

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF BONNECHERE PARKS

SPRING/SUMMER 2001

Web: www.bonnecherepark.on.ca
Email to Editor: dhouse@renc.igs.net

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Since the end of last year's camping season, Jim Fraser and I have had our heads firmly planted in the past. Now close friends and family might say "What's new?" but this time it's for a great cause — because it's all about what's new. New technology, that is. Jim and I have been digging through our archives of audio tapes, images and documents to create a visual presentation of the Little Bonnechere River in the hey days of the logging era. We've gathered sights, sounds and memories to create an interactive CD-ROM of our hidden heritage — those long-gone days that could easily be forgotten unless we preserve what's left. It's become a bigger project than we first thought it would be, but the closer we get to wrapping it up, the richer the past seems. Enjoy!

Betty Biesenthal, Editor

CD LAUNCH: AUGUST 4, 2001

Completing the Spirits Trilogy

Over twenty years ago, Algonquin Park sent out one of its young interpreters to interview the descendants of the families who once called Algonquin home. These elderly men and women shared their memories and stories of days long gone, and Rory MacKay listened carefully, capturing every word and nuance on audio tape. His talent for asking the right questions, knowing when to pry a bit more — and more importantly when not — provided the basis for what we now call the **Bonnechere Trilogy**.

In 1996, the FBP published *Spirits of the Little Bonnechere, A History of Exploration, Settlement and Logging, 1800 to 1920* by Rory MacKay, a book based in part on the research he had conducted two decades earlier in his conversations with those aging pioneers. Then, in 1998, with the goal of passing on this rich cultural heritage to younger generations, the FBP released *Discover the Spirits, a Cultural Heritage Activity Book for Youth*. Together, these publications told of life along the Little Bonnechere River in its heyday, when the virgin woods were filled with lumbermen, and the tiny river was overflowing with logs on their journey down to the Ottawa River to Quebec City where they were destined for shipping overseas.

This summer, using current CD-ROM technology, the FBP are bringing to life the story of the Little Bonnechere incorporating many of the authentic images and sounds that were the catalysts of these publications. Entitled *Visiting the Spirits, The Hidden Heritage of the Little Bonnechere River*, this interactive CD provides self-guided, virtual tours of Basin Depot and the Lafleur homestead. It also includes a detailed map of the Little Bonnechere, from its headwaters in Algonquin Park, southeast to Round Lake at Bonnechere Park. Called "Back and Forth in Time" the map links to photographic images, past and present, of many of the early stopping places, homesteads and dams that sprung up along this stretch of the river throughout the 1800s and early 1900s.

Visiting the Spirits tells the tale of the people too. Surveyor James McNaughton, the infamous Paddy Garvey and homesteader Bella Lafleur to name a few. And thanks to Rory's audio archives, it also includes the voices of the aged children — now deceased — who once lived in this time and place. Hannah Highland, Martin Garvey and John Joe Turner share tales of their youth in short audio clips.



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Written and compiled with the help of historians Susan Code and Rory MacKay, the CD is a compilation of over 75 images and maps, a dozen audio clips and an original recording of the Log Driver's Waltz by Alana and Angela O'Grady.

The CD will be packaged and sold with a map of Basin Depot, for on-site, self-guided walking tours of the former settlement. Ideally, Visiting the Spirits will teach visitors about the hidden heritage of the Little Bonnechere. It will tell the stories of the now empty fields, encroaching forests and abandoned buildings that were once filled with the sights and sounds of a bustling community. And ultimately, it will give us all a better understanding of life in this tiny corner of early Canada, a hundred years ago.

A launch date for Visiting the Spirits is expected in mid-summer, 2001. Watch the Calendar of Events on our web site for a date.

The Story Behind the Story

by Jim Fraser

The recent addition of the Lafleur Homestead to Bonnechere River Provincial Park was met with great excitement by Park staff. And although most items were removed by the previous landowners, some artifacts remained providing much speculation as to their use.

In examining one of the buildings, a hatch was discovered leading to an attic. Years of accumulated dust hid a variety of debris, each item a reminder of various past inhabitants. Amid the collection was a blue duffel coat. Though grimy from years of neglect, ornate gold buttons embossed with the "OTC" adorned the front of the jacket. Inside, a manufacturer's label was discovered identifying TE Maddock and Son as the supplier.

The cut and weight of the jacket suggested military use — possibly the Royal Canadian Navy. Our speculation was that the letters must stand for "Overseas Training Centre." With a little bit of imagination we could visualize this jacket being worn by a sailor trying to keep warm in the frigid cold of the North Atlantic. Our curiosity was further heightened when the local dry-cleaner became really interested in the jacket, taking great care to restore it to its original look.

Having exhausted all local sources of information on the story behind this coat, we forced to turn to the staff of the Canadian War Museum in nearby Ottawa. In addition to providing exhibit space for Canada's Armed Forces displays, the War Museum also provides access to numerous veterans whose specialized knowledge is a tremendous asset. Our phone call requesting information was met with great interest and excitement. We were told that there was a gentleman whose expertise lay in uniforms and that arrangements would be made to have him call us when he returned from a trip. For the next few days, each ring of the phone at the Park was met with great anticipation. As everyone knows, every good story has to have a good ending, and we were more than anxious to learn what our's was!

Finally the call came and although the story behind the story wasn't as dramatic as we had imagined, it did shed light on our never-ending quest to learn more about the people who have lived long the Little Bonnechere River. The jacket was used to ward off the cold, but not the cold of the North Atlantic. Instead, it protected its owner from the chill rising off Ottawa's Rideau Canal. In 1958, Ottawa Transit Commission driver #49593 wore the jacket as he drove his bus through the streets of Bytown.

So, although the jacket's journey to the Lafleur Homestead did not include an ocean voyage, it still provides an interesting story to be told at evening programs for years to come. It also reminds us of the first rule of archaeology: *Make No Unqualified Assumptions!*

CAMP CHUCKLE

What did one mosquito say to the other mosquito?
"Going to the cottage this weekend, Joe?"

An Archaeo Adventure at Lafleur Homestead

History came alive along the Little Bonnechere River this spring as 180 grade school students happily experienced cuts, scrapes and gouges at the Lafleur Homestead. Don't worry; they weren't handling crosscut saws. They were using trowels, brushes and other digging tools during an historic archaeological program sponsored by the Canadian Parks Partnership's kids@parks program.

The 5-day dig involved students from St. Casimir's School (Round Lake Centre), St. Mary's School (Wilno), Highview School (Pembroke), Palmer Rapids Public School and two classes from Eganville Public School. Following a successful model developed by the Friends for the Basin Depot Public Historic Archaeology Program, the students learned about forest succession (including pioneer plants), built heritage, and the science of archaeology, and also participated in an official excavation.

An \$8000 kids@parks grant to the Friends paid for licenced archaeologists to be on-site — a necessity for any archaeological dig — and is supporting weekly interpretive trips to the homestead all summer long via voyageur canoe. Volunteers Judy Recoskie, Marlene Borutski, Alison Covell, Mr. Al Fraser (representing the Friends) and Dave Croft of Pembroke, a member of the Ontario Archaeological Society, Ottawa Chapter helped with the program. Assisting with the Friends portion of the program were summer students Cindy Bosma and Jennifer Dick.

The students discovered table-loads of artifacts including pottery, glass, bone fragments and mortar. The highlight was a silver or gold ring, likely belonging to one of the Lafleurs. We will have to wait for the official report to make a call on who could be the original owner. Thanks to all who participated, especially to the teachers and parent volunteers who did a great job in preparing the students and bringing them up to the Little Bonnechere.

 kids@parks

Paddle into the Past

This summer, thanks to a grant from the Canadian Parks Partnership, Bonnechere Park guests will have access to weekly voyageur canoe trips up the Little Bonnechere River. Alastair Baird of Canadian Voyageur Adventures will be guiding these excursions, in an 24-man authentic replica canoe, each Wednesday morning from June 27 through August 15. If required, an afternoon trip will run as well.

After a short orientation, trippers will depart from Camp Edlau, in the shadow of White Mountain, and travel up-river to the Lafleur homestead on Curriers Lake. As they come ashore, the visitors will be greeted by a costumed guide for a tour of what remains of this once-bustling stopping place and century-old farm — the most authentic site of its type from the logging era of the Little Bonnechere.

After a walk-about of the site, which includes a log home, creamery, piggery and various other out-buildings, the tour will return to Camp Edlau by canoe. Trips run about 2.5 hours, and are available free to the first 10 children (age 8 to 12) who register each day. Parents and other guests are also welcome (\$20/person). Be sure to reserve early by calling the Park office: 613-757-2103.

Bonnechere Park partners with Canadian Voyageur Adventures, Bonnechere Caves, The Anishnabe Experience and Algonquin Park to present various other in **Adventures in Time** family travel packages designed to reflect a variety of vacation options, budgets and levels of activity. Some packages are all-inclusive while others include customized interpretive programs, guides and meals.

Special 2001 Weekends

August 17 to 20:

Pow Wow Weekend

Sept 13: Archaeology Experience including the Dig, Pig 'n Jig

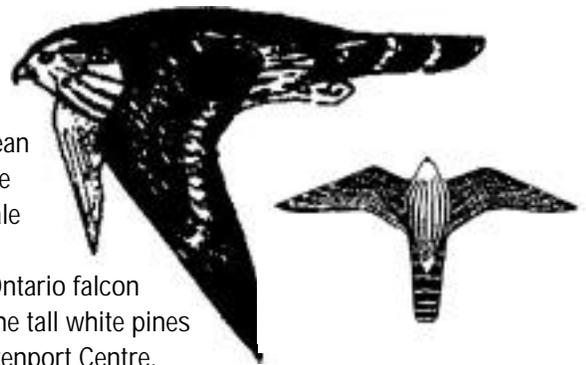
Group rates are available; reservations required. For more information call 1-800-833-5055 or visit our web site: www.bonnecherepark.on.ca



Tall Pines Predators

by Mark Stabb

If you are a Bonnechere Park beachgoer you have been within striking distance of a tercel — and I don't mean a little Toyota revving its engine in the parking lot. Tercel is a name for a male falcon. The swift and raucous Merlin (*Falco columbarius*) — one of four Ontario falcon species — nests and hunts among the tall white pines surrounding the beach area and Davenport Centre.



Merlins are Blue Jay-sized falcons, larger than the American Kestrel (sometimes called the sparrow hawk) but smaller than the more powerful Peregrine Falcon. Ontario's other falcon is the much larger, goose-hunting, tundra-nesting Gyrfalcon. Merlins are mainly bird hunters that pursue and capture prey on the wing. Their diet includes blackbirds, robins, warblers, sparrows, flycatchers and other suitably sized prey such as red squirrels.

If you have binoculars, you can tell Merlins are falcons by looking for their notched bills and teardrop facial markings. Males are blue-gray on the back and wings, while females are dusky brown. Both sexes have basically the same brown, heavily streaked plumage on the undersides. Males are slightly smaller than females. Even without binoculars you can see the narrow pointed wings that are built for speed. Merlins may appear to be *sub-compact* predators, but these are really the *Ferraris* of the bird world.

You are much more likely to hear Merlins before you see them. Listen for their raspy squeaky-wheel calls given while perched or as they cruise through the treetops.

I will be listening and searching carefully for Merlins this spring and summer because I am involved in the volunteer-based Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas, a project that involves recording observations on birds that nest in Ontario. Volunteers keep notes during bird-watching trips or they adopt a 10km x 10km block of land and report information on every species of bird breeding within that area. This five-year program allows ample time for volunteers to seek out rare species and explore all the different habitats of their area.

I adopted a square that takes in most of Bonnechere River Provincial Park. No one has adopted the squares that take in Bonnechere or Foy Provincial Parks yet. Could this be a project for a keen Friend?. Anyone with an interest in birds can participate by taking notes of the breeding activities of birds in the area. This could be a bird making a nest or carrying food, or young birds hopping about later in the season. If you have observed anything like this in Bonnechere Park, or would like more information on the Atlas Project, I would like to hear from you. Bird experts predict that Merlins will be an interesting bird to watch during this project. Ontario's first breeding bird atlas was prepared using the same method about 20 years ago. Since then Merlins have been on the move. They appear to be adapting to more settled areas, urban forests and cemeteries with tall pines. When the atlas is complete we may see that the Merlins have successfully colonized many suitable habitats and increased in numbers.

I am excited that I will be in striking distance of our tall pines predators all summer because I now have an office in the Davenport Centre — smack dab in the middle of the Merlin's breeding territory. From this vantage point I will also enjoy watching Chipping Sparrows, Pine Warblers, Red-breasted Nuthatches and various other birds which will inevitably cause me to think: "Hmmm, prey for Merlins!"

You an email Mark at mark.stabb@sympatico.ca, or call him at the Park: 613-757-2103. He'll probably be out bird-watching, but he'll get back to you!

Giving Thanks

Over the past year, several of our members have sent donations in support of our various efforts. Many thanks to these and all who have supported our projects through their donations of time, effort and donations throughout 2000:

Ziggy, Margaret and Phyllis Biernaski

Ellen Blaubergs

Fred Blackstein

Marie and Charles Cheesman

Rory Mackay

Mike Runtz

Elizabeth Muckle-Jeffs

SPECIAL GIFTS

Each year various people donate gifts that find a special place at Bonnechere Provincial Park. These gifts are often handcrafted works of art or craft, created to reflect the natural and cultural heritage of the Little Bonnechere River. We thank those who have given in the past, and herein recognize those we received in 2000:

Merril Burchart: original painting of a wolf

Dave Croft: historic axe heads

Ron Spurr: historic felling axe and a cross cut saw blade

As well, very special thanks go out to **Alan Jeffs** who worked with us to revamp the website. We appreciate the time and effort Alan continues to give to this project.

HATS OFF!

Congratulations to Chris and Val Hinsperger of the Bonnechere Caves who are the recent recipients of a 2001 Attractions Canada provincial tourism award for **Best Outdoor Natural Site**. Chris is a great supporter of the Friends of Bonnechere Parks and a true Ottawa Valley booster. He also understands the value of providing a great tourism product. As he says, "Everyday is a special event at the Bonnechere Caves."

WELCOME ABOARD

A warm hello to our newest Board members: Dennis Gorr who joined us in 2000 and Olesia Van Dyke, who came onboard in 2001. It's great to have new folks helping out.

MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW UNDERWAY

by Jane Duff

Do you want a say in how your Provincial Parks are managed? This is your chance! Under the terms of Ontario Provincial Park Management Planning, all Provincial Parks are obligated to have a comprehensive management plan outlining goals and objectives of their park(s), resource management policies, development and operations policies and implementation priorities. These plans are reviewed and revised on a regular basis and, in the case of the three Parks supported by the Friends of Bonnechere Parks, the time for review is now.

A planning team with representation from Bonnechere Park staff, the Ministry of Natural Resources, local governments, Parks users and the Friends has been established to provide input and guidance as part of the process.

Phase 1 includes:

- developing Terms of Reference
- identifying reasons for undertaking the Management Plan process
- establishing a Planning Team
- creating a processes for approval of the plan
- developing strategies for public consultation and communications.

Phase 2 focuses on collecting and analyzing information about the Parks and their users including existing and proposed development in the vicinity, current tourism trends, municipal planning, and forest, water and watershed planning.

As members of the Friends of Bonnechere Parks, Park users, local residents and/or visitors, your input to this process is important to us. Plans are underway to hold town hall meetings in the local area in June for residents, both permanent and seasonal, as well as for business and community groups. An Open House will be held at the Davenport Centre, Wednesday in July 11. Your interest and input are most welcome.

Using this research, Phase 3 will analyze the issues presented and suggest options for addressing and/or resolving them. Should significant interest or issues arise during Phase 2, additional public consultation may be required.

A preliminary plan will be drafted in Phase 4. It will summarize the significant issues, and (re)define the goals and objectives of the Parks' plans, policies and priorities. Finally, Phase 5 will see the Management Plan approved and issued with implementation to follow.

With your interest and involvement we look forward to a bright and positive future for our Parks and the area surrounding Little Bonnechere River.

Jane Duff is the Friends representative on the Management Plan Team. You can reach her at: jane.duff@sympatico.ca

"CHERE" WEAR NOW AT THE GIFT SHOP!

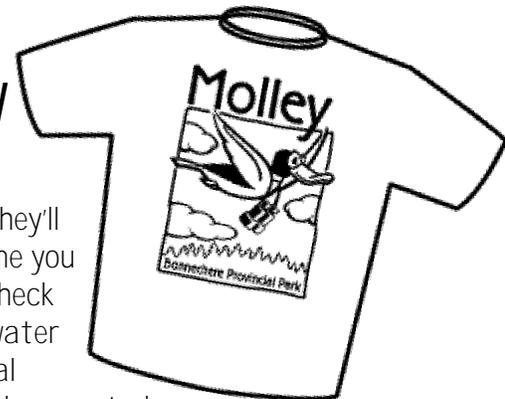


Bonnechere Provincial Park

If your kids liked the book they'll love the souvenirs! Next time you are in the Park Gift Shop check out the kids t-shirts and water bottles based on the animal illustrations which Mark Kulas created

for the "Best of Friends" activity book. Molly the Mallard is now available, but watch for Mikey the Wood Turtle later this summer.

There's something for everyone at the Gift Store this summer: books and beach balls, maple syrup and cozy fleeces, cool toys and fuzzy friends.



Discover the Valley's Hidden Treasures

The following events are highlights from our 2001 Bonnechere Park Calendar of Events — plan to join us and be sure to tell your friends. Keep in mind you will require a Valid Daily Permit or Camping Permit to participate in most of these activities. For additional info or event updates call 613-757-2103 or check out our website: www.bonnecherepark.on.ca.

June 13, Wednesday

Eastern Central Ontario Artists Association paint-in at the park hosted by artist Hershel Payne.

June 23 and 24: Ontario's Living Legacy Weekend

Create your own legacy at Saturday Kid's Camp, hike to Egg Rock with ecologist Mark Stabb, and on Saturday evening enjoy the O'Grady's Fiddling and Step-dancing. On Sunday, enjoy free admission to all Ontario Parks for all Ontario residents! Free hot dogs, cake and ice cream served at noon at the Davenport Centre.

June 27 thru August 15, Wednesdays Morning Voyageur Canoe Trips

Host Alastair Baird will guide voyageur canoe trips up the Little Bonnechere River, from Camp Edlau to the Lafleur homestead and back. Free to the first 10 children that register (age 8 to 12). Reserve by calling the Park office: 613-757-2103. Afternoon trips will be added according to demand.

July 14, Saturday: The Searsons!

Back by popular demand! 7:30pm at the Davenport Centre.

August 4, Saturday: CD Launch — Visiting the Spirits

7:00pm: Join us at the Davenport Centre for the multimedia launch of the latest addition to our Spirits Trilogy!

August 11, Saturday: Annual Friends Festival

7:00pm: Friends Annual General Meeting including presentation of the Annual Board of Directors Award. Followed by The O'Grady's Fiddling and Step-dancing.

August 18, Saturday: Ontario Archaeological Society Kids Day

Workshops throughout the day; Spirits night in the evening.

August 25, Saturday: Wolf Howl with Mike Runtz

Author and naturalist Mike Runtz leads this moonlight excursion into nearby Algonquin Park in search a howling wolf pack.

September 15, Saturday: Dig, Pig and Jig

Tour an active dig site and watch professional archaeologists at work in the field and in an outdoor lab. Hosted with the support of the OAS, Ottawa Chapter. Walk about Basin Depot and the Lafleur homestead. Refreshments for sale. Pig roast at 6:00pm at the Davenport Centre followed by entertainment by the Bonnechere River Boys.

RESERVE YOUR SPOT: 1-888-ONT-PARK



To guarantee your campsite or cabin this summer at Bonnechere or any Provincial Park across Ontario, call toll free — 16 hours a day, 7 days a week, up to five months in advance of your arrival date.

Kid's Camp

Enhance your stay by taking part in various interpretive programs — something for the whole family!

Kids' Adventures

Kids will explore the natural, cultural and recreational resources of Bonnechere Park through crafts, games, water sports and outdoor adventures. Runs three mornings a week for kids of all ages [young children must be accompanied by an adult].

New for 2001, Voyageur canoe trips on Wednesdays — be sure to preregister.

Family Programs

Enjoy topical evening programs ranging from night hikes to campfires and slide shows. Something for everyone on Wednesdays and Saturdays!

Summer Schedule

June 23 through Labour Day

TUESDAYS

10:00am to 11:30am:

Kids' Adventures

WEDNESDAYS

9:30am to 1:00am:

Kids' Adventures Voyageur Canoe Trip to Lafleur Homestead
(be sure to pre-register)

7.30pm to 9:00pm:

Family Program

THURSDAYS

10:00am to 11:30am:

Kids' Adventures

SATURDAYS

10:00am to 11:30am:

Kids' Adventures

10:00am to 11:30am:

Artist-in-Residence Workshop

(every second week beginning July 7)

7.30pm to 9:00pm:

Family Program

For up-to-date information on special events at the Park be sure to check out our website:

www.bonnecherepark.on.ca

While on-line read back issues of our newsletter or order one of our books. Be sure to sign in if you are not a member and want to be added to our mailing list.

2001 Friends Renewal

Once again, Chris Hinsperger of the Bonnechere Caves has donated two family packages to the winners of our annual membership drive. We will be making the draw at the September Dig, Pig 'n Jig, so be sure to get your renewal in before September 1, 2001 for your chance to win!

MEMBERSHIPS

Individual (\$10) please indicate new or renewal

Family (\$15) please indicate new or renewal

Memberships benefits for individuals and families include:

- subscription to the Circle of Friends newsletter,
- invitations to Friends' special events, and
- voting rights at the Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Bonnechere Parks.

SUPPORT

We invite you to support the Friends of Bonnechere Parks by giving a donation of your choice or a donation according to one of the following categories:

Annual: \$35 to \$99 Supporting: \$100 to \$149

Donor: \$150 to \$249 Benefactor: \$250 and up

If your donation is an In Memoriam, please print the name of the loved one: _____

Make cheques payable to the Friends of Bonnechere Parks. A tax receipt will be issued for all donations.

▶ _____
DONOR'S NAME

▶ _____
ADDRESS

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CITY PROVINCE

▶ _____
POSTAL CODE PHONE

VOLUNTEERS

As a charitable organization, we benefit a great deal from the volunteer efforts of a dedicated group of families, friends and campers who look upon Bonnechere Park as a special place. If you would like to become a part of our group, help out with a special event, or join our Board of Directors, please check the following box(es).

Volunteer

Board of Directors

FRIENDS IN NEED, FRIENDS IN DEED

Established in 1992, The Friends of Bonnechere Parks is a community-based, non-profit, charitable organization. Our mission is to encourage and support programs for interpretive, educational, scientific, historical, protection and preservation purposes related to the natural and cultural heritage of Bonnechere, Bonnechere River and Foy Provincial Parks. The operations of the Friends are authorized by Ontario Parks, and coordinated by a volunteer Board of Directors.

FRIENDS OF BONNECHERE PARKS

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