Executive Committee Sets Plans for 1998

by Butch Diesslin

The alumni association executive committee met at the Sommers Base on September 14, 1997. Executive committee members present were Dave Hyink, President; Nigel Cooper, Treasurer; and Blaine "Butch" Diesslin.

The executive committee accepted responsibility for raising the money to publish the 75th anniversary edition of the history of the canoe base program, now being written by Gene Felton. The estimated cost of publication is $15,000. Patronage and pre-publication sales will be solicited.

Association Treasurer Nigel Cooper presented the 1998 operating budget. The budget was approved.

The Alumni Association's "Crossing Portages" five-year annual giving campaign runs through December 31, 1999. Nonparticipating members and others will be reminded that they can still join in this effort. Anyone committing at the "Grand Portage" ($2,500 total) level during the remainder of the program will receive one of the limited edition, hand-crafted canoe paddles. Current participants can still upgrade to the "Grand Portage" total commitment level and receive a paddle.

The executive committee agreed that the association will continue its seasonal staff support incentive for the 1998 summer season. First-year staff will receive a $35 trading post voucher to help defray the cost of their job related expenses. The second-year staff will receive a custom design canoe paddle, made by X-Y Company, Ltd., of Atikokan, Ontario. Those staff members returning for their third (or above) years will receive a high quality "guide pack" with a specially-designed insignia.

The renovation of The Lodge is coming to a close. The only remaining portion of the project is completing the Hedrick Memorial Library. The carpentry in the library is done, all that remains is inventorying, sorting, arranging, and cataloging of the materials of historical significance which will be housed in this resource library. Appropriate expertise will be sought to complete this project. Association members will again be invited to assist with the 1998 seasonal staff training. The exact dates in early June for the training week have not been set. Members of the Northern Tier Committee will also assist the management and senior staff members with the staff training.

The Northern Tier management team will be developing a list of potential projects for the annual alumni work week. The projects taken on will be those with a significant positive impact on the staff and on the alumni association participants as well.

The plans for the 1998 reunion were discussed. Alumni members Dave Greenlee, Chuck Rose, Larry Hanson, Don Richard, Tom Benton, Paul Schieve, Cory Kolodji, Linnea Renner, Bob Oliva, Terry Schocke and Doug Hirdler were in attendance and joined in the discussion. Information about the reunion plans can be found in another article in this newsletter.

Sam Cook's Guide Found

Last issue's request for the name of the guide pictured with crew 7/03C drew a response from Richard Reisdorf (63-66). The picture, on the sixth page, was one of the many photos shot in front of the lodge when crews arrived at the base to begin their wilderness experience.

Richard said he recognized the guide of Sam Cook's crew as Gerry McKay (63-64). Cook, a journalist and outdoor author, will be the speaker at the Association's September 5, 1998 reunion banquet. The reunion committee wanted to urge McKay to attend.

Michael McMahon (64-66) then found Gerry's parents in Twin Cities phone books and got Gerry's phone number in California. Gerry confirms he's in that picture. He and Sam say it's from 1964. Gerry's making plans to attend the reunion next year.

Many former staff members still aren't association members, but there's a good chance they can be found like Gerry was. Mike was lost himself until he stopped by the base. Now he's a reunion organizer. You might try contacting someone you know.

Entering a New Era

This carved, wooden sign by Roy Cerny (64-70) marks the entrance to the base. Ely sometimes refers to itself as "The End of The Road." Folks who travel to the end of the Moose Lake Road are now greeted by this sign. At about 10 feet in diameter, it's said to be the largest one between Moose lake and the Fernberg Road.
President's Message
by Dave Hyink

One of the rewards for attending the fall meetings of the Alumni Association's Executive Committee and the Northern Tier High Adventure Committee is visiting northern Minnesota in mid-September. The clear skies, warm days, cool nights and brilliant fall colors set a magnificent backdrop for a weekend of review, reflection, planning and anticipation. September 1997 was no exception. The weather was spectacular, the Base looked great, the meetings were productive, the camaraderie was wonderful, and oh, the anticipation and excitement about the 75th anniversary year and all it will bring!

1997 will be marked by the significant transition in professional leadership of the Northern Tier program. On the Alumni front, we plunged headlong into the electronic age with creation of the HOLRY Listserver (Contact: holry-owner@leonine.com) and website [http://www.holry.org]. But 1997 may simply be remembered as the "calm before the storm" because 1998 will be BIG!

Our 75th season will find all three bases - Ely, Atikokan and Bissett - operating at full capacity. In fact, so many scouts and their leaders want to share in our 75th year that there are nearly 100 crews on the 1998 waiting list! This presents opportunities for Sommer alumni to offer much needed help. First, members can urge capable young men and women aged 17 and older to join the seasonal staff. Second, your help during Alumni Work Week and/or Staff Training Week would be invaluable. And, finally, those who are registered members of the BSA might offer to be either volunteer Interpreters (aka guides) or Base Staff during peak periods next summer.

Just as the dust is settling from a busy summer comes the 75th Anniversary Rendevous and Reunion. It too will be big, and fun, and definitely worth attending. I personally want to encourage you and your family to begin making plans now to attend. I promise you won't regret it, and your presence will make the weekend all the more successful.

Finally, I want to let you know that you'll be hearing from me again shortly as I send out materials encouraging you to give your Alumni Association a financial hand as we underwrite the publication of "Diamond in the North," the 75-year history of the Base by Gene Felton (1951-53, Committee 1973-present). Gene has spent countless hours refining and expanding George Hedrick's 1967 work and updating it to the present. It will be a "must have" for anyone who has ever been associated with the Base. We'll need your help to make publication a reality.

As always, it is both an honor and a pleasure to serve you as a Director and President of the Alumni Association. To you and yours, I wish all the best, and look forward to seeing you in 1999.

General Manager's Comments
by Doug Hirdler

The National Executive Board of the Boy Scouts of America met on October 8, 1997 and approved an additional purchase for the 1997 Capital Budget for the Northern Tier Canoe Bases of $112,250 for canoes, paddles, pfds, outfitter tents, food and kettle packs, and personal packs. As you probably have heard by now the tents and packs that were issued to crews during 1997 received extremely low evaluations during this summer's canoeing program. In our request for 1998 Capital Funds we included a summary of the adult and youth crew evaluations that I believe were very influential in our obtaining additional funding to prepare for 1998.

We will use $20,000 of the $112,250 to purchase 17' We-No-Nah Royalex Sunowner canoes that weigh 58 lbs. (crews can rent them at $15 per day) and 18.5' We-No-Nah Kevlar Minnesota II canoes that weigh 44 lbs. (crews can rent them at $25 per day). The new equipment will give us some of the same options that other outfitters in the area offer their clients.

On October 10th and 11th the National Order of the Arrow Program Committee met at Charles (please see "General Manager on page 3"

Alumni Association
Directors and Officers

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<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
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*Number in parenthesis is years remaining in current term

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<td>Mr. Norman Augustine</td>
<td>Chairman, National High Adventure Committee 6801 Rockledge Drive Bethesda, MD 20817-1877</td>
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SAA Planning for “Rendezvous 98”

by Dave Greenlee

Just as the voyagers gathered at Grand Portage to celebrate, Sommers Alumni and their families have gathered every couple years to celebrate our friendships and our ties to the Base. As the Canoe Base celebrates its 75th Anniversary in 1998, we are making plans for what is likely to be our biggest and best alumni reunion. Rendezvous 98 will be held at the Sommers Canoe Base on Friday, September 4 through Monday, September 7, 1998. This is Labor Day weekend, and Monday is the holiday. Mark it on your calendars and make plans to attend!

Banquet at the Sun-Spee - The banquet will be held on Saturday evening. The bad news is we have finally outgrown the dining hall at the Base. The good news is that we have contracted to use the banquet facilities of the new Holiday Inn Sun-Spee Resort on the shores of Shagawa Lake in Ely.

Our speaker will be Sam Cook, outdoors writer for the Duluth News-Tribune and Herald, and author of award winning books “Up North,” “Quiet Magic,” and “Camp Sights.” Sam took his first Scout trip through the Base in 1965. The alumni have taken on the challenge of locating his “lost” Charlie Guide (from Sam’s treasured crew picture) and we promise to have information at the reunion. Sam’s books are must reading, and we are honored to have him as our banquet speaker. In his book “Up North,” Sam tells us, “Each of us has an Up North. It’s a time and place far from the here and now. It’s a map on the wall, a dream in the making, a tugging at one’s soul. For those who feel the tug, who make the dream happen, who put the map in the pack sack and go, the world is never quite the same again.”

Music in the Park

Barb Cary Hall is organizing the biggest and best music celebration ever. The Base has a long tradition of music on the trail and at our rendezvous and Barb has already located several musicians from the generations of guide/musicians who have been encouraged and nurtured at the Base. She has been in contact with Ron Miles ’61-66, Jeff Cerny ’67-69, Larry Whittemore ’67-72 and Cory Kolodji ’74-79, ’88-89. Are there other musicians out there who we should include in the program? The music program is planned for Saturday afternoon, probably in Ely, and maybe at the park (weather permitting). As we have in the past, we will also plan some time for just sitting around and singing with friends at the Base. We might even have a good night for an “aurora check” or some night paddling.

Tours of the Base

The Base has changed dramatically over the years, and yet it stays the same. There will be organized tours to show off the facilities of the Base including the new outfitting building, remodeled dining hall and sauna, administrative building. Roy Cerny’s new “signage,” first night cabins and other SAA building projects. With our contributions of time and money, our beautiful lodge has become a winterized training facility, a reference library, a functional map/chart room, and a very friendly place to meet.

Voyageur Theme

From the time you enter the gate, be prepared to enjoy Rendezvous 98 in the theme of the fur trade era. Many people will be dressed in voyageur garb, and our program will include voyageur skills and structured events that should prove to be fun for the entire family. Cory Kolodji has agreed to organize these events, and if you would like to participate in the planning, please let him know. So far, we have talked about tomahawk throws, black powder demonstrations, and even an active voyageur encampment of alumni and friends who act out the voyageur era. If you and your family have an interest in more active participation, contact Cory and plan to get involved.

And...

Much, much, more! We are planning for special organized tours of Sigurd Olson’s writing shack in Ely and his Listening Point on Burntside Lake. Also, we have planned for plane rides for those who want to look at canoe country from the air. And that’s just the organized events! Around our schedule, you can plan your own canoe trips, visit the Dorothy Molter Museum, take your family to the International Wolf Center, or tour the Soudan Mine near Tower.

Make your plans and get involved. If you have ideas for the program, contact a planning committee member. Look for a registration form in a future issue of Reflections. We have set aside a block of rooms at the Holiday Inn Sun-Spee in Ely for those who would like to stay in resort accommodations. To make reservations at the Sun-Spee, call (218) 365-6565 and tell them you will be there for the “Sommers Reunion.”

Some reunion planning committee members to contact:

Dave Greenlee (605) 594-6287
dgreenlee@dakota.net
Chuck Rose (320) 252-2766
crose@iggies.tcout.edu
Barb Cary Hall (218) 624-0329
pubihall@abbyskypoint.net
Cory Kolodji (218) 263-6288
minkolodji@hotmail.com

BWCAW User Fee

Set for 1998

from the Duluth News Tribune

Overnight users of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW) will be charged a user fee beginning summer 1998. This is the first time a use fee has been charged for the BWCAW. It does not apply to day use permits. Eighty percent of the fees will pay for maintenance of the BWCAW. The use fee will be $10 per person, per trip for those 18 years old and older, and $5 per person per trip for persons 17 years old and younger or anyone with a Golden Age (seniors) card or Golden Access (disabled) card. Unlimited season passes will also be available for $40 ($20 for youth, Golden Age or Golden Access).

The 1998 permit reservation fee will be $29, (up from $9 in 1997) with $20 applicable to the per person user fee associated with the party members of the permit. The $20 will be refunded if the reservation is cancelled at least 48 hours prior to the permit date. BWCAW permit reservations are required May 1-Sept 30. Self-written permits are required October 1-April 30. They are available at the International Wolf Center, Forest Service offices and BWCAW entry points. Permit applications for 1998 may be mailed any time, but will not be processed until January 1, 1998 when telephone reservations will be taken.

For information on permit applications, call 800/745-3399. For general information on the new fee system call the US Forest Service at 218/626-4600.

Interpretive Trail construction) or development of additional program areas at Charles L. Sommers. The second week would be spent on a five day canoe trip, completely planned and chosen by the participants. The program is not simply building portages or campsites or canoeing, but OA Crew is ultimately a journey that challenges Scouts mentally, physically, and spiritually. Requirements:

• Be at least 16 years old the day your program begins, but not 21 by its conclusion.
• Be strong and robust.
• Be a registered member of BSA and a local OA lodge.

This program should help in our staffing woes and again brings us closer to working in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service as was the case at Sommers a number of years ago.
Tid-bits on The Sommers Clan

Steven Anderson (72-76) is living in Chandler, AZ where he works for Amkor Electronics.

Fred Balmos (90, 97) joined the alumni association after bringing his troop members from San Antonio, TX to Bissett. Now Fred has been though the Ely Base and the Bissett Base. This year’s trip completed the “Triple Crown” for he and his son Jason. The DiGennaros, Jackie (Hamilton) (75) and Jim (72-75) stopped by the Base the end of July while they were in the Ely area for a six-day trip in the BWCAW. Jackie and Jim live in Sitka, AK.

John E. Duke (88-90) has a veterinary practice in Huntsville, AL, and hopes to return north someday and take a trip from Atikokan to Ely.

Owen Gibbs (67-70), his wife Tish and daughters Erin and Amy; now living in Wichita, KS; spent a week at Big Lake Wilderness Lodge in August. They stopped by the base and were really impressed by the changes.

Paul Holte (68-72) came back to Ely for a visit in August, and raced in an in-line skating marathon along the North Shore from Two Harbors to Duluth in September. Paul lives in Shakopee, MN and is a psychologist/social worker in St. Peter, MN.

Tim Hueniker (70-73) and family drove to the Base the latter part of August, visited the Bridges, spent a night on Wind Lake and drove home via the north side of Lake Superior. Tim is a communications system engineer for GTE Government Systems Corp.

Marshall B. Hunt (65-68, 70, 85-89) is now working for Pacific Gas and Electric in San Francisco. Marsh is still living in Davis, CA. He would appreciate a holler as you pass through. [W: 415-972-5590; MBH9@PGE.com].

Arne Lagus (62) is a family physician in St. Croix Falls, WI.

“The Linament Brigade” - Dave Bird (78, 79, 81); Butch Diesslin (61-); John Oosterhuis (63-65); Lucy Diesslin; Matthew Bird; Sally Toll had another wonderful time on their annual trip to places from the past. You can go back, just a little slower.

Mike Loeffler (68-70), who was affectionately known by the staff as “The Mad Hatter,” is living in Seattle, WA and is in the hat making business.

“Crazy” Larry Luebben (49-50) learned about the alumni association from Al Batterman at the Canadian Jamboree in Thunder Bay.

Justin Markeson (94-95) is working for the Hennepin Co. Park system and lives in Waseca, MN.

Mike McMahon (62-66) found his way back to the Base when he was in the Ely area for a family reunion. Mike lives in Shoreview, MN and is a management analyst for the State of MN.

Reed McPhail (78, 80) is still saving a dance for Doris Koldoji. Reed fondly remembers Sandy for the first time at his closing night campfire in 1977, and sends his regards to all - especially the Snowbank Lodge Polka Group members. Reed is living in Ames, IA with his wife, daughter and son.

Tero Mustonen (94) came back to the Base with the crew of Finnish Scouts; led by Mikko Lamminpaa (84, 86-88, 90); then was one of the first to join the alumni association via the Internet. Tero is a student in Tampere, Finland.

Dave Nachtsheim (64-66) lives in Silver Spring, MD and is an intelligence officer for the US Immigration and Naturalization Service.

John Oosterhuis (63-65) and Sally Toll wish to share the good news of their September 27, 1997 wedding, which was held on the shore of a small lake in the Bettendorf, IA area. They decided to get married while on Basswood Lake with “The Linament Brigade.”

The Jack Parker (72-74) family - Jack, Leslie, Jessica and Melissa - stopped by the Ely base in mid-June on their way from their home in Brooksville, FL, into the Quetico Park for the family’s 16-day canoe trip. [PARKERSLJIM@JUNO.COM]. Many thanks to Bob Red Renner (51, 55-58, 85-) for contributing his woodworking ability in making the beautiful black walnut “Memory Book” for Sandy’s Recognition Celebration.

Dottg (94, 97) and Flora Mae (97) Roszel didn’t even allow their boots to dry from their trip though the Atikokan base before they sent in their association membership and Triple Crown Award applications.

The alumni association’s homepage www.holry.org was found by Phil “Lurch” Schmepf (66-68) from his home in Juneau, AK where he is a Biologist for the USFW’s. Paul Schmidt (74, 75, 77, 78) has moved to P.O. Box 2279, Glen Rose, TX 76043.

Erik Simula (82-84) is working as a ranger at Grand Portage National Monument. In his spare time he builds birch bark canoes. Erik is also an accomplished musher.

Larry Schoppe, (85-90) instructor for the military winter survival training at Sommers, returned to the base with friends Bob Dobransky, (75 Scout), and Mark Burrowes for a canoe trip in early August. We welcome all three as affiliate members.

Congratulations to Norman R. Sjoblom (54) as a recipient of a Silver Beaver Award from the Westark Council. Norm is now retired and lives in Mt. Home, AR, but remains active in scouting as district commissioner and Eagle Scout advisor.

Jim Stone (70) lives in Ft. Lauderdale, FL where he is an environmental consultant.

“Still” Bill Strahm (86-88) is a software engineer for Intel in Hillsboro, OR.

Stanley Tyler (47) stopped by the Base in late July. Stan now lives in Coon Rapids, MN.

Jay Waine (70-72) and his son, Austin, came up from Memphis, TN for a trip into the Quetico Park in early August, just in time for the first real rain in almost a month.

David Winter (78) is now a research scientist at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD.

Adventure Profile

The September 1997 issue of National Geographic features an extensive wrap up of the past season’s around the world attempts by balloonists. It includes an extensive summary of the record-breaking flight of Northern Tier National High Adventure Committee Chairman Steve Fossett.

Among the highlights described are his efforts to avoid Libyan airspace when the country was slow to guarantee him safe passage and his battle against fatigue in what is now proudly described as his “crude” craft, Solo Spirit.

Although the effort to make the first successful circumnavigation of the globe failed, the article describes the records Fossett set on the flight. Among them were distance and duration of a balloon flight, 10,360.61 miles and six days, two hours and 44 minutes. He plans another flight for this winter.
Canada Customs Offices to Close
More Red Tape for Northbound Canoeists, Anglers at Border
by Sam Cook
News-Tribune outdoors writer

Options for applying for a crossing permit

- Apply in person at the Fort Frances Immigration Centre in Fort Frances, Ontario, or at the Pigeon River Border crossing on Minnesota Highway 61.
- Apply by mail by sending a completed application and the $30 fee (no personal checks) to one of these offices: (1) Canada Immigration Centre, 301 Scott St. N., Second Floor, Fort Frances, Ontario P9A 1H1, or to (2) Canada Immigration Centre, 975 Alloy Drive, Thunder Bay, Ontario P7B 6N5.
- To request an application, or for more information, call one of these numbers: Fort Frances International Bridge, 807/274-9780; Fort Frances Immigration Centre, 807/274-3815; Pigeon River Bridge, 807/964-2095; or Thunder Bay Immigration Center, 807/346-2150.

Most of Berg’s customers book well in advance, so securing the permit will not be a problem. But a resort guest who decides on the spur of the moment to book a fishing guide for Saganaga, a trophy walleye lake, may find himself confined to the U.S. side of the lake.

"That’ll really hurt," Berg said. "Not going to Canada will hurt." Canadian officials say about 12,000 RABC permits are issued each year.

New Gateway Puts Past in Base Future

Crews arriving at the Charles L. Sommers Wilderness Canoe Base now enter through this replica of a voyageur-era fort gateway and stockade. They are greeted by interpreters in costume. The entry road was rerouted to allow for this new feature. This gateway faces south and it’s between the old entry road and the new one. Crews passing through the gateway walk down the road past the old entry road and the log cabin reception point, where they meet their interpreters and begin their wilderness experiences.

The gateway adds an important new feel to the beginning of a canoe base experience and turns the experience of arriving from a drab and dusty chore of unloading gear into an event that should feature prominently in each scout’s memory of the base.
Hudson Bay Bread: The Homepage

This is a recipe for what the Sommers Canoe Base calls Hudson Bay Bread, or sometimes just Bay Bread. In the 1960s, the Base got the recipe from the Minnesota Outward Bound School, and for several years it was baked at the Barbary Ann Bakery in Ely. At the bakery, it was baked in a convection oven, so it is difficult to get exactly the same effect in a conventional oven. This recipe comes very close. One important technique left out of the Base's official instructions is that rolled oats should be used (not instant oats), and more importantly, they should be ground up. A blender works fine for about a cup at a time, and a food processor would probably work even better. Bay Bread is most excellent as lunchtime fare on the trail. When you see the ingredients, you'll see why it does NOT make a good "light snack" at home.

on canoe trips when you are burning thousands of calories each day. It is convenient, easy to pack, and is a concentrated food source that everyone seems to look forward to. Gradually add:

1½ cups sliced almonds
19 cups finely ground rolled oats
Press into cake pan or large sheet pan about ¼ to ½ inch thick.

Bake at 325 degrees for about 20 minutes. Do not overcook, as it will get crispy and brittle. Take out of oven and use spatula to press down (keeps it from crumbling). Cut into exactly 3½-inch squares. Package in plastic bags. Allow one for each crew member for lunch. If you measured correctly, they should just fit into half-gallon paper milk cartons. They will be protected, easy to pack, and easy to find when you want to grab a quick lunch. Slather with massive quantities of peanut butter and jelly, wash it down with some Red-Eye, and you will know you ate lunch!

Editor's note: Dave Greenlee (66-70) wrote this and buried it in an arcane corner of the association home page. Here, it is unearthed and published in the light of day for all to see. Dave has created an excellent homepage and invites you to use it and add items to it. Just log on using the address here and make your contributions via e-mail using the option provided on the page. Back issues of Reflections are in the home page's future. Don't miss Sandy Bridges' Bay Bread story on the home page.

http://www.holry.org/baybread.html

Charles L. Sommers: The Holiday Card

The alumni Association is accepting orders for the 1997 edition of Holiday Greeting cards. It's a high-quality thermographic (raised ink) image of a Bob Cary drawing, "Portage at Lower Basswood Falls." Inside is a message "HOLIDAY GREETINGS." See last issue of Reflections for details or send $25 for 25 cards with envelopes to Dan Wangerin, 715 Barbary Place, West Bend, WI 53095. The back of the card includes a message that you are supporting the Alumni Association.