

12th annual Canoeing & Wilderness Symposium on

Historic Canoes and Historic Travels

January 31 - February 1, 1997 at Monarch Park Collegiate, Toronto

with a Historic Canoe Exhibit by the Canadian Canoe Museum

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Program Participants

ANDERSON, David: David Thompson & His Travels

Williamstown ON

- tenant-interpreter of the 1784 Bethune-Thompson House in Williamstown, Glengarry County (near Cornwall) where David Thompson & Charlotte Small lived "the twenty happiest years of their lives". Two hundred years ago Glengarry was home to partners and explorers of the North West Company. Their feats, their habits, their houses, and their people form a web which includes the United Empire Loyalists of the Mohawk Valley, the early military of Upper Canada, the Gaelic-speaking Glengarry Highland immigrants, the poetry of Ossian, the Indian trade, and the voyageurs. These are my interests.

BLANCHET, Janet: A Daughter's Reflections on R. M. Patterson

Vancouver BC

- was brought up on a ranch in the foothills of the Rockies, and this background has given her an abiding love of the outdoors. She now lives in Vancouver, B.C., where she has spent the greater part of her working life as a member of the staff of Simon Fraser University.

BURRY, Donald: The Canoe in Canadian Art

Edmonton AB

- after completing a Doctorate in Physical Education at the University of Alberta in 1993, he combined a love of sport and art into a budding career as a sport artist. He has done works for Pat Lafontaine, Don Cherry, the 1996 silver medal Olympic Synchro Swimming Team, Curtis Joseph, and numerous Edmonton Oilers.

BYRICK, Bill: [Chair]

- is currently the Executive Director of the Canadian Canoe Museum, located in Peterborough, Ontario. Bill has been involved in canoeing and small craft for the past 20 years both for pleasure as well as professionally, managing two historic sites: Saint Marie Among the Hurons in Midland, Ontario and Discovery Harbour in Penetanguishene.

COCKBURN, Bob: P. G. Downes' Travels in Northern Canada

Fredericton NB

- teaches English at the University of New Brunswick, and has published extensively on northern travellers, P. G. Downes in particular. In 1968 he edited a new edition of Downes classic book, Sleeping Island (1943). He guided trips for Headwaters in Temagami for several years.

COMMANDA, William: Native Crafts & Traditions

Pitobig Mikan PQ

- is a traditional Algonquin Elder and a birch bark canoe builder. He is a holder of Sacred Wampum belts and an ardent defender of the environment. He is now retired. [Note: The book - The Native Crafts of William and Mary Commanda, by David Gidmark, and first published in 1980, is available at the Symposium.]

DINA, James: Canoeing & Crafting via the Stone-Age

South Windsor CT

- is a former mechanical engineer (MIT - 1968), who now makes his living as a classical guitarist, and spends nearly every spare moment out of doors. His chief interest is recreating the material culture of primitive native Americans, along with the "flavor" of those forgotten times. To achieve this he works - and builds canoes - using stone tools, friction fires, and methods of the forgotten Stone Age. [Note: The book - Voyage of the Ant by James Dina is currently out-of-print, but the author is hopeful that it will be reprinted.]

DITZLER, Carmen: Rocky Mountain House to Grand Portage

Athabasca AB

- has canoed through a BPE and MA at the University of Alberta, focusing on outdoor environmental education. She now lives with her husband, dog, and two draft horses in the boreal forests of Northern Alberta. She canoes, farms, gardens, and works at a nursing home. She is part of a grassroots effort to preserve wilderness on private land.

HADFIELD, Dave: Northern Songs

Barrie ON

- now a resident of Barrie, Ontario, has canoed and snowshoed extensively in NE Manitoba and NW Ontario. A song writer since his teens, he draws inspiration from his trips through the shield country. He takes particular pleasure in combining an intimate sense of the land with historical and contemporary themes.

HAMILTON, Diane: [Chair]

- an avid canoeist, hiker, and cross country skier for the past 15 years. She is also a past director of the Wilderness Canoe Association.

HAYES, Alden: Down North to the Sea' in 1938

Portal AZ

- grew up in a canoe in northern Michigan but then moved to the southwestern desert. In 5 months of 1938, with five others, he canoed from northern British Columbia to the Yukon. A retired archaeologist, and still a lover of the wilderness, he lives a 150 miles from the nearest shopping mall in the Chiricahua mountains.

KING, Joan: [Chair]

- is an municipal politician who finds canoe tripping a GREAT ESCAPE! She and Bill are both active Wilderness Canoe Association members. [seat B25]

LABOR, Peter: Canada Sea-to-Sea-to-Sea by Voyageur-Canoe

Wawa ON

- started canoeing as a "young lad" in his native Nova Scotia. Sensing a call to "the interior", he headed for Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ontario, and spent four years paddling across Canada by Voyageur canoe - and inspiring completion of an M.A. in Canadian Heritage Studies at Trent University. When not singing voyageur songs or telling tall tales, Peter manages Naturally Superior Adventures - an adventure travel company on Lake Superior's north shore.

LUSTE, George: [Chair]

- has an abiding passion for the northern wilderness and all that it encompasses.

MacLAREN, Ian: Lady Vyvyan's Arctic Adventures in 1926

Edmonton AB

- has made several canoe trips in the NWT. He teaches at the University of Alberta and researches literature and art of explorers and travellers in the Arctic and the West. With Stuart Houston, he has published Arctic Artist: the Journals and Paintings of George Back, midship an with Franklin 1819-1822. He and Lisa LaFramboise have completed a second edition of Lady Clara Vyvyan's Arctic Adventure book. With a foreword by Pamela Morse, this second edition will be published later this year by the University of Alberta Press under a new title, The Ladies, the Gwich'in and the Rat.

MacMILLAN, Hugh: Nor'Westers & Their Canoe Routes Guelph ON

- best known as the Paper Sleuth, having spent many years in pursuit of historical manuscripts / images / ephemera & relics, both in Canada and abroad. His forthcoming book The Paper Sleuth will tell about these exciting chases. Another major interest has been historical re-enactments. This involved organizing Nor'westers Canoe Brigades. During his voyageur period he has retraced many of the old canoe routes using reproductions of fur trade canoes.

MASON, Becky: Growing-up with Canoes

Chelsea ON

- spends every spring breaking up the ice to get her first Classic Solo canoe course started on Meech Lake. And when she's not paddling or painting at her home in the Gatineau Hills, she can be found eagerly planning her next canoe trip or searching for yet another old wooden canoe to add to the Mason collection.

POHL, Herbert: A. P. Low's Explorations & Canoe Travels

Burlington ON

- has travelled in northern Canada for many years and in all seasons. In spite of an increasingly fractious body he still finds excitement, inspiration and solace in the solitude of the North Country.

PURCHASE, Jack: J. B. Tyrrell's Explorations & Canoe Travels

Unionville ON

- a long time wilderness enthusiast who has paddled many of the historic routes in the Canadian Arctic. More recently he has discovered northern Siberia as a canoeing area.

RAFFAN, James: [Chair]

- two of his books will be re-released in March: Fire in the Bone in soft-cover and Wildwaters with two new chapters on rivers in Alaska and continental U.S. His current project is to track the canoe from vehicle to symbol in the Canadian experience, and is looking to speak with anyone with a catchy tale to tell. Jim is Coordinator of Outdoor & Experiential Education at Queen's University, Faculty of Education. He can be reached at raffanj@educ.queensu.ca

ROSS, Alec: Coke Stop in Emo

Kingston ON

- is an author and journalist from Kingston, Ontario who has contributed to national magazines such as Equinox, Canadian Geographic, The Old Farmer's Almanac and the Imperial Review. In 1989 he completed a three-year solo canoe trip from Montreal to Vancouver that retraced Canada's historic fur trade routes, an adventure he chronicled in the 1995 book, Coke Stop In Emo.

STEWART, Hugh: Myths & Legends of the Cedar Canvas Canoe

Wakefield PQ

- first paddled a wood canvas canoe when he was 8 or 10 and has never stopped. In the last 15 years he has had the good fortune to learn how to make these wonderful craft. He holds that one of the greatest gifts given to us by God - or whoever runs the show - is wood.

WILSON, Sally & Ian: Klondike Gold Rush

Vancouver BC

- have made a career of wilderness adventure, exploring Canada's north by canoe, dog team, horseback, and on foot over many years. They have written four books on their experiences. When not on wilderness soujourns, they tour across Canada giving slide shows to schools and other groups. [Note: three titles, - Gold Rush, Arctic Adventures, and Wilderness are available at the Symposium.]

WINTERS, John: Canoe Designs - Then & Now

Burks Falls ON

- is a yacht builder and designer of thirty-five years who has reformed and is now designing canoes and kayaks.

WIPPER, Kirk: Reflections of a Long Trail

Toronto ON

- an active paddler, outdoor educator, heritage and environment conservationist. At the University of Toronto, together with students, he developed an outdoor leadership program. Founder and director of the Kanawa International Museum (now the Canadian Canoe Museum), owner and director of the Kandalore Camp and Outdoor Centre, past President of the Royal Life Saving Society of Canada, and other similar associations. He is the current National President of the CRCA.

This page last edited