

# 2019 Year End Newsletter



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## **HAPPY NEW YEAR, it's 2020 and we hope everyone was blessed to spend 2019 with all those you love and cherish!**

Once again Tom, myself, Adam and our 2 new dockhands Chase and Connor along with our wonderful 4 legged sidekicks Riser, Ember and Boomer made our way as a convoy north to White River on May 5th! It was no surprise to us all that we had to fly in by helicopter again as the ice was still holding tight once we got north of the Sault and we knew there was no waiting to begin the 2019 opening! We had made arrangements through Dan at White River Air to set things up with Blair from Wilderness Helicopters in Wawa to drive to our staging site along with the neighbours our friends the Agich's on May 6th and we began our flights and loads in! Tom and the boys along with Riser and Boomer headed in first with a small load while Ember and I waited at the staging site. It's always stressful heading back in to Kaby in the spring as we never know what we will face, but we were pleasantly surprised to find that the pine marten had only done minimal damage in the main lodge and the only cabin that was broken into was our brand new house. The lake was still covered with ice other than at the mouth of the Little Kaby River so thank goodness for Wilderness Helicopters! It is very exciting taking the chopper in and needless to say the new guys were thrilled with the experience! Unfortunately, Mother Nature still had a tight hold on winter and we even had to bring the rest of the staff in by chopper on May 12th as we still had to finish opening cabins and the main lodge and even though I am a speedy worker I knew I couldn't get them all done by myself as the guys were busy putting boats together, furniture together and getting things up and running like power, water once things warmed up a bit, and mechanically as well. Opening is always a big job and when the weather does not cooperate, it just takes a bit longer. We finally had the ice go out in our area of the lake on the night of May 16th and it was a mad scramble to get the airplane dock in as we had our first guests arriving the morning of the 17th! Believe me the 16th was a very busy day getting the boats in the water, finally! The morning of the 17th dawned beautifully but the ice had moved overnight and our neighbours who had been trying to get their guests in since the 16th, were still unable to do so and Tom and I contacted Dan at White River to let him know it would be okay with us for him to bring the Agich's guests in to our dock and we would simply move them across the lake by boat so they could at least begin their fishing trips! It's really important to be good neighbours and we try to help out when we can. We know they would have done the same if the situation had been reversed. It took a few more days for

the entire rest of the lake to open up but we were thankful to be in and getting our opening started for your arrival on May 17th! Water levels were low at opening despite there having been a good snow load but within 2 weeks the level had risen at least to the edge of the grass line as per usual, with many big fish, both walleye and pike along with some beautiful yellow perch were landed at the airplane dock by both our guests and staff members.

There were lots of big pike caught over the 40 inch mark again and we are pleased to say most were released by those of you that wish to continue seeing these beautiful fish in the lake. The biggest Northern Pike a 42"er for the season was caught by Steve Dawson from Bloomington, IN and the guys in their group also caught some other big fish when they had their 2nd Annual Kaby Lake Fishing Derby along with a shotgun start! Scott Richards of Canton, MI got a beautiful 40" and Andy Schifko of Brighton, MI also did the same. Bill Snelling of the Kunkel Group got a really nice 39" Northern and I think it made his trip as it definitely gave him bragging rights with the gang! For the walleye, this was a red-letter season! Jerome Malinowski of Metamora, MI caught a MONSTER 33 ½ incher that came in well over 12 lbs. Rob Marshick of Novi, MI caught a big 30 ½" as well as a very respectable 26 ½"! Not bad for the same guy! Lol! Paul Eggleston from Howell, MI of the Watson Party got a great fish and believe it or not the 29 ½" walleye was caught right off the airplane dock!! The screaming was so loud from his friend Doug Watson that I ran down to the dock thinking there was a problem with a bear! There was a little bit of excitement in camp once everyone heard that Paul had released this big fish and everyone was very hopeful they might be able to land it as well! We had tons of big walleye caught in the 24 to 29 " range and would love to thank those of you that took the time to safely release these big fish back into the waters of Kaby Lake. We had many new guests come to kaby this year along with more kids than ever before! First timer Ben Tutt, age 4, caught a monster 40" plus Northern Pike using a very special lure that he had been given, and he is already planning on bringing both his Dad and his Grandpa back if they are good! It never ceases to amaze us how kids just live in the moment and love every second of every day. We all need to take a lesson from the children in our lives about how to enjoy life to the fullest and cherish every moment. We totally understand that many of these big fish are "once in a lifetime" fish and truly appreciate it when you choose to live release them back into the lake. By teaching the kids how important this is, it ensures the future of the lake will be strong! These big fish are the breeders in Kaby

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Lake and it is wonderful to know that their genes will stay with us from season to season! Adam once again had another great year of whitefish fishing both with his fly rod and spinning rod and for those of you that enjoyed his smoked fish in the dining room along with Tom and I, some big thanks goes out to Adam for once again making sure our Kaby Lodge family was fed! Yes, Adam caught many of his big fish for the season right off the airplane dock! Yellow Perch fishing was also really great this year and Bob Mills of Collingwood, ON came in with the winner for size at a little over 15 ½”s and Steve Waibel of Canal Winchester, OH, did his Dad, our long time guest and friend, Bob Waibel proud when he got a really nice 15”er! We had a terrific year for Yellow Perch in 2019 & everyone was really impressed by the numbers and size of the perch caught this summer! We know that everyone had the opportunity to make and take home many wonderful memories, and with all the kids coming to fish, everyone of them lived up to our “most important rule for kids” at camp and out-fished all the adults in their parties! Way to go! Congratulations to all our guests that made the wall of fame this year and we look forward to seeing many of the same names as well as many new ones on the board for 2020!

After much discussion between ourselves, Adam and all of you, we have decided to put a new program in place for all of you to take part in. We will have a Conservation Fishing Award starting opening day in 2020 and it will consist of all of you that choose to catch and release your biggest fish during your stay. We will ask that you take a photo of the fish showing the length of it and then live release it back into the water. When you get back to the lodge let Michel know and show her the photos and then she will put each person’s name that chose to participate into a draw for a weekly winner, and all those weekly winners will have their names put in a hat for the end of the year when she will draw 1 name out and that person will win a 3 Day American plan Fishing Trip at Kaby! Tom & I feel this will simply add a little more excitement to your experience while at the same time encouraging everyone to let the big ones go!

We were once again joined by a few celebrities and are really looking forward to seeing the shows they come up with! Our good friend Steve Elmy along with his lovely wife Selina from Homegrown Hunter/ RackStacker Wild Game Minerals & Feed from the Wild T.V. series Homegrown Hunter TV for a great spring time fishing trip, as well as a fall bear/moose hunt. Steve & Selina came for the fishing tip in June and they returned with their 2 kids Logan and Ashlyn in the fall for the bear/moose hunt. Tom guided Steve to several different opportunities on moose while Ashlyn filmed and it looks like it will be a terrific program! Be sure to go to <http://hgstv.ca/> to watch the season finale of their trips to Kaby! We think you will really like the show! We also had Ty Sjodin along with his niece Kaleigh join us for a Kaby Black Bear Hunt and boy did they have a time! Be sure to catch their episodes on The Ontario Experience from Lindner Media airing on The Sportsman Channel, as follows Jan. 14 @6:30am, Jan. 15 @ 12:00pm, Jan. 16 @ 3:00am, Jan. 17 @ 7:00pm, Apr. 14 @ 6:30am, Apr 15 @ 12:00pm, Apr 16 @ 3:00am, Apr 17 @ 7:00pm. Be sure to tune in and let us know what you think. It was a real pleasure getting to spend time with them all and see how excited the youngsters all got when things came together!

Spring was a wet one which once again meant we used boardwalks between cabins to help peoples feet stay dry, and thankfully we have the best guests in the world at Kaby and everyone just goes with the flow! With the shortening of the moose season for 2019, we were able to head out on October 6th and head home to our place in Brechin for the winter. They are predicting a very cold but snowy winter in the north and we will have to wait and see what the winter brings for spring water levels. The fish count done in the 2018 season by the MNRF shows a very healthy level of all the species in the lake so we were very happy to find this out. At this point we are not anticipating any changes to the 2020 Fishing Regulations regarding allowable limits and sizes. There is however discussion happening about designating Kabinakagami Lake as a Conservation Fishing lake in order to help continue to restrict access. We are sure that everyone noticed the logging activity in our area while flying in, and once

again outfitters are faced with the challenge of what logging and mining does to open the area to the general public and how this can affect the quality of the fishing and hunting in the area. We ask that while you are on the lake if you see anything unusual then please let us know asap so we can contact the proper authorities and get things taken care of. We will continue the fight to protect the lake and area from unlimited access by the logging & mining companies and the general public. We will be in touch with everyone if we need your support and assistance in helping the MNRF know how important it is to continue to offer a Remote Fly-in Experience.

It continues to be possible for all of our guests to purchase their Ontario Outdoor Cards as well as their Fishing Licences on line at [www.ontario.ca/outdoorcard](http://www.ontario.ca/outdoorcard) prior to coming to the lodge which will definitely save time upon arrival. An electronic copy will now be legal, so be sure to save your licence in your file on your phones and if you do choose to get your licence at the lodge it will be a simple paper copy. With the new implementation of the licencing system by MNRF you will still be able to purchase both items at Kaby, but if the satellite system is down, it may take a few minutes to get things completed for you. We want to remind everyone that should your Non-Resident Ontario Outdoor Card expire at the end of 2019 they will not be sending out renewal reminders. As I stated previously, you will have the choice of renewing on line to save time or waiting until you get to the lodge.

Once again we are sure that everyone noticed the great level of service provided to us by White River Air Service and Dan & Brandi along with their fabulous staff at the air base! We cannot thank them enough for what they do to make your trip a memorable one from the moment you arrive at the base! I know they really appreciate the kind words and comments many of our guests provided to them at the airbase in White River. We will continue to fly with them for the 2020 season and anticipate they will once again have the Otter and at least 2 Beavers to do the flying for us. We had way fewer flight delays this year than ever before, even though those guests that did experience one may not agree. Lol! For those that got stuck in White River, we know that the flight service took the time to try to make hotel arrangements for everyone and this is one of the many reasons we truly appreciate their level of customer service! For those groups that were able to take advantage of the late afternoon flights, based on cabin availability, we will continue to do this in the 2020 season.

## Boat Upgrades

We purchased another 4-new guest style Mirrocraft boats again this year and anticipate purchasing another 2 in 2020 which will give us a few spares in case we need them! We know from guest’s feedback that the boats are much faster and more comfortable for everyone to use. With the increased speed and comfort, it means you can now spend more of your time fishing and less time travelling to and from your favourite fishing holes! It’s great to see everyone enjoying these great boats out on the big water of Kaby Lake! We also purchased another 11 Yamaha 20 H.P. Four stroke electric start outboard motors to keep our fleet operating at peak efficiency with plans for another 11 for the 2020 season.

## Cabin upgrades

We had Dan Brassard the builder back in right after opening to finish the renovation of our old Cabin 4 to ready it for guests to use. We split the cabin evenly into 2 sides which now consist of a bedroom with 3 twin beds, a small but comfortable living room with a coffee service area, loveseat and chair and a 3- piece bathroom with a walk-in shower. Feedback from our guests that used these cabins was great! We had some guests that booked more than 1 trip with us and they actually asked to stay in the new cabin! We think the reno was a huge success! Dan could only come in for about 10 days but we were fortunate enough to have a new fellow Darren Blais come and work with us for the rest of the summer and boy what a worker he was! He completed the

Cabin 4 reno, removed the kitchen off of Cabin 1 as it needed to be completely rebuilt, which we actually decided not to do, a new metal Quonset building was erected beside the road heading to our dump site, all the cabin roofs were repaired from where we removed the fireplaces as we replaced all of the woodstoves and fireplaces in the cabins with propane wall furnaces to make thing easier for everyone. Adam is very excited he no longer needs to spend so much time getting firewood! Lol! Cabin 5's bathroom reno was also completed and the walk-in shower was installed. We are planning on replacing the airplane dock with a bigger one in 2020 to make it easier and more efficient for loading and offloading. We have listened to guest feedback and noticed that many of you like to spend time outside the front of the dining room and with that being said we decided to remove the old small deck and replace it with a new larger 14' x 40' deck for everyone's enjoyment! Darren also replaced the entire northwest exterior side wall of the dining room including spraying it with new stain as well as spraying all of the cabins with new stain to freshen things up! He also completed everything in our new cabin and gave it 2 coats of stain too! Plans for the 2020 season include sheet metaling all of the cabin roofs, building a larger airplane dock to make things easier to load and offload, adding another new metal Quonset hut for storage so that we can complete the removal of the boat house and wooden storage shed. We hope to be able to build some new staff quarters this year as well to replace the old 2-sided chef's cabin.

## 2019 Hunting

We had a tough hunt for all species this season, but our hunters all left feeling that they had a good hunt despite some of them not being successful in their harvest. We had a total of 13 bear hunters in with 6 successfully harvesting bears, and 11 bears in total spotted by the hunters. There were 2 sows(female) harvested and 4 boars(males) which is what we really like to see. By taking the boars(males) we insure the proper management of the bears for the future. We had some hunters that unfortunately did not even see a bear, while others chose to pass on the ones that they saw as they felt the shot was not a good one or that they were hoping for a larger bear. Thanks to all of you for your continued faith in our hunting program at Kaby Lodge! Wolf hunting was a challenge as well for the 5 hunters we brought in as the weather and winds did not want to co-operate but the hunters heard wolves regularly and some got eyes on wolves but were unable to take the shots. As the apex predator in our area, wolf hunting is one of the toughest hunts you can do so we respect the efforts put out by our hunters and at the same time know how tense this hunt can be especially since most of the time the hunters are on the ground with the wolves and not necessarily in a tree stand. This really changes the game! For the archery moose season, we had 3 hunters in all hunting for Bulls! Steve Elmy got eyes on 2 beautiful bulls and did a very exciting spot and stalk on the 2nd bull he saw but the wind swirled and just as he was getting ready to release the arrow, the bull scented him and took off! Tom had turned into the bull to offer him a challenge while Steve and his daughter Ashlyn followed and filmed the entire event! Very exciting! After Steve and his family left we had Don Dockins and Dan Seater come in to hunt while Diana, Don's wife tagged along. Adam Guided Dan and Tom guided Don so be sure to talk to the two of them about the excitement they faced while getting eyes on both bulls and cows! Once again no one had a successful harvest but all of the hunters left wanting to return since they all got eyes on bulls and now know the quality of our hunt. They continued to hunt hard for the week despite rain, snow, winds and fog and we appreciate the time they put in! As every hunter knows, it's not always about the actual harvest but it is about the hunting experience you have. We are already looking forward to hunting season in 2020 which is already filling up quickly!

Every year we face new challenges as Remote Tourism Operators, and we will be sure to keep you all informed if anything comes up and will ask for your support if the need arises to protect what we have at Kaby Lodge and throughout the Province of

Ontario. We do want to remind anyone that may have a DUI in the U.S. to start your paperwork procedure at least 6 months PRIOR to your planned crossing. This will ensure that there will be no surprises upon your arrival at the border. If you have any questions regarding this process, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will be more than happy to steer you in the right direction. If we require any further assistance dealing with border crossing issues please feel free to contact the NOTO office at 705-472-5552 and they will be more than happy to assist you and answer any questions you may have.

## 2020 Rates

You will notice again, a slight increase in the cost of your packages for 2020. With the rising cost of fuel as well as all our other supplies, it was necessary to add a small increase to this year's rates. The HST Rebate Program was not reinstated but I will be sure to advise you of any changes in the future.

We do want to remind everyone to be sure and book your hotels for the evening before your flight into the lodge if you have not already done so as hotel space is more limited in White River. Keep in mind that is still possible to spend the night in Wawa and simply drive the 57 miles to White River the morning of your flight in to Kaby.

We had another great season with regards to the wonderful staff that came to work with us in 2019. Captain Canada, aka Adam along with his Lab Boomer, will be returning to us for his 11th season as Head Dockman and Chief Fishing Guide and we are excited to have Roxanne returning to continue her great service in the dining room as well as ensuring the cabins are kept in great shape and cleaned properly. We have not yet heard if Clovis and Nick will be returning for the 2020 season but we are very hopeful that they will both do so since they have raised the level in the quality of the food we all get to enjoy while at Kaby! I'm sure you longtime guests noticed a familiar face in Tiff this past summer as well. She was in between school and job hunting in her career choice so it was great to have her return! We have just hired a young fellow named Landon to help Adam out for the upcoming season and with any luck will have a 3rd dock man as well. We are hopeful that Darren will also be able to return even if it's just part time to help us again with the building and repairs that are a constant at Kaby. We shall once again strive to make sure your trip to Kaby Lodge is a good one!

## Family Updates

It seems as if every year each and every one of us faces challenges in our lives, both good ones and bad ones. Prior to heading north to begin the 2019 season, my beloved Aunt Donna (aka The Fishing Queen) my Dad's only sister passed away in April. She was loved by all of us in the family and when her two youngest daughters, my cousins Cindy and her hubby Tom and Jennifer came north along with my parents in June, we took the time to honour her and share memories both happy and sad while we fished her favourite spots on the lake. I know this brought great peace to my Dad, Mom, cousins and us to feel her with us doing something she loved. We also celebrated the life of Ed Barclay with the Greer family with lots of laughter and sharing of memories and stories! Long time guest and friend Gene Kunkel lost his beloved wife Theresa in 2019 as well after a lengthy battle with cancer and even though we never had the pleasure of meeting her our hearts went out to Gene and his family as we know the struggles of losing a loved one to this horrible disease. For all those that continue to face these challenges please know that Tom and I are here and standing strong with you all every day.

We were blessed to be able to have lots of family come up this past season starting with Mom & Dad LeFevre in June along with cousins Cindy, Tom & Jen. They were thrilled to be able to see our new cabin and stayed in the renovated Cabin 4 and loved it! We had a great time fishing and just spending time together. Lots of time was

spent enjoying the view from the verandah on our cabin! Can't wait for the repeat in 2020! Sheila my sister in law came up in early June as well and once again went right to work helping me get things organized and doing some sewing and repairs for the staff as well as us! Son Jess and his wife Hayley along with their 7 year old twins Lily & Irelynn and their trusty sidekicks Briar and Berkley joined us in late July for a great week of fishing, fun and family time. Our daughter Bre and her kids came for a week in August as well and Ellah(15) and Anica(13) both brought a friend for their first visit to Kaby! Vaughn(11) and Cassius(10) were fishing fanatics and pretty much out fished all of us! Jess continues to expand his business, A Perfect View Tree Service, here in Orillia and Hayley continues to be a fabulous Respiratory Therapist and had an experience of a lifetime when she went to Nunavut in the Canadian Arctic for a month in April to help in the care of the locals and provide some much needed medical care. Our daughter Bre graduated at the top of her class in her Family Counselling and Youth Therapy Training and continues to grow her practice here in Orillia while also landing a job as the Program Director Of Jubilee House, a Transitional House for Women and their children here in Orillia. We are very proud of the people our children have become and watch as they teach their own children how to be responsible, caring and loving

members of our family. The kids will all be busy between singing, hockey, competitive dance, rock climbing, gymnastics and just day to day life and we are happy to get to share many of these activities with them during the off season. Spending time with those we love is very important and reminds us of what life is all about, especially when we get to spend it in such a beautiful spot like Kaby.

Our 2019 season was the best since taking ownership in 2009 and it looks as if our 2020 season will surpass that so we are very fortunate and hope that it means we are doing things the right way! We look forward to seeing all of you again in 2020 and sharing the time and memories with our Kaby Lodge Family. Stay safe and well and be sure to check out the website and Facebook page for updates and our sport show schedule. If we are in your neck of the woods be sure to come see us and say hello! We would love to see you all! While winter prepares to put its tight grip on the north, we are already looking forward to sharing another great season with great anticipation and hope to see you all there! LET'S GO FISHING!!

**Your friends in fishing and hunting!**  
**Tom and Michel, Riser and Ember**

## SPORTS SHOW SCHEDULE 2020

**Fort Wayne All American Outdoor Expo**  
 January 10th to the 12th  
 Allen County War Memorial  
 Fort Wayne, IN  
**Booth #215**

**NorthEast Ohio Sportsman Show**  
 January 16th to the 18th  
 Mt. Hope Event Center  
 Millersburg, Ohio  
**Booth TBA**

**Huntin Time Expo**  
 January 24th to the 26th  
 Delta Plex Arena  
 Grand Rapids, Michigan  
**Booth #394**

**Columbus Fishing Expo**  
 February 7th to the 9th  
 Ohio Expo Center, Bricker Building  
 Columbus, Ohio  
**Booth #241**

**Toronto Spring Fishing & Boat Show**  
 February 14th to the 17th  
 Mississauga International Centre  
 Mississauga, ON  
**Booth TBA**

**London Boat Fishing & Outdoor Show**  
 February 21st to the 23rd  
 Metroland Media Agriplex & Arena  
 London, Ontario  
**Booth #412**

**Erie Sport & Travel Expo**  
 Feb 28th to March 1st  
 Bayfront Convention Center  
 Erie, Pennsylvania  
**Booth #1124**

**2020 Toronto Sportsman Show**  
 March 18th to the 22nd  
 International Centre  
 Mississauga, Ontario  
**Booth #2635**



For more information contact your hosts:

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