



VOYAGEUR TRAIL NEWS

PUBLISHED BY THE VOYAGEUR TRAIL ASSOCIATION
PO BOX 20040 150 CHURCHILL BLVD. SAULT STE. MARIE ON P6A 6W3

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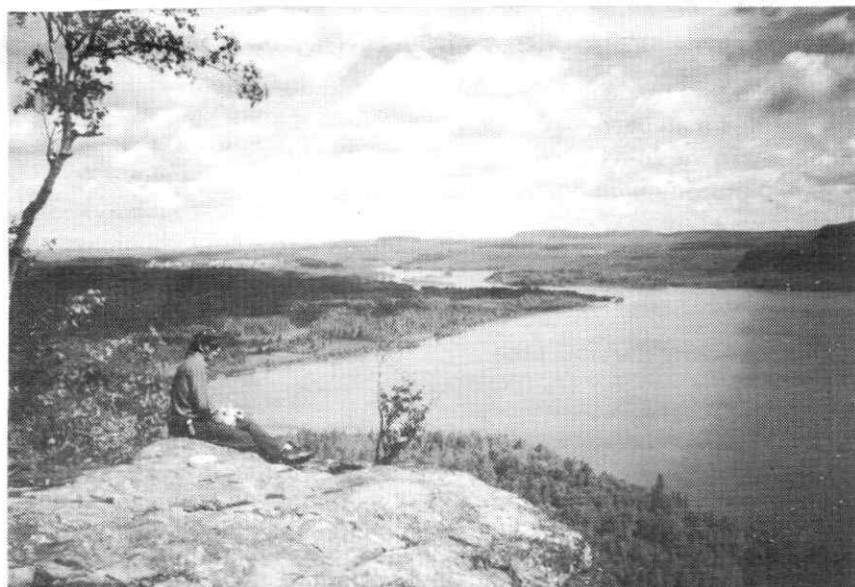
No. 64

EDITOR: Virve Männiste Squire

FALL 1996

"LET'S TRY OUT THE NEW GUIDEBOOK" WEEK

by Gayle Phillips



Jim McCullough, our guide, on the Eagle's Ridge Lookout

My daughter, Shelley, and I and our dog Barney left Saturday, August 10 to investigate Neys Provincial Park near Marathon on our week-long trek. Whenever I am in the Marathon area, I have traditionally stayed at Pukaskwa Park so I took this opportunity to try out the provincial park I had always passed along the way. To my surprise, Dan Wheeler (of Blind River VTC) was standing in the park office waiting for me to arrive! It was terrific to see a familiar face. Dan had planned to join us on our hike on the Marathon Section of the Voyageur Trail on the Wednesday, but was waiting for an important phone call that might have changed his plans at the last minute.

Neys is a beautiful park with a few small hiking trails, spacious campsites, excellent facilities, a great

swimming beach and friendly, helpful staff. I would recommend it highly for families. This trip certainly was a lesson in the difference between our provincial and national parks versus private enterprise, and I have come to the conclusion that we must fight to preserve our park system! There IS a difference—a big difference!

On Sunday, we moved along to beautiful Nipigon and Stillwater Park where we were joined by Linda Badowich and *Sheba-the-Wonderdog*.

Monday morning we awoke to a sunny and warm day, perfect for hiking. At 10:35 am (we were notorious this trip for being 5 minutes late for everything) we all arrived at the trailhead in Red Rock to begin our eight kilometre hike to Nipigon. Bruce Pritchard, Director of M.E.D.A.

Superior, Municipal Economic Development Agency, was waiting to greet our group upon their arrival and invited me back to his office after the hike to discuss any improvements to his trail that I could suggest.

I must say that the helpfulness and friendliness of Bruce, his Administrative Assistant Sheila Larocque and Nipigon in general, was remarkable. If there was an award I could give for going that extra step "above and beyond the call of duty" I would award it to them.

Bruce introduced us to Jim McCullough, a local trail enthusiast who served as our guide. Jim was wonderful. He gave us the history of the trail and showed us all the highlights (like the Nipigon 'cactus') as he lead us through to Nipigon. My particular favourite, the Eagle's Ridge Lookout overlooking Dog's Head mountain, didn't disappoint anyone as we had our lunch there. We watched a sailboat on its way to Nipigon Bay as trains passed far below us.

After lunch, *Sheba-the-Wonderdog* and *Barney-the-Lead-Bottom*, were happy to see the water of Stillwater Creek. Sheba did a perfect dive in and Barney (trying to lay on the sloped shoreline to get a drink of water) went nose first. I think this was his first underwater excursion but it cooled him off. It was a perfect day.

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"LET'S TRY OUT THE NEW GUIDEBOOK" WEEK

(cont'd. from page 1)

After a good night's sleep, we pushed on to Pukaskwa National Park on Tuesday. What can I say -- Pukaskwa is

my favourite. It is located far enough off the main highway that you don't hear transports blowing tires at four in the morning. Its hiking trails are spectacular, facilities are top notch, campsites are private and spacious and the people who are attracted to it are quiet, clean, nature/hiking-type people. I am always delighted to introduce it to someone who has never been there before and this was Linda's first trip.

That evening, we completed the Headland Trail and Linda was later sorry that she didn't bring her camera along, as bad weather settled in the next day and her pictures didn't capture the gorgeous evening we had enjoyed.

The next day set a record-somewhere! It had to. The thunder and lightning lasted for twelve straight hours! We didn't dare try the beautiful but rocky Marathon Voyageur Trail and when I talked to Brian Tocheri, Marathon's Economic Development Officer later, he told me that he had pulled his summer students off the trail that day as well because the storm just wouldn't let up.

After huddling under my tarp until 4 o'clock in the afternoon we decided that we had had enough and hiked the Beach Trail and Halfway Lake Trail, rain or no rain. We were rewarded with a fine supply of blueberries to adorn our pancakes the next morning.

Thursday we bid adieu to Pukaskwa, vowing to return, and moved on to Wawa RV Resort and Campground where we were joined by Gale and Andrea Koteles, Bev and Verna Scott and briefly by Mary Beth Russ. Mary Beth couldn't stay, and Bev and Verna were making an overnight stopover on their way to Thunder Bay.



Our happy "Voyageurs" in front of Mission Falls

Thursday evening we made our way to Buck's Marina for an evening of "Voyageur" fun in the 26-foot Montreal canoe of Naturally Superior Adventures. This evening was an absolute delight! After a quick lesson in paddling, we made our way around the mouths of the Michipicoten and Magpie Rivers, visiting the site of the old Northwest Company Fur Trading Post, Mission Falls and the beach opposite the headquarters of Naturally Superior Adventures, where we were treated to bannock and tea made over a campfire started (with great difficulty) by hitting a flint into some birchbark. Our two guides, 'Pieter' and 'Michelle', instructed us on Voyageur life, history and provided comic relief the whole time making it a truly enjoyable evening. The threatening clouds cleared just in time to see the red sun disappear behind Lake Superior. Everyone remarked time and time again how much fun it was. I, for one, will be making plans to go back for their Sunday day-long adventures soon.

David Wells of Naturally Superior Adventures greeted us as we returned to the dock, so I asked him which section of the Wawa Voyageur Trail we should consider hiking the next day. He suggested the Michipicoten Road to Highway 17 access. This confirmed a call I had made earlier to Dorothy Egan who suggested the same piece, so we decided that's what

we would do. However, since we were getting a little bone-weary from daily excursions, we decided to cut it short, from Michipicoten Road to High Falls. That way, according to the Guidebook, we would see all the highlights of the trail--Magpie High Falls, Silver Falls and Michipicoten Mission Harbour--without the long access to the highway. As it turned out, it was a good decision as we spent about an hour picking blueberries we found along the way! Also, as we approached High Falls, we came across a washed out section of trail. A huge mud slide (due to the floods that hit Wawa last spring) had obliterated a section of trail. Climbing the slope of mud and sand as it gave way under our feet robbed us of much of our remaining energy so lifting *Barney-the-Lead-Bottom* up to the remains of the trail did me in!

After a swim in the campground pool and/or a good long clean-up shower, we settled in around our last campfire.

Andrea Koteles instructed us on the fine art of making Smores over the campfire. A perfect ending to a great week!

I'd like to thank everyone who turned out and for those who didn't--too bad, you missed a great one!



SOUTHERN ONTARIO VOLUNTEERS COME THROUGH AGAIN



(l to r) George Krause, Delmar Ellis and Jack Horton

by Steve Dominy

On August 25, 1996, two non-resident trail cleaning volunteers arrived in the Blind River area to help us clear and blaze the Coureur de Bois Section. Delmar Ellis and George Krause, both of Sarnia, made the trip because 'George wanted to experience true wilderness', as Delmar put it. They were joined for a day or two by other local VTA members. Jack Horton from Blind River joined the boys from Southern Ontario as they worked from August 26 to September 5, by-and-large completing the entire 23 km trail on their own.

A trail crew led by Gayle Phillips had gone over about 9 km of the trail this spring, but the wet season had caused quite a bit of regrowth over the summer. The pair backpacked into the remote trail, and camped as they worked along the trail. I joined them for one day, and we saw a deer on the trail, and flushed three sandhill cranes. This wilderness trail is truly worth experiencing, particularly now that it has been fully refurbished.

Local volunteers are needed to adopt some or all of this trail to help keep it in good repair. Please contact a member of the executive if you are able to take on this duty.

Oh, did I mention that Delmar is turning 79 years old this fall, and George is well into his sixties?



THE BRITS ARE COMING - THE BRITS ARE COMING!!

by Virve Männiste Squire
and Linda Badowich

These were the words many of us heard over and over again as mid-August approached and members of the VTA prepared for the arrival of members of the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers. After numerous meetings and weeks of preparation, seven volunteers from Britain and two from Southern Ontario arrived. This is the fourth year

that the VTA has hosted the BTCV, a conservation group that arranges working holidays all over the world in conjunction with local groups. The group headed out daily, working on sections of the trail that had fallen into disrepair. Three days were spent in the Thessalon section, one day building a boardwalk in the Goulais area, one day in the Stokely section and two and a half days in the Echo Ridges section. The visitors were continuously overwhelmed by our wilderness, having nothing comparable in Britain. As one visitor said: "You just don't have this in Britain. You have to go 15 miles to walk on a footpath where there are trees, and you never break trail anywhere. There's just no land that's not already being used."

This year, to do things a little differently, the VTA decided to billet the volunteers. We hoped to get to know our guests a bit better this way, and to show them what true northern hospitality is all about. Feeding them proved quite the challenge as many of the volunteers were vegetarians. Pot luck dinners were arranged every second evening at various members' homes so the group and hosts could mingle and get to know each other. What things we learned! The backgrounds of the volunteers were quite varied: We had a teacher, a designer of race car engines, a statistician with the British government, a male nurse, a student (the youngest of the group at 19 years of age), a warehouse employee who was returning to school to learn about computers and was quite an enthusiastic volunteer for Greenpeace (he'd dressed up as a skeleton and laid down on a busy street to stop traffic for a nuclear protest). The leader was on the board of directors for the BTCV and had done a working holiday in Thailand and



(cont'd. on page 4)

THE BRITS ARE COMING!

(cont'd. from page 3)

several other European countries. The two volunteers from southern Ontario were a forestry student and a longtime Bruce Trail Association member and hike leader. They all had their own reasons for participating in these working holidays, but the most interesting reason that came to light was that these vacations were a "singles club". What better way to meet people who were roughly the same age and had the same interests as you?

We also learned that after a hard day's work on the trail, the volunteers could eat. Tables were groaning from the weight of all the food on them, yet the workers managed quite handily to eat EVERYTHING!!

On days that the volunteers were not working on the trail, the VTA planned a couple of outings for them. One beautiful afternoon was spent in canoes, paddling down the Thessalon River into Gordon Lake and back onto the river again. The visitors were quite taken by our forests, the meandering river and the birds flying about. For many, travelling by canoe was a first time experience, and for one volunteer, an experience he would most likely wish to forget. As often is the case, the wind was up on Gordon Lake and the crossing was very rough. The poor fellow was hit with a combination of seasickness and a panic attack (for the shore was very far away) and became quite ill during the crossing. Upon reaching the shore, he jumped from the canoe and collapsed on the shore where he remained until we picked him up later by land vehicle. He did have a quick recovery on land and chose not to venture too close to the water for the rest of the day.

Another day was spent hiking the coastal trail in Lake Superior Provin-



(l to r) Back row: Brian O'Sullivan (S. Ont.), Gary Elderton, Steve Balchin, Melanie Dyer, Mark Garlick. Front Row: Ralph Spencer, Meriel Hughes, Richard Wadey (leader), David Platt (S. Ont.)

cial Park. They loved the coastal area. One of the volunteers kept picking up rocks along the coast and even a large piece of driftwood, piling it in his pack. Some of the volunteers jumped in and swam in Lake Superior (letting out screams at the incredible cold). "Kind of like being in the sea" they said, "with the waves and everything, but it's freshwater."

Trees. They loved our trees. During an outing to the Robertson Cliffs the volunteers had an opportunity to see the peregrine falcons. One volunteer could not be pulled away from the first lookout though. As he gazed over the Bellevue Valley and the surrounding hills, he stated that he had never seen so many trees in his life and just had to sit there for a while to try to take it all in.

Evenings with the group were entertaining to say the least. On many occasions, the bodran (a type of hand held drum) was brought out and we were all entertained with singing. One of the potlucks was at a rustic cottage just out of town where we were warmed by a large bonfire (which also helped keep and mosquitos away). On their last night, the volunteers and some local members

went to a local coffeeshop hangout to hear a small band and one of the Brits got up and played the bongo drums.

After two weeks, it was time for the volunteers to move on, each heading their own separate ways. One headed off to the States, another on a cross Canada trek, a third to do some camping at Pukaskwa and some just back home. After billeting the volunteers, they became part of the household. One host was moved to tears as her billet left for she felt she was losing part of her family! The experience was a rich one though, for as we learned about each other, we did discover how similar we all were. We all loved the forests and the lakes, we all hated the bugs and hot, humid days on the trail and we all loved the stars and the moon on a clear night and all longed to see the Northern Lights.



EDITOR'S NOTE: A special note of thanks to Naturally Green and Clean North for providing the van for our transportation needs, and to all the VTA members who joined in to make this effort a success.

SUMMARY OF THE 1996 VTA QUESTIONNAIRE

by Steve Dominy

With a 35% response rate, the VTA Board is convinced it has received a representative sample of the views of its members. This information provides us with some clear guideposts upon which to base decisions, and thus can be considered well-worth the expense (about \$400). The newsletter editor presented some of the highlights of the survey in the spring issue. Many took the time to explain their concerns, and we extend a special thanks to those who cared enough to offer their thoughts in that manner. Following is a detailed summary of responses. Note that not every respondent answered every question; percentage is based on actual number of answers.

LANDOWNERS (17 responses)

1. Feel part of the organization? 12%-no; 88%-yes
2. Want more contact with the VTA? 67%-no; 33%-yes
3. Concerned with increased trail usage? 88%-no; 12%-yes
4. Object to more signs? 94%-no; 6%-yes

NEWSLETTER (95 responses)

1. Read newsletter? 82%-always; 15%-usually; 3%-occasionally
2. Newsletter keeps me up-to-date... 98%-just right; 2%-not enough
3. Three issues per year enough? 11%-no; 89%-yes
4. Number who read it? 33%-one; 65%-two to four; 2%-five+
5. Object to paid advertising? 98%-no; 2%-yes.

VTA GOALS/PHILOSOPHY/IDENTITY (87 responses)

1. VTA should be heard on issues directly impacting the trail? 2%-no; 98%-yes
2. VTA should be heard on issues not directly impacting the trail? 51%-no; 49%-yes
3. Change name of VTA? 92%-no; 8%-yes

MEMBERSHIP FEES (84 responses)

- 1a. Reduce existing services? 88%-no; 12%-yes
- 1b. Pay higher membership fee? 22%-no; 78%-yes
2. Higher fee for groups/families? 35%-no; 65%-yes

TRAIL BUILDING AND MAINTENANCE (83 responses; some selected more than one option)

1. Concentrate efforts on:
 - a) new linear trail - 13%
 - b) more loop trails - 24%
 - c) maintaining existing trail - 63%
2. Help maintain existing trail? 16%-no; 84%-yes
 - If yes, would adopt trail? 35%-no; 65%-yes
3. Willing to build new trail? 39%-no; 61%-yes
4. Object to telephone contact for work parties? 92%-no; 8%-yes

GUIDEBOOK (86 responses)

1. Have bought/will buy Guidebook? 7%-no; 93%-yes
 - If yes, is new format better? 100%-yes
- 2a. Sell Guidebook to non-members? 7%-no; 93%-yes
- 2b. Produce guide brochures for Sections? 6%-no; 94%-yes
 - If yes, provide to public? 4%-no; 96%-yes
 - If yes, sell to public? 6%-no; 94%-yes

TRAIL OUTINGS/GATHERINGS (81 responses)

1. Organized outings in your area are: 16%-too few; 2%-too many; 82%-enough
2. Participated in outings in past year? 44%-no; 56%-yes
- 3a. Are outing leaders competent? 4%-no; 96%-yes
- 3b. Cancel outings in poor weather? 9%-no; 91%-yes
- 3c. Generally enjoy outings? 9%-no; 91%-yes
- 3d. Social aspects important? 31%-no; 69%-yes
4. Felt welcome on first outing? 4%-no; 96%-yes
5. Join outings to know new trail? 17%-no; 83%-yes
6. Use trail on own? 20%-no; 80%-yes
7. Would participate in mid-week outings? 44%-no; 56%-yes
8. Clubs should offer information sessions? 14%-no; 86%-yes
9. Clubs should secure out-of-town speakers? 37%-no; 63%-yes
10. Theme outings were strongly favoured, as were novice backpacking, snowshoeing, garbage pick-up, cross-country skiing, experienced backpacking, canoeing, and family outings. There was less interest in longer hikes geared to experienced hikers, cycling, and mountain biking, although a number of members indicated interest in all these activities.
11. Media used for outing notices? The VT Newsletter was by far the most relied-upon medium, with the newspaper and word-of-mouth being a distant second and third. Note that the VT Hotline had not been in operation for long at the time of the survey.



WANT TO TALK TO THE EXECUTIVE?
Come to the Annual General Meeting on November 16/96. See page 10 for details.

SOLO BACKPACKING THE COASTAL TRAIL

by
Linda Badowich

They say that you're an extrovert if you gain energy from other people and an introvert if you are strengthened by solitude. The weekend of July 20 I set out to discover what kind of person I am. My plan was to solo backpack the Coastal Trail at Lake Superior



Provincial Park from Sinclair Cove on Friday morning, stop at Robertson Cove on Friday night, and join up with the VTA group Saturday on their day hike from Katherine Cove to Coldwater Creek. The day hike, led by park employee Carol Dersch (also a member of the VTA, Michipicoten Club), celebrated Canada Parks' *Take a Hike Day*. I learned many lessons, and most of all, that I seem to enjoy an equal dose of solitude and company, particularly the good-natured folks I met on this trip!

I wasn't entirely alone. Sheba, AKA Sheba-the-Wonderdog—my four-year old black labrador retriever—joined me. She loves hiking, and particularly backpacking, because the fun just seems to go on and on. I checked in at the Agawa main campground and asked about the trail. It was a long route I'd chosen, but was told it's permissible for low-impact backpackers to stop anywhere along the trail.

The Wonderdog and I started off at Sinclair Cove. We hiked along beach, then a forested area and began to climb. Then the trail dipped into an enormous rock crevice and we emerged on the coast again. The trail was marked by rock cairns and posted signs. Traversing the coastal

Carol Dersch leads Canada Parks' Take a Hike Day participants in Lake Superior Provincial Park

rocks was difficult with a heavy pack, despite my solid footwear. After an hour, I elected to turn back. It was my first solo trip and, for safety reasons, I thought it would be better for me to hike in where I knew a group would be along the trail the next day.

I decided to drive to Katherine Cove and hike into Robertson Cove, only a 2 km distance.

At Katherine Cove, some good soul had left a walking stick near the registry so I picked it up after signing in. Again, the trail started in a forested area and moved quickly to the shoreline. Sheba, of course, loved the proximity of the water, ducking in wherever she could.

I took it slow and easy. Two kilometres of trail and it was only 2:30 p.m., so there was no reason to rush. We picked our way along. I watched my footing on the rocks and the edge of the forest so I wouldn't miss a blaze. An hour in, I took a break for lunch, but elected to push on when I realized the bugs were particularly vicious. A half-hour later, I was picking my way along the rocks when I noticed a tent and some

people in the distance. Designated campsite here we come, I thought. The map said the site was small, but if I could find a bare spot of semi-flat ground, I was going to plop my tent down.

By 4:30 p.m., I arrived at Robertson Cove—sandy beach, a beautiful view of the lake, a grassy spot perfect for my tent, AND, the natives were friendly. Rob and Nancy Perry had canoed in from Katherine Cove with their dog Scout, bringing with them many of the comforts of home (cooler, large tent, cozy 2-inch thermarests in sleeves that make them chairs). Sheba kept lying on their side of the beach. She was keen to be adopted. In comparison to canoeists, we backpackers are an impoverished lot!

I set up my tent and cooked dinner, read awhile, chatted with Rob and Nancy and watched the sunset over the lake. The next morning, I was disappointed to discover my stove out of fuel (you can never tell with those propane cylinders) It wasn't a tragedy, I'd brought

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SOLO BACKPACKING

(cont'd. from page 6)

cereal along and there was lots of cold fresh water. Rob and Nancy offered me a cup of coffee. They cooked over a fire and had a pot on. My eyes went all big when they offered cold milk to accompany the coffee. Such luxuries...then, they offered to share the pancakes they brought, made with blueberries they'd picked further up the coast. Rob and Nancy also offered to canoe up the lake and drop off my pack. Well, like the Wonder-dog, I was keen to be adopted too!

By noon, we were joined by about 18 hikers, led by Carol and one of the park's summer students. I recognized Gayle and Bruce from our club (missed the rest of you by the way!). The others were people from all over Canada, who were staying at the park. Two were even from as far away as Austria! Sheba made friends fast.

Saturday's hike from Robertson Cove to Coldwater was ideal. Without my pack, I was lighter by about 35 lbs. A breeze came in off the lake eliminating most of the pesky flying critters. And the rocks were dry, pretty much a requirement for hiking on the coast. Sheba did well, clambering from rock to rock and Bruce showed her a little detour over one particularly tough section. At some point, Sheba hurt her front paw a little on one of the rocks (the dog-equivalent of breaking a nail), but it didn't dampen her enthusiasm. The going was tough as some of the coastal rocks moved under one's feet and the large rocks were anything but flat. Long legs would have been an asset for this terrain.

Carol stopped often, identifying flora and fauna along the way, and carried red licorice and cold water to give to all. There were lots of gorgeous vistas for photo opportu-

nities. One of the group found a large live carp trapped between the rocks. He reached in and freed it. We cheered. *Free Willy!*

By three we arrived at Coldwater where Gayle had left her vehicle. And my new-found canoeist friends arrived just before us, with my weighty pack. I couldn't have asked for a better backpacking trip. So solitude or company? Am I an introvert or extrovert? I think a little of both. With all the space we have in beautiful Northern Ontario, solitude is plentiful and a little company from kindred hikers/canoeists is always welcome.



EDITOR'S NOTE: *This past summer, the VTA hosted the BTCV to do work on our trails. I came across this article which may be of interest to anyone who would like to participate in working holidays. It is reprinted from the Fall /96 issue of the Caledon Comment.*

TRAIL WORK IN THE TROPICS

by Ross McLean

Last summer the Caribbean was badly damaged by hurricanes Luis and Marilyn. Heavily hit were the hiking trails of Saba, a small island in the Netherlands Antilles a short distance south of St. Martin.

John Anderson, a Toronto resident with a home in Saba, spoke to Tom Van't Hof of the Saba Conservation Foundation and suggest that a group of experienced trail workers be invited to the island to help with the trail restoration work.

John first contacted veteran Appalachian Trail volunteer Mac McDaniel when he was visiting Bruce Trail friends in Ontario. Ross McLean of the BTA quickly joined, and two other AT long-time trail crew work-

ers also volunteered. In February, the 'gang of four', also known as 'The Old Goats', flew to Saba for a fascinating two week 'volunteer vacation'. Government of Saba was supportive of the project and provided them with a home while on the island. James Johnson, Saba's most active trail guide was freed from his regular job to work with the volunteers and to learn new trail skills.

The people of Saba were pleased with the amount of work which was accomplished. The volunteers were overwhelmed by the hospitality of the residents, the kind dinner invitations, and the gifts presented when leaving the island. Each was given a certificate from the Government 'for extraordinary volunteer work on the trails of Saba'.

Van't Hof reports "This is the first time such a group visited Saba and the Saba Conservation Foundation is extremely pleased and hopes to establish a prolonged cooperation with these well-experienced trail builders."

It was tough trail work, employing chainsaws, pulleys, sledge hammers, grub hoes and mat-tacks. But it was also extremely satisfying to see a beautiful natural work reopened to the hiking community.

Already, 'The Old Goats' have indicated a desire to join a similar project next year, and initial plans have already begun. Indeed, it may involve a larger group of participants.

If you might be interested in joining this team, or simply if you wish to learn more about the wonders of Saba, contact Ross McLean (519) 821-0243.



DOUBLE TAKE AT THE PARK

by Pim Delfgou

On July 14, and again on July 28, the VTA had outings north of town in Lake Superior Provincial Park. The first outing we made was on the Awaussee Trail. About 15 hikers left the highway and began the long climb up the Awaussee. It quickly became apparent that rain gear was the attire for the day, but it was not the rain that made things wet. Rather, a dense fog caused heavy condensation on foliage, soaking anyone walking through the brush. After a rest at an intermediate lookout, we completed the climb and walked along the rim of the lower Agawa Canyon. We stopped for lunch at the first of a series of three lookouts. There wasn't much to see however, as we were actually above the cloud deck. Under clear conditions, we would have seen Lake Superior and the highway crossing the river.

After we finished eating, we carried on, but with the lack of visibility, skipped the last lookouts and climbed back down to the canyon floor and picked up an old road going out. The last section included a stream crossing over rocks which was quite easy. It was mid afternoon when we caught sight of the parking lot and met up with two bike campers who took a breather after battling the steep hills on the highway. We hoped the weather would cooperate next time we hike in this park.

Two weeks later, we headed north again to the park, this time to do the Orphan Lake Trail. The weather was better this time as a similar number of hikers set off toward Lake Superior. Visibility was good at the two lookouts we stopped at over Orphan Lake and Lake Super-

rior. After a steep descent, we reached the beach at the mouth of the Baldhead River and had lunch. From there, we walked upstream to the waterfall and scrambled up the rocks to have a good look at the river cascading down the hill. The return hike took us along the shore of Orphan Lake and back to the highway. Weatherwise, we were quite lucky for it had been dry while we were on the trail, but it was raining when we arrived back into town. Special thanks to Chuck Bosley and Gale Koteles for these pleasant hikes.



TRAIL MIX

→ MEMBERS ARE ADVISED

The board has voted to increase membership fees to \$20.00 for Adult and Family/Group memberships. The increase will take effect with the 1997 membership year. For the time being, student memberships will remain at \$10.00.

→ DEADLINE FOR MAP ORDERS

Those wishing to order National Topographic Series maps from the VTA should get their orders in by Oct. 31, 1996. The next order will be placed in late February. The cost for the 1:50,000 scale colour maps is \$9.00 postage paid, shipped folded. To order, call Steve Dominy at 705-946-2484.

→ CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Please submit your nomination for the *Steve Taylor Memorial Award*, given to our volunteer of the year as nominated by our membership. A call to any executive member listed on the last page of this newsletter will register a vote. Please cast your vote *before* November 1, 1996.

→ END TO END RECOGNITION

The Saulteaux Club wishes to recognize those who have completed the entire Saulteaux Section (46 km from Gros Cap to Mabel Lake) in one hiking season. Some may have just completed the Saulteaux Section in the four September hikes; others may have hiked it over a period of several years: Let us know who you are!! You will receive a crest for your backpack, jacket or hat at the November Saulteaux Club Social Evening (see page 10 for details), or by mail if you live out of town. We will publish your name in the next newsletter too! We will take you at your word that you have hiked the entire section (we have a pretty good idea of those that have hiked it - they are the ones with the half-crazed look in their eyes). Call Susan at 705-949-4105.



FOR SALE:

By owner, 600 acre wood lot approximately 20 miles north of Sault Ste. Marie. Call (705) 779-2621, 8 to 5, Monday to Friday.

40 acre bush lot, Sec. 11, S.E. 1/4 pt pcd 4918, #302 Fifth Line, W. Extension, Sault Ste. Marie, Ont. Phone (705) 253-6317.

Free personal classified ads offered to landowners and members. Contact the Editor.



GUIDEBOOK UPDATE

by Steve Dominy

The new Guidebook is not yet three months old, and we're already updating it. Please make note of the following corrections and additions.

Page 7: The telephone number for the contact person with the Saulteaux and adjacent Clubs should read 705-949-4105.

Page 12: Last paragraph under "HIKING THE VOYAGEUR TRAIL", add: If you can't see a blaze or cairn ahead, look back for blazes in the opposite direction. The orientation of the blaze will help you position yourself on the trail. If the next blaze can still not be found, have at least one person remain on the trail while the others fan out to scout the area immediately ahead, staying within voice contact. The trail can generally be located with this method. Please report any problem areas to your nearest VTA representative. If possible, try to improve the trail before proceeding, as a courtesy to the next group.

Page 80: The description for Access Point A10, Echo Ridges Section, should be amended as follows: Take logging road to the right (east), several hundred metres past Hansen's Pond. Drive as far as possible and then walk to the end of the road. Follow an orange-flagged skidder trail about 200 m to the trail (the white blazes follow the skidder trail for a short distance).

Page 92: The description for Access Point A5, Thessalon Section, should include the following: If approaching from the north along Highway 129, the trail is 15.5 km S of Highway 554, or 3.5 km S of Melwel Road.



HIKING THROUGH THE WILDERNESS SURROUNDING ELLIOT LAKE

by Manon Poitras

The region surrounding the City of Elliot Lake offers the avid hiker and naturalist a diversity of opportunities to explore Northern Ontario's exciting wilderness. Visitors can select from a variety of well developed hiking trails which vary from half-day to weekend trips. For the more adventurous at heart, a multitude of orienteering opportunities are also available.

One favourite weekend trek follows the 22 kilometre Mackenzie Trail, located within the boundaries of Mississagi Provincial Park. Open to the public since 1993, this challenging route is dedicated to Flight Lieutenant William Hugh Mackenzie, who crash-landed his Gloster Meteor fighter jet in Helenbar Lake. He spent 23 days stranded in the bush before being rescued by a local fisherman. Mackenzie's resourcefulness and bravery inspired the development of the trail that bears his name.

Following in Mackenzie's footsteps, hikers are introduced to the area's upland forest, which combines large majestic white pine with transitional stands of yellow birch, sugar maple and balsam fir. Here you'll find a wide variety of indigenous wild flowers such as the Indian Cucumber Root and Lady Slipper, which beg to be photographed.

The most exciting features by far along the Mackenzie Trail are the spectacular lookouts. As most hikers know, wonderful views usually entail long-and steep climbs, and in this regard the Mackenzie Trail does not disappoint. The treks to the lookouts are challenging, but the breathtaking vistas bring untold rewards.

The first lookout is on Bear Mountain and provides adventurers with an opportunity to contemplate the pristine views of Brush Lake and a steep gorge. Your next destination is the shore of Brush Lake itself, where you will find the most inviting campsite on the route. Enjoy the excellent swimming and spend some time fishing for abundant brook trout.

When you're ready to move on, the trail weaves around the lake to the starting point for the climb up to the second lookout over Brush Lake. A rock stairway brings you to the rocky ridge of the gorge, which provides a spectacular panoramic view. From this vantage point you can examine closely the impressive V-shaped canyon and study the Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) proposed for Stag Lake Bog. This designation will protect the area from logging and development.

As your trek continues downward in the direction of Stag Lake and back towards your point of origin, the trail connects to an early 1900's logging road which provides a glimpse into the history of the area.

For more information on the Mackenzie Trail, or other hiking opportunities in Elliot Lake, call the Elliot Lake Economic Development Office at 1-800-661-6192.



ARE YOU OUT THERE?



Interested in trail skiing at Stokely Creek Lodge this winter? Contact Linda Badowich at 705-254-5270 or e-mail

lbadowic@age.net



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

This ambitious schedule was put together early in September and may have last-minute changes from time-to-time. Please call our Information Hotline at 705-253-5353 or 1-800-393-5353 (where available) and select message #9999 to check and see if any details of the outing have been changed. This Information Hotline is updated regularly and will have the latest news on the next planned outing. For every outing, please dress appropriately, bring water and a lunch.

Association

Saturday, November 16 - VTA Annual General Meeting 2:00 pm at the Great Lakes Forestry Centre on Queen Street East in Sault Ste. Marie. Refreshments will be provided. There will be a boardwalk hike after the meeting. Everyone is welcome!

Tuesday, December 3 - The Voyageur Trail is closed today.

Saulteaux V.T. Club

*(Sault Ste. Marie area) (outings marked with an * are outside the Sault Ste. Marie area)*

***Saturday, October 5**

We will be hiking from Robertson Lake Road to Stokely. This outing will involve lots of climbing as we enjoy the view atop the cliffs. Meet at the K-Mart Plaza parking lot (behind Red Lobster) at 9:00 am. Leader: Patrick Capper 253-4470.

Sunday, October 6



In honour of Ontario Hiking Day we will be holding two outings, one geared to very young children from Connor Road to Crystal Falls. If you are interested in introducing your young family to the joys of the great outdoors, meet at the K-Mart Plaza behind Red Lobster Restaurant at 10:00 am sharp to car pool. Leader: Steve Dominy 946-2484.

*For those interested in a slightly longer hike, we will be introduced to the trails at Limberlost Lodge on

Highway 129 by the owner, Ute Kissau. They have a few trails which, added together, will give you an opportunity to choose the distance that suits you. Anyone interested can meet at the Churchill Plaza parking lot by the old gas bar at 8:45 am to car pool. We will re-group (for anyone coming who is already east of Sault Ste. Marie) at the Tunnel Lake Trading Post at 10:30 am sharp. For more information, call Mike Landmark at 779-3409 or Ute Kissau at 705-841-2521.

Saturday, October 19

Trail maintenance outing. Call Alan Comfort at 945-9496.

***Sunday, October 20**

We will climb the short, but steep trail from Highway 17 to the lookout over Haviland Bay. Meet at the K-Mart Plaza parking lot (behind Red Lobster) at 10:30 am to car pool. Leader: Gayle Phillips 942-1891.

Saturday, October 26

We will be hiking 6 km of the Voyageur Trail from Creek Road to Red Rock Road which includes two waterfalls. Meet at the Market Mall parking lot at 10:00 am sharp. Leader: Susan Graham 949-4105.

Sunday, October 27

Trail maintenance outing. Call Alan Comfort at 945-9496.

Sunday, November 3 - The Gales of November Hike

The "Gales" will be leading us on a section of the Voyageur Trail to be specified at a later date (depending on weather conditions). Meet at the Market Mall Plaza parking lot at 10:00 am sharp. Leader: Gail Allinson 942-0768.

Monday, November 18 - Saulteaux Club Bi-Monthly Meeting

After the general meeting, there will be an End-of-the-Hiking-Season Wind-up Social. Bring your summer pictures or slides to share. Pizza and refreshments will be available at minimal cost. The meeting starts at 7:30 pm at the Great Lakes Forestry Centre on Queen St. East.

Saturday, November 23 - Santa Claus Parade-WALKERS NEEDED!
Call Susan 949-4105.

Wednesday, January 1, 1997 - New Year's Day Snowshoe

We will meet at the K-Mart Plaza parking lot (behind Red Lobster) at 10:00 am sharp. The weather conditions will determine which section of the Voyageur Trail we will do. Leader: Patrick Capper 253-4470.

Sunday, January 12, 1997

Snowshoe outing at Red Rock cottage area. Meet at the Market Mall parking lot at 10:00 am sharp. Leader: Gayle Phillips 942-1891.

Monday, January 20, 1997 -

Saulteaux Club Bi-Monthly Meeting
After the general meeting, we will be discussing winter skills and various survival packs. Meeting starts at 7:30 pm at the Great Lakes Forestry Centre on Queen Street E. For info, call Susan at 949-4105.

***Saturday, January 25, 1997**

Ski outing to McNearny Lake on the American side. Bring your identification for the bridge and health insurance. Meet at the U.S. Information Building at 9:30 am sharp to car pool. Leader: Chuck Bosley at 906-248-3287 or 949-8206.

(cont'd. on page 11)



MAKE IT A HABIT... call the Voyageur Trail Association Infoline before you go on an outing to make sure the details have not changed! Call 705-253-5353 or 1-800-393-5353 (where available) and select message #9999

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

cont'd. from page 10)

Michipicoten V.T. Club

(Wawa area)



In honour of Ontario Hiking Day on Sunday, October 6 we will hike the Wawa Lake Shoreline to Vallee Park (approximately 2 hours). Meet at the Wawa Post Office at 2:00 pm sharp. For more information, call Peter Burgoyne at 856-2290 or Peter Stinnissen at 856-4270.

Anyone interested in trail maintenance outings, please contact Peter Stinnissen at 856-4270.



EDITOR'S REPORT

by Virve Männiste Squire

This will be my last report as editor of the newsletter as I am now resigning my position.

I have been at the helm of the publication for two years and it is now time for change.

Once again, I would like to extend thanks to Gayle Phillips for the excellent job she has done with the layout, and also helping me to get the newsletter out when my work commitments prevented me from doing

so. I have always enjoyed working on the newsletter and wish to thank all who have submitted articles and photos over the months. It makes the editor's job so much easier.

The 'Brits are Coming' article of this newsletter was co-authored by myself and Linda Badowich and I am taking this opportunity to introduce Linda as your new editor of the newsletter. With a background in journalism, Linda will certainly be an asset to our club in this position and this publication.

Welcome Linda, and happy hiking!!



WANTED: VOLUNTEERS

To help out with the Bon Soo Children's Snowshoe Experience in Sault Ste. Marie on Saturday, February 8, 1997. If you can spare some time, please call Susan at 949-4105.



----- (clip and mail) -----

VOYAGEUR TRAIL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP FORM (please print)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Prov./State: _____

Postal/Zip Code: _____ Phone (home): _____ (work): _____

Please check one: ☐ New Member ☐ Renewal

MEMBERSHIP FEES: (January 1st to December 31st—fees paid after October 31st will be applied to the next membership year)

Adult.....\$20 = _____

Family/Group.....\$20 = _____

Student.....\$10 = _____

Donations (tax receipt will be sent) = _____

Guidebook (member) \$15 x _____ = _____

Guidebook (non-member) \$25 x _____ = _____

Crest \$2 x _____ = _____

Pin \$3 x _____ = _____

T-Shirt \$12 x _____ (size _____) = _____

Long-Sleeved T-Shirt \$15 x _____ (size _____) = _____

Sweatshirt \$20.00 x _____ (size _____) = _____

Total Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Make cheques payable and mail to:

VOYAGEUR TRAIL ASSOCIATION,
P. O. Box 20040, 150 Churchill Blvd.,
Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada
P6A 6W3

(cont'd. on back ◀)



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VICE-PRESIDENT - WEST

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THE VOYAGEUR TRAIL NEWS is published three times per year. Your articles and submissions are always welcome!

Send them to Editor, VTA, Box 20040, 150 Churchill Blvd. Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario P6A 6W3 or e-mail to lbadowic@age.net

Submissions for the next issue should be received by January 1, 1997.

The Trail User's Code

- Hike only along marked routes. Do not take short cuts.
- Do not climb fences.
- Carry out all garbage (if you carry it in, you can carry it out).
- Light cooking fires at official campsites only. Drench fires after use. (or better still, carry a lightweight hiker's stove)
- Leave flowers and plants for others to enjoy.
- Do not damage live trees or strip off bark.
- Protect and do not disturb wildlife.
- Keep dogs on a leash, especially on or near farmland and in parks.
- Respect the privacy of people living along the trail. Walk around the edges of fields, not across them.
- Leave only your thanks and take nothing but photographs. **BE A LOW-IMPACT HIKER!**

----- ✂ ----- (clip and mail) ----- ✂ -----

DECLARATION: I have read and will abide by the Trail User's Code. (signature) _____

I WOULD LIKE TO HELP WITH:

- | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> trail development | <input type="checkbox"/> trail maintenance | <input type="checkbox"/> newsletter, guidebook, photography |
| <input type="checkbox"/> hike leader | <input type="checkbox"/> landowner liaison, records, maps | <input type="checkbox"/> publicity committee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> organization—executive, directors | <input type="checkbox"/> special events; conferences, dinners | |

Please consider me a member-at-large ☐ or a member of (check one below): (*denotes active sections)

Section

- ☐ Thunder Bay
- ☐ Nipigon
- ☐ *Schreiber
- ☐ Marathon
- ☐ Pukaskwa National Park
- ☐ *Wawa
- ☐ Lake Superior Provincial Park
- ☐ Batchawana
- ☐ Goulais
- ☐ *Sault Ste. Marie
- ☐ Echo Bay
- ☐ Desbarats

Club

- Thunder Bay V.T.C.
- Casque Isles V.T.C.
- Michipicoten V.T.C.
- Saulteaux V.T.C.
- Echo Ridges V.T.C.
- Desbarats V.T.C.

Section

- ☐ Thessalon
- ☐ Iron Bridge
- ☐ *Blind River
- ☐ Elliot Lake
- ☐ Spanish
- ☐ Massey
- ☐ Espanola
- ☐ Little Current
- ☐ Sheguiandah
- ☐ South Baymouth
- ☐ Sudbury

Club

- Thessalon V.T.C.
- Penewobikong V.T.C.
- Coueurs de Bois V.T.C.
- Rainbow V.T.C.
- Sudbury V.T.C.