

Canoe Lake, Burnt Island Lake Loop



Participants: Janice and Bill, Ken and Louise
Total Distance: 30 Km, 2,530m in 6 portages.
Baden-Powell L. Loop 14 Km, 3,340m in 7 portages.

Janice: Sat. Sept. 18, 1999. Left home at 3:30pm. Today is a lovely day, we should be canoeing today. We arrived in Bracebridge at 7:30pm. and are at Uncle Ken's at 8:00pm. We had a delightful evening helping them pack and visiting in a "very casual atmosphere" as Louise says. It has been 15 years since we were at their house and Louise didn't remember us visiting. (Too long ago I guess.) The pie was sooo delicious. It was great.

Sun. Sept. 19, 1999. We are up early, 6 or 6:30am. We all had showers and a great breakfast of bacon, eggs and fruit, loaded the car and we are off. We are at the park at 9:45am. We registered and while we loaded our canoe Uncle Ken and Louise went off to rent their canoe. We loaded their canoe, got organized and left at 11:00 am.

Bill: The wind was at our back as we headed north. We reached the Tom Thomson Cairn just before 12 and hiked up the hill to see it. We paddled to the 295m portage at the dam and had lunch at the other side. Louise packed a great lunch of ham sandwiches with lettuce trimmings, cucumbers and radishes. We paddled Joe Lake to the east arm and made camp on the north side by a big rock. The site has a bench with a back rest on it. It is spacious and nice to sit on the big rock. We had to look hard for fire wood because it is pretty well picked over. We had an afternoon surprise and then made supper. Beef Stroganoff and tea after. Did dishes, stored our stuff, sat around the fire and chatted. We are in bed at 9:00pm. and ready for a good nights sleep.

Janice: Mon. Sept. 20, 1999. We are up at 6:30am. but we laid in bed and then packed our bedding so we didn't get out of the tent till 7:30am. It has started to rain so we put up a tarp to make breakfast. We finished packing in the rain and got on the water at 11:00am. We paddled through Little Joe L. toward the creek and the 165m portage. Arowhon Pines Lodge is on Little Joe L. and Louise said they are listed as a 4 star restaurant. The creek is pretty after the lodge. Lots of stumps sticking out of the water. It was at the first portage that another group lost their paddle and had to retrieve it. We portaged the flat wide portage and paddled the twisty creek to the 435m portage to Baby Joe L. The 200m portage around the dam into Burnt Island L. starts off with nice wide steps. It's a pretty landing really and an easy portage. Burnt Island L. is very nice and even in the rainy fog you can see how nice the colours of the changing leaves contrasted with the pines and hemlocks. We are camped on the large north point past the third island. There are 3 campsites across from us on the larger southern point, but only one was occupied when we arrived. This is a big site. Uncle Ken and Louise are camped on the lookout point on the hill and we are on the flats. It quit raining finally and we have a fire going. It has turned cold and is foggy. We went to bed at 8:00pm.

Tues. Sept. 21, 1999. Bill and I are up at 7:15am. It is 5 degrees C. in our tent and when we crawled out of the sleeping bags it went up to 12 degrees. It is cold, 3 degrees outside. We have a fire going to cook bannock on. I hope this weather does not turn our guests off camping. This is more like winter camping.

The two campsites that were occupied across from us are now vacated. What a great site, although dry wood is hard to find. We had a good breakfast, packed a lunch and said good bye to Uncle Ken and Louise. They stayed and fished, relaxed, hiked and kept the home fire burning. We left at 11:15 and traveled northward toward the 680m portage into Jay L. The portages are all trodden and well used. We did the 495m portage to the pond and the 110m to Tree frog L. At the end of the 390m portage to Sunbeam L. we had our lunch. We have met only one couple today so far. They are going to Tepee L. by the same route we are traveling. We did the 120m portage into vanishing pond. We checked out some moose trails along the way and looked for the creek to Baden-Powell L. Vanishing Pond is just a creek winding through the tall reeds and bushes. We expected this though because we have been here in 1996. We wanted to check one more path to see if it would take us to Baden-Powell L but the time was getting on and we didn't want to be late for cocktail hour at camp so we carried on. We got to the 405m portage into Bluejay L. around 3:30pm. This portage is pretty to look at with a babbling creek running beside it. The 1140m portage and 200m are all one from Bluejay to Burnt Island L. It is a steep climb at Bluejay L. side into a gentle hill down on the Baby Joe side. We paddled back with the wind in our face and arrived at camp at 5:00pm.

Bill: Ken didn't have any fish for us to eat but that was OK because we had a delicious curry chicken meal to make. We had a curious chipmunk take a taste from our bag of curry and it scurried off and didn't come back. I tried my luck at fishing, but didn't catch any. We sat around the fire and discussed our day and went to bed around 8:30pm. It was colder tonight and the air is damp.

Wed. Sept. 22, 1999. We woke up and couldn't see the lake for the fog. Janice saw a mink on the shore in front of our campsite. It grabbed something from the waters edge and ran away. It is very cold, but as the fog lifted it turned into a beautiful day. Had cream of wheat for breakfast and were on the water at 11:15am. We paddled to the 1140m portage to Little Doe L. and met a guy from England and one from Germany. They are in Canada for a year and were doing a 1 week trip in Algonquin. We ate lunch on a campsite on little Doe L. at 1pm. As we went into Fawn L. we met the first of 4 groups of about 18 college students. We asked one of them where they were headed (which was a fair question) and he didn't have a clue. He was just following the lead guy. So much for learning outdoor skills. They looked like they were out to have fun though and we were glad we were going the other way. We picked a campsite at the start of Tepee L. and set up camp at 3pm. We dried out some stuff that was damp. Janice got to wash her hair in warm water and I did mine too. Janice made a wonderful soup and dumplings meal and Louise made a wonderful fire. Ken finally caught something but it was just a snag. He decided to get it in tomorrow in the light. The moon is out and it is a beautiful calm night. We sat around the campfire and talked and went to bed at 9:30pm.

Janice: Thurs. Sept. 23, 1999. We are up at 7:15am. We packed and ate apple and cinnamon oatmeal. We are on the water at 9:50am. a record time for this trip and as we were leaving, 3 loons danced and sang to us. Louise said they are saying good bye. We canoed farther south on Tepee L. past Camp Arowhon for Boys and Girls. We heard these guys singing and talking over loud speakers last night and the bell has gone off several times this morning. They have a group of kids out in kayaks and a group in a voyageur canoe. They are so busy here. There are many student groups here this week and we have past another one going in from Joe L. We portaged the 295m around the dam at Joe L. into Canoe L. and said hello to the three guys in a kayak and canoe that we met on the 1140m portage to Little Doe L. It is raining now and it rained till we reached the dock at 1:00pm. We loaded up and had a nice lunch in the Portage Restaurant. Thank you Uncle Ken and Louise. We bid each other bonne voyage and we headed off for a shower while they took off for home. It was a great trip with good company. Thanks again to our guests. It is too bad it turned cold and rainy. The leaves have changed a lot in the week. The country side is pretty and portages easy. We saw lots of loons and mergansers. Nice trip.

Ken and Louise: Janice invited us to go on a canoe trip with them while we were attending her cousin David's wedding. We graciously accepted, confessing that we were definitely inexperienced. Bill and

Janice did all the planning, even telling us what we needed to take with us. Their expertise, their joviality, their consideration and their love for us during the trip made it a very enjoyable experience to remember. We want to thank them for all the equipment they shared with us, their help and patience while teaching us how to paddle a canoe, their assistance during the portages and at the campsites, the "gorp" (?), and most of all, the delicious meals.

THE END