

Barron Canyon & Grand Lake Loop



Participants: Janice and Bill, Bob and Trudy and Bob and Cathy.

Total distance: 62 Km. 14.2 Km in portages.

Janice: July 12, 1998. Bob and Trudy arrived 5:20 (10 min. early). Left 5:40 am. Looks like it is going to be a lovely day! Stopped in Clinton and met with Bob and Cathy, got gas at Target and off we go. We arrived and quickly shopped at Foymount (not what we expected). Left at 1:00 pm. We were extremely happy to fill up with gas at Cormac (we were sputtering and running on fumes, 500km max.) Had to stop and remove top side braces on trailer (wore through bolts). The brace gave Bob Sm.'s canoe an owie. Duck tape for now. Saw and heard a hawk. Had a 2:00 pm lunch in Pembroke. Leaving at 3:00 pm. Bob Se's birthday. Stopped on the way to our campsite to hike the Barron Canyon trail. Nice view. Set up camp at Achray Camp Ground on the edge of Grand Lake at 5:30 pm. Nice campsite. Spacious. Had swim. Many clams, we should have wore our shoes. Had a piece of Birthday Joe Louie cake! To be at 10:00pm.

Bill: July 13, 1998. Up at 6:30 am. On the water by 7:30. Grand lake was calm and we made good time. We went up the bay before the portage and visited High Falls. It was very beautiful and I had a ball in the water, but it was too early to go swimming for everyone else. We left there at 10:00 am. Paddled and portaged up to the cascades. On the way, Cathy saw a bear cross the path 50' ahead of her behind some other people that were portaging. She doesn't want to see another one that close. Everyone went in the water at the Cascades and enjoyed the natural whirlpool. It was real refreshing on a very hot day. We made it to the Barron Canyon and everyone thought it was very impressive. The view was better from the top though. Probably because of the element of fear from the fear of heights. At 6:00 pm. we made it back to the Brigham L. portage where we had brought the van & trailer this morning. It was a windy evening at camp and we put our tarp sideways to block the wind for the fire. Trudy lit a wonderful fire and we were all in bed by 10:00 pm.

July 14, 1998. Up at 7 am. Everyone had a relaxed breakfast and packed all the gear up that we are going to need for the next 6 days. We cleaned up and were on the water at 9:30 am. Grand Lake was a long paddle but we took lots of breaks along the way. At lunch on a rock island Cathy saw a big brown snake. She gets to see all the neat wild life. We made it to the far end camp at 2:00 pm. We fought the wind all the way and made our way close to shore to avoid it. We found the camp at a small sandy landing which opened up to a beautiful large flat campsite. It is very clean and even has a picnic table. We set up camp and went for a swim. Bob Se. spotted a moose across the lake and everyone looked at it for a good half hour before it mosseyed back into the bush. It had a large rack on it's head with at least 7 points on the one side. We had our punch surprise and caught up on our log.

Janice: Happy birthday brother John!

July 15, 1998. We had a good nights sleep. Bill was up at 5:30 am. We had just heard Trudy on her early morning walk. I stayed in bed for that extra half hour, but figured I might as well move since we had a 6 Km hike to do. We saw the moose again and made so much noise that he left. Broke camp and on the water at 8:00 am. 8:40 we were on the trail. It was a steady steep climb. 500 ft up and 500 ft down. It

wiped us out so we had many breaks. The sun was scorching! Too hot! Heat stroke was a problem. We travelled with Bob & Cathy. Eagle eyed Cathy spotted a bear by the hydro lines, eating berries, and it reluctantly went away. Bob and Trudy saw it too in the bush. Bob and Trudy were waiting at the end with coffee on. They travelled like antelopes. We finished at 11:40. Bill and I went to set up camp and the others went for their second load. We travelled to the end of Greenleaf L. The first campsite is small but OK. The second is lovely and spacious; occupied. The third, rocky with an elaborate fireplace with only room for 2 tents. We are on the first. Bob Se. was the first to appear after the portage at 5:30 pm. Those poor guys were done and the first thing they did was dive into the water. We had supper and to bed early. 9:00 pm. The 2 carry portage was grueling (18 Km.). Glad I only had to do it once.

July 16, 1998. Up at 7:00 but everyone said they were awake at 6:00 am. We had a relaxed quiet breakfast. Canoeed around. I had a fish on the line but just as Bill went to grab him, the line snapped and he ran off with my perch lure. He was a huge bass. We picked a cup and a half of large blueberries on the last campsite and canoeed past the loon sitting incognito on her island nest. Lunch was good except Bob Sm. ended up with an oil burn and I fell off my shoe (the strap broke) while I was log walking out to get water. Hurt my leg and foot. I got out of making lunch and dishes, but I'll live. Sore though. Bill: I caught THE first bass just by the camp site. I caught two more huge bass out in the lake and Bob Sm. caught a large one too. We came to shore and the rest took pictures of Bob with my bass. Had a great supper of shepherds pie mucked together and fish on the side. We packed our tarps and ropes from what we used for the rain showers we had all day. We are in bed at 9:00 pm. again to get an early start; maybe.

July 17, 1998. Up at 6:00 am. and on the water at 8:00. It was a nice portage, but the bugs were out searching for food in the bushier parts. We were all on the Unnamed Lake of Carcajou Creek by 10:00 am. Poison Ivy was the next thing we had to contend with as we took out and put in the many portages along the way. There were a few extra 50m. portages that were not on the map, but were marked along the creek. We had lunch at 12:30 pm. still along the creek. We spotted a white tailed deer that was drinking along the shore. It was a nice light brown colour. We had a heavy downpour for quite some time and made everything nice and wet. We had a hard time reaching the shore because of all the large rocks at one portage. We made it to Wenda L. at 3:00 pm. At 4:00 pm. we reached our campsite on Little Carcajou L. and it started to rain again. Janice and I saw a small black snake with an image of an eye on the back of it's neck. It was thin and only 5" long. The site is small and there is no thunder box. It is hilly and there is really only one spot for a tent let alone three. We didn't have a campfire because it was too close to the tents. Everyone had really good suppers and were tired of a tough day of tripping. We washed our hair on land, which felt great and went to bed at 9:00 pm.

July 18, 1998. Up at 7 am. and ate Red River cereal without camp spice this time. We were on the water at 9:00 am. Janice and I split up from the rest of the group to go to Stone Chute. There wasn't much water going down it. We also had lots of poison ivy to contend with so we went back out to Little Carcajou L. and had a swim and lazed on a rock in the sun. We started off again at 11:00 am. and did the 365m. portage to the Puddle where we met the rest at the start of the 1270m. portage to Upper Spectacle L. There were a few wet spots on this one and the put in was tricky floating over the mud. We ate our lunch on the water and then did the last portage. We chose our campsite on the south side of the lake at 1:30 pm. Lots of room with a nice large rock shelf going into the water. It has a thunder box which was a plus with the girls, but then they complained about it being on a slant. We hung up our wet clothes and relaxed and swam all afternoon. We had supper and then Janice paddled me around while I fished. We got over to Carcajou Falls and paddled up Carcajou Creek to see if we could see any more moose. We fished our way back and then stowed everything for the night. In bed by 9:15 pm. It was a beautiful day and a calm night.

Janice: July 19, 1998. Up at 7:30 am. Bill woke me up earlier to ask me what makes that sound but I

didn't know. It is a nice day with clouds in the sky. We left the campsite at 9:15 am. The portage to High falls is well trodden. The falls are lovely but Bill came out of the water wiping small black leeches off his body and that was enough for me; no swimming. We waded across the falls, checked our feet and hopped onto the next 90m. portage to the base of the falls. (Make sure you get the right trail, the one along the river.) We had a gorp break in front of the falls and headed out of Carcajou Bay to Grand L. It is pretty there. We arrived at Achray camp ground at 12:30 pm. Washed and left 1:15. We found out that there was a fire ban on since Thursday and since we went in on Tuesday we didn't know about it. Luckily the Algonquin forest is still there. We got in a traffic jam at Orillia. What a bother, 8 pm. and sitting still on Highway #11. What a long trip home. Got home at 12:00 am. It was a good trip with good company. I think that a one trip portage is the answer if you are doing these long and many portages. It was a demanding trip; hats off to our fellow trippers! Hip hip, horray!

THE END