



OCAsional News

The newsletter of the Ontario Camping Association

October 2003

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The View from Here

Brian Blackstock, OCA President

When I am asked to explain "What is a Canadian?" I try to describe Couchie (Adele Statten Ebbs) standing on the rocky shore by her log cabin on Little Wap in her red Hudson Bay coat, her paddle like a staff. Her windblown hair tied in a bun, usually a bandana around her head, no make up, like she was rooted to the ground, surrounded by the balsam-scented air of Algonquin Park, with that wonderful smile that put everyone at ease. No one looked like her, no one talked like her, and there have been few people in our Association who have given so much to the youth of Canada and other countries like her.

Couchie loved the bush. To her, it was an ideal place for young people to learn to live together comfortably in an environment that not only inspires but humbles as well. With campers and staff she was always firm and fair. She had a remarkable talent to get young people to use their talents to be the best that they could be. If you are looking for a role model you can't do better than this. Couchie and "Dr. Harry," her husband and partner for several decades, were a fine team. The Taylor Statten Camps were enriched by their gifts. As Susan, one of their daughters, said, "Their portages often diverged, but they paddled as one."

Couchie died early in the summer. A memorial service was held at Lawrence Park Community Church on September 4. The large congregation reminisced and sang camp hymns which seemed to open Memory's door

so we could look back to an earlier time when the basic camp values and skills were taught and absorbed. As a result of her influence over nearly eight decades, thousands of youngsters from many camps grew up appreciating and protecting our remarkable wilderness environment for generations to come.

It is interesting to note that our new premier has indicated that what we need to do now is to introduce "Character Education" into our schools. This is not a new idea! Couchie's father Taylor Statten, along with Mary Edgar and other camping pioneers, emphasized this in the 1920s. Taylor Statten then went on to become the first Director of Character Education in Canada, which later grew into a guidance department at Pickering College in Newmarket. This of course was copied by most schools in the country.

We also lost another eminent camp director this summer. Madelene Allen was the owner-director of Camp Ouareau in Quebec. She pioneered having French and English speaking campers living and learning in new ways. Being adopted herself, she also pioneered ways to make it easier for adopted children to learn who their birth parents were. Madelene was just beginning to establish herself as our new *OCA'sional News* editor when she wrote us early in the summer to say she was terminally ill. She died August 13th.

Madelene Ferguson Allen: An Appreciation

As many OCA members already know, Madelene Ferguson Allen, the former owner/director of Camp Ouareau, passed away during the summer. Madelene could boast many accomplishments, including camp owner/director, author, and activist. But in the OCA office, we knew her best as the editor of the *OCA'sional News*, from February 2003 until the last issue of the last season, in June 2003. She made a distinct impression during this short tenure. Readers benefited from an expanded coverage of the issues facing camps, a fresh sense of fun, and a commitment to new voices.

I worked closely with Madelene on the five issues she edited. Her diligence, creativity, commitment to quality, attention to the smallest details and large fund of ideas had already begun to carve out for the newsletter a larger role in the life of the Association. We will miss Madelene's contribution to the OCA. The November issue of the *OCA'sional News* will feature an appreciation of Madelene's life by Jacqui Raill and Holly Heibein of Camp Ouareau. We will also announce a new editor, one of whose challenges will be maintaining the high standard that Madelene set.

John Zachariah,
OCA Production Secretary

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These women from two generations of camping were strong, caring, committed

leaders who made a difference to camping and to the lives of campers and staff. It is up to us to remember those trails they blazed and to make sure we use their lessons when blazing our own.

To the families of Couchie and Madelene, we extend our sympathy and our thanks for sharing two such remarkable people with us. They both loved the canoe; on the next page is a wonderful passage from Sigurd Olson's book *The Singing Wilderness* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1975), which may remind us why they did and we do.



Congratulations to Paul Grossinger on the latest issue of *Canada Camps*. The articles are very authoritative, topical and timely, written by authors who are very knowledgeable in their field across North America. Our camps cannot help but benefit from them.

OCA Day Camp Workshop: I'll Show You Mine, If You Show Me Yours!

The **OCA Day Camp Workshop** is coming up fast - on October 16, 2003, meet up with your colleagues to visit camp facilities and discuss topics that matter to day camp directors. Registration closes soon, so don't miss out on this amazing opportunity!

Contact the OCA for registration information.

Adele and Harry Ebbs and the History of Camping

by Bernadine Dodge
University Archivist, Trent University

Trent University Archives in Peterborough, Ontario, preserves over 32 metres (110 linear feet) of photographs, minutes, conference papers, oral history tapes, brochures, staff manuals and camper letters which chronicle the organized youth camping movement in Canada. While there have been many people responsible for seeing that this critically important heritage is catalogued and available to graduate students and all other researchers, none have been more central to the mission than Adele Ebbs and Dr. Harry Ebbs.

Their enthusiasm and support for what we are trying to accomplish here in the archives never wavered

Harry Ebbs was on Trent's Board of Governors in our early years. He was awarded an Honorary degree by Trent in 1975.

Right from the beginning in the 1960s, Adele Ebbs was active on the OCA Archives Committee, a group of camping personalities which included Margaret Govan, Dr. Mary Northway, Charles Plewman and C.R. Blackstock. This committee worked for over six years to make arrangements for historical camping records to be properly housed. At a meeting of that committee in 1969, it was decided that Trent University would assume responsibility for "perpetual storage and cataloguing" of camping related records such as "tapes,

see *The History of Camping*, page 4

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The Way of a Canoe

by Sigurd F. Olson

The movement of a canoe is like a reed in the wind. Silence is part of it, and the sounds of lapping water, bird songs and wind in the trees. It is part of the medium through which it floats, the sky, the water, the shores.

A man is part of his canoe and therefore part of all it knows. The instant he dips a paddle, he flows as it flows, the canoe yielding to his slightest touch, responsive to his every whim and thought. The paddle is an extension of his arm, as his arm is part of his body. Skiing down a good slope with the snow just right comes close to it, with the lightness of near-flight, the translating of even a whisper of a wish into swift action; there, too, is a sense of harmony and oneness with the earth. But to the canoeist, there is nothing that compares with the joy he knows when a paddle is in his hand . . .

There is balance in the handling of

a canoe, the feeling of its being part of the bodily swing. No matter how big the waves or how the currents swirl, you are riding them as you would ride a horse, at one with its every motion.



illustration by Francis Lee Jaques

When the point is reached where the rhythm of each stroke is as poised as the movement of the canoe itself, weariness is forgotten and there is time to watch the sky and the shores without thought

of distance or effort. At such a time the canoe glides along obedient to the slightest wish and paddling becomes as unconscious and automatic an effort as breathing. Should you be lucky enough

to be moving across a calm surface with mirrored clouds, you may have the sensation of suspension between heaven and earth, of paddling not on the water but through the skies themselves . . .

There is magic in the feel of a paddle and the movement of a canoe, a magic compounded of distance, adventure, solitude and peace. The way of a canoe is the way of the wilderness and of a freedom almost forgotten. It is an antidote to insecurity, the open

door to waterways of ages past and a way of life with profound and abiding satisfactions. When a man is part of his canoe, he is part of all that canoes have ever known.

excerpted from *The Singing Wilderness* by Sigurd F. Olson, Alfred Knopf, 1975.

Educational Events Assistant required

for a short-term contract, renewable, commencing in November 2003 at the Ontario Camping Association office. Experience on Microsoft Access, Microsoft Word essential; desktop publishing skills an asset.

Send résumé with references by fax to 416-485-0422, by email to bev@ontcamp.on.ca, or by mail to 250 Merton St., Suite 403, Toronto, ON M4S 1B1. Deadline October 17, 2003.

Waterworks Reminder

Waterworks Legislation Reg. 170 affects you and your camp.

You need to be working on plans for changes NOW so that your system is up-to-date for summer 2004.

The Ministry of the Environment has produced a document titled "A Kit for Regulated Non-Municipal Drinking Water Systems," which will provide you with information on how to comply with the new regulation. The document

is available at the Ontario Ministry of the Environment web site, in the section titled "Drinking Water Systems Regulation."

Remember: If you are not in compliance with the regulation by June 2004, you may not be able to open your camp!

Lisa Wilson, Chair
Waterworks Legislation Task Force

Canadian Camping Magazines Wanted

I am looking to borrow a complete set of Canadian Camping Magazines from the first issue in 1949 to the end of the publication. The copies are needed for digital imaging. They will not be taken apart and will remain intact and returned to the lender. If you have copies that you are willing to lend or have questions about the archiving project for the Canadian Camping Magazine, please contact Joe Richards at The Taylor Statten Camps at 416-486-6959.

Classifieds

Experienced Camp Director/Property Manager looking for full-time work at residential/day camp. If interested please contact Suzanne Slater at ecgrad99@hotmail.com or call 416-239-3816.

Camp Director required for Camp Menesetung, R.6, Goderich, Ontario. The Director must be a faithful Christian, be a team player and a team builder, with camp or recreation leadership experience in recruiting, training, and managing staff; camp operations; administration; program planning; and interpersonal relations. Please send resume to Barbara Knox, Board Chair, R.1, Blyth, Ontario, NOM 1H0, email: knobar@sympatico.ca.

The History of Camping,
continued from page 4

films, slides, photographs, manuscripts, camp records of finances, menus, programmes, association minutes." We had a splendid new library just opened and the associations between the Ebbs, Northway and Trent made it the logical place for camping archives. A formal presentation was held in 1970 at which Jack Martin, University Librarian, reminded attendees that "knowledge of its origin and development provides an association with a sense of historic purpose which gives it direction for the future. An archives serves as an association's 'memory' of its own historical evolution."

Adele Ebbs became Chair of the OCA Archives Committee in 1974. Her commitment and diligence led to Trent Archives receiving several important donations that year including the F.M. VanWagner Papers. In addition, over the year the Ebbs themselves donated records of Camp Tonakela in India, and of their own camps Ahmek and Wapameo in Algonquin Park. The dedication of Harry and Adele to camping, education and history all came together in 1980. That was the year that they established the Ebbs Camping Archives Fund at Trent University. The importance of the Fund cannot be overestimated. After camping records arrive on our doorstep, they must be arranged, organized in acid-free folders and shelved in acid-free archival containers. They must have detailed inventories prepared if the great quantity of boxed material is to be useful to researchers. The costs are considerable and the Ebbs Fund has helped over the years to allow us to hire the extra staff which our commitment to the camping community has required. The Ebbs Fund directive reads, in part, as follows: "The Ebbs Camping Archives Fund is established to support archival activities at Trent University as they are related to children's camping and Canadian Studies . . ."

Thank You Standards Visitors of 2003!

This year you visited over 100 camps across Ontario. Your involvement is crucial to the maintenance of high standards in Ontario camps. The Standards Committee and our Association are indebted to the people listed here who have supported the "spirit" of our Standards Program. Many THANKS!

Karen Gordon, Chair
OCA Standards Committee

Kathy Adam, Beth Allison, Travis Allison, Mike Ankenmann, Nicola Bangham, Kyle Barber, Andy Barnard, Larry Bell, Cheryl Bernknopf, Jeff Bicher, Pat Birnie, Brian Blackstock, Peter Bloom, Don Bocking, Marj Booth, Suzanne Brocklebank, Gwen Brown, Sam Butcher, Fred Cahill, Lyssa Caine, Skip Connett, Ben Davis, Gwen Dell'Anno, Jen Dundas, Jill Dundas, Tim Edwards, Bruce Emmerton, Chris Evans, Barb & Peter Gilbert, Karen Gordon, Dave Graham, Barb Gray, Sandra Green, Alf Grigg, Sari Grossinger, Keith Hadigate, Julie & Craig Hartley, Steve Heming, Bruce Henbest, Shannon Henry, Bruce Hodgins, Ellen Howard, Rick Howard, Barb Janicek, John Jorgenson, Amie Ladner, Tom Lim, Brian Lisson, Andrew Lockie, Nicole Markowitz, Pauline Marston, Dan Martin, Tim Matheson, James Maxwell, Yvonne McCallum, Jim McHardy, Grant McKenna, Bruce Middleton, Kim Mitchell, Mike Moore, Anne Morawetz, Ron Mulholland, Chris Murdoch, Ellen Nash, Bruce Nashman, Harold Nashman, Karen Natho, Cory Nelson, Fred Okada, Howard Oretsky, Cheryl Oudshoorn, Jocelyn Palm, Sara Petker, Steve Polevoy, Greg Reid, Dan Richards, Joe Richards, Duncan Robertson, Rick Romman, Catherine Ross, John Russell, Stephanie Seagram, Marci Shea-Perry, Brian Shelley, Mike Sinclair, Bob Smith, Robin Squires, Bill Stevens, Jan Stewart, Lynda Tilley, Peter Truman, David Tubby, Jill Vandal, Morris Vincent, Dave Ward, Karen Ward, Barb Weeden, Keri Whitaker, Tom Williams, Bruce Wilson, Lisa Wilson, Elizabeth-Anne Young

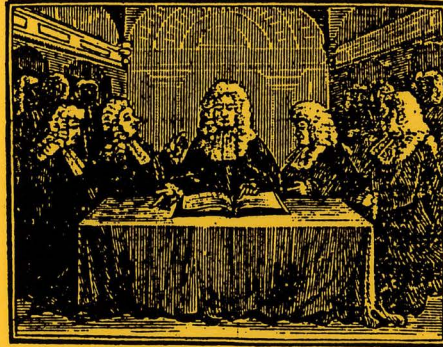
Our appreciation to Harry and Adele Ebbs for their foresight and generosity over the years is heartfelt. Their enthusiasm and support for what we are trying to accomplish here in the archives never wavered and will be very much missed. We will endeavour to keep the historical record of camping in the manner that they would have wished and trust that the camping archives here at Trent will be a fitting part of the huge legacy which Harry and Adele have left behind in so many areas, affecting so many people.



Calling all potential jurors!



CAMP MAPLE ROCK Goes To Trial 2004!



In the summer of 2002 a young girl dies at a summer camp.

Who is responsible for this death?



Who are the other victims in this situation?



How would you handle the situation?

TRIAL DATE: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2004,
8:00 A.M.-4:00 P.M.

COURT VENUE: SHERATON PARKWAY HOTEL, RICHMOND HILL

Building on the success of the 1995 Camp Maple Rock trial, the format will be repeated in 2004 dealing with different issues current to all camps today!



The keynote addresses on Friday, February 20 and Saturday, February 21 will follow up some of these key issues raised in the trial.



Look for full details in the Annual Conference brochure which will be direct mailed to all OCA members in early November.

JOIN THE LEGAL EXPERTS



as they bring this sensational case to trial.



YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO MISS THIS!

