

Blue Heron Bed and Breakfast in Ely, MN is where my husband and I stayed for our honeymoon. Actually, we got engaged there, and we went back for our honeymoon, 1st anniversary, and 5th anniversary. In July 2009 we will go again to spend our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary at the place we love so much.

Glen and I had gone to high school together in California, but were only really good friends. We wound up marrying other people, and didn't get together until 30 years later. We both had raised families, had been divorced, and Glen had moved back to Minnesota, the state of his birth.

After getting reacquainted through a mutual friend, Glen and I communicated very often by email and phone. We recounted lots of high school memories, and laughed about how very much we had in common. It was the beginning of falling in love.

I visited Glen in Minnesota to see his corner of the world. We went to Blue Heron Bed and Breakfast for the first time, and wound up engaged. Jo Kovach was a most gracious host, treating us like family, and making us feel very welcome and comfortable. The Blue Heron is a cozy place, a retreat that invites you to rest, commune with nature, and explore. It was a given to go back for our honeymoon the next year.

Glen and I married in St. Paul in July 1999, and headed north to Ely. Ely is a wonderful town for nature lovers, antique shoppers, and adventure seekers. A person could spend hours in Jim Brandenburg's photography studio. Being partial to wolves, I loved the International Wolf Center. Even the tour of Dorothy Molter's cabins (known as the Root Beer Lady) left me thinking, "I wish I could live in the wilderness like she did." One evening we had dinner at the Mantel House, a quaint French Restaurant with wonderful food and small, intimate rooms. We must have looked like newly-weds even in our 50s, because at one point we noticed people at several tables were looking at us and smiling. It was a bit embarrassing!

Blue Heron Bed and Breakfast is situated right on the edge of Farm Lake in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area, and canoes are available for all the guests. Glen took me out canoeing for the first time. Seeing loons dive around us, hearing the reeds swish under the aluminum, having rice grains fall into the canoe, and watching eagles soar overhead made it a fabulous day. But the best was yet to come. After a fantastic gourmet dinner at Blue Heron, we sat on the dock in the evening. That's when we heard it – that loud, clear, mournful, thrilling call of the loons! That is a sound I will never forget. All around us the green frogs were plucking their loose banjo strings, and as night approached, the stars multiplied in the sky as well as in the water. There were so many, we couldn't see individual constellations anymore. In the distance we heard a wolf howl, another sound that is chilling and exciting at the same time. As we decided it was time to turn in, a huge shooting star blazed across the sky right over our heads. It was the end of a most perfect and magical day! I can't imagine spending a honeymoon anyplace else.

The world is certainly an uneasy, restless place today. Ely, and in particular Blue Heron Bed and Breakfast, have inspired us to pause in peace and ponder the beauty that is all around us if we just take the time to look.