

The Newsletter of The Quetico Foundation

# The QUETICO

Summer 1999

Vol. 44 Number 2



Photo: Matthew Gassenbeek

**PINE BY ME** -- MNR Forest technician John Pringle stands in the White Pine Seed Orchard at the west end of Quetico Park. The orchard is a project of the Quetico Foundation where genetically hardy White Pine seedlings were planted seven years ago. The trees are thriving and being maintained. The seed came from special rust-resistant stock developed in the Boundary Waters region. See Page 6 for more on these unique trees.

## On the ground in Quetico

By **FRANCES GERTSCH**

*Director*

*Quetico Foundation Summer Student Research Program*

The energy and enthusiasm of our group was hard to believe. After five intense days of training, the crew was prepared for, and excited about, the 43 days they would spend in the bush this summer. The six students, who are from Lac La Croix and Atikokan, spent their summer doing research in Quetico Provincial Park.

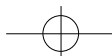
It was perhaps not the bugs in the bush that had them so excited, but the camaraderie and friendships and the thrill of a cool swim at the end of a hard day of work that filled them with enthusiasm.

On July 5, 1999 these students began the process of taking stock of Quetico's forests using two standard procedures: the Forest Resources Inventory (FRI) and the Northwestern Ontario Forest Ecosystem Classification (NWO-FEC). These procedures are scientific methods of gathering information such as tree heights, diameters, ages, and species; soil types; and overall vegetation composition of the forest. This information will help managers make better and more informed decisions about everything from recreational use of the park to their approach to naturally occurring forest fires.

Our crew has spent most of their time at the north end of the park and has completed 35 lines to date - and we still have two ten-day trips to complete. Although the summer has been a process of learning, the skills of the field crew improve: they became not only quicker, but also more accurate in their data collection.

In addition to the ecology inventory being conducted, some students from the Quetico Foundation Summer Student Research Program are involved in the third summer of

➔ *Please see SUMMER on Page 7*



2.

## Chairman's Message

The Foundation's Annual General Meeting held on June 17th presented me with the opportunity to reflect on the activities of the Foundation during my initial year as Chairman.

First and foremost among the significant events of the past year must be the manner in which the Lands for Life process appears to have been resolved. In my first message as Chairman I expressed the view that the Lands for Life Initiative had all the appearance of being a white-wash and a process that would largely ignore one of its principle mandates, namely to complete the parks system and increase the amount of protected areas.

Happily, it appears this anticipated result will not be obtained and instead the citizens of this province can look forward to the promise of a greatly increased allocation of public lands to non-invasive uses. This result, I believe, speaks volumes for the virtue of responsible and informed public advocacy which in this case was led by the Partnership for Public Lands, but also ably supported by the *Quetico Foundation* and other similar voices.

Personally, I also believe it fair and reasonable to give some credit to Premier Mike Harris and his government for not accepting the Round Table proposals and bringing the divisive elements together. Of course, in the next few years it will

be incumbent upon the public, and in particular concerned environmental organizations, to ensure that the proposals are properly implemented and monitored. The Foundation is committed to taking an active role in this process.

Our satellite map is now available for delivery and is being received with a lot of critical acclaim. The large map seems to be most suitable as a remembrance of a trip to the park, with the individual quadrant maps being more useful for canoeing purposes. (Order form on page 5.)

In May of this year, the Town of Atikokan assumed the responsibility of planting in and about the town some 9,000 white pine seedlings that represented the final stock from the Foundation's Tall Pines Project. This project, you may remember, was initiated in 1990 by the Foundation to promote the development of a blister rust-resistant strain of White Pine. The Town was able to make the planting a real community event as part of the town's 100th year anniversary celebrations. We are hopeful that the results of the labour will lead ultimately to a much enhanced beauty of the town site and the enjoyment of many future generations.

This past year has also seen the crystallization of the plans for the proposed Northern Ontario Canoe

➔ *Please see CHAIRMAN on Page 7*



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# The Quetico

A publication of The Quetico Foundation

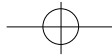
**Editor: Michael Peake**

Additional copies of this newsletter can be obtained by writing The Quetico Foundation: 48 Yonge St., Suite 610, Toronto, Ontario M5E 1G6



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*We welcome suggestions, photos, reminiscences and stories for consideration. Please forward any ideas or submissions to: Michael Peake, Editor, The Quetico, 301 Cranbrooke Avenue, Toronto M5M 1M9 or E-mail: michaelpeake@home.com*



# Park Report

## The Quetico summer of '99

BY SHIRLEY PERUNIAK

Canoeists have had a hot, wet, windy summer with severe storms. As Atikokan was preparing for its 100th birthday celebrations winds gusting to 100 km/hr picked up their arena size tent, dumping it on the car lot across the street doing thousands of dollars damage. At French Lake, those winds uprooted one of the big red pines at the Picnic Shelter and broke the trunks of two others. These trees have stood for approximately 237 years, saved from the logging in 1926-27 by Superintendent John Jamieson.

On July 4 the storm tracking towards Quetico touching the southern boundary through the Man Chain and Emerald Lake. What they called "straight line winds" felled approximately 12 million trees in the Boundary Waters Wilderness. Helicopters lowered crews with chain saws to clear a way out for injured campers. Former Quetico Ranger Art Madsen aged 94 was taking his daughter to the Gunflint Trail so she could meet a plane in Duluth. He reached the U.S. landing on Saganaga Lake. He told her to "unload fast. I've got to wheel. When you see black clouds forming like that, it could mean a twister".

Art wrote me a letter on July 18 about his trip home to the Canadian side of the lake

"I could see it was coming fast and black clouds had a brown yellowish color under them. Lightning and thunder were flashing all around and wind was really getting up. After a few miles I was following along a rock wall as I know lightning will hit the highest part. Quick as a flash I did not see the lightning but one of the loudest thunder cracks I'd ever heard nearly knocked my ears off. Then I could see this grayish wall of cloud coming fast and knew it would really put down heavy rain. When I crossed

by Powells' place the wind was so strong it was pushing rain horizontally. I was coming into the dock area very fast. My granddaughter rushed out and snubbed my bow rope to the dock. Within minutes the waves became 5 feet. This was the worst storm in memory of some old timers."

The Gunflint Trail from Grand Marais to Saganaga Lake was closed and canoeists booked for Cache Bay drove north to enter at French, Nym, and Beaverhouse Lakes.

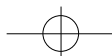
Work continues on the Illustrated History of Quetico with the first draft corrected and on its way back to the editor. The pictures have been chosen - many more than there will be room for. We do have a wonderful collection. The Quetico era under Superintendent Jay Leather contains more information and more photos than earlier sections.

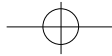
Many Quetico Foundation members will remember being involved in the issues and the resolution of those issues especially in 1992 and 1994. The 1987-1999 section should go to the editor before I leave to drive home to the other side of Ontario. Librarian Andrea Allison of the John B. Ridley Research Library has been of great assistance in keeping the project on track and locating and scanning the pictures. I will not be able to start the album of this era this summer but will have pulled the material together. What is very interesting to me is the fact that as I was contemplating another album in the Lac La Croix series I realized that the new album 1987-1999 will show us working together in the Quetico story.

I have known many of the young people who are now working in the Park. It will be interesting to see how the albums develop. Also of note is the support of the Quetico Foundation in the economic issues of Lac La Croix and of Atikokan. *Shirley Peruniak is currently working on a history of Quetico.*



photo: Michael Peake





4.

## Summer program

# Digging through history

### GREATER PICKEREL LAKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY-1999

This summer we completed a survey of Pickerel Lake and the lakes that can be reached from Pickerel Lake without portaging. This area, which I refer to as Greater Pickerel Lake, includes French Lake, Rawn Lake, and Batchewaung Lake, as well as the Rawn Narrows and Pickerel Narrows. Last year we completed almost all of Pickerel Lake and Rawn Lake. This summer we completed Pickerel Lake and also surveyed French Lake and Batchewaung Lake. The survey involves paddling the shoreline and investigating existing campsites and other places that appear to have potential for use by humans.

The water level is much higher this year and that means that we have much less exposed shoreline to look at. We were extremely fortunate last year because the water levels were lower than usual due to a combination of low rainfall and high temperatures. The higher than normal rainfalls this summer have made it more difficult to find sites

This summer we continued the policy of leaving all the artifacts of the sites where they are found. We began this procedure last year at the request of the Elders at Lac La Croix. Artifacts, except for flakes and pottery shards, are drawn and photographed. These artifacts are then cached on the site where they were found. Caching allows the artifacts protection from being found and removed by canoeists from the site, while keeping them at the site.

We talked to many canoeists this summer

and explained to them what we are doing and why we are doing it. People seem sympathetic to the idea of leaving artifacts at the site rather than removing them. I call this procedure "catch and release archaeology." They seem to agree that this policy is necessary if their grandchildren will have the opportunity

el, we didn't find that many this year, we will end up with about 90 sites. This summer has been very hot, although not as hot as last year, and to compensate for the heat we get up at 5:30 am and get a lot of surveying done in the morning before the day heats up. Fortunately, the students that I am working with are willing to do this. This summer we also found many sites in places that are not current campsites. This is undoubtedly due to a variety of factors.

The environment has changed over time and type of resources exploited has also changed. Most contemporary campsites are sites located to take advantage of summer weather and to avoid insects. Since people used to live in Quetico year around, they also camped in

early spring, late fall and winter. These campsites are in more protected areas and are not usually campsites used by summer canoeists.

The direction given to us by Lac la Croix Elders definitely changed the way the survey is conducted. The standard procedure for archaeological surveys involves a technique known as shovel-testing. Soil is taken at specified intervals from a campsite and this soil is passed through a screen and material left on the screen is investigated. Since we are not digging or doing any intrusive and time-consuming activities, we have time to investigate more of the shoreline. We are consequently finding sites in places that are overlooked by other procedures.

photo: Michael Peake



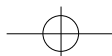
to see a spearpoint or arrowhead in its original context. Every artifact that is removed by a canoeist diminishes the history of Canada.

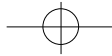
Native Canadians have lived in Quetico for about 9,000 years. Consequently, there should be a lot of archaeological sites in this area. Pickerel Lake was chosen for this survey because it was the northeastern corner of Lake Aggasiz and the lake level has remained relatively stable since that time. The earliest known inhabitants, the Palaeoindians, camped along the same shoreline and in a few cases on the same campsites, as their successors over the next 9,000 years.

Last year we found 58 archaeological sites and although, because of the higher water lev-

el, we didn't find that many this year, we will end up with about 90 sites. This summer has been very hot, although not as hot as last year, and to compensate for the heat we get up at 5:30 am and get a lot of surveying done in the morning before the day heats up. Fortunately, the students that I am working with are willing to do this. This summer we also found many sites in places that are not current campsites. This is undoubtedly due to a variety of factors.

— Marie Nelson.





# Satellite Map

Please send your completed form to The Quetico Foundation, 48 Yonge St. Suite 610,  
Toronto, ON M5E 1G6 Tel: 416.941.9388, Fax: 941.9236 E: office@queticofoundation.org

## Quetico Park Satellite Map Order Form

**Please supply me with:**

_____ copies of the large map ( 86 x 112 cm ) @ \$22.95	\$ _____
_____ copies of Canoe Map 1 ( 56 x 86 cm ) @ \$5.95 (northwest quadrant of the park)	\$ _____
_____ copies of Canoe Map 2 ( 56 x 86 cm ) @ \$5.95 (northeast quadrant of the park)	\$ _____
_____ copies of Canoe Map 3 ( 56 x 86 cm ) @ \$5.95 (southwest quadrant of the park)	\$ _____
_____ copies of Canoe Map 4 ( 56 x 86 cm ) @ \$5.95 (southeast quadrant of the park)	\$ _____
Shipping and handling - NO CHARGE for orders exceeding \$100.00 U.S. orders add \$10	\$ _____ sub-total
for orders less than \$100 add \$5.00	\$ _____
PST (8%) (Ontario residents only)	\$ _____

GST Exempt (Charitable Registration No. 0235341-53-13)

**TOTAL COST OF ORDER** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Cheques or money orders for the above amount should be made payable to  
The Quetico Foundation and sent with your order to the address above.**

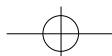
**Ship to:** Name \_\_\_\_\_

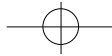
Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Prov/State \_\_\_\_\_ Postal \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (for future correspondence)





6.

## Updates

### Birthday Trees

**D**uring the last week of May, over 9,000 White Pine trees were planted in and around the town of Atikokan. It was a magic mix: Atikokan was celebrating its 100th birthday during 1999 and the *Quetico Foundation* had some seedling trees that needed a home. After some discussion, the town, the students from various schools, volunteers from the Atikokan Sportsmen's Conservation Club, the Atikokan Chamber of Commerce and the Ministry of Natural Resources got together and organized a planting week.

The small trees were remainders from another Quetico Foundation driven endeavour - the Quetico Tall Pines Research Project. Among the outstanding features of Quetico Park are the big white pine trees that contribute so much to the scenery of the Park. Over the years, some of the majestic trees have died, victims of a disease known as White Pine Blister Rust. In 1990 about 1,000 seedling trees were planted in Quetico, partly to replace the lost trees and partly to introduce a strain of White Pine with a greater disease tolerance. The rust resistant trees were given to the Foundation by Clifford Ahlgren who had developed the resistant strain in Minnesota. Additional resident seedlings were grown by the Ministry of Natural Resources at the Dryden Tree Nursery from seeds donated by the Angus Seed Extraction Plant. Not all the trees grown at the nursery were planted in Quetico and it was those that found a home in Atikokan.

Several hundred Atikokan school students enthusiastically participated in the tree plant and will undoubtedly be watching the progress of the trees they so carefully planted. What will Atikokan look like when the next 100 years have passed? Wait and see.

- Dave Elder.

### SatMap

**W**hile Matt Gaasenbeek chaired the Foundation a few years ago, he saw a coloured satellite image of Toronto and realised that the trusty canoe map of Quetico could use a high tech upgrade.

He gently prodded the Foundation into launching a new canoe map, which it has just published. (Order form on Page 5.) This is an



account of how several dozen of us transformed Matt's idea to a finished product.

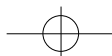
The first stage was the inevitable and unending round of meetings, memos and copyright negotiations. These logistic difficulties were a hidden blessing because they resulted in the involvement of Northern Tourist operators and Park users, as well as giving us a chance to think about what the Quetico community really needs in a map.

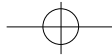
A framework emerged in which the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources would co-publish the map with the Foundation. The satellite imagery and computer mapping would be handled by the Faculty of Environmental Studies at the University of Waterloo. Trevor Smith was hired to undertake graphic design, and a specialty printer, Edward Communications would produce the product.

We began by going to Quetico and verifying the accuracy of the original canoe map portages by consulting park staff and users. Some of the portages had changed location, as had Park entry points, customs arrangements and first aid stations. All this information was recorded on paper maps for transfer to the computer.

The next stage was to obtain Ontario Base Maps (OBMs) which some readers may have seen as 1:20,000 paper maps. These are now also issued in a digital version. Students at Waterloo accurately tiled together the 15 computer OBMs to obtain a single map of the whole park, and a

**TREE TIME --** A big crowd of Atikokan high school students and volunteers (above) helped to plant the special White Pine seedlings grown by the Quetico Foundation in late May. This included students Charlene Happy and Chris Morden (below).





# Updates

few missing portions were drafted in from older maps. This work was completed using the ARC/INFO geographical information system (GIS) software. GIS systems overlay individual maps in the computer and allow data manipulation and extraction of new information. Features, like portages, that did not appear in the OBM's were now added, and extraneous details were removed. Every single lake and river name had to be retyped into the computer and checked for accuracy!

Next a 1996 LANDSAT satellite image consisting of several "bands" of different energy wavelengths was obtained from Radarsat International.

One can think of each band as a different colour of light, though several are actually invisible to the human eye. Three single band images were overlaid to create an image resembling a colour photograph. The resulting image is very slightly distorted due to the curvature of the earth, and there is a slight mismatch between the image projection and the map projection. Thus the satellite image now had to be "rubber sheeted" to match the OBM map exactly. Next we placed the satellite image under the OBM base map, so that the map features appeared to "float" on the real landscape. To aid canoe navigation, lakes and rivers were changed to uniform colours, and wetlands were delineated.

Trevor Smith of Virtual Graphic Communications now turned the technical

map into a design. Ancillary information was added, such as details of entry stations. Text supplied by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources was augmented with photographs and drawings. Finally, Edward Communications printed the map on heavy paper stock using a 60" 5-colour press.

We decided to print a large display version of the satellite map, with the colourful park information and illustrations on the reverse. In addition, 4 smaller computer map images were also printed, each portraying one quarter of the park at a larger scale, and with a conventional map of the whole park on the reverse. These are most suitable for canoe tripping. Map details and prices are appended and details can also be seen at the Foundation's web site: <http://www.queticofoundation.org/canomap.html>.

We hope that the map will serve the Park well in the next few years, and now that the maps are in computer format, future editions will be faster and cheaper to revise and publish. The computer base map is also doing double duty in GIS-based park research at Waterloo, and is likely to be used by the Park for management purposes.

We are grateful to the Foundation members, faculty and students at Waterloo, MNR staff and to the design team who all willingly and cheerfully worked together to make this map a reality. Enjoy!

—Dr. Roger Suffling.

## Summer program *continued*

archaeological research in the park. During the 1999 season, the shores of Pickerel Lake, French Lake, Batchewaung Bay, and Batchewaung Lake are being surveyed to find out more about the history of this part of Quetico Provincial Park. Artifacts will be photographed, sketched, and returned to their original locations. Previous seasons work conducted by Jon Nelson and Andrew Hinshelwood found evidence of extensive occupation of Pickerel Lake from immediate post-glacial times through to the Fur Trade era. Based on this and other archaeological research, it is known that there has been human use of the area now known as Quetico Provincial Park for the past 9,000 years.

During the summer of 1999, through a Human Resources Development Canada Summer Career Placement Grant, the Quetico Foundation has also hired one student to work in the John B. Ridley Research Library at Quetico Provincial Park. This student assisted the park librarian with maintaining Quetico's collection of books. The student also scanned and catalogued slides and photographs for the visual images database.

## CHAIRMAN *continued from page 2*

Heritage Centre for Atikokan and there is no doubt that this project is much closer to reality. The Foundation sees the project as the cornerstone of a plan to bring the Town of Atikokan, the Ministry and the local native communities together in a new prosperity which recognizes as its first premise the value of Quetico Park as a wilderness reserve. The stumbling block to proposals of this nature and magnitude is often their funding and, while this project may prove to be no exception to the general rule, the Foundation is very much committed to doing everything in its power to ensure that the project comes to pass.

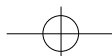
At the time of this writing, the 1999 summer program is almost completed. This year, we have continued with archeological studies, but at the same time we integrated the program with the Ministry of Natural Resources to assist in the collection of data to be used in a Quetico Park inventory project.

It may seem a trite observation, but there can, in our view, be no effective management or stewardship of the Quetico resource without some clear baseline data with which to formulate and implement policies regarding the Park. Jay Leather as Park Superintendent is very much committed to completing such an inventory for Quetico Park and the Foundation has undertaken to use its resources to assist and encourage him in this worthwhile objective.

Finally, I want to assure all our supporters who perhaps wondered why we had no annual dinner in the spring that you have not been forgotten. We have recently been exploring different possibilities for getting our supporters together and enlisting their assistance for our programs and we will be contacting you shortly in that regard. While we may end up returning to our historical past, we are trying to find some new spark to make our get-together more appealing for you. Expect to be contacted in the not-too-distant future.

In closing, I wish you all happy paddling and may the wind always be at your back.

**Lee Woods**  
Chairman





8.

## A Quetico Moment



SAT SCENE -- Here is some detail of Canoe Map 1 in the new series of satellite Quetico Park maps introduced by the Quetico

Foundation. See page 5 for ordering information. There are four quadrant maps and one of the entire park.

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