

Wolf's Eye

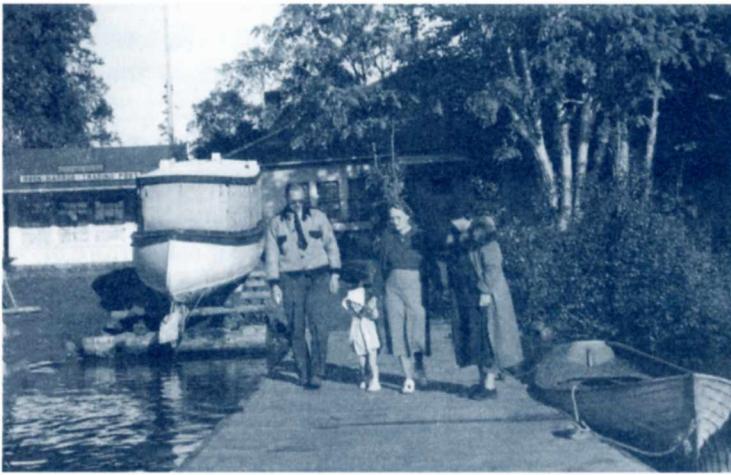


Isle Royale & Keweenaw Parks Association

2015 No. 3

Isle Royale and Beyond: A Trio of National Park Service Legacies

As we transition from Isle Royale National Park's 75th anniversary in 2015 to the centennial of the National Park Service in 2016, it's fitting to look at the careers of three National Park Service employees whose public lands legacies extend far beyond their time at Isle Royale: George F. Baggley, Herma Albertson Baggley, and Robert M. Linn.



Isle Royale National Park Superintendent George Baggley, daughter Ruth Ann, Herma Albertson Baggley, and Alice Warren on the Snug Harbor dock, 1938. Frank M. and Alice Rockwell Warren Collection.



Isle Royale National Park Ranger and later Chief Naturalist Bob Linn in 1956. Photo from his son, current *Ranger III* First Mate Bruce Linn.

George F. Baggley 1898-1991

Although George Baggley is known as Isle Royale National Park's first superintendent, his first visit to the island in 1933 was on behalf of moose. First, a bit of background. Born in November 1898, George's career in conservation began when, at age 19, he worked for South Dakota Governor and later U.S. Senator Peter Norbeck. Norbeck was instrumental in the creation of Badlands and Wind Cave National Parks and Custer State Park, as well as securing funding for the carving of Mount Rushmore.

After studying forestry at Colorado A&M (now Colorado State University) for two years, George joined the National Park Service (NPS) as a ranger at Yellowstone National Park. Becoming one of the first college-educated chief

rangers in 1929, he was assigned to bring a new focus on wildlife to the position. In that role, he developed plans to implement Superintendent Horace Albright's vision for managing the park's iconic bison herd.

A 1932 transfer to the Washington Office forestry section introduced him to the newly created Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). There George Melendez Wright, who had created the NPS wildlife program, transferred Baggley to Conrad Wirth's state park division, with responsibility for hiring 22 biologists to advise the more than 600 CCC camps in established and newly created state parks.

By 1933, Isle Royale summer residents Frank Warren and Frank Oastler were concerned about moose overpopulation. From visits to Yellowstone.

Warren knew both Baggley and Albright, who had become NPS director. Albright sent Baggley and fellow biologists Victor Cahalane and Adolph Murie to investigate the Isle Royale moose situation. One outcome was the corralling and transport of moose from Chippewa Harbor to the Upper Peninsula between 1934 and 1936.

Sent to the NPS Denver District Office in 1936, George supervised CCC projects there, including building of Red Rocks Amphitheater. When that office closed and moved to Omaha the next year, he became project manager for Isle Royale. His main focus was no small task: negotiating the land acquisition necessary for it to become a national park on April 3, 1940, after which he served as superintendent through 1946.

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Legacies, from p. 1

Baggley's status with the National Park Service continued to grow after his time at Isle Royale. He spent eight years as superintendent of Lake Mead National Recreation Area, which must have been quite an adjustment after a decade at Isle Royale. Lake Mead was the most-visited NPS location in 1951, with more than 2 million visitors!

After becoming chief of operations at the Midwest Regional Office in Omaha, he served as assistant, associate, and acting regional director there before being appointed special assistant to the director in 1966. That last post found him leading a team of specialists to assist Jordan with efforts to establish national parks. The team also helped create the master plan for Göreme National Park in Turkey, now a UNESCO World Heritage site.

When George Baggley retired in 1968, Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall presented him with the Distinguished Service Award, the department's highest honor for outstanding contributions to public service.

George then turned his attention to Boise, Idaho, where he settled in 1970. Serving on the Boise City Board of Park and Recreation Commissioners for 14 years, he used his long Park Service experience to help develop park policy and the Boise River Greenbelt. Baggley Park is named in his honor, with a series of murals by Mike Shipman depicting highlights of his career, including at Isle Royale.

Herma Albertson Baggley 1896-1981

A National Park Service pioneer in her own right, Herma Albertson was born in Iowa and moved with her family to Idaho as a young girl. There she earned a master's degree in botany from the University of Idaho in 1929 and was an instructor there the following year. She had already been an NPS seasonal naturalist at Yellowstone National Park, earning room and board as a "pillow puncher" at Old Faithful Lodge. In 1931, she returned to the park as the Service's first female permanent ranger-naturalist.

Herma continued working at Yellowstone after marrying Chief Ranger George Baggley. During her time there, she helped lay out the park's first nature trail, guided visitors, and wrote 22 articles for the NPS. She and plant ecologist Walter McDougall co-authored the classic book, *Plants of Yellowstone National Park*.



Ruth Ann and Herma Baggley. Frank W. and Alice Rockwell Warren Collection

With her pioneering spirit and background as both Park Service employee and wife, it's no wonder that she was a founder of the National Park Women's Organization in 1952. Herma led the group's first project, a survey on substandard park housing, which had long been a concern. The findings of the housing survey were instrumental in helping Director Conrad Wirth sell the concept of Mission 66. Among the results of that decade-long infrastructure improvement initiative to mark the 50th anniversary of the National Park Service is Isle Royale's own *Ranger III*.

Education is an ongoing part of the Baggleys' legacy. The University of Idaho offers a Herma Albertson Botany Scholarship in biological sciences. At Colorado State University, professionals returning to graduate school to major

in forestry, wildlife or natural resources can receive a George F. and Herma A. Baggley Graduate Scholarship. The first recipient was Frank Fiala, then at Rocky Mountain National Park but later becoming Keweenaw National Historical Park's second superintendent.

Robert M. Linn 1926-2004

As a youth in Cleveland, Ohio, Robert Maurice Linn was active in the Boy Scouts of America, attaining the highest possible rank, that of Eagle Scout. After serving in the Army in World War II, Bob enrolled at Kent State University, majoring in biology. At the same time he became a Scout Leader and also joined the Explorer Scouts, where he again reached the highest rank, that of Explorer Ranger.

It was while leading a scout camping trip to Isle Royale that Bob began a lifelong association with the national park, the place he loved more than any other in the world. His devotion to this island wilderness was nothing short of remarkable. No matter where he was stationed, Bob managed to make at least one trip to the island for 58 consecutive years, making his last trip in July 2004.

Linn pursued a master's degree in plant ecology at Kent State, while doing botanical and ecological research on Isle Royale. His Duke University PhD dissertation focused on Isle Royale's forest succession.

After completing his studies, Bob joined the National Park Service at Isle Royale, where he became chief park naturalist, serving in that position from 1958 to 1963. During this period he also participated in some of the first winter research sessions of the park's world-renowned moose-wolf study, working closely with the study's founder, Durward Allen.

Bob left Isle Royale in 1963 to work at NPS headquarters in Washington. He made the move with some reluctance, commenting, "A week enough; a month in Washington would be unbearable." As it turned out, he would spend the heart of his

NPS career in the Washington Office, ultimately in the role of Chief Scientist.

Bob was successful in bringing into the Park Service a cadre of young scientists who formed the core of the agency's research capacity from the late 1960s into the 1980s. His position required a person of persistence, and, perhaps even more, of vision. That was a quality Bob had in abundance, but it was often hidden to all but his closest associates because of his natural reticence and great personal modesty. As it turned out, he would have to wait until his retirement from the NPS to allow that vision to take shape.

Bob finished his NPS career by returning to the Keweenaw Peninsula and helping to create a Cooperative Parks Studies Unit at Michigan Technological University in Houghton, the mainland headquarters of Isle Royale National Park. Shortly after his retirement, Bob cofounded the George Wright Society with Ted Sudia, and established its headquarters nearby, in Hancock.

The George Wright Society grew out of a need for an instrument of continuing duration, dedicated to the exchange of information within the community of researchers, managers

and other professionals, to give continuity to the broad range of topics having to do with cultural and natural park and reserve management and preservation. But the basic reality of starting up an organization is more mundane, more local; somebody has to show up every day to do the mailings, write the letters, ask for the donations, and perform all the other thankless tasks that are necessary to get a nonprofit off the ground.

Bob became the Society's first executive director, a position he held until 1998. Even after he stepped down from that position, Bob continued to work daily for the GWS, doing whatever was asked of him. All his work for the George Wright Society—24 years of full-time labor—was done entirely on a volunteer basis.

Those who knew Bob solely through his NPS and GWS careers will not be aware of how important he was to local and regional community groups in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. While working at Isle Royale in the 1950s, he was a founding member of the park's cooperating association, the Isle Royale Natural History Association (IRNHA). Bob was responsible for starting IRNHA's pub-

lications program, which has gone on to become nationally recognized for its excellence. IRNHA [which in 2008 became the Isle Royale and Keweenaw Parks Association, or IRKPA] remains a vibrant, independent park cooperating association today.

In recognition of his many accomplishments in the local community, Bob was honored in 2002 with the Heart and Hands Award, which is given each year to a person who works for peace, justice, and the environment in the Keweenaw region. A man of great personal integrity and humility, he was truly happiest when working quietly in the background, and was always content to let others take the credit. Bob let his actions speak for him. What he said with his life was this: National parks and other protected places deserve the best research and resource management we can muster; if we give them that much, then the public will understand them better and will do their part to support them.

Bob Linn section excerpted from George Wright Society Executive Director Dave Harmon's 2004 remembrance in the *George Wright Forum*.

And Then There Were Two: NPS Seeks Public Comments on Isle Royale Wolves

The National Park Service (NPS) is seeking input from the public through May 16, 2016, to a revised Isle Royale wolf management Environmental Impact Statement, based on last year's public comments and further internal deliberations. People from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and 19 other countries commented. The scope of the EIS is now narrowed from wolves, moose, and vegetation to focus on wolves.

This year's winter study found only two wolves. The male is both father and half-brother to the lone female. Wolves have played a key role in the ecosystem for the past 65 years, affecting the moose population and other species as an apex predator.

Given the revised scope of the EIS, actions to manage moose, such as cull-

ing or translocation of moose, as well as actions to manage vegetation, such as fire, direct restoration, or other tools, will not be considered in this EIS. After a decision is made regarding whether and how to bring wolves to Isle Royale, the NPS will monitor conditions on the island. If needed, additional planning processes will address other aspects of the island ecosystem, such as the moose population and forest community.

The NPS is considering four preliminary alternatives:

A: No intervention.

B: Introducing wolves once during a defined time period to prolong the presence of wolves on the island.

C: Bringing wolves to Isle Royale as often as needed in order to maintain a population of wolves on the island for

at least the next 20 years.

D. Continuing current management, allowing natural processes to continue, while developing resource indicators and thresholds to evaluate the condition of key resources, which could include moose or vegetation-based parameters. If a threshold is met, wolves would be brought to Isle Royale once (following alternative B) or through multiple introductions (alternative C).

For more details, see <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/ISROwolves>. Submit comments by May 16 online or by mail to:

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2016 Bob Linn Scholarship

IRKPA and the George Wright Society once again are sponsoring a \$500 scholarship in memory of Bob Linn, whose importance to both organizations and the National Park Service is detailed in this newsletter. The deadline to apply for the 2016 scholarship is April 30.

Graduating high school seniors in the Copper Country Intermediate School District and children or grandchildren of IRKPA or GWS members are eligible. They must be accepted at a college, with plans to major in natural resources, forestry, biological, earth or environmental sciences or a related field. Application forms are available at irkpa.org (under Get Involved > News) or by emailing kbradof@irkpa.org or calling 906-482-7860.

Sadly, no scholarship was awarded in 2015 because no one applied! This year the Keweenaw Community Foundation is helping us get the word out locally. The Copper Country Intermediate School District and Western U.P. Center for Science, Mathematics, and Environmental Education have also sent notices to science teachers and counselors in addition to high school principals.

iGive.com Helps IRKPA

Help IRKPA earn extra funds at no cost to you when shopping or searching the internet via iGive.com. What difference does it make? Over four years, IRKPA has received \$673 in extra donations as we have grown to 23 supporters. Imagine how much more we could earn if more members sign up! It's easy—just install the iGive button in your browser, and donations accrue automatically at a percentage determined by each retailer.

Even better, IRKPA will earn a \$5 bonus if you sign up for the first time by April 30 and install the iGive button for 90 days, whether you make any purchases or not. Join the 350,000+ iGive members who help their favorite causes with every purchase and search.

Isle Royale Workshops

IRKPA's June 6-11 botany and June 10-15 photography workshops, based at Rock Harbor via the *Ranger III*, still have a few spaces available, as does the September 6-11 Windigo botany workshop, which departs from Grand Portage, MN, on the *Voyageur II*. Details are on our website under the Get Involved tab or from Kristine by email or phone.

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IRKPA is the membership-based nonprofit partner of Isle Royale National Park and Keweenaw National Historical Park. Supporting OUR national parks! Gifts, bequests, memorials, and memberships are U.S. tax deductible.

Membership Categories

Individual \$25	Household \$35
Supporting \$50	Sustaining \$100
Patron \$250	Life \$1,200*

*may be paid in four annual installments

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