

FALL 2006

THE QUETICO

QUETICO PARK MASTER PLAN REVIEW

PG-2

Artist in Residence

PG-4

New Program Highlights

Ridley Wilderness Youth Program

PG-12

Biology Internship Program

PG-13

CHAIR'S CORNER

BY

Chris Dobson, Chair, The Quetico Foundation

This newsletter is filled with account of the Foundation's accomplishments in the past eight months - our Summer Student Research Program; our advocacy with the Provincial Government on the new Parks and Conservation Reserves Act; the new Quetico Park Master Plan Review process; Jim Douglas' new project with non traditional canoe trippers; our staffing of an assistant to the Park Biologist; the Artists' Cabin; plus a host of other activities all of which have made for a busy spring and summer. But sometimes in the rush of today, we forget the achievements of the past. At the time of the Foundation's annual meeting last May, I was discussing some of our plans for the coming year with Matthew Gaasenbeek, a former Chair. He complimented us on the work we were doing but pointed out that it was a pity that people didn't realize all the things that the Foundation has done over the years. I asked him to write me, listing some of the projects that came to his mind. Here are just some of the Foundation initiatives he talked about:

- Funding of a research and archival library of current and historical materials pertaining to the Park.-the *John B. Ridley Library at French Lake*.
- Providing the funds for the planting of special white pine seeds to produce *superior white pine resistant trees*.
- Providing funds for *canoes for the Atikokan High School's 'Outers' program*.
- Providing \$25,000 to the *Lac La Croix Band* to start a micro loan operation to support small native business.
- Offering a *\$1000 annual bursary* to Atikokan and Lac La Croix high school students who are going on to university to pursue environment related studies.

Space does not permit me to list all the achievements Matthew wrote about but the above provides a sampling of the Foundation's past work. Over the past fifty years we have tried to help the park in ways that were important to its needs at the time. This is a job I hope we intend to keep doing for the next fifty years.

THE QUETICO' includes materials from both Foundation Trustees and outside contributors. We carefully edit our materials, and regret any reference printed in 'THE QUETICO' that may be interpreted in such a way as to offend or discredit anyone, as it is sincerely not our intent.

Early Days in Quetico

One of the big figures in the early years of Quetico was Ernest Oberholtzer or "Ober" as he was known. He was an avid conservationist and a recorder of the Ojibwa's oral history. In the summer of 1909, he canoed in the Park with his Ojibwa guide, Billy Magee. Oberholtzer's diary of that journey is a snapshot of Quetico at the moment of its preservation. Here are some excerpts from his diary.

August 22, 1909- "One of the finest campsites that I have ever seen is on the point of the island where one turns west for the portage to Beaverhouse. Grove of Norways on dry level sandy shore; several miles of perfect sand beach. R.E. Readman of Fort Frances had a very fine camp."

August 23, 1909: "Just above the entrance to Wolseley Lake the river branches, and at the entrance to the north branch there is a splendid torrential fall swinging round a low curved canyon. Island at the mount. Beautiful lichen covered cliffs on the north side. Near the portage just at the foot of the falls the Indians have erected some stands of poles from which they spear sturgeon with a long rod."

August 24, 1909: "Eight chain portage in the run round Snake Falls which is a series of twisting turbulent rapids without any distinction of land forms. A mile or so further we came in sight of the water; gray lake lying like the harbour of an ocean, where one would expect a lighthouse on the capes... birch bark canoes passing each other at the inlet. Indian village of cedar houses, and bark wigwams."

September 6, 1909: "Reached Poohbah at half past six and was very tired. Fortunately we had had a perfect day and we now had a perfectly clear night with the sky abloom with stars. They made a good deal of light and some of them threw long spiral reflections upon the water. I had to finish pitching the tent in the dark on site of a large old Indian wigwam. Billy said the Indians had been making canoes there and that it was a favourite lake for that purpose. The Indian name of the lake is Gan dook gwe mawitay..." (The original name - which means "place for getting bark for canoes" - is still remembered by some of the Lac La Croix people. The current name Poohbah, has no meaning here.)

Fifty five years later he recounted his feelings about that trip: "Quetico in 1909 seemed to be a primitive country, a wonderful place, and it was no wonder the Indians had traditions and felt spirits in there. It had a spirituality. You felt you were in a magic land."

Diary entries quoted from Shirley Peruniak's 'Illustrated History of Quetico Provincial Park.'

QUETICO PARK

Quetico Park Master Plan Review

The Quetico Park Management Plan Review is underway. This critical process will plot the future of Quetico Provincial Park for decades to come. The draft Terms of Reference released in July named The Quetico Foundation to the Advisory Group for the project.

This review is one of the most important tasks the Foundation will undertake and is at the core of our purpose. The Foundation has created a three-person Plan Review Committee led by Trustee and Chair of the Liaison Committee, Cam Clark. In representing the "Foundation's interests, our Review Committee will be relying on the input of the broader team - all Foundation Trustees and concerned members of the public.

The Plan Review is complex and must consider many issues from economic development in the surrounding area to invasive species within the Park. Simultaneously, it must align itself with policies and regulations imposed upon it by three levels of government.

The Terms of Reference are being refined following the September 15, 2006 deadline for comment.

They can be reviewed at <http://www.ontarioparks.ca/english/guetplanning.html>.

The Foundation's response focused on ensuring that the review was comprehensive, specifically requesting the inclusion of the following in the review process:

- *The greater parks ecosystem*
- *Connectivity between the parks in the Quetico region.*
- *Proposed hydroelectric development on the Namakan river*
- *Forest management activities outside of the Park*
- *Motorized guiding*
- *Scientific research*
- *Park use and capacity issues*
- *Aircraft activity*

The real discussion is starting this Fall. We will have no right to complain after the fact if we do not participate fully in the process now. Please review the Foundation's complete response to the Terms of Reference and follow progress on the Master Plan Review process on our website at www.queticofoundation.org. Send your submissions, comments or questions to Glenda McLachlan in our office. Please support The Foundation's *raison d'être* - "the preservation of wilderness!"

Arthur Saunders, Trustee

Superintendent's Musings

Can you recall that feeling when you're paddling up to the rim of fast moving water? The surface you are on is still, but just a bit ahead the water is starting to swirl. Already the under-currents are grabbing the bottom of the canoe and bringing the water to life. You can still control the boat but you need to keep your wits about you because with a few awkward strokes you could lose that canoe.

Well, that's a bit how the 2009 Quetico Park Centennial feels....just starting to grab on but almost imperceptibly. Pulling us forward is the new Management Planning Process - now underway. New research projects suggest rocks beneath the surface. A third vector is the call of history from the 2007 Bi-Centennial of voyageur cartographer David Thompson. And then there is the artistic lineage with the recent news that one of Paul Kane's early voyageur paintings was actually done in Quetico. Then there are the many 'burning issues' ranging from managing last summer's very active fire season to anticipating how climate change may reshape this forest.

Needless to say, so many currents, spreading in different directions with the odd whirlpool make it difficult to seize all of the moments and make the best of every opportunity. The Ontario Parks program has evolved to address most of Quetico's needs but like any large organization it can be slow to react to changing currents.....it goes straight and sure. Sometimes though, you really need a canoe with a lot of 'rocker' that can quickly pivot into a new and unforeseen channel.

The Quetico Foundation has proven to be such a craft. The Foundation has probed many pools. Our resource library, books and pamphlets, voyageur canoes and a sustained research program are all past legacies of the Foundation's efforts. Recent items include a research assistant, an art studio and an evolving school program. Underlying many of these specific ventures are the intangible benefits from the Foundation's role in shaping policy, providing guidance and conducting advocacy.

Quetico offers innumerable potential routes and it is through the unwavering support of many people and organizations that the challenging trip continues to be valuable and fulfilling.

Robin Reilly, Quetico Park Superintendent

Foundation Summer Programs

10th Anniversary Summer Student Research Program

The Foundation's Summer Student Research Program celebrated its 10th Anniversary this summer with an outstanding season - perfect weather, an exceptional team, solid research results, and adventure!

Jeremy Martin, a 4th year veteran of the Program led our team comprised of 2 returning university students Alison Smith and Marlys Niskanen, Noah Johnson an outdoor education student from Rainy River College in Minnesota, and 2 Atikokan High School students, Todd Burton and Lis Boileau.

The research protocol established by Trustee, Dr. Roger Suffling of the University of Waterloo involved: a forest fire and logging history survey along, including vegetation identification, tree core sampling, plot investigation and sapling collection – all along 66 1km transects through the forest; a shoreline photo survey of 3200 photos; historical photo replications; and, a lake outlet survey of 21 lakes, involving water level measurement, impoundment assessment and outlet sketching. The team spent much of the summer in remote areas of the Park, not studied in previous years, involving significant travel adventures by canoe, towing and seaplane.

A special thanks is extended to all of our Summer Student Program sponsors, as well as all those in Atikokan who made our Program possible this summer, including Souris River Canoes, the Atikokan High School Outers Program, Canoe Canada Outfitters, Atikokan Aero Service, Zup's Resort, Andrea Allison of the John B. Ridley Research Library, Ontario Parks and all the Quetico Park staff. Thoughts of one of our students captures what proved to be a great summer:

" It really was one of the best summers of my life. Even if I hadn't have loved the work, the rest of the team would have made the whole summer worthwhile. I don't think a funnier, more enthusiastic, hardworking group of people could be found anywhere. I loved coming back to camp to their smiling faces, excited to regale them with stories of my day, and in turn hear the events of theirs. Our last couple of nights we slept out under the stars, talking about UFO's, planes, shooting stars and everything else contained in our vast universe. The next morning was full of 'lasts.' Our last time packing up, our last time eating English muffins and oatmeal, our last lake, the last time to call or hear called "hut," our last portage and finally our last wait for a Canoe Canada pick- Our summer was over. It was time to go back to our lives. It was hard to say goodbye to the people who I'd spent 35 days with and lived as a tight-knit family unit. I hope this helps to give you a little glimpse into the paradise I called my home this summer."

Glenda McLachlan, Executive Director; Lis Boileau, Summer Student

Biology Internship Program

One of the new programs launched by the Foundation in 2006, in thanks to the Margery J. Warren bequest to the Foundation, was the hiring of a summer student as a research assistant to the Park Biologist. The program was successfully piloted by Chris Martin, a seasoned veteran of the Summer Student Research Program, a recent science graduate and a resident of Atikokan who worked with the Park Biologist on a variety of natural resource management projects.

Although the goal of wilderness parks is to allow the "forces of nature to function freely", this actually requires a lot of management! The park must balance social, economic and ecological considerations when making resource management decisions, and we must monitor the results of our actions. Chris was involved in a number of projects this year that directly contribute to the management of Quetico:

- *Invasive Species Monitoring Strategy:* Managing invasive species can be a daunting task. This strategy will guide Park staff in the management, monitoring and control of invasive species found in the Park and on adjacent lands.
- *Digitize Fire History:* The park has a wealth of fire information, but until now, it has not been in a format that is easily analyzed. The fire history map is now in digital format and can be used by both Park managers and fire ecologists in a Geographic Information System.
- *Life Science Inventory:* The life science inventory is needed to help determine Park use, zoning, policy and regulation. It is also used by researchers and naturalist staff for background information on the Park's flora and fauna.
- *Response of Red, White and Jack Pine to Prescribed Fire and Burns:* This is a long term monitoring project to determine if the Park is meeting its objectives as outlined in the Fire Management Plan (1997).
- *Spiny Waterflea Surveillance Program:* Spiny Waterflea is an invasive aquatic zooplankton that has recently invaded two Park lakes: Saganaga and Saganagons Lakes. By closely monitoring which lakes the spiny water flea has invaded, we can better inform park visitors on how to help control its spread.

Quetico Park appreciates the support of The Quetico Foundation for this new program, and hopes that it will continue in the future.

Lisa Solomon, Quetico Park Biologist

Ridley Wilderness Youth Program

This summer marked the launch of the Quetico Foundation's Ridley Wilderness Youth Program. The Program is supported through a generous donation to the Foundation from the Estate of Norma Ridley, widow of one of the Foundation's founders, Jack Ridley.

Pristine wilderness, like Quetico, is one of the defining characteristics of Canada. Unfortunately, the makeup of visitors to Quetico and other wilderness parks is not reflective of the multicultural face of Canada. The Program is designed to introduce a broad spectrum of Canadian youths, our future business and political leaders, to the wilderness experience and the value of our natural environment. The Foundation has been working with Agincourt Collegiate Institute, a high school in the Toronto District School Board, to give a group of students enrolled in an Interdisciplinary Studies course: Environmental Leadership and Outdoor Education, the opportunity to take a week long canoe trip in Quetico Park at the end of their course. The school population of Agincourt CI, where the first language of more than two thirds of the students is other than English, is truly representative of the Canadian cultural mosaic.

The somewhat inaptly named "dry run" trip to introduce key TDSB staff to Quetico put in at the Beaver House entry point on August 25th. Trustee, Jim Douglas, and his wife, Judy Haladay, were joined on the trip by Mark Whitcombe, Program Co-ordinator of Outdoor Education for the TDSB, Lesley McLean, teacher of Agincourt CI's interdisciplinary course, Pete Hitchcock, Outdoor Specialist at TDSB's Scarborough Outdoor Education School (SOES), Len Elphick, Outdoor Education Teacher at SOES, Tamara van Dyk, Natural Heritage Education Leader for Quetico Provincial Park and Adam Hault, a student in recreational studies at Seneca College. Canoe Canada in Atikokan assisted with the trip planning, outfitted the dry run trip and are already planning for the arrival of the first group of students in September 2007.

Quetico pulled out all the stops for the TDSB folks. The weather was warm and sunny, the wind was at the paddlers' backs and the fish were biting. If there were any lingering doubts about Quetico as an appropriate wilderness destination for TDSB students, those were dispelled by a magical night on Jesse Lake. Mark Whitcombe paddled out on a calm lake as the sun was settling with a sliver of a moon in the sky and began playing his tin flute. To everyone's wonder and amazement, his music set off a chorus of wolf howls from separate packs on either side of the lake. The serenade continued until darkness fell.

The group took out at Nym Lake on August 29th. Lesley, Mark and Jim met with Robin Reilly, Superintendent of the Park that afternoon and with both the Atikokan Town Council and staff of Atikokan High School and their 'Outers' Program on the morning of August 30th. All expressed enthusiastic support and encouragement for the Program. The Foundation and the TDSB hope to broaden the program in the future, providing students in other TDSB schools with the opportunity to appreciate the wilderness environment and to hear the wolves sing!

Jim Douglas, Trustee

Reflections

I dip my paddle into the cool water and let the wind blow through my hair. Waves splashing on the rocky shoreline replace the sound of ringing phones and passing vehicles. My feet no longer meet pavement but soft earth and roots. My thoughts linger on deadlines and worries of the future until I realize, with a grateful sense of relief that they are of little consequence here. Ten minutes of paddling down the lake and I suddenly feel incredibly free. I'm in Quetico Provincial Park, and I focus on the present: the smiling, bronzed faces of my co-workers, majestic lakeside pines whispering in the breeze and loon calls from somewhere off in the distance. The sights, smells and sounds all but overwhelm my senses, and I cannot wait to experience the adventures this job has in store for me

My name is Christopher Martin and I have worked with The Quetico Foundation for 6 consecutive summers (2001-2006). I was born and raised in Atikokan and am the fourth in a family of five children. Having been incredibly fascinated by animals since a very young age, I have chosen to make a career of zoology, recently completing my Honours BSc. and now pursuing my Masters. Employment with The Quetico Foundation- 5 years with the Summer Student Research Program and this past summer as Assistant to the Park Biologist - offered me a means to study and experience this idyllic wilderness Park. I was truly ecstatic when 'Sarge' (William B. Sargent), then the Executive Director, phoned me that spring evening 6 years ago, telling me I was hired.

I have benefited from this job in many ways. Through managing finances, borrowing expensive research and camping equipment and collecting accurate ecological information in the field, I have gained a strong sense of responsibility. Directing co-workers, making decisions and working together with community businesses has made me more bold and out-going. In being responsible for the health and well-being of others in remote wilderness settings, I've become more prudent and cautious. Working and living alongside others in physically and mentally challenging environments has taught me patience and empathy. In learning, teaching and practicing ecology and natural history, I have gained a broad understanding of and deep respect for Quetico's wilderness. I have developed field data collection skills and taken part in the human endeavor to understand, manage and conserve our protected areas- knowledge I will always value. This job has challenged my intellectual, emotional and physical self.

My experiences have also taught me life lessons I will live by. Be very open to, yet discerning with advice, and understand the motivation behind suggestions. Do not rely on good references and compliments of the past to speak for you in the present or future. Remain consistent and self-disciplined - you will respect yourself for it. Discipline and direct others in fairness - they will respect you in the end. Accept responsibility confidently, swallow your fear and admit your mistakes. And, lastly, if you perform and reason to the best of your ability, you need feel no guilt, no matter the outcome.

Working for The Quetico Foundation has had a huge influence on my life and I hope I've given something back. I hope the information I've collected is used to improve our understanding and management of Quetico, other protected areas, and wilderness in general. I trust I've represented The Quetico Foundation well through conversations with campers and partners in business. I hope I have furthered the goal to protect, appreciate and respect Canada's wilderness. I hope I've inspired others to change, speak out or drive to succeed. I hope I have been a positive influence on others and on Quetico Provincial Park.

Thanks for the incredible summers. I guess it never is a sure goodbye from one canoeist to another, so rather I'll say, "Dig in your heels, push hard on the hills, remember to pause amidst your pain and discomfort to watch the morning dew drop from the leaves, and I'll see you at the other end of the portage."

Chris Martin, Summer Student

(Chris has made an enormous contribution to our summer program over the years. We are very proud to say that Chris was the University of Guelph's recipient of the Governor General's Silver Medal Award in the spring. We expect he will continue to be a significant contributor in the field of wilderness ecology and zoology for years to come.)

Artist in Residence

Algonquin Park was home to the Group of 7. The stark landscape of the far north has been beautifully portrayed by native and non native artists for decades. The vast white rocks of Killarney have been a favourite setting for many wilderness artists. Few artists however have chosen Quetico for their backdrop, although in recent weeks it was discovered that a famous landscape by Paul Kane was indeed of the French River in Quetico Park. Encouraging artistic rendition of the pristine wilderness beauty of Quetico Provincial Park is one more way of furthering broader awareness of the wilderness values of the Park.

A now vacant old pump house on the shore of French Lake has presented itself as an ideal temporary residence for visiting artists. George Fells, a former Chair of the Foundation led a successful campaign this summer raising \$5000. from 10 individuals to cover the requisite renovation costs to make the pump house inhabitable. The Artists Cabin is now almost complete thanks to the labour of local volunteers and Park staff. Three local artists have already expressed an interest in taking up residency for a period of a few weeks in order to immerse themselves in the wilderness of the Park and recreate its beauty in their medium of choice. The project hopes to attract visiting artists from across the Province, who in exchange for the opportunity will be asked to donate a piece of their 'Quetico' art to the Foundation for auctioning at our Annual Dinner.

We expect to have our first 'artist in residence' by the spring of 2007!

George Fells, Trustee Emeritus

2006 Annual Dinner

As this newsletter goes to print, we are also preparing for our Annual Dinner on October 18th in Toronto. We are expecting over 100 wilderness enthusiasts to grace the halls of the Ontario Club and hear our distinguished guest speaker Wendy Grater, Owner, Black Feather Wilderness Adventure Company, share with us some of the stories and images of her adventures by canoe, kayak and hike. Langford Canoe has generously supported our canoe raffle this year and our silent auction will be featuring over half a dozen outstanding wilderness adventure holidays! We hope to see you there!

Upcoming Events

May 5th – Mark your calendars for The Quetico Foundation Annual Canoe Day on the Grand River! Following last years outstanding success, Grand Experience of Paris Ontario will once again be sponsoring our event. Details will follow in the winter.

Contact Us

If you are interested in any of our programs, have concerns regarding the Park that you would like to share, or would like to support or become involved with the Quetico Foundation, please call us or email us at your convenience. Don't forget to keep abreast of our activities on our website!

Corporate Sponsors:

REGIONAL POWER INC.

Toronto, Ontario

BORDEN LADNER GERVAIS LLP

Toronto, Ontario

ROGERS PARTNERS LLP

Toronto, Ontario

BOHLER UDDEHOLM LTD

Mississauga, Ontario

COLE & PARTNERS LIMITED

Toronto, Ontario

Corporate Partners:

CANOE CANADA OUTFITTERS

Atikokan, Ontario

GRAND EXPERIENCES

Paris, Ontario

ROBERT EVANS INVESTMENT COUNSEL LIMITED

Toronto, Ontario

SOURIS RIVER CANOES

Atikokan, Ontario

TEPPERMAN BUCHALTER LLP

Toronto, Ontario

STOCKWOOD LLP

Toronto, Ontario

THE ONTARIO CLUB

Toronto, Ontario

The Quetico Foundation, Established 1954

Honorary Patron:

THE HON. JAMES K. BARTLEMAN,

Lieutenant Governor of Ontario

Officers:

CHRIS DOBSON, Chair

FRASER REEVES, Vice Chair

PETER DALGLISH, Treasurer

JIM DOUGLAS, Secretary

ARTHUR SAUNDERS, Past Chair

Trustees:

JAMIE BENIDICKSON

STUART N. BOISMENUE, M.D.

KEN BU CHAN

CAMERON CLARK

RICK CLENDINNING

COLIN COOLICAN

STEWART DEWAR

DAVID ELDER

GRANT GORDON

PAUL D. HAHN

JOHN M. HODGSON

RICHARD L. KELLEY

DR. GERALD KILLAN

BECKY MASON

T. IAN McLEOD

MICHAEL PEAKE

NORM RICHARDS

MARJORIE ROGERS

ROGER SUFFLING, PH.D.

TANNY WELLS

R. LEE WOODS

Trustees Emeriti:

JOHN M. BANKES

STEPHEN COLE

DANIEL DAMOV

R.W. DODDS

A. GEORGE FELLS

MATTHEW GAASENBEEK

F.B. HUBACHEK, JR.

CHARLES A. KELLY

CLIFFORD C. LAX, Q.C.

JACK E. MATTHEWS, LL.D.

WILLIAM B. SARGANT

FRANK W. WOODS

Executive Director:

GLENDIA McLACHLAN

Newsletter Production:

KYLE CROCKARD, GRANT GORDON and

JULIE BOYDA

Published by The Quetico Foundation,

48 Yonge Street, Suite 610

Toronto, Ontario, M5E 1G6

Tel: (416) 941-9388

Fax: (416) 941-9236

Email: office@queticofoundation.org

Web Site: www.queticofoundation.org

Charitable Registration # 119252427RR0001

