

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF BONNECHERE PARKS

FALL 2005

www.bonnecherepark.on.ca
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As is the case with many of our newsletters, this edition features several people who have made significant contributions of volunteer time to fulfilling the mission and goals of the Friends of Bonnechere Parks. The people we and others have honoured over the past year are a dedicated and talented lot. Whether it's recording the natural and cultural treasures of the Bonnechere in an archaeological report, original work of art or press release; hosting a workshop to promote exploration of our unspoiled wilderness, or writing a grant application for program funding, they've work tirelessly, effectively and – most often – behind the scenes. Featuring their achievements in our newsletter allows them but a token of recognition in appreciation. Social activist Mark Kielburger says, "It takes only 10 minutes a day to make a difference." Thankfully, many of our volunteers donate much much more. I can't imagine where the Friends would be without such support. Congratulations to all!
Betty Biesenthal, Editor

Virtual Museum of Canada Supports the Preservation and Promotion of Bonnechere's History

The Virtual Museum of Canada Investment Program has accepted a proposal by the Friends of Bonnechere Parks for the production of an online virtual exhibit celebrating the natural and cultural heritage of the Little Bonnechere River in the Ottawa Valley. Entitled, Land of the Spirits, this interactive portal will feature the story of discovery and settlement along the Bonnechere River over several centuries by animating the forest, river and people in and around Basin Depot. The goal is to illustrate how our Ottawa Valley history is integral to the story of Canada's discovery and settlement.

Over the past decade the Friends of Bonnechere Parks, in partnership with the Ontario Archaeological Society Ottawa Chapter, have hosted a public historical archaeological program (the only one of its kind in Canada) to explore hidden heritage sites along the Little Bonnechere River. Historical archaeology is a scientific discipline incorporating skills and methods integral to the study of a landscape and its people. As a hands-on experiential tool, archaeology is an excellent device for fostering interest, encouraging critical thinking and stimulating dialogue. This project will extend such learning opportunities into digital media providing unprecedented access to what some consider Canada's largest collection of farm depot artifacts, circa 1850 to 1880.

This is not a view of the wealthy or privileged, but a collection of the common man. Currently housed at the Davenport Centre Heritage Hall in Bonnechere Provincial Park, this collection includes a variety of objects including earthenware, ceramics and glass, tools, pipes, coins and animal bones, from 5000 years ago to present. Artifacts of interest from private collections will also be included in this project.

Presently, because of limited space and resources, only a small number of these artifacts are available for public viewing at the Davenport Centre Heritage Hall. Once Land of the Spirits is completed, online visitors will be able to conduct virtual archaeological digs at several sites along the Bonnechere River, view an interactive timeline of the forest, river and people from 1200 A.D. to present, and tour a virtual museum housing 3D images of various artifacts and audio/video recordings.

"This is an amazing opportunity for the Friends to open the doors of Heritage Hall to not only those who visit Bonnechere Park, but to students of Canadian and Ottawa Valley history around the world," says Friends of Bonnechere Parks President Ross Taylor. He added, "This project is a key element of our five-year strategic plan, and we are fortunate that the Canadian Heritage Information Network offers the Virtual Museum of Canada Investment Program to support such initiatives."



VIRTUAL MUSEUM  CANADA



Notes from Bonnechere

Fall is here once again and another camping season has come to an end. The great weather we enjoyed all summer continued into this fall with warm days and mild nights. Combined with the colourful display put on by mother nature, it's always a great time of year to camp.

It was another busy season at Bonnechere featuring a few new faces. Since November 2004, Jim Fraser has been providing technical assistance to the committee that is trying to have the Ottawa River designated as a Canadian Heritage River and I have been acting as the Park Superintendent. Some of the other new people at Bonnechere this year were John Downey (Killbear) as the Acting Assistant Superintendent and Warren Watson (Algonquin) as the Acting Maintenance Foreman. Many thanks to them for working so hard to make this another successful season.

Our former Park Clerk, Shawna Conway-Warren and her husband Andrew celebrated the safe arrival of their son Benjamin on July 23; a little brother for Clarke and Abby. We wish Shawna well in her new career as a full-time mom – she leaves us with many fond memories. Amanda Phanenhour, who has worked at the park for four years has very capably stepped into Shauna's position and taken over the responsibilities of Park Clerk.

This fall and winter promise to be interesting and exciting as well with the upcoming archaeological symposium in Petawawa sponsored by the Ontario Archeological Society Ottawa Chapter and the ongoing work on the Virtual Museum of Canada online exhibit.

Upon reflection, 2005 will go down as another memorable season at Bonnechere – for visitors and staff alike, thanks to the hard work of Park staff and the continued support of the Friends of Bonnechere Parks. The countless volunteer hours put in by members, their financial support of many of our special events and the development of the interpretive panel for our new playground have all helped to make Bonnechere Park a better place for campers and visitors alike.

I hope you all have a safe and healthy fall and winter and look forward to seeing you next season at beautiful Bonnechere Provincial Park.

*Brent Frederick
Acting Park Superintendent*

CONGRATULATIONS to Friends of Algonquin General Manager Lee Pauzé who gave birth to a baby girl named Edie, on Monday February 7, 2005.

The VMC Investment Program invests in the development of online heritage content, and is open to public, not-for-profit heritage institutions. The program received sixty submissions for consideration in its most recent call for proposals. The proposals were evaluated taking into account program criteria, desired outcomes, and VMC operating principles and content policy. A total of twelve proposals were approved covering production of online content including virtual exhibits, interactive games and educational resources across a wide range of disciplines and interests.

The total Land of the Spirits budget of \$383 000 includes \$134 000 in in-kind resources and a \$185 500 investment from Canadian Heritage. Says President Ross Taylor, "Statistics show that more and more people are visiting museums via the World Wide Web. We are fortunate to be able to tap these resources and take advantage of this trend." "CHIN is extremely excited about this new exhibit," said Namir Anani, Director General of the Canadian Heritage Information Network, the organization responsible for the VMC. "We are always seeking new ways to bring cultural content to audiences and this virtual exhibit is a excellent achievement in this regard. It is a treasure that will engage both first-time and repeat visitors' interest for countless years to come."

Work on the Land of the Spirits portal began in August; the project will be completed for launch in June 2006.

The Virtual Museum of Canada (VMC), created by the Department of Canadian Heritage, in collaboration with more than 1200 museums across the country is an important element of the Government of Canada's strategy to produce and promote Canadian cultural content online.

To view the VMC collections, visit: virtualmuseum.ca

THE LAND OF THE SPIRITS ROUND TABLE: AN IMPRESSIVE LOT, INDEED!

On October 1, the FBP hosted a round table workshop to kick off the development process for the VMC Land of the Spirits project. This day-long session was facilitated by Betty Biesenthal and Jim Fraser who are spear-heading the project on behalf of the Friends and the Park. The esteemed group of partners, advisors and contributors includes:

Partners

Erin Collins, Archivist, Friends of Algonquin
Chris and Val Hinsperger, Co-Owners, Natural History Interpreters, Bonnechere Caves
Mark Stabb, Ecologist, Writer; sponsored by the Renfrew County Stewardship Council
Treena Hein, Educator, Writer; sponsored by the Canadian Forestry Association
Dave Croft, Avocational Archaeologist, Ontario Archeological Society Ottawa Chapter
Preston O'Grady, Educator, Historian, Bonnechere Museum [*absent*]

Advisors

Alan Dixon, Co-Owner, Humdinger Canadian Books and Gifts; Retired Educator
Ian Pineau, Coordinator, Adventure Naturalist Program, Algonquin College
Ian Badgley, Consulting Archaeologist
Brent Connolly, Retired Forester

Youth

Sophie Stabb, Youth Advisor [primary]
Julia Biesenthal, Youth Advisor [secondary]
Kara Fraser, Youth Advisor [post secondary]
Darren Bonnenburg, Youth Advisor [post secondary]

Contributors

Ellen Blaubeurgs, Archaeologist, Interpreter, Writer
Rory MacKay, Historian, Author, Educator, Applied Research Archaeologist
Tom Ballantine, Curator, Haliburton Highlands Museum; Consulting Archaeologist

Susan Code, Educator, Historian, Writer, Cultural Heritage Interpreter
Anne Burchat, Educator

Ontario Parks

Marilyn Beecroft, Natural Heritage Education Specialist, Central Zone, Ontario Parks
Brent Frederick, Acting Superintendent, Bonnechere Provincial Park
Amanda Phanehour, Park Clerk
Luke Dickerson, Natural Heritage Education Leader

Friends of Bonnechere Parks

Ross Taylor, President *[absent]*
Jane Duff, Treasurer
Alasdair Fraser

PARKS MANAGEMENT PLAN UP-DATE

After a lengthy hiatus, the Parks Management Plan committee met in mid-September to get the planning process back on track. The proposed plan applies to three provincial parks: Bonnechere, Bonnechere River and Foy Property. A single plan encompassing all three parks will allow for more comprehensive management of the many historical and natural assets within their boundaries.

Bonnechere and Foy Property Provincial Parks are located on Round Lake in the amalgamated Township of Killaloe, Hagarty and Richards. Bonnechere River Provincial Park extends along the Bonnechere River from Bonnechere Provincial Park northwest to the Algonquin Provincial Park boundary, lying within the amalgamated Township of Madawaska Valley.

The committee includes members from the municipalities that border the three parks, representatives from the forestry industry, the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Friends of Bonnechere Parks. As the representative for the FBP, I aim to present the views and ideas of our members and of the many Park visitors with whom we come in contact. Some of the major issues we are dealing with are the:

- proposed amalgamation of the three parks into one entity,
- classification of the park(s) to establish the best way to manage the resources,
- potential future development within the park(s) to improve camping and outdoor experiences, and
- possible acquisition of other environmental areas in order to protect specific habitats.

We also need to determine the most appropriate level of development of our cultural heritage sites such as the Lafleur Homestead and Omanique Mill on the Bonnechere River.

Other issues and matters of interest to local residents and Park visitors include:

- snowmobile and ATV access,
- access and portaging routes along the Bonnechere River,
- motor boat restrictions, particularly in Stevenson Lake, and
- current hunting and trapping activities within the park boundaries.

A number of options have been identified to address these issues.

Several years ago, we hosted several Open House information sessions to present issues and options to all who have an interest in the Parks and the local area. The comments gathered at these sessions from regional municipalities, local cottage owners' associations, forestry representatives and other interested parties, and from surveys of Parks visitors, have been accounted for in up-dating the proposed plan.

Over the next few months, additional information sessions will be held to up-date interested parties and to gather more feedback on the plan before it is submitted for final approval by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Ontario Parks. Watch for notices in local media for up-coming sessions. We seek and welcome your input.

Jane Duff, FBP Board Member



Anna and Sophie Stabb play on the Alligator climber of the new playground at Bonnechere Park.

This past spring, thanks to funding from Ontario Parks, a new playground was installed at Bonnechere Park.

To compliment these unique structures, designed to reflect the area's logging history, the FBP erected an interpretive panel of historic images and the following text:

Pointer Boat

Designed in the 1850s for J.R. Booth by Pembroke ON wood carver John Cockburn, the pointer boat was used by log drivers to navigate the floating booms. This unique, flat bottom boat with pointed bow and stern had such a shallow draft that loggers boasted it could float on heavy dew.

Alligator

In the 1870s John West of Simcoe ON, designed a scow outfitted with a steam winch. He called it an alligator because once it hauled a log boom across a lake, it could winch itself onto a skid-way and crawl overland to the next body of water.

Ranger Cabin

In 1893 Algonquin Provincial Park introduced a system of huts to house the rangers assigned to protect the park. These shelter lodges were established at access points along timber company tote roads and the newly built railroad. The Depot in Bonnechere Provincial Park is the site of the restored Pine River ranger cabin, circa 1946.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

With this edition, we are introducing a new column featuring artefacts from our collection of depot farm objects. Appropriately, we launch with the piece that for over a decade we have affectionately called Peggi's saucer.

SEND IN THE CLOWNS

Archaeology and History of the Peggi Plate

During the 1996 archaeological excavations at Basin Depot, the most important logging depot on the Little Bonnechere River and the Old Bonnechere Road, OAS Ottawa Chapter member Peggi Armstrong uncovered a number of ceramic sherds in a midden feature. These were later reconstructed and conserved to form a virtually complete child's plate. A black transfer-printed image of a "circus" scene with a male figure riding backwards on a horse, and another figure being kicked by the horse, was applied to the centre of this refined white earthenware piece. The name "Billy Button" appears below the scene. A slight rococo rim with a moulded border of florets is also apparent. No manufacturer's mark was placed on the reverse side.

By the mid-1830s light blue, black, brown, green and red-printed ceramics were fairly common and available to Canadian consumers. This particular plate may have accompanied the purchaser to Canada from Europe, or it may have been purchased in a local, well-stocked general store.

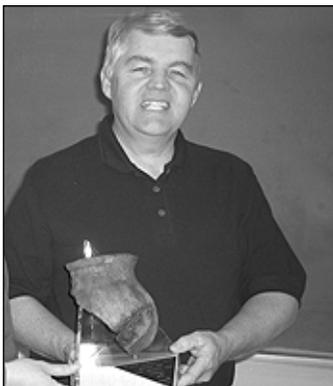
The "circus" scene and name "Billy Button" are the most intriguing aspects of the plate. From Basin Depot, it is necessary to flash to London – 1770! Equestrian shows are all the rage, and displays of trick riding are especially popular. Among the first equestrian stars of this era is Philip Astley, a young Sergeant Major recently discharged from His Majesty's Light Dragoons. Philip is also an entrepreneur with keen business sense. He uses his reputation for superb horsemanship and bravery against the French in the

Continued on back page...

OAS Peggi Armstrong Public Archaeology Award



The OAS Peggi Armstrong Public Archaeology Award is presented on an occasional basis by the Ontario Archaeological Society. This award recognizes outstanding work by an individual or group in stimulating public interest in archaeology, especially in Ontario.



2003 RECIPIENT: JIM FRASER

Park Superintendent, Educator, Advocate, Driving Force

Jim Fraser has been the driving force behind the public archaeology programs provided within various parks under his supervision and along the Bonnechere watershed. In the mid-90s he helped establish the annual public archaeology days at Bonnechere Park. He also organized a conference on archaeology in 1995, which led directly to annual public archaeological events at Basin Depot in Algonquin Park, and at Bonnechere Park and the Lafleur homestead. These events were made

possible through partnership of the OAS Ottawa Chapter, the Friends of Algonquin Park and the FBP.

Jim has also organized hands-on archaeology opportunities for school children at the Lafleur farm site on the Bonnechere River, for which he developed a classroom presentation entitled *The Land Before Nintendo*. In the summer of 2003 this opportunity was extended to park visitors throughout the summer and autumn.

Jim was also deeply involved in the conception and production of various support materials used in association with the public archaeology programs, including publications such as *Spirits of the Little Bonnechere*, *Walks of the Little Bonnechere River*, a cultural heritage activity book for youth entitled *Discover the Spirits*, and an interactive CD-ROM called *Visiting the Spirits*. The latter two resources provide specific insight into activities carried out by archaeologists, with the public as the target audience.

Jim Fraser is an active advocate of public archaeology within Ontario Parks, not only lobbying regarding the logistics and benefits of public archaeology, but also promoting the importance of archaeological investigations within parks to ensure protection of heritage resources. Jim has also organized field-training archaeological experiences for Ontario Parks staff. Though not public archaeology per se, such outreach activities are indeed crucial in the protection of heritage resources within the parks of Ontario.



2004 RECIPIENT: DAVE CROFT

Avocational Archaeologist, Interpreter

For over 40 years, Mr. Croft has been active in the practice and promotion of archaeology in Eastern Ontario. An avocational archaeologist with professional standards, Dave is a well known and popular figure at local workshops, digs and public presentations.

Mr. Croft, a founding member in 1971 of the OAS Ottawa Chapter, has contributed to the public's awareness of archaeology in many different ways. His great enthusiasm and ability to discuss his subject in layman's terms have been put to good use with school children of all ages. Young and old love to see and try out his carefully researched replicas of prehistoric stone tools. Over the years, he has participated in many local digs, including work at Basin Depot in Algonquin Park and the LaFleur site in Bonnechere Park. When visitors to such digs have questions, Dave is always a willing interpreter of the work. In addition, Dave has been active with the Champlain Museum in Pembroke.

FBP Directors Award Winners



2004 RECIPIENT: FRED BLACKSTEIN Master Canoeist and Wilderness Enthusiast

From 1999 to 2005, Fred Blackstien kindly offered his services to co-host the highly popular Wilderness Skills Course. Hundreds of outdoor enthusiasts learned about reading maps, using compasses and GPS, and how to survive in the wilderness. Over the years, Fred donated all registration fees to the FBP —

thousands of dollars were raised for program enhancement at the Park. Fred continues to be a strong supporter of the FBP and can often be seen paddling along the Little Bonnechere. Fred is shown here in his prized, original birch bark canoe built by Stan and Jackie Sarazin from the Pikwakanagan First Nation at Golden Lake. The Sarazins come from a family which is known internationally for the art of traditional birch bark canoe making. This canoe was built for display of the traditional methods at the International Plowing Match, held in Pembroke in 1994.



2004 RECIPIENT: MERRIL BURCHART Folk Artist and Woodworker

In his trademark quiet and unassuming manner, Merrill has long supported the efforts of the FBP. Drawn to the Bonnechere through family history, Merrill has left his mark on the Park through his various donations of hand-crafted woodwork and painted pieces. He has created several miniature replicas of the Basin Depot cabin and the famous

Cockburn pointer boat. In 2002, he unveiled his prized contribution to the FBP: a life-sized pointer boat that holds court under the north canopy of the Davenport Centre. After 100 hours of construction, in the spring of that year, Merrill and members of his family launched the craft upriver near Basin Depot and paddled down to the beach at the park. The Little Bonnechere had arrived. At the welcome ceremony, historian Rory MacKay congratulated Merrill and his crew for navigating a pointer boat on the Bonnechere for the first time in a century.



In A ppreciation

The Friends of Bonnechere congratulate and thank

HERSCHEL & YONA PAYNE

for their support of the Artist-in-the-Park Program at Bonnechere Provincial Park over the past decade. At left is Herschel's painting of the barns at the Lafleur homestead.



2004 Ontario Volunteer Service Awards

In Fall 2004, several long-standing members of the FBP received Volunteer Service Awards from the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship.

Recognized for their commitment to volunteerism were Jane Duff and Laurie Fraser [centre right and left], both charter members of the FBP Board of Directors, established in 1993. Jane has served a three-year term as president, and since then has spent countless hours balancing our books as our treasurer. Laurie has been our recording secretary from the very beginning — that's a lot of minutes of meetings!

Betty Biesenthal [far left] joined the board in 1994 and has since served a term as President, then Chair of Grants and Publicity.

Representing the Ontario Ministry of Culture is Carmen Goold [far right], who is an avid supporter the FBP. Carmen presented the women with 10-year pins and certificates.

This year, FBP President Ross Taylor will be eligible for his 10-year recognition pin. The FBP extend their congratulations to these highly deserving and dedicated volunteers.



LAFLEUR HOMESTEAD ACCESSIBILITY PROJECT RECEIVES \$8500 IN FUNDING

Thanks to funding from the Renfrew County Community Futures Development Corporation [RCCFDC], the Lafleur homestead will benefit from several upgrades to improve interpretive and accessibility features throughout the property.

Funding from the Local Initiative Program will be used to develop improved vehicle access and parking, interpretive signage and a fully accessible walking trail.

By summer 2006, a new 200-metre hard-packed trail will wind its way through this forest, field and relic farm acreage, to a riverside destination at the pre-1900s log home that once served as a stopping place for loggers and travellers along the Little Bonnechere River.

Along the way, interpretive panels in the field and at the farmhouse will illustrate the natural and cultural heritage of this well preserved homestead.

As well, the parking area will be expanded to provide improved and safer parking for cars and buses, including designated handicap spaces.

Over the past decade, the FBP have partnered with the Renfrew County and District Health Unit, Pembroke and Area Field Naturalists and the Renfrew County Stewardship Council to create healthy living opportunities and increase accessibility to hiking trails. As well, the FBP host a historic archaeological program at Lafleur catering to Park visitors and Renfrew County school children.

These improvements will meet the demands of hosting these activities and events, and allow for expansion of outreach and interpretive programming.

The FBP gratefully acknowledge the support of such initiatives by the RCCFDC.



RENFREW COUNTY
Community Futures Development Corporation
Société d'aide au développement des collectivités

Halfway to Basin: A Good Place to Stop

Archaeological evidence indicates that for over eight hundred years peoples have stopped over at this scenic site. When the Township of Burns was surveyed in 1874, this was the only dwelling place in the entire municipality. It was recorded as the residence of Francis and Frances Currier on what's become known as Currier's Lake. Here, they had cleared land where they farmed and ran a stopping place, providing food and shelter for the lumbermen traveling up the Old Bonnechere Road. Their homestead had a "very good house" in which they also raised a family of nine.

In about 1900 the farm passed into the hands of one Charles Lafleur and it was around this time that the existing log house was built. Within these solid square-timber walls Charles and his wife Martha raised three children: Bella, Josephine and William. Here, as in many homes along the road, travelers were always welcome to warm themselves by the Forest Beauty stove. Once inside, the scent of Bella's fresh baking was enough to convince most visitors to accept her invitation to the dinner table.

In recent years, time has taken its toll on the Lafleur homestead. Several buildings that were still standing in the 1950s, including the summer kitchen and dining room (used during the summer heat), are now gone. Four barns stood in the fields to the east of the log house until one spring day when a grass fire fueled by a breeze off the lake, razed them to the ground. However, an old drive shed and piggery still stand near the original landing on the waterfront.

Agents of Change

A few paces from these buildings, the Lafleur homestead preserves a stand of old pine and other tree species that reflect the forests of the past. Surrounding the homestead you can see evidence of this forest trying to make a comeback, and like the loggers of the past, you will recognize many of these agents of change.

Perennial shrubs grow where Park mowers leave grass uncut. Serviceberry is making a go of it where it manages to avoid the branch-breaking black knot fungus. Pin cherry is taking hold only to be attacked by eastern tent caterpillars. Fast-growing poplars are certainly rebuilding the forest, but the voracious appetite of the local beaver population slows their progress. Just like humans, these species are all agents of change along the Little Bonnechere River.

Now look across the river for an example of what the Lafleur homestead would become if it were left alone for several decades, then seek out a healthy pine sapling growing up next to the drive shed as a sign that nature has already started to set its course.

Photo: The square-timber log house and milk house at the Lafleur homestead.

This article is an excerpt from Walks of the Little Bonnechere.



RATING

Easy stroll through a variety of landscapes.

TYPE

Out and back.

TIME

30 minutes.

START/FINISH

10.9km from Cty Rd 58.
Trailhead at parking area south of Turners Road.

HIGHLIGHTS

Preserved pioneer homestead:
- old tote road corridor
- original farm field
- barn foundations
- log house and out-buildings
Ideal for birding and vegetation identification

SURFACE

Stonedust.

Natural Heritage Education at Bonnechere

Now that autumn is upon us, I find myself wondering where the summer went so quickly. The Natural Heritage Education Staff certainly had their hands full this past summer with over 3200 Park visitors participating in Bonnechere's NHE program. Aside from our tried and true events, like the Annual Wolf Howl and Spirits' Night, we also hosted a variety of new events. Among the most popular of these were Scienational Snakes and our first annual Passport to the Past Festival; fresh ideas like these help to keep Park visitors and staff interested and involved.

I would like to commend the hardworking NHE staff for a job well done. Darren Bonenberg, returned for a third season to script the **Spirits' Night** and educate kids about wolves as the eccentric Dr. Wolfman. He has returned to Trent University to pursue a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Classical Studies with a minor in Geography. Stephanie Tabbert was a new addition to our interpretive team this year. She is a natural public speaker and did a wonderful job researching and writing about the items that we showcased in our new display cases. Stephanie has entered first year at Trent University and is studying towards a Bachelor of Science Degree in Zoology and Psychology.

Besides delivering our weekly **Kids' Adventures** and **Family Programs**, we invited a number of new acts that proved hugely successful. The first of these was **Scienational Snakes** featuring an array of reptiles that the audience could view and handle, including Milk, Black Rat, Northern Water, and Eastern Garter Snakes. Some of the more exotic species included a Boa Constrictor, a Ball Python, and several colours of Corn Snakes. This was an enormously popular program for kids and adults alike with over two hundred campers in attendance.



NHE Leader Luke Dickerson makes fire the old-fashioned way.

This summer we also hosted the first-ever **Passport to the Past Festival**, focusing on how crafts and products were made in times before large scale factories, electricity and computers. Exhibitors included Ray and Carol Anne Bonenberg of Maple Side Products who boiled maple sap in a large cauldron; Rory MacKay, who with the help of Park staffer Nick Reaume, setup a blacksmith shop and showed how chain used to be fabricated; and Dwight Dickerson who spoke about his fish decoy reproductions and handmade lures. Outfitted in full Voyageur costume, Randy Thuler displayed numerous animal pelts and a flintlock muzzleloader that he loaded and fired. Tom Stephenson arrived with various wooden creations and machines, including a manual binding device that kids used to make pieces of rope the old-fashioned way.

We also hosted photographer Victoria Alexander who mounted a show of Bonnechere River scenes, and Brian Michael who setup a yurt that functioned as a giant pinhole camera. Brian invited visitors into this circular tent to learn about traditional photographic methods. It was a great day of uniting the tools of the past with modern concepts.

Thanks to in part to great weather and Bonnechere's reputation as a family oriented park we had high attendance at our programs. If you missed some this year's events, do not fret, their popularity ensures that they will be around for years to come.

Luke Dickerson, Natural Heritage Education Leader



ALL SMILES: Author and historian Rory MacKay and FBP President Ross Taylor display a cheque representing the \$185 000 investment by Canadian Heritage towards the *Land of the Spirits* exhibit to be produced for the Virtual Museum of Canada. Watch for the launch in summer 2006!

WERE YOU A WINNER?

Throughout the summer months, the FBP conducted a fundraising raffle featuring some great prizes. The money raised will be used by the Friends to support our cultural and environmental research and educational programs at Bonnechere Provincial Park.

Prizes generously donated by corporate partners included a Woods four-person tent, a set of Motorola walkie-talkies and a wonderful Langford canoe.

Canoe Winner:

Judy Lee, Port Carling

Local Winners:

Coleman backpack: Rolly Michaelis

Woods sleeping bag: Eldon Yutronkie

Motorola walkie-talkies : Tom Ballantine

T-Fal cooking pot set: Jim Ives

T-Fal cooking pot set: Laura Zuber

Woods 4-person tent: Michael Roberts

Friends Sweatshirt: C. Burchart

Congratulations to all the winners and thanks to all who purchased tickets!



RESERVE YOUR SPOT: 1-888-ONT-PARK

LANGFORD
CANOE & KAYAK 

Seven Years War, and gives exhibitions displaying much showmanship and panache. At this point in Astley's biography, there are two slightly different versions. Both seem quite credible when the central images on the Peggi Plate are examined more closely.

Philip Astley built his first show ring near Westminster Bridge. His performance demonstrations became extremely popular when he added a second rider named Billy Button who fell off more than he rode. It was supposed to be a political satire of contemporary local interest, but it was the falling off, the riding backwards by mistake and the horse chasing Billy that everyone loved. The satire was forgotten, but the circus and circus clown had arrived. Astley's new acts included Carlo Delpini, a Commedia dell'Arte clown and former Pierrot (note the Pierrot-like appearance of the character being kicked, on the Peggi Plate). Trick riding, clowning, comic horse acts and other routines quickly became the centerpieces of this new circus.

Another version espouses that Astley developed the "Tailor's Ride to Brentford", an act combining clowning and horsemanship. Astley played Billy Button, an inept little tailor who is determined to ride to the village of Brentford as quickly as possible to cast his vote for a popular underdog politician. After much difficulty mounting his horse, he is finally successful, only to find that the horse will not move; then it gallops off so quickly that he is thrown. With his talents for clowning, riding, and business, Astley successfully developed his little equestrian variety show into an entertainment empire. He died in 1814, but his descendants carried on in the family business and became one of the premiere circus family dynasties in Europe. Astley is traditionally credited with the title of "Father of the Circus". "Circus" was a name he never used himself. Audiences attended the "Amphitheatre" or "Astley's".

Not surprisingly, we know that at least one European potter capitalized on the fame of Billy Button/Philip Astley and created children's plates with this popular character. Further research may reveal the manufacturer; as well, it would be intriguing to learn more about the social history reflected in making and decoration of children's china.

End Notes

The web site for "The White Horse on Parson's Green" has the following information related to Billy Button: "The White Horse was mentioned... in August 1712 in relation to the popular annual Parson's Green [Fulham] Fair... In the early years of the 19th century, a noted clown, Billy Button, used to ride a horse at the fair. After completing its routine 'the intelligent animal would throw its rider off and bolt for the stables of the White Horse inn' where it was evidently given plenty to eat and drink."

The FBP Directors Award is modeled after the Peggi Plate from Basin Depot. It bears a moulded projectile point motif alternating with pine cones which represent the past and the future. The black printed log cabin image in the centre illustrates the Garvey homestead on the Little Bonnechere River.

It is tempting to imagine Peggi Armstrong's amusement upon learning that this plate from Basin Depot in Algonquin Park is intricately tied to the history of the modern circus! EB

Acknowledgements

Tom Ballantine provided valuable reference and archaeological context information towards the preparation of this article. His contributions are appreciated very much.

References Consulted

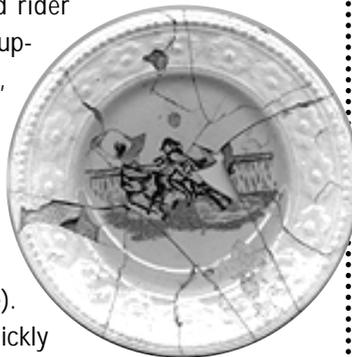
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Submitted by Ellen Blaubergs



**November 3, 4, 5 and 6
Petawawa, Ontario**

The 2005 OAS Symposium is being hosted by the Ottawa Chapter, Friends of Bonnechere Parks and Town of Petawawa at the Petawawa Civic Centre. We will have access to the facilities and modern accommodations at Canadian Forces Base Petawawa, which is celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2005. The Base museum and archives have been refurbished for the centenary, and this spectacular location in the Ottawa River Valley will be a unique venue for this annual symposium.

The program will focus on the theme of partnerships and promoting interest in the archaeological past including those between archaeologists, Aboriginal peoples, museums and communities. There will also be an overview of the Ottawa Valley's archaeological heritage, and contributed papers from the OAS membership. A book room, post-conference tours, evening banquet with live theatre presentation, and OAS annual meetings will round out this gathering.

Conference proceedings will be published in early 2006.

For further information, please contact:

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