

This I Remember Introduction

by Kenzie Phelps

Mary Ann and I have only lived on Julia Lake [the DNR version of our lake's name] for eighteen years, relative newcomers compared to many along the east side of the lake. We purchased our property in 1990 from Virginia and Bob Faloon and used it as our summer cabin for four years. We liked being here so much we decided to build our home on the lake in 1994. One of the things that makes for great lake living is having great neighbors, which we did: Chuck and Carol Schmedeke to the north in the pink cabin and ski jump, and the Corder family to the south in the quaint log sided cabin.

I had hoped to interview Alma Corder for *This I Remember* and include it in the Lake Report, but in the last several years her trips to the lake were less frequent. She died in September 2012 at 101 before I could talk at length with her. I got to know Wayne Corder, Alma's husband, usually in the midst of lawn mowing or some other outside task. He loved fishing for crappies on Julia, and would often be out fishing by himself or with his daughter-in-law Norene. Unfortunately Wayne died of a heart attack in July 27, 2001 while cleaning up after a summer storm at the lake.

Without being able to interview Wayne or Alma I thought I might not be able to pass on some of the Corder's story, which covered close to 60years. Fortunately, however, I started talking with Gary Corder, the oldest of the Corders, as he was orchestrating the sale of the cabin, and then tending to his mother's estate matters. He had read all of the other *This I Remember* stories and was interested in writing and sharing some of his own memories of the lake. The following are some of Gary's memories, taking place in the early and mid 50s when he was a junior high student.

Gary Corder: This I Remember

In 1953 my parents first purchased the cabin at 4490 – 115th Ave. SE. This cabin actually had two 50' lake front lots. The lot on which the 4484 cabin is currently located was empty at the time, containing only a smoke house for fish, and a batch of poison ivy growing in the weeds. Since it was mostly on a hill, we made no effort to mow it.

At the foot of the hill was a very large wooden diving dock that had to be manually hauled out to deep water every Summer when the swimming season opened. Made of big rough timbers, it was so heavy it took the strength of several people to move it when on land. Once in the water it was only somewhat lighter until it sat in water deep enough to make it a little buoyant.

Once positioned to eliminate dangerous diving due to lack of water depth, we somehow anchored it with cement blocks to keep it from floating away when the waves of passing boats hit its' side. Where it was positioned, I recall well, as my then girl friend who could not swim, but had taken a couple of swimming lessons, decided to show me how she could jump off the diving board into deep water and swim back to the diving dock. After jumping she could not retain her float, and started to sink. I was in the water already along side of the dock, couldn't swim that well myself and went to help. As soon as I got to her she grabbed me and we both sank. I hit bottom and gave her a push up, but took in so much water myself I almost drowned. She grabbed the dock and kept afloat but was shaken to the point where she had to go lay down for a while. We both recovered nicely, and never did that again.

In 1954 one of my good friends and I decided to go up to the cabin squirrel hunting during the winter. As I recall, it was very cold and we had a lot of snow that season. The water pump, which was only a hand pump at the sink, had been removed when we winterized the cabin, so we didn't have access to fresh water. Just what we brought along in a gallon jug or two for cooking and drinking. Of course the toilet facilities lacked modernizing in that it was a two-holler about 50 feet back of the cabin toward the road. We did remember to

bring the toilet paper though, so we didn't have to use Sear's catalogue pages. Getting to the two-holler however was a trial due to all the snow we had that year, and we forgot to bring a shovel. We were only up there for two days, so as soon as we arrived we headed for the woods across the road (which was still gravel at that time) to bag our quota in squirrels. I'm not at all sure we got any, as the subsequent events of our stay erases that part of my memory.

After stomping through woods for a couple hours in knee-deep snow we were exhausted, and daylight was disappearing. So we quit the hunt for the day and went back to the cabin to fix something to eat. The first thing we noticed was the cold temperature in the cabin. Consequently we set about the task of tromping back through the woods to retrieve some firewood. Eventually we had enough wood to carry us through the night. The only source of heat back then was the fireplace. Being X-Boy Scouts we were sure we could fire it up and keep it going all night if our supply of wood lasted. So we fired it up and since there was nothing else to do, we ate dinner and went to bed early.

All went well and we kept the fire going by getting up and adding wood every now and then until about 6:00 A.M. when we awoke smelling smoke in the entire room. This was only a one-room cabin as the porch was shut off. We quickly got dressed and tried to determine the source of the smoke. No fire that we could see, so what was burning? It seemed to be coming from under the floor, so we headed outside, and around the cabin to a tuck-under boathouse under the porch, which was on the lakeside of the building.

In the boathouse, which was about as narrow as a small fishing boat (and it already had a stored aluminum fishing boat) was a small door that lead to a crawl space under the main part of the cabin. In opening the door we immediately encountered smoke. Crawling in we were amazed to see that the fireplace had been built on top of the joists. It was the joists that were beginning to burn and smolder due to the heat from the fireplace we had going all night.

Without ready access to water we tried throwing snow on the joists, and when that didn't work we found an axe and bucket, went down to the lake and chopped a hole in the ice to get water. After several buckets of water the joists were still smoldering, so we headed around to the outside of cabin where the chimney was located and chopped a hole in the siding so we could get at the joists easier. After a few more buckets of water we were satisfied the cabin wouldn't burn down, and left for home. My dad of course was happy we didn't get hurt and called the insurance company who paid to have it fixed the following Spring.

