didn't close until Olie went to bed.

The store contained almost everything needed to survive -if it could be located. Olie would give general directions but by the time you moved and peaked into all the boxes, you usually forgot what you wanted and bought something else you had come across in your hunt. He stocked groceries, soft drinks, coal oil ice,

clothing, blankets (pure wool from England) stationery, pharmaceuticals. Best of all, the store had the only telephone on the lake.

It was a wooden wall phone. To use it you held the receiver, pushed in a button on the left side of the phone while turning a handle on the right side. When successful, you were connected to the operator to whom you gave the number you were calling. Then, you waited for the connection to be made. While waiting you could either talk to the operator or to the people in the store. A long distance call was rare and particularly exciting. Since the audience in the store was party to only one side of the conversation, when the phone call ended it was the duty of the caller to report the other side of the conversation. There were few secrets.

Olie's store was the gathering place for the lake. You were not expected to return for at least an hour. People sat and visited on the benches inside the store or on the steps or pop cases outside.

It 'was on this porch that Don and I learned a lesson in social behaviour. One of the men who often sat on the porch of the store was a handsome, tall, slim man. He had fine features, clean skin, rosy cheeks, deep blue eyes, white hair and a white moustache. I don't remember his name; as we got older, Mum called him "Spittin Mac". He chewed tobacco (we thought it was gum). Don and I were fascinated; he chewed and spat - never once did he hit the porch; it was an act of perfection, a graceful arc that landed farther and farther away, exactly where he aimed. Don and I studied the mechanics carefully. We were ready. There was one problem: in our family gum, although not exactly prohibited was also not encouraged: ladies don't chew gum was the reason I was given; Don was too young for a reason. That day we coaxed and Mum relented. We were each given a stick of gum. While she was in the store, Don and I sat in Mr. Mac's spot. We chewed and spat, improving our distance consistently - until Mum came out. It did no good to explain that we weren't really spitting; we were trying to out-shoot Mr. Mac. Mum was adamant: Mr. Mac spits because he obviously has a problem swallowing, no lady chews gum, no one ever spits, and no one mimics someone else. Since then neither one of us has had any interest in gum.

Another of our favourite people was Lillian Ashby, the postmistress for the lake. Her little post office and apartment were at the back of Olie's store. As you walked along the side of the store to the post office, you walked between two gardens. Mrs. Ashby loved flower and vegetable gardening. In fact, Mrs. Ashby loved everything and everyone. If she couldn't sell you her vegetables, she would give you some.

Her life had had many sad nesses. She had been raised as a foster child by an elderly couple. Her husband had drowned on the lake leaving her to raise two small children. Her son, Barry, had died in his early 20s of carbon monoxide poisoning when his car got stuck in a snowbank. Her daughter, Gail, lived in Montreal, a long way in the 1930s. If Mrs. Ashby was ever sad, lonely, or

unhappy, no one ever knew. She hugged and kissed us all every spring, always hummed to herself, smiled, bubbled with enthusiasm when talking, and seemed to flutter and float whenever she walked. I was always her little butterfly.

Every day, except Sunday, a half hour before the mail train went through, Mrs. Ashby hung out the mail bag. Beside the tracks was a tall metal pole with an arm extending from the pole towards the track. Mrs. Ashby would climb up the steps to the platform around the pole and attach the bag to the arm. When the train approached, a metal arm extended from the mail car, snatched the hanging bag and swung it into the train car. The incoming Sesekinika mail bag was thrown out at the same time. Someone usually carried the mail bag back to the post office for Mrs. Ashby. Then, while Mrs. Ashby sorted and stamped the mail, we would visit in the post office. In about 20 minutes the little panel would slide back and Mrs. Ashby's beaming face would appear. The mail was delivered via the friendliest mail service in the world.

Even before Olie and Mrs. Ashby, my first childhood memories are of Gus. He was a Finish man who built on the shore of the lake. After Gus died, Ed Bartell bought the house and property. It now belongs to Brian Landers. Gus did odd jobs for people. He looked like an outdoorsman, tanned, wiry, tough. One eye was slightly smaller than the other. He must once have had teeth and hair, but not in my memory. Whenever he laughed, which was often, one big grubby hand reached up to cover his nose and mouth, then moved down seeming to stroke his chin and chest. Gus never had any fondness for water, but he did for whisky and garlic which made us grateful that he covered his mouth when he laughed.

Gus, like most of the men in the village, was a bachelor. The work he did for people was tremendously hard, tiring and dirty. He seldom wasted water on himself, at least not on the outside of himself. He had a garden, a cow or two and chickens. The animals shared the house with him. He owned a little boat, never a motor. He rowed everywhere. His rowing was as unique as he was: the boat faced frontward; Gus rowed backwards. To earn extra money, he would fill the boat with vegetables and cow manure and row past all the cottages calling out "vegetables and cow shit".

Gus enjoyed children. We were never chased away when we followed him as he worked. Don, particularly, trailed after Gus trying to do everything he did. If Gus scythed grass, Don swung a stick to cut grass; when Gus chopped down a tree, Don pounded a stump; when Gus moved rocks, Don moved pebbles. When Gus rubbed on fly dope, Don lathered it on, too, on everything - his face, clothes, and shoes. The day Gus needed more and the bottle was empty, Gus, with Don in tow, went to the back door and asked my grandmother for some "gris". Grandma, a very proper lady, always had trouble understanding Gus. Gris had to be something no woman would keep in the house. Gus patiently repeated himself until, in exasperation he hauled out the empty bottle and said "the leetle

bugguh used it all" and he needed gris to keep the flies away. Grandma gave him the grease.

Another day, Gus was moving the outhouse. Grandma was again looking after us. Gus came to the back door, told my Grandma to "teel de meesus de crappuh ees done". Grandma, of course, didn't understand. Finally, Gus said, "de shit house -shees done". Grandma's arms flew up, scandalized, "thunderations" was her response. But, she got the message.

Gus never had much money but often talked about his wealthy brother who was a butler in New York City. One year he received word that his brother had died and had left Gus some money. He was advised to go into town and see a lawyer. He rented a room for the night over the steam bath, took a bath, dressed up, saw the lawyer, and died in bed that night. Since Gus never took baths, my childhood wisdom told me he should never have taken that steam bath; he was allergic to water.

Sam Ivars, also a bachelor, replaced Gus in doing work for people. Sam built his house at the end of the village. Gord Klockars now owns it. Sam was a good-looking Fin-Swede, hard-working and a good worker, but oh, so stubborn. Mr. Cramp called him Sam-Mule.

Sam owned a little flat-bottomed boat and a small motor. He couldn't swim, but he was fearless. In rain or wind, empty or loaded with lumber, that little boat would be driven across the lake. Sam never thought of danger. He did swamp his boat once when delivering a load of lumber to the Neelands. Fortunately, he was close to the dock. With Dad's help, and guidance from Don and me, he was able to get to safety, bail out the boat and rescue the lumber. Whenever islanders saw Sam, in the boat, they all kept watch until he had arrived safely at his destination.

Sam had learned English late in life. He spoke easily and well, although not often. Writing was another matter. He wrote words the way they sounded. Every winter he kept in touch with us especially if he had done work after we had closed the cottage. At Christmas we would receive a pretty card (from Olie's store) with a brief message, such as: "the scul has a nu teechr", "Mery x-mus Yu oe mee \$50".

Sam died suddenly in his house. The words on his headstone: "Samuel Ivars - A Faithful Worker". That he was.

From the mainland, memories drift to the island.

Here, from the time Don and I were able to walk any distance, Mum would take us on our annual spring walk from one end of the island to the other. To be the first over the trail was a great adventure, and a ritual we loved. We checked all

the old familiar trees, watched for partridge, inspected for damage at cottages. Since boats were used only when necessary, walking was the normal way to visit neighbours. Children always used the trail. It was almost a social event because we got to visit with all the cottagers along the way and usually left with a couple of cookies. Now, sadly, the trail has disappeared in places, some cottagers don't appreciate children passing by, and boats are too readily available for youngsters.

In the late 1930's the three fastest boats on the lake were 35 horsepower ones. The "Viking" was owned by Chris Sorenson who owned the docking facilities on the mainland. "Yankee Boy" was owned by the Thompsons (parents of Mary Celia Moodie). The "Red Devil" was owned by Bert Elliott, the postmaster in Kirkland. Whenever one of the boats went by, all activity stopped as we gaze in awe at the fearsome speed. No one ever wanted to be on the water when one of the boats was approaching, particularly when it was the Red Devil. It was a boat well named: red, a smaller, lighter boat that seemed twice as fast as the other two/ and driven by a man whose family was never seen in the boat with him. This fact was not lost on any parents. I suspect it's why we headed for shore whenever we saw the Red Devil speeding our way.

As I grew older, evenings were busy. At nights adults gathered at one cottage or another up and down the island to play bridge or gin rummy. There was also a big summer dance for adults on the mainland at Chris's boathouse {later McGregor's). Florena Thornham played the piano for the dance. Many times, too, parents drove to Bourques for dances there. Bourques was renowned for its good parties. Saturdays, when teenage boys were off work, we teenagers traveled the lake to our parties.

The annual party on the island was the barbecue put on by the Thompson's (the parents of Mary Celia Moodie). Uncle Udie (Mary Celia's father) barbecued the ribs; Aunt Ret baked spaghetti; others brought salads and desserts. Only one year did we have a near failure: the year Dad forgot to bring out the ribs. He had to drive back to town, a long drive in those days. The food may have been late, but the party started on time.

One particularly memorable party was the mock wedding the women gave for Mrs. who was to be married in the fall. It was held at the McGregor boathouse (now the location of Ranta's cottage). Kath Thompson was the bride dressed in cheesecloth; Isabel Tripp, the groom; Sadie Irwin, the minister; I was the flower girl (in a nightgown). It was a lot of fun, but the most amazing part was the boat ride home- a motionless lake below the northern lights above. Never before or since have I seen northern lights as beautiful. They were in colour - blues, greens, yellows- dancing all over the sky and reflected in the lake.

Every year the island had bears around the cottages. There were no public garbage dumps, so each cottage dug a pit behind the house and buried its garbage. The pits attracted the bears.

For many years my niece and nephews spent summers with us. The summer that Sheree was six and the boys younger, we heard that a bear was prowling the island. Dad decided to shoot it, so he put out a pail of grease beside our garbage pit. Then he and Mum went into town. That evening as I was frying some meat for supper, I saw the bear coming towards the kitchen. He completely ignored the grease pail; the smell of meat was far more enticing. I took the meat off the stove, closed the door, and called the children to come and watch the bear. That is just what we did; we watched and watched as that bear got closer and closer. When I realized the bear wasn't going to stop, I got concerned and began banging the stove pipe with the poker. It was useless; he kept coming. About 4 feet from the window he paused, kind of nodded his head, then sat down to watch the antics of one wild female yelling and punching a stove pipe with a poker while three little faces were smiling and calling - nice bear, come on little bear. The children thought I was performing some miracle to make the bear sit. When he tired of the entertainment, he ambled back towards the bush in the direction of the Neelands' (now Caldbick's) cottage.

Then I realized that Peter Neelands three children were outside playing. There were no phones. The only way to tell them to bring in the children was to walk the trail. After warning Sheree not to let the boys out of the house, I dashed out the front door. With one eye on the bear, I tiptoed over the trail. Halfway the bear spotted me. He watched me. I watched him. He turned around. I turned around. He stopped. I sure didn't; I raced back to the front door. It was locked; to the back door, it was locked; back to the front -shouting to Sheree to let me in. Sheree, occasionally an obedient child, had locked the doors to keep the boys safe. I was running so fast and frantically from one door to the next, Sheree didn't know which door to open. To this day, when I expect perfect obedience from a child, a little voice inside me says, "No, make it almost perfect".

There are many more memories, but memory lane has to end somewhere. This will be the stop sign for now. I am still collecting memories, however, and plan to do so for a long time to come.

Pearce Sese kinika History

Submitted by: Betty Pearce

In the 50th Anniversary Year of the Lake Association, I must submit what I know, for Herb (deceased August 6th, 1998).

This property has been in the Pearce name since March 1, 1947. Ethel Pearce, Mother of Herbert Pearce, signed it over to him May 12, 1959. Herb and Kay started clearing the land for the cottage in the early 50's with the help of Kay's sister and brother-in-law, Pat and Lloyd Culhane. The Culhane children have many memories of summers here at Sese kinika. The cement base of the flagpole has the inscription "The Pearce's- Cedar Point- June 29/58. The precut cottage was erected by company-trained personnel, shortly after that date. In the 70's the large screened room was added- a wonderful place to entertain and to escape from the bugs.

Herb's friends tell me he was very involved in activities around the lake. He was President of the Lake Association in the 70's and continued as a director until into the 80's when he had to resign due to Kay's deteriorating health. For many years, Herb had an airplane and some referred to him as the "Sese kinika Air Force". He used the plane to spot and to advise the location of rocks in the lake.

Northwood Camp and its campers were dear to his heart and he often spoke of working with others of building the outdoor barbeque, of soaking bulrushes in kerosene for the torchlight boat parades and of taking campers for boat rides. He also spoke of the lake regattas and of pulling water-skiers in that event. This year, Mildred (Elliott) Towers, (her father was Bert Elliott, a cottager on the lake in the 30's and 40's), showed me an old letter from her daughter, Kelly, who was visiting at the lake in the 60's and she mentions Herb taking her waterskiing one day when they were both visiting the Moodies. Herb loved the lake and his favourite saying was, "THE SUN ALWAYS SHINES AT SESEKINIKA".

For me, Sese kinika will always hold special memories. As a young child, I vacationed with some of my parents friends, the Irwins, here on the lake. Their cottage was next to Dr. Jefferies on A1, not far from Oliver Blais' cottage, as I recall. I think there is a large new cottage on the site. Back then we stayed at the Elliott's cottage and slept in their loft. My most vivid memory of that time was loosing my little black spaniel pup for several days- he was found thirsty, hungry and dirty, too. He had slipped into a deep hole far back in the thick bush! I must also mention that the Elliotts had a lovely sand beach for castle-building and I was only allowed to wade into the lake a short ways.

Since 1990 when I first came to Sese kinika again, and to the Pearce cottage, I have come to love this place as dearly as Herb and his family did. So many wonderful friends here! It will be a sad day when I must leave- but my memories will remain- especially the "Herb" days.

Scenes of Sesekinika – Burgman Art

Submitted by: Signy Ingimundson-Campbell



Sesekinika Lake

"The Channel"

Scenes of Sesekinika – Janssen Art

Submitted by: Johanna Janssen







Sesekinika Burial Ground

Submitted by: Sesekinika Bookworm

Another one of Sesekinika's fascinating history is pictured below. The grave site is located just past the Sesekinika village, over the tracks, turn towards Vermette's cottage. Just at the corner you turn to your left.

Speculation has it that the native people traveled through the Sesekinika lake waterways hunting and fishing. Sesekinika was a stop over and hence became a private burial ground.

The name carved on the stone is Rosa Elizabet Black. She was of Ojibway descent and the wording inscribed in Ojibway means "She had lived a long and good life".

Two native graves, unmarked, are on either side and rumours were that she was a princess and the two graves are the warrior guards.

Some of the Black family has come in the past to pay their respects and maintain this special grave site.



Sesekinika Memories

Submitted by: Don Sampson

I probably first visited Sesekinika around 1946, at age 7, shortly after I was adopted and brought to Kirkland Lake by Bill and Bessie Sampson, my adoptive parents.

Our family had a cottage (OSOKOZIE) (Oh, so cozy!) on Island A-1, across from the (then) Crippled Children's Camp, and a 16' Cedar strip boat powered by a noisy, silver-coloured 9.8 hp Johnson outboard with an "external", tubular gas tank hanging off the back of it, along with a separate "pull-cord" for starting. This was the motorboat I first learned to drive. Dad, (Bill Sampson), had a 3 horsepower inboard "putt-putt" that was pointed at both ends and steered by ropes running through pulleys to the rudder at the "back". It had a top speed equaled by its cruising speed, of approximately 3.5 miles per hour! He and Oliver Blais (and another gentleman I can't remember), used to rendezvous regularly and tour the lake "in formation" in their regal crafts.

One summer, I built a tiny "raft" that would hold only one person, lying down, so I followed our toy sailboat out behind a nice breeze on a sunny day. I fell asleep on it and when I woke up, I could hardly move, burnt to a crisp, all covered in water blisters on my back and legs...didn't sleep for nearly three days! (Never tried that again, either!)

I eventually got (courtesy of my wonderful Dad), a 10' Paceship Plycraft (moulded plywood), open-cockpit boat with no decks and a 10 horsepower Johnson motor, complete with brass "speed" prop. I painted shark's teeth on the front and called it "Shark". It would do 26 mph and could actually pull up 3 water-skiers at once! I built my first "surfboard" out of "ship-lap" wood (a flat board attached to the tow-boat by a rope, and a rope "handhold" attached to the board), and my friends and I were probably the first to ever "surfboard", or perhaps even to water ski on Lake Sesekinika. How many hours we roared around the lake, creating "walls" of water everywhere we went!

Shark won almost every race it entered in the Sesekinika "regattas", which were held every year on the lake.

Later, I had another Plycraft boat, called a Mahone, with a beautiful front deck and a split centre deck, with a 35 hp Johnson motor that would go 36 miles per hour, which did even more water-skiing and racing. It too, rarely, if ever, lost a race. It was called Shark II.

I'll never forget the time that another Sesekinika "speed-demon", wild Bill Wiggins, drove his big Paceship 14-footer with a 25 hp Johnson on it, right over the back of my little "Shark" at the start of a regatta race, while "jockeying for

position"...! Think it was Shark I with the 10-horse motor, and, if I recall, I still won that race!

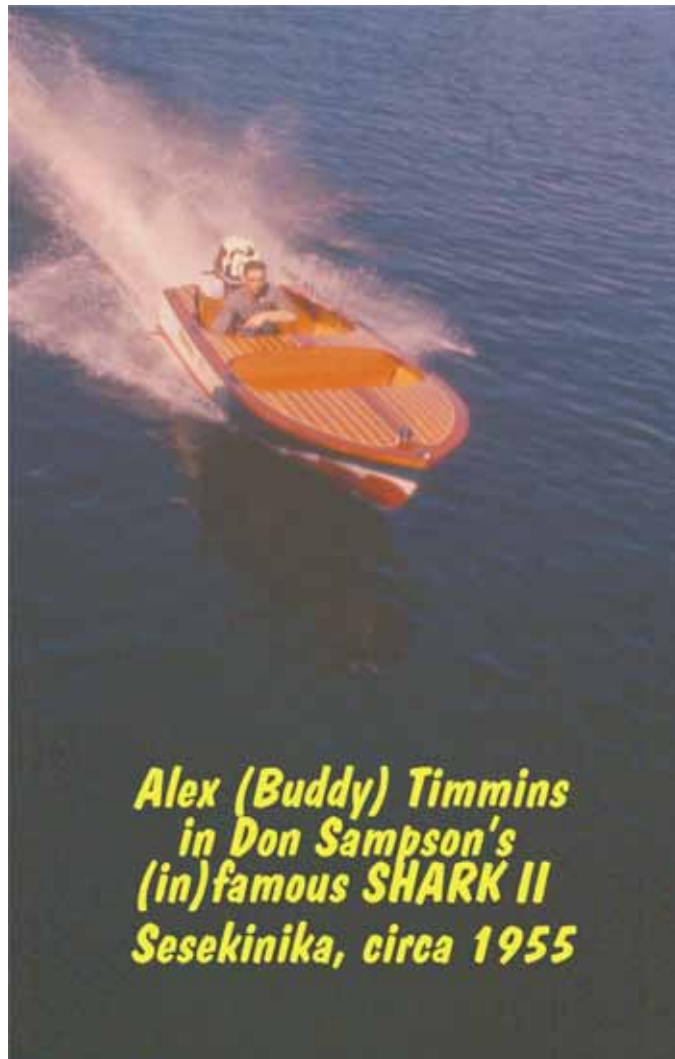
Our family spent many, many, wonderful weekends and holidays at OSOKOZIE, until approximately the early eighties, when I sold it and moved to Crystal Lake, where I now reside permanently.

Memories of Sesekinika – Pictures

Submitted by: Don Sampson

1. Bill Sampson & son, Don, circa 1955
2. Alex (Bud) Timmins & Terry Davis in Shark I, 10hp Johnson, 26 mph
3. Alex (Bud) Timmins, Shark II, 35hp Johnson, 36 mph circa 1957
4. Alex (Bud) Timmins, Don Sampson, Dave Soucie and friends
5. Bill Sampson's "putt-putt"







Sesekinika Schoolhouse

Submitted by: Sesekinika Bookworm

The village of Sesekinika has the prestige of hosting a one-room school house. This is located in the village almost directly behind Lois and Ken McGregor's homestead.

The building was erected from 1929-1930 and at that time cost three thousand, five hundred dollars cash.

It served as a school house, a church, and community centre; a political arena and dance hall until the school closed in 1964.

At this time the building was sold to the Mitchell family who still owns it and frequently visits Sesekinika.

The school house was constructed of wooden planks and painted a neat white with green trim and the windows offered a view of Sesekinika Lake.

Inside one enters a vestibule just before the school room and it's storehouse of educational treasures from days gone by.

The blackboards still remain on the far wall at the front. A row of desks complete with ink wells bring back memories. The cloakrooms and washrooms are also preserved in their antique condition and add to a visitor's most wonderful feeling of nostalgia.

Our own Eva Killins and Lloyd McGregor served on the school board for many years. The board kept records of expenditures, paid the teachers' salaries, bought the books and supplies. Eva still retains much of the school boards ledgers. She recalled that Box Socials were a popular event. The boxed lunch was raffled off and you ate the meal with the highest bidder. These made money for children's outings and special events.

Many residents; former and present have some fond memories of a one-room school house. Education had an entirely different aspect at that time.

Marion Stroud was a teacher and a former student at the Sesekinika Schoolhouse; she had come here to the village with her parents' vaudeville show while they were entertaining at the various small communities. Residents and cottagers filled the schoolhouse to the doors. Doc and Rae Hamilton were Marion's parents. Her mother played the piano and a bass silver drum (folding drum). Her father played the bagpipes; he was also a fancy paper-tearer (which meant he created art forms with paper cuttings). He was a standup comedian and Marion too was a vital part of their performances.

Marion's parents settled here in Sesekinika and after completing her early education Marion went on to teacher's college graduating in 1947 just after the Second World War.

Upon receiving her teacher's certificate she wrote a letter of application to the local school board who accepted her and Marion had her first teaching position. She was twenty-one years old.

Marion boarded upstairs at the current Klockar's residence during her teaching days in Sesekinika and greatly enjoyed the wonderful multi-cultural village life. She taught here for a total of three years.

The school children's parents contributed notably to the picnics, skiing parties and Christmas concerts. Social times in the village were always well-attended. Halloween parties included students, parents and even grandparents in costumes.

Every occasion inspired many different artistic projects which in turn also became part of a pupil's education. When it snowed; paper snowflakes soon decorated the classroom. Discussions were held on the varieties of snowflakes, formations and numbers of snowflakes etc. The themes would then be geared to science, math, reading and writing.

So many memories of a different era.

Sesekinika Snooker – Gordie MacDonald

Submitted by: Teresa McDougall

Nereda Rehm and I (Teresa McDougall) chose a bright sunny afternoon to ski over to Gordon MacDonald's island home. He had agreed to relate to us the story behind his famous snooker table.

Gordie poured us a fine drink and then we were entertained to a most memorable afternoon.

The table was given to what became the Canadian Legion. It was called The Post during the 1st World War.

The Wright House was the original site of the legion. Bill Wright, one of the founders of the Wright Hargeaves Mine donated money to build it on the corner of Government Road and Woods Street. It is now the site of Vic's Fitness Centre.

Harry Oakes donated the table to this building and there is an engraved brass plaque which reads;

Presented to Kirkland Lake Post Canada Legion
By
Harry Oakes Esq.

In due course of time and usage the Legion executive decided to make a meeting room from the area which housed the snooker table, so the table was dismantled and shuffled off to storage in various basements for many years.

In the 1960's the present new legion building was constructed and during the building of it Gordie discovered the snooker table in Ken McGuarrie's basement. Stored away for all those years, it was badly deteriorated and so it would have to be completely refurbished.

After seeing the dusty pieces of that grand old table that was once such a vital part of our history, he knew he had to have it! Yes! This table deserved much more than a basement storage room. He would restore it to the former original beauty.

Thereupon ensued many months of careful restoration by a good friend, Reino Maki who shared Gordie's passion to preserve what was once a thing of magnificence!

It was an expensive venture. The materials that we ordered were of the very best quality. The pockets replaced and the slates redone. The chipped, scratched and worn wood was carefully sanded and then lacquered to bring out the fine grains of the might oak.

Some years later, Gordie decided to build himself an island home here in Sesekinika wherein he could watch the sunrise and sunset. "A bachelor's paradise!"

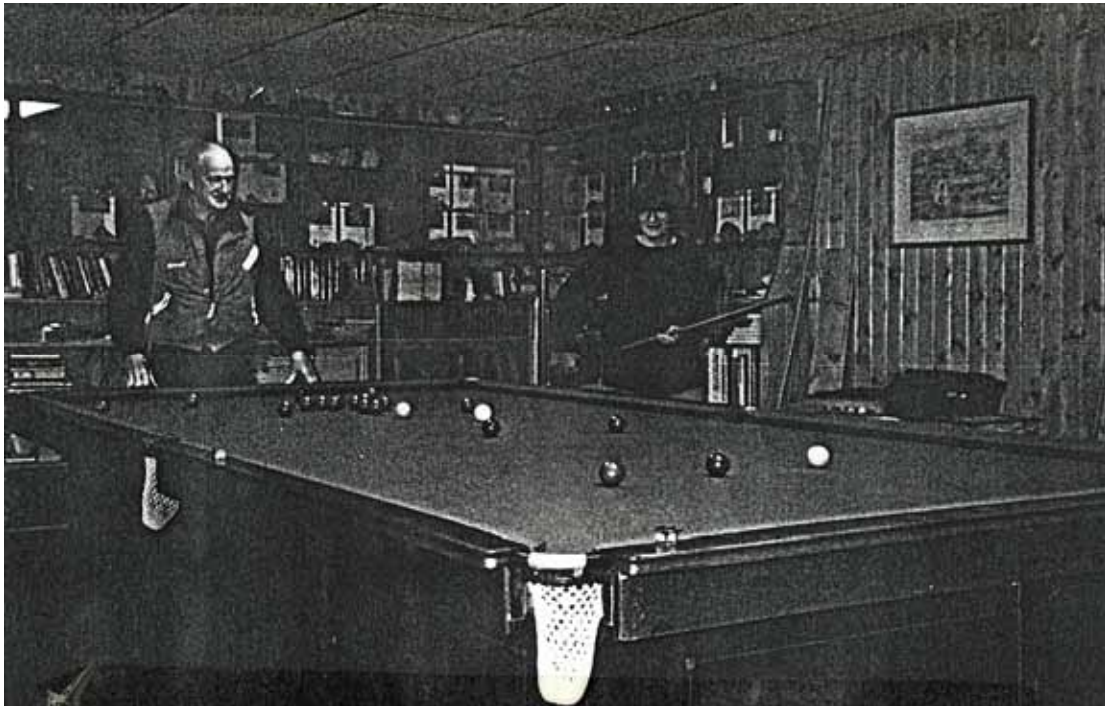
The room in which the table would eventually preside was decided on and it became an immense 18x40 feet with spectacular view of the lake. Some say he built his house around the table.

All was finally ready for the transportation of the table, of which the five slated alone each weighed 350 pounds. It was an exercise of endurance! Bill Righton and George McDonald helped with the move during the winter freeze. Reino Maki came over once again to assemble the table "for the last time."

And so Nereda and I tried our hand at snooker. Nereda took some pictures. Our afternoon just flew by and it was already quite dark. The homemade bread was baked to perfection. So very good!

Gordie insisted on driving us back with his skidoo and tucked our skis and both of us into his sleigh.

A true gentleman in the finest sense. Thank you!!



Sesekinika Stories

Submitted by: Marie Shunsby Woaller

Marie Woaller came to Sesekinika Village in 1908, when she was 8 years old. She and her Mother, Petrina Woaller, arrived on the train.

Mrs. Woaller and Marie had emigrated from Norway to the U.S.A. Two years before, to settle in Chicago, where their older daughter and sister lived. She was married but very tragically died with the birth of her first child.

Mrs. Woaller did not really want to stay in Chicago with all the sad memories of her daughter's death.

Her son had gone to Northern Ontario, together with Olaf Olsen. When the Canadian Government opened up homesteads in the north, they took out a homestead and wrote to Chicago, inviting Mrs. Woaller and young Marie, to come and settle in Sesekinika.

The Trans Canada Railway was being built in that time and Northern Ontario opened up for settlers.

Mrs. Woaller packed her suitcase, and with her little 8 year old daughter, Marie, traveled to Northern Ontario on the new railroad.

Marie remembers their arrival at the Sesekinika train station. I am quoting Marie here: "When the train came to a stop, I saw my brother and Ollie standing there waiting for us. I got very excited. As soon as the train stopped, I jumped right out and sank t my armpits in the snow bank." It was the end of April, 1908.

Marie told me that they went in a rowboat across the lake to where the future homestead was situated, on the north end of the lake. Marie's brother and Olaf had built a small, one room cabin, on the homestead, close to the lake. They also had cleared a few acres for a hayfield.

The cabin was pretty primitive with an earth floor. They farmed a bit and traded with the Indians. Their supplies had to come from Englehart on the train. There were no roads. After a few years they moved to the village. The brother moved to the U.S., where he died in the collapse of a bridge. Olaf Olsen lived in Sesekinika for the rest of his life.

When they lived in the village, they still did some work on the homestead. In the summer, they would make that into a little outing; row across, stay in the little cabin, cut some trees, etc. A certain amount of work was required by the Canadian Government. After so many years of this, the land was yours and you got the deed to the homestead.

We, the Janssen's, bought this land in 1970. Marie Shunsby (Woaller) walked around with me. She pointed out where the one-room cabin stood. It sure was small. The foundations are still there. Also the broken remains of a woodstove. Poking around in it once, I found an old, black, crooked bottle. It looks like a medicine bottle. I took it home, cleaned it and put it up on my kitchen cupboard, where it still is.

Marie also pointed out where the clearing was, that her brother and Ollie Olsen made. Of course, it had all grown in, mostly with tag-alders. Marie still called it "The Farm".

Two years ago we had it cleared again. Quite a bit more than the original clearing, but it is the same area. We are now trying to grow some grass on it and maybe in the future there will be some horses.

Life in Sesekinika in the early 1900's was tough. Medical care, as we know it now, did not exist. When you were sick, you doctored a bit yourself. When you were very sick, you got the doctor from Englehart to come out on the train to see you. That is: if you had the money!

Money was scarce in those days. You only called the Doctor when you were at your wit's end.

When Marie was a young girl, she became very ill. Her legs got badly swollen and she was running a fever.

After trying a little bit of this and a little bit of that, while Marie kept on getting worse, Mrs. Woaller sent a message to the doctor in Englehart and he came up on the train and got off at the Sesekinika station.

He examined Marie and diagnosed her as having a kidney infection. A very serious condition, especially in those days, before the discovery of antibiotics. There was really nothing to be done for it, but patient nursing and hoping for the best.

The doctor gave Marie's Mother some instructions for the care of her daughter, she paid him, and he took the train back to Englehart.

Marie was bedridden for months. Her Mother looked after her and it took a long, long time before she saw some improvement in her daughter's condition.

A year later the same doctor from Englehart was called to Sesekinika again for a different patient. While in the village he was asked: "Doc, have you been to see Marie Woaller yet?"

The doctor answered: "Oh is she still alive?"

Those were the days, the good old days!!

St. Augustine, Florida

February 8, 1995

The Venerable Putt Putt

Submitted by: Susan Thornham & Celia Moodie Topping

As I grew up on Lake Sesekinika, boats were very different from those of today. One class of boat which has totally disappeared from the lake is the "greatest little motor boat afloat", The Disappearing Propeller Boat, the Dippy, or as we affectionately called it, "The Putt-Putt."

The boat originated in Port Sandfield and the first patent was granted in 1915. It is described as "a unique contraption which would permit small rowing skiffs to be powered by small lightweight gas engines. The propeller and shaft could be raised manually into a small box fitted into the keel of the craft so that the boat could be hauled out of the water onto a wharf or beach." The propeller was protected by a large skeg which would cause the propeller to retract into the box when it hit an object- the propeller would continue to rotate in the box. This feature made it particularly attractive at Sesekinika where, at that time, few of the rocks were marked. The original model was named the Water-Ford after the Model T Ford automobile which was very popular at that time. Two additional models were added soon after- the John Bull (a fat Water-Ford) and the Uncle Sam "a sleek 18 footer with a unique alternate light and dark strip deck treatment." This model became the most popular despite being the most expensive. In the early 1920's, the Disappearing Propeller Boat Company became the largest motor boat builder in the Dominion of Canada. It had a US plant in North Tonawanda, NY.

The boats were pointed at both ends with a wooden rudder at the stern. The little gas powered marine engine (3 or 6 hp) was situated in the mid section of the vessel. There were either 3 or 4 seats and the controls were in the mid section of the boat. The rudder was activated by ropes which followed the gunwales around to the stern of the boat. The early models did not have a gear box- so docking in the wind could be tricky. Grandpa's was of this vintage- and was made of cypress, a very heavy wood. Because it was heavy and traveled slowly, it was a very safe boat. I recall my sister, Polly, traveling around the lake in the putt-putt by herself with Max, the dachshund, when she was very young (four or five years old). And this was before the widespread use of lifejackets! Polly was able to pilot the boat at such a tender age because Grandpa had added an electric starter- the original was a pull start. The same qualities which made putt-putts safe also made them ideally suited for "cruising". The quiet engine made conversation easy and the slow speed ensured a peaceful ride around the lake or up the river past the railroad tracks.

To my knowledge, there were six putt-putts on Sesekinika in the 40's, 50's 60's and early 70's. They belonged to:

David Cramp (my grandfather)

Udell Thomson (Mary Celia Moodie's father)

Arnley Wright (Arlene Wright's father)

Oliver Blais (previous owner of McCallan's cottage on A-1)

Bill Sampson (Don Sampson)

Ralph Neelands (Peter Neelands and Nora Caldbick's father)

The early Sesekinika regattas featured a putt-putt race! It was a colourful event- Grandpa's boat was painted a subtle orange on the inside and a bright green on the outside. Bill Sampson's was red and white, and the others were the more traditional varnished wood. What the race lacked in speed, it more than made up for in elegance!

I am not aware that any of the noble little Sesekinika ships have survived. After Grandpa died, we gave his ship a proper Viking send-off. We burned her very carefully as she was well-soaked in gas and oil after many happy years putt-putting around Sesekinika!

Reference: <http://www.disappearingpropellerboat.com/history.html>

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Some Additional Reflections on Putt-Putts

Submitted by Celia Moodie Topping

With helpful input from my Mom (Mary Celia Thomson Moodie) and brother David.

One of my earliest memories was the boat ride each evening in the Thomson family putt-putt. Once dinner was over and the dishes were done, my grandfather – Poppo - loaded my grandmother and grandkids into his shiny wooden putt-putt for a trip around the lake. There was plenty of room, but I felt most fortunate to claim the single seat in the back. You see, I could lean back comfortably, face forward and simultaneously drag both hands in the water – one over each side of the boat as we wove our way among the islands, typically the ones facing our cottage on A-1. None of us can remember when my grandfather first introduced his beloved putt-putt to Sesekinika, but he bought it from someone in Muskoka where they were very popular at that time.

I recall one summer back in the 50's when a huge storm hit Sesekinika and it rained hard for two or three days. Trees fell on the power lines and there was no electricity. Someone needed to call Hydro, but the closest phone was in the

village general store on the mainland. After much thought, Poppo decided the putt-putt was the safest way to reach mainland. He and my brother David headed out, and were doing all right until they passed Fee's point and caught the high winds around the end of the island. The wind ripped the rudder off the back of the putt-putt forcing them to turn around and limp safely home. A photo taken later that week - a picture of David standing on our outer dock with the water level well above his knees - attests to the raised level of the lake as a result of that storm.

Poppo died in 1959. My grandmother sold our putt-putt to neighbour Glen Code the following summer and it was only on the lake for a short time thereafter.

A Loon in Peril

Submitted by: Elizabeth Croxall

Early one morning, in August of 2003, at our summer home on beautiful Lake Sesekinika, my husband Roy and I were going into town. As always, I looked down at the lake as I was walking to the car. I was very surprised to see a large majestic loon swimming at the shoreline. Seeing a loon is certainly not unusual here, but to see one right on the shoreline is strange indeed.

When we returned in the afternoon, I immediately went to work in my garden and to my amazement, as I looked toward the lake, I could see the loon still swimming on the shoreline. I immediately called Roy and we walked down to the lake. The loon made no attempt to swim away, but seemed to welcome our arrival. As we approached, we could see what the problem was. This beautiful bird had a fishing line wrapped tightly around his beak. Roy went into the water and held the bird at his feet. The loon made no attempt to escape, but sat there completely passive. I ran to the shed to retrieve a pair of pliers and after a considerable time, we managed to remove the fishing line and lure. Our beautiful loon immediately started desperately drinking water and then slowly started to swim away, continually drinking water as he went. Half way across the lake, he raised himself, spread his huge wings, called out his mysterious sound and then quickly swam out of sight. This gesture, my husband and I interpreted as, "Thank you."

We later heard that five days before, other cottagers had spotted the troubled loon. They tried to catch him to remove the line but the bird would not let them come near him. I can only imagine that after the five days the loon was desperate and therefore came to our shore for help. How amazingly intelligent this bird was! In his time of peril, knowing he had no choice, he approached human beings for help.

Sesekinika Lake Association History

Submitted by: Mary Celia Moodie

In the late 20's, as seen through the youthful eyes of your Historian, life at the village centered around the General Store of Olaf Olsen and the Marina of Chris Sorenson. While both locations are gone, in their day, each played a key role in the lives of summer and permanent residents. As General Store and Post Office and through the succession of different hands, the Store was the meeting place for many during the change from the days of the train to those of the auto. The Marina also had an important role to play in the period leading to the mid 50's. For gasoline, ice and people transportation, it served as a haven for property owners to discuss the affairs of the Village and Lake. The idea for an Association was conceived of such a gathering of well wishers for the good of the Lake Community. From 1935 to the mid fifties, ownership and operation was in the capable hands of the McGregor family until sold to Tony Heikkila. The Association began in 1954 headed by Alec Harris who, with Doctor Bill Burgman and Doctor Ralph Neelands introduced the Constitution. Aims were "for the stimulation and promotion of interest in aquatic sports, water safety and the enhancement of the natural beauty of Lake Sesekinika". Alec Harris, a resident of Kirkland Lake, was the secretary of all the mines in the city. Other names were; Bill Burgman, Secretary- Bill Wiggins, CEO & Sales- Bill Sampson and Ernie Miron. We run the risk of offending others whose names should be included here. Apologies given. Also active in the formation of Northwood Camp were Alec Harris, Gilbert Kokotow, Jack Richards and later Lloyd McGregor who served as Manager for 16 years. The relationship with the Camp continues to be active. Other activities over the years for the Sesekinika Lake Association have been aquatic sports, water safety, lake levels, and marking the rocks. The Association is the second oldest of such groups in Ontario. Taken from the 1998 Sesekinika Lake Property Owners' Association Newsletter

History of Sesekinika Village

Submitted by: Mary Ann Dumas

Sesekinika's history began with a Danish gentleman, William Wendt-Wriedt, who moved from the U.S. to a farming location in Englehart in 1906. Subsequently, he approached the then Director of Colonization, Thomas Southworth, with the proposal for establishing a Scandinavian dairy co-operative on land as yet unsurveyed (Benoit and Maisonville Townships). Southward complied with his request, designating the area a Scandinavian colony, and Wendt-Wriedt proceeded to advertise the land in the two townships, and moved to Sesekinika near the newly laid railway tracks.

Some confusion arose when the T&NO began to survey a town site at Sesekinika on land Wendt-Wriedt believed they had a claim to. A protest was made through Southworth in 1907, but to no avail, as the 1907 T&NO annual report merely states that "surveys for land required for town site purposes on Sesekinika Lake. Plans have been submitted to the Dept. of Lands, Forests, and Mines for approval." Southworth, in a memo to the Deputy Minister of Lands, said, "Mr. Wendt-Wriedt has secured a considerable number of Scandinavian families, some of whom are already here, others waiting for word from him to come, who are prepared to take up land and perform their settlement duties, just as soon as they can ascertain where the lot lines are. It is obvious that until the surveyors survey lines are run, they might be in danger of putting their houses upon the wrong land." Exactly how the dispute was settled is unknown; but the Sesekinika Village did develop right along the railroad tracks and most settlers established themselves on land within a five mile radius of the station.

First settlers came by water, in canoes. Supplies and mail were brought in by canoe and packhorse from the Englehart train station. Skis and dogsleds were also popular modes of transportation. School Section No.1 Maisonville & Grenfell(Sesekinika) was established in 1910, the second in the study area, after Dane. The two room school house was burned down in the forest fire of 1916, which also took a couple of houses and the only hotel (strictly residential) which was never rebuilt. Between 1916 and 1929-30, when a new school house was erected, some of the children went by train, to Swastika to school.

The second school was built for \$3500 cash. It served as a school, church, community center, political arena and dance hall until the school section was closed in 1964 and the building sold.

Though the ostensible purpose of the community was dairy farming, only three men lived by farming- Westergard, Guildburg, and Denby Scales. Their produce, dairy and vegetable, was sold in the village to tourists. Land around Sesekinika was found to be more suitable for prospecting than grazing and a goodly number of prospects sprang up in the area. However, as one old-timer put it, "There was more mining of the public in this particular area than mining of the ground." An

article in the Nov.8, Northern News sheds a little light on early prospecting in Sesekinika: "In the year that the Dome Mine started the genuine rush to Porcupine, 1910, two prospectors,(one of them Bill Biederman) came down from Sesekinika and submitted samples to a Haileybury assayer.

In a few days news leaked out they had secured high assays in gold, much to their surprise as they had sought silver. Word spread like wildfire. Scores of prospectors caught the train with canoes and packs and headed for the place."

Sesekinika was developing into a lively village and, by 1925 had already attracted a summer cottage industry. Many of the cottage owners were from Kirkland Lake or the Matheson-Porcupine area. Cottaging on the lake grew steadily as more and more people, particularly after World War II, began building new summer homes.

Marie Waaler had the first store in Sesekinika and it was taken over by the Olsen family. The Sesekinika General Store of today dates from the days when the Olsens owned it. No population estimates are available for Sesekinika but it is believed to have reached its peak in the twenties, when immigrants were arriving steadily and the mines were still good prospects. The Bennett Mine ran for two and a half years, employing 40 men and the Golden Summit sunk a shaft and installed a mill before it shut down. During the thirties, prosperity diminished as the effects of the depression were felt, but most of Sesekinika's core population of Scandinavians stayed on their land.

Visiting the Janssen's Ranch

Submitted by: Perry Craenen

I am sure you are all aware of the Homestead ranch/campground on the lake. My parents Gil & Diny Craenen were the first friends that Harry and Johanna Janssen had when they moved to Canada from Holland in the late 1950's. They lived together near Toronto and supported each other in this new land of Canada.

In 1965 my parents ended up settling in Southwestern Ontario in Strathroy and Harry and Johanna went north to Kirkland Lake. In the early 1970's dad informed us that Harry had bought a piece of nice lake front property north of Kirkland Lake. We were excited to learn that we would be visiting them and camping there. We loaded up the big old Pontiac with all of our camping supplies and proceeded to drive north to KL which was a 12 hour drive then because of highway #11 only being 2 lanes the majority of the way. I remember dad cursing because he would be stuck behind a convoy of trucks with no where available to pass because of the hills and curves.

We finally arrived in Sesekinika and dad was looking for the road to Harry's property. We stopped at the marina and they informed us the road was just past theirs 100 feet on the right. My dad drove along the shoulder and spotted a small sign on the tree that said H. Janssen and an opening into the bush that looked like a logging path. My dad being the adventurer he was pulled the car into the road and we proceeded to drive this road, branches scraping the car and big rocks jutted out from the road everywhere.

When we got further along the muffler was ripped off of the car. My dad just kept driving up to the house and later on Tony, Harry's son, welded up the muffler. This was my first trip to Sesekinika but not my last. I was there this summer and Harry and I had a good laugh about how wild I was as a teenager and how he was the "Warden" of his kingdom on Lake Sesekinika. I will continue to come back as I love going to Sesekinika and escaping the rat race here in the south.

McKelvey's Little Acres

Submitted by: Bill McKelvey

In the fall of 1936 Jamie Little (my father-in-law) was in the Sesekinika Lake area searching for lumber strands for his father's (Walter Little) logging operations. He found the present location of Gail and Bill McKelvey's cottage and Annette and Rob McKelvey's home. Jamie instantly fell in love with the area and purchased one lot, dismissing any further ideas of logging in this area. He convinced his uncle Joe Knox (his mother Hannah's brother) to buy the adjacent lot.

In 1937 Jamie built the West Sesekinika Road from the old Ferguson Highway (the present dump road) to the site of their lots. In the fall of 1937 both Jamie and Joe built themselves ice houses to store ice for the summer as electricity was unavailable and everyone used ice boxes. In the winter of 1937-1938 and in subsequent winters Jamie, with the help of men from the logging camps, cut blocks of ice to fill the two ice houses. The ice was packed in sawdust and lasted all summer. The ice houses later became storage sheds in the early 1950's when electricity came to Sesekinika. We had our ice house demolished in 2001 and there was still much evidence of sawdust.

In the summer of 1936 both Jamie and Joe cleared their lots and had their cottages built by two Finlanders. The Knox cottage remained in its original design until it was demolished for us by Wayne Conway and Chesty Clowater in 2002. By this time our son Robbie had built a huge log home on the former Knox property and the original cottage was becoming an eye sore. The Little cottage had two bedrooms and a bathroom added on in the 1950's.

Upon Jamie's death in 1971, Gail's mother, Mona, gave the McKelveys the Little property. We have, over the years made many renovations to our cottage but never changing the actual size of it. In 1980 when Joe Knox's widow, Mabel passed away we inherited that property which eventually was passed on to Robbie. Our children Tracy and Robbie and our grandson Austin have never missed a summer at Sesekinika. I don't think they ever will. Although Tracy and her husband Todd and Austin live in Barrie, they are always anxious to come to Sesekinika.

Gail and I have numerous fond memories of Robbie, Tracy, Kelleen and David Schonfeldt and Tanya and Ericka Whelpdale water skiing in the late 1970's and early 1980's behind our ancient plywood boat powered by a 1957 18 hp Johnson. Near the end of that notorious boat, the driver had to keep his/her foot on the fibreglass patch to prevent it from popping out. The kids used to go doubles behind this contraption. Attempts to construct pyramids were humorous and unsuccessful.

We have such fabulous memories of our time spent at Lake Sesekinika. It doesn't take long before the "good life" at "Ses" gets into your blood. Now Gail

and I spend between five and six months at the cottage. Fortunately for us, the next generation of McKelveys, Rob and Annette and Tracy, Todd and Austin Shuttleworth will continue the Little - McKelvey traditions.

Romance Blooms at Sese kinika

Submitted by Alan R. Schloz

The year is 1926. Gladys Royce of Toronto is vacationing with her sisters at Island A 13 at the south end of the lake. The cottage was then owned by Mr. Hastings. Gladys had several relations living in and around the area of the North including her cousin Elaine and husband Marvin Ireland of Engelhart, and Jack Pilsworth, a pioneer who came to Engelhart for a land grant who later owned the island next door to Island A 13 on the lake.

Down in Boston, Massachusetts a student by the name of Arthur H Schloz from Toledo Ohio was attending college. A fellow student with whom he had become friends told Arthur about a gold claim he had staked on the shores of Sese kinika Lake and of a train that could take them there. Before too long they were off on a long trip to Lake Sese kinika. There my father met my mother and romance bloomed. There was a wedding in Toronto, Ontario the next year.

I am Alan Schloz, the son of Gladys and Arthur Schloz. My parents were able to purchase Island A 13 in 1947. I spent many great summers there with my parents, my maternal aunts, my parent's friend Andy, and my own friends. Later on I would bring my own family there, my wife Janice, our four children, their friends and some of our friends and now return with my children, their spouses, my grandchildren, and friends.

I have so many wonderful memories of summers at the lake. I remember the days when, in retirement, my father, mother, their good friend Andy Anderson, and my mother's sister would come in June and stay until October or November. When they arrived at the lake they would be greeted by Jamie Little with a can of pure Canadian maple syrup as they came down the hill to the lake. The Littles lived right across the lake from our island and we kept our boat docked there. My parents would leave whenever the snow began, to avoid being trapped at the lake by the snow and unable to reach the highway.

Andy and Art were known in those days as the old fishermen of Sese kinika and we had many fresh fish dinners thanks to their efforts and knowledge of fishing and my mother and aunt's good cooking. My dad and Andy taught Bill McKelvey how to troll for the big fish in the lake.

The McKelveys now own the Little cottage (Jamie Little was Gail's father). We have had many good times with them and the Schonfeldts. There have been lots of practical jokes over the years like the time they painted our outhouse and dock with polka dots. We got even later by putting their lawn furniture on the roof of their cottage!

I recently gave the cottage to my son Tim and his wife Monica. They have spent almost every summer there since they were married in 1985 and, in fact, chose the cottage as their place to honeymoon.

We have over the years enjoyed many good times at the lake and the many great people that have cottages around the lake. The fourth generation of Schloz's is now enjoying the lake and it will always be deep in our hearts.

McClarty's and Sese kinika

Submitted by: Kalon McClarty

My name is Kalon Robert McClarty, and I'm an Albertan, well, at least I am now. I'm originally from Lake Sese kinika, or homestead camp, and a lot of you probably know my parents Mitch and Maryann. First off I'd like to bring one thing up. While browsing through this site I was shocked, (ohh yes, shocked) to discover a certain lack of McClarty on this site, not one darn reference. I mean come on! That lake would fall apart without a strong McClarty influence throughout. What are you guys trying to pull? I mean, you think we'd be on the site by association to Harry; the man is my grandfather after all.

But I'm not bitter, I'm just happy I caught it when I did. Now I'll make a few things known which my father should have put down months ago.

In case you don't know her, my mother, Mary ann is the daughter of Harry and Johanna Janssen (the Dutchmen on the point). She grew up at the lake with her brothers and sisters Tony, Tina, Henry, Marlene, and Eric. After ohhh, lets say 20 years she met a charming Irishmen in Alberta, a strapping gentlemen of short stature and huge brawn, who could wrestle a bear (starting on the bottom), or so I'm told. They married and had three wonderful children: Conor, the successful Power linemen, Breanna, the medical student, and Kalon, the arts student with eyes that could make even the strongest woman blush... but I digress.

We lived at the lake for, ohh, around 7 years, and ended up moving to Alberta, were we had many a wacky adventure. Every summer, though, we would return to our cottage at Ses, until my parents finally moved back there last year. 'Abandoning' their children in the Big Bad World.

Hun, our history didn't take as long to recite as I expected... Oh well, back to the reason we're all here, The McClarty's.

My mother and father now live at the lake, surrounded by wonderful people and beautiful landscape, anxiously awaiting this summer's family reunion.

So if your ever curious as to whom these McClarty's are that you keep hearing are causing trouble, our house is on the top of a hill of the homestead camp bay. (Second to the right from the beach) you can't miss it; it's the one with the grumpy Irishmen on the deck in the revealing robe.

The Corboulds of Sesekinika

Submitted by: Frances Anderson nee Corbould

Our parents, Olive and Ted Corbould, built their cottage "Innwood" on island 2 (#33 lot it is now) back in the early days circa 1927 when there was only one cottage on the island then Dad and Adams from Iroquois Falls built in the same year. They came from Iroquois Falls by train and had Chris Sorensen deliver them over to the cottage where our Dad kept his Peterborough Sponsson canoe row boat, canvas with cork channels, which prevented it from capsizing and/or sinking.

They rowed all over the lake - back and forth to Sesekinika Village where they got groceries and supplies at Ole Olsen's general store or to make a phone call on the phone attached to the wall which you to crank with the handle at the side to reach an operator to give her the number of whom you wished to reach.

Ole's store was an interesting mutual meeting place of the cottagers and villagers to meet and have a chat while they purchased everything from vegetables and dry food to saws and nails - fishing lures - minnows. He had a large weigh scale to weigh various quantities of flour, rolled oats, etc. People brought their fish in to be weighed usually if it was a good size. It was a competition among the fishermen of the lake as to who could land the biggest prize fish. I recall an American fisherman caught a 20 lb pike which was quite an event - word spread over the lake like wildfire. Well just after that event one of the fishermen on the lake caught another large pike but not quite as big so they (he and several of his friends) put a wrench in the fish and took it over to Ole's to be weighed - of course it weighed well over the 20 lbs. Ole's comment was "Well, that is a pretty big minnow!"

Downstairs in Ole's store was the post office and the post mistress was Lillian Ashby who was such a friendly person, always with a beautiful smile. She was a very hardy person. When Ole would cut the ice blocks out of the lake for his ice house which he used for his ice box or to refrigerate food and he also sold ice to customers as well. When the opening in the water was there at the shore, Lillian dove in for a swim. I think Lillian held the record for being the first one in Lake Sesekinika for a swim every year.

Moores, from Cleveland, Ohio, were one of the first cottagers on the lake who had the property on the mainland with the beautiful beach across from our cottage. Old Dad Moore (as we referred to him) and his wife were indeed pioneers of the cottagers as they lived in their very small cottage all one winter with only access to the town site by water or ice. After they passed on their daughter, Mrs. Mitchell and her husband, Dr Mitchell, also from Cleveland, carried on and built the beautiful log cabin - trees taken from their property to build it and it still remains to this day.

Bert and Hildred Elliott later bought the other beautiful beach called Pearl Beach in those days. They built first cottage on the rock overlooking the bay and the beach and they followed with two more on the beach. They were the first cottages in that part of the lake.

Mildred, their daughter, and I were good friends as our parents were. We had rowed over in the sponsson or we might have our five horsepower Johnson motor by then. Anyway Mildred and I were sunning and swimming and Bert comes roaring down to us and says 'come on girls, get in the boat' it was painted red and I think a 15 horsepower motor which was fast in those days - Bert called his boat the Red Devil. Anyway he said a plane landed at Caldbeck and Langdons - I want to go over (quite an event to have a plane land on the lake). So before we knew it some of the young people of their family were going in the plane for a flight up around the lake and of course they asked if Mildred and I wanted to go up too - so how exciting can that be for a twelve year old, which was me? We were enthralled our first time flying. Went past our two moms standing on the rock waving at the cottage - never knowing at the time their daughters were waving back from the plane.

My brother Allen has carried on the wonderful life as a cottager on Lake Sesekinika when he and Peggy bought their cottage. It is great for me to come and visit them from time to time as it keeps me in touch with loved ones and the ageless Lake Sesekinika.

Growing up in Sesekinika

Submitted by: Katie Beaudoin

Hi my name is Katie Beaudoin. I'm originally from Kirkland Lake. I moved here when I was 3. Before that we camped at my grandfather's cottage, located behind Dumas' house.

I enjoyed the community sliding party held by Norm Grossinger. I hope we have it again next year. Also, I like the annual ice fishing derby and although we didn't have a Sesfest last year, the previous ones were great. When I first moved out here, there was a craft night held every Monday night at the fire hall by Cindy Fillion. She would teach us crafts and make hot chocolate.

I learned to do lots of fun things here, like fishing, canoeing and kayaking. When I'm a little older I will race in the High Water Run with my mom.

Sesekinika-It's a great place to grow up.

Canada's Sixtieth Birthday

Submitted by: Mary Celia Thomson Moodie

July 1, 1927 marked the sixtieth birthday of the Dominion of Canada. July 2, 1927 marked the opening of the Ferguson Highway, joining the south and the north of the Province of Ontario.

Celebrations were held to celebrate the linking of Toronto to Cochrane by road. In Toronto, one example was the "Oranges to Gold" trip for over 100 motorists from Florida.

In the north, the Temiskiming Motor League and civic groups organized the "Northern Crusade". For this account of the crusade, our thanks go to a participant, Mrs. Eva Killins of Sese kinika and to the Northern Daily News. Mrs. Killins ran the Sese kinika store, was postmistress through the 1960's and 1970's. The many friends of her family can attest to the kindness and thoughtfulness shown all with whom she had contact.

One hundred cars from Cochrane with escorts of motorcycle police were joined by the other members of the Crusade traveling to the rallying point; Richmond Hill on September 6th.

A parade of 400 cars traveled through streets lined with cheering school children to Toronto City Hall for a welcome given by Premier G.H. Ferguson and Mayor Foster.

The Crusade moved to the Canadian National Exhibition grounds, accompanied by the two dignitaries and 15 floats depicting life in the north, developments there and the great riches there.

Day One Activities: (September 6th)

The luncheon at the Georgian Room of the T. Eaton Company followed by dinner at the Crystal Room of the King Edward Hotel. Vehicles were parked in the University of Toronto grounds under police protection

Day Two:

Visit to the CNE where the Crusaders were admitted free and the Mayors of the northern towns were given a luncheon.

Ladies had a Fashion Show and Luncheon at the Robert Simpson Company. Then all had reserved seats for the evening performance at the CNE grandstand.

Day Three:

Time for shopping, followed by a boat trip on Lake Ontario aboard the S.S. Cayuga. The provincial Government entertained at a banquet that evening.

Day Four:

Host for the day was the City of Hamilton who provided a dinner and a tour to view Niagara Falls.

The tours and activities were planned with the CNE with the object of giving the people of Ontario a greater insight and understanding of the opportunities and material wealth of this great Northland. Each Crusader car has a red sticker and people from the north wore buttons and were greeted as a Crusader. It was reported that the people of Toronto were impressed with the 'High Class' of the Crusade cars- a higher standard than that reached by those in the capital city of the province.

The result of the visit has been described as the biggest thing that happened in years in Toronto. It was an awakening, like an ice cold shower, to the members of the south who believed that they were the only Ontarians. The facts were clearly shown to be otherwise. There WAS a Northern Ontario which provided 1200-1500 people traveling in nearly 400 cars who gave of their time and themselves to travel 500 miles to share the common link of fellow countrymen.

A Colourful Local Figure, Denby Scales

Submitted by: Mary Celia Thomson Moodie

In the years following the exciting times of mines and hotels in the first thirty years of the 1900's, Sesekinika had a number of described best as interesting senior citizens. Among them was Denby Scales whose family and background were unknown, even to his closest friends.

Denby came from the Kingston area where he had worked on the electric railroad between Kingston and Ottawa. When the steam railway came north in the early 1900's, he was employed as a foreman responsible for his men and the amount of steel and ties used daily. Like many others of that era, Denby had no schooling, and being unable to read or write, he kept the daily information in his head until passing it on to the timekeeper. In all his time as foreman, there was never a dispute with his crew over hours.

When his lack of written records was discovered, and the railway discharged him, Denby settled in the Sesekinika area where over the years he farmed, raised cattle, and used his horses year round to freight materials for the local mines where they were working; as well as logging work and odd jobs around the lake. In addition to hauling soil and building material over the ice, he worked on and built several cottages including Gord MacDonald's old cottage.

While it is uncertain if he was ever licensed, he always drove a vehicle of some description. At one point, when the muffler gave out on his Studebaker, he promptly built himself a new one.

To all appearances a gruff, unemotional man, on many occasions he did quietly help people when he saw their need. It is said his premises were always spotless. In appearance he was described as handsome with a wide brimmed hat shadowing bright blue eyes.

In the winter of 1967 when his health and memory started to deteriorate, local residents worrying about his being so far out of town, moved him into the old Shea cabin at the edge of the village. He was moved later to the Old Folks' Home in the Chateau in Kirkland Lake, where he died.

Truly a noteworthy citizen of the Sesekinika community.

Written for the 1997 Sesekinika Lake Association Newsletter.

The Trussler Story

Submitted by: Helen Trussler

Two of our former Sesekinika neighbours, Bill McKelvey and Judy Barr suggested we should add our bit of Trussler history to the Sesekinika Lake History website so here goes.....

In 1950 Bill, along with Al Cameron, acquired 175 feet of Lake Frontage from Norman Mortson, Gus Mortson's father. It was located between properties owned by Joe Knox and Jamie Little (now McKelvey) and Ken Griffin (now D. Thompson). The price was one dollar per foot for the land, a big investment in those days. This piece of land was, I believe, part of a mining claim and there was an old cottage on the part that Mortson retained.

The following summer Al Cameron was transferred to Sudbury by the Department of Mines and Bill's Mom and Dad, Grace and Rollie Trussler, bought his piece of property and built a little cottage on the point for themselves. Ours was built in 1950(20 feet by 24 feet) using trees from the site for the base and we were able to find a source of unplanned lumber for the frame, then some siding. With lots of help from family and friends we had ourselves a summer cottage.

We were fortunate to find a very good, not too old cook stove which was still in working order when we sold the property. We had 2 children, Andy and Grace at that time. Our third, Tom, was born the following January. John arrived 3 years later. We had no hydro or water, just what we carried from the lake and we brought drinking water from home. We could get water from a spring up in front of Linton's or from our good neighbours the Littles who had a well if we should run out. Refrigeration was a problem and we did acquire an old ice box refrigerator but could only get ice at Gull Lake where George Henneberry had an ice house. Young people today would have no idea of that kind of carry on!

Don, Bill's brother, left Kirkland Lake in the late 1950's so he did not build on his 50 feet so we acquired that part. The remainder of the Mortson property became available sometime in the 60's and Dad, Rollie Trussler bought it and renovated the old cottage. He later sold it to Cliff Rankin, but severed a piece from the west side to make his lot larger. Rankin sold to Bill and Isobel Barr and their daughter, Judy Barr built a new cottage in the 80's.

When Bill's Mom and Dad were no longer able to come to their cottage, we bought their place. We had an aluminum row boat that we had acquired before we had become cottagers and went to various lakes such as Victoria. Later better boats and motors followed. Bill built row boats for our 2 younger sons, Tom and John and of course they assisted him. This was quite an achievement for them!

Gradually we would spend the whole summer at the cottage, lots of good times with cousins and friends visiting, blueberries to pick, and not always appreciated by the youngsters and fish to catch. We went to town to do the washing, get the mail and shop. I remember there was still door to door milk delivery then and the milkman from Producer's Dairy came one day and asked if I would like milk delivered to the cottage. I was so surprised, never expected that they would come out there and I said "OK". Then Lindfors who was our regular supplier in town came and was not too pleased with me. Note; milk was delivered in glass returnable bottles in those days.

There were many young folks spending their summers in the "bay" so there was always something for them to do. As the years rolled on the children married and moved from the area but did enjoy bringing the grand children to visit at the cottage. In 1996 we moved from Kirkland Lake to Powassen where John is located and began to find the trip back to Sese kinika a little much and the children not able to come to the cottage very often so we decided we had better sell. Andrew Johnson of Kirkland Lake bought our place in 2002. We do miss being there but are quite happy in our new home and we are thankful for the 52 years of good memories we have of happy times at Lake Sese kinika.

Sesekinika Song

Submitted by: Mitch McClarty

Sesekinika There is a place in Ontario's northland, Full of black bear and beaver and moose. I've got a home on a lake, Sesekinika, Where Mary Ann and I go to cut loose.

We cleared land and we built us a cottage, Raised three children somewhere on the way. As soon as we're free, it will be her and me, Headed back to paradise in our bay.

Someone said we were deserting our children, they're not children, and they'll be okay. If our kids need help, they will fend for themselves, And Mom's only a phone call away.

I'm tired of coming home to a land lot, I'm tired of life's silly games, I need a massive attack, of rest and relax, I need campfires and brew with my mates.

I need the smell of the forest around me, And the sounds through the window at night, I like watching things grow and mountains of snow, When I take my sled out for a ride.

I love getting in the boat in the evening, With tea and a crumpet for two. It's like sailing on glass as we watch the time pass, The lake mirrors the sunsets bright hues.

An osprey does spirals in the distance He stops and seems to hang in the sky. Then like a torpedo he drops, at a zeroed in spot, Folds his wings, tucks his head, and he dives.

We have family and friends waiting for us, There is yard work and the place needs repairs, There is lots to be done , but we'll make time for fun, Come and see us, if your way passes near.

Sesekinika Gold Rush

Submitted by: Mary Celia Thomson Moodie

Sesekinika has a great deal of history which dates back to the turn of the century. In the early days it was a thriving mining community with three mines- The Bennett, The Golden Summit and The Consolidated. There were two hotels.

When I first arrived with my parents in 1927 the gold rush was over. The centre of activity was the General Store, which continues to stand today. Previously, it had served as a summer residence for two of the original families, the Codes and the Kingstons. Descendants of both families continue today as part time residents of Sesekinika Lake. The proprietor of the store, who continued in that role to the mid 50's, was Ole Olson. His store boasted not only a hand crank telephone, a Post Office, and a large ice house well supplied with sawdust. There was also an avid bridge player in Ole Olson himself.

Everyone loved and admired Ole Olson. The money from your purchase was kept largely in tin cans on the same shelves with a hand coffee grinder and the goods. A giant head of cheese shared floor space with a large stove in the centre of the store, a meeting place all winter long for the residents. It is said that no one in the village went hungry when Ole Olson was around.

The above article was written for the 1994 Sesekinika Lake Association Newsletter.

Sesekinika Lake Our Paradise on Earth

Submitted by: Annie and Pierre Delnoij

In 1976 we visited Johanna and Harry Janssen at the occasion of their 25th wedding anniversary. We were surprised when we arrived at their place. During our stay we scouted the lake and its surrounding. When we traveled home, we knew it for ever: we visited a paradise. Since that year we often came back during summer and wintertime. So we experienced water fun and winter fun. Reason for us to come back with our children to celebrate our 25th wedding anniversary. We also came with grandchildren and last but not least we came with our whole family, with children, their partners and grandchildren (22 persons) for Johanna and Harry's 50th anniversary in 2001. We plan to come again next year - 2005 - it will be our 10th visit to the wonderful Lake Sesekinika.

Annie (Harry's sister) and Pierre Delnoij

The Early Days

Submitted by: Ken Langdon

I'm not sure my memories of Seseikinika are what the Cottage Owners' Association is after since they end in the early 'fifties before the Association was even formed. When I was invited to submit something to this web site I cross-examined the caller on the spelling of the lake as it would appear in the web site. She must have wondered just how good my memory might be and probably started to regret having issued the invitation. My reason for asking lay in the peculiar dichotomy displayed toward the name by the Temiskaming and Northern Ontario Railroad on one hand, and the His Majesty's Canadian Postal Service on the other. The railway station favoured Sesekenika while Mrs. Ashby at the Post Office insisted on Seseikinika. Although we liked Mrs. Ashby who was the most senior representative of the Dominion of Canada in Seseikinika, we thought the railroad probably knew where its trains were going better than the post office knew where the mail was going. It hurts me even today to have to use the Post Office spelling to get this Email away to you.

Sometime in the middle 'thirties my parents together with the Caldbicks of Timmins bought a cottage on the island at the extreme south east corner of the lake, opposite the T&NO railway tracks. The first summer they had it I remember sleeping in a tent outside the cottage which was too small to accommodate two families. The following autumn our parents arranged through Chis Sorensen (who owned the marina) to have the cottage extended by building a wide, screened porch around three sides of it. The following spring my sister and brother were taken up to see the upgraded cottage but I, as the youngest, was excluded from this trip (quite unfairly I might add). My sister's eight year old eyes were dazzled by a pair of cut glass door knobs which were on a pair of french doors installed to open onto the new porch. My sister's description was fulsome and from it I imagined a building somewhat similar to the Palace of Versailles but perhaps more modern. Although she had not specifically mentioned cut glass chandeliers and twenty foot murals I nonetheless expected these when I was finally transported to the island. My disappointment with the place lasted almost a whole day.

Our first boat was called The Haw Haw (which is maybe Cree for Leaks Like Hell - I'm not sure). It was built in the village and was about 20 feet long with a flat bottom. It was powered (if one can use 'powered' in this context) by a 1 horsepower Elto outboard motor of latest technological advancement. This motor featured no dynamo - the spark for its single plug was supplied by a car battery. The motor did not pivot. Instead, it featured a rudder slightly smaller than the one on the Queen Elizabeth and operated by two lines than ran through pulleys on the corners of the stern. The Haw Haw's speed with fourteen people aboard was 1.5 mph. Empty, except for the driver, one could whiz along at nearly 2 mph.

We only suffered the ignominy of having the slowest boat on the lake for ten years or so. Sometime in the early forties we acquired a second-hand Evinrude motor of 32 horsepower which was made of solid cast iron, was as big as a Mack Truck, and would usually go after 100 or so pulls on the massive fly wheel. This may have been, briefly, the fastest rig on Sesekinika although it was hard to prove this because it actually ran so seldom. Anyway, the (St. Louis) Thompsons on the Big Island seemed to buy a new motor every second year and always bigger than the last. We were quickly outclassed.

We acquired a couple of beautiful little skiffs - rowboats pointed at both ends and a delight to row. Our fleet also included a couple of canoes and our only reliable outboard - a Johnson Workhorse 10.

When I was a teenager I was returning from Francis Corbould's cottage driving the big Evinrude. For a change it had decided to start easily and run smoothly. There was bright moonlight and the water was like a piece of plate glass. As I rounded the point of our island I heard a funny whirr over the bellowing roar from the motor. The next morning I went down to the boat intending to pay Ole Olson a visit at his general store. But when I went to wrap the starting cord around the plate on the flywheel, there it was - gone! Why it hadn't taken my head along with it as it soared off into the night is a mystery. "You're probably being saved for hanging," my father told me sourly. It had only been a few years earlier when Bob Walker, John Barry and I were returning from a dance in Bourke's and managed to lose the Johnson Workhorse overboard in the middle of the channel. We hadn't been able to retrieve that motor so my father was a bit sensitive on the subject of motors generally.

We had the southernmost 13 acres on our island so had frontage on both sides of it. Our cottage was on a small point looking across a quarter mile of water to the railway tracks. As kids we would run down to the diving board when we heard a train approaching and wave violently at the engineer. He would always reward us with a nice blast from the steam whistle. Sometimes at night he would also give a toot on the whistle - a sound as pleasant to my ears as the cry of the loons as I lay out on the porch in a snug sleeping bag with the stars glittering like ice crystals through the treetops. It was a very sorry business when the ONR retired the steam engines in favour of the unromantic and disharmonic diesels.

The Caldbicks and Langdons rotated summer holidays, having July one year and August the following. In the spring and fall there was no exclusivity and often both families would share the cottage, even sometimes with other guests. One weekend we had twenty-three souls stay over. I can't imagine where they all slept - perhaps the "Upper Cottage" was used - a small building which sometimes housed a hired couple who might work through the summer months. In any event I've always associated Sesekinika with very happy times not only for we children but also for our parents and their friends who vastly enjoyed their weekend parties.

When I was a boy there were no bass in Sesekinika. The five species were pickerel, pike, perch, suckers and whitefish. The latter two were rarely seen. On occasion we caught pike so large we suspected they might be muskellunge but I don't believe that this was ever proven. The best pickerel fishing was right off our diving board and as a five year old I'd sit there by the hour, often with my father right behind me. One day in May my father left me on the board while he went up to the cottage for something. I had not yet learned to swim and, when a fish took my line I got excited and managed to fall off the diving board into deep water. Somehow, despite the usual happy noises of a bunch of people in a small space, my father heard the splash and tore out of the cottage, down to the water and dived straight in. He was wearing a heavy Hudson's Bay jacket and shoes and the ice had just gone off the water. He was lucky enough to plow right into me in the dark and frigid water and, somehow, managed to get me up and onto the rock. Firmly clasped between my legs was a bamboo pole and, on the end of the line, a half-drowned pickerel. My father said he had never before had such trouble landing a fish.

During the winter men from the village would come up the lake and, with great long saws with big teeth, cut blocks of ice for our ice house. As we got older it became our job to pry these big blocks of ice out of their sawdust beds, take them down to the lake to wash them, then bring them up to the cottage where there were two iceboxes to feed. I swear to this day that my right arm is significantly longer than my left from having hauled these big blocks using ice tongs.

I guess it's not surprising that Sesekinika Lake has always defined for me what a lake should be - that is, it should not be so large that a venturesome boy can't get to know all of it pretty well, and it must have a lot of islands. The islands are important not just because they will offer to some a very great deal of privacy but also, more importantly, because they vastly increase the amount of shoreline a given body of water can provide. I was very fortunate later in life when, moving to the Maritimes; I found a lake similar in size to Sesekinika and having many small islands one of which I bought. I was stunned a few years ago when a son-in-law estimated that this little four acre island provides over a third of a mile of shoreline. It is this factor, I believe, that makes heavily-islanded lakes so attractive for boating and canoeing. There is so much more to see and to explore.

I'm an old man now and it is more than fifty years since I last saw Sesekinika. **But when I close my eyes at night I often trace the course of the old Haw Haw from Chris Sorensen's boat house to our cottage an hour away under the surging power of the old Elto.**

16th Annual Firefighters Cornroast

Submitted by: Henry Janssen

The 16th Annual Firefighter's cornroast was held this year Saturday August 14. The corn was superb as usual.

PHOTOS:

1. The Chef



2. Enjoying the meal



3. Bonfire to end the night



The Kidnapping of Dr. Burgman

Submitted by: Robert R. (Rick) Richards

This happened in the fall of 1946. The days were getting shorter and colder. There was a nip in the air and Freddy Biggs and I were sitting in the Legion on the corner of Gov't Rd. and Wood Street sipping away at a couple of Black Horse Ales. Freddy and I had gone to KLCVI together and were the right age for war fodder. He joined the Signal Corps while I chose "Adventure in the Air" and flew Spitfires.

We had been upstairs listening to Spike Jones listening to Cool, Clear Water and other music of the day on the Legion radio and had come down to the bar for refills. There wasn't much to do in the evenings in Kirkland Lake. There were three theaters, the Strand the Capital and the LaSalle. There were several pubs and of course there was always 5 Main but that, for a couple of apprentice Pharmacists, was just a tad too expensive. Freddy worked for Boyd's and I dispensed pills and potions for Les Hornick. Freddy came up with the suggestion that we go out to the cottage. We were both lovers of the great outdoors and particularly of Sesekinika where I had bought a cottage for \$500 on Island A1 just around the corner from the Narrows separating A1 from A2. You couldn't call it a real cottage though. It was more of a shell. Arnley Wright had arranged the purchase of it for me from somebody who lived far away and did not use it any more. It came with five and a half acres of trees, and a sound roof that did not leak. I had replaced the broken windows. It housed a big belligerent iron cook stove with a mind of its own and a double bed with a mattress mice had lived in so long they figured they owned it.. That was about it. 00. Bill was there when we pulled up to the house. He got in and away we went. As an excuse we had used getting a couple of beers at Kenogami so he didn't complain as we went along #11 to Swastika where the pavement ended and gravel began. But when we passed Kenogami without stopping Bill finally figured out that he "had been had".

I agreed with Freddy's suggestion about going out to Sesekinika and suggested we bring Bill Burgman with us. Many of you will remember Bill.. At the time he was a brand new dentist who had joined the Army after graduating in 1944, had married my sister Katherine (Kay) and set up practice in Kirkland where he pulled and filled teeth for three bucks a pop.

At my suggestion that we bring Bill, Freddy said "Aw he'll never come with us."

I replied that he might if we didn't tell him where we were going. So we phoned and got him to meet us in front of the house. I had a brand new 1946 Dodge Deluxe which, in passing, cost me the horrendous sum of \$1,532.

We pulled into MacGregor's Beach where I kept my boat. We parked, went down to the boat and Freddy got in first, immediately taking the little seat at the bow. (No flies on Freddy). Bill got in next and sat in the middle. He had complained a

bit about this not being the best idea of the day but had good naturedly gone along with. I sat in the stern as I had to run the motor which was a little silver coloured 2 1/2 h.p. Johnston with the cylindrical gas tank crossways on the top behind the fly wheel which you wrapped a starting cord around and gave a sharp pull or two to get the motor going.

We shoved off into the pitch black lake and I attempted to start the motor. I pulled and pulled but the motor would not start. I said that this was funny because it had always started in the past. What to do? "Well we have oars", said Freddy. The oars were in the middle of the boat so the only one that could row was Bill. I kept pulling the starting cord and Freddy kept telling Bill what a good rower he was for a city guy. As the minutes went by I kept pulling the cord, checking the gas, telling the motor what I thought of it while Freddy kept congratulating Bill on his skill as a rower. By the time we got to the narrows Bill was ready to quit but once again Freddy told him what an excellent job he was doing and that the cottage was just around the corner.

Another 5 minutes and we were there. We shivered our way up to the cottage through the dark stumbling on logs and stumps we could not see. Even I was beginning to think the whole thing could have come out better. However, once inside with the Coleman lamp lit things started to change for the better. The anarchistic stove co-operated and we soon had a roaring fire going and got some heat into our bones. Did I not mention that it was cold? It was.

We were enjoying just being there and finishing our last drink when it started to rain. Not a nice gentle rain but a real downpour. What to do? Go with the flow! We took the mattress off the bed, put it on the floor beside the stove, ignored the mice which were squeaking their displeasure at being evicted and, 3 to a bed, slept the night.

In the morning, early, as the fire had gone out and we had awakened cold, we went down to the boat and Bill finally remonstrated. He said, "I rowed over here, somebody else can row back". So Freddy took the oars and I tried to find out why the motor had refused to even cough. I took the top off the carburetor and low and behold the float had been frozen to the bottom of the bowl. I freed it allowing the gas to run through, gave a couple of pulls and we were off. I had thought of checking this on the trip over but I was afraid of dropping some key part overboard in the dark.

Arriving home Bill was greeted with hugs and kisses through tears of relief while I had to listen to my father J.W. Richards, expound on my complete lack of hope for any worth while future and my likelihood of ending up "on relief" if I didn't change my ways because "You boy, don't have the sense God gave geese".

Bill's only volunteered explanation for his part in the outing was, "I was kidnapped".

Marions Memories

Submitted by: Marion (Hamilton) Stroud

One night Mary Celia Thompson (Moodie) and her friend Kay Baker came up to ask about the bagpipes, Dad explained a bit and next thing we knew Mary Celia was working hard to keep the pipes "howling" and Kay was trying to keep a rhythm going on the drum. Talk about laughter!

At the General Store one day while my parents chatted with someone, Olaf Olson (dear Olaf) talked to me. He asked me if I got paid (I was ten years old)" Oh yes, Daddy gives me the shim plasters". Remember the small bills worth 25 cents?... A couple of nights later, Dad at the door with cash box and tickets found himself being paid largely in shim plasters.... Strange.....Meanwhile, Olaf was sitting at a vantage point so he could enjoy all of this. He had told folks as they came into the store about me and the shim plaster and the folks picked it up from there. Can't you picture Olaf's sly smile as he would look over his glasses?! Mom and I had a great laugh and yes, I got the shin plasters.

My parents were accustomed to being "the entertainers". In Sesekinika WE were being entertained. The Thompson invited us to a "real" southern BBQ. Mary Celia picked us up; lovely ride across, cottages nestled among the trees- and Mary Celia sang some of her school songs. I remember this so well! It was a most enjoyable time and long remembered. Mom kept in touch with Mrs. Thompson and Mary Celia all through the years.

When our week was up the decision had been made. We would winter Sesekinika.

Upon return in late fall we settled into Chris Sorenson's cozy, white bungalow. It seemed only a day or two later when Randolph Nord arrived carrying a "still warm" pumpkin pie. "Welcome in" from the Nord family. Other folks dropped by, neighbors became friends---long time friends.

One winter evening (1940-1941) a group gathered just by chance. People dropped in. There were eight or ten people and Dad noted the different nationalities. In the course of conversation Dad turned to Sam Ivers and asked "Sam, do you have any property back in your homeland?" There was a pause.... quiet.... Then " Ja, I haf a cementmixer." There was laughter from our little "League of Nations" as Dad called it.

Why did we stay in Sesekinika? It was all because of the people. How does that song go?" I love those dear hearts and gentle people....". We lived in many different places and were away for periods of time but Doc and Rita Hamilton always returned. This place was, for them, truly home.

Highway bras are quite a distraction!

Submitted by: Breanna McClarty

This is a happy tale about friendship and community spirit.

Anyone driving down Highway 11 in mid-September may have been startled to see 50 braziers lining the road. No, it was not a feminist movement as some of you may have thought. Instead it was a tribute to one of our most cherished citizens. Had you read the sign "Raise Your Cups, Marlene's 50" you would have been able to gather that Marlene Danis, who still looks the part of a ravishing 21 year old, had in fact just turned 50. We, the community of Sesekinika, all pitched in old, new, tattered and torn bras until 50 had been collected. We then proudly displayed them for all to see. This is just one of the incidents that binds us together, not only as a community, but as a family. For this reason I will always proudly call Sesekinika home.

1937 Sesekinika Entertainment

Submitted by: Marion (Hamilton) Stroud

Note from the Editor: Arlene Wright

Marion's parents, Rita and Doc Hamilton owned a traveling show which performed in villages and small towns throughout the north. The following story describes their first visit to Sesekinika village. Marion performed in the show. She later became a teacher and spent three years teaching in the one-room "new village schoolhouse" mentioned in the story.

Here and There and Back Again

On a sunny 1937 day Sandy's Overseas Fun Show pulled in to Sesekinika. Little did my parents know the impact it would have on us.

The 1923 seven passenger Packard pulled its four wheel trailer up to the new school. Trunks were unloaded, curtains hung, bagpipes tuned and the big silver folding drum set up to go.

Evening came. Parents, grandparents, people from the islands arrived....The pipes and drum struck up and the show was on. There was comedy (Dad's "Paddy Casey"), music, singing-and where Dad was there was always laughter. On the artistic side he did a paper tearing act. He would fold a sheet of (in this case) the "Northern News", put it behind his back and (back to audience, tear), then facing the audience and unfolding would hold up a ship's steering wheel. The "piece de resistance" was the table cloth. Mom would have pasted several sheets of paper together (flour and water and Mom on her knees). When this was dry, then folded for the evening show Dad would tear and explain what he was tearing as he worked. When completed Mom would hold one corner while it would be gently opened up; The Pope's Table Cloth. In the centre seven stars representing the seven hills upon which Rome was built: in corners the cross and other symbols. There were no gimmicks! A picture of this will be added.

Before closing the show Dad would sometimes say "We hope you enjoyed yourselves tonight. If you did, please tell your friends about it....If you didn't- for goodness sake keep it to yourself!" the pipes and drum would close the show and invariably, folks would come up to talk. Mom and Dad so enjoyed this.

1937 Sese kinika Entertainment Photo

1. (No caption provided)



Opening the Moodie Cottage in 2006

Submitted by: Doug Topping

For over fifty years, the Victoria's Day weekend has been the date set aside for the official opening of the Moodie Cottage. The date had been selected by Mom, Mary Celia, and her parents before her, as the earliest date to cross the lake, open, and connect the water pump without fear of a hard frost, and the opening almost always went well. In May of 2006, however, the younger generation, David and Celia Jean, together with their spouses, came to Sesekinika to open the cottage and their experience connecting the water proved to be a trying and frustrating one. Several days of work in miserable weather, and a lot of help from Andy Beaudoin (referred to below as St. Andrew of the Mine) finally resulted in an operating water system. In retrospect of their week dealing with water pumps, Celia Jean's husband, Doug Topping, wrote of their trials in the form of the following document or scroll from long ago:

The Book of the Flowing Waters

Now it came to pass in those days that the annual pilgrimage of the foremothers was decreed. And David and his sister went forth, with their spouses trailing after. And they followed the northern star beyond the Wilderness of Tema-gami to the nether regions of the watershed as had been their ancient custom during the Festival of the Birthday of the Long Dead Queen. And this journey was accomplished in order to make plans for the creation of a summer work site. And as part of these plans, they set about to cause the flowing of the waters.

But the wrath of the Gods was upon them, and the Gods set out to test the people to the core of their souls. And sheets of rain and torrential winds were cast upon the people on the first day, and no work could be accomplished.

Now on the second day, the people labored long and hard, and they cried out for help, and lo, St. Andrew of the Mine appeared and gave them assistance. But though they labored from sunrise to sunset and many wrenches were used, there was no water, and the people beat their breasts and rent their clothes asunder. And thus ended the second day.

And the Gods conspired in the night following the second day, and they said, let us bring ice and snow to these people, and tiny flying black beasts out of season in order to anger and frustrate them, and it was so. And on the third day the ice and snow came from the skies unabated, and they were as at an ocean, because they could not see the mainland shore. And yet the waters did not flow even though the people followed the holy writings, edicts, laws, and parental directives. They made seven, yea, seventy times seven attempts, and all their efforts yielded only the dust of the earth. And the ability of the pump driving the flowing waters was questioned. And the people wept and gnashed their teeth, and the sun departed from the third day.

Now on the fourth day, it was seen by midday that there would be no relief for the people from their trials. And St Andrew spirited forth the Pump of Methuselah, so named because of its great age; and though the pump was from the sacred Mount of Trash, the Gods said, we will let this pump do according to its design, for after four days the people still have nothing to drink. And the people were given small amounts of flowing water. And they rejoiced exceedingly for this small kindness.

And on the fifth day, the people went to the marketplace known as Kirkland of the Disappearing Lake, and they took with them sacks of loons for barter, and spoke there with the traders in the stalls, and they bought a new pump from them for the delivery of flowing water. And on the sixth day, a man came from the wilderness of Ramore, and he was trained in bringing about the transport of water. This man worked during the rising of the sun, and during the attacks of the small black flying beasts of the air. And there was flowing water between the twelfth and thirteenth hours of the sixth day. And there was great rejoicing among the people.

But not all that occurred on this journey was trial and tribulation, for during these hardships, the people were blessed with flowing electrons in the wires of their abode, and were warmed by fires of their own making. And the people ate well. Knowing there would be neither manna nor fatted calves on their chosen island, they brought with them great feasts: lasagna and casserole, cole slow and bananas and strong tea from the orient. And they sat before the fire and told stories of old. And on the sixth day they celebrated the flowing of water with strong drink, in the form of Mike's hard lemonade. And they were satisfied.

But to keep the people humble and fearful of what might befall them, the Gods gathered together and decreed that there would be no TV for the people. They called upon obscure rules and enlisted the help of the Mother of the Bell, and the people were denied access to the satellite-stars of the sky. And this continued for eight full days, even unto the end of the journey of the people. And the people cried out and they donned sackcloth and ashes, for they were denied, yea, even one minute of Stanley Cup hockey.

And these are the writings that have been written in the Book of the Flowing Waters. THE END

Thompson Moodie Photos from 1930s

Submitted by: Celia Moodie Topping

1. 1927 - Ferguson Highway Postcard. In 1929, my grandmother (Ret Thomson), with 9 year old daughter Mary Celia (my mother), 7 year old son Bud, and her mother, traveled north to Sese kinika from St. Louis, Missouri. This Highway, linking North Bay to Latchford, opened in 1927, and theirs was one of the first American cars taking this route.



2. 1932 - Ferguson Highway Travel Permit. Each summer, the Thomson family make the five day trip from St. Louis to Sesekinika. You can see that this is actually the permit issued to them in 1932. Thanks to my Mom, Mary Celia Thomson Moodie, for sharing these pictures and keepsakes which are dear to her heart.

WARNING
Dangerous Fire Hazards and Valuable Timber exist adjacent to this Road.
Do Not Throw Lighted Matches, Cigars or other Burning Substances, from Cars
Build your lunch fires only in prepared fire places.
Be Sure Your Fire is Out Before You Leave
Penalties for Infractions of the Fire Act, up to \$300.00 together with imprisonment.

TRAVEL PERMIT No. 597
FERGUSON HIGHWAY
BETWEEN NORTH BAY AND LATCHFORD

Name Mrs Mary C Thomson (4)
Address St Louis
Duration of Stay on Road 1 day
Destination Sesekinika Lake
Car License No. 561625

BE CAREFUL WITH FIRE

ONTARIO FORESTRY BRANCH
DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND FORESTS
per. J. H. Miller
Date June 17/32

O.F.B. 82-A-1M-JAN.-31

3. 1934 - Chris Sorenson's Landing. Chris owned the mainland Marina (later sold to McGregors) and you could leave your car, rent a rowboat, dock and buy gas from him. For more about Chris, read *Sesekinika Memories* by Arlene Wright.



4. 1934 - Chris Sorenson. Chris, a year round resident of Sesekinika, was actually an American citizen who had fought in the Spanish American War. My Mom, Mary Celia Thomson Moodie, said he was always dressed as in this picture. He spent his last few winters in St. Louis with my grandparents - Udy and Ret Thomson. He is buried at Jefferson Barracks in St. Louis.



5. 1930 - Mary Celia Thomson Moodie and her brother Bud (Udell Thomson, Jr.)



6. 1932 - Thomson Moodie Cottage. For their first few summers, the Thomsons rented different cottages at Sesekinika. On their third summer, the family rented, and then purchased this cottage at their present location on A-1 Island. Over the years, my grandfather (Udy Thomson) added and enlarged it to the size it is today.



7. 1932 - Muriel Fee at the Kingston family (now Pat Cramp's cottage). Note the putt putt at the dock.



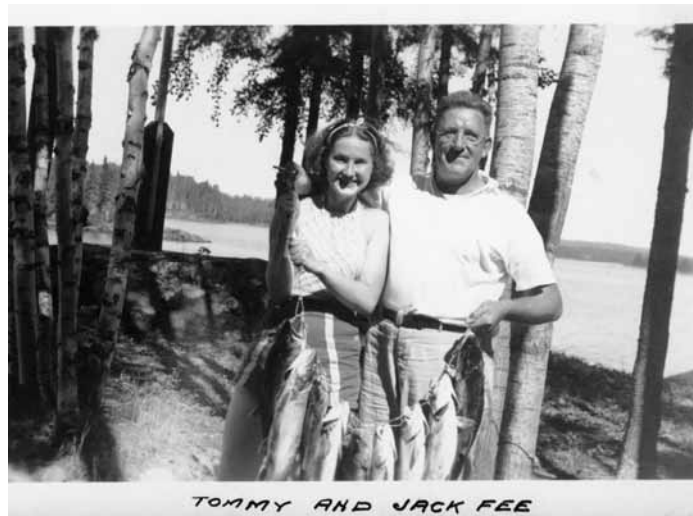
8. 1934 - Bud Thomson (Mary Celia Thomson Moodie's brother) - age 14. One of Bud's summer jobs was delivering blocks of ice (cut from the lake in winter and stored in sawdust in Ollie's ice hut behind the General Store) to customers around the lake. Although American, Bud flew in the RAF in World War II. He and his wife, Kathleen, stayed in St. Louis, but loved to visit Sesekinika over the years.



9. 1935 - Udell Thomson (Mary Celia Thomson Moodie's father). Udy used to travel to the lake each summer by train and stay for a few weeks with his family. A favorite activity for friends and family was taking surf board rides.



10. 1937 - Mary Celia Thomson and Jack Fee. Another favorite activity was fishing.



Thompson Moodie Photos from 1930s thru 1950s

Submitted by: Celia Moodie Topping

1. 1937 - The Fishermen. From left to right: Jack Fee, Bud Thomson, Ralph Neelands, Arnley Wright and sitting: Udy Thomson.



2. 1937 - Ollie Olsen's General Store. Can you find Udy Thomson (white shirt), Chris Sorenson (with hat), Ret Thomson (with dog) and Mary Celia Thomson (standing at pole)?



3. 1953 - Ollie Olsen. Ollie managed the General Store - the center of all Sesekinika activities. In her *Sesekinika Memories*, Arlene Wright provides a wonderful description of the store and Ollie.



4. 1949 - Thomson Moodie Cottage. Although the cottage looks more familiar, the boathouse would not be added until the mid 50s.



5. 1949 - Udy and Ret Picking Blueberries. Udy, my grandfather, always wore his beany and was known as Mr. Fix-It because he was very handy. Ret, my grandmother, loved tending her extensive flower beds and was a wonderful cook.



Thompson Moodie Photos from 1940s thru 1950s

Submitted by: Celia Moodie Topping

1. 1949 - Family. From left to right: grandchildren David & Ian Moodie, Ret Thomson, daughter-in-law Kathleen Thomson, and grandchildren Pat & Jimmy Thomson. Each summer, Udy and Ret would welcome their six grandchildren for the summer.



2. 1951 - Brothers David, Ian, myself (Celia) and sister Mary. Note Mary is safely tethered so she can't wander too far.



3. 1951 - Brother David, age 8, with his Catch. The covered docks would later be replaced with the boathouse.



4. 1957 - Sharon Bedwell Ritchie & Celia Moodie Topping.

