TROUT TALES:

CHRONICLES OF THE IZAAK WALTON CLUB

OF DALHOUSIE

by

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1984

Chester, Lloyd and Walter fish the 'Mash' on Donahue Lake, Guysborough County, NS
(Painting by Alec McCarter)

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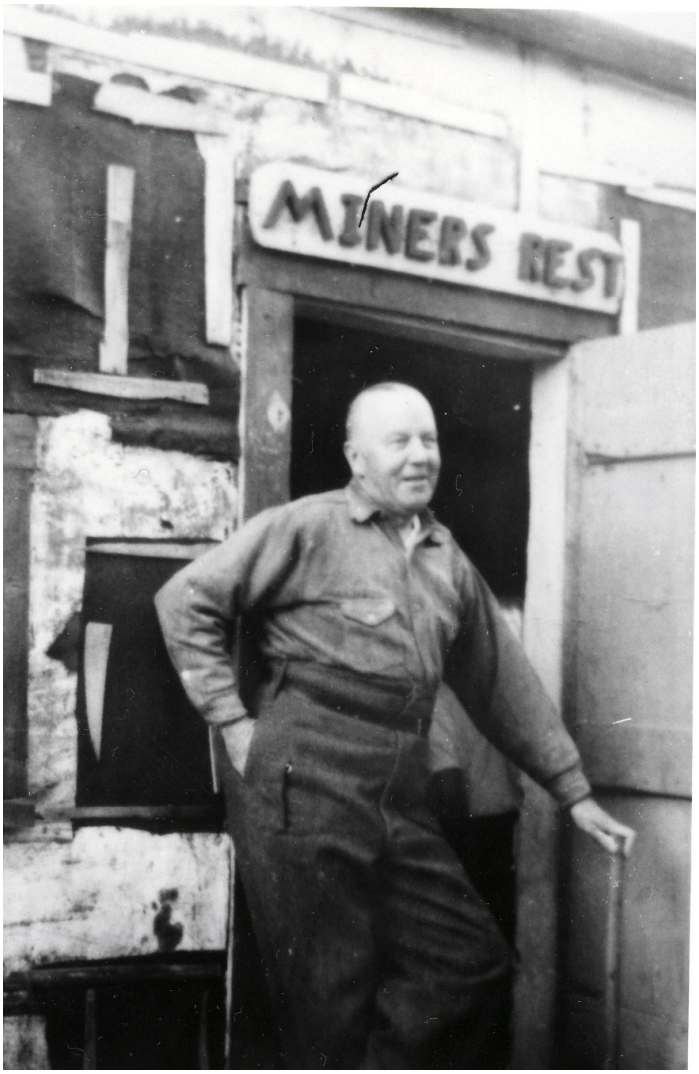


Dr. H.G. (Pat) Grant, Dean of Medicine and Founder of the Izaak Walton Club of Dalhousie, to whose memory these Chronicles are dedicated

A carbon paper rubbing of the Highliner Trophy

FORWARD

No one asked me to write this account of the Izaak Walton Club of Dalhousie. No one else volunteered to do it, but as I had acted as the 'secretary' of the group and had retained all the correspondence with Fred DeYoung, together with the record of the make-up of the fishing parties and their catches, I felt that maybe the Club members, mostly retired now, would derive some enjoyment from recalling some of the happy hours spent together on the Annual Fishing Trip.

Someone once wrote that the Forward to a textbook was something like a front tooth; it was only noticed when it was missing. The Izaak Walton Club was certainly not so classified. Nobody, except the members, noticed it while it existed and nobody missed it when it was gone. This was undoubtedly due to the fact that very few persons outside the membership knew of its existence. But to those who were members, the Annual Fishing Trip was one of the most important events of the year. It took place usually during the third week of May at a time when lectures were over, exams were marked and convocation exercises finished for the year. We were going to be free of any commitments for a whole week. It was time to replace and restore fishing gear and toward this end several of us together would visit the Halifax sporting goods stores to buy 'something that looked good'.

Trout Tales has been written expressly for the Club members. But it occurred to me that others might read it too and therefore a certain amount of explanation would be necessary in order to understand things which, to a Club member, would be self-evident because he could call upon his memories whereas others could not.

Memories (especially mine) are not always factually reliable and although I did make notes at the time, they only covered the first decade of the Club's activities. Thus there are bound to be errors and many omissions, but better this partly accurate account than no account at all.

I am grateful to Alec McCarter for sending me his slides from which many of the colour prints were reproduced.

John G. Aldous
January 1984

THE EARLY YEARS (1946-47)

Sometime during the spring of 1948, Dr. H.G. (Pat) Grant, Dean of Medicine at Dalhousie, received the following memo:

To: Piscator General Grant
From: Ordinary Piscator Aldous (Second Class)
Re: Memo to Ordinary Piscator Aldous from Piscator General Grant

Sir:

I have examined the gauntlet that you have cast at my feet and have decided to accept your challenge. May I, Sir, however enquire whether we shall be encamped near a natural source of salt water, or shall I be required to:

- Collect and transport the dry ingredients of sea water to be later mixed with fresh water, or,
- Obtain, for one week, the services of an Imperial Oil truck, the same to be filled with ocean nectar, and to follow us on our pilgrimage?

Re your request for stimulated bait, may I draw your attention to the fact that I have already been in conversation with a character known as Big Barnsmell, late of Dogpatch Skonkworks Inc. Mr. Barnsmell informs me, from a distance, that, for a price, he will supply the Izaak Walton Club of Dalhousie with 2 (two) drams of 'Sweet Essence of Skonk' (patent pending) and, for additional 69 cents, he will obtain a quantity of Kickapoo-Joy-Juice from his colleague, Mr. Lonesome Polecat.

The virtues of this most excellent nectar are too well known for me to dwell upon herein, but Mr. Barnsmell informs me (from a distance) that in addition to sharpening blunt fish-hooks, dissolving decayed teeth (natural or otherwise), disposing of garbage and removing unwanted varnish from fishing rods, the 1948 brew has double the diplopia value (biologically tested) of any recent batch, and is exceeded in this regard only by the brew of 1872.

I feel, Sir, that it behoves us to take advantage of this most excellent offer.

I await your further instructions and remain, Sir,

Your Obedient Servant

On the reverse side of this memo, the handwritten reply reads:

From: Grant Piscator Emeritus
To: Aldous Piscator Researchus

Your job is to devise and make a portable container which will hold preferably 12 dozen minnows and allow them to live for one week from time of capture.

Note: There will be no salt water within 15 miles of our fishing grounds.

Re stimulated and attractive ground bait which in any case means garden worms, I would suggest we try two perfumes: (1) Essence of Ivy, as recommended by my late friend, Izaak Walton, and (2) Polecat a La Barnsmell.

Nihil Desperandum

This correspondence arose because Pat Grant had decided that the site of the Annual Fishing Trip, the first one of the group known officially as the Izaak Walton Club of Dalhousie, would be Lundy in Guysborough County, 200 miles northeast of Halifax. As the memo suggests, the problem of keeping salt water minnows alive for a week had been raised and I was delegated to provide a solution. Fortunately the problem was rather easily solved by taking a bucket of fresh water minnows with us and changing the water at a roadside stream every hour or so.

The Izaak Walton Club of Dalhousie had its Charter Membership Evening in February 1948 at Sam Balcolm's apartment on the corner of Henry Street and Coburg Road in Halifax. This building is presently occupied by Fader's Pharmacy. The charter members who gathered on the second floor over the old post office were: H.G. (Pat) Grant (Dean of Medicine), C. Beecher Weld (Physiology), Morley G. Whillans (Pharmacology), John G. Aldous (Pharmacology), Chester B. Stewart (Preventive Medicine), and our host Sam Balcolm. The evening was a frosty one and as a result the appetite and thirst of the group that entered the cheery atmosphere of the apartment were well prepared for the celebration. Although Sam never consumed alcohol, he had set up a most enticing bar where 'one of almost everything' was attractively displayed. The sight of this splendour prompted Morley Whillans to demonstrate some practical (applied) pharmacology, namely that the old adage 'don't mix your drinks' is false and what really counts is quantity consumed. During the course of the evening, he managed to sample every bottle set up on the bar. Unfortunately, by the end of the evening, none of the company present was in any condition to judge whether Morley had really demonstrated his point. While the outcome of the experiments may have been in doubt, there was no denying the fact that the members of the group were oblivious to the cold air as they trudged their ways homewards through the light snow that had fallen during the evening. The Izaak Walton Club of Dalhousie had been well and truly inaugurated.

Pat Grant was the moving force behind the formation of the Club. During the spring of 1946, he persuaded several of us in the Medical Sciences Building that a fishing trip should be organized for the first few days in May. Those showing interest in the suggestion were Beecher Weld, Ed Black (Physiology), Morley Whillans, John Aldous (Pharmacology) and Bruce Collier (Biochemistry). Morley had just taken over the position of Head of Pharmacology and most of his efforts had been directed to a complete re-organization of the department's programs. No doubt flushed by the spirit of re-organization, he volunteered to organize the details of the fishing trip. I have in my possession Morley's list of requirements – six pages long – wherein items such as food and equipment are listed in detail. The circulation of the list among the potential

fishermen must have elicited some discussion, for example Beecher submitted some questions and comments among which is found:

> "Too much bread and jam. Suggest 18-21 loaves and 1-2 tins. Bacon – 7 lbs could not be bought (bacon was still rationed). Each of the six of us might get ½ lb. Would that suffice?"

The final list obviously took note of Beecher's comments for the order that was filled at Akerly's Market, 236 Quinpool Rd., reflects some of his suggestions. In view of the present prices of food, those of 1946 are of nostalgic interest:

1 box salt	$0.10
2 lb onions	0.16
3 lb carrots	0.21
2 bars Sunlight soap	0.12
1 pkg Kraft cheese	0.23
18 loaves bread	1.80
6 doz eggs	2.94
4 doz oranges	2.60
1 lb tea	0.76
2 lb coffee	0.98
8 T-bone steaks	5.20

The food bill totalled $29.25 and was designed to supply three meals a day for each of nine men – six fishermen and three guides.

The week before we were due to embark, I received a telephone call from Dean Grant.

"Aldous, are you free to come over to my house this evening?" he asked and when I said yes he explained he reason for the invitation. "I have the recipe for making Drambuie and I'll need your help for making a quart for the fishing trip." When I arrived at Grant's house, he met me at the door and led me into the kitchen. Rolling up his shirtsleeves and pulling his braces off his shoulders so they hung in two loops at his side, he rubbed his hands together and remarked: "Now the first ingredient is a quart of good Scotch whiskey." This he placed on the kitchen table and from a cupboard over the sink he brought forth a jar of amber fluid. "The first secret" he said with a twinkle in his eye "is the sweetening agent. It's not sugar but honey." and he tapped the jar of amber fluid.

We calculated that at least half a cup of honey should be added to the quart of 'base' and this raised the first problem. The bottle was already full of whiskey leaving insufficient room for adding the honey. This problem was quickly solved by removing half a cup of whiskey which, when divided in half, made a drink for each of us. The honey was added to the bottle in small quantities and thoroughly dissolved because, as I explained to him, "you can only dissolve so much sugar in 40% alcohol."

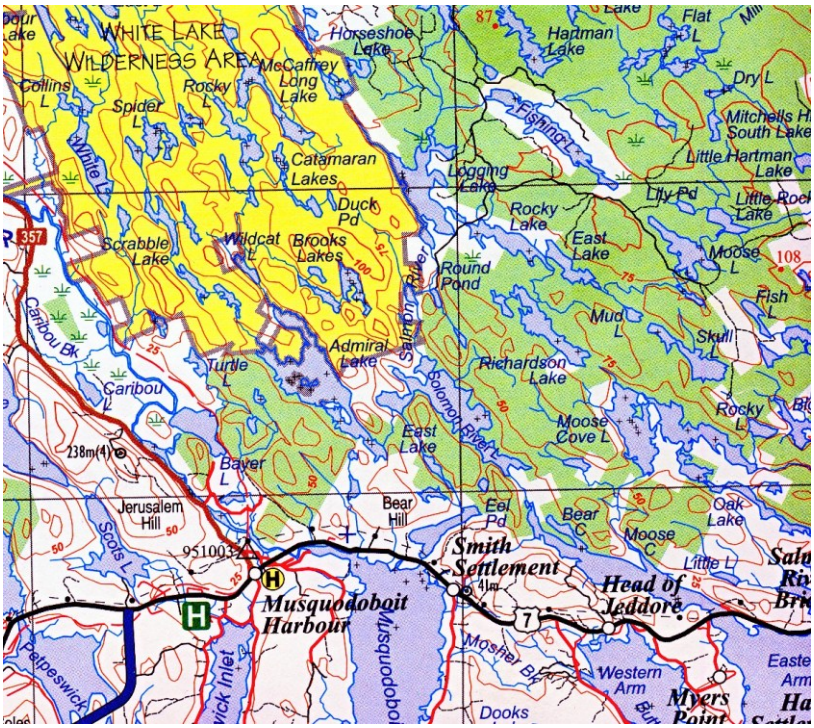
About 15 minutes after the honey had been added, no precipitated sugar appeared so our next move was to determine whether it was sweet enough. We each drained our glasses of what remained from the original whiskey and poured a small amount of our embryonic liqueur into each glass. "Hmmm" said Grant, rolling the liquid over his tongue. "What do you think? I'd vote for a little more honey." I agreed so the next half hour was spent adding honey and tasting each new mixture, until we were both satisfied with the quality of our product.

"And now - the second and most important ingredient - anise" he chortled as the first flush of success started to glow in his cheeks. "I don't know how much of this we'll need so we better add just a small amount at a time." This we did, adding and tasting the result until we were satisfied. Unfortunately, by this time the amount of alcohol we had imbibed had dulled not only our sense of taste, but also our enthusiasm for the product of our labours. "You know Aldous" Grant remarked "I think the only thing we've accomplished is the ruination of some good Scotch! Never mind – we'll take it along for the guides - they'll enjoy it." I subsequently designed a label to paste over the bottle's original one. It read "Grant and Aldous' Genuine Old Bambooey".

I do not know whether the threat to give this concoction to the guides was ever carried out but in my notes I do find reference to "fortified rum, courtesy of Black and Collier." It was this preparation I am sure that gave rise to an event both amusing and unfortunate that took place later on the trip.

Our destination was Logging Lake, Halifax County. In those days the only way to get to Dartmouth from Halifax without driving around the Bedford Basin was by means of the ferry. Thus it was that on April 30 the trusty fishermen in two cars crossed the harbour and proceeded to Salmon River Bridge via the No. 7 Highway. Until this point the weather must have been dry because the highway, once past the city limits, was so dusty that the second car, in which I was a passenger, dropped about half a mile behind the first car in order to provide some reasonably dust-free air to breathe. By the time we arrived at Sandy Myers' house at Salmon River Bridge, the skies had become definitely overcast. Rain started as we proceeded by boat up Head of Jeddore Lake to where our first portage commenced. The only event I recorded that took place during the remainder of the wet trip into Logging Lake was that involving Beecher Weld, who, carrying his pack and six dozen eggs, tripped and fell while crossing a rocky part of the trail. Several eggs were lost.

The cabin at Logging Lake was a small one built of logs, with sleeping quarters (i.e. bunks) for six. The guides had brought a small tent which they pitched close by. The fire in the cook stove was soon roaring and as the wet clothes that had been hung around started to dry, the steamy atmosphere, mixed with the vapours of rum, set the scene for a hearty meal of steak, cooked by Whillans and Collier. The next two days were spent on Logging Lake and environs, but the cold clear weather kept the fish dormant in the mud so the total catch only amounted to 56 fish.



Map of the Logging Lake Area

It was on this trip that I learned something important regarding the sleeping habits of Pat Grant. He snored. In fact, he snored very loudly and started soon after laying his head on the pillow. Obviously the light sleeper had only two options: a) to get to sleep before Grant did or b) to locate himself as far as possible from the source of the snores. The best solution would be a combination of both options. I suspect that my colleagues knew something of this problem and chose one of the above options, but did not tell me. Whatever the explanation, I found myself bunked down beside Pat and spent a very difficult first night. The second night I decided to exercise option b) but confining myself to the same bunk as before (since I had no other choice). This operation was accomplished by turning my sleeping bag around so that my head would be at his feet. I got into bed first. Sometime later I was awakened by Pat, flashlight in hand, attempting to crawl over me to his bag located against the wall. The pencil of light flashed up and down his bag and then up and down mine. Noting the new arrangement he remarked "Aldous, either I am drunk or you're upside down." No one attempted to prove the truth of either of these suppositions.

The last supper in camp, at which Mulligan stew was prepared by Black and me, was preceded by a round or two of drinks. It was on this occasion that the 'fortified rum' appeared. One of the guides elected to try this (I don't know whether he was aware of what he was drinking) and after half a tumbler, undiluted, had been consumed he tried a second round of the same volume and left the cabin. We presumed he had gone to 'attend the call of nature' as we politely expressed it. However, when the time came to eat and he had not reappeared, the other guide went to find him. He returned shortly to

state that his friend was being violently ill and would probably not appear for supper. It was the feeling of some of us during the trip to the road next day that the unfortunate guide believed we had tried to poison him.

The mention of the 'call of nature' recalls another event which, in years to follow, had its repercussion in the appearance of a concoction named Grant's Eyeopener. Ed Black suffered from constipation and one morning on this Logging Lake trip the fishing party was patiently waiting for Ed to respond appropriately to his 'call of nature' in the outhouse (hereafter call The Crapper). Bruce Collier's patience was first to break and in strident tones he shouted "Ed, for Christ's sake, break it off and let's go fishing."

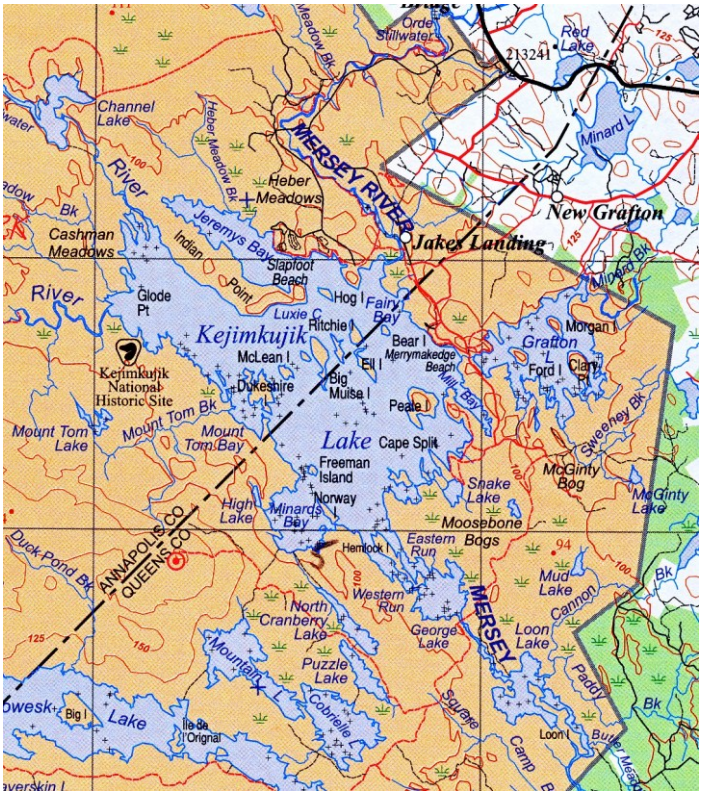
Pat Grant's devotion of the practice of medicine must have been touched by this event because the following year he brought along the ingredients to solve, or perhaps better, to prevent this problem. The prescription for and the ceremony associated with this therapeutic procedure would be as follows:

The scene: Early morning before breakfast. Pat Grant is seen busy setting glasses on the table. Beside these are placed a bottle of gin and several fresh lemons. The latter are quartered and the juice from each quarter is squeezed (with much licking of fingers) into each of the glasses. A measure of gin (varying from 1-1½ ounces) is added to each glass, followed by water to the half-way mark. At this point, Pat calls "All right gang, come and get your Eyeopener". The party gathers, sleepy-eyed around the table and, as each receives his glass, Pat adds a generous teaspoon of Eno's Fruit Salts – "just to give it a fizz". "Are we ready?" asks our leader. "OK, bottoms up".

Well aware of the consequences of such debauchery, the fishermen 'bottomed up' like gentlemen and later it is recorded bottomed down quite effectively. Thus the Grant's Eyeopener was born, but several years later during one of these therapeutic sessions it was suggested that the name was inappropriate since the eye was not the target of the operation and that the beverage should be re-named Grant's Pipe Cleaner. The ceremony was recalled many years later when Alec McCarter recounted one of his famous dreams. Six glasses were lined up on the table with the ingredients beside them but in each glass was a set of false teeth! Portents of things to come!

The second trip, and the last before the Izaak Walton Club was organized, took place in May 1947. Collier and Black had been replaced by Chester Stewart and Pat's long-time friend Sam Balcolm. It was the latter who suggested we visit the southwestern part of the province and assisted Pat in making arrangements to use Douglas' camp on an island in Lake Kejimkujik (before it became a national park).

The party left Halifax in two cars proceeding via Highway 1 to Wolfville where we picked up Sam Balcolm. Somewhere near Kentville, a stop for lunch was made at a roadside inn after which the journey to Annapolis continued. Here the party got out to stretch its legs and to view some of the historic sites in this village. Our next destination



Lake Kejimkujik Area

was Caledonia. Pat Grant, who was driving the leading car, turned off the road leaving Annapolis in order to admire some wrought iron work and Beecher Weld, driving the second car, soon noticed Grant's absence ahead and drove like mad to catch up to him. Grant had seen Weld go by and he in turn drove a furious pace in order to catch Weld. Arriving at Caledonia, the party picked up Mr. Douglas and back-tracked down the road several miles to the landing at Kedge where two guides were waiting. Here the supplies and party were loaded into boats to make the half-mile trip to the island where Douglas' camp was situated. The party was most impressed by what it found in the camp (and remembering the experience of the previous year) for delight was expressed by the presence of real beds (cots) and china cups. Fishing gear was quickly assembled and the party took to the waters. At sunset they returned to camp to relate their experiences and exhibit the products of their labours. To everyone's envy, Pat Grant displayed a beautiful 1½ lb specimen of speckled trout.

This trip was a memorable one for many reasons. Grant's Eyeopener was born and so was the Zoot Suit. The latter appeared because during the previous winter one of the fishing party found that J. Simon had purchased a large number of Navy foul-weather suits from War Assets and had them stored in his warehouse on Upper Water Street. For the price of one dollar (or five dollars for a new one), one could obtain a nylon-covered, wool-pile lined suit which zippered from ankle to neck. These were extremely warm and well-suited to cold weather fishing, especially when this necessitated hours of sitting in a

boat trying to conserve body heat. Chester Stewart wore his for many successive trips and I still have mine some 35 years later.

This trip was also memorable because of the weather. For three days, the sun shone brightly, the air was warm and the mosquitos and blackflies were out in full strength. After one day of exposure to sun and insects, the party gave up shaving – it was too painful an operation. These were the days before insect repellents so there was practically no defense against the bugs. This was the first time I had experienced the mixture of sunburn and blackflies. Hands and arms burned and itched continually. However this misery was largely offset by the generosity of Sam Balcolm who supplied cigars, chocolates and liquid refreshment.

It would have been difficult to maintain one's misery very long in that company what with the antics and anecdotes of its members. One of these antics - or rather a series of them since it was repeated each evening - involved Pat Grant and his sleeping bag. The bag was equipped with a zipper, the lock at the top of which was broken. Thus, during the night, the zipper would gradually work its way down leaving his chest open to the cold air. This caused him no end of concern and discomfort and in order to rectify the matter he had brought along a large safety pin with which to fasten the top of the zipper. The procedure involved in carrying out this operation was complicated by the fact that being the last to go to bed the lights would be out and so a flashlight became a necessary piece of ancillary equipment. Having settled in the sleeping bag, Pat would zip it up and try to apply the safely pin. There was usually considerable grunting and groaning and finally an expression of frustration. "Where the hell's the flashlight?" More groaning and tossing ensued and then "Aha, here she is. Now!" There would be a pause and a pencil of light would sweep around the room. Then an explosion. "Now where's the goddam safety pin?" A little later, silence descended and shortly after heavy breathing commenced. The listeners never knew whether this was a sign of a successful operation or of sheer exhaustion, but it was agreed that the hilarious nature of these antics generated so much laughter that the exhaustion that followed helped to subdue the annoyance of Pat's snoring.

LUNDY (1948-1966)

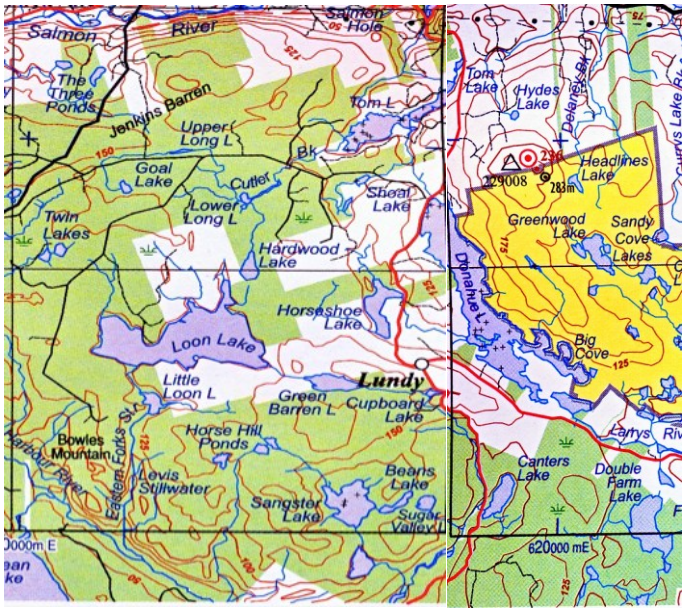
From some notes in my possession, it is probable that Pat Grant heard of Lundy in Guysborough County and contacted Fred DeYoung through his friend Ed Kirk of Antigonish.

The plans for this 1948 trip were under the joint direction of Pat and Morley Whillans, but the problem of the live bait was handed to me, as has already been related. Beecher Weld, Chester Stewart and Beecher's new assistant professor Mel Schachter completed the party of six. In those days, the only way to travel from Halifax to Guysborough was via Truro and New Glasgow for the No. 7 highway up the eastern shore was unpaved, narrow and anything but straight.

Coffee stop in Truro (1951). L-R: Pat Grant, John Szerb, Walt Chute, Alec McCarter and Beecher Weld

We often stopped at a small restaurant just outside of Truro for a cup of coffee and again at New Glasgow for lunch. Our time of arrival at Lundy was usually between 4 and 5 PM and, by the time all our food and gear had been transported to the cabin, known as Miners Rest, it was almost time for the evening meal. During the late 1950s, the No. 7 highway was straightened and paved and since it was a more direct route to Lundy we gave up the Truro-New Glasgow run. It then became our practice to stop at the outskirts of Dartmouth for fresh-water minnows and at Liscomb River for a sandwich lunch. The water in the minnow pail was also replaced from the river. At Marie Joseph, we would call at Belle Baker's to make a reservation for one of her famous lobster lunches on our return to Halifax. Having arrived at Miners Rest and stowed our gear, we always made a point of inspecting Fred's boats on Donahue Lake, about two minutes walk from the cabin. The reason for this inspection will become apparent later.

Prior to 1948, the outlet to Donahue Lake was at the southeast end through a small stream which Fred called Trout Lake. A few years preceding our arrival at Lundy, a small power station had been built at the northwest end of the lake where there was a considerable declination of the land culminating in the Salmon River. In the spring of 1948, channels from the lake to the power station were opened and a small dam built across the original outlet at the southeast end. The latter raised the level of Donohue Lake by several feet (as I remember) with the result that the natural shoreline disappeared completely. The water flooded back into the trees making it next to impossible to land anywhere without first cutting a path through the submerged trees. This Fred had done at the landing below the cabin. Since the trees had been cut off at water level, the remaining stumps posed quite a hazard to navigation. During the next 18



Lundy Area

years that we visited Lundy, ice, winds and waves gradually established a new shoreline and the trees and stumps rotted away. While this type of terrain caused considerable difficulty to those trying to fly fish or even bait fish with minnows, it provided plenty of food for the trout. No doubt the gradual disappearance of this food source over the ensuing years was one factor in reducing the fish population of the lake and the size of the fish that were caught.

Lundy always reminded me of Al Capp's Dogpatch. The village consisted of about half a dozen houses plus an elementary school, complete with wood-burning stove and 'Boys' and 'Girls' outhouses. This portion of Guysborough County could well be termed the geological ash can of Nova Scotia. All along the eastern shore of Donahue Lake stretched 'The Barrens', bare granite rock upon which nothing but moss, lichens and blueberries grew. The slopes down to the water's edge everywhere consisted of piles of granite boulders. On the west side of the lake, where Lundy and the road through to Larry's River were situated, the rocks had accumulated an overlay of soil, but not much. It was common to see a small potato patch at the back of a house with piles of rocks beside it where hours of labour with horse and stone boat had been expended.

Fred still used his stone boat as a means of general transport and in the years that followed our arrival he used it to move our gear and food from his house down the path through the woods to the cabin. The mare provided the motive power guided somewhat haphazardly by Fred. This move was a source of annual entertainment for us for Fred would be running alongside the plunging stone boat pulling on the reins and yelling "Woe back boy! Back! Back you old bugger!" The mare appeared to take very little notice of Fred's admonitions and continued to plunge forward crashing through the bushes and trees until the objective had been reached. One particular year this scene was enacted and when Fred arrived at the cabin, the mare did not want to stop so Fred steered

Lundy (1961), school house in left background
L-R: L. Macpherson, J. Aldous, Bob Dickson, Chester Stewart and Walt Chute

completely around the cabin and as they passed the doorway heading back home the stone boat practically demolished the steps in front of the cabin door.

Miners Rest (1961)

The mare was not always immediately available for this job for it sometimes took unto itself to wander back to earlier (and perhaps happier) pastures, usually down to Larry's River. When this happened, Donny, one of Fred's young sons, would walk to Larry's

River, catch the mare and walk back with the animal in tow. We questioned him once as to why he not ridden the horse back to Lundy since it was such a long walk there and back. He explained to us 'city folk' that no one in his right mind would ever ride **that** mare anywhere, especially for five miles. The way he did it he ended up only with slightly sore feet.

Fred had a large family of which Wilfred was the oldest. This young man was short like his father but almost as broad across the shoulders as he was tall. Wilfred guided and hunted around Lundy and also occasionally manned one of the fire-watching towers in the neighbourhood. One of the Lundy inhabitants told us that he was a bad one with the girls and was responsible of a rapid turnaround of the local school teachers. Wilfred was a great outdoors man. I had never seen anyone cast a fly line out with so little effort and so much grace. On one trip, Wilfred accompanied three of us for the day and during the afternoon we had been lashing a small stream with our lines, occasionally catching the shrubbery behind us but certainly no fish. Wilfred had been lying on the grass watching us. Finally, in desperation and exhaustion, we stopped fishing and joined Wilfred for a rest. We made the suggestion that we should shortly move to where there was a little more activity. While we were resting, Wilfred asked if he could borrow one of the fly rods and proceeded to lay out 40 or 50 feet of line in the most graceful manner. Within a minute or so, he had a trout which he quickly removed from the hook and tossed to our feet. During the next 15 minutes, four more fish landed on the grass. We three just sat there with our mouths open. Someone remarked that given enough room to cast a line, Wilfred would get trout to rise in a bathtub.

In 1951 or 1952, Wilfred gave Pat Grant the best morning's fishing of his life. About half way down the path from the road to the cabin we passed a small 'lake' on our left known as Charlie's Little Pond. It could not have been much more than a few acres in area with the tip of a great granite boulder breaking its surface near the middle. Alec McCarter and I had often wondered if there were any fish in Charlie's Little Pond. There

Charlie's Little Pond (1963)

was no way to find out, it being almost impossible to fish from the shore and, aside from a few water-logged tree trunks, there was nothing from which even a crude raft could be made.

Pat Grant must have asked himself the same question regarding the fish population of the pond. But being a little smarter then Alec and me, he had Wilfred carry a boat up from Donahue Lake and for a couple of hours they drifted back and forth over the pond taking the most beautiful specimens of speckled trout we had ever seen. There must have been a dozen fish, none of which was less than a pound and a half in weight.

The next day, Alec and I fished Charlie's Little Pond but during a howling gale. We landed several good-sized fish but the crowning event occurred while I was netting one of Alec's fish for him. This fish had taken a streamer fly that was attached about 5 feet up the line from the terminal fly. I had just got the fish in the net when a second one about the same size took the terminal fly. After some struggle, we boated both fish.

Pat Grant and Wilfred DeYoung after a morning on Charlie's Little Pond (c. 1952)

We never saw Wilfred again after the middle 1950s because he had obtained a job as fire watcher with the Department of Lands and Forests. As we always made our trips during the last two weeks of May when the fire hazard was usually high, Wilfred was never home.

In October 1973, the following news item appeared in the Halifax paper: "Lundy. Searchers yesterday recovered the body of Wilfred Nielson DeYoung, 57, from a lake near his home in this remote Guysborough County community Mr. DeYoung's boat was found washed up on the shores of the lake about two weeks ago. RCMP officers of the

Guysborough detachment carried out a number of searches aided by divers and forest department aircraft." The lake mentioned in the newspaper was Loon Lake.

The catch from Charlie's Little Pond

It is difficult to image what finally happened to Wilfred. He was so much at home in the woods or on the lakes around Lundy. Loon Lake was a large open lake and, given a strong wind from almost any direction, the water could get very rough. In the days he guided for us it never occurred to us to ask him whether he could swim.

Fred was a loveable character despite his shortcomings. Short and wiry, the most remarkable feature to me was his eyes which always seemed to be too small for their sockets. But they were kindly eyes, like his smile. I am not sure whether Fred played poker but if he did he would have played well because he would be able to maintain a straight-face bluff under almost any circumstance. Couple this with an ability to come up with the most outlandish explanations for things or circumstances and you have Fred DeYoung. Two examples of this will illustrate this point.

One year when we arrived at Lundy, Fred started telling us how he and 'the Mrs' had been busy cleaning, painting and redecorating Miners Rest. Arriving at the cabin, we opened the door and sure enough new curtains hung at the windows, new calendars hung on the walls and the floor shone with new brown paint. We entered to find the floor very sticky. "How long ago did you paint the floor, Fred?" someone asked. "Couple of days ago, why?" "It's still wet." Fred scratched his head and observed: "Jeez, looks here that Frank must have sold me frozen paint."

After a few years of visits to Lundy, we complained to Fred about the condition of his boats. One of the three was so bad it had become dangerous to use and this meant that only two parties could fish on Donahue. Next spring Fred told us that he had a new boat for us but it was down at the dam at the southeast end of Donahue. Someone drove John Szerb and me to the dam as we had volunteered to row the boat back to the landing. We were amazed at what we found. Perhaps the kindest thing one could say about this creation was that it was some form of primitive art. In its construction, Fred, or whoever the artist was, had used five, 10 inch planks about 8 feet long. The bottom consisted of three planks placed side by side nailed together with 1 by 4 inch strips. The bow had obviously been shaped with an axe so that the two sides had different curvatures. Around this 'floor', the two planks which formed the sides were bent and held apart by two seats, one at the stern and one about midships. The seams had been well-laced with blue paint.

John and I launched the new vessel and prepared to row, but immediately ran into difficulty. With so little freeboard, one had to raise the oars fairly high out of the water and the degree to which this could be done was severely restricted by one's knees. Unless the rower spread his legs wide apart, there was no space to put the oar handles down in order to raise the blades from the water. It was our observation that the coracle of the early Britons would have been an improvement on this. We finally made it back to the landing and after explaining to Fred what our difficulties were he remarked: " No sir, she don't row so good coz the keel is too straight." And this with a deadpan expression on his face.

Like most guides (I am told), Fred was non-committal when it came to where to fish or what fly to use. Beecher Weld found this out on the first trip we made to Lundy. The conversation went something like this: "What sort of fly would you use today Fred?" "Well, jeez mister, I dunno. Maybe…" "Here's a nice Montreal Dark." "Yessir mister, that there's a good fly. By jeez I seen a feller last year…." "….or how about this Royal Coachman?" "That there's a dam good fly mister, yessir…" "Well, I try this Silver Doctor." "Yessir, by jeez, I'll bet they go for him."

That Fred had been able to raise a large family at Lundy was no mean feat. Aside from guiding for fishing and hunting, his only other source of income (provided the right government was in power) derived from maintaining a portion of the road that ran through to Larry's River. Fred, or his wife Vennie, never complained about lack of money or their inability to make ends meet. However, some insight into their problems is revealed in a letter from Fred to me dated 17 March 1954. Mrs. DeYoung or one of the children actually wrote these letters which I expect Fred would dictate.

> Dear Johnny:
>
> Received your letter and more than glad I was to hear from you. Must tell you will be OK to put up the Issak Walton Club of Dalhousie for another year, yes for the three days during the week of May 17th, will be OK as it will give me enough time as I will

At Miners Rest (1949). L-R back: Alec McCarter, Beecher Weld, Sam Balcolm, Pat Grant; front : John Aldous, Chester Stewart, Fred DeYoung.

be engaged again on the 26th. Must tell you Johnny I have had a bad spell of rheumatic pain in my hip and shoulder again this winter but feel OK now. So it was pretty tough so now I'm able to get around again and work (Thank God). The weather has been so bad and wet and lots of rain, so it's bad weather for person like me. All the rest of the family have been pretty well all winter except for a few colds. Well Johnny, you are telling me about Mr. Grant had told you to ask us if we knew of anybody in Lundy who would like some second-hand clothing. Sure ourselves here. The Mrs. here says she could make good use of them for the children here and the girls. You tell him not to throw them away to keep them. So the Mrs. told me to write you to tell Mr. Grant she will take them. Only too glad as it takes a lot of clothing where there is a large family like we have here, Johnny so please tell him won't you please. So I taught I wouldn't wait to long to answer to tell you about the dates to come. Also for you to please tell Mr. Grant the Mrs. here will only be to glad to have the clothes she will make good use of them. Thanking you again for your copration and best of regards to you all.

Hoping to hear from you soon again.

Sincerly, Fred DeYoung

There were undoubtedly many who would have termed Fred a 'lazy bastard' but in my opinion such a judgement overlooks the problems that he must have faced in trying to provide for the basic needs of his family. During the late 1950s and through the 1960s, Fred accompanied us less and less on our daily excursions. Of course by this time we had selected our favourite fishing grounds and did not need the services of a guide. As

Lloyd Macpherson and Fred DeYoung at the Landing on Loon Lake (1959)

time went by, Fred's 'rhumatic' pain recurred more frequently and as a result he was less able to even row boats for us. This turned out to be a blessing in disguise because it meant that all members of the crew including the rower could fish at the same time. If Fred rowed, then only the other two men could fish simultaneously.

As mentioned earlier, Fred's boats were of constant concern to us. We classified them as being of the 'two-man' or 'three-man' variety. This terminology was not based on size or capacity but rather the bailing requirements. A two-man boat leaked at such a rate that the rower and passenger could all fish most of the time with the passenger bailing occasionally to keep the water level down. The three-man variety on the other hand required one of the passengers to bail almost continually. We often complained to Fred about this sad state of affairs and each year, just before we arrived, he would plaster the boats with paint. This practice maintained them in a sort of plastic condition such that when one stepped into them the layer of paint would pull apart along the seams. One year Lloyd Macpherson and Beecher Weld brought caulking material to Lundy and spent part of the day filling the seams of one of the boats. They finally gave up, however, as the more okum they applied the more the seams opened up.

Some of the fishermen maintained that there was a boat one degree below the three-man variety. This was kept at Farm Lake, reached by walking in from the Larry's River road at the east end of Donahue. Being very little used and being constantly exposed to the elements, this boat could only be used to take a short trip across Farm Lake to where a run-out provided good fishing. Roger Read (Bacteriology) was a guest of the Club the year Fred took a party of two (including Roger) into Farm Lake. Roger decided to troll a minnow on the way across but was a little concerned because Fred was rowing too fast for his bait to sink below the surface. As he was about to complain, a good-sized trout seized the minnow. Now it was an unwritten law, always observed, that when a fish struck the rowing stopped and other lines cleared from the water so as to provide an unobstructed area in which to retrieve and net the fish. "Fish" yelled Roger, but Fred

kept pulling on the oars at a furious pace while the other companion bailed at the rate of about one gallon a minute. "Fish" screamed Roger starting to retrieve his catch which by this time was skipping over the foaming wake of the boat. No doubt stimulated by this ruthless treatment, the fish slipped its temporary moorings and Roger was left with an empty hook and a bellyful of ire. The latter he vented fully on Fred. "Why'n hell didn't you slow down and help me net that fish?" Fred's answer spoke volumes. "You want us to sink mister?"

There was never any reason to doubt the ownership of Fred's fleet; anybody else would have retired the boats as being a hazard to life. However on one occasion this doubt did arise in a rather spectacular manner. Three of us had walked into Loon Lake which according to Fred was about a mile from the main road. Since the walk took almost an hour we put the distance closer to three miles. Fred had a hunting cabin on Loon Lake and a large boat which was in good shape. There were several other boats pulled up under the trees close to the landing. As mentioned earlier, Loon Lake was a large lake

Chester Stewart, Alec McCarter and Beecher Weld (c. 1951)

and derived its name either from the loons that inhabited it or from the long narrow neck of land (the Loon's Neck) that jutted out several hundred feet from the eastern shore about a mile from the landing. We, members of the Club, had been to this lake many times and knew the best spots for trolling or casting. On this occasion, three of us in Fred's boat were slowly trolling over to the Loon's Neck when another party of two or three appeared on the beach we had just left. A few minutes later they launched a boat, mounted an outboard motor, and came charging full speed toward us. Cutting their speed as they circled us, they shouted: "What are you doing with our boat?" "This is Fred DeYoung's boat and we're part of his fishing party" we replied. "We've used this boat for several years." "Fred doesn't have a boat on this lake" they shouted. That one belongs to us." Convinced of their story, we offered to return the boat but the thought of trying to fish the lake without a boat was about as exciting as undertaking to fish Bedford Basin from the shore. "No, you use the boat. We have this one but make sure you pull it well up on the beach and tie it to tree when you leave." And off they went. We looked

at each other and one of us remarked "Well, I'll be damned! But we should have known this wasn't Fred's boat. It's in too good a condition!"

Fred loved a good cigar and we often sent him a box at Christmas, or took some with us on the trip in May. Sometimes he would join us at the evening meal at Miners Rest and, while the dishes were being washed, light up a cigar. Either as a result of rum, or the heat from the wood stove (or both), his usually pale cheeks took on a rosy glow, his eyes would light up as he savoured the cigar smoke and he would utter a guttural growl. "Yessir mister, that's a good cigar."

In a letter dated 19 February 1957 Fred wrote:

> Dear Johney:
>
> Again this year you have all taken the pleasure of sending me another box of lovely cigars and I wish to thank you ever so much for them. At the time of receiving them I was laid up with arthritics so all I could do was to smoke some of those juicy cigars and thinking if I was only near you you could be so much help to me but however now I am able to get around a little better.

Happy fishermen (1959). L-R back: John Szerb, Lloyd Macpherson, Jim McLean; front: Fred DeYoung, Chester Stewart.

Fred died in March 1962 and Mrs. DeYoung ('the Mrs.') did her best to continue making Miners Rest available to us that year and 1963. But she had problems. The man who supplied the lobsters she cooked for us died and she did not have another source of supply. In April 1963, she wrote:

> As yet we haven't been able to reach the shore, having still so much snow so I really don't know in what condition the cabin or boats are in. But I assure you that I will do everything possible to have it available for you on May 24th.

That proved to be our last visit to Miners Rest for the following April 1964 her reply to my letter read:

> Dear Johnny:
>
> Rec'd your letter a few days ago. Very sorry to tell you that the cabin is not available, cause the roof is down to the floor. So I have nobody home to fix, so I thought I would let you know right away.
>
> Best regards from the family,
> From Mrs. V.A. DeYoung

This was the third lost that the Club had suffered in nine years. Pat Grant had died in 1954, Fred followed eight years later, and now Miners Rest, like its owner, succumbed to the ravages of time and the elements.

It is strange the way these three events influenced the activities of the Club. Pat Grant's death was sudden, unexpected and a shock to all. Fred's was not unexpected since he had been in poor health for some time. Although these two were sadly missed, we adjusted to their absence and carried on much as before. The collapse of Miners Rest, however, was a different matter. Much like the curtain coming down at the end of stage play, its loss necessitated a change in the pattern of the way we had done things for 15 years. The

John Aldous at Miners Rest after the collapse of 1964

ridgepole had broken under the weight of the winter snow and since this structure supported not only the roof but also held the end walls apart, the whole structure collapsed into a tangle of boards and tar paper. It was surprising that so little debris was left.

One could not help viewing these remains without recalling the happy hours that had been spent within those walls. How frequently those walls had echoed the voices of the Club members as they joined in unison for the evening's entertainment during washing up time after supper. While these sessions could hardly be termed a contribution to the cultural life of Lundy, they were a sincere and spontaneous expression of the comradeship of the group. The repertory was not extensive and close harmony was not a particularly strong point. Nevertheless when the voices swelled to "Just a song at twilight, when the lights are low, When the flickering shadows, softly come and go……" none of these things mattered, it all sounded very sweet to our ears. John Szerb, cigar in mouth, would pause before the dishpan full of dirty dishes to beat time with the dish mop as if he were conducting a choir.

And then there were all the meals that were cooked on the old wood stove and consumed on the kitchen table. Never did food taste so good. After a few years of coming to Lundy, the menu took on a form from which only minor deviations were made. The first night in camp (having driven up from Halifax) featured lobsters freshly cooked by Mrs. DeYoung. One of the bills I received for these delicacies read "10 lb. lobesters $4.00". Those prices are gone forever! The second night in camp, following the first full day of fishing, was steak and onions, potatoes and canned vegetables. It was during this evening that the 'specialty of the house' stew was prepared. Chester Stewart would peel and slice onions, tears streaming down his cheeks, while others would prepare the meat (stew beef), carrots and potatoes. The reason for this early preparation of the stew lay in the finding that the mixture tasted much better and thicker if it were allowed to 'juice-up' on the back of the stove for at least 24 hours. It thus became the meal for the third night in camp. With two meals being prepared at the same time, the second evening was a busy one.

One year the inevitable happened. Two fishermen who had had a disappointing afternoon returned to camp early and having nothing else to do decided to prepare the stew. By the time the remainder of the party returned, it was bubbling slowly on the back of the stove. After a round of drinks, the immediacy of preparing the evening meal presented itself, and after searching through the cartons of food, a voice cut through the alcoholic mist – "where the hell are the steaks?" The mystery was soon solved and the party had to settle for fried stew beef that night.

The third meal was stew, and the fourth was usually a fish-fry in which we consumed some of the catch. Some years when the weather was particularly warm, preserving our trout posed a problem, since there was no refrigeration available. On these occasions we switched the stew and fish meals – eating the first day's catch. The trout were prepared by rolling them in powdered oatmeal, seasoned with pepper and salt. They were then fried to a golden brown in bacon fat. Talk about "finger'licking good!"

On one of his early trips with the Club – it may have been his first – John Szerb announced that he wanted his fish boiled. "Hey, do you hear this?" someone shouted. "This crazy Hungarian wants his trout BOILED." Since no one volunteered to commit such sacrilege, John had to cook his own fish and, as he smacked his lips over the product of this venture, the remainder of the party became curious. Upon tasting samples, everyone agreed it was delicious. However, next year and every year thereafter, John partook of the fried preparation. He had quickly become Canadianized.

After the dishes had been washed and pots and pans scraped clean, the party would sit down to a game of poker, using matches for currency. An hour later, someone – usually Alec McCarter – would stretch and yawn loudly. One last hand would be played and the winner declared. One by one, the fishermen would wander outside to brush teeth and empty bladders and quickly snuggle down in their sleeping bags, some in pyjamas, some in underwear. Last man in put out the lamp.

Mention of the lamp recalls an incident in 1949 when Fred almost set the cabin on fire and Beecher Weld almost received an unexpected shower. The valve on the kerosene lamp refused to work properly as Fred commenced to light it on the kitchen table. Suddenly the excess fuel caught fire and Fred was faced with a tower of flame. He seized the lamp and headed for the door. At the same time, one of the Club members, who had been watching the operation, seized a bucket of water and also made for the door, getting ready to douse the fire. At this point, Beecher appeared at the threshold preparing to enter the cabin. Needless to say, he quickly stepped aside as two bodies, the flaming lamp and the bucket of water came charging outside. The lamp finally burned itself out but not before the spectators, who had been badly frightened, insisted that, until the lamp was properly fixed, Fred should light it outside the cabin.

The last night in camp always had a special significance. After the washing up had been done and before the poker game started, someone would total up the number of fish caught by each member of the party and the Highliner for that year declared. Following Pat Grant's death in 1954, the Club purchased a pewter mug to be used as an annual trophy. The engraving on one side read "Izaak Walton Club of Dalhousie, Pat Grant Highliner Trophy". On the other side, the winner was responsible for having his initials and the year engraved.

Following the totalling of the scores for the year, the Highliner accepted the mug from the previous winner and was expected to fill it with beer and drain it without pausing for breath (the various winners over the years are recorded in Appendix 2). The trophy of course did not record the winners prior to 1954. In the period 1948-1953, the highliners were Weld (1948), Aldous (1949), McCarter (1950), Stewart (1951) and Chute (1952, 1953).

By 1955, a core of members had been established which was to remain constant over the ensuing eleven years. Beecher Weld, Chester Stewart and I were the three charter members. Alec McCarter joined in 1949, Walter Chute in 1950, John Szerb in 1952 and

Alec McCarter and Chester Stewart setting up their gear (c. 1951)

Lloyd Macpherson in 1954. Roger Reed joined the group in 1953, made three trips but then left Dalhousie in 1956. Occasionally a 'guest' was invited to attend one or more trips. Frank Moya was present in 1956 and C.E. Van Rooyen, Head of Bacteriology, made trips in 1956, 1957 and 1959. Jim McLean, Dean of Dentistry, accompanied the Club in 1959, as did Bob Dickson, Head of the Department of Medicine in 1960 and 1961.

The core members of 1955 had one characteristic in common, apart from their love of the outdoor life, namely that they were all, with the exception of Walter Chute, John Szerb and Lloyd Macpherson, department heads in the Faculty of Medicine. Walter was head of the Chemistry Department, John subsequently became Head of Physiology and Lloyd succeeded Chester as Dean of Medicine. It was pointed out to me by one of the members of my department that the annual fishing trip presented me with an administrative ploy.

In those days, the department budgets arrived on my desk several days before the trip was to take place. My colleague remarked that the day before we left I would send each staff member a memo telling him what his salary would be for the ensuing year and would then disappear for a week. By the time I returned, initial reactions had cooled, especially if I was able to present a few specimens of our catch to colleagues who otherwise might have been upset by budget decisions.

Despite the common nature of interest and responsibility, or perhaps because of them, it was mutually agreed very early in the life of the Club that 'shop talk' was forbidden from the time we left Halifax until we returned. This was a wise decision, therapeutically, for there was nothing like four days in the woods and on the lakes to restore one's perspective on the problems that arise by virtue of being an administrator. While Chester Stewart was Dean, he never missed a trip, largely because his wife Kay insisted on it. "It's possible to live with him for another year after he gets back" she once remarked to me.

Chester Stewart (1963)

Before he became Dean of Medicine, Chester was Head of the Department of Preventive Medicine. This discipline, as most people know, thrives on statistics and Chester applied statistics to his fishing activities very successfully. During the 1950s, bait and fly fishing gave away almost exclusively and rather abruptly to spin-fishing and the use of lures as bait. The majority of the group replaced their fly casting rods with the spin-casting variety which was particularly well-suited to fishing the shores of Donahue Lake. Chester, however, retained both types of gear and used them simultaneously, trolling a minnow (we always brought a few of these with us, largely for his sake) and spin-casting in to the shore among the stumps of trees that had been rotted by the increased water level referred to earlier. Simple statistics should show that two lines in the water would double the chances of a catch and of course he was right as is borne out by the number of years he won the Highliner Trophy.

Chester, known more commonly as 'Stewie' to his companions, not only caught a great many fish but was responsible for both the largest and the smallest. On the first trip to Lundy, Fred, Chester and I were fishing in a southeasterly gale on Donahue. Fog was rolling in and swells on the lake grew into whitecaps so we decided to return to the landing. Suddenly, a fish struck Chester's line and judging by the difficulty he was having in retrieving it, it was a large one. One or twice it surfaced and sure enough it was a beauty. Fred prepared to net it, but the wind and the waves were so strong that he could not get the boat into proper position. Finally the fish freed itself and disappeared. At Chester's suggestion, we retraced our route and fished over the same area again, somewhat to Fred's disgust since it was heavy going against the wind and water. As we approached the same spot a second time, the fish struck again but this time on my line and was successfully boated. It measured 22 inches in length and weighed approximately 2.5 pounds. Chester claimed that he should have been credited with an 'assist' on that one.

Years later, while he and I were fishing Arnold Lake just off Northeast Lake in Halifax County, he retrieved one so small that when I netted it for him it passed right through the mesh of the net, still dangling on the hook. If the boat had not happened to have been beached at the time, I am sure Chester would have fallen overboard laughing. It must have been satisfying, from the point of statistical distribution, to have had actual rather than theoretical evidence of size variation.

Beecher Weld was one who believed in keeping his line wet as much as possible, regardless of the local geography or the current weather. Looking back over the years, I seem to recall that the more challenging these conditions were, the greater was Beecher's effort to meet and beat them. He would frequently be seen to carry on at least two different operations simultaneously, such as spin-casting and rowing the boat. Under normal circumstances this would not have been impossible, but under abnormal conditions, such as during a howling gale, only Beecher would attempt it, and with a certain degree of success. It certainly made for a great deal of excitement to be with him under such circumstances for there was seldom a dull moment as the boat tossed in the waves and the wind redirected the lines that we cast so that they ended up in the shrubs along the shore or tangled around one of the oars. But these were extraordinary conditions and elicited extraordinary responses.

Normally the weather was calm, the breezes light and sun warm. Under these conditions one often saw another facet of Beecher's personality, namely an insatiable curiosity about things in general and a consequent desire to experiment. I spent many happy and entertaining hours with him as he changed flies or lures in order to test some proposition regarding incident light or water temperature. One year during the pre-spin-casting era, he and I were together on Donahue trolling minnows. It must have been the last day of that trip because we had only about half a dozen minnows left and not all of them were still alive. Around 1130, we each caught a trout, so we anchored and proceeded to cast minnows. Very shortly we had two more fish. "This is where they are" remarked Beecher and then, looking at the minnow pail, he added "but we're going to run out of bait very soon." We both switched to flies both nothing happened. The trout were

obviously after live bait. "I wonder…" said Beecher slowly, cleaning some drops of blood from his glasses, "I wonder what would happened if we used only part of a minnow?" With this he cut a minnow in thirds, passed a piece to me and fixed another portion on his hook. In very short time, we each had a fish. Once caught, we carefully removed the hook from the mouth and also if possible the bait. If the bait had gone we used a piece of fresh minnow. I do not remember how many fish we caught that morning but it exceeded the number of minnows by quite a large margin.

Setting out for the day on Donahue Lake (1961)

As mentioned earlier, Walter Chute was the only non-medical faculty member of the Club and, although I do not know how he originally came to be involved with us, I believe he or his family were well known to Pat Grant. Walt was the kind of person who was just as much at home in the woods as he was in the chemistry laboratory. His knowledge of plant and animal life was a constant source of interest, competing in this respect with his bag of fishing gear which contained anything and everything a fisherman would need including materials for repairing equipment. His collection of lures was a constant source of wonder. These he kept in a round flat pipe tobacco tin which was crammed to the top with every kind of piscatorial hardware that could be imagined. The only problem with this method of storage was that it was impossible to extricate any one lure without removing at least half a dozen others, all the hooks intimately entangled.

Walt was usually the first to rise in the morning. Many were the times I watched him in the dim light of the cabin light a cigarette, put on his old gray fedora adorned with flies, hitch up his pants, and shuffle over to the stove where he laid and lit the fire. After placing the kettle of water on the stove, he would take a look at the weather outside and return to his bunk to await the arousal of his companions.

Walt Chute at Picnic Island (1961)

Although he seldom indulged in cooking the meals, Walt was always ready to scrape out the porridge pot or clean the frying pans - chores for which he had little or no competition. His dry sense of humour is best illustrated by the remark he would make when the fish refused to bite: "They don't seem overly anxious."

It was noon following a non-productive morning when we found ourselves across the lake from the landing in a little bay below the barrens. There was no place to land for lunch so we tied up to a large granite boulder that rose out of the water close to shore. As we were eating our sandwiches, Walt looked over the side and noticed a trout swimming lazily just below the surface. Without missing a bite of his lunch, and not mentioning this observation to the remainder of us in the boat, Walt quietly picked up a net and scooped the fish into the boat. He was one of the 'true' fishermen in the Club. Most of us fished only on the annual trip but Walt kept his line wet for a good part of the season.

Like most of us, Walt used the same bunk in Miners Rest year after year. The roof over this area would leak during a heavy rain and the first time this happened Walt had a collection of clothes to dry over the stove. However, during the next storm, he arranged his wet-weather gear over his bunk so that the water was deflected over to the wall where it ran down to the lower level – fortunately not into the lower bunk.

Alec McCarter and Lloyd Macpherson were a pair with many common interests. They were both biochemists and graduates of the University of Toronto. Bird watching was an activity they both indulged in and, like Walt, were able to recognized birds not only by sight but also by their calls. Alec's jokes and descriptions of his dreams were a never-ending source of entertainment and in this respect he differed from Lloyd. Lloyd would always enjoy a good joke but had difficulty in remembering it. Usually he would recall the punch line but forgot the circumstances leading up to it. Occasionally it was the other way around so when Alec asked if he'd heard the one about……., Lloyd would say "I

think so but tell it again anyway." Lloyd would be better remembered for his profound observations such as "This is a damn good lamp but it has to get dark to be appreciated." During one trip that had been plagued by a great deal of wet weather, the toilet paper that had been kept in 'The Crapper' behind the cabin lost much of its usefulness. As one scientific member of the Club remarked "Its bursting strength has been reduced". Lloyd suggested that when a visit to The Crapper was planned, the visitor should take some paper with him but not the whole roll. He further suggested that the amount taken should be limited to three sheets, as it was in the Canadian Forces in Britain during the war. This ration allowed for a wet wipe, a dry wipe and a polish.

Alec McCarter (1961)

The last core member of our Club at this time was John Szerb whose musical abilities and culinary efforts have already been referred to. John could become very excited when a fish took his line and occasionally this reaction resulted in some very entertaining moments. I wish I had had a movie camera (with sound) to record an event that took place on the little round pond off the southern shore of Donahue. In the first years we fished Donahue, it was possible to push a boat through the small stream that connected this pond to Donahue but, as the final level of Donahue became established, the two bodies of water were permanently separated. Around about one-third of the perimeter of the pond was a stony beach while the remainder of the shoreline consisted of boulders, scrub alders and leather-leaf vines. I was fishing from the boulders across from the beach where John, with his waders pulled up, was casting his line, ankle-deep in the water. Suddenly I heard a shout from him "Fish, fish!" I retrieved my line and sat down to watch John land his fish. It was immediately apparent that he was experiencing some difficulty in doing this for his rod had bent in a complete semi-circle and his line zipped back and forth through the water at an amazing speed. "Oh my God! Oh my God!!!" John yelled as he waded deeper and deeper into the pond. "Oh my God, it's a monster!" With visions of him chest high in the water and finally losing his footing, I cautioned him to slowly retrace his steps and to try landing the fish on the beach. Fully five minutes later

(with blood pressure considerably above normal) John did beach his monster. "Oh my God!" he remarked and then started to laugh. "What's up?" I asked. "How big is he?" John was still laughing as he held up a specimen about 12 inches long. "He was hooked through the skin just behind the pectoral fin. I must have snagged him so he was pulling sideways all the time."

John Szerb (1959)

Of all the visitors that accompanied us to Lundy during those years, none impressed Fred as much as did C.E. van Rooyen (Van), Head of Bacteriology at Dalhousie. In a letter to me on 19 February 1957, Fred commented "…..I will be looking forward to seeing you and the boys and will be glad to have the *real good* fisherman Dr. van Rooyen with us so I think it's going to be a real good competition."

No doubt Fred's enthusiasm stemmed from a number of observations. Firstly, Van was an ardent fisherman. Secondly, his tackle box was impressive both in size and variety of gear it contained. Thirdly, and I am sure most importantly, Van brought with him an outboard motor! To some of the Club members who had rowed for years (and miles) this seemed a sacrilege. To others it portended disaster. The question that immediately arose (and was answered just as quickly) was which one of Fred's boats could withstand an outboard motor plus fishing gear and motor fuel to say nothing of several fishermen? There was only one, the big one, the one that leaked the least. Fred obviously enjoyed this type of fishing for all he had to do was guide, pointing out where the submerged rocks and trees were, and where perhaps the fish might be. Although the boat did withstand two motorized trips, there was little doubt that its useful life had been shortened by this traumatic exposure to the onslaught of civilization.

The collapse of Miners Rest raised the question of what to do. As we were loath to leave Donahue Lake, we enquired about the availability of other cabins in the area and eventually located one at the northwest end of the lake owned by people by the name of Morrison. This cabin proved to be almost the antithesis of Miners Rest. It was fully furnished with beds, curtains and rugs and every available shelf or window sill was

covered with little knick-knacks. One of the first things we did was to remove these objects d'art to safer places while we occupied the premises.

Beecher Weld and Chester Stewart apply sunburn lotion to their faces (1964)

During the three years 1964-1966, the size and number of fish taken on Donahue and Loon lakes fell noticeably. Electrical power had arrived at Lundy, the road had been improved and several new cottages made their appearance. We of the Club were convinced that fishing pressure was responsible for the fall in productivity of the lakes for these lakes were not stocked by the Provincial government.

We were discussing this sad state of affairs one early evening when a knock came at the door of the camp. Our visitor proved to be a neighbour whom we had seen fishing on Donahue during the late afternoon. He enquired as to our catch, which had been extremely small, and this gave us the opportunity to expound on our theories regarding the fishing population. Our visitor was not impressed by our observations or our arguments. "There's still lots of good fish in Donahue – you've just got to hunt for them" he remarked. "I was out for a couple of hours this afternoon and caught a dozen or so. Come and look in my station wagon." Since our party of seven had barely equalled his catch - and we had fished all day – this was hard to believe. But sure enough, in his station wagen there were a dozen fish, about half a pound each.

Upon pursuing this matter further, it turned out that his fishing technique was quite different from ours. We always rowed along the shore trolling or spin fishing and whenever a fish struck we would stop, anchor the boat and fish until we were convinced that there was no longer any interest. Then we'd move on. Our neighbour did not row his boat. He used an outboard motor to the handle of which he had attached an extension about three feet long. This permitted him to stand up amidship and, with the tiller

A day's catch on Donahue Lake (1965)

extension between his legs, he had both hands free to cast his line which he did from side to side as he cruised along the shore. When he caught a fish, he quickly retrieved it, unhooked it and threw it into a box just in front of him. He then resumed his casting, but he never stopped the boat and he never used a spin rod. We shuddered to think what our patron saint Izaak Walton would have thought of this technique!

We left Lundy and its surroundings for good after the 1966 trip and continued our sport elsewhere. But in leaving Lundy, we also gave up another very enjoyable habit, namely our stop on the way home at Belle Baker's in Marie Joseph. We would leave Lundy mid-morning and if the weather was fine we would stop at the bridge at New Harbour to see if the tide was right for sea trout fishing. Sometimes we would wander down to the beach and make a few casts into the surf. One year I managed to catch a good-sized sea trout under the bridge and Lloyd, who had waders on, netted it for me.

Around noon we would arrive at Marie Joseph and Belle Baker would usher us into her living room. The house was always spotless. The wood floors, quite uneven due to the settling of the house over the years, shone with a mirror-like finish. The room was full of pictures and photographs and dozens of knick-knacks. Shortly after we had settled ourselves, Belle would enter with a tray of glasses and a pitcher of water. One of us would quickly bring out the remainder of a bottle of scotch (saved for the occasion and wrapped in a brown paper bag) from which drinks for the party were poured. As soon as our glasses were drained, Belle would call us into the dining room where 'lunch' would be laid out. The table was a sight to behold and without a doubt accounted for the fact that Belle Baker's reputation extended all the way down the eastern seaboard at least as far as New York. Except for items like coffee and tea, everything was home grown or home made. The meal usually started with a bowl of lobster bisque and freshly baked rolls. Then followed a large steamed lobster (or cold if desired), drawn butter, baked potatoes and assorted vegetables. Just as we were clearing our plates of the debris of

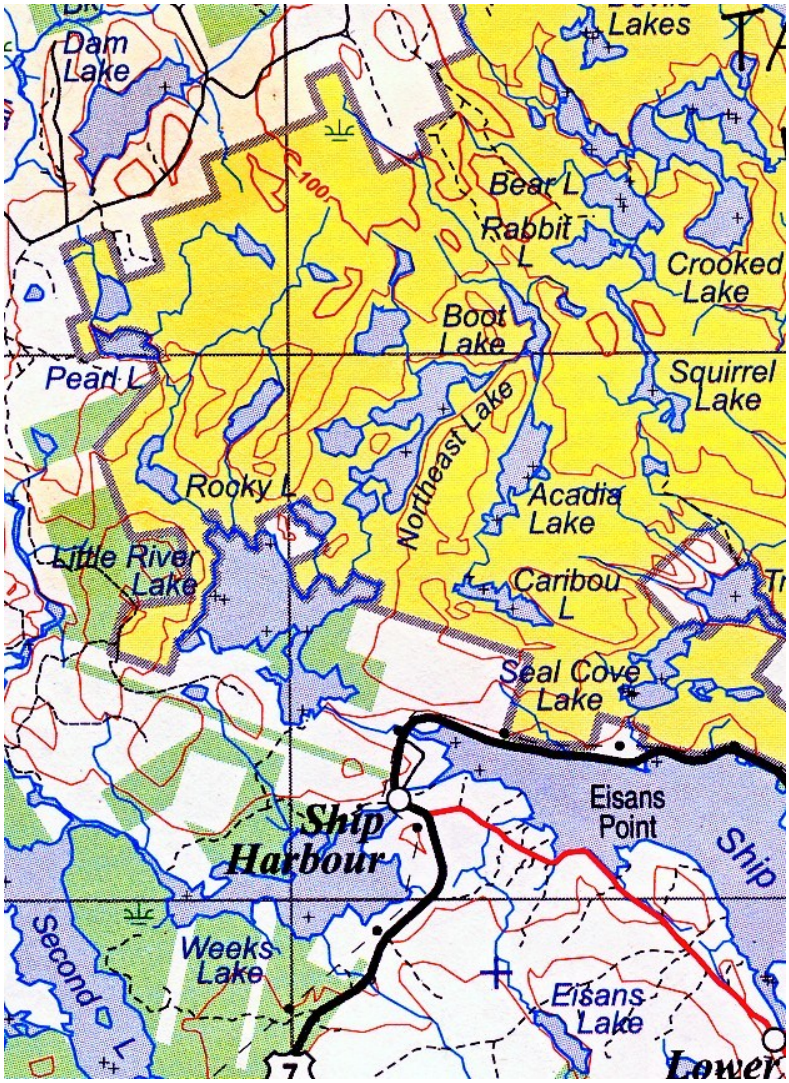
lobster shells, Belle would bring in a large platter of "lobster pieces to be finished up." A fruit dessert and assorted cookies, tea or coffee completed the meal. It was with some effort that we rose and made our way outside for a short walk before resuming the return trip to Halifax. The price of this delectable meal was $5 a head. As well as being gastronomically satisfying, these meals were somewhat soporific, much to Lloyd's distress the year when Bob Dickson, with whom he was riding in a little red sports car, fell asleep at the wheel and almost left the road.

The passing of time wrought a series of changes in the Club, some of which were directly related to the aging process while others resulted from increasing responsibility that growing older often brings. Alec McCarter made his last trip with the Club in 1966. He left Dalhousie to take over direction of the National Cancer Institute's laboratory at the University of Western Ontario. Other members were becoming involved in the activities of national institutions so that it became increasingly difficult to schedule five or six days 'in the woods' at this time of year. Physical aging was making its mark as well. Joints were becoming a little stiffer in the morning, oars were noticeably heavier and some members were showing the changes in hair colour and distribution that inevitably accompany the passage of time. Despise all this, however, the Club members' enthusiasm for fishing was not dampened as they entered what was to be the final phase of the Club's activities.

NORTHEAST LAKE (1967-1976)

In 1967, Canada celebrated the centennial of Confederation but I doubt that this event had anything to do with the Club's change of location of its annual outing. Distance from Halifax, and therefore time spent in travelling, plus the declining rewards in the way of fish caught, all contributed our trying our luck elsewhere. Several years previously, Lloyd had bought a share in a log cabin on Northeast Lake, one of a chain of lakes that runs into Ship Harbour just east of Lake Charlotte. This was a mere 45 miles from Dartmouth, thus considerably reducing our driving time. However, while the distance from Dartmouth was roughly a quarter of that to Lundy, the total time required to reach camp was approximately half. As has already been related, in going to Miners Rest we could drive to Fred's house and from there to the camp was just a ten minute trip (depending on how cooperative the mare was that pulled the stone boat on which our food and gear were stacked).

Northeast Lake presented a different set of logistics for there was an initial carry-in, mostly uphill, to Little River Lake where Lloyd kept a boat. Having stowed our gear aboard, we motored up to the run-in from Northeast Lake from where we walked in to Northeast Lake over a trail strewn with granite boulders. A ten minute trip from the landing took us to camp. It would not have been possible to pack in all the food and gear for four or five men, even if sufficient time were available, so we made use of the services of Eric Newcombe who lived in Ship Harbour. Eric looked after the three camps at Northeast Lake (O'Neill's, Morse's and Lloyd's). Several days before the annual trip, two members of the Club would drive out to Eric's place with all the heavy items (e.g.



Northeast Lake Area

canned food, beer, gasoline, etc.) which he would pack in. An outboard motor was an absolute necessity for these trips not so much during the fishing but for packing in and out. This meant that in addition to our personal gear, a motor had to be carried over the portages. All this added up to the fact that, despite the increasing age of the Club members, a greatly increased demand was made on their physical activity.

The pattern of activity at the new base deviated surprisingly little from that of previous years. The group would form pairs to spend the day on each of the several lakes on which boats were kept. Arnold Lake, a short walk in from Northeast Lake, was for years a favourite. The self-sustaining fish population here was characterized by the bronze colour of the belly. From the picturesque cove at the top of Northeast Lake, it was a ten minute walk to Boot Lake. Here, at a considerably higher elevation, lived the largest fish, possibly because of the great depth of the water. From the top of Boot Lake, a trail

followed the run-out from Acadia Lake which many years later poachers dynamited and practically eliminated the fish population.

From Northeast Lake it was also possible to walk into Big Kearney Lake which, like Boot Lake, was at a much higher elevation but which to us yielded few fish. One year Lloyd and I walked in by compass to Little Kearney Lake where, so the tale was told, the fish would be swarming for no one had been there for years. After fishing from the shore for more than an hour, we decided that the reason no one had been there was that the little lake was devoid of fish.

During the 1968 trip, two events took place that were well remembered by those involved. In fact they both took place the same day. John Szerb and I had selected to spend the day together on Acadia Lake so Lloyd and Chester 'drove' us to the head of Northeast Lake from where we hiked into Acadia Lake via Boot Lake. We agreed to meet them at 1900 for the ride back to camp. John and I had an excellent day. The fishing was good and the weather warm but not 'brassy', that is to say there were frequent short cloudy periods. Just as we were about to leave Acadia Lake on our way back to Northeast Lake, I caught my limit for the day (15) and John was not far behind. He picked up another fish in Boot Lake so that by the time we reached the landing on Northeast Lake, where our companions were waiting, we had 27 trout.

It was obvious from the expressions of Lloyd and Chester that they had not had much luck, but on the way back they told us of an adventure which had almost been a disaster. After leaving us at the top of the lake in the morning, they were trolling out of the cove into the main body of the lake when the outboard motor hit a submerged rock, jumped free of the boat and, with a few gurgles, disappeared into the water. This motor was somewhat unique, not only in that it was light-weight and air-cooled but over the years it had been repaired repeatedly, sometimes with parts from a lawn mower engine.

As the motor went overboard, Lloyd did a quick triangulation of the spot using various rocks and trees for reference points. Rowing back, they anchored over the designated spot and using an oar determined that the water was 4-5 feet deep. Some discussion ensued as to how to proceed and, having come to a decision, Lloyd stripped down to his BVDs, lit a cigarette and lowered himself overboard. Luckily the air and water were both warm. He attached himself to the boat with a length of rope – not so much for the sake of safety but in order to be able to proceed in ever increasing arcs to hunt for the motor with his feet. In a relatively short time he found it and was able to hook it up and pass it to Chester in the boat. At this point it was decided to make a run back to camp so that Lloyd could change his underclothes. Chester took to the oars while Lloyd fiddled with the motor. Common sense told him that, since the motor had been running when it fell into the lake, the cylinder would probably be full of water. It was wise then to get rid of this before any damage was done. He gave the starting rope a couple good pulls and to the complete surprise of both of them the motor coughed and started. And ran all the rest of the day.

As time went by, changes were taking place in the active membership of the Club. In 1971, Ken Rozee joined the group. He was a graduate student of mine who later succeeded van Rooyen as Head of Bacteriology (later Microbiology) at Dalhousie. That same year was the last trip for Beecher Weld; no doubt the hike in became more and more difficult for him. Two years later (1973), Chester Stewart made his last trip. Always bothered by asthma, he found the exertion of packing gear in over the rough trail precipitated more frequent attacks and made life in camp rather miserable. Walt Chute made his final trip in 1975, a year that he won the Highliner Trophy. By 1976, the last year the group functioned as the Izaak Walton Club, the only members still active were Lloyd Macpherson, John Szerb, Ken Rozee and me.

Weather was more of a problem at Northeast Lake than it had been at Lundy. The Eastern Shore, particularly around Ship Harbour, is notorious for its fog and rain during May. In 1973, it rained almost continually and in four days the party of six caught only 27 fish. Two of the group caught nothing. The following year, the temperature ranged between 32 and 44 F, it rained and the wind blew continuously from the east. On the morning of the last day in camp, we awoke to hear John Szerb exclaiming in disbelief about something outside. Upon investigation, it turned out that about an inch of snow had fallen during the night, covering the trees, wharf and the boats. No one thought of humming the tune to 'Winter Wonderland'

ADDENDUM

The Club was never officially dissolved or abandoned, it just unofficially ceased to exist. Those of the group who made the last trip in 1976 have since made an occasional trip in with Lloyd. In 1982, all four of us were together and in the following year three went in but not as members of the Club. On these last trips we were flown in to Northeast Lake by float plane. There were no fond farewells, no stirring speeches, nothing but an accumulated wealth of happy memories. And that is exactly as it should be.

John Aldous at Northeast Lake in May 1979
(on a day trip by canoe with his son-in-law)

Appendix 1. ANNUAL FISHING TRIPS AND TOTAL CATCHES

Year	Dates	Days Fishing	Party	Location	Total Catch
1946	30 April-3 May	3	6	Logging Lake	56
1947	14-18 May	3	6	Kedge	72
1948	?	3	5	Donahue (DeYoung)	102
1949	?	3	6	Donahue (DeYoung)	135
1950	24-28 May	3	6	Donahue (DeYoung)	198
1951	16-20 May	3	6	Donahue (DeYoung)	142
1952	19-24 May	3	6	Donahue (DeYoung)	167
1953	13-17 May	3	6	Donahue (DeYoung)	111
1954	17-21 May	3	7	Donahue (DeYoung)	177
1955	18-22 May	3	7	Donahue (DeYoung)	105
1956	22-27 May	4	8	Donahue (DeYoung)	90
1957	27 May-2 June	4	7	Donahue (DeYoung)	145
1958	19-24 May	4	7	Donahue (DeYoung)	161
1959	24-29 May	4	6	Donahue (DeYoung)	125
1960	20-25 May	4	5	Donahue (DeYoung)	171
1961	22-27 May	4	6	Donahue (DeYoung)	117
1962	22-27 May	4	7	Donahue (DeYoung)	141
1963	27 May-7 June	4	6	Donahue (DeYoung)	191
1964	25-30 May	5	8	Donahue (Morrison)	?
1965	31 May-1 June	5	7	Donahue (Morrison)	126
1966	24-28 June	5	6	Donahue (Morrison)	52
1967	?	?	?	Northeast Lake	?
1968	?	5	6	Northeast Lake	105
1969	?	5	4	Northeast Lake	43
1970	?	5	4	Northeast Lake	40
1971	?	?	?	Northeast Lake	?
1972	?	5	6	Northeast Lake	47
1973	?	4	6	Northeast Lake	27
1974	23-28 May	5	5	Northeast Lake	24
1975	9-14 June	5	4	Northeast Lake	30
1976	21-25 May	4	4	Northeast Lake	53

Appendix 2. FISHING PARTIES AND INDIVIDUAL CATCHES

Winner of Highliner Trophy in Bold

1946 Grant, Weld, Aldous, Whillans, Black, Collier
1947 Grant, Weld, Aldous, Whillans, Stewart, Balcolm
1948 Grant, Weld, Aldous, Stewart, Schachter
1949 Grant, Weld, Aldous, Stewart, McCarter, Balcolm
1950 Grant, Weld, Aldous, Stewart, McCarter, Chute
1951 Grant, Weld, Aldous, Stewart, McCarter, Chute
1952 Grant, Weld, Aldous, McCarter, Chute, Szerb
1953 Grant, Weld, Stewart, Chute, Szerb, Reed
1954 Stewart (37), Weld (16), Reed (22), Chute (17), Aldous (25), **McCarter (38)**
1955 Stewart (6), Weld (14), Reed (17), Chute (12), **McCarter (26)**, Szerb (11), Macpherson (19)
1956 Stewart (8), Van Rooyen (6), Moya (14), Aldous (12), Szerb (11), Chute (14), McCarter (12), **Macpherson (23)**
1957 **Stewart (30)**, McCarter (22), Chute (18), Aldous (22), Weld (21), Szerb (11), Macpherson (22), Van Rooyen (10)
1958 Stewart (24), **McCarter (42)**, Chute (18), Aldous (21), Weld (10),Szerb (27), Macpherson 19)
1959 **Stewart (36)**, McCarter (24), Chute (18), Szerb (13), Macpherson (25), Van Rooyen (8), McLean (19)
1960 Stewart (36), Weld (19), Dickson (8), Chute (18), Aldous (22), Macpherson (37), **Aldous (53)**
1961 **Stewart (32)**, Dickson (7), Chute (31), Macpherson (12), McCarter (19), Aldous (16)
1962 Stewart (9), McCarter (27), Weld (19), Chute (20), Szerb (17), **Macpherson (27)**, Aldous (22)
1963 Stewart (38), McCarter (34), Chute (33), Szerb (31), Macpherson (16), **Aldous (39)**
1964 Record lost
1965 **Szerb (29)**, Stewart (16), Chute (22), Macpherson (17), McCarter (10)*, Weld (4)*, Aldous (28) (*3 out of 5 days)
1966 Chute (8), Stewart (6), Weld (9), **Szerb (13)**, Macpherson (11), Aldous (5)
1967 Record lost
1968 Chute (12), Stewart (22), Weld (13), Szerb (20), Macpherson (5), **Aldous (33)**
1969 Stewart (13), Macpherson (3), Szerb (10)*, **Aldous (17**) (*4 out of 5 days)
1970 **Stewart (13)**, Weld (8), Aldous (7), Macpherson (7), Szerb (4)* (*4 of 5 days)
1971 **Stewart (5)**, Macpherson (0), Weld (0), Rozee (0), Aldous (0)
1972 Stewart (8), Macpherson (2), Szerb (12), **Chute (11)**, Rozee (10), Aldous (4)
1973 **Szerb (10)**, Rozee (6), Stewart (7), Chute (0), Macpherson (0), Aldous (4)
1974 Szerb (5), Chute (4), **Rozee (9)**, Macpherson (2), Aldous (4)
1975 Rozee (8), **Chute (10)**, Macpherson (5), Aldous (7)
1976 Rozee (9), Szerb (13), Macpherson (9), **Aldous (22)**

Appendix 3. CATCH STATISTICS
1954-1963

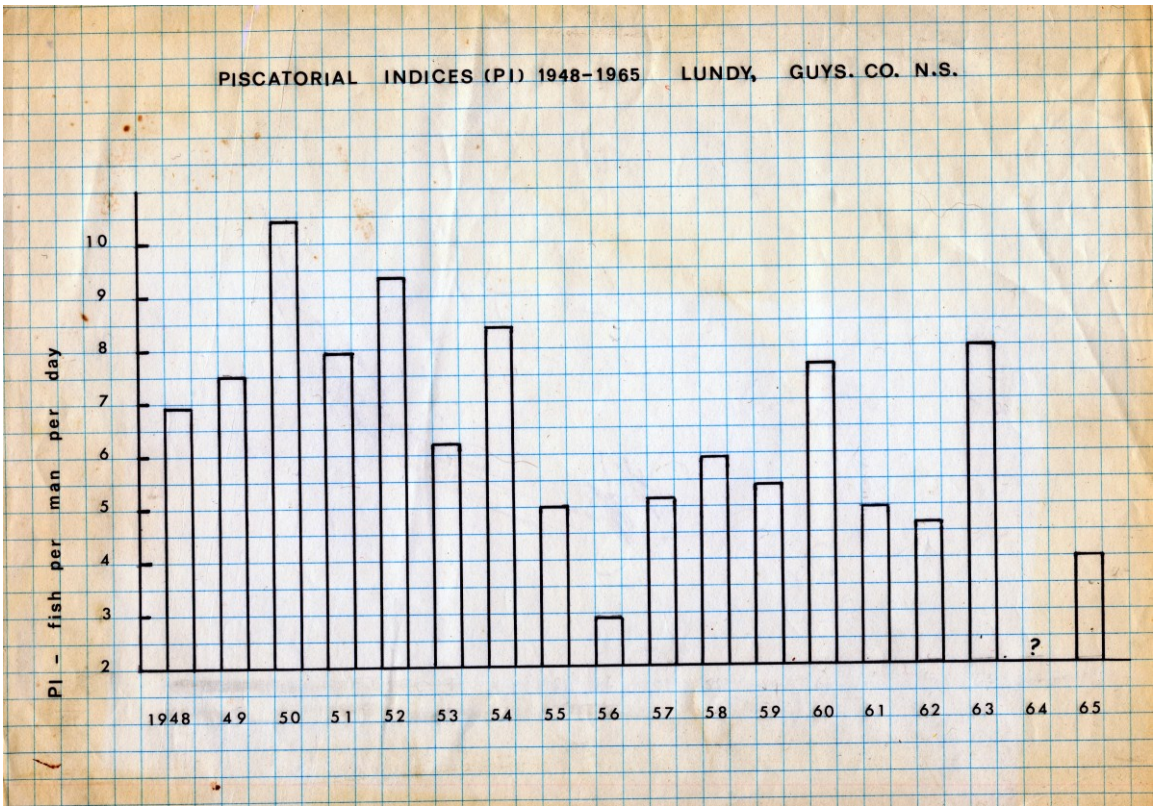
Name	Total Fish	Trips	Fish per Trip
Stewart	256	10	25.6
McCarter	244	9	27.1
Macpherson	222	10	22.2
Aldous	210	8	26.2
Chute	181	9	20.1
Szerb	110	6	18.3
Weld	99	6	16.5
Reed*	39	2	19.5
Van Rooyen*	34	3	11.3
McLean*	19	1	19.0
Dickson	15	2	7.5
Moya*	4	1	4.0
*Guests			
Grand Total	1,433	10	143.3

FINANCIAL STATISTICS
1954-1963

Total Cost (including transportation) = $1,819 or 181.90 per trip

Mean Cost per person per trip = $27.57

Mean Cost per fish = $1.27



Catch Records from Donahue Lake (1948-1965)

[This letter was written by Alec McCarter, living in Victoria, BC, in response to receiving his copy of 'Trout Tales' from John Aldous]

12 September 1984

Dear John:

A telephone call to you is insufficient to tell you how much I appreciate your chronicles! You are quite right – those were among the happiest times of our lives. The bonds of friendship formed then are very strong.

I remember so well the day that Pat Grant caught all those fish in Charlie's Little Pond (I wonder who Charlie was?). That day, Beecher and I had gone with one other person to the run out of Farm Lake. Your account of Roger Reed's catching a fish in the furious wake of the boat (made by Freddie's oars and the splash of bailed water) was hilarious! I can't remember if he was the third person on that party spoken of above. Anyway, the day was sunny and warm and in the still water of the other side of Farm Lake the fish were taking like crazy. As we looked across the water, two or three fish could be seen in the air or rising for mayfly at any one instant. Beecher and I were having a great time. Then a cool wind came down from the northeast and fishing went dead. After a couple of hours, we packed it in and once again rowed frantically across Farm Lake to avoid sinking on the way. On the trail out, the rain started – a cold drizzle. When we got out to the road, there was Pat Grant huddled up against the rain sucking a Scotch mint, leaning against the interior wall of what had once been a stable. Three boards remained of what had once been the roof. Pat was just leaving then and said "How'd you do?" We told him of the great time we'd had and asked him "How'd you do?" He said "Boys, I had the best day's fishing of my life" and he told us the tale that you told of Wilfred carrying the small boat into the lake, of how when he had caught his limit Wilfred said "Keep on Mr. Grant, you're catching for me now." I seem to remember 29 fish weighing 54 pounds but that couldn't be right. I shall always remember the look on his face as he told me.

Anyway, I remember that none of us felt any envy whatever, just joy that Pat had had such a good day. Nor will I forget the next day when you and I went out in the roaring wind and rain on Charlie's Little Pond. I had forgotten about catching two on one, thanks for remembering. You stimulated a flood of memories. Although I wasn't there, I remember your story about Mel Schachter and Wilfred calling of the moose "that moose sure has a handy tool". Fred DeYoung saying in response to "Are there lots of fish this year Fred?" The answer "There must be mister, nobody caught none yet." And Frank describing tuna "That tuna is one son-of-a-whore of a big fish." And Mel throwing his eye-opener out the door with a "What a beautiful day" gesture.

The picture of Walt Chute on Picnic Island might have been the day that we were eating there and Walt, who had been watching the water, said not a word but got up, cast to a rising fish, landed it, then came back to finish his lunch. The picture of the three people

in the white boat at the entrance to the Mash includes Walt, Bob Dickson at the handles and Stewie in the stern, two lines trailing as usual.

I have had my big operation and am at home recuperating. What happened was that in October 1982 I broke my right tibia just above the ankle. The surgeon did an open reduction using three screws. The damn thing never united properly and started developing a fore-and-aft angulation of 30° so this time he cut a wedge out, straightened the leg, put a 10" long 1" wide steel plate up the back with eleven screws to hold it in place and slathered bone-graft material from my hip all around the break. Hopefully it will heal now. Needless to say, this has cramped our styles a bit.

I am still at work. I came out here in 1980 for a study leave and we decided to stay. Until my normal retirement on 30 June 1983, I was paid by University of Western Ontario who extended my leave. I took an active part in a research project on toxic effects of sublethal concentrations of copper, zinc and cadmium on trout and salmon. After retiring from Western, the University of Victoria asked me to stay on to carry the research project along. If we are successful in getting the project renewed this coming October, I could stay on for two more years but I am hoping they'll find a younger enthusiast to take it from me. I have so many other things that I want to do.

Alec McCarter
Victoria, BC

THE IZAAK WALTON CLUB
OF
DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY

In Memory of
John Aldous, Sam Balcolm, Bruce Collier, Walter Chute,
Fred DeYoung, Bob Dixon, Pat Grant, Lloyd Macpherson, Rodger Reed,
C.E. van Rooyen, Mel Schachter, Chester Stewart and Beecher Weld

An excerpt from an autobiography written in 2002 by Alec McCarter
with thanks to John Aldous for having written the history of
the Izaak Walton Club 'Trout Tales'

Started by Dean H.G. (Pat) Grant, an avid trout fisherman, a group of six staff of Dalhousie started before I had arrived, going in late May to a good fishing lake for three days. Logging Lake was the favourite until 1948. I was invited in May 1949 to go with Pat Grant, Beecher Weld, John Aldous, Sam Balcolm and Walter Chute. Later John Szerb became a permanent member of the Club.

These were some of the finest men I have ever met. Pat was in his sixties, bluff and hearty, rather jaunty, but with the nobility of a gentleman, genuinely fond of people, passionate about the outdoors and fishing. We invited him to dinner in our Dartmouth home at a time when his wife was away. He came and played with the boys, allowing them to climb all over him as he sat on the settee while he talked to us – obviously enjoying their attention. Because we knew him and liked him so well, we other professors, his friends, resented intensely the derision that he received from some of the students (some of them it was said called him 'Horseshit Harry') and from President Kerr who treated Pat like dirt. Pat was very much troubled by the withdrawal of his authority with the appointment on an advisory committee to the president on medical matters and the medical faculty. Nevertheless, Pat insisted that while we were on our trip we should

never even mention our work or Dalhousie – and we respected that. When Pat died of a stroke in 1954 (perhaps not unexpectedly), we turned up at his funeral dressed in our academic robes. In subsequent years, on our fishing trips we toasted 'absent friends' and remembered him.

John Aldous, one of the founders of the club, was the volunteer secretary, treasurer, food-provider, liaison officer, organizer and general in charge of everything. It was he who early in the year, perhaps even the year before, arranged the date of our visit to Lundy. He corresponded with Freddie's missus. He visited Pat at Pat's house and spent hours concocting 'Bambuie' from scotch and heather honey. At camp, he prepared breakfast, supper and lunches – our great enjoyment of the fishing trip was largely due to his organizational skills and his great good nature. He probably played better poker (for matches) than anyone who sat around that small table under the hissing gas lamp, while Freddie sat on the crooked wooden chair near the door, Drambuie in one hand and a 'big fat juicy cigar' in the other. I never heard a complaint from John about the black flies, sunburn, cold rain or any of the other unpleasant things that Nature has designed to discourage a fisherman. His enthusiasm for the whole venture was infectious.

John Szerb was a professor in the Department of Pharmacology and, despite his urban and urbane beginnings in Hungary, he took as much delight in the fishing trip as any of us. One would expect the rest of us, brought up in or close to the woods, hills and lakes of the Canadian wilderness, to love Donahue Lake and its rough surroundings. But John, with a medical degree from Budapest, European erudition and general sophistication fitted in with the rest of us, never complaining, always willing to take the oars, or cook or do whatever was needed – the perfect Izaak Waltonian!

Sam Balcolm was one of the owners of Balcolm-Chittick, a small chain of drug stores. Sam, like Pat, was also a gentleman, good humoured, generous of nature, ready to participate in all the chores and fun that the made the fishing trip so enjoyable, even those who didn't catch fish. Although he didn't drink or smoke, he always brought a bottle of rum or scotch and a box of Cuban cigars for us to enjoy.

Walter Chute had been a graduate student with George Wright at Toronto a year or two prior to my going there. Wright was a particular friend to Tony Young, my supervisor who held Wright in high esteem and even tried to emulate him when it came to his treatment of graduate students. Walter had the patience of Job and apparently got along well with Wright. He got along well with everybody. His patience knew no bounds. Whenever a job needed doing, whether it was lighting the fire in the early morning, or fetching wood or water, Walter was there. If the kettle needed boiling, or the stew needed stirring, it was Walter who did it with no fanfare, expecting no praise or even a thank you. Quietly and quiet spoken, he just did what he did in the background, obviously enjoying himself, puffing on his pipe, or holding a match to it. He knew how to strike a match on his pants. He was tireless in walking to fishing spot, patient in casting all day long, rowing or bailing water. He was the backbone of the party and quite partial to white Bacardi rum. He was loath to speak his mind, neither loquacious nor

vain, a quiet, strong man, a good listener, one that could be counted on to do his part and more.

Beecher Weld, one of the kindest men I have ever known and one of the most generous, was aggressively argumentative. It mattered not whether the day was good or bad, raining or shining. If one expressed an opinion of it, Beecher would take the opposite view and argue it strenuously to the point of reaching a ridiculous conclusion when he then had the good sense to say "but of course you are right, on the other hand…" and so on and so on. This seemingly gruff manner was an endearment to his friends but a rebuff to those who did not know him. It was simple, on Beecher's part an attempt to get at the truth of a matter, to see and examine it from all sides, sometimes infuriating, always interesting. I think we all loved him – if that word can be allowed without today's meaning being attached to it.

A medical student watching Beecher do an experiment on a living animal observed Beecher putting a catheter into an artery and attaching it to a bag of saline supported from a pulley on the ceiling. Beecher asked "Any questions?" to which Doug Robb the student asked "Why is the bag so high?" "High?" said Beecher, "High? That bag isn't high – it has to be elevated to counter the pressure of the blood in the artery" and he went on at length. To which Robb asked "All right then Doctor Weld, why is that bag so low?"

Beecher had been injured shortly after the First World War. He had a stiff knee which gave him a bit of a limp. He had to drive his car with his legs crossed, that is left leg on the gas pedal, right on the brake and clutch. I never heard him complain. Although he was older than I and the others, he having been born in 1900, he walked with us, fished with us, always happy. It was he who would carry the eggs down the trail from the cars to the cabin 'Miners Rest'. With his nose slathered with a lotion which made a slip of paper stick to it to protect against sunburn, he took his turn at the oars and fished all day without complaint. Beecher was a tremendous friend to Peggy and me and to all of us more junior men and women in the Medical Building. He was a wise member of the Senate, an academic leader who could speak his mind with clarity and force and others listened.

My first time with the Izaak Walton Club was in 1949. We went to Guysborough by going through Truro and Antigonish, then to Guysborough town and so to Lundy. The next year we drove up the Eastern Shore. The road was paved only as far as Musquodoboit Harbour. Thereafter, it was a narrow, muddy one-lane road through such wonderfully named places as Sheet Harbour, Ship Harbour, Ecum Secum, Necum Teuch, Sherbrooke and the St. Mary's River, Country Harbour, Crossroads, Marie Joseph, Seal Harbour, Coddles Harbour, New Harbour and eventually Lundy. I still remember vividly the wild beauty of the places that we passed – the names fitted them well – hinting at the history of each, the hovels and wharves, the overall smell of spruce forests, sheep, wood smoke, drying fish on flakes, gasoline and tobacco smoke. The sounds of the sea – roaring with the crash of breakers on the rocks and beaches, sighing with the wind in the trees and around the huge glacier-dropped boulders that had not moved for ten thousand years but stood as reminders of the mile-thick ice that had once covered this entire region.

To this day, there are places on the high, bare rock hills that are still devoid of all but enormous areas and piles of grey rocks, the barrens, now lichen and moss covered in places, but still much as they were when the ice melted so long ago.

Because I lived in Dartmouth and the other members of the fishing club lived in Halifax, I was the last to be picked up by one of the two cars. Our first stop was at Lake Major to get minnows for use as bait. We kept them alive in a bait bucket consisting of two pails, one perforated, inside the other and filled with cold fresh water several times at convenient places along the way. John Aldous took on this responsibility. When we got to Donahue Lake, the inner bucket (with a tight lid) was tied to a rope and kept in the lake. Another method of keeping the minnows alive was to layer them between dry leaves – not wet - they would keep alive and frisky for hours – a convenience when we were out on the lake in boats. Actually we could have kept them in the bilge water, because Freddie's boats all leaked, but we were afraid of bailing the fish over the side. On arriving at Freddie DeYoung's farm home we would pull up into his front yard and the whole family, Freddie and his 'missus', the boys and little girls would all run out to meet us. Usually we carried a consignment of clothes from our families to give to theirs. In response to our greeting to Freddie, asking him if the fishing was good, he would say "Sure is boy, nobody caught none yet. They're there boy. You betcha."

We would all pitch in to help carry supplies down the rough wet trail to the cabin 'Miners Rest', a log and tar paper shack located on the top of a small hill, plentifully wooded, perhaps a quarter of a mile away from the road where we parked the cars. Freddie would load up the heavier provisions on a stone boat and pull it with the horse, a bag of bones with all ribs showing through its gaunt sides. With a "Gee, haw, whoa and giddup" and lots of swearing ("Giddup you son of a whore. Whoa goddam you son of a bitch. Stop. Now see what you've done god dammit"), Freddie would manage to get the load to the cabin, once or twice tearing off the platform that provided an entry way into the shack.

Then, we would lay claim to our bunks (four for six men but the lower ones were wide enough for two). We would light a fire in the small iron wood stove to boil water for tea and have a light meal. While the kettle was boiling, we would rig up our fishing gear and change into our fishing clothes. Then it was off down the hill to the lake. There, we had to tread on roots barely above the water to untie the boats and bail out the water – some had come in as rain but most came through the bottom and sides. If there was too much, we had to take oakum and stuff it together with black gooey tar into the cracks and seams in an attempt to slow the pace of the many leaks. The procedure always resulted in getting tar stains on our hands and clothes, for it seemed that no matter where we touched the boat thereafter was covered with the black sticky goo that kept us from sinking. There were no oarlocks, we used sticks (tholepins) cut to fit the holes in the thwarts where the oarlocks should have gone and there was no anchor unless we fashioned one from a rock and a wire – a kellick it was called. The oars scarcely ever matched, one was invariably longer and heavier than the other. One of the boats was smaller and canvas covered. It refused to follow a straight line when underway – "because the keel it too straight " said Freddie.

Donahue Lake must have been a lovely lake prior to its being taken over as a reservoir to power a small generating plant near salt water, a couple of hundred feet below its northern end. Trees along the shore had not been logged but were drowned after the dam raised the level of water by several feet. Logs lay along the shore in profusion and dead trees, still attached to their roots in the flooded bottom, stood out like grey sentinels all around the lake. It was among these trees that the trout were to be found – wonderful, beautiful, speckled trout *Salvelinus fontinalis* hungry, good sized and in abundance.

The lake, nine miles long and about a mile wide with many islands making it appear narrower, lay in a valley running north and south. Lundy and the people who lived there were on the western side - forests of spruce, beech and red maple, fields of poor grass, and the road from Guysborough to Larry's River made it almost hospitable. The eastern side was high, solid, barren rock with thousands of erratic boulders scattered over it. At times, when the light was right, the largest boulders looked like houses and the ridge resembled a city. We never ventured there, walking would have involved scrambling over and around boulders with risk of breaking a leg but the presence of this barren was with us always – above us, looking down at us puny beings, at once foreboding and reassuring. The roar of wind around the rocks mingled with the roar of the distant sea was a constant background to the ripple of water around the boats, the sounds of bubbles flowing and gurgling under the keel and breaking at the stern, the creak of the oars against the tholepins, and near the shore the songs of wood warblers and the calls of blue jays. It is the roar of the wind in the firs and leafless maples that I remember most now. When I hear that sound while working in our Victoria garden, I am at once transported to Donahue Lake. I can smell Lloyd's pipe smoke, hear the creak of the oars and the sound of the small waves splashing the boat, the chill of the wind penetrating every seam of our clothing and feel the burning sun on my hands and face. I miss those good men now so far away in time and distance. All but two of us are dead.

After several hours of fishing, and as dusk was approaching, we returned to the cabin cold and exhausted but happy, ravenous for our supper of cold lobster from Larry's River cooked for us by Mrs. DeYoung. Washed down with rum or beer in the hot cabin, the food, drink and our tiredness soon brought us to our bunks.

The last man up would rush to his bed before the gas lamp flickered out. Then we would lie awake listening to the sounds of frogs from nearby Charlie's Little Pond, the continuous shrill, high-pitched 'too-deep' of spring peepers, the intermittent trills of toads and the deep 'go-round' of bull frogs. Sometimes the bell-like, surreptitious calls of a saw-whet owl told of its presence in the dark woods, unseen, now from close by, now from a distance. Then came the soft snores from the bunks where good friends had been overtaken by sleep. It was at times like that we felt truly content, truly glad to be alive and in such a place and company.

The residents of Lundy, the DeYoungs, Freddie and the Missus and their numerous children, including Wilfred, the oldest who sometimes served as our guide, and Frank Girois, a neighbour. I suppose they were of Acadian descent. Tough, wiry people of the land – owning very little and working hard for every mouthful of food and every stitch of

clothing – but also somewhat shiftless. Freddie was kind and gentle, heavily tanned, wrinkled skin, bent of back and leg with large, rough arthritic hands. "By Gee Mister" was a frequent saying that prefaced many of his remarks. "By Gee Mister Grant, those pills you gave me sure worked for the pain in my wrists – you're sure some good doctor." "Johnnie, just cast over there by the white rock – there's always a fish there. By Gee Mister, that's some good fish." Frank's language was more salty "Ever see a tuna, now tha's a son of a whore of a big fish"

Freddie kept boats, in a state of ill preparedness, in several lakes and stillwaters around the area. We suspected that he did not always own them and our suspicions were borne out when Walter, Lloyd and I walked to Loon Lake on one glorious day. The boat was in surprising good repair – and so was the cottage 'American Lodge'. That should have been the tip-off. We went off in the boat to the Loon's Neck, a long narrow spit of land bearing tress and shrubs, extending some hundred yards or more into the lake. Fishing was excellent on both sides, particularly on the sheltered side where the mayflies were landing on the water. Black clouds of them danced in the air on the lee side of every bush near the shore in a wild orgy of display and mating prior to landing on the water to lay their eggs. As soon as they landed, they were snatched at the surface by hungry trout – a flip of a dark creature, leaving a circular pool of wavelets marked where the mayfly had met its end.

We caught fish on nearly every cast when suddenly we heard from far off "What the hell are you doing in our boat?" There on the shore near American Lodge were three fishermen who not only owned the boat but the cabin in which we had planned to spend the night. We returned the boat rather sheepishly but the men knew about Freddie and his tendency to tread on their rights of ownership. Anyway, it was a good day, one that I shall never forget. The Loon's Neck is a special, a very special place in the fisherman's world and the walk to the lake, nearly two miles from Freddie's home, is one of the finest that anyone could want to make on a lovely spring day in Nova Scotia. The trail is wide and dry through beech and striped maple with 'Spring Beauty' and other early flowers pushing up through the dried leaves – the air fresh and the sun warm and glorious. Whereas the water of Donahue Lake is brown as tea, that of Loon Lake is perfectly colourless and clear. Of course, it is still there but I wonder if it still so pristine. I hope so.

Another lake, which was difficult to reach, was Farm Lake, also known as Square Lake set in a bowl among the treeless barrens. The walk is difficult, through straggly, low brush just boot high, blueberries, bayberry and Rhodora growing among closely spaced, large boulders and a muddy trail that skirts some of them – one must climb over others. At the lake, a leaky boat, typical of those owned by Freddie, had to be repaired by caulking before we ventured to get into it. We did, though not without getting black tar on our hands, clothes and fishing gear. Beecher, John, Rodger Reed and I rowed madly to reach the other shore where the water was shallow and we could sink with impunity. Rodger eagerly kept sending looping casts behind the boat. A very large trout took the lure with a great splash – we kept rowing, at a frantic pace, afraid to stop long enough for

him to play and land it lest we should sink. He captured the fish successfully and we remained afloat.

Once on the other side, we pulled the boat through a narrow, shallow space of a dozen feet, through the gravel and into a stillwater closed by a beaver dam at the outlet end of the pond. When we arrived, the water was alive with jumping fish feeding on mayfly. We caught several trout and explored the small river below the dam, creeping around enormous boulders and casting into deep pools. Quite suddenly the calm was replaced by a gentle north wind. The sky, which had been excessively clear, became covered with haze, then grey cloud. Finally, scudding clouds and cold rain showers utterly changed the day. The fishing stopped and all was quiet except for the hiss of raindrops and the howl of wind in the shrubs and bushes around the pond. We rowed back, turned the boat over on the shore with the oars underneath and hiked back to the road where we had left the car.

A log lean-to at the side of the road marked the end of the trail and there, leaning against the wall with a smile on his face, was Dean Grant waiting for us. "Well boys" he said "What sort of day did you have?" "Just great" we said, "How about you?" With a grin from ear to ear and a nonchalance that was characteristic of him he said "Well boys, I had the best day's fishing of my life!" Wilfred and Dean Grant between them had caught 29 fine, fat trout. When Pat Grant had caught his limit of twenty, Wilfred said "Carry on Mister Grant, you're catching them for me now."

The next day in the pouring rain and strong, gusty wind, John Aldous and I tried our luck in the little lake. The best place had been beside a huge, grey granite rock that emerged from the centre of the pond. We caught a couple to trout but I think Pat and Wilfred had pretty well fished out the pond.

Fishing the 'Mash' was an essential part of every trip. A floating mat of shrubs (mainly Sweet Gale), roots and moss, it bordered a channel in the lake. Protected from winds, it was a sure-fire place in which to catch trout. The surface of the quiet water was covered with the empty carapaces of nymphs from which mature mayflies had recently graduated. As they did at Loon Lake, these ephemeral creatures, as light as air, danced near the surface of the water and in the lee of every shrub or drowned tree. It was here, waiting for the mayflies to alight, that hungry trout dimpled the water in expanding rings of tiny waves. Eager tree swallows swooped low to scoop up the tasty morsels. On warm days in the hot sunshine, it was aggravating to watch the trout rise to the plentiful food but not to our proffered lures or bait.

On such days, the only possible way to catch a trout was to present a fly in the most artful manner possible. Best was a mayfly itself in a process called 'midging'. Using the smallest hook available, we would dab a tiny spot of pitch from a spruce tree on the shaft and attach a mayfly by its abdomen to the sticky material. It was easy to catch the flies – all one had to do was wave one's hat through a cloud of them and then replace the hat on one's head until a fly was needed. Using a spinning rod, a 2 lb test line and the hook with attached mayfly at its end, a careful hand was required to throw the fly gently into a pool

where the trout were breaking the surface. Sometimes there would be an immediate response. On one occasion, a tree swallow picked up mayfly and hook and took it high in the air before dropping it!

Another couple of stories and then I'm done with telling about fishing. Dr. C.E. van Rooyen, 'Van' to his friends, was Professor of Bacteriology succeeding Rodger Reed. He was invited to become a member of the Izaak Walton Club of Dalhousie (the name of the group started by Pat Grant). Van refused to row but rented an outboard motor. This meant that it had to be mounted on Freddie's best boat and because of all the obstacles under water, namely sunken logs and roots of trees still attached to the drowned ground below, the boat with the engine attached to the stern could not navigate shallow water. Instead, Van, and the hapless person who by luck of the draw accompanied him for the day, spent the whole of it trolling up and down the length of the lake at its deepest parts, far from shore and at high speed. Now those of us who knew about trout fishing knew that the fish were close to shore at this time of year, drawn there by the hatching mayflies and other water fauna. It was therefore a very dull day for Van's companion. Van never caught a fish. Once he invited son David and me to accompany him on a fishing trip – he was going to do all the driving. We drove over 400 miles on that weekend, putting our lines in the water for perhaps a total one hour in at least a half dozen places including the Musquodoboit River, Mosher River and a lake impossible to reach except with extremely long casts from a high bank. We caught nothing except food poisoning.

Lloyd and Charlie Allan [brother of Mary Jones, wife of Bob Jones]invited me to go with them to a cabin that Lloyd and his brother Ian had rented on Northeast Lake, inland from Chezzetcook (or was it Jeddore?). It was May and the weather was warm and fine. We parked the car, gathered our gear on our backs and took a boat across a lake to a landing on the other side. We shouldered our gear and hiked up a steep hill to another lake and another boat. Here and there in that lake were ice floes, separated by long leads. The ice presented no hindrance to getting to the other side. Another hike through the woods and we came then upon Northeast Lake. Here the ice was nearly continuous and it was thicker. We put our gear in the boat, fired up the outboard motor and, finding clear passages, pushed our way through the ice until it became not possible to go farther. I leaned over the bow and, with an axe, slashed at the ice as far as I could reach ahead to create a passage. In the manner of an icebreaker, Lloyd would gun the engine and we would ride up on the floe – more hacking and backing to and fro eventually got us to the far shore and the landing below Lloyd's camp. It was a clean, well-constructed cabin made of small calibre logs in the manner that is common in Nova Scotia, that is the logs are stood side by side on their ends and the chinks between them are filled with sphagnum moss, then closed with strips of saplings nailed to the logs to hold the moss in place.

We had our supper, set up our sleeping places and fell into them to get our rest before the next day's fishing. Sometime in the night, a tinkling of fairy bells woke us, something was happening at the edges of the lake. The rest was completely clear of ice. We had noticed on the previous day that the ice appeared to be made of long crystals held together at the tops. This had only to melt and the crystals would be free to float about on

their own. Evidently that was what had happened last night and the sounds we heard was that of the millions of crystals striking one another like wind chimes as they moved. That day we went fishing in the newly freed waters of Northeast Lake and two others nearby with just enough fish to have for our supper and complete a nearly perfect day in Nova Scotia's vast and beautiful wilderness.

Addendum - The Smallest Fly

Dean Pat Grant called me one day in 1951 to ask if I could get the smallest fly available. He suggested a Montreal firm. I wrote them and they sent a single, tiny fly enclosed in an envelope with a message that said "It is pity to crush this beautiful thing." I took it to Pat who examined it and said it was too small to be cast properly. Yesterday, 51 years later, I used it to number the pages of this tribute to him and the other members of the group that he and John founded. Happy memories John and Pat.

[This account was written by Ken Rozee in 2002 just after the death of John Aldous and was read at his celebration of life at the Dalhousie Faculty Club]

JOHN AND THE IZAAK WALTON FISHING CLUB

Ken Rozee
May 2002

First let me say how much I regret that it was not possible for me to be here. My daughter Sarah is dancing her first professional *pas de deux* in Montreal tonight and my wife and I will be attending.

Peter has asked that I write this bit about the Izaak Walton Fishing Club of which John was a founding member and which I joined during its maturity. The story of the Club has been recorded in detail in a history written by John so I will just be recounting a few personal memories.

The Club had really two chapters, the Liscomb times and the times at Northeast Lake. During Liscomb, I was learning my trade in Toronto so reports are anecdotes told with great relish and good humour usually at night over a rum toddy at the camp. I think the Liscomb experience was dominated by the condition of the boats. Held together by roofing tar and rag stuffing, they were, as told to me by John, "Three man boats, one rowing, one bailing and one fishing." The wisdom of rowing the boats was proven when Clennel van Rooyen fastened a 6-horsepower outboard motor to one and against all protestations proceeded out into the lake. As the boat approached mid-lake, the motor shook open all the seems and as John recounted over gales of laughter "We just made it back to the dock, all hands bailing, then sank!"

The move to Silver's cabin on Northeast Lake brought a substantial improvement in both the living conditions and the boats. By this time I had returned from exile in Toronto and John and Lloyd Macpherson invited me to join and it was a great pleasure for me to do so.

It was customary for the first year that the 'probationer' was the guest of the Club. Thereafter they were to follow the rules like everyone else. Like good scientists all, the trip was carefully planned and everyone had their duties. Each must bring some homemade cookies which were combined in a large tin for easy access (mine were oatmeal). Each brought a bottle of spirits of choice (usually dark rum). The groceries were obtained by one of us in turn each year according to an ancient list originally by Lloyd and Alec McCarter and he costs were divided evenly to the penny.

John most frequently cooked breakfast, always complaining that most of us liked our bacon too 'crispy' ("All the taste was gone!"). Lloyd was an excellent supper cook, made bread and we all knew what to expect on the menu each day. John Szerb, Chester Stewart and I were the scullery maids and washed up after each meal. First one up in the

shivering May morning (those with smallest bladders) lit the stove. Lunch was eaten in the field, or rather the stream, and each prepared their own.

Partners for the day rotated, as did the fishing sites. Each partnership set out in the early morning filled with food and expectations to go to Arnold, Acadia, Kearny lakes or to stay on Northeast Lake or to fish the stillwater or the runoff into Little River Lake. It was always a full day. To describe the week or so that we spent together each year as happy times would be an understatement – they were the best of times.

In the evening, all the day's tales were told with maximum exaggeration compatible with belief and after supper, and a toddy or two, we settled into the traditional card games of 'Oh Shit'. A careful record of these games was kept and over the years it was revealed that John was master player as well as a master fisherman.

At the end of each trip, the Highliner, the one who caught the most fish, had their name engraved on a beer stein. By the time I was fortunate enough to be a Highliner, John's name was all over the mug. My only excuse was that he had a head start.

As a final observation, I should tell you that John held no respect for the intense commercialization of recreational fishing. Indeed he insisted that too much foolish comment was made of the virtues of various lures. He proceeded to prove it one year when he almost won Highliner by fishing with a lure he made out of an aluminum beer can tab! This amongst the many things that I learned from my teacher John Aldous.

Thank you John,

Ken Rozee
May 2002