

My Voyage to Grey Owl's Cabin

Journey made Augusts 2003

I took a trip to Grey Owl's Cabin with my friend from England, Henrietta Smythe. We left from London. Ont. on the West Jet to Saskatoon, where we rented a car and drove to Waskesiu Lake in the Prince Albert Park.

On the 8th of August we were booked to leave at 8 A.M. but a lightening storm in the North delayed our start until noon. It is usually a day's trip to the Cabin. The Waskesiu Lake has gone down very low and the river is a trickle from that Lake to go across to Kingsmere Lake. At one time a portage made it possible to take a boat up there, but that is impossible now. So we had to walk from the parking lot at the Narrows between the Lakes, to go to Kingsmere, where the men had spent two days getting a boat up there to accommodate our trip. That walk was 3 Kms., and we reached the lake where the boat was waiting a good distance out in the lake as it too was too shallow and no dock. We were prepared with rubber shoes to wade out to the boat, and with the help of a wonderful guide, they got this old girl up and into the boat, with not too much trouble.

We then had a 45 minute rest as we went across the Kingsmere Lake, where again we had to wade into the shore. We then had another 3 Km. walk to go around Ajawaan Lake to reach Grey Owl's cabin. The big problem in walking was that the roots are all exposed from time of walking over them, and makes it more difficult.

Seeing the Cabin again, was worth the walk. They have kept it up very well and also the upper Cabin, where my brother and I lived for six weeks while I was typing the manuscript for Tales of an Empty Cabin. Grey Owl was in a tent between the two cabins doing his writing, and my brother was our cook and looked after the beavers, Jelly Roll and Rawhide. So I had many happy memories of our time spent up there with Grey Owl. And saw where I sat and typed looking down at the lake and the lower cabin.

We visited the graves of Grey Owl, Anahareo, and Dawn, while there.

After an hour rest, we had the return Journey to do and the last 3 Km. were getting harder but I had a niece that was an angel taking my arm along the way. We arrived out of the woods when it was getting quite dusk.

I felt good the next day, but the second day, the 12 Km was telling on me, and I took it easy that day, and then was back to normal to continue our holiday up there.

I arrived back to be greeted with celebrations for my 85th Birthday, and it was a great party that we had with our good friends the Hughes.