

Stories of Lac Gauvreau – Part II

Farm folk and cottage folk

- In the 40s and 50s, the farms and houses on this stretch of Route 366 were owned by families such as Biron, Pilon, Brisebois, Cross, Brown and Welch.
- The Vaillant family farm was sold around 1949 or 1950. Many members of original farming families, including members of the Biron and Vaillant families, still live in the area.
- When I was young, we used to swim in the creek and camp out on the fields in back of the Vaillant farm. There was a tree with a big branch, and you could jump off into the river. In the winter, the Vaillants used to tap maple trees for syrup. There was a sugar shack down by Vaillant Road. Most of their old farm land was bought by the NCC.
- My mother is a daughter of Hercules Biron. She was born on Chemin Gervais. In 1973, my mother moved our young family back to Chemin Gervais. We renovated the house and still live there today.
- My mother used to work at a French fry and ice cream stand at the top of Chemin Gervais. In later years, the stand was moved down the road.
- This house was the Pilon family home. There were five boys in the family. It was pretty quiet around here back in the day, so we used to go in to Wakefield for a beer. I left home in 1965, but my mother lived in this house until she died in 1995.
- Years and years ago, my father's favourite treat was a piece of fresh bread, dipped into fresh cream from the Vaillant farm, and then into brown sugar. He loved the "crème habitant" – you couldn't get it in town!
- Hillaire Vaillant delivered milk to the cottages. Later on, his son, Laurier, took over.
- Gilles Phillippe ran the bread truck. There was also a fruit and vegetables truck, but I can't remember who ran that.
- There used to be a mill down by the Pilon store. Bertrand had a mill as well. The biggest of the local mills was the one down on Kennedy road – that was Morin's mill.
- When I was young, there was a candy man named Aimée Leblanc. He sold candy floss and chocolates – stuff like that. If you knew him, he'd sell you a whole box of chocolate bars.
- Augustine, down by Philippe's garage, sold soup, smokes and that kind of stuff – right out of her front window! She also sold \$5 bundles of firewood to cottagers. All of that stopped in the 1980s.
- I grew up about 8 miles from here, on a farm at lac Gervais. I have lived on Chemin Gervais since 1958. My father-in-law was M. Hercules Biron. M. Biron had five daughters and a son. I married one of his daughters. My brother married another. The two Leblanc brothers married two others. The fifth sister married a Vaillant. The names of some the original families on this road include Bureau, Quinn, Montsion, Chateau-Vert, Maillet and Guindon.
- Two of the Gratton sisters, who were cottagers, ended up marrying boys from nearby farming families.
- Claudette Maillette, whose mother was a Biron, used to live on Chemin Gervais – right beside Mme Guindon. Her daughter married Dr. Powers' son.

- If you knew Dr. Powers, you could call on him for medical assistance. Once, the son of Mme Cecile (Biron) Gervais had a fishing hook stuck in his forehead. He went to see Dr. Powers, who took out the hook and patched him up!
- We never used to swim in the lake. Our mothers were afraid that we would drown if we played unsupervised down at the lake. Instead, we had family picnics on the river, which ran behind our family farms. In addition to picnicking at the river, we used to fish and take dips in the water.
- In the 50s, when my mother wanted a fresh chicken, she used to say “Kids, wouldn’t it be nice to have a fresh chicken today?” She would send us off in a rowboat, across the lake, to the Robertson farm, and we would bring back a live chicken in a cloth bag. My cousin would cut its neck and then we’d eat fresh chicken for dinner!
- When I was a kid, we used to watch them kill chickens out on the Robertson farm. Not my favourite memory!
- The Robertson and Bertand cows ran free over the hills during the day. The hills were quite open then, so the cows could walk right down to the cottages around the lake. They used to wander all around the properties. They had cow bells on, so we heard cow bells all the time. Most of the cows were dairy cows, so they went home to be milked at the end of the day.
- In the 50s, the Leech and Arnold kids played up on “Cow Mountain”, which was where the Robertson cows grazed. Mr. Robertson’s cows were better contained than Mr. Bertrand’s!
- The old Robertson farmhouse and barn are gone now. Daniel Robertson’s father lives at the end of Robertson Road, and his property overlooks the old Robertson farm.
- The Kingsbury’s had a farm with a huge old building and a tiny house. The original homestead was still standing in the 70s and 80s. The sons were Ron and Blair. Blair runs the campground.
- As a kid, Ron Kingsbury used to run errands and do odd jobs around our house for extra cash.
- Years ago, the farmers complained about how slowly the land was draining. The Quebec government decided, in the late 50s or early 60s, to bring in a drag line in. They straightened Parent Creek, turning it into a canal or a ditch all the way up to McKenna Greenhouses. The result was that the water came off the fields too quickly in the spring, leaving layers of dirt and clay on all of the rocks and filling in parts of the lake with silt.
- The original access to the lake was via Wakefield and the part of Kennedy Road that is now in the Gatineau Park. The road ran along the left hand side of the La Pêche River and crossed over to the existing Kennedy Road at Legros’ mill.

Island adventures

- When I was a girl, I babysat my younger sisters and my neighbor. I used to bring them to the Island for picnics. The priests had made picnic tables where we could eat our lunch. After our picnics, I used to take my young charges along the trail and make them pray at the Stations of the Cross.
- We used to like to go out on adventures for the day. The boys went out fishing and stopped at the Island for lunch. The priests had made a BBQ, and we used it to cook hot dogs.
- Yesterday, I swam out to the Island and back. As I neared the shore, I saw a water snake move quickly away from me. I didn’t know there were water snakes here!

- Years ago, we used to watch Mrs Snelgrove swim out to the Island and back in the mornings. Mme St-Jean sometimes swam with her.
- We were sent off to the Island with picnics every day. We played and built forts all day long. Actually, there were forts on both sides of the Island. We could usually tell if the kids from the other side had been in our forts – and vice versa.
- M. Falardeau said that they used to have dance parties in the clearing on the Island!
- I was the one who spotted the fire on the Island. I was about 9 years old at the time. The day before, we kids had been playing on the Island and we had seen some strangers camping there. The next day, as we approached their campsite, we saw smoke. When we got there, we saw the fire – even the trees were starting to burn. We hurried back to tell our parents. They told us to go around in our boats, and to tell everyone about the fire – asking them to come out with buckets. Back then we only had 3 and 5 HP boats. Everyone came out. We made a big line and passed buckets of water from person to person. Eventually, we put out the fire. Most of us had been strangers to one another before the fire, so it turned out to be a bonding experience.
- Back in the old days, we felt like we owned the Island. Initially, the priests sold the Island to a few families on Bay Sainte Anne, with the proviso that they could not build for a certain number of years. A few years ago, when the Island went up for sale for the second time, a bunch of us cottagers came up with 100K and put in a bid to buy the Island. We wanted to prevent developers from getting the Island! In the end, our bid did not succeed.

Early cottagers

- My father bought our cottage in 1949. It was an “Eaton’s Catalogue” cottage – i.e., a cottage that you ordered out of the Eaton’s catalogue and then put together yourselves! This is something we hadn’t realized until fairly recently. We discovered it when we read an article in *Cottage Life* magazine. There, in the magazine, was an exact replica of our own cottage! The cottage style was called “Grove Cottage”. You wouldn’t recognize it as such now, as we’ve done several sets of renovations. In retrospect, all of this seems funny, as our family name was in fact Snelgrove. To add to the humour of it all, it turns out that and we had unwittingly given “grove” monikers to everything around our property, i.e., “Poplar Grove”, “Sail Grove” and “Outhouse Grove”, and so on!
- We used to spend the whole summer up here. I was 12 when my Dad bought the cottage and we have been coming here ever since. My Dad was a letter carrier and used to commute to town during the summer months. We played a lot of cards when I was growing up! Our gang was Julie Montsion, Michel Faubert, ti-Gilles Faubert and Line St-Jean.
- I have been coming here since 1987. It started with visits to the cottage of my girlfriend and her family, who had been coming here for a long time. They had such a nice cottage that I decided to keep hanging out with them. Just joking! At first, we spent days at the lake with her parents and camped overnight at lac Philippe. Later on, we got a tent trailer and spent the entire summer on her parents’ lawn. Now we have inherited the family cottage, and this year, our boys are camping out on the lawn – just like we did!

- Our cottage was built in the early '40s by a Mr. Andrews. My father, who was in the insurance business, met Mr. Andrews in Ottawa. Mr. Andrews was in a bit of a predicament as he wanted to buy a house in Ottawa, but couldn't afford to do so unless he sold his cottage. My dad went up to have a look at the cottage and decided to buy it on the spot!
- Hercules Biron built the early cottages on our road. First, he built them. Then he rented them. Then he sold them to cottagers.
- I was very young when we first came here – maybe 6 or 7 years old. My brother was only 2 or 3. We rented a cottage for 1 or 2 weeks from a M. Blouin. In those days, the families in this area were named Biron, Bureau, Viaux, Blouin, Patinaude and Nixon. In 1956, when I was 15, our family rented once again. That's when my father decided to buy a property from M. Biron. Our family has been here ever since.
- I inherited the family cottage. My children, like my sisters and I, feel like they grew up here at the lake. Though it was only our cottage, it felt like our real lives were lived here. A few years ago, my husband bought some land and built our dream retirement home.
- Old family names that I remember from Chemin Pilon include La Flèche, Gagnon, Faubert, St-Jean and Reid. Two of the old chalets on this road burned down and were never replaced.
- My mom first came here when she was 9. This year she is 93. I have been coming here since I was born.
- My family is descended from the Biron and Brown families. My grandmother was a Brown (of lac Brown) and my grandfather was a Draper. He was a boarder at Maxwell's in Farm Point, where he did farm work. Later he worked at Alcan, mining in the limestone quarry. Marvin Morrison bought up the land where the old quarry was. Years ago, there was a store that a certain "Mrs Texaco" ran beside Grant Honywell's garage. The Hamilton Motors property used to be a depot for logging. If you retrieved logs that got stuck in the river, you could sell them to the depot.
- In the old days, there were only 70 or 75 cottages on the lake.
- Back in the '40s, my mother didn't want my father to buy our cottage because it had no trees around it. My dad spent his whole life planting trees on the lot. Now I spend my whole life trimming them back. We recently had to remove two old white pines as they were dying and threatening to fall on the house. The cost of removing those two trees was more than what my father originally paid for the cottage.
- We had no indoor plumbing until 1996. When we bought the cottage from my mother and decided to renovate, we insisted on indoor plumbing. Initially, my mother couldn't get used to the new plumbing. Her daily shower, she said, was her swim in the lake!
- Mom used to swim in the mornings until she died at age 89. One of our neighbours used to watch her swim. This woman assured me that, although she herself couldn't swim, that if anything were ever to happen to my mom, she would go into the water herself to save her!
- Everyone always loved coming to the family cottage. Even now, with the family scattered across the country, they always plan stop-overs at the cottage when they drive from one part of the country to another.

- We paid \$35 for a beautiful wooden canoe and gave it as a gift to our parents for their 25th wedding anniversary. We still use it on the lake. We also have an antique 1958 cedar strip motor boat that we have refurbished.
- Years ago, we met a family named the Tarrs. They were collecting blankets to send to flood victims in Winnipeg. We started talking to them and invited them to the lake for a visit. They ended buying the cottage next door!
- Before moving to Ottawa, my husband's mother and her Tarr family cousins had had cottages together in the Winnipeg area. When my husband's parents were looking for a cottage, they ended up buying Wildwood cottage. That was in 1950. Norris Wood and his girls also have their cottages because of the Tarrs.
- Wildwood was the original cottage on chemin O. Bertrand. The land was originally bought, with a cottage on it, in 1924. In the deed, the farmer promised to build road access. Our family bought the property from a Mr. Logan, who was a fireman in Ottawa. In the 1930s, the cottage was owned by Mike Ninijer's aunt. Mike Ninijer was here at the lake with his family for a long time – his widow sold their cottage last spring.
- Mr. Chilcott Senior, who was a judge in Ottawa, bought a lot of the land in this area back in the '40s. Many of the cottages on Robertson and Bertrand roads were built by Mr. Chilcott's sons, Don and Jim. Mr. Chilcott Senior gave them the lots, and they built cottages on them to earn money for university. They built Barbara Booth's place, the Castle and many more, including the Leech, Peck, Lockwood, Trudell and Keogan places. The Chilcotts used the same model for all of the cottages, but the cottages have been changed over the years.
- Our house was used as a fishing cabin before we purchased it, so it was in rough shape. There was a Quebec heater in the main room and a water tank in the attic. We did a lot of work on the cottage!
My husband starting coming here when he was 8 years old. There were lots of mothers here over the summer months in those days. His mother was a very social woman – she walked her dog every day and met people that way. Their dog's name was Gypsy and she was a black lab. She was such a nice dog! She used to go begging for food, so she put on an extra 20 lbs. every summer. My husband's mother used to work hard all winter to get the extra weight off. Eventually, she hung a sign on the dog saying "Please don't feed the dog"!
- Every summer, John Leech and Ian Arnold used to sail around the Island in their 16 or 17 foot sailboat. The boat is very old now, but they still take it out once or twice a summer.
- The Leeches, Arnolds, Tarrs, Snelgroves and Booths used to get together to play bridge – a lot!
- We used to dump garbage on certain properties around the lake -- in what were then considered remote areas. We can still see the old "garbage point" (much improved since then!) from our cottage. Our mothers also rinsed out cans and glass jars and sank them in the middle of the lake. Believe it or not, we thought we were doing something good for the environment, because we thought that sinking cans and bottles was preferable to sending garbage to the landfill!
- Long ago, everyone had an ice house. This would be a rough 8x8 or 10x10 building. In the winter, the farmers would get teams of horses, bring their big saws and cut blocks of ice out of the lake. The ice would then be completely covered with sawdust. The larger the ice block, the

more the sawdust. The ice usually lasted until mid-August. After that, we had to haul it in from the city.

- We used to use ice tongs to bring ice to the ice box. The cool air in the ice box went down from the ice box into the lower part of the fridge. You had to change the pan of water in the fridge every day, as water formed when the ice melted.
- There was no electricity until the mid-50s, so water systems tended to be manual. We had an old barrel, which we mounted about 7 or 8 feet high at the back of the cottage. We hooked it up to pieces of inch pipe to bring in the water, which was gravity-fed into the house. There was also a handle pump (side to side pumping) down by the lake. My job was to pump water from the lake for 20 minutes every day. This produced about 20 gallons of water.
- Some of the older cottages in the area near the campground were the Allen and Lauzon cottages. Dr. Allen was a dentist.
- One of the first cottages on the lake was built by Harold Geggie or his father-in-law, Dr. Stevenson. Ian Arnold worked with Dr. Geggie in the 60s. Stewart Geggie said that the first cottage on the lake was hidden in the woods, in the area around the marshes.

La Baie des Pères

- We called Bay Sainte Anne “la Baie des Pères” because the priests used to swim there.
- The Pères Rédemptoristes had a logement on Bay Sainte Anne. They also owned Isle Sainte Anne. There was a chapel on the bay near the waterfront. The priests put in docks so we could go to mass by boat, but we could also walk down to the chapel from our house.
- Le Chemin du Croix was on the Island. There was a small altar or chapel there as well as stations along the trail.
- Every Sunday night, the priests held “la Cérémonie des Flambeaux”. The priests had a raft with an organ on it. We used to follow along in our boats! The priests loved it here. They did a lot of fishing. They left when the lake got too busy with cottagers and it was no longer suitable for training young priests. We were sad when they left.
- The young priests in training were 18 to 20 years old. They built the Island trail as part of their training. They created ledges with rocks and levelled the land in places. The rocks they used were quite heavy, so they did a lot of hard work.
- There was a procession of boats on the Feast of Sainte Anne. It was a candle-lit procession led by the priests.
- The priests used to hold church services on the Island.

The Island people

- Initially, the priests sold the Island to four men with cottages on the lake. One of the original men died, so in the end, there were just three owners. By the time these men were in their seventies, they were thinking about selling. They consulted with the municipality to try to get them to buy it, as they were worried that it might be sold to people who were not from the lake. About 10-15 families raised money to buy the Island, but the sellers preferred to sell to a single family.

- We were visiting at lac Gauvreau when we found out that the Island was for sale. After our visit, as we drove back to the city, we were thinking “Wouldn’t it be a crazy idea to buy an Island?” When we woke up the next morning, we looked at each other and said – “Are you thinking what I’m thinking?” It was a busy day for us, as we had to head out of town on a plane that evening. But we drove back to lac Gauvreau and started looking for the “For Sale” sign. It wasn’t easy to find! We called the sellers and things went very quickly from there. He was happy that the Island was going to go to a family that wanted to enjoy the same kinds of experiences as the cottagers already living on the lake. It wasn’t about the money; they wanted to be sure it would be in good hands and that the Island wouldn’t end up being developed.
- We are a brother and sister whose families share the Island. We have a small cottage with no electricity. We try to have a low impact on the Island. Before we made our offer on the Island, there were several other plans for the Island that had been considered. One plan was to sell it to the municipality. The fear was that it would somehow get into the hands of developers. Another plan was collective ownership based on taxation of cottagers (by the percentage of shoreline ownership). This was not agreed to. A third plan was for a group of cottagers to buy it.
- When we arrived here, the Island was pretty clean, but we did find some rusty old seats. They were rotting away and were heavy to carry back! There were old beer bottles too – even an old “stubbies” cemetery of sorts.
- It is a privilege to own the Island. We feel like we are responsible caretakers. We have done nothing to change the shoreline, except clean up the odd beer can or two and some broken glass. We want to preserve the view for everyone who has a cottage on the shore looking out on the island, and we haven’t cut down trees in order to create a view for ourselves. Overall, we are happy with the way people treat the Island. We are glad that everyone loves the Island as much as we do, and grateful for neighbours who keep an eye out on our behalf. We do worry that something could happen to the Island while we are away. We are always concerned about fires, especially when it is very dry. We have seen old pieces of burnt wood on the Island – we hope they are remnants from long ago. The fire department can’t come out here!
- When we meet people on the Island, we usually introduce ourselves. Often people don’t know that there is a cottage with people living in it, as you can’t really see us from the water.
- When we built, we had to bring everything from the shore by raft. Many, many loads were brought over by my dad and my brothers. My brothers and my father worked very hard that spring to put up the basic frame of the house. I wanted to try my own hand at building something, so I found a good book on building and built a treehouse!
- The loons build their nests on the Island. Usually, there is only one couple. We stay away from the North shore where they nest. A lady living on the lake puts up the yellow warning signs about the loons and a little floating platform to encourage the loons to nest. We see loons most years. They usually have one baby loon per season.
- You can hear everything on the Island! If two people are having a conversation at an ordinary volume on the shore, you can hear it almost word for word!
- When my brother and I were growing up, we had a family cottage without electricity, so this feels normal for us. Our kids do lots of reading when it rains, just as we did! We sometimes

complained about going to the cottage as kids, but obviously, deep down inside, we must have loved it, because here we are recreating the same kind of experience for our own kids!

- We have a 4 stroke motor- 2 chair raft. Originally, our raft had an electric motor. It was very slow but also nice and quiet. We used to see everyone, including canoes, scoot past us. Quite often, the battery would just die and we would have to paddle to shore. Once we had no paddles, so we had to use buckets! Eventually, we decided to invest in a better engine.
- We can't always get the raft motor running, so we often use the canoe. One time when we were on the raft and it was very windy, we had to get help from some fishermen who kindly hauled us back. This sort of thing always seems to happen at the worst possible time! Like when you need to get to shore for an urgent appointment or when you have run out of drinking water. That's why we prefer the canoe!
- I always pay attention to the birds on the Island. Once I saw a new kind of swallow here. Another time, I saw what looked like a red-throated loon. This year, we found the remains of a beaver's lodge, but there was no beaver. We also see signs of deer along the paths. We've heard stories about bears in the area, but never seen any on the Island!
- We have our own names for places on the Island. There is a place where the creek makes the ground soggy and it makes a "splouche" sound when you walk – that's "Splouche Creek". There's also "La Roche au Pin" and "La Pointe Fraiche" – which is the cool spot on a hot afternoon. Along the South shore, where the turtles sunbathe on a fallen tree is "la Baie des Tortues". "Big Rock" is a place where you can walk out on the rock and it looks like you are walking on water. There's also l'Île à Golala, or, as the adults say, l'Île aux Goélands, which is where the gulls land. Finally, there is a secluded spot where the loons nest that we named for an uncle who was a recluse, "la Pointe à Fred".
- Down by the shore, there is a big white pine with a few planks nailed on it. We think that the priests may have used the tree for diving.
- Because we live on an Island, we can go to different parts of the Island for our swims. We often follow the sun around the Island as the day unfolds.
- The painted text on the rock was actually written in Latin. It used to read "Insula Sanctae Annae".
- Our son has been telling stories about the Island to his friends at school. It seemed unbelievable, so his teacher called us to ask if he was telling tales. When we tell family and friends about the Island, especially those in Europe, the first reaction is disbelief – to a European mind, only royalty could own an Island!
- One of the hardest things about being on an Island is not having a refrigerator. At best, ice will last 3 to 4 days in a cooler before turning to water. Also, a lot of effort goes into bringing food to the Island, so everything tastes great here! Once, when I made fried potatoes and green beans and it tasted like a delicacy.
- When we go in to a restaurant in Wakefield, it feels fantastic to feel the hot water as you wash your hands. And after about 4 or 5 days on the Island, you start to crave for a shower!
- When it is dark on the Island, it can be pretty magical. It is lovely to paddle to the Island and to arrive after dark, under the moonlight. Of course, once you hit the forest, it's pitch dark.

Lake lore

- My sister's youngest son, who swam in the '84 Olympics, learned to swim in lac Gauvreau. He ended up 5th in the world in the 200 meter breaststroke!
- Look! I just caught a 300-lb Sun Fish! Ha-ha, just joking!
- Twenty or thirty years ago, you could hardly move a canoe or swim in the lake because there were so many boats on it. The lake is a lot better now.
- As far as I know, I am the only person to have swum the full length of the lake and back in a single trip.
- Years ago, the guy with the fastest boat on the lake (probably a 25 HP) drove it around like a maniac. We used to call him "Hot Rod Harry".
- Zeta and Alec Armstrong were the original owners of 110. They started out with a 5 or 10 HP boat. Eventually, Mr. Armstrong got up to about 30 HP. Folks used to say that Mr. Armstrong bought himself a bigger boat so that he could make a larger wake! Every Sunday the Armstrongs went down to the priests to Church, and there would be that large wake.
- Long ago, a fisherman was out fishing in front of the point across the way. A storm came up and he was struck and killed by lightning. Some of the dads went out by rowboat to try to rescue him. They had no motorboat.
- There is one low, flat cave and at least two others. Three of the caves are connected. Years ago, there was a bit of an air passage, but I couldn't say what it's like now. To get in, you had to crawl on your belly through animal turds and nests!
- We were told that the Island is some sort of bird sanctuary.
- There used to be a hydroplane docked in Murray Bay. In 2008 or 2009, I watched it take off down the long side of the lake. Very impressive!
- I heard that Pierre Trudeau came to visit someone on lac Gauvreau and that he came here by hydroplane.
- "The Barn" property used to be owned by the Hannah family. It was called Hannah's Hill. Mr Reid and Lester B. Pearson started the United Nations right there!
- The Falardeau family in Bay Sainte Anne was a famous water skiing family. They used to do exhibitions at La Ronde, and they learned to water ski on this lake. When they had family reunions, they used to do tricks, like pyramid formations. People watching around the lake would clap.
- My teenage son competes at a national level in polo. When he is here, he practices in the lake.
- The cadastre system divides lots around the lake using the middle of the Island as the central point of origin.
- *A History of the Townships of Wakefield and Masham in the province of Quebec, from 1792 to 1925*, says that "traces of pre-Indian inhabitants of the region", including hand axes and a spear-point, have been found at Lakes Mahon, Fairbairn and Gauvreau.

Road lore

- In the 50s, Chemin Gervais was just a farm road. M. Biron used the road to move his hay from the fields. He told the cottagers to use the road to get to the lake. There was no electricity in

those days. Finally, the hydro came in. For six years, we had to pay an annual fee for the hydro installation, on top of our regular hydro bill.

- Before Chemin Murray was built, cottagers along that shore had to park at the end of Chemin Richard. They went to their cottages by boat.
- Dr. Powers opened up Chemin Murray. As I recall, he had a separate cottage for his servants!
- Years ago, Chemin Pilon was heavily forested. Cottagers had to park on the upper part of the road, near the Nixon property, and walk down to their cottages on the lake.
- Chemin Fortin was the original access to the cottages facing us on the ridge. They built Chemin Murray after the farmers had settled their differences. Once Murray Road was in, the first new place that was built was the A-frame – the cottage with the rocks in front. The Moores were the original owners.
- Omer Bertrand's farm was on the corner of Kennedy Road and Chemin O. Bertrand. Omer was the son of Emmanuel, who also farmed there.
- When we came in 1950, there were two other cottages on our road – Ricky's (47) -- of Ricky's Frozen Food in Ottawa -- and Keogan (45).
- Some of the families living on our road were Schmidt, Potvin, Brule and Descelles. Years ago, Robertson Road and Chemin O. Bertrand were connected.
- Xavier Gauthier used to live in the old blue house on Chemin Pilon. This house was moved over from lac Philippe. One of the houses on Chemin Gervais was moved from the 401 when it was being built. That house came over in two pieces.
- Things have really changed since we were kids. We used to bike along a path that ran between Chemins Gervais and Richard. Chemin Fortin was an old ski-doo trail. Most of the old trails have been turned into roads.

Heard around the 'hood

- This year, a police chase ended on Chemin Gervais. Apparently, some guy offered to take a woman he had met in the Eastern Townships to visit his cottage in Maniwaki. But he ended up getting chased down Chemin Gervais by the police instead. Turns out the car was stolen!
- About 6 years ago, a criminal got away from the police by stealing a boat and escaping onto lac Gauvreau. He was in the area for a few hours before the police found him. Apparently, he was hiding on the Island.
- Our family canoe was bought by my grandfather and given to my father in 1923. It was passed down from my Dad to my sister and ended up being donated to a camp in Algonquin Park. Even though the canoe was heavy and old, I was sad when we lost the canoe, as it was a family heirloom. About 5 or 6 years ago, my wife and I were driving past the camp, and lo and behold, we spied our old canoe! It was just sitting there under a tree, rotting away. We decided to ask if we could buy it back. The owners agreed. The canoe was in rough shape. We had parts of it rebuilt and restored. Now we are able to put it to good use once again, at lac Gauvreau.
- When we had our new septic tank installed, we discovered (and removed) three previous systems: A 15-year old non-conforming septic tank, an older concrete tank and an even older wooden tank!

- I used to come to the lake in the summers with the children. There were a number of women here who were not working in the summers, and the kids had lots of friends to play with. The kids were always anxious to see their summer friends. With today's two income families, the moms usually have to return to work on Mondays.
- I used to work on one of the farms in Rupert. The old farms are slowly dying out, partly because the kids don't want to keep running the family farms, and partly because of the rules and regulations that farmers have to follow. The government says they will reimburse farmers for making environmentally-friendly changes to farms, but they don't pay up. There's a ton of paperwork involved, too.
- We have been here for 14 years. Initially, we came to visit at a friend at her cottage. When we heard about an opportunity to buy our own cottage, we decided to buy right away. We made an offer and closed on the property within a few days. We were very pleased with the purchase, and especially grateful that we had a nice, quiet, elderly couple next door. One day, as we arrived home, we saw our real estate agent showing the house next door to some people. We hadn't even known it was for sale! We casually asked her to drop by our place for a visit after she was done. When she stopped by, we asked if her clients were seriously considering buying the property. She said that they were. We decided right then and there to buy the house next door. We bought that one within 24 hours!

Just visiting...

- We are renting at lac Gauvreau for the first time. We like to fish, and so far we have caught lots of bass (of pretty good size).
- We are three generations of a family renting a cottage for the week. Just got here!
- Our family bought land on the other side of the lake. We are planning to build. In the meantime, we are renting a cottage.
- We are renting for the week and visiting with family in Ottawa. Last night, the man who owns our cottage told us that last winter, he noticed deer sleeping in an alcove near the shore. One day, he looked out on the lake and saw something unusual. He went out to investigate, and found a dead deer. Its head and entrails had been removed. It looked like it had been killed by Fischers (Fischers are like Wolverines, and are quite vicious).

Peace and tranquility

- I haven't lived here long enough to have many stories about lac Gauvreau. Of course, the proverbial question: "are the fish biting today?" takes on a whole new meaning around here. It's a problem for me that the fish bite. I tend to take a long time, moving slowly into the water. OK, supposedly they just nibble. 'Art de la Paix' means 'the art of peace.' I'm a Bramachari yogi. I teach meditation.

Note:

As with Part I, the spellings, names and stories have not been verified.

Thanks for sharing your good times!

Jennifer