

MAKING THE LOOP

Agnes Wudel

An old plat, circa 1885, shows that George W. Hollingshead homesteaded 360 acres in section 10 of the Township of Worcester, which included the land surrounding Lake Ten on every side except the north.

Mr. Hollingshead had a logging camp at what is now N6673 Pioneer Road. The white pine was harvested about 1885 and the hardwood was logged after 1904. This area was replanted to Norway Pine (red pine). Cyril Kralicek remembered that in about 1915 he and the boys who swam in Lake Ten would put their clothes on top of the small pines out of the reach of the cows pasturing there.

Prior to 1919 John Gruber, business man and banker in Catawba, bought 2 forty acre parcels east of the lake. On October 23, 1919 he had the land surveyed by Frank Henry. The map shows a Lake Drive going down to the shore of Lake Ten; Park Drive circling a park and a baseball field; adjacent land numbered in blocks 1 to 6 of Lake Drive; and a pier where the beach is now located.

A year later, Albert Soetebeer was hired to build a road south from the town road (now 111) to the lake. It was a very steep road. In 1921 five area young men built a round dance hall near the lake shore with a raised stage on which the orchestra played and a smaller building called a canteen. Heavy snow the following year caved the roof in, but it was rebuilt under new ownership. A few years later Albert and Hattie Nuebauer purchased the property and remodeled the whole place and by 1925 The Birchwood Inn, a 13 room hotel had been built with birch interior done by Eustace Friedl, a Phillips cabinet maker. People came from as far away as Ashland, Ladysmith and Abbotsford to dance to out of town orchestras. A sign, Lake Ten Resort, was put at the top of the road.

Then disaster struck! In September 1925 the hotel burned. The Nuebauers fixed up the canteen for a home and ran the dance hall another year. On May 6, 1927 two dance halls burned: Jerry's Pavilion at Lugerville and the Lake Ten Dance Pavilion.

People came to Lake Ten only to picnic and swim.

In 1934 when John Gruber died, Louis and Kathryn Hladish bought one of the forties from the estate and they bought seven lots from Mrs. Nuebauer. They used the canteen as a home and a tavern. In 1941, the same year that the REA electric lines reached this far, Harvey Soetebeer was hired to build on to the small resort. Living quarters were enlarged, a second story was added as well as a dance hall with a hardwood floor. There were free dances nearly every weekend. A garage was built in the hillside and 2 cabins were built on the shoreline.

In 1947 a new road was built.

A community was also growing. Arne Christianson, who had married Josephine Hladish, came up from Chicago to retire. He bought lots 7 through 10 in Block 4 and proceeded to build a small two story cabin on lot 10 on Park Drive. With care not to cut any pines, he directed Louie Hladish to scoop out a space in the base of the hill and with Jim Perger's help, erected a 24x18 foot cement block house with an attached one car garage. An 18 foot deep dug well that produced good water was located in the northwest corner of the house and there was a small bathroom besides the open kitchen-dining area. Upstairs there was one small bedroom and a sitting room. Mr. Christianson lived in his home until the summer of 1957 when he died suddenly.

There were four residences along Park Drive at that time and the lot nearest the pier had been bulldozed flat to provide fill in the center of the circle. It was left to the executors, Mr. and Mrs. Hladish, to sell the rest of Arne's land once the legal matters were settled.

After living in Kennan for 10 years, Rev. William Wudel accepted a call and moved to Naugart near Wausau; in his late 50's he was thinking to retire in this area. Rev. William Wudel had fished for bass in Lake Ten and our Phillips High School class picnics were often held near the beach, so Lake Ten Resort was familiar. His only child, Kenneth, and I had married in 1957 and lived in Kennan.

Early in 1959 Kenny shared the discussion he and his father were having concerning the opportunity to purchase a cottage at Lake Ten. We went to see it. My first reaction was no! It had been closed up for two years and there was mold on the bathroom wall. The interior was cement block painted green, the cement floor with 12 inch gray and green tiles, supported a potbellied wood heater. There were 3 narrow windows looking east toward the road with one 12 inch square window near the ceiling on the south wall. Outside the door was part of an old road, and beyond it thin grass made an attempt to disguise a cleared swamp ending with willow brush at the ditch. Two huge pine trees were little more than arms length outside the kitchen windows. I knew my visit was a common courtesy

and not a vote so I looked for potential and began to agree that it would be an investment that we could handle financially. We made our down payment of \$300 on May 9, 1959. By March the next year we had paid our share of \$1550. The deed dated, March 19, 1960, granted the property to Rev. William Wudel and Agnes M. Wudel as joint tenants.

I believe the first year we paid \$127 real estate taxes.

We furnished the house with bare necessities. The wood burning stove was sold and replaced with a Jungers oil heater and over the next four years we made improvements inside and out. Liquid stump remover killed the willow brush in front and a year later, Kenny's father, who had a green thumb, bought a blue spruce, New England asters, a mock orange bush and roses for the front yard. Dick and Larry Bergquist, landscaping friends, removed three huge pines that threatened the roof edge. We chose to paint the exterior trim dark red and applied silver roof cement to the flat roof of the garage. The place was looking better.

After Vera passed away in 1961, meeting at Lake Ten to work on the cottage gained importance. Relatives from Fremont came to visit, a pastor friend with his family spent a week when he was invited to play the new pipe organ installed at St Pauls Church at Naugart, and a couple from that congregation spent their honeymoon there. We hosted reunions for the Winter family, which included swimming at the beach. We also did lots of fishing.

All this time Kenny had been driving to work at the Ladysmith office of Lake Superior District Power Company, and I was teaching lower grades at the Kennan State Graded School. We decided to make a change in 1963, so Kenny found a house to buy near the fair grounds in Ladysmith and in the spring I retired. Kenny's dad used the cottage several days mid week and we spent weekends there. Our son Billy was born in May of 1964 and Rev. Wudel arranged to conduct a Sunday service at Zion in Kennan which included the baptism of his grandson, William Kenneth. Within days he left for Montana to visit his siblings and in the night following his arrival, he passed away. He was only 64 years old and didn't get to retire at Lake Ten as planned.

In the ensuing years many good changes were made. Kenny glued wall board to the concrete block walls and I wallpapered; we added a picture window to let in more light; we replaced the exterior composition board with aluminum siding; covered the swamp area with sand and a layer of black dirt to make a garden spot and hauled field stones from Tennessen's rock pile to build up the edge of the front lawn. Two bedrooms were built over the garage. A well was drilled in 1990 and a new roof put on in 1992. The biggest change during that time was that Kenny was transferred to the Phillips office and in the summer of 1971 we sold our house in Ladysmith and our family of four moved to Lake Ten. Our cottage became our permanent home. Our address was Lake Ten Road until 1991 when fire numbers were issued to each residence and the road was named "The Loop".

Our family celebrated many birthdays and other happy events here in this friendly community. Too soon the children came just for visits and in 1988 Kenny retired from Northern States Power Company to spend ten years hunting and fishing. It wasn't long before swim suits decorated the clothes line in summer again when the grandchildren spent time here.

After Kenny passed away, the house was remodeled to add 12 feet to the width; the concrete floor was removed; ceilings raised; more windows added. The best improvement was turning the car closet into a downstairs bedroom. The tool shed was replaced with a two car garage.

These improvements that make this home a more delightful place to live have also been noted by the assessor and the real estate taxes for 2010 were over \$2000.

The only minor disappointment could be that the stash of valuables, rumored to have been hidden on the property by Arne Christianson 70 years ago, has not been found.