

LITTLE YELLOW ROWBOAT

of Idletime Island

This story about a cherished little yellow rowboat often seen in the cottage neighbourhood of Dr. Bill Cruikshank, former owner of Coney Island, Georgian Bay, has been passed down from generation to generation and to the grandchildren of other friends on Ansley Island. It was written by the late Dr. Cruikshank in 1982 about a boat originally built in 1959 by Reg Kitchen for his grandchildren. Joy Kitchen of Parry Sound updated the tale in 2006: "This is a story about an almost forgotten way of life and I hoped it would remind parents that children don't need fast boats to explore the nooks and crannies of their shoreline."

Chapter One JASON AND HIS FRIEND

Once upon a time there was a Little Yellow Rowboat. Many years ago it had seen better times. Then it had carried a little boy named Reggie Kitchen (who could swim faster than a motor boat) and a little girl named Maureen Kitchen (who could bake Blueberry Muffins) around the waters that touched an island called "Idletime." But those children had grown up and no longer wished to use the Little Yellow Rowboat. Now it lay on its nose, pushed deep under the porch of the Kitchens' old white summer cottage. There it collected dust and served as a home for spiders, mice, and an occasional chipmunk. It was a sad little boat, for it wished once again to float happily on the blue water and to travel among the islands.

The island home of the Little Yellow Rowboat was located in the great Georgian Bay of Lake Huron, about 150 miles north of Toronto. There are 30,000 or more in the Bay, but the Little Yellow Rowboat carried his passengers only between a few of them. He had two bright red oars which the boy or girl used to use to make him splash happily through the waves. These were his memories as he lay face down on the soft earth under the cabin. Each summer he heard voices and hoped they would need him once more, but they were the voices of older boys and girls and men and women who wanted only the big boats with loud motors on them. The Little Yellow Rowboat just waited and hoped, and waited and hoped some more. Occasionally a hard rain would fall, and the water would sweep under the cabin, trickling down the nose of the Little Yellow Rowboat like tears. But, he was brave, and he knew his day would come again - and it did!

One very sunny day the Little Yellow Rowboat heard voices. He heard an older man and woman walking up the path to visit the owners of the cottage that sheltered Little Rowboat.

They sat on the front porch above the spot where Little Yellow Rowboat lay, and they talked and talked. Occasionally the Little Yellow Rowboat heard a young boy's voice. All of a sudden the Little Yellow Rowboat's heart almost stopped

