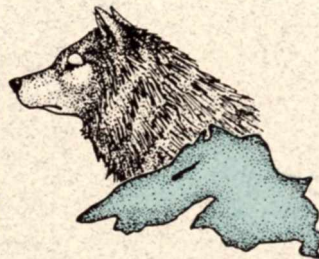


WOLF'S EYE



Isle Royale Natural History Association Newsletter

Winter 1989

Chairman's Comments

The IRNHA Board held a Fall meeting this year for the first time, necessitated by increases in business activity and fiscal responsibility. The primary order of business was approval of our annual budget, with a particular eye to our Aid to the Park contribution. I daresay that most members are not aware of the specifics of the Association's direct involvement in Park operations: I certainly was not until I joined the Board! The association provides indirect support through publication and sales of books, maps, and other interpretive items. IRNHA has also, for the past several years, supported the publication and interpretive programs in another very significant way. Our contribution of cash has primarily been used to print the brochures regarding camping, regulations, and transportation within the park. During the 1990 fiscal year, we will again support these publications, and will also purchase necessary equipment that is outside the park's budget capabilities. A particularly interesting item purchased by IRNHA will be an authentic herring skiff to be used in the interpretation of commercial fishing at Edisen Fishery. We've budgeted a total of \$7000 in Aid to

the Park for this year. We should all take pride in this significant contribution to the operation of Isle Royale National Park, improving the quality of experience for all the visitors who enjoy it annually.

Beyond the budget, we approved the payment of medical benefits for our excellent business manager, discussed our near-future storage needs, and named several standing committees. Operations and Finance will oversee personnel and day-to-day operations, Publications will lay groundwork for future publication projects, and the Annual Membership Meeting Committee will see to it that our summer meeting on the Island will be a memorable event! Park Historian, Tim Cochrane requested the Association's administrative aid on a proposed small boat study, a study that promises to pull together information from a variety of sources regarding the hand-built boats of Isle Royale and western Lake Superior.

The business end of IRNHA is doing quite well. Sales of *Isle Royale: Moods, Magic & Mystique* remain brisk, and the holiday season sales generated from the new publication brochure have been very gratify-

ing, with membership sweatshirts and other items selling at a rate well beyond past years. Mastercard/Visa capability has made a significant difference in total receipts.

Finally, you have surely noticed the new masthead design on the front and back of the *Wolf's Eye*. Executed by B.J. Litsenberger of The Print Shop, this design resulted from months of work and negotiation. It is a fairly bold and contemporary design, but retains the traditional symbolism of the Island as the eye in a wolf head outline that represents Lake Superior. Finalizing graphic designs by committee is a slow and painful process, but we all feel that this new image reflects both where our Association came from and where it hopes to go. We hope that you will like it, as well.

The Board joins me in wishing you a Happy New Year.

-- Pat Martin

WELCOME

to New Life Members

Todd Moore of Novi, MI
Tom Hall of Moorhead, MN
John Doerr of St. Louis, MO

THANKS

to the following for Donations towards the work of the Association:

Arlene Hoffer of Dearborn MI
Melonie Sisson of Alexandria IN
Dorcas Society of Hancock MI
D. Robert Hakala of Watersmeet, MI

Thanks also to Valleen Clay of Lutsen MN who forwarded a gift from friends in memory of her husband, Dr. Lyman Clay, who died June 9, 1989. Dr. Clay was a long time summer resident of Isle Royale and had the distinction of being aboard the vessel *America* when it shipwrecked at North Gap in 1928.

Membership Report

The following letter recently brightened our day and we thought you'd enjoy it too:

I have waited for this day for a long time. I can now afford my life membership to IRNHA--I have been an annual member since 1976.

I just returned from my 8th backpacking trek across Isle Royale, with seven Eagle Scouts from my troop. This was a special group but then, all of my groups have been special. We hiked Windigo to Rock Harbor--Greenstone to Hatchet Lake, then Minong to McCargoe, then Greenstone to Rock Harbor--the same route I've used for eight years. (I still believe that Group Campsite #1 at Todd Harbor is the most

beautiful campsite on Isle Royale).

As always we picked up all trash and litter as we went; we found almost none this year. Basically, the Isle is litter-free. But then Isle Royale National Park does attract a special kind of backpacker--we're perfect examples of that!

Could you please send me 10 copies of the IRNHA Publications order form? We are printing a journal of our trip for the scouts and parents and we'd like to include an order form and park brochure in each one. Thanks!

-- Tom Hall, Moorhead, MN

Observations

Among the fascinating phenomena observed at Isle Royale this year were:

- The wolf population dwindled to a low of 11 animals, but tracks and a nursing mother discovered this fall indicate the population might be bolstered. Blood tests showed that Isle Royale wolves have been exposed to Lyme disease and canine parvovirus and that the population for 40 years has been inbreeding. Whether that or something else is preventing the wolves from repopulating remains a mystery. The National Park Service and Dr. Rolf Peterson are actively studying this phenomenon with hopes that answers might apply to other endangered species elsewhere.
- A Canada Goose with leg band, that spent a week at Davidson Island in May, turned out to have been banded four years earlier in June 1985 near Thunder Bay, Ontario, by the Ministry of Natural Resources.
- If you came to the island in mid-July, you may have wondered what the rafts of brown material were that covered Lake Superior so completely. It looked

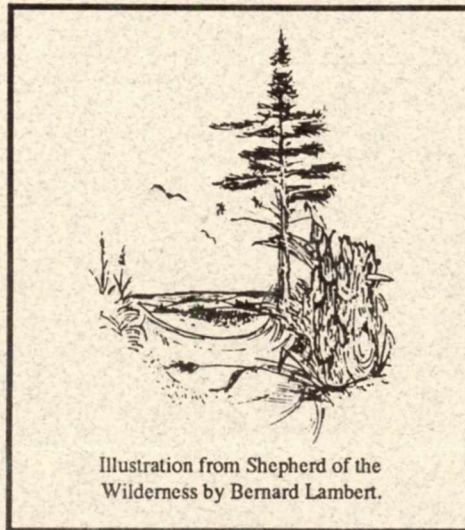


Illustration from Shepherd of the Wilderness by Bernard Lambert.

like mud flats stretching all the way from the Keweenaw Peninsula to the park. It turned out to be insects. An outbreak of "billions and billions" of spruce bud worm moths, living in the Ontario forests, all took flight at once and northerly winds blew them south over Lake Superior until they dropped. Hopefully most died before reaching the Upper Peninsula. The bud worm larva can seriously weaken spruce and fir

trees, and significant patches of Isle Royale's forests have been affected in the past.

- For the first time, a whooping crane has been sighted at Isle Royale. Experienced birder Joel Peterson (one of our peregrine attendants) spotted the rare bird at Raspberry Island with a flock of sandhill cranes in early September. This is no doubt a new record for Michigan.
- The flowering plant Dutchman's Breeches had not been seen at Isle Royale since it was recorded by Prof. A.E. Foote's botanical expedition in 1868. In fact, some people believed his observation may have been a labeling mistake. Thanks to backpackers Matthew and Laurie Kania of Minneapolis, we now know Dutchman's Breeches still grows at Isle Royale. They even took a beautiful photo of the clump of white flowers. It blooms in early May when few people are on the trail to observe it. That probably explains why it "went missing" for 120 years. What other things are yet to be rediscovered?

- Bruce Weber, Park Naturalist

STAFF MOVES

Several members of the park staff, who directly or indirectly helped the Association during their tenure, have moved on to other parks. Whenever this happens it gives us all an opportunity to expand our knowledge of geography and an appreciation for the diversity of the national park system. We wish them all happiness:

- Superintendent Tom Hobbs has moved to Maryland as the new superintendent of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park. The park follows the route of the 184-mile canal along the Potomac River between Washington DC and Cumberland MD. The C & O canal was built between 1828 and 1850.
- Houghton Headquarters ranger Jean Schaeppi, who supervised tickets and programming for the vessel Ranger III, transferred to St. Croix National Scenic

Riverway in Wisconsin. This park runs along 200 miles of the beautiful St. Croix river and is an initial component of the Wild and Scenic Rivers System. Her replacement, Kari Iverson, comes from St. Croix.

- Administrative Officer Tom Ferranti transferred to a similar position at Glen Canyon National Recreation Area in Arizona. Within this canyon of the Colorado River lies Lake Powell, which stretches 186 miles behind one of the highest dams in the world.
- Windigo District Ranger Ramon Brende is the new Chief Ranger at Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore in Michigan. Multicolored sandstone cliffs, broad beaches, dunes, waterfalls, inland lakes, ponds, marshes, hardwood and coniferous forests, and 40 miles of Lake Superior shore, comprise this scenic area.

Isle Royale

Natural History Association

87 N. Ripley St., Houghton, MI 49931

A nonprofit membership organization that assists Isle Royale National Park by publishing and selling educational materials to park visitors. Gifts, bequests, memorials and memberships are U.S. tax deductible.

Membership Categories:

Single Membership \$5.00

Family Membership \$8.00

*Supporting Membership \$35.00

*Life Membership \$150.00

**Corporate Sponsor \$1,000.00

**Corporate Patron \$5,000.00

(Life memberships may be paid for in two annual installments of \$75.00 each)

*Includes a gift copy of Isle Royale-- Moods, Magic and Mystique.

**Includes a premium gift of a beautifully framed photo of an Isle Royale scene (16"x20").

Board of Directors:

Patrick Martin, Chairman

Jan Dalquist, Charles Eshbach, Chris Gale,

Paul Hinzmann, Patrick Johns,

Marcia Young; Thomas Hobbs, Ex-Officio.

Staff:

Bruce Weber, Coordinator and Editor

Gayle Pekkala, Business Manager

Ellen Croll, Membership and Mail Order Clerk

Wolf's Eye – A Brief History

The name of our quarterly newsletter, *Wolf's Eye*, was first used for the January 15, 1957 issue before the Isle Royale Natural History Association was actually formed. A notation on the inside back cover of many of the early issues read "*Wolf's Eye is published on the 15th of each month by and for employees, residents and friends of Isle Royale National Park.*" Copies were distributed gratis by the NPS. The cover was a 9 x 12-inch sheet folded to make a 6 x 9-inch size format and was printed with a small letterpress with handset metal type. The logo was a screened blue Lake Superior with a Wolf's head superimposed in black with the wolf's eye over Isle Royale. The inner pages were mimeographed—if there was such a thing as "xerox" in those days, we neither had one nor ever heard of it.

The idea behind the name did not originate with the newsletter or any of its producers. As nearly as I can recall, the name for the newsletter evolved—well, something like the following:

In 1952, while a seasonal "fire control aide" for the park working at Mott Island, I became a good friend of Jim Orsborne, who was a seasonal park ranger also stationed at Mott. Jim introduced me to his father, "Coach" Orsborne who was the Postmaster at Rock Harbor and who, along with his wife, was a life lessee with a cabin about midway between the present Lodge dining hall and Ranger III dock. Those who knew Coach know what stories he could spin. We became good friends and many evenings in this and subsequent years were spent playing scrabble or chess or just reminiscing, and it was during such an evening that Coach related the fact that an outline of Lake Superior was similar to a wolf's head and that Isle Royale fell exactly where the eye would be. The words used were "eye of the wolf," as I recall. Just where Coach came across this com-



parison I don't know, but I assumed at the time and still do that it was a common piece of folklore among island residents.

Several years later when Superintendent John Lewis wanted a newsletter for employees of the park we had some minor discussion as to what an appropriate name might be. "Eye of the Wolf" wouldn't ring too many bells with anyone, but "Wolf's Eye"—denoting both location of the park and an eye-on-occurring-events—might just fly. At least, that was my reasoning, and since I owned the small letterpress it's just possible that I forced the issue by ignoring all other suggestions and just doing it—which I tend to do when a discussion on a subject seems to be interminable and getting nowhere. There was never any relationship between the name and the wolves that first were proved to be on the island in 1950.

Sometime in 1958, after IRNHA was more-or-less operational, we acquired a used offset press—a Davidson 227—for \$950, on which we made time payments

over about 2 years. It took some time to learn how to use the machine, for although offset presses were fairly commonly used elsewhere, no printer in the "Copper Country" had one to whom we could go for help. The first thing published was *The Fishes of Isle Royale*, which was valuable to many fisherman at the island (but was a terrible job of printing). Anyway, *Wolf's Eye* began to be produced on the offset press. It turned out to be quite a chore to produce one issue each month—having something of lasting value to print, setting type, making negatives of each page, plates from negatives, etc. Gradually *Wolf's Eye* was printed "as needed" which amounted to something like four issues a year. And since it was decided that a regular employee newsletter should be more often than that and *Wolf's Eye* had become more of an IRNHA publication with different interests, a new monthly newsletter for employees called *Northern Lights* was initiated for that purpose.

During the late 1950s and early 1960s most early publications for sale to park visitors were put out as issues of the *Wolf's Eye: A Guide to Rock Harbor, Wilderness Trails, The Wildflowers of Isle Royale, Charlie and Angelique Mott, Forests and Trees of Isle Royale, The Orchids of Isle Royale, The Birds of Isle Royale, The Vertebrates of Isle Royale*, and so on. *Wolf's Eye* disappeared in the mid-1960s, not to reappear again until 1979 when "Westy" Farmer took up the cudgel and produced several more issues. Nadine Janke became the editor ("appointed" by Westy) and Chuck Boyle somehow got it "xeroxed" in Marinette, Wisconsin, returning the production to Park Naturalist Bob Huggins for distribution. In 1982 Bruce Weber, as the new Park Naturalist, became editor and has energetically maintained publication to the present time.

—Bob Linn, Founder Member

IRNHA Moose/Wolf/Loon Sweatshirt

Now Available for IRNHA Members



NATURAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION

This fine quality screen-printed sweat-shirt illustrates three of Isle Royale's attractions: the Moose, the Wolf, and the Loon.



\$20.00

Available in sizes S-M-L-XL-XXL

S-XL colors:

Ash (gray) and Seamount (light mint)

XXL: Ash only

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WOLF'S EYE

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