

Stone Lake and the Belter/Beaumont Island

By Jody Miller

Local history indicates that in 1904 the large island in Stone Lake was deeded to Edward McQuire by the U.S. government. However, details regarding the individual and the deed transaction are somewhat of a mystery.

Charles Doriot and his family purchased the property in 1908 to develop a tourist camp with a few log cabins and a large dining hall, naming it Cedar Lodge. A journey to reach the island required transport via train, stagecoach and boat, and then guests had to reverse the process to return home. In 1917, Cedar Lodge closed when the Doriot family purchased another resort. Gus Koerner owned the island from 1920-1922, then sold it to the Hunger family. Hunger's Cedar Lodge welcomed guests until 1926.

The next chapter in the island's life begins in 1931 with Beryl Maude Belter visiting her sister at an area resort. Maude, as she preferred to be called, started searching for a summer home to buy, fell in love with the island, became the owner, and Belter's Landing was born.

Maude bought the island's first liquor license, converted the old dining hall to a bar serving alcohol and food, installed a piano, and opened in 1932. Improvements were made to the cabins, guests rented by the week, and many stayed for the summer. Resort guests were now transported to and from the island via the Rest Lake landing.

To attract locals to her bar, Maude devised a pickup system by installing a large bell on the shore across from the island. Patrons would ring the bell, wait for a boat to pick them up, and later in the evening they'd be returned to the opposite shore. Belter's Bar became known as "the place to go for a good time" with plenty of music and dancing.

With Maude's passing in 1949, her eldest daughter Vermitta (Mitzie) Beaumont purchased the resort and renamed it Beaumont's Island.

Improvements to the resort included a gas-powered generator, electricity and a new motorboat to transport guests. Mitzie loved music, particularly honkytonk jazz, and regularly entertained her guests with piano and song. Her mother's traditions of providing a good time for all carried on until 1960 when Mitzie decided to retire. Her four children were each allowed to choose a part of the island for their families, but no trees were to be destroyed. The resort has remained closed, and the island is still owned and enjoyed by Maude's descendants.

More information about the Belter/Beaumont resort can be found at
<https://www.mwhistory.org/commerce/resorts/stone-lake/>.