

Fisherman Marooned on Crowe

Mr. Fred Soule of Belleville, a former Marmora resident, had a rather harrowing experience last Sunday afternoon and night.

He had been fishing in Blairton Bay during the afternoon and had left his car and boat trailer at Blairton Trailer Park.

Mr. Soule was having very good luck fishing and decided to try for a second Muskie when his motor quit. After trying very hard to start it, the boat being driven by the strong winds, came out into the lake which was very rough due to the high winds late Sunday afternoon and evening. He could not row back to the park and drifted farther out.

When Fred did not come home by 3 a.m. Monday morning his wife called their son, Perry, who in turn called the Provincial Police who had a car at Blairton within 15 minutes of the call.

Perry Soule and his brother Craig along with Doug McKay from Belleville left immediately for Marmora and began searching. Aided by OPP officers they finally found Mr. Soule on the shore of one of the islands in the west end of the lake.

He apparently had been blown aground and pulled his boat ashore around 6 p.m. and had turned it over, staying out of the driving rain and sleet which hit around 7:30 Sunday night. He remained there until found Monday morning. Outside of being cold he was otherwise unharmed and indeed very glad to see his rescuers.

Marmora Herald
November 25, 1970

This Fish Caught the Fisherwoman

No – it wasn't drowning that caused the yelling and screaming out on Crowe Lake over the weekend.

And no, it wasn't a near drowning either.

But it was a fish – a Muskie to be exact – that caused all the excitement and the resulting noise.

It all happened when the three McGrath sisters went out fishing.

The three, Angela Byrnes, Mary Callery and Margaret Casey, love fishing, and usually come home with a good catch.

The muskie that caused all the excitement virtually caught them!

Everything seemed perfectly normal when Mrs. Byrnes got a strike.

But the fish apparently went head first into the anchor line, knocking off the lure.

But instead of streaking for freedom, it jumped right into the boat and right into Mrs. Byrnes' lap!

Can you imagine the result?

Eventually things calmed down enough for a measurement to be taken.

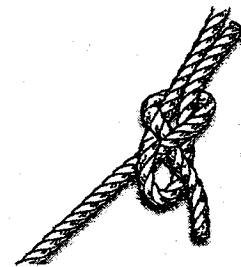
The fish measured 24 inches – too small. The gals threw it back in.

But if it happens again, the ladies mightn't be so generous.

"After all," noted Mrs. Casey, in relating the story to the Herald.

"If the Lord giveth...!"

Marmora Herald
July 2, 1975



Sheet Bend



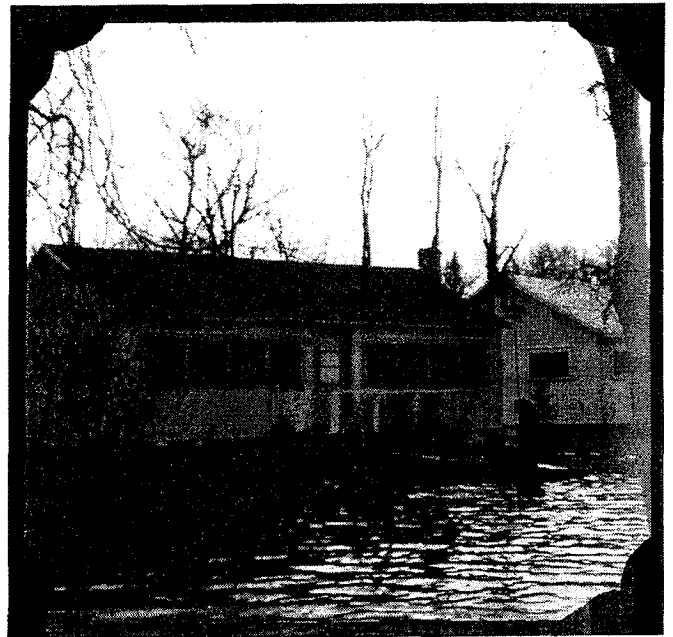
Christmas 1904



Jean on ice with Norma & Bob Caverly



Hazel, Norma & Glen Caverly



Tim & Don Black, the flood of 1907



THE CROWE VALLEY CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

• P.O. BOX 416, MARMORA, ONTARIO K0K 2M0 • 613-472-3137 FAX NO. 613-472-5516 •

CROWE LAKE

July 20, 1994

Vital Statistics:

- **Size:** 3,100 acres / 1,255 ha
- **Depth:** Shallow basin, most water between 3 and 6 m
- **Deepest Point:** 15.24 m
- **Summer Level:** 182.42 m
- **Winter Level:** 182.09 m
- **100 Year Flood:** 183.88 m

- **Present Dam:**
 - Rehabilitated in 1977
 - Owned and operated by Crowe Valley Conservation Authority, Marmora (CVCA)

Main sluiceway

- 30.78 m long
- 5.64 m high
- 5 bays of logs
- 8 logs per bay
- 0.25 m x 0.25 m

Each log is

Centre sluiceway

- 11.87 m long
- 5.03 m high
- 3 bays of logs
- 10 logs per bay
- 0.23 m x 0.23 m

East Sluiceway

- 7.92 m long
- 5.03 m high
- 2 bays of logs
- Left bay 2 logs
0.23 m x 0.23 m
- Right bay can be controlled by either stop logs or a 0.25 m x 2.29 m sluice gate.

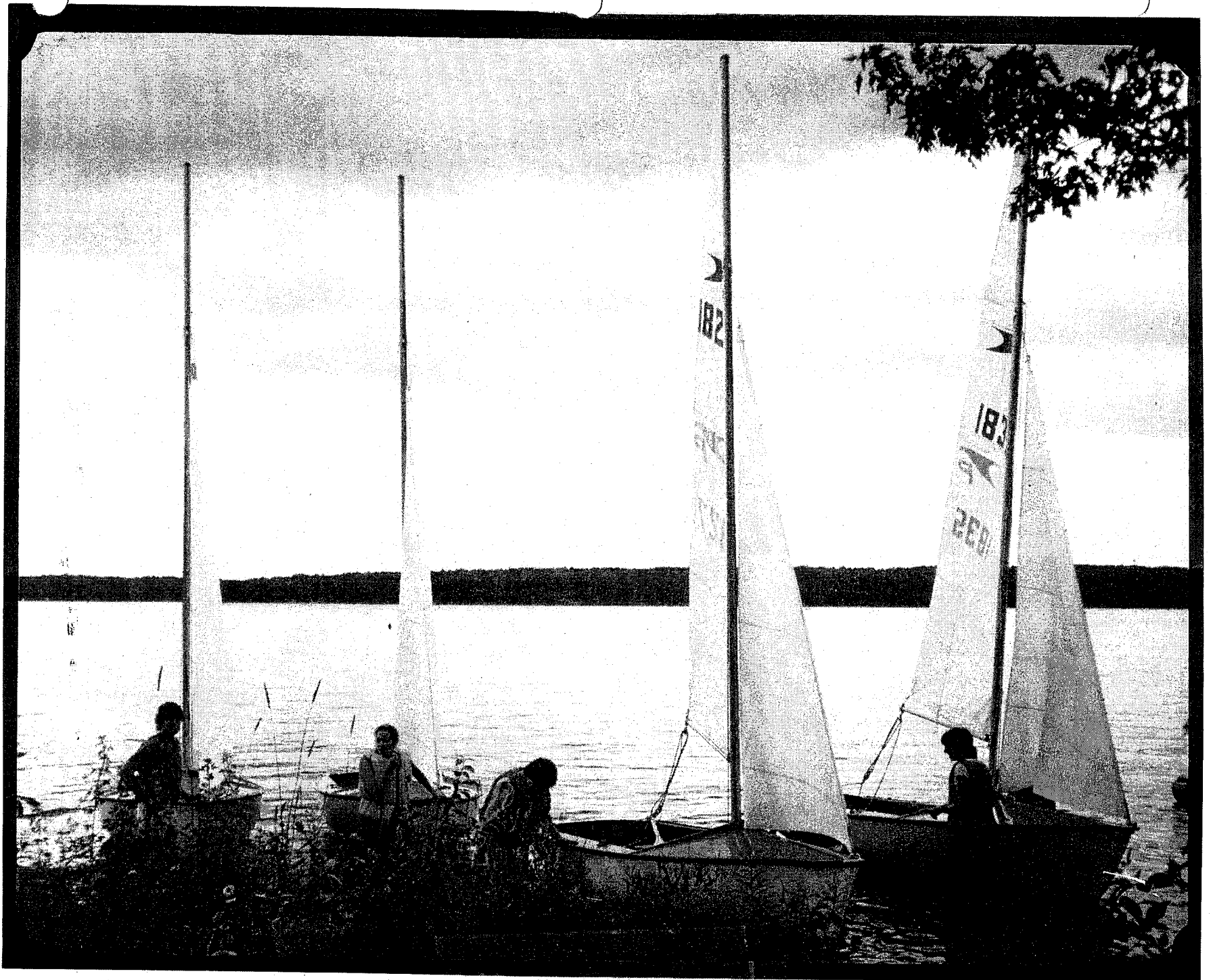
- Fall draw down commences annually October 15

Located immediately below the centre sluiceway is a twin turbine generating station which was constructed in 1990 and is owned by Consolidated Hydro, Toronto. Each turbine has a discharge of 16 m³s; total discharge of 32 m³s.

The regulated lake level was established in 1950's by CVCA. Altered in 1960's by the Department of Lands and Forests. Last changed in 1970 by CVCA.

The CVCA monitors the lake level of Crowe lake via electronic gauge located at the east side of the dam. Levels are recorded every 4 hours throughout the year. A staff gauge is also located at the dam on the east side of the dam.

For further information contact the Crowe Valley Conservation Authority office.



Crowe Lake Yacht Club, 1984

WHAT'S AT THE BOTTOM OF OUR LAKE?

by Andre Philpot

Marmora Herald , August 7, 1991

There is something at the bottom of Crowe Lake. It may not be a "Loch Ness" type monster but it is still interesting and a lot more real.

Like almost all of the first communities of Upper Canada, Marmora was built on a substantial water system. But Marmora was not a simple mill town. It was Upper Canada's first mining town and its first really industrially-based centre. When Charles Hayes established the Village on the Crowe in 1892, he had the advantage of an enormous, never-ending power source in the waters of the river.

Those waters drove his wheels which pumped the billows of his blast furnace. They powered his saw, bark and grist mills and they also did something more – they gave him a means of transportation.

It was reasonably easy to clear the waterway from Fiddler's Rapids on Beaver Creek to the village and back up the Crowe River to the lake. By proceeding westerly across the lake, Hayes' barges could reach the "immeasurable mountain of Iron Ore" at Blairton. There, the barges were loaded and turned to begin the two-day trip downstream to the furnaces of Marmora.

One of the abiding beliefs in our community is that one of Charles Hayes' barges lies at the bottom of Crowe Lake. Laden with ore, it is said to have swamped and floundered to the bottom where it remains to be explored. I hope that it can one day be shown to be so. Difficult as it may be to prove its existence, this belief will continue because it's impossible to disprove (at least without draining the lake).

It does seem that something is down there. There are too many reports of sightings for there to be nothing on that muddy bottom. One thing seems certain; what is now at the bottom of the lake is almost surely one of the vessels that plied the surface years ago. It could be another type of vessel however, because at one time Marmora looked to be a shipping centre.

In fact, the perpetually optimistic Marmora Herald pronounced that the village would soon become "the Venice of North Hastings." It was shortly after the turn of the century and Marmora was now booming with another industry: lumbering.

The mills were making the merchant class wealthy, especially the leading Pearce family. It was a time when one could expect more from life than just an endless drudgery of working for survival, if, that is, you were successful. Things were looking up and it looked as if they would stay up.

The occasion for this bold prediction was the launching of the "Queen of the Seas" in 1919. The little ship had been constructed secretly at the Marmora Cooperage Co. in its plant on the shore of the Crowe River. After all their work, the owners were determined to christen her properly.

In the presence of an immense crowd of workmen, Miss May Dickerson broke the traditional bottle of wine over her bows and gracefully named her Queen of the Seas.

Despite the grandeur of her name, the boat was neither a warship nor one of the impressive pleasure yachts already plying the Crowe system. She was definitely built to work, and work she would, rescuing stray bolts of timber for the lumbermen who ran the annual log drives to the sawmills of Marmora.

The Queen of the Seas was 34 feet long and nearly as wide at 24 feet. As the Herald noted, these dimensions "preclude the idea of speed." She could not sail alone, "as she has neither engine nor sails." To move her, companion vessel, the Ben Bolt was to be constructed. This vessel was to be powered by a five-horse power, quadruple-expansion engine driving side-wheels.

Although the Ben Bolt was to be only 24 feet long, if you believe the Marmora Herald, you might envision a little ocean liner. Sometimes when speaking about history, it is better to just quote your sources, rather than try and verify or deny it. Here then is what was said, word for word, about the boat that once graced the waters of Crowe Lake and may now grace its bottom:

She will be fitted with all the modern conveniences. The cabins will be models of comfort and art. She will have two ice cream saloons and a tonsorial parlour on the main deck...She will be installed with the Marconi wireless system, which will automatically signal to the chief sawyer at the mill every time a wandering bolt is found. Mammoth landing nets will be installed behind her paddle wheels to catch the fish that may be thrown into them and the fish caught will be immediately cooked and served at 10 cents a mess, half of the proceeds to be divided among the four churches of our municipality

We should like to add that these two ships are but the precursors of a mighty fleet, which will soon make Marmora the Venice of North Hastings.

Lithographic Mines in Township

Marmora Township is known to have several different kinds of rock and mineral hidden among the huge deposits of rock, but one mine site of lithographic stone caused some excitement in American mining circles in the late 1890's because of its rarity.

Located on land owned by four generations of the Bonter Family, the site is quite close to the south shore of Crowe Lake, and within about 30 feet of Mrs. Ruth Bonter's back door on Booster Park Road.

The following information was obtained from the Department of Northern Development and Mining office in Tweed: limestone may be used as lithographic stone if it is sufficiently grained and uniform in texture. It must be porous enough to absorb ink and soft enough to engrave.

In recent years, the use of lithographic stone has fallen off because the photographic processes on zinc, copper or steel are cheaper and more rapid.

In the past, some six or seven quarries were operated in Hastings County for lithographic stone. The largest is at Crowe Lake on Lot 8, Conc. 3, Marmora Township. It was operated by the American Lithographic and Asbestos Company, and had saws, rubbing beds, and planers. The mine operated from 1895-1898.

The 1912 report by Parks Canada continues:

On property owned by William and Robert Bonter, the excavation is roughly 150 by 100 feet with a depth of 20 feet. While operating the quarry, the company installed a 110-horse power engine, three gang saws, one rubbing bed and one planer. Although a channelling machine was in operation for a short time, the exploitation was largely affected by the dynamite.

According to local observers and, in all probability, in accordance with the facts, the final closing of the mine was due to the injudicious use of this shattering explosive.

The lithographic stone was sawn into slabs and smoothed. The leather-lug was sawn. Over 100 such slabs, some of them 3x6 feet, are still on the premises but they are broken and destroyed by frost. As a building material, it possesses the same advantages as the stone from the Pearce's quarry near Marmora.

The second quarry was opened along the Crowe River and was used in the construction of several buildings in Marmora Village, one of which was the Roman Catholic Church built in 1904. Located on Lot 7, Conc. 4, of Marmora Township, on the west side of Crowe River and north of Highway 7, the Pearce quarry produced building stone periodically from the early 1800's to early 1900's.

It is said that the lithographic stone obtained from these quarries was fairly satisfactory. Since the quarries were opened, however, the use of lithographic stone has been largely dispensed with, except for certain types of work for which only stone of the highest quality is used. The quarries have not been worked for many years.

Marmora Herald
May 30 1995

Bonter's Tourist Resort

A FAVORITE SPOT FOR BASS, LUNGE
PICKEREL FISHING



Bonter's Tourist Resort, situated in a lovely sheltered cove on Crowe Lake . . . where a scenic view of the entire lake with its many islands and surrounding wooded shoreline may be enjoyed from each cottage or cabin. Fishermen will enjoy the sport at Crowe Lake, too, as it is known far and wide as a spot to go when you want to be sure of a good catch.

● Well equipped and comfortable housekeeping cottages and cabins. Central Showers and flush toilets.

● Boats and motors to rent.

W. R. BONTER. PHONE 99r5
MARMORA, ONT.

Ad in 1953 Highlands of Hastings booklet



Merry
Christmas

Jim Maretts cottage



Ted Hughes, 1960

"God has given us our memories
that we might have roses in December."



Storm damage, March 1991

History of the Marmora Dam

Editor's note: The following brief history of the Marmora Dam was presented to Marmora council by Crowe Valley Conservation Authority (CVCA) member Jack Grant at their last regular meeting.

At the turn of the century, the Pearce and Pearce Lumber Company constructed the Marmora Dam to provide power for a saw mill, a planing mill and a hydro operation.

The original dam was located about 200 feet upstream of the present dam and was a timber crib structure.

In 1930, the crib workers were replaced with concrete spillways at the west end of the dam structure. This spillway had five openings, each of which were 14 feet wide. The west spillway was separated from the centre sluice way by a gravity wall (which was over-topped during the "one in 100 years" flood in the spring of 1976.)

The centre sluice way, before construction, had one opening which was 10 feet wide. Even with all the stop logs in place, a considerable amount of water was passing through, under and around the sluice way through major clefts in the bedrock. The east section contained one sluice way which is about 20 feet wide.

In February, 1950, the Pearce Company holdings were purchased by Mr. Earl J. Armstrong for \$45,000.

In 1958, the CVCA was established, and 1.3 acres of land was expropriated from the Village of Marmora and the CNR, creating an access to the dam for repairs and renovations.

The next year, a new steel and concrete deck was placed over the west sluice way. The piers were refinished and a grouting program was attempted in order to alleviate massive seepage under and around the dam. The grouting program, however, did not prove successful due to the fast flowing water.

In April of 1976 the "one in 100 year" flood occurred and after the run-off had reached its peak, prospects for a new dam were dimming. Although the dam had withstood against the tremendous force of water, it was realized by local residents and officials that the dam must be rehabilitated or a new dam constructed to help minimize future floodwater.

One year later, in April of 1977, a contract was signed between the CVCA and the Cribb Construction Company Ltd., of Ottawa for the reconstruction of the Marmora Dam: the cost of which was approximately \$600,000. The actual construction work began one month later.

The existing Marmora Dam has ten sluice ways, Of these, nine are controlled by wooden stop logs which must be added or removed manually; the other is controlled by an electronic gate. The water intake for Marmora is also situated adjacent to the Marmora Dam as the village is dependent upon Crowe Lake for its entire source of water.

Up to Dec. 31, 1989, the CVCA has spent \$750,808 on the Marmora Dam. An additional \$20,000 was spent this year at the dam. This consisted of an erosion control project on the slope adjacent to the west sluice ways.

The slope was cleared of brush and debris and sloped downwards towards the river. Filter cloth was installed on the embankment and covered with a mesh netting called Geo-Web which was then covered with topsoil and sod. The purpose of this exercise is to prevent sediment caused by eroding banks from entering the river.

It also improves the overall aesthetics of the area. Much of the labor for this project was supplied by the "Experience'89" project, which is funded by the Ontario government.

The CVCA has also established a "stream flow gauge site" in conjunction with the dam. The gauge, which is accessed by computer from the office, relays valuable information concerning Crowe Lake and, by monitoring the gauge, the Authority is able to determine current water level trends. The Authority has 13 similar gauge sites through the 775 square mile watershed. The gauges provide an overall trend of water levels and allows the Authority to make immediate decisions based on information received.

For example, if the water level in Belmont Lake (which is upstream from Crowe Lake) is rising and logs have to be removed from the dam, by monitoring the gauge site, the Authority is able to see what effect this additional water is having on Crowe Lake and make necessary adjustments. Crowe Lake and Crowe River are also influenced by St. Ola Lake and Beaver Creek.

MEMORIES OF MARBLE POINT LODGE AND SANFORD LAWRENCE

The letter you printed from Bill McGarvey brought back to me my association with the late Sanford Lawrence, the woodsman, hunter, trapper and guide.

My father was the manager and proprietor of the Royal Hotel, when the late Sanford made headlines on the front page of the Toronto Star. I am not quite sure of the time but I feel that it was in 1920 when the Star reporter interviewed Sanford at the hotel. The story was about Sanford shooting five timber wolves.

I cannot recall the exact story or the circumstances but I can tell you that he informed the reporter that he saw this pack of nine or ten wolves coming across Crowe Lake. He climbed up into a tree and he shot five of the pack.

I can assure you they were Timber Wolves, not coyotes, because when Sanford had his picture taken, holding the five hides, he stood on a chair and their tails were touching the floor.

The following year (1921) my parents built Marble Point Lodge (on the south shore of Crowe Lake) and Sanford was hired as a handyman and guide for the tourist season. I was more or less in charge of operations at the Lodge and it was during this time that Sanford and I became such good friends. I will try and relate some of these happenings during that year.

One day, Sanford was returning to the Lodge with a fishing party and one member of the party dropped his fishing pole into the lake. Sanford came to me and informed me what had happened. He insisted that I put on the bathing suit and try to retrieve this rod, so I agreed. We rowed into the lake and Sanford informed me that it had a big silver reel on the pole. When I got to the spot, I dove off the bow of the boat and I thought I saw what appeared to be the reel so I went to pick it up. Instead of the reel, I had stuck my hand into the mouth of a snapping turtle. Boy oh boy, did I ever pull my hand out of that turtle's mouth fast.

When I came up, I never stopped to get into the boat. I made shore in a very short time, and that turtle just peeled the skin off my middle finger. Sanford came in and wanted to know what had happened and when I showed him my hand he said we would get that turtle. That night, we set a nightline and the following morning we had three turtles.

At this time, we had some American fishermen at the lodge, and they wanted to have our chef make turtle soup for them. I asked the chef if she would make turtle soup for the guests, if Sanford cleaned the largest turtle. She did, and I can assure you the soup was delicious and the visitors congratulated her on her achievement. It was something to see Sanford clean a turtle; it looked as if he had done this all his life.

One Sunday morning, Sanford and I decided to go for a troll, so we left Marble Point in a rowboat, trolled around the foot of the lake, up the north shore to Cedar Point, where we stopped to change position.

A pair of loons happened to swim by with a baby loon, and Sanford said to me, "Do you want to catch a loon?" Naturally, I said yes because I didn't believe you could catch one with a rowboat.

He informed me not to pay any attention to the old birds but to just watch the baby loon. He then started to row the boat in a circle around the baby loon, always making the circle smaller. He informed me that the loon would go under the boat, and that was the time to catch it; which I did. The poor little loon was played right out and then Sanford asked, "now what are you going to do with it"? I replied that as soon as it got its wind back, I was going to let it go.

By this time, the old birds were up in Blairton Bay, a distance of maybe a mile and a half. As soon as I put the little loon in the water, it made a sharp little whistle and would you believe it, I never saw two loons come that distance, while sitting on their tails and just making the water fly. When they got the baby, they really put some show of antics on, never paying any attention to us.

In those days, we had no garbage collection so we had our own way of getting rid of it and one was to dig a pit about six feet deep. When the pit got within two feet of the top, we would bury it.

Well, this turned out to be a trap for skunks, so we would have to do away with them. Sanford and I would take the .22 rifle and he would shoot the skunks and believe it or not, there was never any odour.

One day, when we were covering the garbage, Sanford noticed that there was a lot of bees around so he said to me, there is a bee tree around here somewhere. So he and I decided that we would line the bee tree. We were about an hour and a half before we found the tree, but we decided to wait until after Labour Day when the Lodge would close for the season. It was a big basswood tree on our own property.

Well, this turned out to be a disappointment, because when we decided to do the job, somebody had beat us to it. They had felled the tree and according to the remains, Sanford said it had been loaded with honey. I found out that the late Norman Cooper was the person who cut the tree, and I can assure you, it would be welcome food for his family, so I didn't begrudge the loss.

Another thing Sanford taught me was how to clean a Muskie. He always took the outer skin off, leaving the inner skin. This I couldn't master, as I couldn't keep a sharp enough knife to do the job.

In closing, these happenings are just a few of the fond memories of my association with one of the greatest woodsmen, hunter and trapper I have had the privilege of knowing.

by Ralph Neal
Marmora Herald
March 13, 1991



Sanford Lawrence and five timber wolves, circa 1920



Clove Hitch

January 12, 1996

To the Council of the Village of Marmora

We are pleased to advise council that we have revived the Marmora Booster's Association which although it has been dormant, has a history in the Community since it was formed March 31, 1924. Its first president was Dr. Hamilton Crawford and its general mandate was defined by him as "seeking everything the name implies".

The particular mandate included the promotion of culture and arts and community support, with all operation to be conducted on a not-for profit basis and all funds to be spent for the benefit of the Marmora Community.

We would like to have it accepted that should we obtain a location, we would have municipal approval for a Nevada.

Yours truly,

Richard C. Rayson

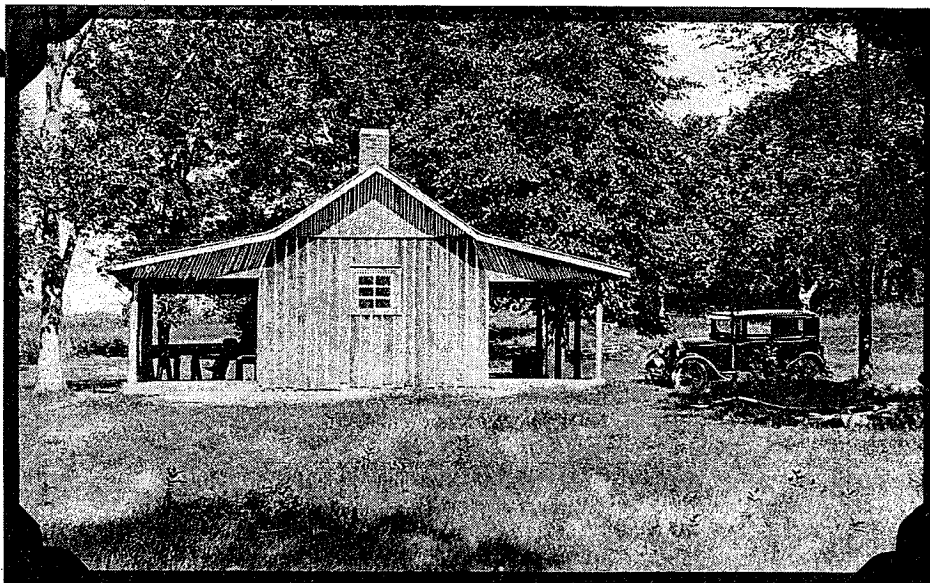
Carl ...

George ...
Justin Beckus

The Booster Club

Organized to promote Community Welfare and to Advertise and encourage the use of Marmora and Vicinity as a summer recreation ground.

Please Help Us



THANK YOU TO...

Andrews, David
Beach, Jean 'Gladney' & Hugh
Belanger, Gerald
Bennett, Gordon & Stella
Black, Ray & Virginia
Bleeker, Peg
Brooks, Cecilia
Campbell, Jeannette
Caverly, Glen
Connelly, Susan,
Crofts, Norma 'Caverly'
Durbatch, Judy
Fraser, Sandy & Joyce
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Gladney, Bill & Marg
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Philpot, Anne
Reynolds, Barb
Shannon, Don & Jean
Taylor, Judy 'Grant'
Vesterfelt, Sharon 'Campbell'
Vodden, Mary 'Reid'
Welch, Nadine

And a very special thanks to Rory MacKay and Cathy Granger, without your help this would not have happened, thank you.

"And when the rain beats against my window pane



I'll think of summer days again & dream of you."

May you have wind in your sails,
gas in your tank and always,
remember to tie off your anchor.

THE END