

News from Nan

NEWS 'N' VIEWS

ANNA'S COMMENTS ON "THE COTTAGE"

JULY 19, 2019 | ANNA



Anna and her grandpa Riedel at the cottage

This post is Anna's response to Nan's reminiscence about her childhood adventures at the Riedel family cottage on Lake Huron in Forestville, Michigan.

As I was growing up, the cottage was a special place for me, although my parents and I typically drove the 100-mile round trip only a few times each summer. Throughout my childhood my mother kept me primed for the next "cottage encounter" by telling me tales of her magical summers on Lake Huron.

In the early years, before we moved to California, I would occasionally be allowed to stay there by myself with one cousin or another. I sometimes learned a thing or two away from the super-protective atmosphere at home. At a time when my home-based comic book purchases were limited to Donald Duck, Mickey Mouse, and Little Lulu, my cousins read various Superhero series like Batman and Captain Marvel, and in the later years they used to smuggle in Mickey Spillane books to read under the covers in the bunk beds.



Anna and Cousin Andi



Anna and Cousin Gretchen



Anna and Cousins Mike, Andi, and Jan

"The cousins" were also allowed to wander up and down the beach and even up the hill to "town" where we could hang out with the locals and buy popsicles and ice cream. At the dawn of the rock-and-roll era, Andi and Dan even had a record player of their own, and I remember listening to "Rock Around the Clock" until we drove Aunt Dorothy crazy and she made us turn it off. For a rather sheltered child it was a heady experience!



The pump, one of my favorite cottage landmarks

One of my more memorable experiences at the cottage was the “bloody toe” incident, which occurred one Fourth of July. We cousins had been wading in the creek when I stepped on a piece of broken glass and sliced open the bottom of my foot just at the base of my big toe. It bled copiously, and I had to hobble across the beach to get to one of the cottages for assistance, thereby getting a lot of sand in the open cut. By the time I got to Harbor Beach, where we managed to find a doctor who reluctantly came to his office to stitch up my foot, the cut needed a lot of cleaning and disinfecting. The doctor did the cleaning and stitching first (I remember it as being excruciatingly painful) and then afterwards he gave me a shot of painkiller. Was it punishment for having dragged him away from his holiday festivities?!



"Bloody toe" incident at the cottage



"How bad is it, anyway?"



Aftermath of the bloody toe incident

Dick and I and our three kids made one trip as a family to the cottage in 1976, when we towed our tent trailer across the U.S. and spent a few days there (thanks to the generosity of our relatives). Gillian was about 8 months old, and she did her first "crawl" in the living room of the Riedel/Westman cottage. I enjoyed showing my family that special place!



Ellen and Tim by the turkey coop cabin



Ellen and Tim by the log cabin



Gillian asleep in the original Riedel cabin

As an extended family we have all scattered, and I believe no Riedel descendants still owns property on the original property purchased over 100 years ago.



Paul Riedel cabin



Kelley and Uncle Paul at the cottage



Cousins Anna and Andi (who is the baby - Jean?)



Cousins Andi and Anna



Andi, Nan, and Anna, still recovering



Anna and Cousin Gretchen



Camping in Nevada on our way to the cottage



Poor Gillian (with chicken pox), at Great Salt Lake, on our way to Michigan and the cottage. How can she be so cheerful?!

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