

## Box 2 Windy Pine tape transcription

90-016, Trent University Archives

### Windy Pine 1984

Now what I thought I'd do is start off with how we got Windy Pine and why we got Windy Pine. Is that alright? [Yep] Well, how we got Windy Pine was this. We saw it first on a September day in 1940. It was late September and the leaves had turned and the lake was beautiful. Now we began thinking about a camp that summer and we went up and got in touch with Cec Irwin whom you know of, the Irwin's Camp, Sherwood Forest, and it was a complete gravel road from about Fenelon Falls up, dreadful drive on a Friday night, dark, and we stayed with the Irwin's and he had selected certain sites that might be useful for us.

Dory: Why did you choose Haliburton? Was that always your choice? Was it because you'd been up there?

Why did we choose Haliburton? Well, Algonquin Park we didn't want because that was where the parents were and we'd be supervised and of course we had been at Glen Bernard. And we had driven up what is now Highway 35 ... I think during that summer or the summer before ... just after the road had been opened up. And Haliburton was completely untouched, nobody was there. The Irwin's were 20 miles down at Carnarvon and a few farm houses but nothing, real, real wilderness. And of course it was that much nearer to Toronto than Algonquin and the real pioneering country. Well I suppose we arrived at the Irwin's about half-past eight at night, pitch dark, and Mr. Irwin said would you like to come out while I go over and get the milk. So we got into his tin lizzy and drove around Maple Lake ... oh I could say it seemed like miles and miles ... and picked up the milk and he pointed out in the pitch dark a place that might do for us that we should go back and look at the next day. And then we came back to the Irwin's and stayed overnight and next day set out and looked at his place he pointed out which was farmland, quite open, and on this rather small lake. Then he told us that there was property up on Lake Kushog so we went on up there and the Boston Bull, Bing, was with us and I think we left the car up at Penrose's, Ox Narrows, and took a rowboat down the lake. But we may have walked in from the highway over the old trail and landed up at this point and there was nothing down the lake from us. Not a building, not anything.

Dory: Anything across the way?

Not a thing. The only things that were there were Pen's old cabins at Ox Narrows and they had been left over from the road building, the road construction which was done as a relief measure in the depression in the '30's. The men had lived in them and Pen had taken them over. And then there were the cottages above us, the Baker's cottage and three other cottages near what was the highway and that was all. So we tramped down with the dog to this point and it was the ideal day to see property and a beautiful, beautiful lake and all these colours. Now I don't think either of us had any sense whatever of thinking how it could be turned into a campsite. We didn't notice that there wasn't much flatland to build on but we just noticed that it was a lovely wilderness site. So we were entranced. I think Flora went in swimming, it was a rough day, I'm

sure I didn't. So next we wrote to the government authorities to see if we could get this property and, very distressingly, they wrote back and said that somebody had an application in. It was the woman with the double-barrelled name, don't know, can't remember, somebody Philips. However, they checked it out with her and she no longer wanted it and so we put in an application and were given practically squatter's rights. I think we paid \$10 for the right to camp there.

Dory: What do you mean by squatter's rights? For keeps, or ....?

Well, I mean we paid \$10 for the right of being there and I don't think we paid anything more to the Ontario government until we got the deeds which was in 1950. You see, this was the beginning of the war and nobody wanted property up there at all. So I believe from then on we went up every weekend, leaving after school and getting there, uh, oh eight or nine o'clock and I believe we stayed at Penrose's cabin because there wasn't anything. It was too cold for taking a tent and I don't think we had a tent.

Dory: So did you plan the layout when you went up, or ....?

Well, we decided it would be for canoe trips and we decided we'd put a cabin where the cabin is now, behind the pine tree. And I think we walked around ... I'm sure we did ... all the bay, thinking we'd get it all eventually and said, 'where driftwood is now, well this is reasonably flat, this could be our lodge'. And I remember we walked up the pine cliff and said 'and this could be our chapel'.

Dory: Now tell me, was the pine tree there then?

The pine tree was there then and how we got the name was this. I insisted that it should not have an Indian name like these various camps that you can't spell. Mustn't have an Indian name, so we thought of many, many names but we were sitting on that point with the wind blowing and the windy pine. And so we decided quite quickly on Windy Pine Point, it had Point added to it in the beginning. And that's how we got the name.

Dory: So that was around September or whatever and through that winter?

Yes, we didn't go up in winter. We didn't go up in winter. So then we arranged with McEachran, Hugh McEachran ... I think it was Hugh ... to build us a cabin first thing in the spring. And that is the cabin 'til today.

Dory: So that was built in 1941.

Yes. And in Easter, 1941, we went up to Dorset and we stayed ... you know the Robinson's? ...[yes] ... that had the store. Well they had two or three little cabins and we had one which had a fireplace and bunks and we stayed there for the Easter holidays and went down each day. The snow, of course, was just melting. And we walked in every day and we began clearing. Didn't make much impression ... and meanwhile Mr. McEachran had planned this one-room cabin with a small veranda which is the main part of the cabin now. And for getting the lumber, bringing it

down, bringing it in by boat, building it, he charged \$150. And people say it's the best-built cabin on the property.

Dory: Well it's 45 years old now.

That's right. And then I should say in early May we took Nora Bailey up to see this beautiful, beautiful place. Well when we got there ... I think we must have gone up Saturday morning 'cause it was light ... when we got there, he had the floor and he had the walls but no roof and the mosquitos were terrible and the weather was cold so we got back into our boat and went back to Pen's and stayed there. And I don't know that Nora was very impressed. And the 24<sup>th</sup> of May, I took up a group of people ... where Flora was, I don't know ... I took up a group of people. I think Mally, Jessie ???, Elizabeth Burris(?), somebody else .... The cabin was built and we all must have slept in it but there was no john built, no outhouse, and Patsy Burris was one of these people who couldn't go to the toilet unless she had a proper toilet. So that was difficult. And I think I planned and took all the food and god knows what they had to eat.

Dory: How did you get the furniture in? By boat?

I suppose we must have and I don't think we had much at that time, maybe a couple of cots and that's about all. And we must have taken a few things to cook with. We got a stove ... I don't know if we even had it up there for that weekend ... we got the stove through Mr. Statton. His brother-in-law had an old stove with four burners on it, a wood stove, and we had to go and get it out of the brother-in-law's garage and put it in the car ... it was a small stove ... and for that we paid \$7. And that stove lasted and lasted and lasted.

So then I guess we went and bought things necessary such as tents for the girls to sleep in when they came up for the canoe trips in July.

Dory: Oh, you were having canoe trips that first year?

Oh yes, yes, we had four of them that first year. We put out a circular which is down at the archives in Trent ... I'll get it ... describing the whole thing and I remember I kept reading the papers for bargains and I made Mally come down with me to Eaton's to buy Fiestaware [oh yes] which was on sale and some of it remains there until this day. Green and yellow and a great big huge blue plate. I don't know what we were going to use that for. But that was the thing. Now we must have ordered cots and mattresses. We certainly ordered tents, three tents. The girls were to sleep in the tents. No floorboards in them, just tents with the guy ropes. So it was in July that we took the first canoe trip but meanwhile we had everybody up that we knew. Now I believe Mr. and Mrs. Morrison came up and stayed for about ten days. Of course they gave us a great hand with the thing. And I remember one of the first things we bought was a dutch oven to cook on the outdoor fireplace and we were going to do a pot roast. And my mother and father came in, and they had to cart in that narrow trail that went up over rocks and my mother had brought a beautiful steak and instead of being delighted, I believe I said, 'Oh, but we have a pot roast all ready to be cooked.'

Dory: And the poor lady had carried the steak all the way in.

Yes, and of course we had to get a refrigerator which came from Carrying Place and how it got trucked up and brought down, I do not remember, but it was an old ice refrigerator and it sat at the back, outside of the cabin. So, as there was no back door, you had to go out the front door, cross the veranda, around the cabin to the back, get your ice and cold goods and bring them all back around. Now when my mother first saw the cabin, she said, 'You'll have to have screening on the veranda and on the windows.' And I guess we said, 'Well we've paid \$150 so we can't pay any more.' And she said, 'Well, I'll get them for you.' And she put in ... had the screening put in and also the big shelf that ran right across the front of driftwood where we did our dishes. [Oh yes] We hadn't any indoor shelving, you see. We hadn't thought of that. And I was there to have it put in and Flora and Dottie always complained 'cause it was far too high. Mally and I loved it. So that was the beginning.

Dory: And then the fireplace, who built it?

It wasn't a fireplace.

Dory: I mean outdoors.

Oh, the fireplace. Well I think we pulled it together first ...

Dory: ... because it had a lot of big rocks...

I think we pulled it together first ourselves, Flora and me, maybe somebody helped us, but then Flora's brother Dugald and his friend came up to go on a canoe trip before we were taking the girls on canoe trips. And these two boys, age 17, they just got those big rocks and I know they did it in the middle of us trying to get lunch. And that fireplace has remained the same since they built it.

Dory: It was a beautiful fireplace.

It still is and I told John Wadland that he was never, never, never to pull that down. It's a historical monument. And of course, we had to buy the canoes so we went up to see McEachran's brother who built canoes, just outside Dorset, and told him what we wanted. Sixteen-foot canoes with a good beam for canoe tripping, canvas-covered, painted red. And so he made us three and they were, with the paddles, either \$56 or \$58 each and those were in use right through, as long as we were there. Then Flora, the last year she was there, gave one to Kirk Whipper for his museum and one to Jack McGregor for his personal use. And I gave one ... I gave ... oh, this was later. Oh, the ???'s took one. I don't know why we let them have it except we weren't using four canoes for canoe tripping.

Later, a couple of years later, I had Mr. McEachran make a 14-foot canoe and gave it as a Christmas present to Flora. We kept it, we brought it down to Caledon, remember? And then we gave it to John and Nicola Jennings. I suppose eventually it should go to a museum.

Now I'd like to tell you a little bit about Windy Pine in the community. I don't know if you'd really call it a community unless you think of a community as people, no matter how far apart in

distance, have formed relationships. I told you there was nothing, absolutely nothing on the lake south of us until you got right to the end where there were farms. That was about eight miles down the lake. There was nothing on Lake Kabakwa where Kandalore now is, it was a deserted wilderness. We used to take a canoe over and have lunch on the island which later became Kandalore's chapel. We called it Pancake Island because we always made pancakes. Now when we were walking in, very early on before the days of the canoe trips, we met what we considered an old man and lady, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Baker, who had the cottage up at the point above us. He had been up through that territory fishing for many years. He used to like to tell us stories of how they had to get a whole wagon to take out the number of fish they caught. Anyhow, these two old people ... I suppose they were in their '60's ... were cutting wood with a cross-cut saw and we stopped and talked to them and told them what we intended doing. And they took us on as their girls. They were intrigued with girls going out through that wilderness canoe tripping and they became our staunch supporters and helped us through the years. He had a little 1 ½ power motor boat and used to come around the point to see that we were alright and to give us a hand with things.

Next up were people called Masterson's who had a cottage with a big sign on it, 'Eureka', and then 4 E's, I mean the letters. Eureka 4E's. He also was a great fisherman. I remember one day we got a bloodsucker, put it in a bottle and deposited it on his porch. He was delighted. And further up from them were people called the Dicker's. Um, we had a little verse, 'Quicker, quicker, Mr. Dicker'. Now they were an older couple and she had ... one had kidney stones and the other had gall stones and they called it their Rockery. Further up at Ox Narrows was Henry Penrose. He had taken over the cabins that had been used when the highway was put in. He had just taken them over so there were these cabins that had been used by the workmen on the road, which he fixed up somewhat. One of them, he used for a little store where you could buy ... oh, pork and beans, and you could also get blocks of ice from them, 50 lbs. they were, and that is where we had to go once we got the refrigerator, up to Ox Narrows half a mile away in a canoe, bring down 50 lbs. of ice. Pen put it into the canoe for us but we had to take it out and get it into the refrigerator and always chip off some so that it would fit. Now Pen became a very valuable friend and helper because most of our deliveries from the city went to his place and he'd bring them down in his rowboat. He'd also come down and do a few jobs for us but didn't like to leave his store. I think only about six cars passed a day, really, but he felt he should be there. However, he did come down to take down some dangerous poplars in front of the cabin and we went up and tended the store while he was away. I think we only had one caller. His banking system was great. He had jam jars of different sizes. Into one went pennies, into another, dimes, nickels and quarters. I don't know where the bills were, perhaps there weren't any.

So those were the immediate neighbours. Now our next relationships were with the people at Hall's Lake. There was a Mr. and Mrs. Cooper in the large stone house that is still standing and Mrs. Cooper would make pies for us and sometimes stuff a chicken. It was all stuffed with sausage meat, very, very rich indeed but a beautiful chicken. And across the road was a little store which had the minimum of goods, canned goods, etc. But nevertheless, a little more than Pen's. At Hall's Lake too was our post office. That was our address, Hall's Lake Post Office. It was run by a Mrs. Welch and one time when we were there, we must have looked hungry. We'd come in from canoeing a good way, and she had nice made-up pork sandwiches for us to eat

because for some reason we had to walk three or four miles back to Windy Pine. She thought we looked tired. Now mind you, there was nothing between Windy Pine and Hall's Lake except, I think, one little cottage among those small lakes that you passed. The road was very, very winding. In the other direction, of course, there was Dorset and that's where we went to the Robinson's to do our big shopping and I told you we stayed at the Robinson's the spring we were up there. There we could get really good supplies. It was quite an establishment then and we dealt with them through the years and became very good friends with the old people that were then running the store and later with their son who's taken over, Brad, Brad Robinson.

So those were our contacts. Now as far as social events, there was nothing but dropping in on one another. I think one time the Baker's daughter, Lena Ramer(?), had a little evening party, cornroast, and invited the few people that were around but there was no community effort as such. It was individual personal contact with these few neighbours and with the people with whom we dealt. I should say the township headquarters was over near Hall's Lake but we really didn't get to know them until later because we didn't, of course, pay taxes. However, that was the beginning of relationships as far as we were concerned in the community and that remained as it was until after the war, remained a complete and utter wilderness and everybody kept their doors unlocked and their boats outside, not locked in any way. That's the way it was.

So this is, as it were, Section Two, the background of how we got around to starting the camp, or thinking of starting a camp. You see, I'd been at Glen Bernard since I was a child of 12, five years as a camper and then about, um, 12 years as a counsellor with a few breaks. One summer we went to England and one summer I think I stayed with my parents at Nomineegan(?) and I loved that camp, loved it, but as time went on, I'd gone about as far as I could go. That is, I was Program Director with Miss Edgar as the Director and there was no further ??? so it became a little monotonous. In fact I guess I got a little bored with it. Also, from the early '30's I'd been very much involved in the camping association, the Ontario Camping Association, from its beginnings and got to know people in all camps and put on educational courses and started research, 'cause then I was in psychology, I'd graduated and had my degrees, so I was very much in camp.

Now let's just see ... now Flora had come to camp in 1927 when she was a 17- or 18-year-old and then she went on to Margaret Eaton and then came back to Glen Bernard as a waterfront counsellor. And after her several years of that position, she also couldn't see anything, any further place to go in Glen Bernard. So in 1940, Flora was intrigued with Mr. Sharp of Life Camps in New Jersey and went down and spent the summer there, learning to live simply in the outdoors and to conserve and preserve natural surroundings. She was also very intrigued with Mr. Sharp himself and the psychologist who was there, Dalton Partridge. It gave her a new outlook on camping. Meanwhile in 1940, Mally and I had taken a trip to 24 camps in Ontario and Quebec and visited them during two weeks in the summer and got to see them in action as they were. Most of these people we had met at these Association meetings but this was really seeing how camps differed and what they were doing. We wrote quite a report on that. So 1940, we were away from Glen Bernard doing these other things. Now I should mention that as well as Glen Bernard, my parents had a place on Smoke Lake, a beautiful place, Nomineegan, where I visited in summer and one might very well ask why didn't I just stay there instead of getting into thinking of a camp of my own. But by this time, I was quite ready to enjoy my parents as a

visitor but not to be under their supervision and my mother's, as you remember, very precise ways of doing things, for a whole summer. [that's right]

I think I was also getting tired of being Program Director where you were somewhat remote from actual camping, making lists and schedules and holding discussions and counsellors' meetings and all that kind of thing. It was rather too close to what I was doing at the university and I never had time to go out on camping ... canoe trips and to do simple things like fry fish or cook [s'mores], s'mores ... I don't think we knew about them. Now I can't remember when we thought that we'd like a camp of our own but it was after that summer and what I wanted to do was to get back to actual camping. What Flora wanted to do was to bring Life camps into Ontario and that everything must be very simple and we mustn't ... well you remember ... throughout her life, we couldn't cut down a bush or put in gravel or do anything that would destroy the landscape. If you wanted to underbrush in front of the cabin or the tents, you really had to do it very carefully because she'd object that we'd taken down some simple little alder to give a view of the lake and she became more and more, as you know, interested in nature, growing things. Every flower, every moss, every fern had to be preserved. She didn't like me hacking down the bushes. So it was to be simple, natural and doing real things. And remember, as I've said, this was a real wilderness then so that we could do real things in canoe trips through what was then the wilderness and is now, as you know, all cottage. But I can't remember how we decided that we would start a camp of our own but I do remember that the parents, my parents, were most apprehensive about the whole thing. Not because we didn't know our camping but we didn't have any knowledge of financing or building or anything. However they let us go ahead.

Dory: Now tell me this. Were there other camps at that time that were primarily canoe trip camps or was this something new? Because you didn't set up your place, really, as a camp. It was your jumping off point for a canoe trip.

It was set up for canoe trips and where we got this idea ... we couldn't develop it as a camp because the war had started and we didn't feel that ... perhaps we'd seen this in other camps ... that people really knew much about canoe tripping and so our plan was to have, to start off, with canoe trips for older girls between their life as a camper and before they became counsellors, that they'd get real training in canoe tripping and in living in the outdoors. Now we were aided and abetted in our desire for simplicity because (a), we had no money and (b), with the war, you used the simplest possible things. But it was for canoe trips and training in canoe tripping and to be canoe trip counsellors and I think our plan was that, when possible, we'd develop this into a base camp with about 50 girls, not more, and take feature trips from this base.

Now of course we had to go and tell our Camp Director, Miss Edgar, about this idea and at first she was shocked and horrified and very opposed to it because I guess she'd thought of us staying on at Glen Bernard and helping her run it. But then when she got more aware of what we were doing and it was going to be a small, simple enterprise, she backed us to the hilt and chose older girls who were potentially capable of this kind of experience. It didn't compete in any way with her camp but rather supplemented it.

Now I want to add that one of my ideas for training for canoe trips was I think we realized that people were being sent out without much training of how to do things. At Glen Bernard, they did learn to swim, to paddle and some campcraft done rather easily down at the campsite at the camp but they never got the full sweep of preparing for a canoe trip, mapping it out, getting the supplies, the menus, doing the packing, thinking what you should take and shouldn't take and particularly how you could lighten your equipment. And this was my idea, and Flora's too, though she was always more interested in nature, was to give in, 10 days ... preparation for a trip, going on the trip and, most important, clearing up after the trip and putting things back in order.

Dory: What about safety, health?

Safety ... yes, well that came in how to paddle and discussions those first two days at the campsite to keep near shore, always to keep near the shore, always to keep the canoes in sight of one another, never to venture out when there was a storm. In case of capsizing, to hang on to the canoe, never try to swim to shore, and so on. There was a good deal of discussion about that.

Dory: Now were lifebelts required ...?

No, never heard of them, never heard of them. The canoe was your lifebelt, as it were. Now the next thing we talked about was health ....[end of Side 1] ... to use for our cooking at Windy Pine. The second year, you reminded me about the Lester's who helped us through many years but we didn't meet them until later on. I think I should say more about Dorset because as well as the Robinson's, there were other stores, Birk and Avery(?), the other side of the river and uh, Clayton's, an outfitting store. There was also an old hotel. By the way, Clayton's had the post office at that time so that we often entered, through the early years, the store to get our posting done. There were a few small houses, there was the Anglican church up on the hill on the main street and the United church with the stone wall around it. A Mr. Norry(?) from Caledon East had built it.

Next, um, that I should say more about... Mr. Penrose, Mr. Henry Penrose. He was left from the first world war and had had one leg shot in nine places. He walked with a bad limp in spite of him carrying this ice down to the canoe for us and doing other quite difficult things. Uh, he had a radio, primitive it was, battery, up at his store and on occasion when he would come down, he'd tell us how the war was progressing. The Germans were doing well, the British are picking up, etc. That was the only news except the papers that we got once a week.

Another item was where did we get the money to start the camp. Well, we didn't spend much money at all. The tax, the assessor began to come around ... I don't think the first year at all ... and the annual fee for our building and property was \$7. However, we were not destitute. Flora had inherited from her mother in Scotland, who died when Flora was eight months old, and in '30's when Flora was over there, she received all the assets of her mother's estate, the clothing and the jewellery, plus the actual money. And of course, over the years since 1912 'til 1936, the amount had accumulated so she did have a backing. She also had her salary from Moulton College. I had a small investment that my father taught me to keep carefully. I had also inherited an original \$187 when my mother died eight months after I was born. And more



through Victory Bonds, \$50 denominations, given to me by my grandparents for birthdays and Christmas, a very dull present. But as the years went by, these had accumulated to a bit of a backstop and I was then earning some money from the university. And of course, I was living with my parents at that time so the costs of living were minimum. The parents never backed the venture financially. As I say, my mother did give us the screen for the veranda and brought in steaks from time to time and other little goodies but other than that, we did what we did on our own. As you will see from the account books down at Trent, I think the first year our total intake was \$600 and our total expenditure was \$600. So we did very well, you can check this.

And I should add Mally and her mother were up from time to time during that first summer. Mrs. Gibson started the clearing of brush and trees. She had a friend up with her, Mrs. Stadious(?). Mrs. Stadious and her husband had a tent around on the north side of Windy Pine Point and Mrs. Stadious and Mrs. Gibson worked very hard and began the first clearing. I remember that we went, Flora and I went on a quick canoe trip to sound out the route from which we would go and Mally was at the cabin with Mrs. Morrison and they scrubbed the floor and did all the housekeeping. Later, when we had canoe trips ... and of course there was rationing on everything in those days, sugar particularly ... um, Mally made bread sticks rolled in chocolate, I guess, with nuts on and heated them in the oven and these were a great, great treat when we returned from the canoe trip.

*[I couldn't find anything more on this side of the tape ... went through to the end and couldn't hear anything more.]*