

CLEARWATER LAKE



Clearwater Beach, Kyle, Sask.

Submitted by Dolly (Oscar) Nelson

My Grandfather homesteaded a quarter section of land on which was located the most beautiful lake you could ever imagine. It was the only lake for miles around, but more than that, it was truly a lovely spot, a sort of oasis in the desert. Saskatchewan can be very hot and dry in the summer, and the lake provided a great relief from the elements. The water was so clear you could see the bottom from a depth of ten to twelve feet. As it was fed from a spring, the drinking water was out of this world so to speak. I can still remember the clear fresh taste, so different from water today.

I can remember as a child walking through the shady lanes and trails that surrounded the lake. There was a fern-like undergrowth where violets, tiger lillies, blue bells and many flowers grew, many I don't even know the name of. I remember one that was shaped like a miniature umbrella. It was a pinky mauve in color, and had a black centre. Then there were wild prairie roses, the smell of which I will never forget. Oh, I can still feel the joy of wandering those paths in my bare feet and breathing in the fresh air. It was wonderful to be alive. And the birds! There was magic somehow. I felt sometimes I was in a paradise at that time of my life. I felt that way again many years later when I first saw Banff and Lake Louise. But as I was saying, the Birds...anyone who has heard the sweet song of a meadow lark, and the ducks skimming over the clear water, or the cry of the wild geese overhead will know what I mean.

We were very poor. I was of a family of nine, but we were rich in the things that count — freedom, love of God, the companionship of a large family, lots of music and the joy of swimming in the lovely crystal clear water, to name a few. When we were little children, we learned to swim almost as we learned to walk.

And the winters! Sometimes it was so cold — down to 45 to 50 degrees below zero with up to four or five feet of snow with ten to twelve foot snow drifts...and cruel blizzards that would last for two or three days at a time. We dared not move from our little house. Then the sun

would come out and the whole country was like a fairy land, the sun shining on the snow covered hills. It reminded me of a huge Christmas card sparkling in the sun.

We would go sleigh-riding over those giant drifts, and sometimes were nearly buried in the snow, but fortunately nothing ever happened to mar our joy. Oh, to be a child again!

I can also remember walking along the shore of the lake, and finding spots where I am sure no one had walked since the Indian roamed there. I used to find beautifully made arrowheads in the fine pinkish sand that lined the shore of the lake. Now many thousands of people come to this lake to take advantage of all it has to offer, but somehow to me I remember the quiet times when I was a little girl, and it all belonged to me.

My father made a living mostly by hunting coyotes and weasels in the winter and muskrat in the spring. Once in awhile, I would go along with him to inspect the trap lines, and a herd of antelope would come by and then disappear over the hills. Many times, we would walk these hills and find Indian graves. They were marked with stones laid out in definite patterns. How many great warriors were laid to rest there? In my child's mind, I knew there were many.



Buffalo head found at the bottom of Clearwater Lake.



Clearwater Lake Tennis Courts.

The land on the east, south and north shore of Clearwater Lake was purchased by Elmer and Anna Nelson in 1925 from the Oscar brothers and they began building a summer resort. It grew to be a bustling place in the summer months.

At one time there were 18 cottages and 110 tent sites for rent, now there are approximately 306 private cabins.

The round hall housed many activities, some years



Clearwater Lake Band, 1925.

having a dance every night from opening day May 24th until Labour Day, Movies, vaudeville, political and religious meetings were also held in the hall.

Some of the Annual sports events were Golf Tournaments on a nine hole course. Two court Tennis Tournaments. The second largest Rodeo in Saskatchewan, Baseball tourneys with teams from U.S.A. Water sports with swimming and boat races and water games and two years the Chautauqua played here.

There were up to 35 employees and some of the services provided over the years included a restaurant and lunch counter, general store, licensed hotel, con-



A stampede at the lake.



Closs, Boyer, Wilson, Thompson and Nore Children.

fectionery booth, service station and bulk station, fresh meat market, pool room, barbershop, daily ice delivery and garbage pick-up dairy farm, police, fishing, bathing and boat house with twenty row boats and canoes and a passenger launch.



Restaurant and store, 1932.

They sold the property in 1949 moving to Calgary. Since then other owners have been Johnson and Graber, Oscar Strom, a Co-op and now it is a Regional Park.

FRIENDS

If nobody smiled, and nobody cared and
 Nobody helped us along,
 If every moment looked after itself and
 Good things always went to the strong,
 If nobody thought just a little about you and
 Nobody cared about me,
 And we stood all alone, in the battle of life,
 What a dreary old world this would be.
 Life is sweet, just because of the friends we have made
 And the things which in common we share,
 We want to live on, not because of ourselves,
 But because of the people who care.
 It is doing and giving of somebody else,
 On which all life's splendor depends,
 And the joy of this world, when you've summed it all up,
 Is found in the making of friends.