



Wilderness News



FROM THE QUETICO-SUPERIOR FOUNDATION • FALL 1964



THE COMMITTEE LISTENS*
No glaciated stone was left unturned



THE PEOPLE SPEAK
They had their hearts in it

BWCA HEARINGS

Dr. Selke Hits the Road

If George Selke wanted advice on what to tell the Secretary of Agriculture about the Boundary Waters Canoe Area (BWCA) he got what he wanted.

During the course of a rugged road trip that began July 14 at Grand Marais, and ended two weeks later in St. Paul, his review committee listened, hour after hour, to about 165 speeches. In the Twin Cities so many (63) wanted to be heard that the meeting at the University had to be held in two sittings. Other portages carried the patient panel to Orr, Ely and Duluth.

The speakers explored every possible angle and aspect of BWCA. Some were eloquent; some pretty dull. But they all had their hearts in it.

Even the Summer Cabin Set. The cast included judges, mayors, bankers, lawyers, labor leaders, a clergyman, a publisher and an author.

The case for small business was pleaded by resort owners, camping outfitters and practically every chamber of com-

merce in sight. Loggers, sawmillers and papermakers spoke up for the timber industry. Steelworkers spoke up for mining.

From academic halls came ecologists, botanists, foresters, a school superintendent and the curator of mammals for a natural history museum.

Nature lovers, of various stripes, were there in droves: conservationists (Ozark Wilderness Club); sportsmen (Igloo Snowmobile Association); promoters of tourism (Arrowhead); and, of course, a fleet of ardent canoeists. Even the summer cabin set had its say.

Not a glaciated stone was left unturned.

Directed to Explore. So far the committee has put forth no proposals. Their recommendations, when ready, will go directly to Secretary Orville Freeman, whose Department of Agriculture governs BWCA through its Forest Service.

*At Grand Marais: John Vukelich, St. Louis County supervisor; George A. Selke, former Minn. conservation commissioner; David J. Winton, Winton Lumber Co.; Ray Haik, Izaak Walton League. Other members: Rolie Johnson, WCCO; Wayne H. Olson, Minn. conservation commissioner.

In the words of Dr. Selke, the chairman, "We have been directed to explore, in an objective manner, the resource potentials of the area and to recommend



AGRICULTURE'S FREEMAN
He'll get the word in November

management objectives which will realize for the people who live in the vicinity of the Superior National Forest and for the people of our country as a whole, the highest long-term values."

Latest word on delivery date: November.

Wilderness News

Published quarterly by the Quetico-Superior Foundation, a non-profit organization.

President: **Henry T. McKnight**; Vice Presidents: **A. M. Blood**, **James T. Wyman**; Secretary-Treasurer: **Robert V. Tarbox**; Ass't Secretary-Treasurer: **Frederick Winston**. Other board members: **Paul Clement**, **Russell W. Fridley**, **F. Peavey Heffelfinger, Jr.**, **Robert E. Hess**, **Charles A. Kelly**, **Elizabeth Melone Winston**. Executive Secretary: **Clyde N. Ryberg**; Editor: **Philip F. Kobbe**.

While we hope to deliver Wilderness News free to interested individuals, a donation of \$1 per year to cover printing and mailing costs would be appreciated. Please send all contributions, financial or literary, to Quetico-Superior Foundation, 1666 Northwestern Bank Building, Minneapolis, Minn. 55402.

What Are We Trying to Prove?

AFTER inspecting our summary of the recent Quetico-Superior symposium, a reader remarked:

"I can see that there are many sides to Minnesota's wilderness problem. But which side are you on? What are you trying to prove?"

The answer to this rather pointed, but natural, question calls for an understanding of the Quetico-Superior Foundation.

This tax-exempt, non-profit organization was put together in 1947 by a group of outdoor-minded Minnesotans for the general purpose of **advancing science and education**. They included J. Frederick Sutherland, the first president, Paul Clement, W. L. Brisley and Frederick S. Winston.

The particular concern of the Foundation is that part of America defined by the watersheds of the Rainy and Pigeon rivers of the United States and Canada. In Canada the area embraces Ontario's Quetico Provincial Park; in the U. S. Minnesota's Superior National Forest. Hence the name, Quetico-Superior.

During the 17 years of its life, the Quetico-Superior Foundation has given advisory and financial aid to many groups that are also interested in this area, notably the President's Committee (Wilderness News, Spring 1964), the U. S. Forest Service, the Department of the Interior and, of course, Minnesota's own Conservation Department. Activities have ranged from the production of a documentary movie, "Wilderness Canoe Country," to the sponsorship of unusual scientific studies (e.g.: "The Value of

Quetico-Superior in Preventing or Correcting Nervous Disorders").

Heart of the Quetico-Superior country is known today as the Boundary Waters Canoe Area (BWCA) — about a million acres of primitive waterways and forests stretching nearly 200 miles along the Minnesota-Ontario border.

It is the management of this unique strip of geography (especially its upper third) which is now causing so much sound and fury. Some say it should be managed more intensely. Some say it should not be managed at all. Some favor logging and mining there. Others would permit more resorts, more roads, more mechanized transportation. Still others would block off the region to all but the paddling canoeist, the plodding hiker.

We believe these voices crying in the wilderness should all have a fair hearing.

Like most interested groups, the Foundation wants to hear the testimony and weigh the evidence before passing judgment. The final decision, of course, must be made by the Secretary of Agriculture whose review committee is now studying the question of BWCA use and management.

The Foundation's immediate aim is to help this committee expedite its enormous task in any way we can. That is why we sponsored the symposium. That is why we compiled and distributed the voluminous proceedings. That is why we continue to report BWCA developments in this newsletter.

The only way to arrive at an equitable solution of any problem is first to listen to all facts and all opinions of all sides. This, at least, is what we are trying to prove.

Hess Added to Board

Robert E. Hess, executive vice president of Minnesota AFL-CIO and a regent of the University, has been elected to the board of the Quetico-Superior Foundation. He also serves on the Governor's Committee on Delinquency and Crime and on the Citizens' Committee for the Taconite Amendment.

Top This One

Rep. H. R. Gross, R-Iowa, was puzzled by a provision in a House Bill that defines wilderness as an area having "outstanding opportunities for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation."

"This has nothing to do with topless bathing suits, does it?" he asked on the floor of the House.

Gross was quickly assured by sponsors of the bill that the words mean only that a wilderness area is free of man-made structures.

— AP dispatch from Washington

CUTTINGS

First Edition

I thought the first edition of Wilderness News was excellent. You have your work cut out to maintain the high standard.

C. DAVID LOEKS, AIP
Twin Cities Metropolitan
Planning Commission Director

A noteworthy compression. The typography is excellent.

ROBERT C. MUELLER
Minneapolis

Most interesting.

MARTIN K. BOVEY
Chelmsford, Mass.

Congratulations on your first issue. It's a very good paper. Our copy of the symposium hearings has been in use since the day it arrived.

WILLIAM H. MAGIE
Duluth

Congratulations on bringing the Quetico-Superior Foundation to life.

BOWER HAWTHORNE
Minneapolis
Star & Tribune Executive News Editor

This is the first time, in a matter of ten minutes, I have been able to learn what the wilderness issue is all about.

RAYMOND PLANK
Minneapolis

I am very encouraged by this publication.

AMOS ROSENBLUM
Minneapolis

Wilderness News is a terrific idea. \$1 is the least one could give to receive such a publication.

BLAKE S. DAVIS
St. Paul

I wish to be a charter contributor, and am enclosing \$5 to start with.

RICHARD M. LEONARD
San Francisco

Your wilderness report is excellent.

JOHN DELAITTRE
Washington, D.C.

Banker deLaittre's two-dollar Canadian bill has been converted to 1.81 U. S. dollars. — ED.



HANDS ACROSS THE LAKE
Officials from Canada and U.S. meet on the shores of Basswood*

CANADA

When Lightning Strikes

One stormy night this summer a bolt of lightning suddenly set fire to the forest around Basswood Lake's remote Merriam Bay in Canada. Despite strong winds, damage was confined to a mere 3½ acres.

The answer? Prompt action by two great countries: Canada and the United States joined hands to rush fire-fighting men and equipment to the scene. Together they worked quickly and efficiently to bring the blaze under control.

A few miles away at the Quetico-Superior Wilderness Research Center on that same Basswood Lake (U.S. side) a group of Canadians and Americans sat around a campfire last July further cementing this brand of international co-operation between the two nations that face each other along the Boundary Waters Canoe Area.

Their leaders were the Honorable A. Kelso Roberts, Ontario's minister for lands and forests, and Charles S. Kelly, Chicago, chairman of the President's Committee. Participants included Minn. state senator H. T. McKnight, who represented the Quetico-Superior Foundation, and his Canadian counterpart, John B. Ridley, chairman of the Quetico Foundation, Toronto. Altogether about 20 top forestry and park officials took part in

the pow-wow July 24-25.

The Weekend Was Spiced. Besides fire prevention, these men (who call themselves the Quetico-Superior Joint Advisory Committee) mulled over plans for coordinating long-range management policies for BWCA, and for encouraging the public to acquire neater housekeeping and sanitation techniques at heavily used camping sites. The weekend was spiced by on-the-spot inspections of some of these sites in both Canada and the U.S.



CANADA'S RIDLEY
Wanted: neat housekeepers

The Wilderness Research Center, host to the gathering, is northeast of Ely, about 20 miles from the nearest road. Here, deep in the heart of the North Woods, it quietly carries on scientific studies of wilderness values under primitive conditions practically undisturbed by man for the past half century. (In a later issue WN will tell in more detail the fascinating story of this little-known enterprise that is privately financed for the public good.)

***STANDING:** H. T. McKnight, president, Quetico-Superior Foundation; Canadian airplane pilot; Theodor R. Swem, National Park Service; Harold Jordahl, Dept. of the Interior; Harold A. Svensen, U. S. Forest Service; Charles S. Kelly, chairman, President's Quetico-Superior Committee; N. B. McMahan, assistant to minister of Ontario lands and forests; F. A. MacDougall, deputy minister of Ontario lands and forests; Ross Williams, supervisor, Quetico Provincial Park; Charles H. Stoddard, director, Bureau of Land Management; L. P. Neff, supervisor, Superior National Forest; Arthur W. Greeley, deputy chief, U. S. Forest Service; John B. Ridley, chairman, Quetico Foundation; George S. James, regional forester. **SQUATTING:** F. B. Hubachek, Chicago. **SITTING:** A. Kelso Roberts, minister of Ontario lands and forests. **MISSING** (all from Canada): K. Balkwill, district forester; R. Boulton, regional forester; A. S. Bray, regional director; J. H. Brodie, chief, Timber Branch; T. W. Hueston, acting chief, Parks Branch; Lloyd Rawn, supervisor, Quetico lands and parks; L. Sleman, district forester.

OUTDOOR MAN

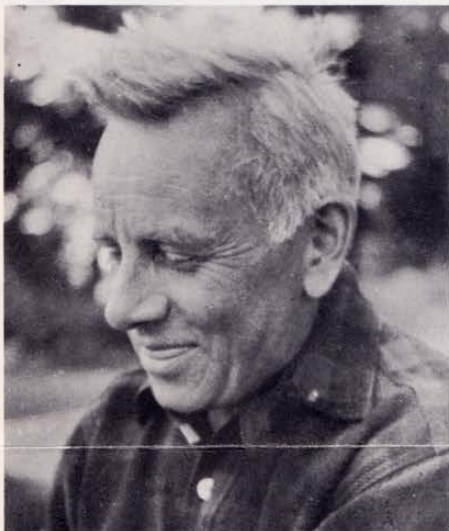
Mr. Quetico-Superior

When Ernest C. Oberholtzer, charter member of the President's Quetico-Superior Committee, was introduced at the Foundation's symposium last May, Henry McKnight said, "Were it not for this man we would not be meeting here today."

The 81-year-old Harvard graduate, who once studied landscape architecture and now lives alone on a tiny island in Rainy Lake, has devoted his entire career to what must be the biggest (and poorest paid) landscaping job on record: Quetico-Superior country.

Born in Davenport, Iowa, Oberholtzer spent a few years abroad after college, then headed for Minnesota to recuperate from a childhood attack of rheumatic fever. (The cure included paddling all the way to Hudson Bay with an Indian — a round trip of at least 1,000 miles.)

Battle of Backus. Appropriately, Oberholtzer settled at Ranier, a small town on Rainy Lake just east of International Falls, about the same year (1909) that both the Superior National Forest and Quetico Provincial Park were established.



"OBER" (IN 1940)

He was the main architect

Since then — for over half a century — he has continually fought to preserve and improve this international wilderness. Among his victories: the battle of Backus, the timber tycoon who tried in 1925 to take over much of the landscape for power development.

According to Charles S. Kelly, Oberholtzer was "the main architect" of the Quetico-Superior Program, a new concept of primitive land management pioneered in the 20's by a group of young Minnesotans. Known as the Quetico-Superior Council (followed later by the President's Committee), their activities led to legis-



ELY'S NEW VISITOR CENTER

The public will learn what really goes on in the woods

SUPERIOR FOREST

Western Gate Swings Open

Dedication of the U. S. Forest Service's Voyageur Visitor Center east of Ely on Highway 169, will probably take place next month. The wood and stone building, completed this summer at a cost of \$71,000, serves as an educational gateway to the western part of Superior National Forest.

"Those who enter it," says Regional Forester George S. James, "will discover what goes on in Superior. They should emerge from the forest feeling they really know it."

The "course" is conducted through a series of exhibits and live programs covering such outdoor subjects as forestry, logging, mining, wildlife and Indians. Features: replica of a 25-foot Voyageur canoe and (outside) a do-it-yourself nature trail.

CONSERVATION

Hall of Fame?

Delegates from 19 states, Canada and Mexico gathered recently at Fort Snelling to discuss the establishment there of a proposed North America Conservation Hall of Fame. The Quetico-Superior

litation that set aside for public enjoyment the original Boundary Waters Canoe Area.

Oddly (but characteristically) very little has been published about this modest man who has done so much for so many. Oberholtzer is listed in no Who's Who. Public libraries have practically nothing on him. Neither has the University.

To relieve this biographical drought, the State Historical Society last summer dispatched an interviewer to Rainy Lake where, at his waterbound retreat, "Ober" poured out for a tape recorder the adventures of his long outdoor life. When the whole story is finally released (probably next year) it should make fascinating reading.

For the voice you hear will be that of Mr. Quetico-Superior himself.

Foundation was represented by Clyde N. Ryberg, executive secretary.

Gov. Rolvaag explained that the idea of the shrine, similar to baseball's Hall of Fame, is to memorialize men and women, living and dead, who have made classic contributions to the science of conservation. He said, "This is not something that is Minnesota or the United States. This is something that is all of North America."

The 2-day conference of August 3-4 worked out organizational details, elected Minnesota's Conservation Commissioner Wayne H. Olson president, and presented a plaque to George A. Selke, who heads the BWCA review committee (page 1).

The plan has been endorsed by many U.S. conservationists as well as by the International Association of Game, Fish and Conservation Commissioners.

WILDERNESS BILL

An Exception for BWCA

The so-called Wilderness Bill, just passed by Congress after 16 years of wrangling, sets aside 54 areas in the nation to be preserved in a primitive condition. This means that generally all commercial development of these lands must cease.

However, in the case of Minnesota's Boundary Waters Canoe Area, one of the designated wilderness units, an exception is specified. Here, any new regulations for use and management will be made by the Secretary of Agriculture, presumably after he hears from his BWCA review committee.

The new wilderness system comprises some nine million acres in ten western states, as well as in Minnesota, New Hampshire and North Carolina.

Quetico (*kwet'iko*). A provincial park, Ontario, Canada, on U.S. border in Rainy Lake district. From the English contraction of the Chippewa word, **Gwi-ti-go-si-bi**, meaning bad waters, dangerous rivers, crooked water or tippy canoe.