

## 1903

One can only imagine the unspoiled appearance of (Deer Lake) Wah Wash Kesh Lake in 1903 when Robert M. Morton & Edward Campbell Kenning first visited their acquaintance, Donald Alexander Cameron. With the small amount of building which had taken place at that time and few cottagers on the lake it surely must have been extraordinary. Tales of James Kelly, an Irishman who owned the Hotel in Dunchurch, who constantly talked to and praised his horses from his wagon team during the treks to the lake and more often than not would partake of his favorite libation from his trusty flask, abounded during the early years. Especially remembered was the fact he would stop at the farmers houses on the way to the lake and drop off the “liquid refreshments” for them.

The name “Wah Wash Kesh Lake” is thought to be Ojibway which translates to “Deer” Lake although the CPCGN lists a definition of “small eggs” for the same word.



The original Cameron Island cabin early 1900's.



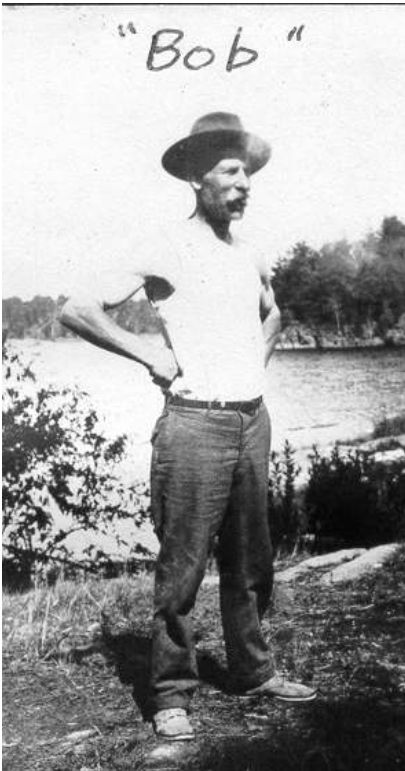
Cameron Island cabin July 1998.

In 1872-73, A. B. Scott surveyed McKenzie Township and identifies the lake as **Wahwaskesh** (no “h”), but in his notes also refers to it as **Wahwashkesh**. The location of Wah Wash Kesh Lake is 45°43' 80°02' on an atlas. Eleven (11) km from Ardbeg. The Dominion Government used **Wahwashkesh** as the name of the areas Post Office (1910) but somewhere along the line it was phonetically spelt as **Wah Wash Kesh**, which is how I spell the name throughout the History of Morton’s Point Camp Book.

Donald Cameron and his group had established their hunting club on Cameron Island. The certificate of ownership is dated May 8<sup>th</sup>, 1899. The log cabin, built by John Broderick, who was hired by the hunting clubs members, is set on the Magnetawan River surrounded by scenery to bountiful and awesome to describe in writing. This year, Howie Watson had John Reid digging the foundation for a kitchen.

The original members of Cameron Island were Donald Alexander Cameron of Dawson City, Yukon; Ernest Gardner Swift of Windsor & Detroit; John Gowie Watson of Windsor; C. Clayton Ambrey of Toronto; A. V. Spencer of Toronto and Wilker Collins. The cost of the property was \$32.52 .

Bob Morton in 1910 - 11 area.



James Kelly, an Irishman, would transport people to the Cameron Island Camp, with a stop overnight in Dunchurch and then on to Whitestone where they would reach the Big Lake. It was reported his manner was mild and he was constantly reassuring passengers, which did much to smooth the first ride over the roughest roads ever experienced by most visitors. He was known to praise his horses throughout the trip and he said they knew every word he said to them. Never far from James would be his flask which he used to partake of often.

Robert Morton was so impressed with the area he started to influence nine Windsor Walkerville businessmen to start a fishing camp on the lake. By 1905 the group was ready to launch the project. These original people were William J. Burns, Abram D. Green, William Henry Isaacs, Major Edward Campbell Kenning, Lt. Col. Walter Leishman McGregor, Robert M. Morton, John Northwood, Col. Sydney C. Robinson and Dr. Herman H. Sanderson. Several of these men were executives from Hiram Walkers and others were brother officers in the 21<sup>st</sup> Regiment of Essex Fusiliers. Robert M. Morton owned Morton's Tobacco Co.

While searching out the names of the original men above, I found notes of others thought to have been involved at this point. Robert Lawrence Daniels and Alexander Douglas Willis Leach were noted as founding members but were not as they did not become members until 1918. Ed Ladore is noted as a founding member in the Lake Wah Wash Kesh book but further investigation showed he also joined as a member in 1918. The section of the above book was not specific as to Ed Ladore being a "founder" and investigation proved that it was relating to the transfer of Deer Lake Syndicate to the Charter Company, Morton's Point Limited, in 1925. It appears to me that the two sections of History, 1910 & 1925, were mixed together somewhere along the line but the hard facts were available to separate the men into the proper time frames.

A . H .Traux opened the areas post office in 1910. (Floreen Ellen Carter, London, Phelps Publishing Company. 1984)

Wahwashkesh translation from Ojibway to "deer" by Allan Rayburn in his book "Place Names of Ontario". Toronto University of Toronto Press. 1997.

To Mrs. Jno. Gowie Watson  
Cameron Island,

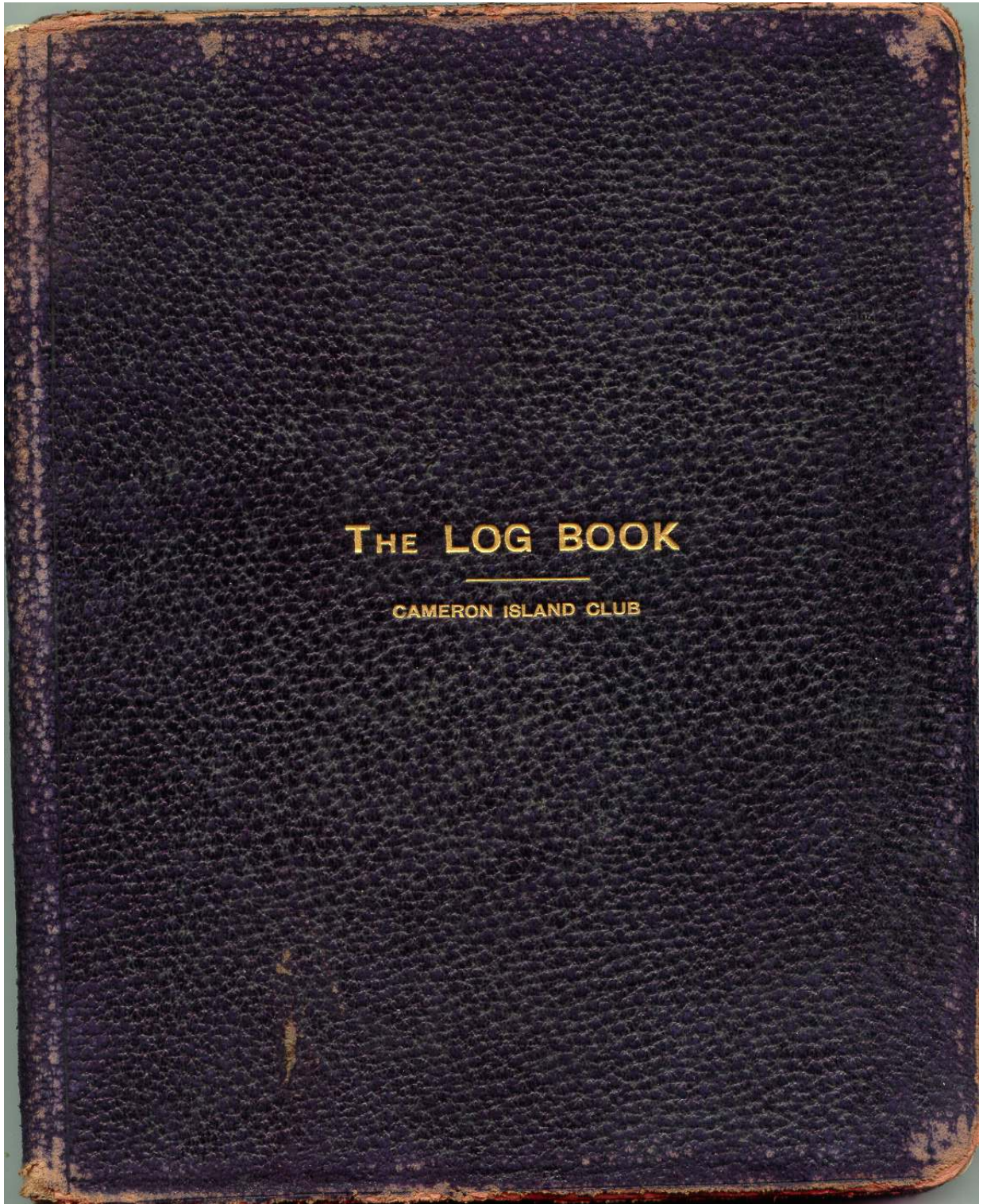
With sincerest affection.

We hope the names and  
sentiments to be inscribed  
will bring back to memory  
the happiest days of your  
life

The Smiths

Aug 30<sup>th</sup> 06





Last Modified May 5, 2012.