

## **History of Iron City Fishing Club**

(Summarized from the 100th Anniversary Booklet)

The first camping trip in 1881 was to Lake Sparrow on the lower Severn River, which runs from Lake Simcoe southwest to Georgian Bay. The Rev. Dr. Charles W. Smith and Rev. Dr. Joseph W. Miles of Pittsburgh planned a joint expedition to Lake Sparrow on August 7, 1882. The following 18 years of the Iron City Fishing Club were a nomadic experience. The Club tried seven different campsites in the Georgian Bay area and two in Michigan. The early camps were made on private land without charge.

The Club's first encampment on the shores of Georgian Bay was in 1897 at Go Home Bay, north of Honey Harbour. The Club returned again in 1898 and 1899. But when the campers learned in 1899 that they were being charged \$100 for the use of the land which had been bought by the Madawaska Club earlier that year, (hence Iron City Fishing Club never owned any land at Honey Harbour), they immediately began a search for another site.

In the Go Home Bay Camp the summer of 1899 was an Indian guide named Jerry Monague, an Ojibway Chief. Jerry had boyhood recollections of visiting a sandy beach on the eastern shore of Georgian Bay with his father. So sometime during that four-week encampment of 1899, Dr. Miles and two other campers, with Jerry Monague and his nephew as guides, set sail from Go Home Bay to Captain Allen Straits to look for the fabled sandy beach. They scouted the Moon Falls area with no success and then sailed back toward the open water, crossing the large bay in front of our present campsite. There the glistening sands of our front beach caught their attention. They returned to Go Home Bay with the good news. All were as enthusiastic as the initial discoverers, and it was decided to locate there next year. Accordingly, the Camp of 1900 was established at "Sandy Beach near Moon River, Georgian Bay," where it has been ever since.

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