

TIMELINE (#18)

WORKING AT LOST LAKE WOODS

THE CLUB DESCRIPTION

Lost Lake Woods Club (The Club) is a private, member-owned, family resort and gated community founded in 1926. It is located 8 miles north of Lincoln, Michigan and 20 miles northwest of Greenbush. Membership includes 1225 people and the community is currently home to over 500 homes. Club property consists of over 10,000 acres (about 15 square miles) of wilderness and includes five small lakes. The largest of these is Badger Lake, the site of the clubhouse. The smallest is Lost Lake which is located in a remote area and is seldom seen, thus meriting its name. Also included on the property are: a 52-room lodge, a private 18-hole golf course, an 84-site campground, horse stables, skeet and trap facilities, and an archery and rifle range. The following websites provide a good description:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/upnorthmemories/2108712412/> Many photos (including the clubhouse in 1952)

<http://www.lostlakewoodclub.com/> Slide show and description

ROOM RATES

The following excerpt was lifted from "Lost Lake News (June, 1953)"

RATES AND RESERVATIONS

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Rooms with Double Bed, 2 persons _____ | \$5.00 per day |
| Rooms with Double Bed, 1 person _____ | \$4.00 per day |
| Rooms with Twin Beds, 2 persons _____ | \$6.00 per day |
| Extra Cot in Room _____ | \$1.50 per day |

Guests - 75 cents per day per person additional.

Ten percent service charge on total bill.

No tipping.

No reservation shall be accepted from members not in good standing.

The cost of meals shall be consistent with prevailing prices.

GETTING THE JOB

1. I played golf at the beautiful Lost Lake Woods course once. I was aware of their nice clubhouse and hoped that they might have a job opportunity for me. During the summer of 1951 (when I was 15 years old), I went to the clubhouse, found the manager, and asked him for a job. He told me, in all sincerity, that he would be

interested in hiring me but the law required that I be a minimum age of 16. He advised me to write to him during the early part of the following year.

2. On January 18, 1952, I submitted a job application to Lost Lake Woods. It was typed on my 6" x 7" personal stationery, with my name pre-printed at the top of the page. The following is an exact copy of that application:

TOMMY BOYER
GREENBUSH, MICHIGAN

January 18, 1952

Lost Lake Woods Club
c/o Manager
Lincoln, Michigan

Dear Sir:

I would like to place this application for employment at your "Lost Lake Woods Club," for this summer vacation. School lets out about June 1st.

During last summer I inquired about work at the "Club," but was told to write the first of this year.

Name.....Tommy Boyer
Age.....16 on February 9th
Height.....5' 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
Weight.....145 pounds
I'm in the 11th grade at Oscoda High School. Typing is one of the subjects I take.

During the last three summer school vacations I worked as caddy at the Greenbush Golf Course. Last summer I took care of the "Pro Shop" at the Greenbush Golf Course.

Yours truly,

3. Following this informal job application, I had an brief, informal, interview with the manager, Mr Harry B.Duff. During the interview, he hired me for the summer of 1952, with a start date of 5/29/52. I was so excited about this offer that I accepted it immediately. However, I didn't know how much I would be making, how many hours I would be working, exactly what I would be doing or any other features of the job.

4. Ultimately, I worked at Lost Lake Woods for 2 full summers, 1952 and 1953. I started work at the beginning of the summer of 1954 and intended to stay for the full summer. However, a few weeks later, my uncle Bob Hopps called and offered me a job with his company, General Conveyors. Within a few days, I quit The Club job, was living in Detroit, and designing conveyors. For a complete description of this job change, see Timeline (#11), General Conveyors Experiences (Summers of 1954 and 1955).

COMPENSATION

After I started working at The Club, I was surprised and slightly disappointed to learn that my salary would not be as good as I had expected. Even so, it was much better, more certain, and easier than caddying at the Greenbush Golf Course. Shortly, I was elated to learn that salary was only a portion of my total compensation.

1. I worked 8 or 9 hours per day and was paid by the day. I got one or two days off per week but rarely on a weekend which was their busiest time. During 1952 I was paid \$3.00 a day, during 1953 I was paid \$4.00 a day, and during the shortened 1954 summer, I was paid \$5.00 a day.
2. In addition, I received my portion of the service charge imposed on all guests (10% of their total bill, including room and meals). Normally, this amounted to no more than an additional \$1.00 a day.
3. Despite The Club's rule of "no tipping," I was allowed to keep any personal tips I received. The usual tip for hauling guest luggage was 25 cents and a \$1.00 tip was a welcome rarity.
4. I received free room (dorm style with bathroom facilities down the hall) and board (3 excellent meals a day).
5. I could use, free of charge, all The Club facilities, including the golf course, beach and equipment, rowboats, tennis courts, pool table, and ping pong table.

PERSONNEL

1. The Club manager, Mr. Harry Duff, and his wife and assistant manager, Mrs. Elsie Duff, lived in a room (with private bathroom) adjacent to the lobby and front desk. They were an elderly couple who were very pleasant to guests and employees alike and were available at all hours of the day and night.
2. The majority of employees were women and late-teenage girls. They worked as cooks, waitresses, dishwashers, chambermaids and janitors. Most of the women were married, lived in Lincoln or Harrisville and commuted to work daily. Most of the teenage girls had no cars and stayed overnight in the large girls' dormitory room directly across the hallway from the boys' dorm room.
3. Each summer, 4 young men worked and lived at The Club. During my first summer (1952), my male co-workers were Roger Jamieson, his older brother Duane Jamieson, and college boy Milt Steadman. In my 2 later years, Roger and I remained but the other 2 departed and were replaced by others.
4. A fixture there was the caretaker and jack-of-all-trades, Oliver (Ollie) Gonyea. He was, in reality, in charge of everything and was responsible for the smooth operation of The Club. He must have been there for 20 years when I arrived in 1952. He may even have been a member when The Club was founded in 1926. He was probably there for another 30 years (until he passed away) after I left. Ollie was the only person to live at the clubhouse year-around. He always seemed to wear the same beat-up shirt, pants and high-top shoes. Although Ollie was kind of surly, he was very efficient, hard working and a likable old guy.

MY JOBS

Basically, we 4 young men were interchangeable and did what was perceived as "guy work" at The Club. My job responsibilities were similar for all 3 summers. Roles included the following:

1. Lobby Counterman; sold snacks and drinks and operated cash register.
2. Bellhop; hauled (no carts) guest luggage in and out.
3. Lugging (no elevator) heavy roll-away beds up 1 flight of stairs.
4. Chambermaid helper; cleaned rooms, made beds, moved laundry.
5. Busboy; cleaning off tables; carried heavy trays of dishes and silverware to kitchen
6. Garbageman; slid big, heavy cans of kitchen refuse across kitchen floor, bounced them down a flight of stairs, loaded them on the back of stake-bed truck, drove truck to on-property dump, and dumped cans overboard.
7. Janitor; buffed hallways with industrial-size buffer regularly. Once per summer, moved all lobby furniture out of the way and buffed lobby floor late at night (when guests were asleep).
8. Gardener; mowed lawns (including some steep slopes) with large power mower, planted vegetables and did other heavy-duty gardening.
9. Setting-up beach equipment and rowboats at beginning of season; reversed process at the end.
10. Shoveling many yards of sand from truck to replenish beach and walkway sand at the beginning of season.
11. During "skeet" and "trap" shooting matches, sat in one of the small houses, and loaded the throwing machine with individual "clay pigeons" (targets). After a shooter cries "pull," the machine slings the target out and resets itself. Repeated this process hundreds of times during a match.
12. Miscellaneous other jobs: lugging, lifting, shoveling, sweeping, trucking, etc.

MY FAVORITE JOB

My favorite job was working behind the counter in The Club lobby. I sold a wide array of products such as candy, gum, potato chips, pop, milk, cigars, postcards, and souvenirs and operated the balky, hand-cranked cash register. I replenished the coolers and glass showcases and kept them clean.

I helped the guests check-in, carried in their luggage, sometimes parked their cars, answered questions, and gave directions. This was an excellent opportunity to "check out" the in-coming young daughters. In July 1952, I met my first girlfriend, Sandra Collon, this way. [See Timeline (#18B), My First Girlfriend]. Since The Club allowed us to fraternize with the guests, she and I dated throughout her 2 weeks of vacation there.

I assisted Mrs Duff with her mountain of paperwork, including inventory and ordering. I helped accumulate and sort the guests' signed meal tickets, tabulate and calculate their bills.

The primary difference in my job responsibilities from year to year was that Mr. & Mrs. Duff gave me increasing guest and monetary responsibilities each summer. For example, during my third and final summer, they left me in charge of The Club for an entire afternoon while they drove to Alpena (20 miles away) to conduct club business.