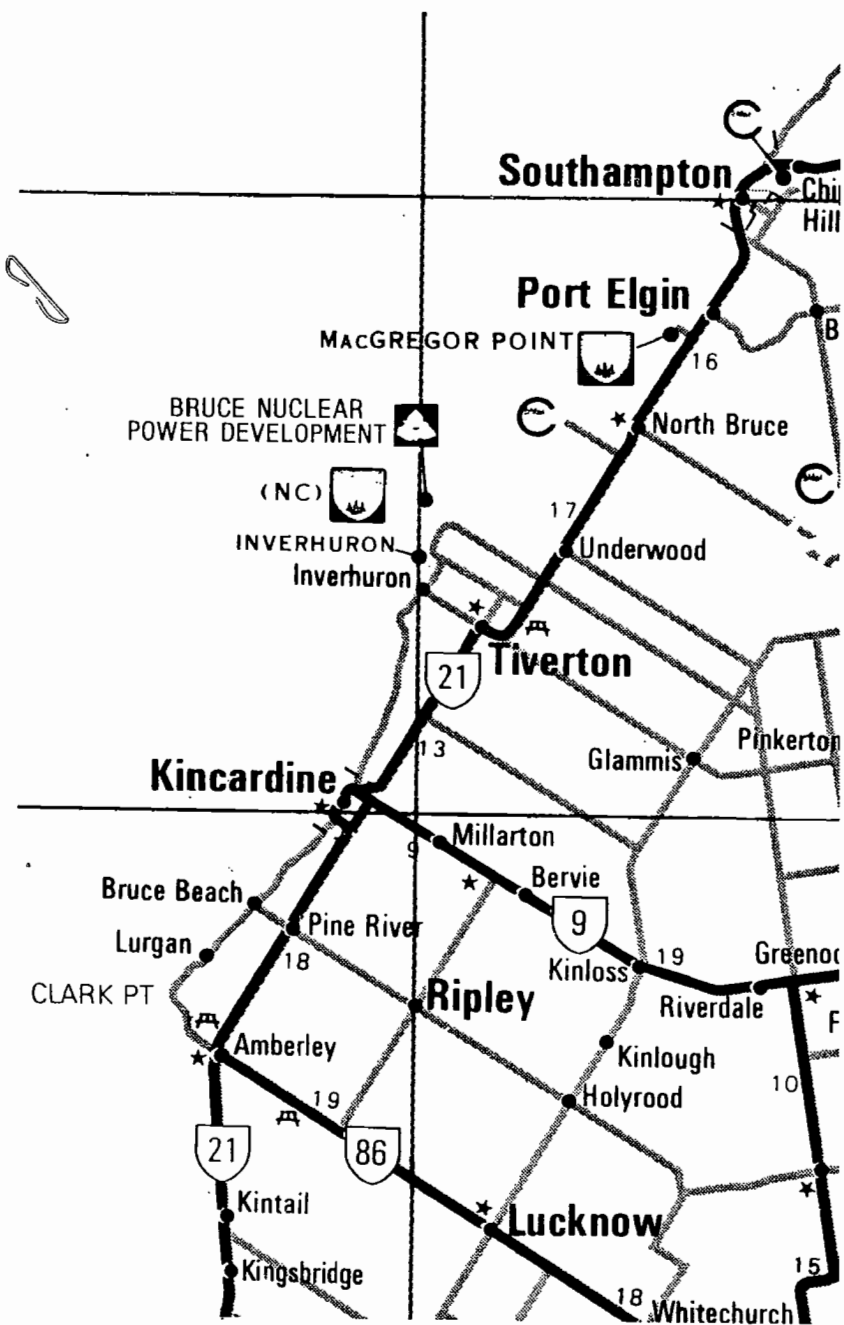


**A  
HISTORY  
OF  
BRUCE BEACH**



## PREFACE

Shortly after the Bruce Beach Historical Society was formed in the Fall of 1981, I was having lunch with a friend. When asked why I had given up curling that year, one of the two or three reasons I mentioned was my interest in publishing a history of Bruce Beach, where my family had been spending their summers for more than sixty years. "How fortunate you are to have such roots", replied my friend.

Many times a year I say silent prayers of thanks for the many joys I shared with my parents, my brother and my sisters, but especially with my own family while vacationing at Bruce Beach. I therefore dedicate this book to my wife, Joan, my son, Brian and my daughters, Dawn, Laurie and Ruth.

I wish to thank Louise Currie (No. 124) and Barbara Metherell (No. 1A) for their special efforts in encouraging other cottagers to submit material, as well as those who took time and trouble to write histories of their own cottages which will have to be kept for future historians. I also am indebted to my friend Laura Smith who typed the original manuscript so perfectly.

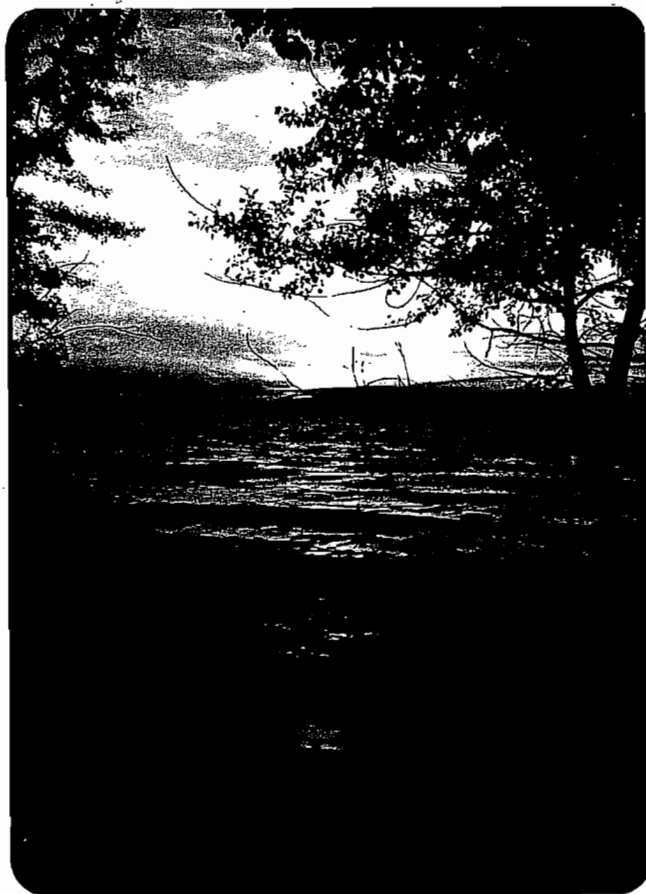
Recognition must go to the late Borden Spears (No. 46) who coordinated the original material and was responsible for the layout of this book. Regrettably, he did not live to see his work completed.

*Ian MacEachern (No. 41)*

*June, 1983*

## CONTENTS

PREFACE	3
GEOLOGICALLY SPEAKING ... P.F. Karrow	6
AS TIME GOES BY ...	7
REMINISCENCES	34
Andrew G. Wilson	34
Barbara Metherell	42
Louise Currie	44
Florence Roulston	47
Anne Caskey	49
Don Farquharson	40
R. Ledingham	53
Gordon Munn	54
Marjorie Dobson	55
Jim McBurney	56
Howard Anderson	59
Jean Auchterlonie, Nancy Allen	66
Don Finlayson	67
Gordon Corneil	69
Craig Davidson	70
Mildred Parker	71
Kay Fallis	72
Helen Cushnie	75
Janet Carver Davis	76
Jean T. (Hackland) Marshall	77
The Lanes, Mary, Gordon, Agnes and Ron	77
Mary Kennedy, Margaret Mary Benson	79
Greta Hossie	80
F.E. Knowles	83
Margaret Bennett	85
Tom Walsh	86
Stu Young	87
Jean Dancey	88
Jean M. Ernst	88
Ruth McBurney	89
Crozier's — The Bruce Beach Store	90
Ian MacEachern	93



## **BRUCE BEACH WILL SHINE TONIGHT**

Bruce Beach will shine tonight  
Bruce Beach will shine  
Bruce Beach will shine tonight  
All down the line.

Bruce Beach will shine tonight  
Bruce Beach will shine  
When the sun goes down and the moon comes up  
Bruce Beach will shine.

*From a concert many years ago.  
Submitted by Mary Spears (No. 46)*

## GEOLOGICALLY SPEAKING . . .

Bruce Beach, or at least its rocky substructure, is about one billion years old. However, its "modern" history only began about 1,300 years ago when the last great glaciers melted away, filling the Georgian Bay, Lake Huron, Lakes Erie and Ontario basins. One result of the melt was the creation of a series of lakes with different shorelines, each lower than its predecessor. At different periods of history they drained either into the St. Lawrence valley, as they do today, or westward into the Mississippi valley.

One of these lakes was the great Algonquin whose shoreline, traceable to beyond Owen Sound, can be recognized as an elevated terrace at the north end of Bruce Beach. Much of the present beach line was eroded by waves of later lakes, such as Lake Huron itself, yet the terraces in the Pine River and Eighteen Mile River valleys are indications of the former Algonquin Lake shore. Fossils and pieces of wood have yielded radiocarbon dates of 10,500 and 10,800 years ago.

After many more centuries of shifts and changes, including a settling of the earth's crust under the immense glacial weight, a period of relative stability set in about 3,000 years ago. It was known as the Algoma stage and at that time the lowest part of the cliff was formed. (This is the area near Bruce Beach's present golf course.)

Gully erosion cut into the shore cliffs at intervals and the sediments formed low conical accumulations at the gully mouths. (A good example of this action is preserved at the spot where the Sunday Church services are being held).

Although it all seems stable now, many geologists believe another glacial period will come, but not for thousands of years.

Meanwhile, the beach, which almost has persisted in its present form for 5,000 years, can be enjoyed by everyone.

*P.F. Karrow (No. 1)*

***AS TIME GOES BY...***

As far as is known, Bruce Beach had its origin as a summer resort on May 24, 1894, when a picnic party was held in William Tout's Grove, attended by a group of Ripley residents, including the McInnes, the Munn, the McCrimmon and the Jackson families. It was so successful that someone suggested repeating such outings through the summer and Angus Munn proposed a spot near the lake where cottage No. 7 now is located. The site also appealed to G. McInnes and A. Jackson, who later that summer pitched a tent there, calling the place "Sylvan Beach Home".

The Kennedys and Jacksoms built the first cottage near that spot during that same summer; it is now No. 12. In 1896, the McInneses and the Munns, both from Ripley, built No. 14 and No. 13 respectively, and although the beach area was closer to Kincardine, it was known as "Ripley Beach" for some time.

Robert McCosh Sr., whose farm fronted on the lake, used to visit these original beachers and jokingly called them "The White Indians". Over the years, they and many other families became friendly with the McCoshes and all used their pump in the lane.

In 1900, James Anderson purchased the Kennedy-Jackson cottage (No. 12) and Mrs. Anderson renamed the area "Bruce Beach". To hold religious services on Sunday evening, they set up a tent at first, although later services were conducted outdoors on McCosh flats. The Chapman family built No. 35 in 1902 and when Rev. Robert Martin of Hamilton built No. 5 in 1903, he was the first of many ministers to make Bruce Beach his summer home. His first task was to introduce his fellow cottagers to the game of golf by laying out a six-hole course in Frank Tout and McCosh Grove flats, but it was not until 1907 that the Bruce Beach Golf Club actually was formed. That year the course was enlarged to nine holes, following the recommendations of the newly elected executive of five. The annual membership fee was 25 cents; three hundred score cards were ordered; and when the first tournament took place, the entry fee was



10 cents per person.

The following cottages were built between 1903 and 1907:

McNab's of Walton - No. 6

McNamara's of Drayton - No. 19

Perrie's of Wingham - No. 18 20

Burnett's of Ripley - No. 9

McLeod's of Ripley - No. 10

Dobson's of Fordwich - No. 4.

By 1907, some cottages had changed hands, and the Maxwells and Coopers arrived. In 1908 the Bruce Beach Campers' Association was organized and the following cottages were erected:

Rev. W.J. West's of Stratford - No. 33

Rev. D.T.L. McKerroll's of Toronto - No. 41

John F. Archer's of Listowel - No. 11

T.L. Hamilton's of Listowel - No. 44.

The Bruce Beach Campers' Association held its first Field and Regatta Day in 1910, and the following families built cottages that year:

Barker of Lansing, Michigan - No. 37

A. Treleaven of Ripley - No. 39

John S. Robertson of Ripley

Pollock of Ripley - No. 45.

In 1911 cottages were built by:

Jack Chapman of Ripley - No. 27

Hector McKay of Ripley - No. 17

Interest in the golf club remained strong and Tom Walsh who now owns No. 159A was instrumental in making the first sand green in 1913. For several years he cut the grass with a horse-drawn lawnmower, and although most of the maintenance was done by club members, Bob McCosh was paid \$1.50 for the work he did and Frank Tout received a \$1.00 rental for that part of the course located on his property; a \$2.00 rental went to Bob McCosh for allowing golfers on his land. Annual club receipts were between \$7.00 and \$10.00.

In 1914, the golfers organized a tennis club and laid out

two courts — one behind No. 41 and the other behind No. 28; the second court was never used. The annual tennis club membership fee was 25 cents.

The following built cottages during that year:

Mrs. J. Gourley of Detroit - No. 16

Dr. J.F. McKenzie - No. 53

There was no electricity in any of the cottages during those early years, however, Bob McCosh provided firewood for heating and cooking, charging \$5.00 per cord of hardwood and \$4.00 per cord of softwood, including delivery. Lamp coal oil was available at 25 cents per gallon and one of the children's daily chores was cleaning the lamp chimneys.



*Watching the sunset in front of cottages 12 and 13.*

The year 1915 was a time of expansion for Bruce Beach when the following cottages were added:

Prof. Richard Davidson's of Toronto - No. 49

Rev. M. McArthur's of Kincardine - No. 19

Rev. H.J. Harnwell's of Drayton - No. 56

Rev. J.W. Baird's of Mitchell - No. 59.

The beach area was extended to the 8th Concession when cottages were built by the Branoch-Sheriffs (No. 86) and the Robertsons (No. 80).

Rev. J.V. Stewart of Whitechurch built his, and at the south end Rev. G. Atkinson's No. 30 was erected, while Roderick Martyn of Ripley built the first (No. 87) north of the 8th Concession.

Expansion continued through 1916 with new cottages by:

Rev. W.A. Bradley of Teeswater - No. 28

Rev. D.A. McLean of Ripley - No. 23

S.W. Huff of Detroit - No. 51

Dr. Dan Martyn of Detroit - No. 88

It was largely due to the community spirit of Rev. A.B. Dobson that the Bruce Beach Cottagers' Association came into being in 1916. Rev. W.A. Bradley was elected Secretary-Treasurer and also became its official historian. Regrettably, Rev. Dobson passed away in 1918.

In 1917 the Bruce Beach boundaries were further extended with new cottages by Samuel Pollock of Ripley (No. 99) and Thomas Clark of Detroit (No. 96). At the south end, Dr. E.C. Atkinson of Alvinston (No. 52) and Rev. W.H. Burgess of Chatham built theirs, and during the Fall, the Association secured aluminum numbers for all the cottages.

In 1918, the place for Sabbath worship was moved from the McCosh to the Tout Flats behind the Henderson cottage No. 37. That summer a ladies' orchestra was formed under the direction of Mildred Bradley. Among its members were Mrs. Duncan Munn, Irene Harnwell, Eloise Baird, Beatrice Huff and Beth McLennan. The orchestra's first concert raised \$62.00 for the Ripley Red Cross.

By 1919, the concert had become an annual event,

enjoyed by young and old. During that year, seating for the Sunday services was secured for 125 people and a platform and a folding pulpit were added. A camera club with 17 charter members was formed, presided over by Mabel Dobson (No. 4).

1920 was a year of much activity and progress. The lots staked out by prospective builders resulted in cottages for the following people:

Ruth Warren of Walkerton - No. 68

W.E. McCorquodale of Detroit - No. 47

Rev. J.R. Hoskings of Toronto - No. 94

Rev. J.R. Kirkpatrick of Ripley - No. 101



*Resting on the McCosh Hill, early 1920s.*

Many cellars were dug in existing cottages, and Duncan Munn (No. 8), Rev. R.D. McLean (No. 21), Rev. W. Bremner and Rev. D.T.L. McKerroll (No. 41) all made substantial improvements to their cottages.

This also was the year when the Men's Glee Club was formed, and the annual concert, for the first time, involved members from all parts of the Beach. In addition, a Sabbath school was organized with Dr. J.F. McKenzie as its superintendent.

At the 1920 annual meeting of the Association, steps were taken to add even better facilities. Each division appointed a committee to select grounds best suited for additional tennis courts; Division I chose the McCosh property on the upper level, just west of the present golf course third hole tee-off; Division II picked Tout's Flats behind No. 41 and Division III a site near the 8th Concession.

During the same year, arrangements were made with J.W. Crawford of Ripley to deliver groceries and provisions to Bruce Beach residents three times a week. Gerry Emmerton of Kincardine was asked to call on cottagers twice weekly to supply them with fruit and vegetables, and Henry, his son, who as a young lad helped his father, still sells vegetables in the area.

Many new cottages were built in 1921:

Agnes Hamilton of Goderich - No. 1

J.R. McLeod of Montreal

J.S. Robertson of Ripley - No. 43

Ruth Heather of Guelph - No. 78

Rev. J.E. Hunter of Belmont

Dr. Donald Martyn of Detroit

E.F. Lambert of Toronto - No. 72

A. Love of Detroit - No. 22

A. Jackson of Seaforth - No. 27

Rev. C.A. Malcolm of Lawrence - No. 31

Dr. F. McLennan of Windsor - No. 17.

At the Association's annual meeting, two committees were appointed to discuss with Huron Township Council and the provincial government the possibility of securing titles to the land on which the cottages were built.

The tennis courts in all three divisions had been completed and were ready for the first tournaments. Two were clay-

based, and Division III had a grass court in Pollock's field at the foot of the 8th Concession. The major problem was to keep the weeds at bay.

In the early 1920's the following advertisement was produced and delivered to all cottagers:

## **BRUCE BEACH THE IDEAL SUMMER RESORT**

Bruce Beach is unquestionably one of the most delightful places in Canada to spend the summer months.

From the standpoint of health, it is unbeatable. The fresh, purified air blowing off Lake Huron is always refreshing and stimulating, and restores to good health the individual looking for a respite from a period of physical or mental strain.

Quiet reigns at Bruce Beach. Free from commercialism, there are no unnecessary noises or excitement to harass the tired, nervous man or woman who is bent on building up in preparation for the return to the normal activity of making a living at the vacation's end.

Religious services were established years ago in an attractive grove and have since been continued uninterruptedly each Sunday afternoon during the season.

All conveniences for securing supplies are amply provided for by the merchants' deliveries of wood, ice, milk, groceries, meats and vegetables directly to your door, or some prefer to visit the stores personally at Kincardine or Ripley, located only a few miles away.

After a person has been at the Beach for a short time, he becomes so peppy he begins looking for diversion, and there is plenty of it available — bathing, boating, fishing, hiking, tennis, and the grand old game of golf over a unique nine-hole sporty course.

The golf course is very popular. Men and women, young and old, from the full length of the Beach are to be seen on the course during the entire season.

The golf club is regularly organized with a list of members who pay annual dues to support the club in its various phases, even if they should not find it convenient to spend every season at the Beach. The enrolled members are eligible to compete for the cups and other prizes presented each year by the club, as well as being privileged to participate in the many entertainments and parties held at the club house during the season.

The expense of joining in the activities at the Beach is very nominal. A membership in the tennis club entitles one to play all season on any of the courts for a small fee, and the charges for golf for an entire season are little more than some of the city courses charge for a single day's play. The club is operated purely as a community enterprise. The officers serve without compensation and all the money taken in is used for maintenance and for improving the course and the club house property.

Players on the Bruce Beach course are given much for their money. In addition to those for regular members, tournaments are scheduled at frequent intervals during the summer for the season, weekly and daily players.

Very attractive and useful prizes are furnished for all tournaments. Some of the prizes are given by the club with no entry fee charged for playing and others are provided with a small charge for entering the tournaments, and refreshments are generally provided.

Any person of either sex over 12 years of age is eligible for membership and all children of members or season players under 12 are privileged to play at specified times two days each week without the payment of fees.

The golf club is probably the biggest drawing card for the Beach and *every owner of a cottage should become a regular member.*

The golf club, well managed as it is, is an inducement for families and individuals to come to the Beach, and many cottages are rented as a result. One season of a newcomer spent at the Beach almost always means their regular return

each season.

Beginning the latter part of June and through July and August, a representative is stationed at the Club House with whom playing arrangements may be made.

*Author unknown*

By 1922, the boundaries of Bruce Beach were extended to the 10th Concession with new cottages built by:

Chid Jackson of Ripley - No. 25

C.W. Yates of New York - No. 21

Dr. W.H. Sedgewick of Hamilton - No. 34

Thomas King of Wingham - No. 46

Rev. H.B. Parnby of Belmont - No. 67

Rev. R.G. McKay of Dresden - No. 55

Rev. W.H. Burgess of Walkerton - No. 75

James Clark of Detroit - No. 50

Rev. J.W. Gordon of Mitchell - No. 118

Rev. Charles Farquharson of Newbury - No. 137

Rev. C.A. Carr of West Lorne and

Rev. A. Laing of Fordwich - No. 162

Thomas Johnston - No. 107.

John S. Robertson (No. 43), who had been an active member of the Association, passed away in 1922, and his cottage was purchased by Rev. Norman MacEachern of Toronto.

In August 1922, a provincial inspector visited the Beach, and the government appointed a surveyor for the area.

The year also saw the formation of the Bruce Peninsula Fishing Club. Their first trip to Miller Lake in two Model T Ford cars started at 8 a.m., reaching Wiarton by noon. After a stop for lunch and a wait for a member to arrive by train, the party set out for Lion's Head and on to Miller Lake along a cow path. When they finally arrived there at 6 p.m. their accomodation had already been taken and they had to sleep in a hay mow. Rising at 5.30 a.m., they were able to catch 41 black bass, returning home the following day, having



completed a round trip of 188 miles!

In 1923, the annual golf fee was increased to \$1.00, and a ladies' golf club was formed. They passed on half their proceeds to the men's club that now had \$133.00 in the kitty.

After some initial difficulties setting boundary lot lines, the provincial surveyor attempted to divide the Beach area into 66 foot lots, reaching from the sand dunes at the 6th Concession at the south end to the 10th Concession in the north. As a result, many lots were reduced in size while others were increased, at the same time setting the annual rent at \$12.00 per lot.

Cottages were erected by:

W.H. Collins of Kitchener - No. 36

Rev. T.M. Wesley of Sterling - No. 54

Nettie Moffat of Teeswater - No. 71

J. Johnston of Ripley

T. Bradnock of Gorrie - No. 86 (two cottages).

In 1924, to encourage greater attendance at Church services, seating was once again increased and a new organ was purchased.

Several new cottages were erected north of the 8th Concession, as well as No. 1A by D.E. Kennedy of Guelph and No. 2A by Dr. Gerald Wilson of Detroit.

For the first time, a number of break-ins during the winter were reported and the Association put up signs offering a \$25.00 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the culprits.

At the 1924 annual meeting, D.T.L. McKerroll (No. 41) reported progress in the procurement of land titles.

The Division III grass tennis court was abandoned and a new clay court was prepared in Cameron's field that also became a community centre where picnics could be held each year.

When Frank Tout decided to plow the field at the south end of his flats, the golf course had to be shortened. Also, as no vacant lots were obtainable in the south, further devel-

opment of the cottage area shifted to the north end in 1925. In August, D.E. Kennedy and Dr. Gerald Wilson arranged to purchase the McCosh property extending from the upper road to the back of the cottage lots.

A permanent storage shed was built to house the church organ and the seating for Sunday services.

This also was the year when the water level of the lake was so low that many cottagers' wells went dry.

In 1926, Huron Township Council refused to accept the proposal to acquire land rights from the government for \$10,000. The cottagers behind the McCosh property formed a company and the following year managed to secure a charter, known as McCosh Grove Limited.

The ladies' golf club was given equal representation on the general executive and through their efforts, children under 16 were allowed to play, free of charge, between 1-3 p.m., providing they were accompanied by an adult.

In the same year, the Stephen Tout flats flooded and that part of the golf course had to be abandoned. The two new cinder tennis courts at the top of McCosh Grove hill had to be repaired and the old court was reserved as a future badminton court. Thanks to the generosity of McCosh Grove Ltd. the property was placed at the disposal of the Golf Club



*Resting after a long drive to the Beach! In front of cottage No. 45, 1926.*

to become a permanent playground. With the help of Mr. Ritchie, a nine-hole course could once again be laid out. A new horse-drawn mower was purchased for \$250.00, boxes were set up at each tee to provide sand and water, benches were procured, and a caretaker was hired to make the course ready in time for the cottagers' arrival. C.W. Yates, Dr. Wilson, Dr. Young and D.E. Kennedy donated tournament prizes.

In 1927, cottages were built by Rev. Gordon Rintoul (No. 32) and Rev. G.D. Paton (No. 66). The following year, J.G. Archibald of Woodstock built No. 38.

By now the lake had returned to a more normal level and most wells could again be used.

Negotiations with the government to reduce the annual rental fee of \$12.00 had not been successful.

The Golf Club fees were increased to \$2.00 per season, guests paying 25 cents and outside visitors 50 cents per game. C.W. Yates was made an honorary member in appreciation of his contribution to the golf club, and the annual trophy was named after him.

Floods occurred in many areas in the Spring of 1929 but no serious damage was reported at Bruce Beach.

D.E. Kennedy donated a piano to be used at the annual concert and the merchants of Kincardine provided prizes for Sports Day.

Golf fees were increased to \$3.00 to enable the executive to purchase mats for three of the greens which were being changed to sand greens. It also was decided to install steps to the first and third greens and from the eighth hole tee-off.

At the Association's 1930 annual meeting, a committee was appointed to investigate the possibility to bring hydro power to the Beach. The following year a Hydro Electric Commission representative attended the annual meeting to discuss with the cottagers the conditions for providing electricity.

The annual Sports Day and Concert were well attended and the Association recognized Dr. J.F. McKenzie's 15 years dedicated service as sports committee convenor by donating

an annual award.

The main topic at the 1932 annual meeting was the record low level of the lake which was causing problems for many cottagers. The question of bringing in electricity was further discussed and quotations were obtained ranging between \$30.00 and \$60.00 per cottage for installing eleven electric light outlets and one for an electric stove.

The present golf club house was built in 1933. The annual concert showed a record turnout and the popular tennis tournament was attended by over 100 spectators; refreshments were served.

Motor traffic on the beach became so heavy that the Association had to ask cottagers to use it only when absolutely necessary.

The merchants from Kincardine and Ripley called on cottagers almost daily and the Kincardine Dominion store sponsored an afternoon tea at the golf course. Parisian Laundry from Toronto provided a weekly service.

The following year the lake again was at record low levels.

The tennis courts at the top of McCosh hill were abandoned and two new courts were planned at the present location.

At the 1934 annual meeting a committee was formed to obtain printing estimates for a souvenir history of the Beach.

Although the local post office was asked that year to consider the possibility of mail delivery to cottagers, it was not until 1935 that this much appreciated service could be provided.

That year the new tarvia tennis courts located near the golf club house were ready for play and well used throughout the summer.

Bruce Beach golfers won the annual golf contest against the Kincardine golfers.

At the annual meeting the committee to look after the proposed souvenir history was reappointed.

A drowning occurred in 1937, the second on the Beach in over 43 years. A visiting doctor from Atwood had devel-

oped cramps while in the water and drowned before help could reach him.

The efforts to publish the souvenir history continued and the sum of \$25.00 was set aside to cover the cost of engravings, with the proviso that the same amount be reserved for the following year.

Jean Ernst conducted the Sunday School which was attended by about 60 children.

In 1938, some cottages were wired for electricity. The township provided a horse and wagon for garbage collection along the beach. A delegation from Bruce Beach attended a Good Roads meeting in the Kincardine council chambers to press the need for improving the road from the 10th Concession to Kincardine.

The annual Sports Day and concert had a large turnout and an official Bruce Beach crest was authorized by the Association. Dr. Bradley resigned after serving 23 years as historian and Rev. J.W. Gordon took his place.

The "Souvenir History of Bruce Beach" was published in 1938, financed with a \$300.00 loan extended by Bob McCosh at 6% annual interest. The first copies, priced at \$1.00 each, were sold on Sports Day under the supervision of Margaret Mary Love (No. 22).



*It was great to receive a letter on the Beach after all those years climbing the hill.*



*Even a ride on the garbage truck was fun in 1938!*

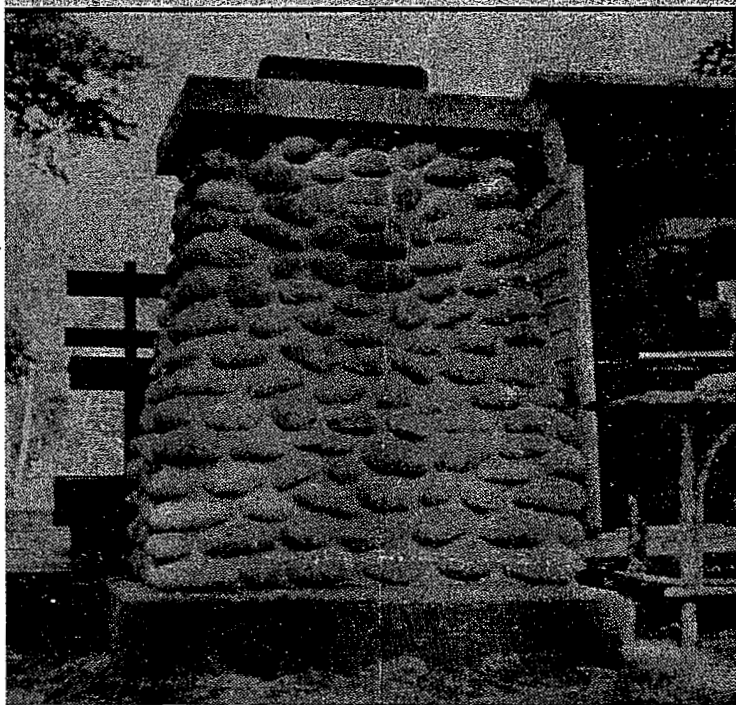
Two major problems developed at the north end of the Beach; excess noise from some of the cottages, and cattle passing through lots to reach the lake rather than using the right-of-way. Besides, three cottages were burglarized, the culprits apprehended and "sent down" for five years.

In 1939, the Association's annual membership fee was raised to \$1.00 per cottage. Proceeds from the annual concert totalled \$45.54, including \$13.83 from booth sales. These funds, together with additional donations of \$25.80, more than covered Sports Day expenses. The annual treasurer's report showed an expense of 10 cents for a long distance telephone call!

The following year, the executive was authorized to build a Church shell so that services could be held indoors during

inclement weather. Arrangements were made by area residents to acquire Stephen Tout's land, and during 1941 a new stone pulpit was built in memory of Stephen Tout, who, for 34 years, had reserved that part of his property for Church Services. A piano was purchased by the Church Services Committee from the Heintzman Company of Toronto at a cost of \$75.00 plus \$10.00 transportation charges: \$35.00 in labour and parts had been donated by the piano manufacturer. However, plans to put up the Church shell had to be abandoned because the estimate of \$300.00 exceeded the funds available for the project.

## **Unique Pulpit At Bruce Beach**



*Kincardine News, August 28, 1941.*

The plan to build a road at the north end of the Beach, at the foot of the hill, was opposed by some cottagers who felt it would increase traffic and dust, as well as making the cottages too accessible out of season.

By 1942, many young people of the Beach had joined Canada's armed forces and at the annual Sports Day, War Savings Stamps in values of \$6.00 each were given out as prizes.

Mail still was delivered six days a week.

In 1943, authorization was given to engage a person at a cost of \$50.00 to patrol the beach from September 15 to June 15.

Bruce Beach celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 1944, and to mark the event, *The Kincardine News* provided a special cover for the Year Book. This also was the year when a road was built north of the 8th Concession to reach No. 117.

Many of the sons and daughters who had served both at home and overseas returned to Bruce Beach in 1945, the end of World War II. While there may be others who lost their lives fighting for peace, here are the names of three who had served with the R.C.A.F., and did not return:

George Lloyd of Wingham (No. 2)

George King of Wingham (No. 46)

Donald Carson of Toronto (No. 147).

In 1946, the Bruce Beach Association joined the newly formed Ontario Cottagers' Association. That winter the snow storms were so severe that the farmers were able to walk on top of the cottage roofs.

The following year the purchase of the Cameron land was completed. It included the area behind the cottages from No. 121 to No. 136, and a 30 foot strip at the base of the hill that was given to the Township to link the existing roads running north from the 8th Concession and south from the 10th. Furthermore, the Association appointed a committee to discuss with the Township Council the completion of a road leading from the 10th Concession to Sid



Huff's property (No. 51).



*Entrance to Bruce Beach from the Lakeshore Drive, "Foot of the 10th", where cars always got stuck rounding the curve into loose sand.*

The treasurer's annual report noted expenditure of \$2.41 for a baseball, including the cost of peanuts, for Sports Day

That same year, golf fees were set at \$4.00 per season.

When the provincial Department of Lands and Forests transferred its responsibility for the Bruce Beach Subdivisor to the Township, cottage owners living in the Toronto area held a meeting, in May 1948 to discuss the new relationship between the Association and the Township.

At the annual meeting the executive was authorized to urge the Township Council to complete the road along the base of the hill as soon as possible and to consider the matter of residents purchasing any lands adjacent to their cottage lots so that proper access could be provided.

Due to an increase in the cost of living, cottage fees were raised to \$2.00 in 1949, and the annual grant to Tout' Grove Association for maintenance of Church grounds had to be increased from \$5.00 to \$25.00. Dave Moore appointed to look after the Church property, was paid \$20.00



*Behind bars! Gate between Camerons and McCormicks on Beach Road, 1948.*

annually. It also was decided to pay 50 cents a week to each of the boys who arranged the seating for Sunday services and distributed the hymn books.

The Association president and secretary once again approached the Huron Township Council with the proposal to allow cottagers to purchase their lots; they were, however, turned down.

The road from the 10th to the 8th Concession was finally completed in 1950. It was well used, especially after a sign banning motor traffic along the beach had been erected at the 10th Concession.

A highlight during the 1951 season was a service conducted by Rev. Fred Anderson who had led the congregation on the Beach for more than fifty years. He administered the sacrament of baptism on the last Sunday in July.

At the Association's 1952 annual meeting it was reported

that \$1,700.00 in taxes and \$2,600.00 in rentals had been collected from Bruce Beach cottagers by the Township. In addition, \$400.00 had been paid for garbage removal, although the actual cost was only \$325.00.

In 1953, the Association retained legal counsel, "at a cost not to exceed \$100.00", to assist in discussion with the Township regarding extension of the road south from the 8th Concession.

In 1954, the Association raised advertising rates for its annual booklet to \$1.50 for a small insert and to \$4.50 for a full-page ad.

A community night of pictures and entertainment, held in July 1954, raised \$14.00 for the golf club.

Speed control and appropriate playground signs were erected following north end cottagers' complaints regarding speeding cars and dirt along the lower road between the 8th and 10th Concessions.

In 1955, the last and southernmost section of Bruce Beach was put up for sale by the Misses Pearl and Elizabeth Henderson. They had purchased the lake frontage from Gordon Emmerton whose farm stretched from Blair's Grove road to the 6th Concession — an extension of the Cheese Factory road. At that time the concession boundary down to the lake front was just a path for Emmerton's livestock to reach the water's edge. The only vehicle access to the property was via a breathtakingly steep hill behind the Emmerton farmhouse. All cars had to be parked at the bottom of the hill and supplies carried up from that point.

A road had to be provided when Jay Marshall became the first to build on the site (No. 19A) in 1956. Only three more cottages followed and the rest of the lots were sold. By this time, much to everyone's relief, a road had been opened down the 6th Concession hill. That ended the "house calls" by cows and horses which, in the past, had been a special feature of Area I. Archie Blandford was, and still is, the main mover and shaker of that small group of cottagers that, for several years, variously was known as Henderson or South

Bruce Beach. The residents purchased the meadow land behind the cottages to the upper road and when they eventually joined the Bruce Beach Association in 1960 they were able to function as one unit in any Township development discussions.

During the summer of 1955, two community nights were arranged, yielding net proceeds of \$11.11. The Association paid the golf club \$25.00 for permitting them to use the club house for the annual meeting.

By 1956, water skiing had become a popular sport, following the introduction of more powerful outboard motors and better quality boats.

North end cottagers requested the Association to arrange for a telephone to be installed at the Bruch Beach store and there was an offer of a small building, no longer in use, to be equipped as a telephone booth.

At the Association's 1957 annual meeting, the sports committee was asked to discontinue baseball games on Sunday morning.

By 1960, problems, arising from cars being driven along the beach, were almost eliminated, due to the lake's high water condition.

Close to 300 cottagers and friends of the late Rev. C.E. Dyer attended a special Church service during the summer of 1961. They came to dedicate an organ as a memorial to a man who had served them for more than 25 years as secretary-treasurer of the Association.

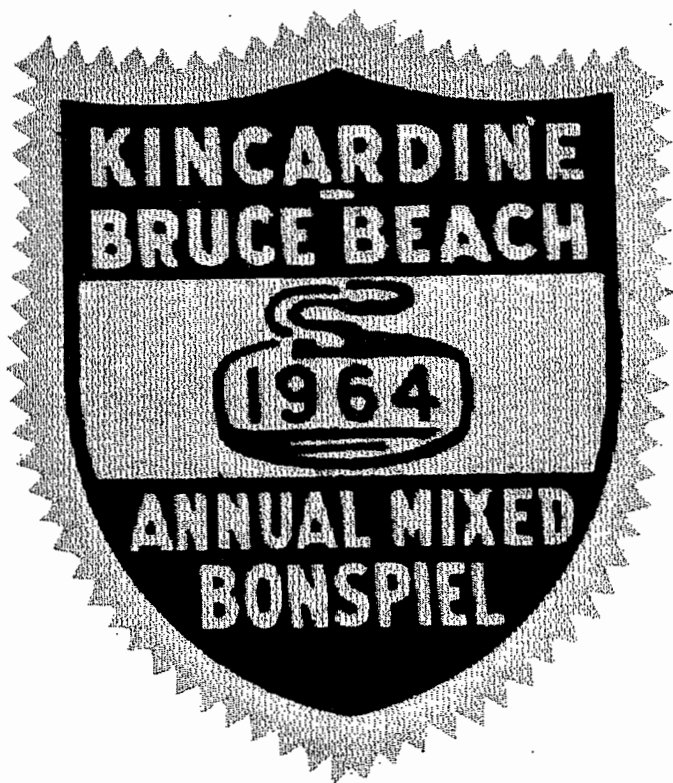
One of the first artesian wells in the area was drilled for cottages No. 50 and No. 52.

The possible publication of a second volume of "The Souvenir History of Bruce Beach" was discussed at the 1964 annual meeting. It was thought that it should coincide with Canada's Centennial celebrations scheduled for 1967.

Little interest in the Centennial project was revealed by Association secretary Ian MacEachern during the 1965 annual meeting.

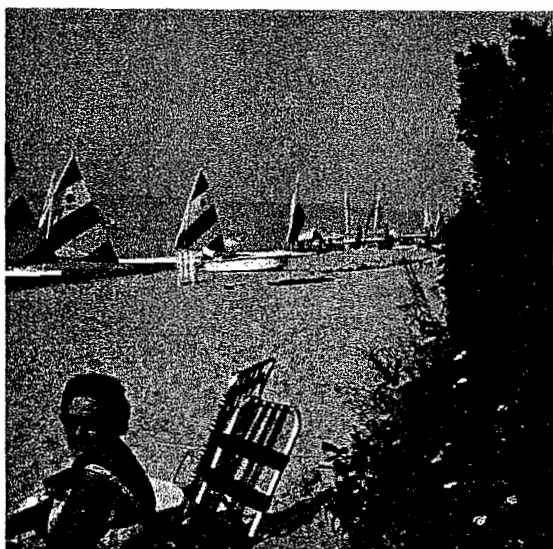
Don Finlayson and Ian MacEachern organized the first

annual Bruce Beach versus Kincardine Bonspiel during the winter of 1964 and a crest was issued to all participants. At the closing party everyone was entertained with a musical program.



During the sixties Jim Clark and George Aucterlonie contributed much to increased waterfront activities with the introduction of Sunfish sailboats. They were easy to beach and relatively simple to maneuver, according to Don MacLellan. After the Sunday ballgame, regattas were held,

the dozen or so participating boats providing a kaleidoscope of colour along the shore.



*Bathing beauty ready to watch the first race.*

To mark the 1967 Centennial, the Bruce Beach community donated \$400.00 to the Kincardine General Hospital, the money to be used to furnish an outpatient facility.

A professional study of Bruce Beach property rights was commissioned by the Association. In 1968, Association fees went up to \$3.00 per cottage.

In 1969, the five Bruce Beach divisions were officially redefined as follows:

Division I - South Bruce Beach Association - Cottages 34A to 14A

Division II - McCosh Grove - Cottages 13A to 27

Division III - Tout's Grove - Cottages 28 to 52

Division IV - Cottages 54 to 103

Division V - Cottages 104 to 177.

July 26, 1969, was the day for the official opening of the "new" tennis courts in Division IV. It provided an excuse for

a celebration, and after a beauty contest and ribbon cutting ceremony, a rummage sale and pot luck party were held on the ballfield.

Inflation hit Bruce Beach in 1971 with Association fees increasing to \$10.00 per cottage.

In 1974, the Association again investigated the idea of buying cottage lots from the Township.

The following year a committee was appointed to study the feasibility of incorporating the Bruce Beach Association.

In the past, some cottagers had spent winter weekends at the beach although under somewhat primitive conditions. Now more and more people became interested in winterizing their cottages to be able to spend time there in greater comfort during the cold weather.

At the 1976 annual meeting, historian Mrs. Carolyn Flinn, requested that a committee be formed to look into the writing of a new "History of Bruce Beach", including the period covered by the first book published in 1935. The following were appointed to serve on the committee: Barbara Methereil (No. 1A), Dick Huff (No. 51A) and Mrs. W.M. McBurney (No. 68).

To mark the United States Bicentennial in 1976, a baseball game took place on the Huff-Clark diamond, followed by a garden party at No. 50A, that was hosted by the Huffs, the Allens, the Clarks and the Auchterlonies.

In 1977, the executive was authorized to engage a lawyer to proceed with the incorporation of the Association. At the annual meeting, Craig Davidson (No. 49) related a history of "land lease" of the Bruce Beach property, and a committee was once again appointed to negotiate with the Township the acquisition of cottage lots by individual owners. A public meeting was held in Ripley in May, 1978, to hear the Township's plans for selling the lots.

The Association's incorporation was announced by President Don MacLennan during the 1978 annual meeting. In September of that year, members of Tout's Grove were busy clearing overgrowth at the north end of the property. Area

cottages expressed concern about damage to trees caused by snowmobiles, as well as ability to reach cottages out of season, ever since cross country skiing had become a popular winter weekend sport. Some people were alarmed about increased vandalism in the area.

In the Spring of 1979, Tout Grovers planted 2,000 trees — spruce, pine, black locust, silver maple and oak — purchased from the Ontario government at a cost of 3 cents each. Another major clearing project was accomplished in the south end during September, with the help of bulldozers, front-end loaders, a bush-hog and lots of muscle power.

The proposed development at Blair's Grove together with a change in land description from "Green Belt" to "Residential" were the Association's major concerns during 1980. A committee of five was appointed to look into these matters as well as into the proposal to build a road that would join Blair's Grove with South Bruce Beach.

Despite opposition from cottagers, the Blair's Grove Development by-law was approved by the Ontario Municipal Board. The legal expenses incurred had to be defrayed by a special \$20 assessment per cottage, as well as by raising annual Association fees to \$15. It, therefore, was resolved not to appeal the O.M.B. decision, to avoid additional high legal costs.

In 1982, the Association and individual cottage owners had to deal with two new Township by-laws; one effectively eliminated the possibility of building additions on most lots while the other prevented those with smaller lots from rebuilding cottages destroyed by fire. About seventy members objected to both by-laws and at the annual Association meeting all members present signed an official petition requesting that by-laws 11-82 and 30-82 be rescinded. During these proceedings, the board of directors was greatly assisted by a special committee consisting of Paul Haney, Russ Scorgie, Ken Taylor and John Kennedy. Their joint efforts resulted in the final passage of Huron Township by-law 46-82 which was heartily endorsed by the board as well as by the



committee.

At a special general membership meeting held on September 4, 1982, the Association's petition was withdrawn and members who had submitted their own written objections to the earlier by-laws were asked to withdraw them as well.

It is the hope of all Bruce Beachers that the heritage handed down to us will be continued by future generations.

# ***REMINISCENCES***

The 1930's were the halcyon days of Bruce Beach. Social and athletic organizations had been established, representing such activities as beach fires, marshmallow roasts, tennis, golfing and glee clubs. A respectable club house had been erected and regular Sunday school and Church services

were conducted in Tout's Grove, confirming the cottagers' commitment to conservative enjoyment of God's worship outdoors.

The Great Depression and World War II conspired to fix the status quo for two decades. Although the depression, no doubt, was felt by individual cottagers, its total effect and the war years were to freeze social and vacation habits into the form and style of the area's first half century.

The roads were not dependable and the autos had just barely achieved reliability. Friends still competed with friends to see how quickly a trip could be made from the city. These trips were not taken often as there was a tendency to come to Bruce Beach and stay for the whole summer or, at least, for a full month. Work for adolescents was not attainable and few women worked outside the home.



*Looking south from in front of cottage No. 2A in the early 1930s.*

Ours was a stable and extended vacation period with a tendency to live to and for ourselves. We were a self-contained community whose activities centred around the

club house and the Church. There was no weekending but a lot of togetherness.

Two phenomena arose from this situation — one social, the other geological — both interacting with one another. By the mid-twenties the south end of the beach extended to cottage No. 5A. Until No. 6A was built by Jud Benson in 1939 there existed only a desert of sand dunes to the south. The Depression and World War II froze the terrain in that condition for one whole generation. Yet these dunes were an open invitation for several activities. During the day, gleaners would search the sand for pine knots and stumps to burn or, as Nora Benson did, to turn them into attractive indoor decorations. The pools of water in the low-lying, blown-out areas had created sun-warmed ponds where small boys could sail ships and watch polliwogs and water bugs move about in endless, dizzy circles. For the children the dunes were their Sahara Desert while the older people found them ideal for beach suppers over an open fire or a place to spend a pleasurable evening burning a pine stump too large to take home.

At the southern end of this sandy desert was Pine River, one and a half miles from Bruce Beach. Along the banks of this secluded stream, groups of teen-agers would entertain themselves, having carried food by boat or car, to roast their supper over an open fire.

Many beach fires were excuses to get together and create skits and glee club medleys for the annual concert. Artistic talents and organizational skills were unconsciously passed on from the older to the younger members of these groups. The apex of the summer's social life was a display of these talents and skills on an appointed evening in August. The concert followed the annual peanut scramble, races and the fiercely contested North versus South softball games.

In 1940 Canada was at war and the social fabric of Bruce Beach was torn, never to return again to its earlier character. The glee clubs, concerts, beach suppers and other pursuits dissolved in the concerns of world-wide military conflict.



*A group of teen-agers down at the dunes in the mid 1930s.*



*Summer fun was often driving on the beach.*

The fifties opened on a changed society, as the hiatus of war and post-war reconstruction had shattered old traditions. Bruce Beach entered the weekender generation and while some young children might stay at the shore for a protracted period together with their mothers, many mothers each week had to return to their city jobs. It became rare for older adolescents to remain at the cottage throughout the summer. The norm was a hectic influx on Friday nights and reluctant but inevitable departures late Sunday afternoon.

Social relationships became catch-as-catch-can, intermittent contacts. Yet, despite this change in habits, the loyalty and love for the beach seemed to remain as strong as ever. The children of the thirties now were parents, soon to become grandparents with their progeny scampering about in their parents' footprints in the sands of Lake Huron. Many children now are fifth generation Bruce Beachers.



*Several feet of sausages served as a prop for this operation skit performed in 1949 during the last but one concert.*

The changes that took place during the post-war fifties not only were social but also strongly environmental. The new cottages that were built, the first in a long time, signalled a rapid expansion of the area, as though a vacuum had to be filled quickly with a crescendo of hammers and screeching saws. Andrew Wilson leased lot No. 7A from Huron

Township in April 1950, occupying his new building on July 1, that same year; his brother Ian built a cottage on lot No. 11A later that same summer which he sold to Mrs. Jane Kusser in 1969. Phil Swart built on No. 8A in 1951 and later sold to Walker Whiteside of Windsor; the cottage is now owned by Deanne Wright. During the fall of 1950, Colville of Detroit built on lot No. 9A, a cottage to be bought and occupied by Hugh Murray. In 1952 Dr. Fred Bryans and Kay and George Fallis built on Lot 10A. Quickly erected were No. 12A, No. 13A and No. 14A, now owned by Jo Annett, Bob and Marg Sedgewick and Eugene Schweitzer, respectively.

The 6th Concession road was rebuilt and improved to the lake shore, just as Gordon Emmerton's property on the sand dunes south of the 6th was quickly subdivided and sold for cottage lots. Several more cottages were built at Blair's Grove and after being resurveyed, the old village building lots of the town of Lurgan, at the mouth of the Pine River, also were sold for cottages. At the same time, development spread north from Point Clark to Pine River and by the end of the fifties the face of the shore line had completely changed. The open sand dunes were no more and vegetation quickly spread, protected by hundreds of new cottages.

As new homes were built and recreational facilities increased, so did the demand for electrical power. The facade of the sixties was visualized to be dotted with atomic reactor buildings and other structures that would change our skyline to the north. The Douglas Point Nuclear Power Development, started in 1960, was a new contribution to life at Bruce Beach. At night, this spectacular exhibit of colour truly earns its name of "Emerald City".

As power brought more people to the area and people demanded more power, this cycle became quite evident, especially in Kincardine where population surged to over 6,000. Huron Township reacted to these pressures in the seventies, first by introducing land use planning, then by establishing new zoning restrictions and modernizing old

ones. All these influences predicted changes for the eighties and by the time Bruce Beach celebrates its centenary in 1994, our environment and our social relationships certainly will be different.

Perhaps it is easier to remember and evaluate present changes that may be disturbing than it is to gauge our losses of the past. Behind most successful enterprises lies the moving spirit and the encouragement of a specific individual. In our case, Robert McCosh Sr. was the true "Godfather" of Bruce Beach and his mantle was inherited by his son Bob who, together with Jack and Lizzie, carried on as patrons of Bruce Beach. The farmers at the "top of the hill" had taken under their wings the "campers" — from the 6th to the 8th Concession — all along the beach. We



*Jack, Liz and Bob McCosh.*

depended on them for fresh milk, eggs and poultry. I think Bob McCosh epitomized the friendly concern and generous attitude by patiently introducing small children to the wonders of farm life, such as a team of horses and a wagon while



Lizzie would shoo the hens from their nests to let their little eyes peek at the warm, globular shells in the hay. She let them sprinkle seeds on the ground for the hens and while all three McCoshes were busily milking the cows in the evening they would encourage city boys and girls to look on how a milk bottle really was filled. For the older children the separator was sheer magic as they watched the thick cream pour from one spout and the milk from another. All the while, Lizzie would turn the crank to make the noisy machine rise to a banshee scream as it went faster and faster.

We learned to let calves suck our fingers and could observe the piglets as they scrambled to the trough for their food. Bob McCosh would encourage the older boys to help with the haying, even letting them drive the horses now and then. His farm was a never-to-be-forgotten school and playground. We climbed his apple, cherry and pear trees; we walked seemingly endless miles down his back lane to fish in the river. All this was Bob's world and he generously shared it with us. Perhaps he was the last of the pioneers, at least that is how he affected me.

Bob liked to read his newspapers and was very sharp in assessing their contents, especially the business pages. Knowing his liking for keeping up to date, I thought a small modern battery powered radio would appeal to him. At seventeen, while visiting him one day, I expressed what I thought to be a mature outlook on life, boldly suggesting that such a radio might give him pleasure. He stopped whatever he was doing, and leaning on his pitchfork, he turned his blue dancing eyes on me and said, "Them wot has 'em sets and listens to 'em". A clearer indictment of our society was never made! Bob always had plenty of time for children but I hadn't realized until then that his relationship with them was happier when it was a busy one.

Lizzie also was a memorable character. She looked after the farm house, drove the horses when needed and kept the keys of all the cottages. She always was friendly and garrulous as she prepared the milk, sold us eggs, fixed the

chickens, passed on various messages, thereby adding these demands to her list of regular summer chores. Someone once asked her if she was glad to see the cottagers every July. "Oh yes", she replied, "glad to see them come and glad to see them go".

Well, the McCoshes went in the fifties. Lizzie died, Jack died and finally Bob, who had been living in a Kincardine nursing home, died in 1955.

All three had given Bruce Beach a start and I often think I would like to ask Bob's advice on how to handle a situation today. If it were possible, he would surely reply, "You can't stop people from trying new things, but you can work to see it through". And Lizzie would echo, "Times come and times go but people has to do forever".

*Andrew G. Wilson (No. 7A)*

\* \* \* \* \*

From the very beginning, those who had discovered the joys of Bruce Beach would talk about them to others and eventually share them by renting cottages to them. J.M. Wesley and F.H. McMullen had built No. 24 between 1915 and 1919; it was owned by H.L. Chilver from 1929 to 1956 and rented to Betty and Ed (E.V.) Anderson from 1936 to 1956 before it was purchased by them. Betty Anderson had been introduced to the Beach by Mrs. Elizabeth Eastman (No. 18); they had known each other when both were students at London Normal School. Since 1975 Jane (Anderson) Bondy and Don have continued to enjoy Bruce Beach life.

The Brooker family (No. 38) first came to the beach in 1945, enjoying room and board at Beth and Bill Cameron's cottage (No. 82). When the Brookers retired they were able to rent the cottage for a few years and before buying, stayed at Rest-a-While Lodge. For them Bruce Beach with its traditions and friendships represents a priceless heritage.

It is unlikely that any family can equal the record of the Walshes for the number of years they have been renting at

Bruce Beach. Starting off in No. 133 in 1949, they spent several years in No. 36 and No. 44 and since 1966 were fortunate to rent the Roberts' No. 10. They hope to return for many more years.

David Walsh came back from Germany for two years to spend his holidays at Bruce Beach and in 1982 Catherine and her husband arrived from Winnipeg, while Peter drove in from Alberta with a friend.

What makes Bruce Beach so special? Is it its natural beauty, its sandy beach, its beautiful blue lake with its many changing moods? Yes, all of these things, but most of all it is the very special people we meet there year after year — wonderful folk from both north and south of the border.

Together we enjoy the old movies on a Saturday night, the square dances at the club house, the bonfires on the beach, the baseball on Sunday morning and the wonderful games of tennis and golf.

\* \* \* \* \*

For those who knew Bruce Beach in days gone by, I'll ask, do you remember . . .

The tree in the middle of the road on the way to Ripley?

The sheep responding to visiting clergy?

Alex McCosh selling raspberries from a buggy?

How slippery the sheep path was on a rainy day from the second to the third fairway?

Waiting for the mail at the McCosh's mail box?

Trips to Point Clark lighthouse?

Sunday morning walks to Pine River?

Waiting for someone to arrive from the city to give you the right time?

Saturday night trips to the dance hall in town after a beach supper?

Having to go to Port Elgin for beer or to Walkerton for booze?

Glee club practice at No. 1A?

When digging a garbage hole was the first chore upon arriving?

The Indians from the Southampton Reserve selling woven baskets and furniture?

McCosh' outhouse with the Eaton's catalogue handy?

*Barbara Metherell (No. 1A)*

\* \* \* \* \*

The Currie family's Bruce Beach roots go back to 1922 when Eoin's father, the Rev. J.W. Currie of Tara, came to claim lot No. 126, on the recommendation of some of his friends. Many of the cottagers were ministers who came to Bruce Beach for their one month holidays. At that time No. 121 was the closest cottage to the south and No. 133 to the north of the site where Mr. Currie had nailed his shingle to a tree.

To build his cottage he had to bring all the materials down the hill through Hugh Cameron's property, which involved a lot of walking, climbing and carrying. There were no trees on the hill — just scrub, bush and grass.

Father would bring four chickens to the cottage and keep them tied to a post with a string around one leg. Each weekend he would kill one and although there was meat to eat, the number of eggs would gradually diminish.

By the time later generations of Curries came to spend their summers at Bruce Beach, more cottages had been built and local tradesmen delivered provisions to the residents.

To accomodate extra guests, cabins could be rented at Poplar Beach and later, there was a store with a hall behind it where a nickelodeon provided music for many parties and dances.

When our own children were babies doing the the laundry, especially diapers, was a special challenge. This was several years before laundromats and disposable diapers and the supply of those made of cloth always was limited. In desper-

ation we would use dish towels or pillow cases or whatever else was suitable to keep a baby dry.

After accumulating as many dirty diapers as your hands could carry, you would take the load down to the lake for an initial rinsing. In the meantime, the water you had pumped was heating in a boiler on the coal oil stove and you kept your fingers crossed that the wick on the burner had been trimmed well enough so that it would not smoke while you were down at the lake.

When you returned to the cottage, you would put the rinsed diapers into the boiler to "cook", making sure the water was hot enough to make them sterile. You would use as little soap as your conscience would allow, because it was so hard to rinse out.

When the diapers were deemed to be clean, you would remove them from the boiler with a stick and transfer — a few at a time — to the sink. To rinse them, cold water was pumped over them. Then you would wring them out by hand, sometimes after two or three rinsings which was why a single load had to be limited to what your hands could endure!

On a warm day the diapers could be draped over the juniper bushes to dry. No, not hung on a clothes line where they would have been too accessible to the roaming cattle with an appetite for these irresistible tidbits. As they were not fond of juniper the diapers were safe, as long as the wind did not blow them away.

You still had to wash on rainy days and the only place where diapers could be dried was in front of the fireplace. So *they* were steamed and so was the cottage.

Other laundry — bedding and clothes — did not enjoy the luxury of getting washed in hot water. It was taken to the lake, scrubbed with soap and rinsed. The danger was that while you were wringing out one article, the others were apt to float away.

Pots and pans were also washed on the beach. The coal oil stove would have blackened their bottoms so much that

you had to use abrasive sand to get them clean and then rinse that off in the lake.

When the road was put through, the ice man started to deliver. He would come along honking his horn and we would go out with our tongs and pick up a 25 lb chunk of ice to dump into our newly acquired ice box. That is, we had paid for a 25 lb chunk because that was what it had weighed when the iceman left Kincardine . . .

Over the weekend, we tried to squeeze in two chunks but as the drip pan was not large enough to hold more than eight hours' worth of "runoff" we drilled a hole through the cottage floor and attached a hose to the pipe at the back of the ice box. The water then could run through the hole into the cellar.

When in 1952 our own family — four children, at first, and two more later — outgrew cottage No. 126, we bought No. 124 from Mrs. McKay after Rev. William McKay's death. He had built his cottage in 1930 and although it was unique in design and construction, there were some skeptics who had felt it would never stand. Yet it did, providing summer fun for many people for nearly fifty years.

After we bought it, we did considerable remodelling and modernizing; we installed plumbing, electricity, water and so on. But by 1978 when Eoin retired, we wanted a cottage we could use for a longer season. Old No. 124 was going to be difficult to insulate and heat. So we took it down — board by board and nail by nail — and started to build a new one in September 1978. During construction, we lived in a motor home parked in our driveway, having moved our cottage's worldly goods to Jim Stewart's cabin at No. 125.

Our new cottage was completed in November 1978 and since June 1981 has been our permanent home.

I'll conclude my reminiscences with a "Bruce Beach Song" that can be sung to the tune of "Ship Ahoy"!

When you're sweltering in the city  
In the hot month of July

And you think that it's a pity  
That you can't curl up and die  
There's a cool spot up at Bruce Beach  
And we love it every bit  
It's the home of joy and mirth  
It's the happiest spot on earth  
Bruce Beach! Bruce Beach!

*Louise Currie (No. 124)*

\* \* \* \* \*

About 1896, John Kennedy, a Ripley merchant, and S.T. Jackson, a Ripley banker, built a double cottage (now No. 12) on the Lake Huron shore with an approach from the Robert McCosh farm. Using unplanned lumber, it was about forty feet long with an open porch across the front.

The following year my family, the Chapmans from Ripley, and my uncle's family from Wingham, rented the cottage for a month. My father had a horse, but instead of hitching it to a buggy, he borrowed a light wagon to move us and the baggage over the eight miles of road to the cottage. My uncle, W.J. Chapman, drove his horse hitched to their phaeton "with the fringe on the top."

As youngsters, my cousins and I roamed the woods, made sand castles and picked wild strawberries. As the cottage was only big enough to sleep in, we ate at a table in a grove outside. We were not aware that to give us a good time our mothers had to put up with many inconveniences and hard work.

The following year, Mrs. McInnes, the Ripley postmistress, and Angus Munn, a Ripley merchant, built their cottages nearby. I often was a guest of Pauline McInnes' as we were growing up together in Ripley. These two cottages now are No. 14 and No. 13. About two years later, my father, Harry Chapman, built No. 8 with the help of William Knight, a good friend. To filter our drinking water, they sank a 2' x 3'

x3' pine box into the sand. Knight also had a flat bottomed rowboat with a sail and anchor which came in handy for some good perch fishing.

Then No. 12 was sold to Jim Anderson, a commercial traveller from Toronto who had heard of Bruce Beach from Mr. Munn, one of his customers. The Andersons built an upstairs to the original cottage to accommodate their several small children, a maid, and the inevitable long list of guests.

They had a tent for a dining room that they offered for Sunday evening services with Rev. Robert Martin as preacher. The neighbouring farmers joined the beach folk and Presbyterians, Methodists and Anglicans became a truly united group of worshippers.

Transporting provisions was quite a problem in the horse-and-buggy days. Our buggy always was heavily loaded on the frequent trips to and from my father's store in Ripley. We kept our horse in a pasture at the McCosh farm and my father enjoyed many a chat with the McCosh family. We shared our *Toronto Globe* with them and gave them some of our perch when we had a good catch.

My father died in 1905 and my mother sold the cottage to Mrs. Duncan Munn because she felt she could never again enjoy it, as my dad had put so much of himself into it. Many ministers had built cottages at Bruce Beach and it soon became known as "Saint's Rest" and by other less complimentary names.

In 1917, my husband and I rented C. Pollock's No. 45 and we came back again in 1919 and 1920. The cottage then was sold to Mr. King and when he offered it to us for a very reasonable sum, we accepted. Gradually, over the years we decided to improve it which meant a lot of work and planning for my husband, while I had to care for the family and provide food for the workers. This was our vacation! Eventually, we had hydro installed, then a septic tank and water for bathroom and kitchen. Finally came time for retirement and to our great joy Dot and Harry were ready to purchase the cottage so that we might buy a home in Exeter.



Together with Peter and Phillip they continue to enjoy No. 45.

From early days there was social interaction; borrowing a cup of sugar, some tools or sharing a mess of fish. A warm and true friendship developed between Mr. & Mrs. King (No. 46), their family and us. They always generously provided us with whatever we lacked and visited us wherever we happened to be. Mr. & Mrs. T.L. Hamilton (No. 44) and their daughter Mrs. William Burns and family also were good neighbours. The friendships at the Beach always had a rare and abiding quality.

*Florence Roulston (No. 45)*

\* \* \* \* \*

Bruce Beach is . . .

- Watching the most beautiful sunsets from the deck of cottage No. 32.
- Picking raspberries with Gran and making jam.
- Walking to the store to buy candy.
- Buying ice cream at Rest-a-While.
- Riding the milk truck.
- Watching and listening to the wind blowing through the silver poplars.
- Picnics at the little red round house.
- Watching the family play tennis from the clubhouse while sneaking drags from a cigarette.
- Sneaking out at night to meet the gang.
- Attending the out-of-doors church services.
- Pumping water from the well.
- Sunday baseball games.
- Having the door broken in while asleep and then losing at poker.
- Sitting on deck and watching spiders spin their webs.
- Taking long walks along the beach.

- Surfing in the waves.
- Returning each year and feeling that you have never left.

*Anne Caskey (Granddaughter of  
Norman and Annie MacEachern No. 32)*

\* \* \* \* \*

My father, Charles D. Farquharson, was a Presbyterian minister (later United Church). He probably had heard about Bruce Beach, then affectionately known as "The Ministers' Paradise", at the Presbytery. Having learned that this was crown land and being descended from a Scottish family, he carefully checked out all accessible beaches between Bayfield and Southampton before deciding on Bruce Beach. This involved two weeks of driving with Rev. Lee Carr, up and down farm lanes, walking to the lake, sampling the swimming and the tenting at night.

By 1922, lots from the 8th Concession south were filling up rapidly. My father found a location at the north end with excellent swimming (few rocks) and a stand of red pine.

Most of the following are excerpts from letters written by my father to his family and relatives:

*July 14, 1922* - We motored to Kincardine this morning and we are making slow progress towards selecting a building site for our cottage. The shore is wonderful, in some points I can wade out 500 feet. The sand beach is about 100 feet wide from the water edge to vegetation, so as to be on government land. It is covered with small trees, poplars, pine, spruce and cedar. As these are needed to hold back the drifting sand, cottagers are not allowed to cut down trees except for the actual site of the cottage. If we build on one of two sites we marked, we will be half a mile from the nearest cottage, but people are flocking in and the whole beach will be taken in a few years. I am sure that in a short time people will be able to sell cottages here at twice what it costs to build now. I am all in love with the place. The birds sing all the time in the branches. The water is clear and the beach beautifully clean sand and gravel.

I prefer being away from the Holy city at the south. I think that Mr. Carr has a cottage of his own in mind too and we will try to build part of our cottage this year and at least lay his foundation.

We can get milk from the farmers for 10¢ a quart, though down below they only charge 8¢. Lee keeps his auto in a farmer's drive shed, and is charged a dollar for the privilege. Our meals are splendid. The coal-oil stove works perfectly. Yesterday we brought boxes from Ripley for a table and chairs and will get another today for a well. A hole in the sand under a tree keeps butter as hard as ice.

*July 15, 1922* - Carr and I drove to Kincardine today and ordered cement and lumber for our cottage, costing about \$320 in all. The three bedrooms will run along the north side and they will be all built like a sleeping porch with three or four feet open along the whole side and screened in; the verandah similarly. We are not putting in any glass windows but have shutters to pull-up in case of storms or during the winter. We will have a cellar also probably about five feet square. The only objection is the difficulty of reaching the place. The hill behind us is the highest point between Kincardine and Goderich and must be 150 feet. That is the short way to the road, but it is through Mr. Hugh Cameron's farm. Along the beach we are nearly  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile from the first road at the 8th Concession. I am writing by candlelight (two candles) sitting on a soap-box.

*July 22, 1922* - It's raining a steady downpour this afternoon and I have a chance to write and read. A tent without a floor is not very cheerful on a rainy day. If you have a bed, that's sure to be under a leak, but today it is gentle and no leaks have appeared.

We had ham and eggs for dinner today; potatoes, carrots and beets came from Carr's garden at home. We get eggs at 25¢ a dozen and butter at 35¢ a lb. For dessert we had rice pudding and raspberries which can be bought for 15¢ a box.

Now for our work. Yesterday, we finished the cellar and today took the forms away and levelled the ground. We worked to eight o'clock and as I had all the cement to mix,

gravel to handle, water to carry etc. I was well tired by night, with a sore back. We are having too strenuous a "holiday" but the heavy work is over now. The other campers are planning a bee to help us out next week. We hope to have the roof on before I leave on Friday so that we can sleep there instead of in the tent.

*August 4, 1923* - I am busy choring around, putting in windows, etc. to get the cottage completed. I paid \$26 for a dozen window frames and glass yesterday. The grocery wagon calls every day about 6 p.m. and delivers anything you order. He motors to Kincardine every forenoon and will get hardware or anything wanted. We find it wonderfully convenient and as cheap as in Newbury. He drives a horse along the beach and enters 100 cottages every day. He says it is hard work climbing up the sand to each cottage. Our order yesterday came to \$5 but, of course, it will lessen to \$5 a week by next week.

I have our little coal-oil stove here and someday will have a chimney built, but I am anxious to avoid the expense this year. It would cost probably \$25. I got Hugh Cameron to drive to Ripley with his team to meet the noon train. I was afraid to ask him to leave his wheat but he said there was no profit in farming this year and he was glad to earn two or three dollars so easily. The livery men charge \$5. You would enjoy a visit if you would not find the distance by train too great. It is about ten hours run from Chatham, including three hours between trains at London and Wingham.

*August 17, 1923* - The concert at eight was held outside in the "Church". Church means an open glade with seats for 175. The two Sundays we have attended, there must have been 200 people present. Well, in the afternoon yesterday we sat on the hillside and watched the sports on the golf links, but spent most of our time visiting with old friends. The concert at night was very clever; all beach talent, but extra well done. A girls' chorus of 18 voices; also some solos, a recitation, and not least, some very clever shadowgraphs . . .

My summers, until the end of high school, were spent at No. 137. One of the greatest delights was the annual Sports Day and Concert held about the first week in August. I am

sure many will remember the pillow fights, climbing on and off a horizontal pole, the various races and the annual North-South softball game. One year there was a contest during which wives had to identify their husbands by their bare legs! Then in the evening skits were performed by various groups — glee clubs and solo talent — all rehearsed for days before the event. This was fun! In sports, the impetus was to do well and hold up the honour of one's division.

*Don Farquharson (No. 137)*

\* \* \* \* \*

A very early resident at Bruce Beach was Rev. (later Dr.) Donald McKerroll, then a Presbyterian minister in Lucknow. The year is uncertain but perhaps around 1908 he located on what is now No. 41. He encouraged Reverends W. Bremner and R. Davidson, fellow graduates from Knox College, to join him at Bruce Beach. These three doughty Presbyterians probably were responsible for the start of Church services at a very early date, which have continued until today.

Rev. Bremner's cottage, adjoining the McKerroll's, was separated by a breezeway. When the weather was bad it was closed by a curtain of sorts. Later the two buildings were joined to become identical semi-detached units allowing the Bremners and the McKerrolls to live side by side. Church Union changed this close relationship and Rev. Bremner built a new cottage (now No. 42) a little further north. Miss Wylie who attended Dr. McKerroll's Church in Parkdale, Toronto, was invited to visit around 1920. By this time the McKerrolls had constructed a cement pad as a tent site, immediately south of their lot, to prevent strangers from occupying it. Eventually, they persuaded Miss Wylie to build a cottage on the site and No. 40 was erected in 1925 by Sam McDermid from Lucknow. Miss Wylie sold it to R. Ledingham in 1972.

She often spoke of the close relationship with the Tout family who owned the adjacent farm and how the cottagers had to travel across their land to get to their summer places. She admired the Touts, perhaps because of her own childhood spent on a farm near Sutton, Ontario. She believed it had given her a better understanding of the farmer's point of view, conceding, however, that "not everybody got along with the Touts".

*R. Ledingham (No. 40)*

\* \* \* \* \*

Before 1850, the only cemetery in the area was an Indian graveyard in the sand dunes at Lurgan, north of the mouth of the Pine River. Over the years the sand blew away, exposing various bones and skulls that, for many years, were picked up and used by many Bruce Beach medical and dental students. The white man's cemetery was just beside it for a few years; the first to be buried there had been a Joshua Lindsay who died September 8, 1853 at 24 years of age. Shortly after that, the cemetery was moved to its present location, next to the Anglican Church; it is the oldest in Huron Township.

Few will recall the Regatta days of the late 1910's and early 1920's. Nearly every cottage owned a lapstrake, a double-ended rowboat, some of which even were equipped for sailing. Boats and participants would assemble in the vicinity of Sid Huff's cottage (No. 51) before the rowing and swimming events. The contestants in the canoe races provided many laughs, as a few of them ended up in the lake when their craft tipped. Sailing again became popular in the 1970's when lightweight boats that easily could be beached were introduced. These weekly regattas usually were organized by the Huffs, the Clarks and George Auchterlonie.

*Gordon Munn (No. 13)*

\* \* \* \* \*

Marjorie Dobson's father, Rev. A.B. Dobson of Fordwich, erected No. 4 in 1907. At the same time Rev. McLeod of Ripley built No. 23 which was the most northern cottage on the Beach. The nearby flats and hillsides were grazing land for sheep and cattle with stiles at each fence line, to be climbed over whenever one went for a walk. James Anderson, a travelling salesman, was another early cottager whose visits to Munn's Dry Goods Store in Ripley must have kindled his interest in Bruce Beach.

For obvious reasons most of these original cottages were located near farmer McCosh's pump and water trough, in fact, the old cement trough still can be seen at the side of the road, south of the tennis courts. But Mr. Dobson and Dr. Martyn felt that better water could be had from the lake and, therefore, decided to sink wooden barrels above the "wave" line on the beach to collect the clean, cool water. In about 1910, the Dobsons hired Bob and Jack McCosh to sink a 30 to 40 foot steel pipe that had to be hammered in by hand, near their cottage. Yet, with the small hand pump at their disposal, they could not get much more than a trickle of water.

Since the beginning, the McCosh family always extended a helping hand to the cottagers. I believe Frank Tout, another farmer in the area, was jealous of these friendships and, therefore, opposed the original extension of the golf course south of McCosh Grove.

In the early years, our food was kept cool in a zinc-lined box dug into a small sand bank behind the cottage. By 1914, some cellars with storage shelves and stairs had been built. Later a few small dumbwaiters were installed to partially eliminate the use of the stairs. At first, most meals were eaten outdoors but the later additions of dining rooms provided welcome relief from the bothersome flies.

I remember many community activities during my Bruce Beach vacations. Bonfires with sing songs in the sand dunes north of the 6th Concession, annual regattas including

rowboat races for the ladies, but I never shall forget the masquerade party in the new golf club house when Mrs. Whalen (No. 138) came dressed up as Tom Tom the Piper's Son, carrying a piglet she had borrowed from a farmer at the 8th Concession.

*Marjorie Dobson (No. 4)*

\* \* \* \* \*

My aunt, Agnes Warren, built cottage No. 69 in 1934. After leasing the lot she was allowed one or two years of grace before starting construction. The lease payments were so modest that they amounted to no more than ten dollars per year. Today, we would rush to get the cottage built the very first summer.

Initially, No. 69 was designed to accommodate the excess overnight guests from my mother's cottage No. 68. Although it provided no more than sleeping quarters we managed quite nicely without many of the modern conveniences we take for granted today. The farmer's son would bring down a honey pail of milk every morning until we were old enough to fetch it ourselves from the top of the hill. To keep food cool we dug a hole in the sand in a shady spot covering it with a board. Luxury arrived later in the form of an ice box with thrice weekly ice delivery from Kincardine. We would meet the ice man on the road and he would give us an ice sliver to suck on a hot day. To dispose of garbage, we would dig a large hole in the backyard, fill it up and sprinkle a bit of sand over the top; no one worried much about flies.

Sometimes it was easy to drive up and down the hill but when it was not possible we just had to walk. It was fun, too, when our bare feet were covered with a thick coating of clay that would dull the pain when you trod on sharp stones along the path. Barefoot walking after dark was rather



adventuresome, especially after the neighbouring farmer's cattle had used the path to reach the lake for its nightly watering . . .

The visits from delivery people always were interesting occasions and to ensure prompt service on a hot day my mother would offer them a drink of lemonade. Many a time we had to help push a truck stuck in the sand along the shore. Old wire mesh bedsprings put under the wheels were just right to extricate it from the sand's grip. Traditionally, the milkman gave the kids rides along the beach over the bumps and through the many gullies. The Murray brothers, the Ledinghams, Bruce Dean, Bill Brown and I all had fun doing this.

On wash day the lake usually was quiet and we would bring down our sheets, trample on them, rinse them in the lake and spread them out to dry; they made wonderful air domes to get under! No one cared much about a little extra sand in bed at night.

Cooking was done over a coal oil stove and woe to those who left the kitchen door open to cause the flickering flame to go out. Cranking an ice cream machine really made you warm, but when you were rewarded with a dish of the frozen delight you didn't mind!

One event of the early days was the Church Bake Sale for which the ladies supplied their finest wares. During one memorable sale at our cottage, two dogs decided to have a vigorous barking match right in the middle of the display of cookies and cakes. Another delight was the country Church Supper when long rows of eaters, seated on planks supported by nail kegs, would enjoy the superb and plentiful food. Afterwards entertainment was provided and everyone could return home content and happy.

Swimming always was great fun and our family would race to the water on "the 24th" for their first dip. One day in early Spring, my brother and I became really daring; we

went into the lake through a hole in the ice but the temperature of the water did not let us linger long.

Division III has held an annual picnic for years — all are invited to lunch, then games for all ages are played. What a great way to get to know your neighbours! I remember many other picnics when we would pack a lunch, walk to Pine River mouth (no, we didn't drive), have lunch, play on the huge sand dunes and then walk home.

Poison ivy used to flourish in hidden places at Bruce Beach. We would spend much time spraying and finally won the battle that saved us much scratching and misery.

Rainstorms with lots of thunder and lightning were exciting. I remember one during a Sunday dinner that really was loud. Running to the door to see what had happened, I got a jolt from the door knob. When the storm was over we found that the neighbour's mail box, down by the beach, had been struck.

Rainy day pastimes included climbing up on the cottage partitions and jumping down on the bed. Alas, many jumpers broke the springs.

I wonder if any southend beachers remember the "bones" of a sailing vessel that would appear and disappear at the shore line just north of the 6th, whenever there was a storm? I never found out which vessel had come to grief, but still would like to know . . .

Sunday afternoons, of course, were reserved for outdoor worship, a custom now over 75 years old and still going strong.

During W.W. II, Sunday evenings were spent at the Carson's No. 147, an hour or two of singing our favourite hymns accompanied by an organ or a piano and often by Rev. Carman Dyer's violin.

Another wartime memory was the sales promotion campaign by hydro officials to convince us how wonderful it would be to have electricity. There was considerable opposition, at first, but eventually it came to everyone's cottage and now we could hardly do without it. Running water and indoor

plumbing soon followed.

Our cottage has survived four generations and is still going strong. As each new group comes along, it rediscovers the joys of Bruce Beach.

*Jim McBurney (No. 69)*

\* \* \* \* \*

Bruce Beach associations and friendships last a lifetime. I am thinking of my brother, Ross Anderson, who married Florence, the eldest daughter of Rev. and Mrs. E.W. Jewitt, who for many years owned No. 133.

The Anderson family was ready to try a cottage-style vacation in about 1932. We had spent previous holidays visiting relatives and tenting, until my sister, now Mrs. Helen Sanderson of Toronto, arrived in December 1930. The 1931 camping-and-visiting-style vacation apparently did not sit well with Helen and when my father met Carman Dyer at a Toronto conference in June 1932, it did not take long to convince him of the merits of a comfortable cottage as a suitable alternative to our earlier, nomadic summer existence. As I recall, Carman Dyer looked after renting cottages for Division IV of the Bruce Beach Association and it was at his suggestion that we rented from Mr. & Mrs. Jewitt for that summer.

The trip to Bruce Beach largely was an endurance test, as the greater part of the distance from our home in Woodbridge had to be travelled along gravel roads. Although they were in good repair, dust and loose pebbles meant that the speed limit never exceeded 35 mph (60 kmh) and it took five hours to reach our destination. Also, our 1930 Oldsmobile sedan was built rather rigidly and one could feel most of the bumps.

The distance between Bruce Beach and Woodbridge was only 125 miles (200 km) and there was every indication that travel time could be reduced as road paving became part of

government policy during the "Great Depression". These roads eventually eliminated all further cottage development along the shores of Lake Huron. Instead, all lots between Tobermory to Sarnia were built on during the next thirty years.

Upon settling in at a rented cottage my father soon began to think of building one for himself and his family. There were few in Division IV at that time, but lots still were obtainable on a 99-year lease from the Department of Lands and Forests. After acquiring lot No. 131, Dad commenced work levelling the ground during that first Bruce Beach vacation. He had to do much shovelling to remove the sand dune in the centre of the proposed cottage site.

During July cement posts were placed on a grid at 8 foot (2.4 m) centres. A cellar, 9 foot (2.7 m) deep, was dug and after the concrete was in place Dad felt that a well easily could be dug through the floor. Promptly the next morning he broke through where he thought the well ought to be. To most observers it seemed such an unusual idea that they thought more than the concrete had cracked around the construction site! Yet, Dad's reasoning was straightforward enough, as the bottom of the cellar was about level with the top of the beach wells that had been dug by most cottagers.

According to some records kept by my mother, Ina V. (Laidlaw) Anderson (deceased 1978), "the framework of the cottage was up" by August 1932. During that month she and we three children — Howard, Ross and Helen — stayed in Lion's Head with our maternal grandparents, William and Bella Laidlaw.

Dad worked part of the week at the cottage but when he was able to secure Bert Waugh from Lion's Head as a full-time hired helper, he returned to Woodbridge for the rest of the week including Sunday, hoping that none of his parishioners would expire during the time he was working at the cottage supervising Bert. Dad usually took his one-month vacation in July but always was on call, just in case he had to officiate at a funeral. His telephone messages in those days

were relayed via Hugh Cameron's farm, so that if necessary, he could be back in Woodbridge in a matter of hours.

During August 1932, a fireplace "of the best Shallow Lake rug brick" was installed at a cost of \$100.00. This was a considerable sum of money as I believe Rev. Duncan Guest was able to build his entire cottage (No. 132) for just over \$300.00, even after hiring a carpenter to do the work. The roof of our cottage was in place and shingled by the autumn of 1932. The shingles were asphalt type and the heaviest obtainable at that time. It should be noted that to the best of my knowledge this roofing material has survived for approximately 50 years! As the Depression was deepening in 1932 good quality lumber and hardware was available at fairly reasonable prices, yet the family budget was under considerable strain for some time to come. That same year the woodwork received a complete coat of paint with a good base of raw linseed oil for preservation.

In 1933, the furniture arrived by truck from "Little Eaton's", a dealer in used furniture on Parliament Street in Toronto. Mother and Dad had been on a shopping trip and probably spent between \$75 and \$100 for the lot. The dining room table and chairs, certainly very substantial pieces of furniture, were promptly enamelled in pale green and ivory. A concrete slab was built at the back door and a waterworks system installed.

Few cottages had indoor flush toilets as there was no electrical power. It wasn't until the spring of 1946, shortly after I was discharged from the RCNVR, when Dad and I wired the cottage in a few days. He then decided that a gravity feed water tank would provide the necessary pressure to operate the flush toilet. The tank, custom made of galvanized sheet metal with an approximately 70 gallon capacity, was installed on top of the dumbwaiter enclosure next to the kitchen sink. A regular hand-operated force pump was used to pump the water into the top of the water tank. The septic tank was far enough removed from the well, and the sandy soil provided excellent filtration. There was one little equation

everyone in our cottage knew — 1 flush = 25 pumpstrokes. This system worked reasonably well until we had guests who had never heard of it . . .

In 1934, the balance of the concrete work was completed but not without help from the entire family. Building the wall in front of the cottage was a major undertaking, as rock loads had to be brought to the site in a wagon drawn by a team of horses. Ross and I gathered many pails of coarse gravel from seams on the beach. After the base was built to a good depth, wooden forms were made, face stones selected and cemented into place. By this time the cottage really was quite presentable and I remember it would take Dad at least an hour to describe its various wonderful features to our guests.

My brother and I spent many hours in the water at that stage learning how to swim. After all, what would all the water be doing in Lake Huron without being put to good use? Mother recorded in 1938, "Boys learned to Swim". This past summer, when my wife and I were at Ipperwash Beach, I remarked that I was the fourth (Anderson) generation to learn how to swim in Lake Huron! One hundred years ago my great-grandfather lived on the Lake Road east concession of Bosanquet Township near Forest within a few hundred paces of the great Lake Huron.

Eventually we could dive off the "brown rock" and when we became even better swimmers, diving off the "white rock" which is further out and therefore in much deeper water, was lots of fun. At one time before Ross or I could swim, I very nearly drowned. We were returning to shore from the sand bar between the brown and the white rock and when Ross could not touch bottom, he frantically clung to my neck. After a succession of waves hit us both we were having trouble breathing, especially I, since by then Ross' hands were firmly clutched about my neck! I think our parents had us in their sight at the time and we made it to the shore, but it does go to show that water can be dangerous for the inexperienced swimmer!



*A '39 Ford, '37 Chevrolet and a '37 Pontiac parked in front of the "brown" and "white" rocks.*

We sometimes would pack a lunch and hike to the concession road at the north end of the beach, up the hill, along the top, then south past the farm homes and barns of the McCormicks and Camerons to the next concession which leads to Pine River. We would come down the hill, perhaps stopping to pick some wild strawberries, then take the road behind the cottages about as far as No. 119 and go cross country as there was no road north of that point. Fortunately, during those early years the level of Lake Huron was low enough to provide easy access via the beach itself.

The formation of the Cameron Grove Association came about when Hugh Cameron decided to retire from farming and sell the farm to his son Mervin who had returned home from the Army in 1946. Dad, Carman Dyer and others, therefore, had to move quickly to acquire from Hugh Cameron the strip of land between the cottage lots' rear property line and the base of the hill. The sale ultimately provided a right-of-way for the Township road which now

serves the cottages at the north end of Division IV.

A winding road suitable for one wagon and horses was cut into the side of the hill of Cameron's farm so that lumber could be brought to building sites in the event of high lake levels. I recall Mrs. Maude Dyer telling me, because of that, the lumber for their cottage had to be brought down the hill in 1929. The road also was used in the summer by Mervin Cameron to bring his livestock down to the lake for watering during a sustained dryspell. It was not often that he drove the cattle past our cottages, but it did happen!

The actual road allowance between No. 133 and No. 134 seemed not to have been open for this purpose, as it was customary to use a wagon width trail just north of No. 131. When Duncan Guest built his cottage, the proper road allowance was opened up and later improved with clay and gravel so that nearby cottagers could park their cars in the shade. That made the loading and unloading at the back door much easier.

The earliest mail delivery came from the Cameron farm, the same place where we obtained our milk supply. Each evening a member of our family would walk to the farm to pick up our mail and the milk, right from the cow. Pasteurization only became mandatory within the province in 1935.

Rural mail delivery to Bruce Beach seemed to have started about the same time as milk delivery began along the beach. At least two Kincardine grocers, one a Mr. Shewfelt, would take our orders and deliver several times a week. Garbage collections did not exist and the usual procedure was to bury the refuse which could not be burned in the fireplace. Any cursory digging in what is now known as the Cameron Grove will reveal these abandoned garbage repositories. During the season they usually were marked by potato plants sprouting in the otherwise barren, sandy soil.

There are many other fine features of life at Bruce Beach that I can recall; Church services at Tout's Grove, under the trees accompanied by nature's own music, such as the song of the cicada. My Dad was in charge of the Annual Bruce



Beach Picnic for a few years. It began with the traditional "peanut scramble" followed by races for the young and contests including nail-driving for the ladies. The picnic was sometimes in Tout's Grove and sometimes on the golf course, followed by evening entertainment. No. 1 tee became the stage area illuminated by about four Coleman style lanterns that used unleaded (white) gas. (Yes, during the thirties, most gas stations sold four grades of gasoline, one of which was unleaded (white). The other grades came in various colours which were very much in evidence when you gazed at the tall glass cylinders perched atop each gasoline pump.) At these picnics amateur talent such as singing, Highland dancing or poetry recital was much in evidence.

Although movie houses existed in Kincardine, I never attended a single show in the thirty odd years I spent at Bruce Beach; very Presbyterian, I would think. One feature of Bruce Beach life that was extremely popular was the Sunday evening sing song, at times held in No. 119 (Rev. A.C. Stewart), No. 125 (Rev. C.E. Dyer) or in No. 131 (Rev. J.E. Anderson) with musical accompaniment usually provided by Rev. Carman Dyer and his violin. I don't remember that he ever had any music in front of him, but since we sang hymns only he probably knew the tunes by heart. In later years, when more cottages had been built, the crowd grew too large to assemble in any one cottage, except possibly the Carson's No. 147. It must have been a considerable imposition on their privacy but they never failed to open their doors on these occasions — a gesture much appreciated by their many friends and neighbours.

Rev. Carman Dyer probably was one of the great missionaries to spread the gospel of Bruce Beach. He even persuaded his home area doctor, Dr. J.T. Thomas of Caledon, to build cottage No. 136. I guess he felt it was time that we had someone to care for our physical needs as the spiritual ones already were amply taken care of. The following small anecdote will illustrate what a poor preacher like our Rev. Dyer had to do to pay his medical bills before the days

of medicare. As I recall, his eldest daughter Jeanette required an appendectomy in 1936 and he arranged to make a partial payment to Dr. Thomas, the surgeon, by constructing a number of Cape Cod style lawn chairs for him, the kind that are very comfortable to sit in but difficult to get out of. Dad and Carman Dyer spent several days working on them and, conservatively, must have produced about a dozen. Using pine because it was straight and easy to work with, the chairs would not last if left out on the lawn in the rain!

*Howard Anderson (No. 131)*

\* \* \* \* \*



*Teeing up in 1940.*

\* \* \* \* \*

We recall playing golf in the early 40's, stopping at the 4th tee-off for a drink of water from an old enamel cup hung on McCosh's pump. We would chat with Lizzie McCosh and watch her make "shoo-fly" pie or perhaps ask her for some blueing to cure a bee sting. We would desert a golf game if it

was bad and instead play hide and seek in the hay loft or visit old Charlie, the draft horse.

*Jean (Clark) Auchterlonie (No. 50a)*

*Nancy (Huff) Allen (No. 51A)*

\* \* \* \* \*

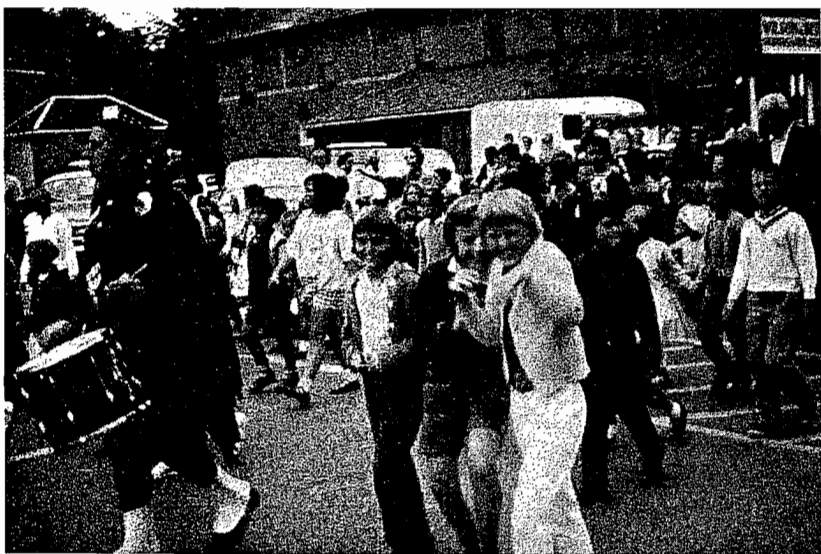
It is difficult to estimate how many children and adults from Bruce Beach enjoyed going into town on a Saturday night to hear and see the Kincardine pipe band, a tradition that always will be remembered.

The Band was formed in 1908 but it wasn't until 1910 that they acquired the second-hand kilt of the MacKenzie tartan which they wore until 1922 when they were given the second-hand 48th Highlanders' Gordon. During part of World War II, Jimmy Irvine played the pipes on street corners to raise funds for those overseas. Since 1948, Jack Graham, Henry Lamont, Sandy Cameron and John Hall have been and still are members of the Pipe Band. (Jack Graham has a special connection with the Beach as he worked for the Golf Club in 1935). Later members included Peter Tucker, Ernie Fisher, Goldie Buckingham, Ross MacLennan and Norm Dunsmoor. The Band now is known as the Kincardine Scottish.

Many beachers played in it over the years; Ian Wilson (former owner of No. 11A), George Johnston (former owner of No. 17A), Bob McFarlane (No. 17A), the Roulston twins, Peter and Phillip (No. 45), John Goodenow (No. 53), Jim Murray (No. 62), and Watson Morris (No. 165). Some members of the Band also came to play at special events, such as the first Bruce Beach Barbecue, the party to celebrate the purchase of Snowden Grove by the cottagers; Don MacLennan's (No. 52) 40th birthday; Craig Davidson's (No. 48) 50th; the opening of the Marshall tennis court (No. 19A); the dedication of the plaque on the little round house at the 8th tee-off, in memory of Charles and Fred Yates.

They played at many other parties and at one of them, one of their members, a butcher, was introduced to a Bruce Beach surgeon as a "fellow tradesman." It only was much later when either of them learned of the other's real profession. In addition to Henry Lamont playing the spoons and Jim Murray the bass drum (a washtub), I also remember the charivari (or chivaree) at Joan's and Ian's new cabin (No. 32).

One of the band's more recent visits to the Beach was in June 1973 to entertain at the wedding reception of Laurie and Tom Hogg (No. 32) whose marriage was the first to be solemnized in the Church Grove. On the same evening, Bob Ledingham (No. 40) dressed in his kilt and wearing dress shoes, attempted to cross the Tout gully on a log. For a number of reasons including the fact that he was carrying a large coffee pot and his camera *and* because it was raining, he lost his balance, fell into several feet of water, but managed to save himself. When his film was developed there was a note attached suggesting that he have his camera checked



*Saturday night fun in town!*

to avoid future blurred pictures . . .

A great tradition lives on and during the years when curling Bonspiels took place between members of the Kincardine Club and the Bruce Beachers, those involved will remember generous Mel Riffin of the Dickey-Bird Motel and the thrill of being piped on the ice by members of the Kincardine Scottish.

*Don Finlayson (No. 39)*

\* \* \* \* \*

October 15, 1954 will be remembered as the day "Hurricane Hazel" a freak tropical storm, swept across Lake Ontario causing floods and devastating many regions. Eighty-one people died, many were left homeless and property damage was estimated at over one hundred million dollars.

Although the greatest loss of life and property damage occurred in Etobicoke Township's Humber Valley, it should be mentioned that the storm spread throughout South Western Ontario. A C.N. passenger train from London left the rain-drenched tracks a few hundred yards from Southampton; one passenger was injured, the engineer and fireman were trapped in the cab of the engine and both subsequently died of injuries sustained when the boiler burst.

Some thirty-five miles south of Southampton the storm inflicted damage at Tout's Grove. Although there were no witnesses, it became apparent that it had caused a torrent of water to drain from Collins' farm by way of an open gully which overflowed at the base of Tout hill and washed out the road running due west. Luckily, the large elm tree between No. 40 and No. 41 diverted the waters a few yards south where they rejoined the gully to flow into Lake Huron. Cottagers were amazed to find the access road washed out for nearly 100 yards, to a width of about 20 feet and a depth of up to 6 feet. If the elm tree had not diverted the torrent of water, substantial damage probably would have been done

to Mrs. Mary Buchanan's cottage and that owned by the Misses Wylie.

Ian MacEachern, during his two weeks holidays in July 1955, headed up a work bee to fix the road, with the help of a team of horses, a scoop shovel and a front-end loader. Dead trees were cut down and logs packed into the roadbed with clay from the side of Tout hill and sand and gravel from the beach.

After two weeks of hard work, the project was finished and it was hoped the road might last for about 10 to 15 years. Some 27 years later, it still is in excellent condition. The logs likely were so well protected and packed that they did not rot.

*Gordon Corneil (No. 30)*

\* \* \* \* \*

Richard and Edith Davidson first came to Bruce Beach as visitors of the McKerrolls in cottage No. 41. It took them a long time to make the 20-mile journey from Lucknow in their democrat because the roads were so rough. In 1914 they rented the West cottage (No. 33) and during that summer, with the help of Donald McKerroll and Billy Bremner, a study was added to what is now No. 49. Using the study as temporary living quarters in 1915, Dr. Davidson, assisted by four carpenters, erected the frame for his cottage in three days. He was the first to equip all windows with sash and glass. By 1935 it was necessary to build a boys' bunk house and this was accomplished for less than \$100. Later, a kitchen and woodshed were added to the main cottage.

Before the days of cars the train trip from Toronto was a momentous undertaking. Starting out at 7 a.m. we had to change in Guelph and Palmerston, stop at Wingham to wait for the train from London, arriving at our cottage just before nightfall. Hinton Mitchell, the drayman who owned No. 48, would meet us at Ripley Station. He kept his horse in a barn

next to his cottage.

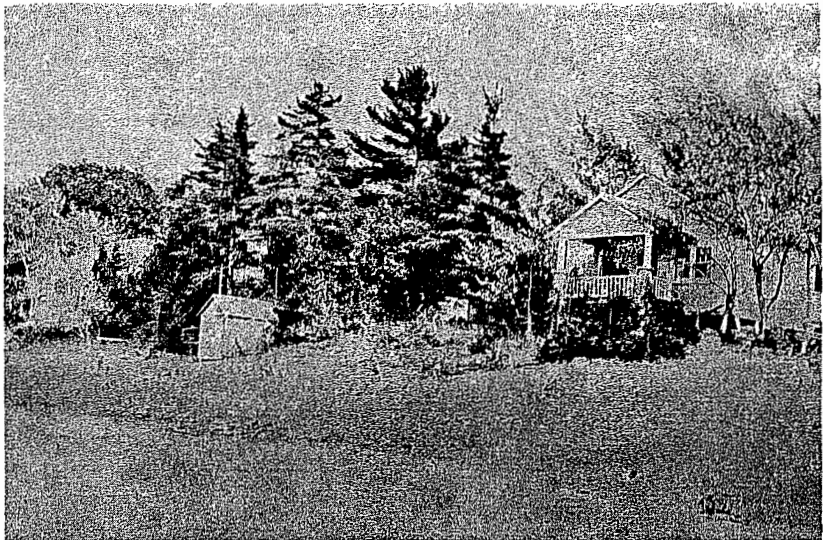
Bruce Beach is one of the most wonderful spots in the world for both young and old. Over the years four generations of Davidsons have enjoyed it and in 1963 we were able to purchase No. 48 to leave No. 49 to be shared by our children.

*Craig Davidson (No. 48)*

\* \* \* \* \*

Rev. David Perrie of Wingham built No. 20 in 1906. Although at that time most of the other cottages were south of us our lot had been chosen for its stately stand of pine trees.

My husband Harold, grandson of the original settlers, recalls many happy hours spent at the McCosh farm. While the children would watch the milking, the adults would sit with the farmers on the front verandah or the back porch until Lizzie McCosh would fetch her dipper to fill each tin pail with milk. The cottagers all looked forward to that daily



*The Rintoul cottage in 1930.*

trek to the farm.

A hike to the "old farms" to fish in Pine River and explore the old buildings also was a highlight of summer fun at Bruce Beach.

*Mildred Parker (No. 20)*

\* \* \* \* \*

Through the years the worthy traditon of weekly ecumenical summer worship was maintained despite wind, storms, the bright sun shining in the minister's eyes, and the noise of cars and motor boats. When it rained the services were held in the golf club house, and many opened with the psalm "Unto the hill around do I lift up mine eyes". In the early days that included watching Steve Tout's sheep on the hillside, and there was always hope that a surprised "baa" would be heard at an appropriate or inappropriate moment!



*Church Grove in 1928.*





*Church Service in the early 1920s.*

Led by many of the ministers who had cottages at Bruce Beach, arrangements for services were made by the Association's Religious Services Committee, in which Rev. Carman Dyer, as secretary, played an important role. After his death in 1960, a memorial fund was established to purchase an electric organ and a public address system. In this connection, a dedication service was held on August 1, 1961. Other gifts included a pulpit bible donated by Mrs. W.G. MacKersie in memory of Rev. Fred Anderson who had conducted the first services; hymn books by Ian MacEachern in memory of his father and offering plates by Margaret and Frank Walsh in memory of Mrs. T.C. King. Other special services and celebrations have taken place in the Church Grove, and probably the first baby to be christened there was Jack Henry when his family rented Cottage No. 32 in 1920.

Music always has been an important part of the worship, and contributions by many volunteer pianists and organists were greatly appreciated through the years. Among these musicians are T.L. Hamilton as "precentor", Percy Bennet,

Greta Hossie, Jim McBurney, Mrs. G.W. Cushnie, Laura Mullin, Bill Cameron, George Dunkley, June and Warren McBurney, Mrs. John Henderson and others.

The setting of the Church Grove was improved by planting cedar trees in 1944. As they grew they replaced the original canvas reredos. Locust trees also were planted for shade, in an attempt to replace the large elm tree which had succumbed to disease. The benches and other equipment still are maintained by the members of the Church Services Committee, who also arrange painting and other work bees.



*Church Service, 1981.*

The following outstanding people have served the community as chairmen of the Religious Services Committee: Dr. J. Lovell Murray, Dr. George Covey, Rev. E.J. Roulston, Rev. Orville Hossie, Bill Henderson and his son, John. By continuing the summer services they have reaffirmed our founders' Christian faith, thereby adding to the community spirit and quality of life at Bruce Beach.

*Kay Fallis (No. 10A)*

\* \* \* \* \*

Tout's Grove also was the location of the first baseball games for boys and girls. Starting in the summer of 1923 they played almost every evening. Similar games were held in other divisions of the Beach.

In 1942, Sid Huff and his sister Bea Clark purchased the flats and hill property, behind the cottages (from No. 48 to No. 54) from Leonard Tout. Together with their families they cleared the brush and planted trees to create a ball park and recreation area. The first of the weekly games started there in 1944 and since then have become social events for many cottagers. They are so popular that often three games are scheduled at 9:00 a.m. The Huffs and Clarks have maintained the ball park for all to use and enjoy. In recognition of their efforts, and especially in memory of Sid Huff, the ball players and neighbours erected permanent screening and benches in 1973.



*Sunday morning ball game, 1982.*

\* \* \* \* \*

We first came to Bruce Beach in 1942. There was no other

access route except to drive in from the 10th and south along the beach. We would park nose-in in front of cottage No. 135.

The mailman also drove along the beach to deposit mail in boxes mounted on posts just above the lake's high water mark. Groceries ordered one day would be delivered the next by Kincardine merchants. Some enterprising farmers and others sold vegetables, home-baked goods and sometimes delicious roast chickens.

The people to the north and south of us began to buy the land behind their cottages from the farmers. As a result there was development inland instead of along the lake-front. This caused some concern to Bruce Beach residents, just as the rumours that a dance pavilion, similar to the one at Sauble Beach might be built, were greeted with apprehension.

To prevent undesirable development, the base land of the hill was jointly purchased from Hugh Cameron on August 7, 1947. That gave the Township a 30-foot strip, from the 10th to the 8th Concession, to build roads that would lead to each cottage, since the lake's high water level made it no longer possible to drive along the beach.

*Helen Cushnie (No. 135)*

\* \* \* \* \*

During the early thirties the cottages still could be reached by driving along the beach which one year was almost four lanes wide. Besides being the only access route the beach with its hard sand became the place for cottagers to get acquainted. Every evening teenagers from south and north would meet there and as our cottage was about halfway along the strip it became the place to plan activities at the golf course, on the tennis courts, at the dunes, for the week-end bonfire and whether to drive to the pavilions at Kincardine or Southampton for a dance to "Freddy Morrey's".

band.

*Janet Carver Davis (No. 90)*

\* \* \* \* \*

My family came to Bruce Beach as renters in the late thirties. While occupying No. 85 our neighbours were the Prouse family who came from Prince Edward Island to spend their summers at Bruce Beach. Their children became part of a large group of teenagers who enjoyed the dances in Kincardine and Southampton.

Many of the cars parked on the beach were protected with tarpaulins and walking home on a stormy night was a very scary experience as the tarps would flap in the wind. Sundays seemed to be the busiest day for the farmers; they often had to bring a team of horses to the beach to pull out the cars which had been parked too close to the water's edge.

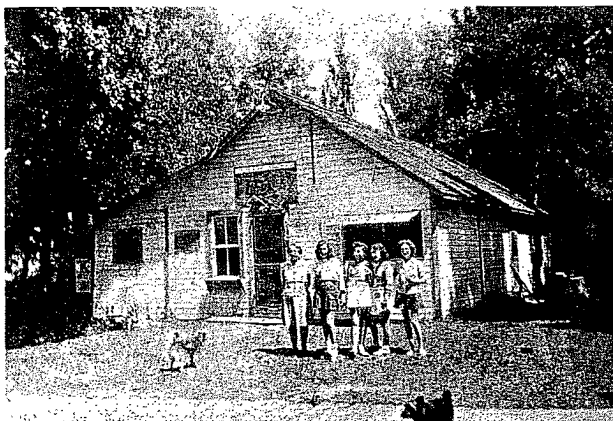
Looking back it is hard to believe how many amenities we enjoyed. Two cleaners called every week from Toronto, merchants provided almost everything we needed and the Indian people offered us quill and leather work and took orders for outdoor furniture.

*Jean T. (Hackland) Marshall (No. 19A)*

\* \* \* \* \*

For those who grew up in the late 40's and 50's — do you remember . . .

- Our hill-side "forts?"
- The dances at "The Booth", 10th Concession on Saturday nights?
- Or better still, the dances at the pavilion in town?
- "Tin Lizzie" ice cream sundaes at the Kincardine Dairy Bar across from the old Post Office?
- The Sunday night sing song at the Carsons?



*"The Booth" — at the foot of the 10th.*

- Having to go with the family to Sunday Church services in the Grove? Parents sat up front in the pews while kids and teenagers sat on a grassy knoll at the back. Repressed mayhem as boys slipped caterpillars down the backs of girls' dresses.
- The impromptu horseshoe pitching contests of our seniors?
- The evening promenading along the beach, just at sunset, with old-fashioned courtesies and conversations en route?
- Living at the tennis courts, and the North-South tournaments with a handsome silver trophy for the winner in each category?
- The hayrides? Kenny McCormick from the farm near the 10th would hitch up his team of Clydesdales; we all piled onto the sweet hay and the wagon would roll along under a summer moon to Blair's Grove for a weiner or corn roast.
- The baseball games in town, Bruce Beach versus Kincardine? The Bruce Beach gang usually had a picnic at the tables near the pavilion. The big feature was our wooden ice cream freezer which we cranked

by hand. Bruce Dean (No. 150), who delivered milk along the beach, had got the ingredients from the dairy. He died in a tragic accident at the hill top by the Bruce Beach store at 18 years of age. Will anyone who ever knew him ever forget his cheerful whistling as he walked along the "back path"?

The merchants' trucks from Kincardine, the orange Superior Store truck, Forbes market, Cross's Bakery, and the ice man? Our jobs as kids were to take our wagon back to the road where the ice was loaded and empty the water pan at the back of the ice box.

The corny songs that always were the finale of the annual concert as darkness fell and the surrounding circle of cars facing the stage turned on their headlights? Here is one we sang to the tune of 'K-K-K Katy',

B-B-B Bruce Beach, bee-oot-ee-ful Bruce Beach  
You're the only B-B-B Beach that I adore  
When the M-Moon shines over Lake HEW-RON  
I'll be strolling with my true love on the shore.  
(And likely tripping over recessed wells!)

*The Lanes, Mary, Gordon, Agnes and Ron (No. 130)*

\* \* \* \* \*

J. Lovell Murray was "Mr. Tennis" from 1929 to 1938. He graciously guided the young people in the logistics of arranging meetings and tournaments. Matches for men's and ladies' singles, doubles and mixed doubles were the highlights of the season. Sometimes friendly tournaments were played with Divisions III and IV, and occasionally, there were games with the Kincardine Tennis Club. At the end of the season the annual meeting was held with election of officers, prize giving and refreshments.

The courts were resurfaced in 1958 at a cost of \$650, five

interested cottagers donating \$50 each. With the years the back stops became stronger and the players more skillful. In the early 70's, the courts were again resurfaced, this time with a green silica sand mixture which greatly enhanced their appearance. Back supports were added to the benches and in 1982 the areas around the courts were levelled and surfaced with special crushed stone at a cost of \$1,000.

Interest in tennis at Bruce Beach has remained high and the calibre of play has steadily improved. The courts continue to be busy places where good fellowship can be found, in addition to good tennis with enthusiastic players.

*Mary Kennedy (No. 8)*

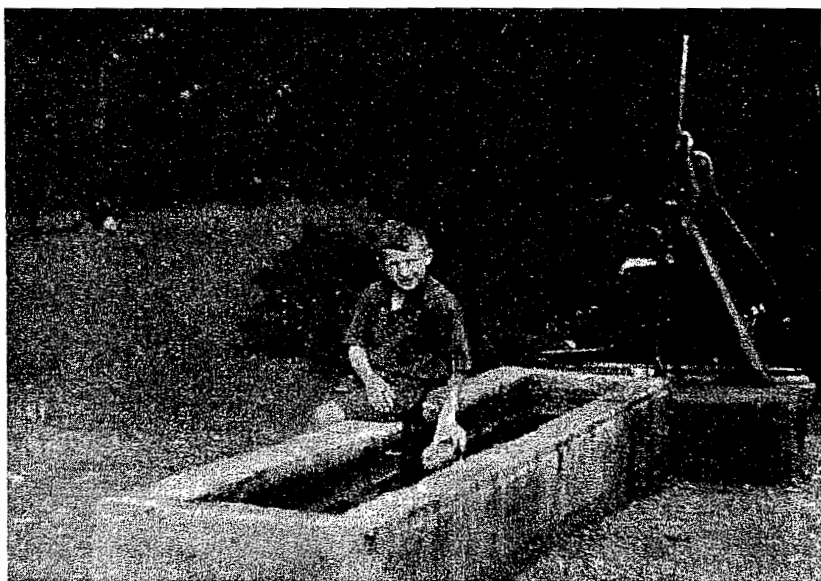
*Margaret Mary Benson (No. 22)*

\* \* \* \* \*

A special tribute must be paid to the farmers on the hill. They all proved loyal friends to the early cottagers who depended on their produce and their friendliness. Robert McCosh's family was especially obliging and friendships were fostered by twice-daily visits seeking supplies of milk. Cottagers were initiated to the mysteries of the cream separator and, if they were lucky, given the joy of actually operating it. As the number of families increased on the shore, other farmers began to sell milk mornings and evenings.

In due course, the Murray Brothers of Kincardine became the milkmen of the beach. By then, some people had installed ice boxes and the iceman began to make his rounds two of three times each week. Some young men from among the cottagers considered themselves most fortunate if they landed summer jobs with these companies. Alas, these daily services disappeared as more and more electric refrigerators were installed; now we must drive to the stores and carry home everything ourselves.





*No thirst problem in 1922 at the McCosh farm pump!*

An early survey shows a farmhouse on the site of the McCosh Grove tennis courts. That is why the first cottagers were fortunate to find an ample supply of water from the farm pump at the bottom of McCosh hill. Each cottage had its own water pail and dipper as well as its own water carrier. Perhaps it was the latter who instigated sinking a sand box or digging a private well? Some cottagers pumped water nearer home and shared it with their neighbours. By the mid-twenties, most residents had their own wells and the luxury of having water within your own four walls soon became a common occurrence. After electricity was available, adjustments were made to accommodate electric pumps to supply running water for inside toilets.

In 1961, the "Bruce Beach Waterworks No. 1" began. A deep well gave eighteen cottages a common water supply and since then, additional deep wells provide groups of cottages with an abundance of pure water, enough for lawn



*A typical beach well.*

sprinklers, dishwashers and clothes washers.

The annual concert held each August as a conclusion to Sports Day always was anticipated with pleasure by most members of the Bruce Beach community. Singers, trained by Miss Bradley or Mrs. Duncan Munn, and those people who could play ukelele or guitar practised hard to perfect their songs and parodies for the audience. Especially talented local folk were invited to participate and the first community players offered skits and melodramatic theatre, all performed outdoors. Tout's Grove, that lovely flat expanse of land, was readily lighted, first by hanging lanterns and then by cars drawn up in a semi-circle with their headlights focussed on "the stage". The later concerts held on the first fairway could not match this earlier, romantic setting.

During the early days of holidaying at Bruce Beach, receiving mail was a unique social experience. Except for the few cottagers who had their own boxes, most people's mail was directed to the nearest farmhouse. Since the times

of the mailman's arrival were sporadic, it was customary for a representative from each household to wait for him at the top of the hill. These gatherings fostered friendships and a sense of community. The arrival of the mailman would interrupt tennis matches and conversations as everyone would run to the road. Who can forget the thrill of having an enormous parcel of mail thrown into one's arms? The older teenagers usually acted as sorters, handling the mail with utmost care.

All these happy experiences came to an end when our community grew to a size that merited a separate route. People were asked to set up one mailbox among every three cottages. No sooner were they established when the beach changed so dramatically that it became a road of hard sand. It, therefore, was infinitely easier for the mailman and other service folk to deliver along the lake front. However, just as dramatically, the lake's high water level eliminated that road and our mailboxes, once again, are situated on the back roads.

*Greta Hossie (No. 7)*

\* \* \* \* \*

In 1920, my father, Thomas E. Morgan of Ripley, heard of a young minister who had started to build a cottage at Bruce Beach but could not complete it because he was called to a new parish. The property, therefore, was up for sale and our family decided to buy it for the asking price of \$375. My two sisters and I each put in \$100 and my father added the balance of \$75 to purchase No. 81.

The outside of the cottage had been completed and to finish the inside we bought furniture at local auction sales. Our mattresses were ticks filled with straw from Billie Cameron's barn. Our quilts were made from old overcoats, etc. and although they were heavy, they certainly were very warm.

Gathering driftwood on the beach was a daily chore; toast



*The latest style in 1920.*



*Cooling off after the trip from Ripley.*

made between two wire holders over the coals of a wood fire never tasted better!

After breakfast we had chores to perform — wash dishes, make beds, sweep the floor, clean lamp chimneys. Almost all of Saturday was spent baking for the weekend. Before

local merchants came to call on us, we would bring from town 100 lbs of flour, 50 lbs of sugar, a large tin of soda biscuits and a wooden box of cheese. Sunday was our big day and often there were as many as twenty-five people at the cottage.

We made our own fun — huge bonfires and square dances, a Snowden playing the violin. Decades later I learned that one of our neighbours wasn't allowed to join our "den of iniquity". What fun that person missed!

During Labour Day weekend in 1979, a fire broke out and our cottage was burned to the ground. Thanks to the Ripley firemen, none of the others were affected.

All being well, we hope to rebuild very soon.

*F.E. Knowles (No.81)*

\* \* \* \* \*



*No chance of getting stuck here! Notice the wide beach.*

I also have fond memories of my childhood at Bruce Beach. I believe my bedroom was the first to have "running water" after my father mounted an old car gasoline tank he had found at the dump on the outside wall of the cottage; the tap could be turned on inside my room. The catch was that I had to carry the water from the pump on the other side of



*A handy pump for washdays.*

the cottage to fill the tank. At the age of 12, it was worth the effort, because it brought me a great deal of prestige.

*Margaret Bennet (No. 164)*

\* \* \* \* \*

I now live in Kincardine but probably am one of the oldest, living Bruce Beachers. My mother, my two brothers and I came to live with our grandfather Robert McCosh Sr. after our father died in 1913. I stayed until 1925, when I decided to go west to Saskatchewan on a harvest excursion. I returned in 1934 to work for my Uncle Bob for two years, before buying my own farm near Kincardine.

I remember helping to make the first sand greens for the five-hole golf course, below the hill; I cut the grass for several years with a lawnmower hitched to one horse; in the winter, Bob McCosh, his brother and I cut wood by hand and sold it

to the campers in the summer; I also helped build the first tennis court.

Jack McCosh would rent a horse and buggy to people who wanted to go shopping or meet the train. We provided straw for the campers' mattresses — the charge was 25 cents each. Before they arrived for the summer, I dug outhouse pits for \$2. While I worked for the McCosh family I was paid \$20 a month and board.

I also remember skinny dipping in the lake, down by the sand dunes; the dumbwaiters that were used for refrigeration located in the cottages' cement cellars; Mrs. Anderson, one of the earliest campers, who brought her washer woman from the city and let her live in a tent . . .

*Tom Walsh (No. 159)*

\* \* \* \* \*

#### Random Memorabilia:

Lizzie McCosh going for her annual swim, dressed in an ancient, Victorian bathing costume. Down beyond Dobson's by the sand dunes she would have her great splash and the "naughty" boys would have great fun spying on her!

Another favourite pastime was to watch Lizzie McCosh in her dirty old apron pick out bits of dirt from the milk can while working on the separator.

Boating and swimming were forbidden on Sundays but irreverent youths had much fun during Church services. One rather boastful clergyman once endlessly talked about his "marvellous sons" when his indulgent remarks were echoed with a chorus from Tout's grazing sheep. Everyone cracked up

...

*Stu Young (No. 14)*

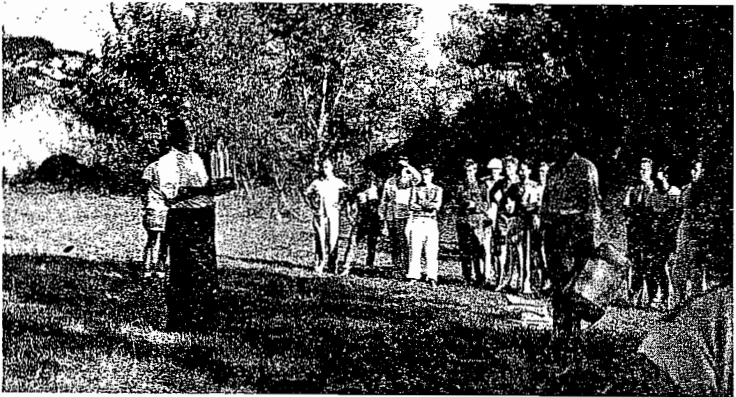
\* \* \* \* \*

I first saw Bruce Beach in the summer of 1935 when our family visited the Armstrongs in No. 32. For several years, the entrance to the beach from the 10th Concession was the biggest hazard. To make access to the beach easier, a group of men from the north end, under the supervision of T.N., Dean (No. 150), cleared the brush and sand from the roadway.

My father, Rev. J.A. MacInnis, built No. 151 in 1937. According to my mother's diary, electricity came to the Dean's cottage on July 25, 1938.

For years we were fortunate enough to have a pump in our kitchen, until many of the wells dried up and a community well was dug.

*Jean Dancey (No. 151)*



*Presentation of the cup to the north end after ball game in 1949.*

\* \* \* \* \*

In 1897, my mother, Mamie Gourlay, then single, visited her sister-in-law's family farm on the 6th Concession near Ripley.



One day they rode down to the lake shore below McCosh's hill in a wagon drawn by a team of horses, when my mother was heard to exclaim, "I never saw such a God-forsaken country!" Years later, in 1914, after my uncle and aunt William and Christine Gourlay, had built a cement cottage in Bruce Beach (No. 16), my mother admitted "never did ever expect to summer in that area".

Between 1914 and 1926, I spent every summer at No. 16, dividing my times of play between the Dobson's No. 4 and the Huff's No. 51.

In 1926 Dr. Wilson urged my dad, Charles L. Ernst, to build his own cottage and I remember helping him gather stones for a fireplace.

For many years the road behind the cottages ended at No. 2 but in the early thirties it was extended to our cottage.

After Eugene Schweitzer purchased Frank Tout's farm in 1950, he sold a portion of his land so that the road could be extended as far as No. 14A.

*Jean M. Ernst (No. 3A)*

\* \* \* \* \*

Our first summer was spent at Bruce Beach in 1920 when our cottage could only be reached by walking up and down a narrow road which now is Moore's Hill. The people in No. 59 to the south and in No. 78 to the north of us then were our closest friends.

Every Sunday morning, Cliff Cox, who worked for Alex Johnson, the grocer, would pick us up to take us to the Presbyterian Church.

When our own children were small we had many happy picnic outings to Point Clark where they could climb up to the lighthouse. As they grew older they would join their friends on overnight camping trips to the lighthouse, taking supplies, a tent, etc., and rowing to the Point.

Many boys from the beach will remember working for

Murray Bros. Kincardine Dairy. The cottages were a long way from the solid sand where the truck was driven and carrying two baskets of six quarts each was exhausting in the hot weather. Like many others we gave them a glass of lemonade and a sandwich for a break.



*Hard work with 12 quarts!*

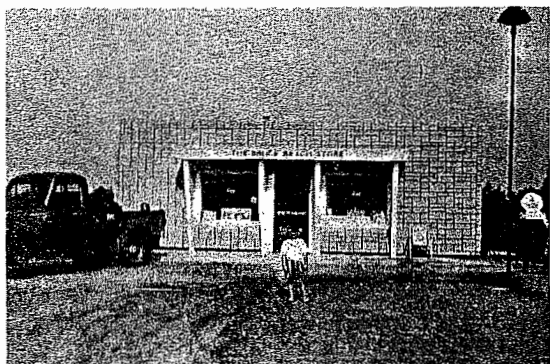
What happy times we all had — first with our own four children and now with our grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

*Ruth McBurney (No. 68)*

\* \* \* \* \*

### The Bruce Beach Store

Jean and Norm Crozier first came to Bruce Beach from Walkerton in 1949. They built a cottage they called "Crow's Nest" at the north end of Blair's Grove and soon met a number of people who mentioned how much easier it would be if they had a store nearby. Before the summer was over,



1951.

Norm said to Jean, "If I were to build a store in Bruce Beach would you run it?" Jean agreed, and during the winter, plans were made to open on June 30, 1950. They were in such a rush to get everything ready in time that they had to leave the cement blocks below ground level exposed, to be filled in later.

Norm and a friend, a grocer wholesaler, were still busy the night before pricing goods and stocking shelves. When they had finished they shared a few beers; however, Norm's friend suddenly remembered that the sign over the entrance still had to be hoisted into place. It was almost midnight but they, nevertheless, decided to erect a temporary scaffold and finish the job.

Just as they were raising the sign into position, the plank slipped and crashed into the store window. Fortunately, a friend from Walkerton was able to rush over the next morning to install a new window.

Calamity number two happened when Norm's sister Nora, who had volunteered to babysit for the Croziers on opening day, had a serious accident while driving back to Walkerton. One of the babies had to be rushed to hospital.

On the following day there was a tremendous downpour and one side of the unfinished basement wall caved in. All the stock stored down below got wet and covered with mud.

The next day while Jean was visiting her injured little son in hospital, the sympathetic contractor came to repair the wall and clean up the mess.

Jean now was ready to carry on business. After a hectic but successful summer, Norm delivering orders after working all day at his full-time job in Goderich, the final calamity happened: on the last delivery, Norm's Austin station wagon caught fire and was destroyed.

For the next fourteen years things ran relatively smoothly for Jean although the long hours in the store and looking after her small children were very tiring.

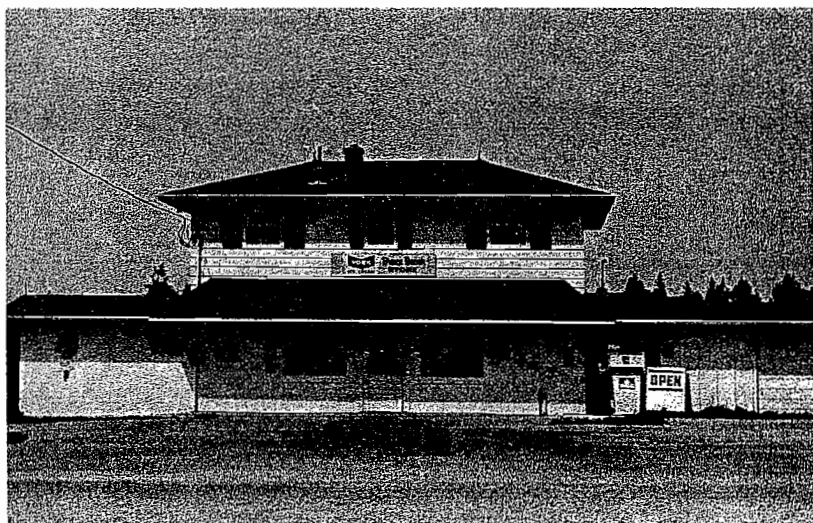
The place became known as "The Bunny Store" after the Crozier children had been given rabbits as pets. One year, sales of mixes, pop, etc. were so brisk that the stock purchased for the following week already was gone on Saturday and new supplies had to be rushed in.



*Well fed bunnies!*

Over the years the Croziers added a second floor to the building and made several other additions. After fifteen years

of operation, they sold the store to Betty and Nelson Beuhlow and now Bruce Beachers look forward each summer to seeing Harriett and Jack Daniels behind the counter.



1982.

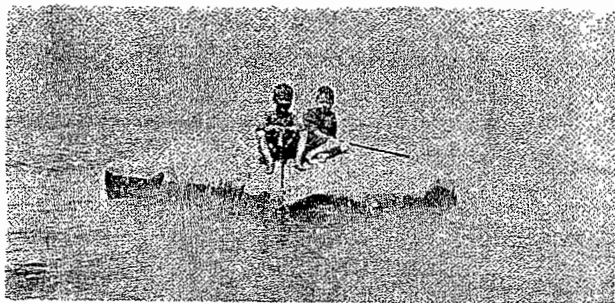
*Norm and Jean Crozier*

\* \* \* \* \*

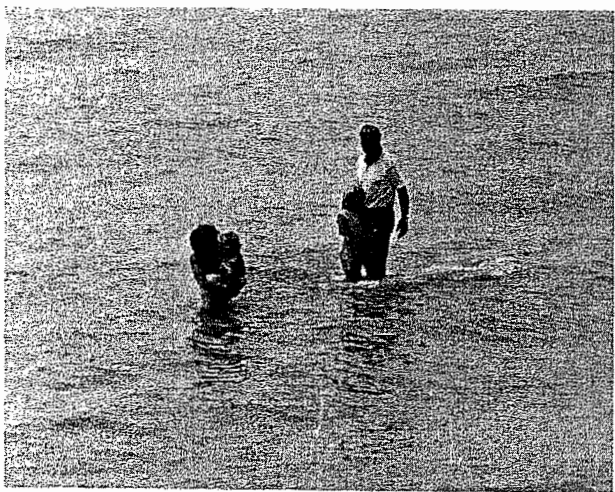
In Conclusion . . .

I envy people with good memories, yet despite my deficiency in that area, I would like to contribute something to the Reminiscences.

In 1920, the MacEachern family rented part of the McKerroll duplex cottage No. 41. However, my earliest recollections are of No. 43 which was purchased before Church Union in 1925. My father and brother Alex built a long, narrow boat which leaked badly but provided a great deal of enjoyment for the youngsters in the area. Much of our time was spent playing in Tout's gully or on McKerroll's rock which was well above the water line at the time.



*McKerroll's Rock, 1926.*



*McKerroll's Rock, 1982.*

When we moved to Winnipeg several years later our cottage was sold to the Ledingham family. Five years later, on our return, we acquired the Armstrong's No. 32.

During the thirties, the many teenagers enjoyed golfing, tennis and driving on the beach, although when there were older brothers and sisters, it wasn't always possible to borrow the family car. I can recall Lorraine Whalen in a Chevrolet coupe with as many as twenty-five teenagers standing on

the running boards, sitting on the hood and bumpers and anywhere else where they could hang on. In those days the beach was wider and smoother than any of the roads in the area.

I also remember going on a double date with Bob Ledingham, Lorraine Whalen and Shirley Smith. Bob had "borrowed" the family car and I helped him push it quietly down the lane to a point where we could start the engine without alerting anyone.

There were few trees on the grazing land behind the cottages, and Tout's Grove, for the most part, was a huge sand bowl. On a really hot summer's day we would dare each other to run across the sand barefoot, before the soles of our feet were sufficiently hardened not to feel the heat. Needless to say, this game made for very fast running!

My wife, Joan, was introduced to Bruce Beach during our courtship shortly before World War II. While I have said many times that the sun always shines at Bruce Beach, the weekend of her first visit was the exception. I remember helping my Dad build an extension to the cottage and as the roof was only partially finished we had to use pots and pans to catch the large amounts of rainwater.

Bruce Beach is also remembered for many a charivari when neighbours got together to celebrate a happy and important event. When Joan and I decided to spend our honeymoon there in August 1945, we were awakened by a din so great that we thought an atom bomb had landed. It was during that charivari that Joan officially became a Bruce Beacher and she always will be grateful to Carolyn Flinn for the speed with which she introduced Joan to so many new people. For our honeymoon we had bought fruit juices, using up all our ration coupons. Before the charivari was over our stock had disappeared.

Our children have enjoyed many summers at the Beach and still recall the days when they rode tailgate on Dave Moore's horsedrawn wagon while he collected garbage along the beach. As they grew older, they enjoyed the club house

dances organized by John Davidson. As every family had their own curfew hours for their teenaged daughters and sons, those that had to be in early often managed to climb through their bedroom windows to rejoin the fun.

Although there have been many changes at Bruce Beach it still amazes me that, over the years, the golfing, the tennis and the weekly ball games still are going strong. While the club house no longer is the centre of attraction as it was in earlier days, it still is the focal point for the annual barbecue which has replaced the annual concert as the main social event of the summer.

For the MacEacherns, Bruce Beach always will be a home away from home. Some of us come every month of the year; to spend New Year's Eve at the cottage with our children and friends is a special joy.

*Ian MacEachern (No. 41)*



*Annual barbecue, 1982.*