

# 2015

## Project Completion List

Another summer has come and gone so with Muskoka covered under a fine blanket of snow it is probably a good time to give everybody an island update on the projects completed this year.

The cottages were opened on May 30<sup>th</sup> and appeared to be in pretty good shape. Ryan and Alex had the electric on and the water pumps installed within minutes of arrival (thank you guys). A couple of trees were down and the Lee Island dock was a little wobbly but no major damage to contend with. The boats still floated and ran as they should with no issues. A critter attempted to build a nest under the dresser in the front bedroom of the Big House but ultimately failed in his quest to reign supreme at the top of the food chain (I think he just gave up!). A summary is below.

### *Lee Island, Big House*

- 1) One of my biggest pet peeves concerns the large amount of wood and refuse under all of the cabins. This year a concerted effort was made to burn and/or otherwise dispose of this waste and other clutter on Lee Island. Although not entirely purged, a significant amount of this garbage was removed and permanently deleted from this earth...or at least reduced to the smallest convenient particle size available to me. I also ended the life of many low growing sticker bushes in a similar manner. RIP you wretched weeds.
- 2) The “old” BH kitchen was purged of un-needed shelves and reorganized in a more user friendly arrangement. Lin supplied a great rug for the floor.
- 3) A ceiling fan was installed in the back bedroom for improved air flow and comfort.
- 4) Grandpa Lee’s twin bed set was moved to the back bedroom and assembled in a king size configuration. Finally a good night’s rest and plenty of room for two full grown dogs and Cyndi!
- 5) The structural beams supporting the BH were inspected and found to be in very good condition with no signs of carpenter ants.
- 6) Many areas of entrance and egress were identified and repaired much to the dismay of the natural inhabitants on the island.
- 7) The generous and charming Miss Laura Lee donated Grandpa Lee’s old traveling trunk to the cause. This fabulous and historical family heirloom will make a great place to store blankets, sheets and other bedding components over the long winter months and is currently located in the front bedroom under the newly formed “dog wall”. Thank you Laura, for this wonderful treasure that has found peace and happiness in its new home.

## *Lee Island, Little House*

- 1) Water pump hose was replaced with the correct 1" diameter tubing.
- 2) A railing was installed on lower steps entering LH. This project made me throw up but that's another story...!
- 3) The topographically interesting, but unsanitary and un-cleanable old linoleum (... or was it asbestos?) was removed from the LH kitchen counter tops and hauled away. The interior kitchen window frames facing the channel were stained with the hope that paint may protect them until they can be replaced. The window facing Pancake was too damp and rotted to stain.
- 4) ANTS, ANTS and more ANTS! LH was infested with carpenter ants nesting between the plywood roof sheathing and asphalt shingles. Thousands were killed but many escaped the carnage. Orders were issued to kill survivors on sight but no reward was offered. Their fate and current location is unknown.  
Coupled with a leaky roof that was well beyond the original warrantee of the material, an executive decision was made to tear-off and replace the roof shingles. Numerous trips to town and across the lake resulted in an organized skid of 42 year warrantee shingles stacked neatly on the banks of Skeleton Lake, ready to install. Labor was organized and the job quickly completed. Old roofing debris was collected and hauled off in a trailer generously supplied by Randy...and destroyed by me! A huge thank you to Lin, Ryan and Alex for their help working in the worst mosquito infested conditions I have ever seen anywhere.
- 5) Little house porch was leveled using a 20 ton bottle jack and numerous floor jacks. The center post, original to the house, was replaced with a 6x6 treated post lag bolted to the support beam. The porch door is now square and opens effortlessly. Windows also slide with no difficulty. The porch door "sill plate", or lack thereof, allowed water to seep into the floor and create a soft spot in the supporting structure. This area was cut out and replaced with treated lumber. A door sweep was installed to discourage water intrusion.
- 6) ALL debris was eliminated from under the little house porch and original cottage. Some minor junk remains under the kitchen addition and will be deposited of in the spring. I'm mainly speaking of the four steel 55 gallon drums and other such nonsense.
- 7) A platform was erected under the LH steps. I was thinking this would be a good area to store a couple large Rubbermaid® containers full of wood and/or kindling. In my opinion, no wood should be stored in the house for extended periods of time. Thanks for the help J. Bahr!
- 8) Tool room was organized and purged of clutter. Shelves were constructed and hooks were installed to securely hold various components in this area. Thank you Pam!
- 9) A lot of the overgrown brush near the lake was remove to allow cross breezes to pass through and dry out this moist, mosquito infested area. This also allows an unhindered view of the channel.

## *Lee Island, Storage Shed*

- 1) The storage shed was cleaned and lightly purged of clutter. Much more needs to be done here as this area has become out of control.
- 2) The Thompson family did an amazing job scraping and painting the exterior of the storage shed. I was impressed and I don't get impressed easily. Nice job guys.

## *Birch Lee Island*

- 1) A couple of dead Birch trees that were leaning towards the cottage were cut down on the advice of workers quoting a future roofing job. Several other trees were cut down by the beaver.
- 2) It was reported that after a four year hiatus, electric was restored to the boathouse. Thank you!

## *Final Thoughts*

2015 was a very productive year in terms of projects started and completed. Much more needs to be done to keep ahead of the curve. Priority items for 2016 should include removing the decking on the "rock dock" and making the Big House level. Windows (already purchased and delivered) need to be installed in the LH along with a new kitchen floor plan. Appliances in the LH will need to be replaced soon.

The crib holding up the last section of the main dock on Lee Island will need to be reinforced or reconstructed. The steel threaded rods Don used to hold the logs together have deteriorated to the point of failure. I have some ideas as to fixes but nothing that will be easily accomplished.

Finally, all structures need to be thoroughly sprayed with Spectracide® on a regular basis. The Little House is the second structure to be infested with carpenter ants and the damage has been extensive (and disgusting). To put this issue into perspective, Randy has an exterminator spray his place twice a year. His cottage is five years old and has experienced damage from these eusocial insects.

Questions or concerns? Feel free to contact me.

cell- 937. 417. 4091

email- [mrmoose@woh.rr.com](mailto:mrmoose@woh.rr.com)

Love always,

Jeff

Photos attached.



Little House porch door sill replacement.





Lower railing and platform under stairs.



Little House porch leveling.





Deteriorating chimney on Little House needs repaired.



Ant nest/damage on roof at chimney interface prior to roof replacement on LH.





“Old” Big House kitchen area purged of clutter and organized for comfort.



“Old” Big House kitchen area purged of clutter and organized for comfort.





2015 Little House winter photograph.



2015 Little House roof replacement.





2015 Little House roof replacement.



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