

Rain Lake To Big Trout Lake

By Petawawa River Return McIntosh L, Bandit L.



Participants: Janice and Bill.

Total Distance: 81.25 km, including 11,920m in 23 portages.

Janice: Aug. 12, 2000. We are leaving Bayfield at 3:40 pm. Bill is too restless to stay home and go in the morning, so off we go. We got to Arrowhead Provincial Park at 8:30 pm.

Aug. 13, 2000. We are up, showered, and left the campground at 7:30 am.

Bill: We stopped for our permit at Kearney at 8 am, then went for coffee. Put in and started our trip on Rain L. at 9:30 am. Canoed up the lake and did the 1,275m portage into Casey L. We met two guys at the takeout and they were just going back to get their canoe. We were at the put in at Casey L. at 11:00 am. We paddled the small lake and did the next 1,185m portage to Daisy L. Towards the middle of the portage we came upon a board walk and startled a heron. It tried several times to fly away but kept getting stopped by the brush. It finally made it away. The board walk was under water at the end. I guess the water must be up in this area. It took 25 min to do the portage. We are at the last campsite on the NE end of Daisy L. at 12:15 pm. We had lunch and set up camp. I moved the fire pit out of the bush and put it back by the big rock where it used to be. Janice set up the tent and then we made juice and went for a swim.

Janice: This is a great site! The bugs are not bad at all. We expected every bug imaginable because people everywhere were complaining about them. Three weeks ago they were terrible on the Magnetawan. I hope our luck holds. There has been a fair amount of traffic here, canoes and people coming and going. It's 7:15 pm and we are hanging our bear bags. There are 2 canoes just arriving here. Someone had told them to camp on the site with the big saw blade mounted on the tree, because it was a great site and they were a bit disappointed that it was occupied by us. They took the next site to the NW. They were on the water at 12:00 and at the site at 7:00 pm. Wow. Bill and I went for a late night paddle which was quite delightful. The lake is beautiful tonight; as smooth as glass. Bill is fishing and I am enjoying a warm fire. In the tent at 9:00 pm.

Aug. 14, 2000. We are up at 6:00 am. It's a nice day. There are a few crazy red squirrels at this site.

They are very bold; you have to be careful or they will run off with your food when you are busy. Bill chased them off and they scolded him soundly. We left the site at 8:00 am. Our neighbors are up and moving. We canoed to the 135m portage to the Petawawa River. There are some nice rapids and falls at the end of the portage. We considered playing here but it seemed a bit too early to get wet. The river was narrow and slowly twisted along. We had lots of water and didn't have to walk it like many have before. We saw lots of rocks well below the water level that had a lot of paint on them. When we reached the 450m portage we decided to continue on down the river. There was lots of water and we thought that, maybe... Well, we took out after the second set of little rapids. There were just too many rocks and not enough water. We bushwhacked half our gear over to the trail and did the portage in a two carry. We could have been quicker since we normally do it in a one carry, but oh well. The river begins to widen out now and we move along well with the slight current. We had two herons fly so close and right above us. Wow. There are a lot of tamaracks along the river bank and lots of flowers, but I remember the wild

pink roses the most. Little Misty Lake is very nice and quiet, only one campsite here. There are many arrowheads in the water by the portage, pretty. We did the 935m portage into Misty Lake. We met a family at the Little Misty side of this portage and the boy told us it was a tough one. There is a climb on both sides, but a larger climb on the Misty Lake side. We stopped at a campsite and had lunch and there were about 8 jay birds carrying on in the tree tops above us. We paddled down to the east end of Misty Lake in hopes of getting the last campsite, but as luck would have it we had to backtrack to get a site. We are on the campsite close to the Timberwolf Lake at 2 pm. We did 4 extra km. today. We set up camp and showered. It's been a good day. We had trouble with our carrots going bad and leaking throughout our food bag. We dried and cleaned up any juice there was and decided to only bring fresh food for the first day. Bill is making supper, kraft dinner and ham, 6:30. We are hitting the hay early tonight, we have a 20 km. day tomorrow. The long range forecast called for showers, I hope they're wrong. We've enjoyed this site, it's very quiet with evening sun. There are many huge and stately trees (silver birch, cedar and pine) mixed in with the younger trees.

Bill: Aug. 15, 2000. Janice's inner alarm clock went off at 5 am. We decided we had enough sleep so we got up and packed, had breakfast of oatmeal and were on the water at 7 am. We canoed down to the east end of Misty Lake and no one was up at any of the other sites yet. They were wasting the best part of a beautiful day. We started the 850m portage at 7:45. It was a nice trail that went along the river. The river was narrow and then it widened out. It was deep enough that we had no problems paddling it. The 155 and 195m were pretty good portages. The 160m was up and over a hill. The river winds and twists from here to Grassy Bay. The 80 and 200m portages went past some nice falls and we put into Grassy Bay at 10:30. Many of the portages we took today had fresh moose tracks along them. Grassy Bay is very vast and over grown and can be quite confusing. The wind was at our back and we made good time into White Trout L. We had lunch at the same site that we took Joe and Andrew to in 1996. We paddled into Big Trout L and checked out the island site to the east and north. We ended up back at the 1st island site to the north of where we came into Big Trout Lake at 2:30. We set up camp and had a nice afternoon. It is trying to rain so we put up the tarp, but not much came. It has been windy here and that is why we chose this site. It is quiet and not many mosquitoes. We gathered some dead wood on the main land and put it under our tarp to keep it dry. Had a noodle meal with hamburg and mushrooms for supper. Had a little fire and went to bed at 9 pm.

Janice: Aug. 16, 2000. We have slept in today. We are up at 6:30. It is a nice day and the wind has died down somewhat. There is a lot of bee activity on this island. There is one group of black and white bees that have collected large aphids on a tree and they are very busy looking after them. There are yellow jackets here too. I woke up to the hum of these bees. They don't bother you though. It's 8:30 and we have enjoyed watching the activity on the lake; most people put in between 8 and 9 am. We spent a relaxed uneventful day on our campsite. We busied ourselves with bannock making, showers and cooking split pea soup over the fire. It has rained off and on all day, it cannot decide what it wants to do, the sun pops out and the wind blows in another shower. This lake has been quiet today. Do you think it has to do with the weather? It's cold! It's 10 degrees C. in our sheltered tent fly at 8:30 pm. We should sleep well tonight. We plan an early start tomorrow. Happy 50th birthday Tony, we thought of you today!

Bill: Aug. 17, 2000. We arose at 5 am to a cool 6 degree morning. We packed, had granola for breakie and were on the water at 6:45. There was no wind and the sky was clear. We took the small channel between the island and the land, in the middle of White Trout L. We wound our way through Grassy Bay and on the way we saw a couple of loons with their young beside them. Twice there were ducks that thought they were luring us away from their young ones by acting hurt and staying just ahead of us as we paddled along our way. We even saw an owl and lots of herons and other birds. Towards the end of Grassy Bay we had to go over a couple of beaver dams and then we reached the portage at 9:30. There was a group of young offenders doing a wilderness trip in a Dare program. They had a lot of stuff and one participant was proud that he carried the canoe for the whole portage without stopping once. We did the 745m. portage to McIntosh Creek. It passed over the creek a couple of times and was a nice path till it got wet, but then we got to higher drier ground again. Part way through one of the youth ran up behind

us with a canteen that they thought was ours, but we thought it was theirs. We had to go up 3 more beaver dams in McIntosh Creek before the next 510m portage. We arrived in McIntosh L. at 10:45 am and took the middle island campsite. Lots of room with a southern exposure and protected from the wind. We set up camp and went to the far shore to get fire wood. We canoed around and picked blueberries in the afternoon. We had a delicious cabbage roll meal for supper with blueberries for an appetizer with dried apples for dessert. It is a very calm evening and we are off to bed at 9 pm.

Aug. 18, 2000. We slept in till 7, but didn't get up till 7:30. Had red river cereal with blueberries for breakfast and rebuilt the fireplace for a stone shelf to cook on. Went for a tour of the lake and went fishing. No moose and no fish. When we came back, Janice took the food bag down and I heard a cry for help. Turns out that when she was untying the second bag the rope behind her twisted and grabbed her hair with it. I should have got the camera, but I didn't. I untwisted the rope and she was free. Had pancakes with blueberries for lunch and another cup of blueberries for dessert. Had a shower and a swim and feel great. It tried to rain off and on and I moved the tarp around because the wind kept shifting. We had chicken noodle soup with dumplings for supper and vanilla mousse for dessert. The sun came out just in time to set in the west. We made everything ready for an early start tomorrow and we are off to bed at 9 pm.

Janice: Aug. 19, 2000. We are up at 6 am., at least at this time of the morning you don't need a flashlight. We pack and have breakie and we're on the water at 7:45. We have the wind in our face today. We head over to the 405 m portage to Timberwolf L. where we see 6 loons together and a flock of mergansers along the way. The portage is wide and full of fresh moose tracks. We are in Timberwolf L. at 8:30. The wind is stronger here. This is a nice quiet lake, not too many people around. The 765m portage into Misty L. had a hill at the start and a small decent at the other end. We saw moose tracks here as well. The 1,030m portage into Muslim L. was a slow and steady climb with a short descent. There are more maples in this area with a few hemlocks and the odd spruce. We had a 10:00 gorp break on Muslim L. It was quiet and peaceful. The 370m portage to Wenona L. was up, over, and down a hill. There is one campsite here. It looks nice and open. We did the 540m into Bandit L. We are on our site at 11:00 am. There are 2 sites here and we chose the one on the island because we would be protected from the wind. It has been a cold day. Bill's thermometer reads 13 degrees, daytime. That's not very warm for August. We saw our first canoe moving here. It traveled past the back of our island toward the next portage at 2:00. It doesn't seem like there are too many people moving today. We have a mouse friend at this site and a garter snake on our point. We're keeping our stuff high so that we don't get holes in our stuff; mice do like to chew. At 2:30 our neighbours arrived (2 canoes) and it's still cold. 4:30 pm and one more eastward bound canoe went by, and as it turns out those were the only canoes we saw all day. It rained off and on all afternoon. Our mouse friend has tunnels under the fire pit. I wonder if it gets hot under there. We've had a nice quiet afternoon. Bill says there are lots of leeches here and no fish, just minnows. It's a good thing we are going out tomorrow, our filter is pretty well shot. The water here seems to clog filters very quickly. We've taken down the rain fly and are having a sit by the fire. It was a good day. We hit the hay at 9 pm and listened to an owl call: "Who, who cooks for you".

Aug. 20, 2000. We are awake at 6:30, but we didn't move until 6:45. It's cold again, 5 degrees. We pack and wait for our stove to heat the water (it's burning as if something stuck in it, we'll have to check it at home). the mergansers are up early playing in the water, no sign of our mouse. We leave camp at 8:45 am. We did the 440m portage to Moccasin L. We were entertained and amused by 3 otters here. They kept popping up everywhere and sputtering while we tried to take their picture. We portaged into Juan L. 185m and skipped over to the 450m portage into Jubilee L. This is a pleasant looking lake, but fairly busy with sites. We had a gorp break on Jubilee L. and relaxed for a bit. We headed south toward the portage to Sawyer L. This part of lake is a bit shallow and slow. We met 4 guys at the portage at 10:30 (the first guys tripping today). They were from Cincinnati. We had a chat and we wished each other well. We loaded up while we watched them pick their way through the rocks at the start of the lake. We did the 310m. portage to Rain L. and met another 2 guys getting ready to do the portage. We had lunch at the first site to the right of the portage at 11:30. All of the portages we did today were well trodden, the dirt has been worn away from the roots along the trail. We headed westerly through the busier Rain

L. to our put in. We got there around 1:00 pm. It was a good trip, we picked the right rain days since it did rain on those days and yes, this is definitely the quieter side of the park. It was nice.