

A Passion for Prichard Lake

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This was the Prichard farmhouse back on Prichard Lake in Sugarloaf Park

The last resident remembers

If you are a resident of the Restigouche area and have been living here for a while, chances are you are very familiar with Prichard Lake. This particular lake is one of the many attractions of Sugarloaf Park and is especially popular with cyclists and cross-country skiers alike, who use its shore throughout the summer and winter months. The gravestones, which border the pathway close to the lake, remind us there once lived a family – the Prichard family – near this crystal clear body of water.

Harold Prichard, who currently lives in Campbellton, is the last surviving member of his family and has very fond memories of living next to the lake. Recently, he spoke with The Tribune, and told us his vivid memories of days gone by



Harold Prichard, at Prichard Lake today. He is the last alive to have lived on the farm there

The Prichards were originally from England, and immigrated to South America to seek their fortune. It was not until they learned of the abundance of fish and wildlife in the province

of New Brunswick that they decided to move north to Canada.

“My great-grandfather never wanted to work. All he wanted to do was fish and hunt,” remembered Prichard. “In 1880 this property was a grant from the government, so they made a living there and people came fishing during the summer and got wood.” The property was a total of 1,200 hectares and years ago 60 hectares were cleared to farm things as carrots and strawberries.

At one time when the railway industry was at its peak, the Prichards took advantage of the booms and the employment opportunities generated.

“My family sold a lot of wood for the railway. You would have five cents a tie and they had to pull it from out of here to Campbellton.”

Since he only had one brother, a twin, his parents needed extra help on the farm, so many men from Val D’Amour would cross the woods in order to find work with the Prichard family.

“The times were hard and the men from Val D’Amour were glad to help around.”

When the government assembled land for what would eventually become Sugarloaf Provincial Park, and included the lake within its boundaries, Prichard knew life would never be the same. At that point in time, he was the only living member of his family who still resided by the lake. During the last two years, the government allowed him to stay as a tenant to take care of the lakeside property, but in 1960, he was forced to move. It is with great sadness that Prichard talks about the time when he had to leave.

“It all came to an end. I always wish I was back there.” He reminisced.

“There were a lot of deer, partridges, now there are none. It was one of God’s gifts; we never had to come to town. The only thing you needed was flour to make bread,” he recalled, remembering that at times, getting to town was a challenge in itself. “When we used to go to school we drove with the horses and a sled. We had to get up at 6:30 every morning. It was a hard life and I loved it. My twin brother never liked the lake so he was happy in Campbellton and I never liked school, so I liked it there (at the lake).”

After moving to Campbellton, around the age of 30, Prichard got married and joined his brother in a business venture, distributing oil from house to house in the area. Together, the Prichard brothers ran the business for 35 years, until Harold had a health scare.

“I had cancer and the doctor told me I wasn’t going to make it, but I fooled them.” laughed Prichard. So I sold the business. Both of our wives were dead and later on, it was my brother at the age of 65 who died in his sleep.

Prichard’s connection with lake is still very strong. The gravestones of his father, grandparents and two aunts and

his constant love of nature, often bring the 78 year old back to the lake



The lovingly maintained Prichard Family cemetery as seen today.

The lake, for Prichard, will always be home. He believes people should still be able to take advantage of its resources by being allowed to fish and boat and that someone should be in charge of taking care of the lake and keeping it clean and controlled.



Prichard Lake was once a popular spot to fish, and in fact Campbellton hotels used to arrange excursions there for tourists.