



# VOYAGEUR TRAIL NEWS

PUBLISHED BY THE VOYAGEUR TRAIL ASSOCIATION, A MEMBER OF F.O.H.T.A.

BOX 66, SAULT STE. MARIE, ONTARIO P6A 5L2

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WINTER 1985/86



## REMEMBERING SUMMER HIKES

*It find  
membership  
go on  
sides for*



The Voyageur Trail Association Executive is currently as follows;

- President -Peter Stinnissen
- Vice President -Tom Baxter
- Second Vice President -Vacant
- Secretary -
- Treasurer -Dieter Ropke
- Membership Secretary -Patrick Capper
- Trailmaster -Paul Syme
- Landowner Recorder -Ian Hamilton
- Editor -Steve Taylor

THE COVER

If this particular issue of the newsletter has a theme, it involves remembering last years treks. The product of an expedition usually includes improved body health, declining equipment health, memories, and one or more group photos. The group may be posing in a parking lot before the trip, standing in front of a run-down shack, sitting on a lunchtime log, or standing in the woods. Our cover photo was taken on July 14, 1984. The location is at the intersection of the Sauteaux and Echo Ridges sections northeast of the Sault. The group had just triumphed over a swamp by hummock and log hopping. Clockwise from the top left are Liz Hansen, Vince Nealis, Patrick Capper, Brian Williams, Ian Mackinnon, Eunice Bostelaar, Dorothy Buskard, Paul Chapman, Ken Kansikas, Tom Allinson, and Steve Taylor. Steve Dominy can be seen lying in the foreground, no doubt scheming about tapioca pudding.

TRAIL MIX

Information on two significant upcoming events which are of special interest to hikers, and which in fact are hosted by hikers, appears in this newsletter. Anyone who is outdoors oriented may wish to consider spending Saturday afternoon on February 22 at the YMCA in Sault Ste Marie for a hiking workshop hosted by the Sauteaux section of the VTA. These same people will also want to note the conference for the May long weekend that has been organized by Hike Ontario. Both events

should provide for a useful exchange of information on a wide variety of outdoor topics.

Information for the next newsletter should reach the editor by April 10. Hike schedules from the different clubs for the summer are encouraged for this issue.

The Voyageur Trail is closed on Monday February 3.

One of our members has some advice for cross country skiers. Apparently, he has seen evidence that dog droppings alter the glide of fish-scale skis. He was not asked to comment on changes to the grip.

Brian Williams has moved to Toronto to pursue a new career. The Sauteaux club was rejuvenated under his guidance as club president. A hearty thanks is extended to him. He still plans to help out with the membership list from down south. Brian; here's hoping you can make it up north for one of our trips next summer.

Rita Bertoli has elected to step down as association secretary. She has decided to remain active by heading the phone committee. Thanks are also in order for Rita for her involvement. Peter Stinnissen is looking for a volunteer to fill this position.

The membership secretary position is now in the capable hands of our past president Patrick Capper. Steve Dominy relinquished this post to move over to fill the Sauteaux Club Presidency vacated by Brian Williams. Good luck to both of you.

The endeavours in 1985 of one of our members should not go unnoticed. Gisela Nolte hiked from Gros Cap to Highway 17 on May 12. In doing so, she helped to raise sufficient money to send nine young people, who are affiliated with the Zion Lutheran Church in the Sault, to a Youth Conference in Montreal. She was accompanied by Steve Dominy and several youngsters, who showed tremendous stamina on this

difficult hike in warm humid weather. Gisela, who is a grandmother, had not hiked much before. She prepared by walking several kilometers at a time in the weeks prior to her hike. Gisela has now left the Sault, but the trail remains. Possibly, it can be used in this way in the future.

The Saulteaux Club's first cross country ski outing of the year took place on January 11 at the Batchewana Lakeshore Resort. Fourteen people attended. We left the Sault under cloudy skies and encountered warm sunshine all day long on the trail. The trails were in excellent condition and were ideal for people with mixed ability because there was a mix of short to medium length loops. Hills were not too severe. An excellent lunch was served in the chalet.

In the past several months, the Voyageur Trail Association has been the recipient of several donations. A special thanks goes out to those of you who have contributed in this way. Our treasurer Dieter Ropke mentions that although membership fees balance many of the debts incurred in the running of the VTA, without donations, we would have difficulty surviving.

Many new members have joined the organization since this publication last mentioned new members. Here is a welcome to all of you. An updated membership list is included in this edition and new members for 1986 are mentioned.

HUGE BIRD NESTS, TAPIOCA PUDDING,  
DINING IN THE WOOD SHED, AND OTHER  
NOTES AND BESTS FROM THE TRAIL IN 1985

After much careful deliberation, a list of the best, worst, and most notable trail events, which took place in 1985 on VTA outings, was compiled. If you feel that you have something else which should be contributed to this list, please feel free to send it in for the next newsletter.

Best Sunset of the Summer-At Agawa Bay on July 27, following the Orphan Lake Trail hike. The crystal fine clarity of the pinks and oranges clashing with the black outlines of a few clouds and the hills was inspiring.

Worst Sunset of the Summer-At Pictured Rocks on the Canada Day Weekend. Several hikers were poised by the water with cameras, but the sun just sank without a show of colour (perhaps there were just too few clouds).

Best camp meal of the year-At Stokely on September 28. Other members of the party gazed with watering mouths as Virve Squire and Steve Taylor combined talents to produce french onion soup, spinach salad, pork and potato, and blueberry sauce with dumplings and Devon cream. The meal was topped off with cafe au Grand Marnier and cognac sips. Another strong contender for this one was Tony Romano's bulgar chili at Agawa Bay on the July 27 weekend.

Worst camp meal of the year-Steve Dominy's tapioca pudding which made a brief appearance on the Canada Day weekend Pictured Rocks trek, before it was unceremoniously dumped on the fire. One brave soul described the substance as being rather much like 'a bland chalky paste'. Mr. Dominy wishes to interject that at least one other concoction, which was believed to have been a bulgar rice curry mixture, also wound up on the fire.

Beach of the year-The 20 people who attended the Pictured Rocks hike perhaps didn't quite dine in the fine style that those on the Stokely weekend did (although Grant Hauer's Carrot Cake was excellent), but they were witnesses to some spectacular scenery. Perhaps the best was found around Chapel Beach, in the interior of the Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore in Michigan. The 'Chapel' itself guards the east side of the beach and is worth a look. Viewers were amazed at the roots of one old

white pine on top of the chapel. A stream slides over the sandstone and crosses the beach on its way into Lake Superior, providing a perfect toe-soaking spot. Tall cliffs and one spectacular walled turquoise inlet were found immediately west of the location.

Most Interesting Camp Site of the year-Roddy Larsen drove all the way from Wisconsin to sleep in a woodshed on the Stokely hike on September 28-29. She noted that it was "dry and not too bad except for the parade of mice".

Most Unique Blazes-The Penetowobikong Club have pioneered tack-on plastic blazes which seem to be standing up quite well.

Strangest event of the year-Steve Dominy's tapioca pudding. This mysterious mixture seemed to actually liven the fire when it was dumped on.

Youngest hiker of the year-Six year old Mike Podgorski accompanied dad on the Pictured Rocks weekend. By the end, he was tired, but he appeared to be a little more lively than some of the veteran hikers.

View of the year-From the lookout over Orphan Lake and Lake Superior on the Orphan Lake hike in July. This vista shouldn't be missed by anyone who is in the Lake Superior Provincial Park area.

Runner-up for view of the year-The view of two people in a truck driving away while putting on clothing after they were ambushed by VTA hikers on the April 28 hike in the Saulteaux section.

Shortest hike of the year-The August 17 hike terminated after about 1/2 km for two people due to a scenic view and a blueberry patch respectively. The rest of the group was much harder and struggled on about another 1/2 km in the muggy heat. After lunch, which was back at the

blueberry patch by Shaw Dam, some ridiculously ambitious long distance trekkers even went a bit further. After such a strenuous day, most of the group jumped into the water at the Kirkwood tree nursery.

Bird nest of the Year-A huge bird nest, probably belonging to a bald eagle, was spotted from the Lonely Lake Road on the July 13 hike to the lookout above the Coffee Creek Falls. The ambitious bird built its home on a metal frame supporting hydro wires. Birds must be getting more sophisticated than we think when they tap into Ontario Hydro for energy for their nests.

Best glide of the year-The March 2 ski outing in the Saulteaux section just northwest of the Sault occurred over a thick ice crust, so that people accelerated to high speeds on the slightest inclines. One way of navigating through the woods was to push oneself from tree to tree. We considered also referring to conditions on this trip as causing the worst grip of the year.

Most Noteworthy Event of the Year-Steve Dominy's tapioca pudding.

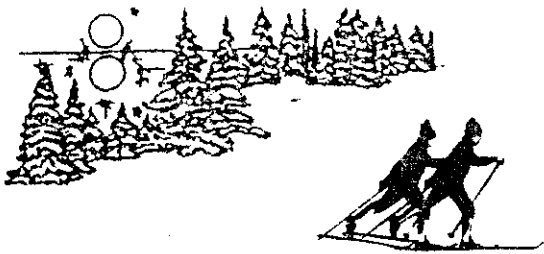
Fall of the year-The current VTA Newsletter editor's plunge into the icy waters of one of the creeks just northwest of the Sault on the April 28 hike. All other hikers, including fourteen adults and two children, made it across safely.

Biggest hill skied up last year-Six hardy or deranged cross country skiers crawled up the hill at the north end of Tower Lake on the Voyageur Trail. This feat was accomplished in -29°C weather on February 2. In spite of the obstacles encountered on the trip, all on hand seemed to enjoy it and were proud of their accomplishments as they mulled it over with mulled wine.



Best wildlife siting of the year-A cow and calf moose swam in the lake in front of about a dozen entertained on-lookers during the September 28-29 hike at Stokely. The following morning, a bull moose swam across the lake to the near shore in the mist and stood a mere fifty or so feet away from a couple of members of the party.

Quote of the year-From Tom Allinson, who stated that "bushwacking just isn't any fun unless I'm a bit lost".



Outings and Events

**SAULTEAUX CLUB**

Saturday February 22-"Hiking for Health" workshop. Details are elsewhere in this issue of the newsletter.

March 8- Bushwack Gros Cap area on skis (difficulty-intermediate)  
Meet beside the gas bar in the Stedmans Plaza second line parking lot at 10:00 A.M. sharp. Bring lunch.

April 5- Bushwack Goulais Ave. area (difficulty-intermediate and details of the trip are weather dependant). Meet beside the gas bar in the Stedmans Plaza second line parking lot at 10:00 A.M. sharp. Bring lunch.

May 3-Hike Red Rock area- We will hike the trail off the Red Rock Road and return to the road along the Superior shore (Approx. 12 km). Bring lunch and meet at Stedmans at 9:30 A.M.

Note that it is not policy for the trip leaders to assume responsibility for accidents on hikes. Leaders are unpaid volunteers. Trip participants should carry suitable clothing for all possible weather conditions and should

have equipment for all possible needs. Be aware that weather conditions can change rapidly when you plan. All are welcome to attend VTA outings unless there is a statement to the contrary.

CANOE TRIP A SUCCESS

Although the Voyageur Trail Association is primarily a hiking club, there is no reason why the trails can't occasionally be on water when canoes are available and the interest is there. On the Labour Day weekend, nine people rested their feet on a VTA canoe outing in Wakami Lake Provincial Park. The park contains a mixture of northern forest types around a large lake oriented north-south, and for those who would rather fight than swish, there is a 50 km hiking trail around the lake as well as several shorter trails. There are drive-to campsites at the north end of the lake, and many others around the lake which must be hiked to or paddled to.

We gathered Friday evening under a full moon in the campsite at the north end and froze. The sun warmed things up the next morning as we observed what we believed to be a black bellied plover in the campground, and then set course for a campsite at the south end of the lake. As we paddled into a stiffening south wind, we quickly realized that canoeing can be every bit as physically demanding as hiking in rough terrain. We ate lunch on a sandbar where we first realized one of the unique things about canoeing. It seems that you can take incredible amounts of food with you, and not even realize it until you stop for a bite. Two days later, we were to find that you can also take most of it back home with you.

As we continued to fight our way down the lake past the hills that were bobbing up and down, ospreys glided overhead in the at first warm blue and then cloudy skies. By late afternoon, we arrived at a peaceful campsite beside a small cove near the south end and pitched tents. The crew pulled together to construct a fire as everyone, including

young Rachel Squire, helped with the gathering and cutting of wood. Supper was prepared and conversation ensued for a while before the exhausted troop prepared for bed. Just before we hit the sac, we saw a giant moon, veiled by thin cloud, rise above the treetops.

The crew was suddenly awakened by a blast of thunder shortly before 7:00 A.M. the next morning. After about an hour of rain, Darcy Ortiz and I donned raingear to retrieve the food. We had placed it in a canoe tied to a sunken log, and were afraid the canoe would fill up with water. Then, we went to bed for another hour while the rain petered out. The rain was over for the rest of the weekend.

Sunday was more relaxing than Saturday. We cruised around the south end of the lake in the canoes and generally observed nature. At one point, we even landed and hiked for a while on the hiking trail. Lunch was consumed on the rocks by a tumbling stream. Virve Squire unceremoniously discovered that the moss on some of the rocks was slippery. On the way back, I caught a nice sized pike of about a pound and a half. On arrival at the site, it was placed on the fire that had been prepared by Steve Dominy and Jack Squire. We discovered that these two had been playing board games all day (board games usually don't go on hiking trips). After supper, we were back on the Lake for sunset time.

The trip back occurred under ideal conditions with blue sky and light winds. Surely this was the relaxing side of paddling. After a swim at the north end of the Lake, Steve Dominy and I visited the logging museum in the park. If you are ever in Wakami Lake Park, it is well worth saving about two hours for the museum. There are many elegant and ingenious pieces of equipment from Northern Ontario's early logging days.

During the night after returning to the Sault, a tremendous thunderstorm struck. If we had been camping then at the south end of Wakami Lake, it would have been a nerve-wracking experience for

some, and I'm sure we all would have been soaked.

We resolved to plan another canoe outing in 1986. We now have faith that the weather always co-operates with those who plan such events (there hasn't been a Saulteaux outing in the past few years where the weather has been terrible), and we know that canoeing also has its virtues.

Steve Taylor

#### A VISIT TO KILLARNEY PROVINCIAL PARK

At 8:00 in the morning on Saturday May 11, 1985, two members of the Saulteaux trail group were on their way to try Killarney on for size. A stop was made at Sudbury to pick up a third member of the group and to have lunch. We met our fourth hiker, a member of the Toronto Bruce Trail Club at the camp gate around 2:30.

Our original intention was to do Silver Peaks the hard way. That meant we were going to take the Baie Fine trail as far as it went, and then we were to bush-wack on to Silver Peaks, returning to George Lake on the established trail. We talked with an official of the park, and he remarked that the route we had picked was considered to be a twelve day hike. Since we had planned on six days, we revised our thinking and decided to go until Tuesday evening before retracing our steps on Wednesday. Saturday night saw us camped at the second campsite on Lomdsen Lake.

Sunday was warm and pleasant. We followed the 1,700 yard portage from Baie Fine over the Blue Ridge to Three Narrows Lake, which is the steepest portage in the park. All good things come to an end and we finally reached the dam at Three Narrows Lake. This lake is man-made, with the dam being built in 1934. At this point, one has to walk downstream for a few minutes to cross on a bridge over a narrows.

We camped Sunday night beside Three Arrows Lake. During the night, we were awakened several times by what seemed to be someone throwing large stones in the lake, accompanied by 'snuffling' noises. After breakfast on Monday, the mystery was solved when we were visited by four otters. They came quite close to us and put on quite a show.

Monday night saw us at the western end of one of the arms of Three Narrows Lake, after crossing over the 'great bog'. It was a piece of cake. The country was nice and flat and not all that wet, although, legend has it that the early maps of this area used to be captioned; "beyond here be dragons".

Temperatures reached 80°F on Monday and the sweat ran freely. At least the male members sweated but the ladies apparently perspired.

Tuesday was the last day before turning around so we left the tents and sleeping bags on site and headed out along the La Cloche mountains for the day. Views were spectacular with the temperature in the 80's again. This far in, the trail becomes a little harder to find. A lot of the blue flagging tape is on the ground (I think the moose untie the knots). We got back to our campsite around 1700 hours.

Wednesday night brought us back to our campsite at Three Narrows Lake. No otter tonight though. What we got instead was an eleven hour rain. The precipitation was very co-operative though. It didn't start until seven in the evening. We had eaten, so outside of making us retire early, it didn't really bother us.

Thursday night was spent at an idyllic campsite on a narrows between Acid Lake and another small lake. At least it was idyllic on Thursday evening. During the night, the temperature dropped to 40°F accompanied by high winds. The only thing that kept the tents from blowing away was the fact that we were in them.

We got back to George Lake shortly before noon on Friday, checked out, said our goodbyes, and started for home. We found that Killarney was much bigger than we were, but all that means is that there is still some trail left for next year.

Tom Allinson

TRIBUTE TO MRS SHEILA RENAULT

Sheila Renault passed away in November, 1985 after a lengthy illness. She was a member of the Wawa branch of the Voyageur Trail Association, and was very active in the club, having been secretary treasurer for the last five years. Sheila was also active in the community of Wawa for many years, serving as member of the board of directors of both the Michipicoten Township Public Library and the Sault College Board of Governors. She was librarian at the Michipicoten High School from 1968-1979. Her interest in the community and participation in many organizations will be sadly missed.

HIKING WORKSHOP

The Voyageur Trail Club (Saulteaux Section) is proud to present a workshop entitled HIKING FOR HEALTH on Saturday February 22, 1986 at the YMCA auditorium, Sault Ste Marie Ontario.

ALL ARE WELCOME

ADMISSION IS FREE

TIME - 2:00 P.M. UNTIL ABOUT 9:30 P.M.

Talks are to include the following;

- 1- HIKING AND BACKPACKING-A NOVICE APPROACH - by Willard Kinzie, noted speaker and outdoor enthusiast from Willard's Adventure Expeditions, Barrie Ont.
- 2- FINDING YOUR WAY IN THE WOODS - by Sally Childs, instructor at Lake Superior State College