



Mighty Trappers

A collection of Ontario trappers that made an impact in their respective communities and/or Ontario as a whole.

WE WELCOME STORIES AND PHOTOS.

List of Mighty Trappers

LISTED IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

- Arkwright, Paul Fenelon Falls
- Barnes, Robert Thunder Bay
- Beck, Bob Searchmount
- Betz, Roger North Bay
- Bice, Ralph Haliburton
- Boyd, Mel Waubauskene
- Bron, Gary Willem Balderson
- Brookes, Stanley Loring
- Burnham, John
- Conibear, Frank Ontario
- Cook, Lloyd
- Dale, Peter Brownsville
- Dean, Andrew Kenora
- Denonville, Raoul
- Dillon, Patrick Hearst
- Dussault, Arthur Strickland
- Froats, Hubert Cornwall
- Giroux, Alcide & Maurice Sturgeon Falls
- Hinds, Gerald Gogama
- Kelly, Simon Renfrew
- Kenopic, Leo Renfrew
- Leblanc, Yvon Dunvegan
- Lefebvre, Albert Williamstown
- MacRae, Angus Maxville
- McKinnon, Jim Teeswater
- Meek, Elmer Williamstown
- Millette, Paul Hearst
- Monk, Murray Nipigon
- Morris, Price Frankford
- Nadeau, Gerald Chalk River
- O'Brien, William Bancroft
- Owen, Les White River
- Payeur, Jos Hearst
- Poirier, Charles Iroquois Falls
- Sawyer, Benjamin (Jim) Maple Lake
- Sawyer, James Powassan
- Suffron, Donald Suffron
- Veilleux, Joe Hearst
- Ward, George Montagne

STORIES & POEMS ... found at the end



Paul Arkwright

1937 -

The man from Fenelon Falls

- Began trapping at age 12
- Trapped muskrats with his dad 60 years ago and lucky if they got \$1/rat
- Bought his first bicycle with trapping money
- Trapping a family tradition
- Active member of Minden District Fur Harvesters
- Passionate about trapping and is a great spokesman of the trade
- Has an apprentice, Wyatt Watson, who is learning the trade from a master.

- Every year the Minden District Fur Harvesters put on a fur show for locals to join them and learn about the trade.



Paul Arkwright and his granddaughter, Sawyer Arkwright, 11, from Minden, tidy up their display at the 23rd annual convention of the Fur Harvesters Auction Inc. PJ Wilson/The Nugget

April 11, 2014

ELLIOT LAKE

Fur Harvesters



Walking the trapline

By Matthew Desrosiers
Editor

Paul Arkwright trapped his first animal, a mink, when he was 12 years old.

"My dad couldn't skin a mink because they have a little scent on it, and if you want to clear a room, you hit the scent and they'll be gone," he said.

So he took it to his neighbour who skinned it for him.

"I didn't know anything about how you flesh stuff."

That mink netted Arkwright \$18 from the local buyer.

"That was big money for that time," he said. Arkwright, now 78 years old, said he used to trap muskrats with his dad. If he received \$1 per rat, they did well.

"I bought my first bicycle out of muskrat trapping," he said. "[Trapping is] more or less a family tradition."

These days, trapping isn't as popular as it used to be in Haliburton County, but the Minden District Fur Harvesters, of which Arkwright is a member, are keeping the tradition going.

"It's still good," he said. "Maybe not as good as it was back in the 30s when you had to trap to make a living. There wasn't that much industry around, so you went out and trapped."

It used to be there were no quotas for beaver, nor were there any zones for trapping. Now, the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) have set up zones and specific areas, called traplines. Trappers bid for rights to certain lines, which can also be passed down in the family.

"If you have a good line, you can get 30-40 beaver off it," Arkwright said. "Then with your fisher, martin, coyote and wolves, you could possibly work four days a week if you had time. A lot of us guys around here, we do it to make a bit of money on the side, but you're working too."

Most trapping is done in the winter, though some people trap nuisance animals like skunks, raccoons, and red squirrels.

"The fur is no good on a beaver in the summertime," he said. "You're just destroying a fur-bearing animal."

Each trapper with rights to a line receives a beaver quota from the MNR.

"The beaver drives your line," Arkwright said. "The reason why the MNR wants you to take the beaver is so they can keep the population down and they don't become a nuisance."

Trappers must achieve at least 75 per cent of their quota each season to maintain the rights to their trapline.

Once the furs are harvested and prepared by the trapper, they are usually sent to North Bay to be graded. Most trappers around the county sell their furs through the auction house in North Bay as well, while others will send to Toronto. It all depends on who will offer the best prices.

Like any market, it's demand that determines what's going to sell. Arkwright said this year, the trappers were advised to trap fisher, martin, muskrats and coyote. They were told otter and beaver wouldn't sell.

"We target what they want," he said.

Despite the public backlash fur-wearers receive, real fur is still in demand, he said.

"When I go shopping in Peterborough, Ottawa and Gravenhurst, I go into the stores looking at fur coats," said Arkwright. "You didn't see that 10 years ago, but it's coming back slowly and gradually."

Some of the biggest fur buyers include Greece, Finland, China, and Russia.

"Fur trapping is still part of the culture up here," said Arkwright. "The council in Minden, we have 86 trappers that belong to it."

Arkwright is working with an apprentice, 13-year-old Wyatt Watson. Once Watson turns 16 he'll be free to trap alone.

To combat the stigma attached to it, Arkwright and the council host a local fur exhibition every year in January. The community is invited to come out and learn about trapping, see how fur is harvested from an animal and prepared for grading.

The Fur Harvesters also put out information billboards and displays in cities like Toronto and Ottawa.

"It's to show people that the trapper is not all bad," he said. "At one time, everybody had fur to put around their necks. People are afraid to go out in public, but more people are coming out all the time."

For more information on fur trapping in the Highlands, visit mindendistrictfurharvesters.com.

- A story that appeared in *The Highlander* newspaper showcasing Paul and the Council.

- Published February 2015

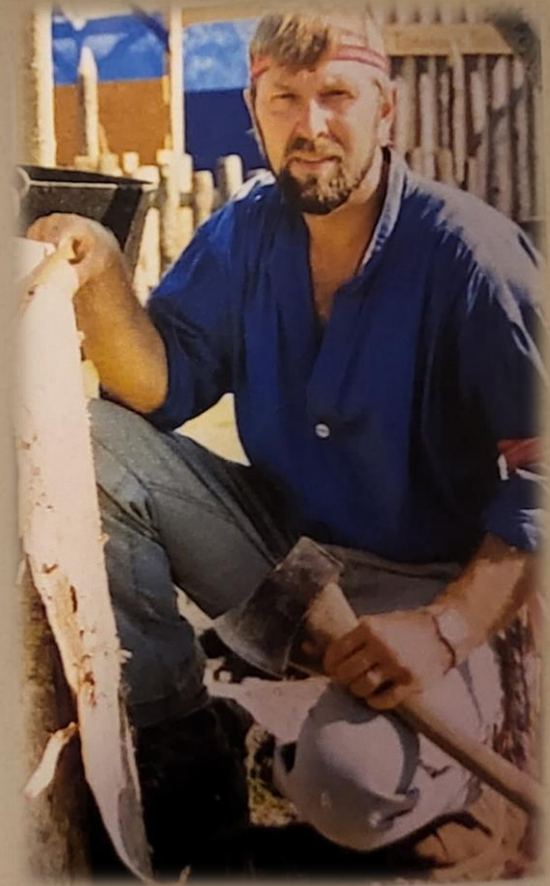
Robert (Bob) Barnes

1950 – 2022

A true north man



- Started his career as a birch bark canoe builder at Old For William (Thunder Bay)
- A skilled builder
- Owned his own logging company
- Trapped in northwestern Ontario
- Moved to North Bay to become the Executive Director for OTA
- Loved spending time in the outdoors with family





Richmond Bob Beck

1886 - 1974

A reclusive Searchmount trapper

- Lived off the land in Searchmount (near Sault Ste. Marie) year round in a trappers cabin
- Decorated veteran of WW1 - stood at 5ft 4" tall.
- Called a "loner" but enjoyed company when they called.
- A great cook of sourdough bread and pemmican & loved to make moonshine out of potatoes
- Trapped for a living and did odd jobs
- Never married, played the banjo
- In 1974, he left a legacy of \$180,000 for scholarships to East Elgin Secondary School (near London, ON) where he was born and raised on his family's homestead just outside Springfield.



Roger Betz

1933 – 2022

The Communicator!

- Had a trapline in 1960's
- Member & Coordinator (1978) of OTA
- Started magazine "The Canadian Trapper" and soon became the voice of OTA
- Built & opened a Trappers Museum on Hwy 11 in Marten River
- Assisted with development of Fur Harvest, Fur Management & Conservation Course
- Instrumental in the production of the Canadian Trappers Manual
- A passionate man who loved to educate people on trapping and loved trapping overall.



Ralph Bice

1900 – 1997

*An Algonquin Park
Wilderness Legend*

A man with a quick wit!



- His life was full - A writer, sportsman, philosopher, lay preacher, mayor and raconteur.
- Ralph Bice was born in a log cabin in 1900. His father was an early park ranger and trapper of Algonquin Park.
- Lived for 86 years in Kearney, Ontario with wife and six children.
- Died at age 97 in Burk's Falls

- His name is synonymous with Algonquin Park whose family has lumbered, fished and trapped since the 1870s.
- Spent most of his life in Algonquin Park.
- Was a guide in the park since 1917 – thought he had gone to heaven!
- Known as “the Old Man of Algonquin Park” and “King Trapper”.
- Retired in 1990 at age 90.



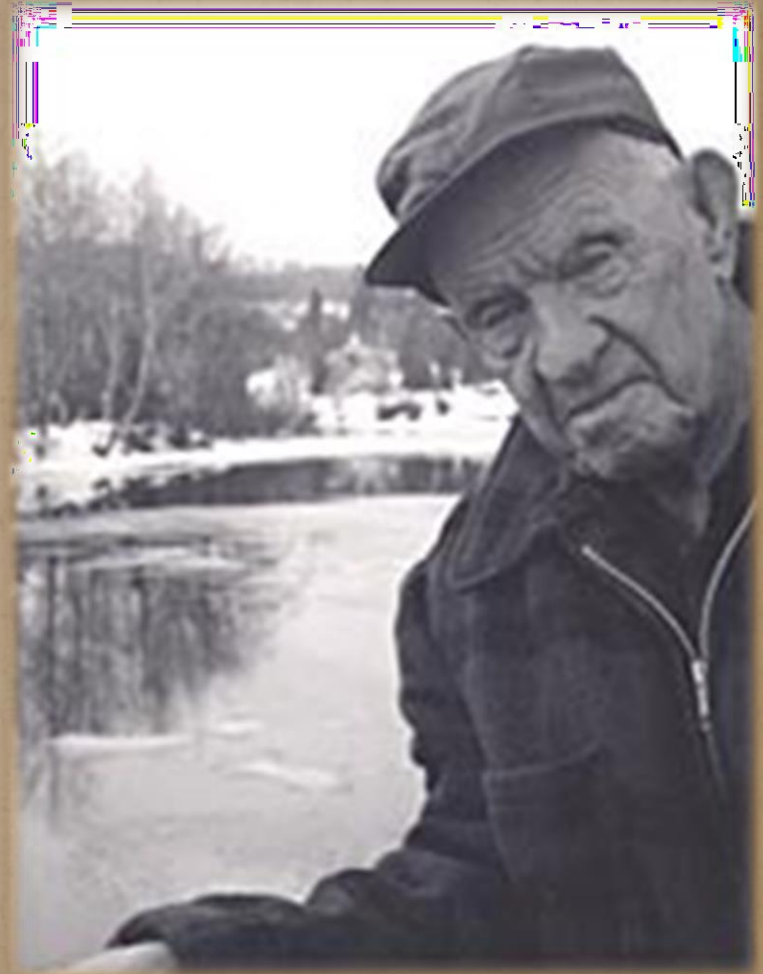
***He has a lake named
after him in the park!***



His trapping cabins in
Round Lake
Algonquin Park

Accolades Aplenty!

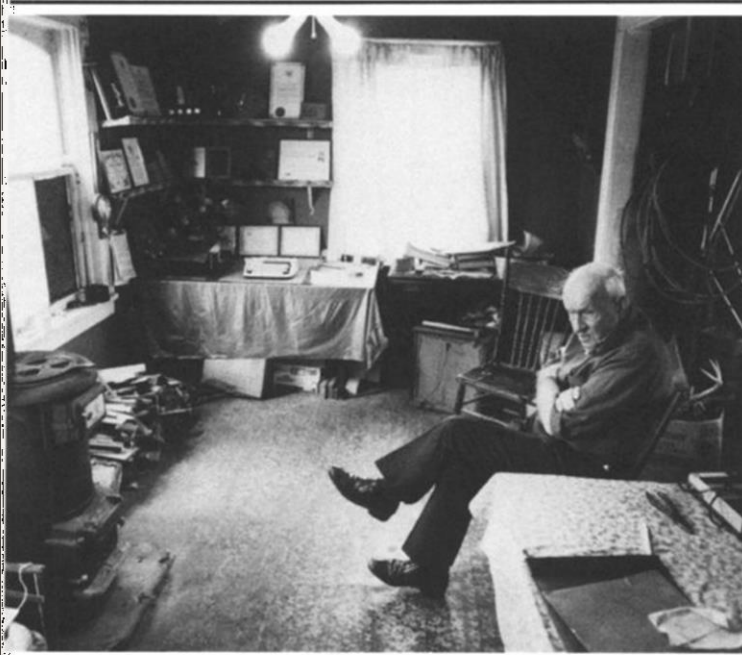
- He was president of the OTA from 1954 to 1960.
- He was the first recipient of the Lloyd Cook Memorial Award presented by the Fur Institute of Canada.
- In 1997, at the Annual Convention of the Fur Harvesters Auction, he became the first inductee into the Trappers' Hall of Fame.



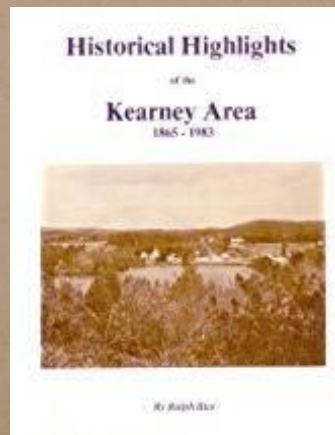
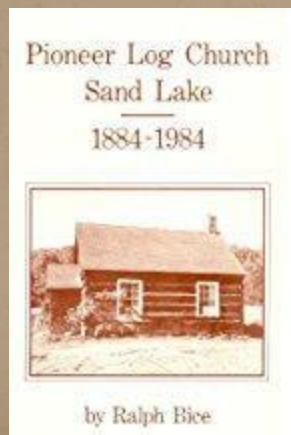
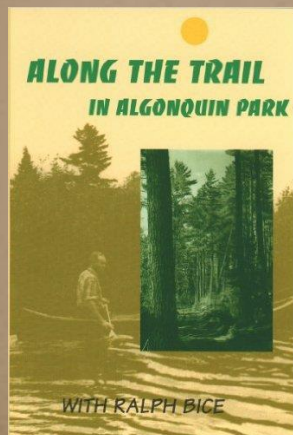
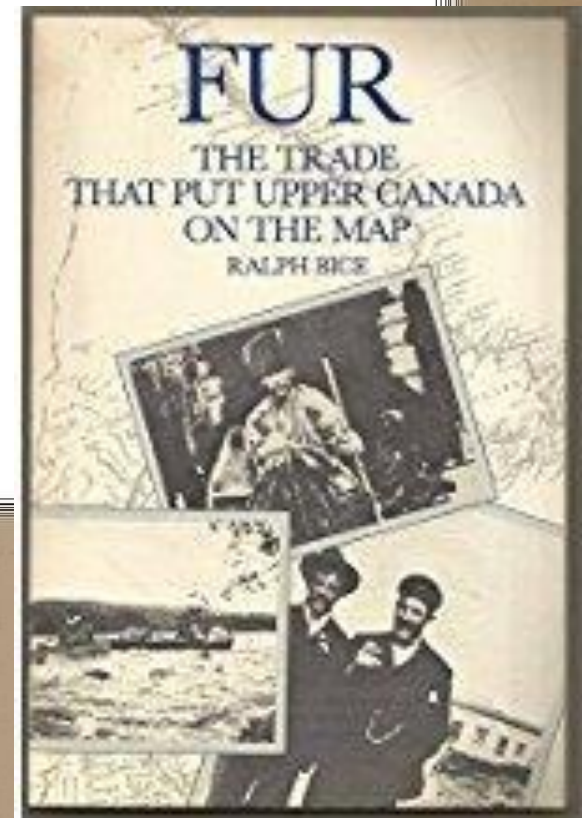


In 1985 when he became a member of the Order of Canada, Ralph Bice did not allow the occasion to cramp his wit and he told fellow recipient The Right Honourable Pierre Elliot Trudeau that he (Trudeau) was the "*Luckiest fellow in this room*". When Trudeau asked why, he said "*Because there is only one trapper in this room and you are sitting next to him.*"

In his twilight years and surrounded by the collectibles and the tools of a veteran outdoorsman, Ralph reflects on a long and rewarding life.



Some of the books he wrote.

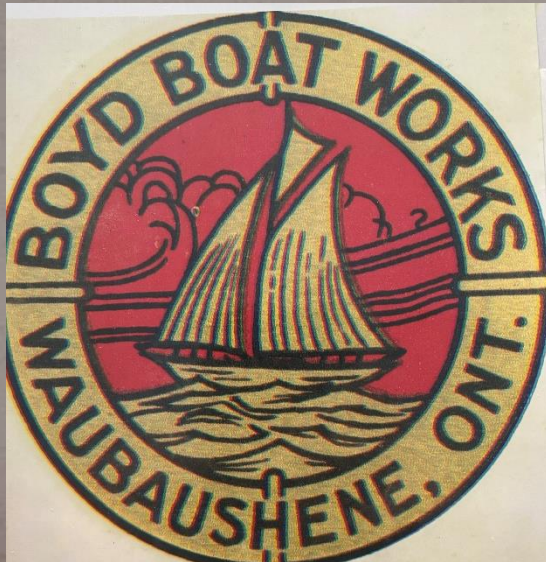


Mel Boyd

A resilient, hard-working trapper
in Waubashene, ON



- Built boats for Lands & Forests
- Shot a 7 ft tall, 500 lb bear that was trying to break into his cabin
- Was known for having 1 hand and 1 hook
- Uncle of Otto Boyd





- Left- Mel Boyd & Game Warden
- Bottom left- Mel on 1961 Polaris Autoboggan
- Below- Mel on 'Freddy', a boat he built, at the government dock in Waubauskene, ON



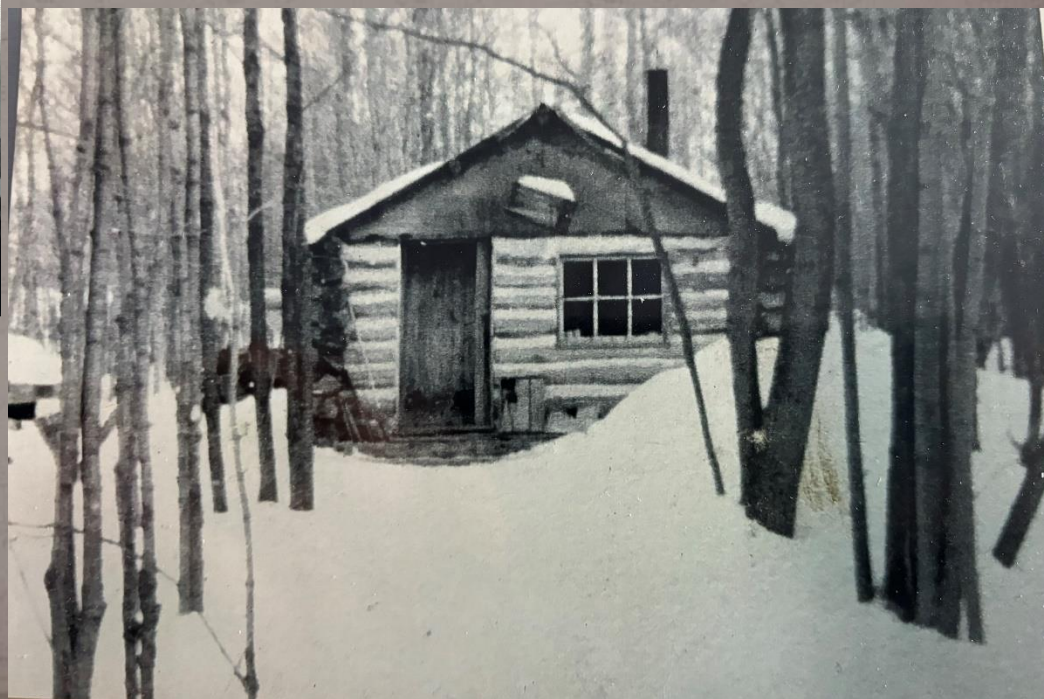
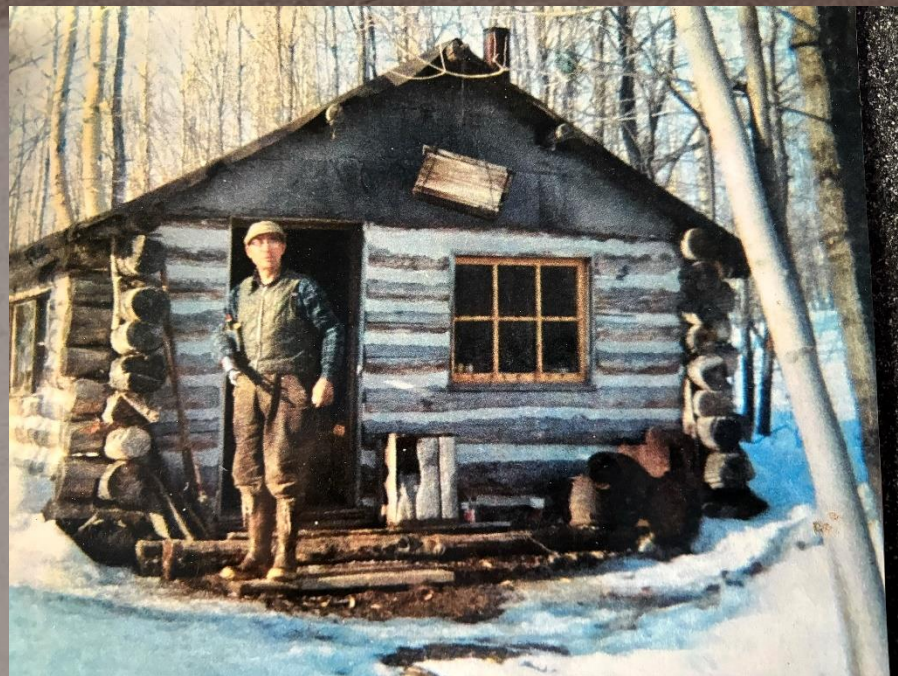
Huge Bears At Waubaushene

A 150-pound black bear which had been causing damage to his log cabin, was shot recently by Melville Boyd near Waubaushene. Another trouble-maker on a bigger scale soon appeared. Mr. Boyd was greatly surprised to be awakened one night by a tremendous bruin trying to smash its way into his cabin. After a short chase Mr. Boyd shot the intruder with one shot from a 30/30 rifle. The bear weighed 500 pounds and measured 7 feet from the nose to the hind feet.

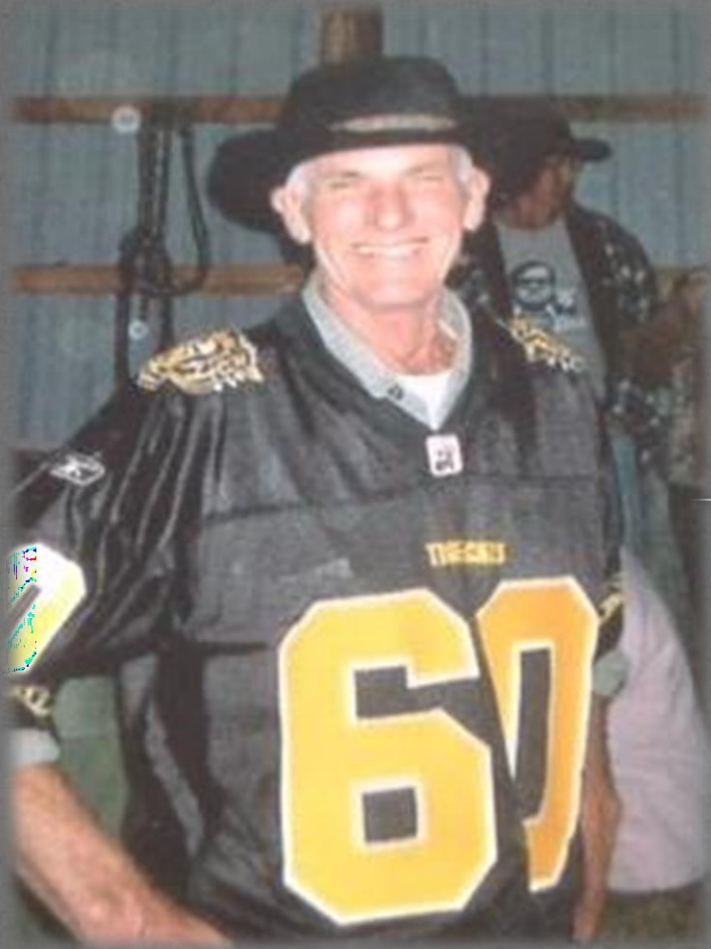
The bear skin will likely be used to cover the Boyd living room floor as a reminder of the experience.



- Mel with a bear he shot



- Mel's trap cabin



Gary Willem Bron

1945 – 2013

***A passionate
outdoorsman***

Balderson, ON

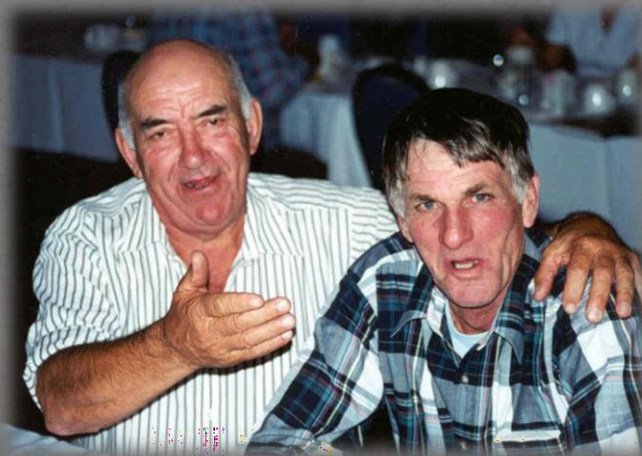
- Born in Holland, moved to Canada with the family to a farm in Balderson.
- Career as a Welder along with continuing the farm activity.
- His love of the outdoors led to a life-time of trapping, fishing and hunting.
- Founding member of the Lanark District Trappers Council and held many positions over the years.



Taken in 1973



- His home was a drop-off for fur bundles to North Bay and also sealing of fur pelts by his wife, Gail.
- He took great pride in his 9 years with MNR working on the rabies program.
- He was a passionate outdoorsman and lived his life accordingly.



A caring, gentle man who treated all animals with respect

- He was a diligent trapper who treated animals with exceptional kindness.
- He took great pride in the handling of the pelts and kept numerous photo albums with all his fur statements and awards for top lots, pelts etc.
- “He rarely got sprayed when live trapping skunks with the MNR because he talked to them, moved slowly and, I would bet, they sensed he was a 'nice guy' “ explains his wife Gail.



Gary & Gail Bron



Article in
Gananoque
Reporter, Wed
July 19, 2006

Other animals took advantage of the free meal of sardines Mr. Bron offered.

A bit farther into the

ing the animals, he was recording the sex, and approximate age of the cap-

per must go to the hospital for precautionary treatment.

the bush. He was now protected from rabies, the usually fatal disease that if left untreated attacks the central nervous system of animals.

MORE SURPRISES

Mr. Bron jumped back into the truck and headed to the next collection of traps where a different animal awaited him.

"You never know what you are going to get in the traps," he said before heading into the brush to bring out a skunk.

While the majority of animals treated by the TVR program is raccoons, the trappers also deal with skunks and foxes.

Before getting too close to the skunk, Mr. Bron produces a plastic sheet to cover the traps. While the sheet protects the trapper from direct contact with the skunk's spray, the noxious scent still quickly fills the air.

The skunk is all scent, no bite, though. After the initial shock of being placed in the smaller trap, the striped animal waits calmly for Mr. Bron to administer the vaccination and apply the ear tags.

"They are very docile, delicate creatures," he said.

Mr. Bron has also come across coyotes and fishers that have been tricked by the allure of an easy meal of canned fish.

"You can almost see the stupid looks on their faces," Mr. Bron said.

'IMMUNIZED BARRIER'

Mr. Bron is one of several people who are on



Simple procedure: Ministry of Natural Resources trapper Gary Bron places an ear tag on a raccoon that was captured last Wednesday morning near Escott. After tagging and administering the rabies vaccination in the leg muscle of the raccoon, Mr. Bron released the animal. — Photo by Mark Kerr

Stanley Cecil Brooks

1918 - 2015
Port Loring, ON



An avid bush man

- Faithful supporter of OFMF
- Loved going to trappers meetings
- An avid violin player – bought his first violin at age 12 with trapping money
- A logging business man, a family man
- Loved hunting, fishing and most of all trapping
- Had a trap line



John Burnham

A founding father

- Founding member of the Ontario Trappers' Association
- Active in West Nipissing Fur Council his whole life
- Began trapping at age 10
- Continued throughout his life
- Trapped West Nipissing area
- Spent a few years in military

John Burnham - A Founding Father

by Florence Friel

In the mid 1940's John Burnham and his cousin paid a visit to the Department of Lands and Forests in Sudbury. John's cousin Frank Crumb, a trapper, had encountered some trouble with a local game warden and the two men were attempting to remedy the situation. By chance, that same day, 10 or 12 other trappers, with similar concerns, were also meeting with the warden.

The trappers discussed their problems among themselves. All seemed to agree that they shared similar concerns about trapping. The local representative for the CCF party (later to become the NDP), urged them to organize and form an association. He recommended to them a good lawyer, and this was the humble beginnings of the Ontario Trappers Association. The year was 1947.

"We had no money to pay for a lawyer", says John Burnham, remembering these early days. Yet this obstacle did not discourage the trappers. About forty of them gathered at the King Eddie Hotel in Sudbury and took up a collection to raise funds. The association was then legally formed and John Burnham was elected as a Director on its first Board.

According to Mr. Burnham, the first Board had six members. Gilbert Clements was the first President, Emile Larose of Cartier was the first Secretary. Other board members included Ed Sawyers and Frank Crumb.

The following year (1948), the first OTA convention was held in Sudbury at the old Nickle Range Hotel. Many new members joined the association at this time. Since then, John Burnham has attended nearly every convention held by the OTA.

Trapping began at age 10 for John Burnham. In 1917, his family settled on the west arm of Lake Nipissing and it was the following spring he set his first traps, with the help of his grandfather.



John Burnham displaying his plaque from the OTA and West Nipissing Trappers Council.

John trapped four muskrat that year - quite an accomplishment for a young trapper.

During the years that followed, John busily tended traps with his uncle. By age 17, he had a trapping licence himself and trapped every fall. By freeze-up, he would take in his traps and go to work in the lumber camp. In 1931, John quit working at the lumber camp to begin trapping and guiding full-time.

John spent several years in the army and upon returning home, was disappointed to find that his former trapline was no longer his to trap.

In 1945, the government offered Mr. Burnham a replacement trapline on the Blackcreek watershed, where he remained. This 53 square mile trapline saw many years of productive fur harvesting for him.

At age 78, Mr. Burnham remains active in his profession. "I still trap", he says, "as long as I am able". The

Blackcreek watershed trapline, however, has now been taken over by Dennis Leeger.

John Burnham was one of the first seven members of the OTA. He was a key organizer in the creation and success of our Association. Yet his list of achievements did not stop there. His next task was to aid in the creation of the West Nipissing Trappers Council, a council on which he sat as President for four years.

Last fall the West Nipissing Trappers Council presented John Burnham with a plaque in recognition of his dedication to their council, to the OTA and to the trapping profession. This is an honour well deserved, for John Burnham is not a man content to let others do the work. His accomplishments have proven that he is an active member who has played a key role in the organization of trappers in Ontario.

Frank Ralph Conibear

1896-1988

The inventor of the Conibear Trap!



We'll call him one of ours!

- Born in England and immigrated to **Ontario** at age 3 with family
- Lived in Orville, Ontario until age 15 when family moved to North West Territories
- Learned to trap there & supported his family



An unholy alliance!



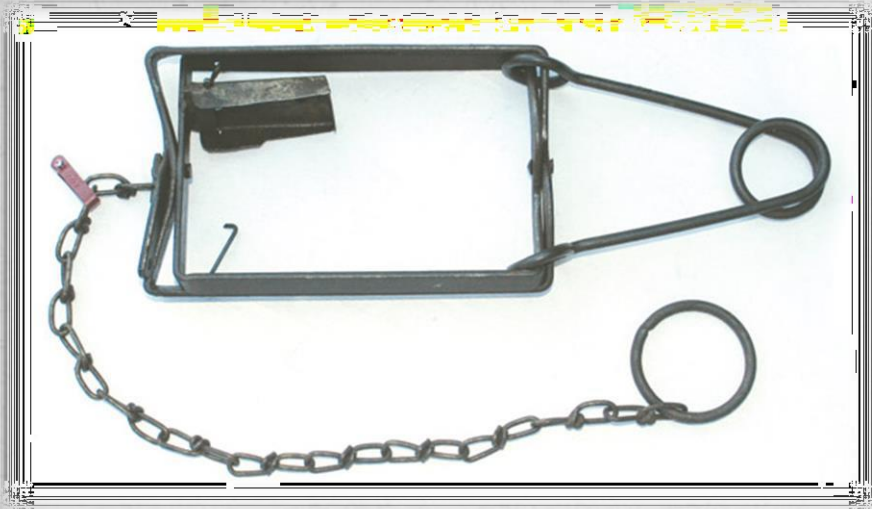
- In the 1940s, the Association for the Protection of Fur Bearing Animals (APFBA) was formed in BC; Miss Clara Van Steenwyck became vice-president.
- Their main focus was to fund the development of a humane animal trap.
- Van Steenwyck, an animal welfare activist who knew nothing about trapping but was keenly interested in finding a substitute for the leghold trap, heard about Frank Conibear's work and decided to back his next attempt.
- She provided \$800 for a patent and also to have more prototypes built.

- He was unhappy with the results of using a leg hold trap. He wanted to create an alternative that would kill the animal instantly.
- In the spring of 1929, he took an idea for a new type of trap to Edmonton, Alberta, where he paid a mechanic to make prototypes from tempered steel.
- With funding from APFBA and help from Eric Collier, a BC trapper, the Conibear trap was revamped into what we use today.
- The Conibear trap was invented in 1957 by Frank Conibear
- He sold his patent to Animal Trap Company of America in 1958 which was then mass produced and sold to trappers across North America.

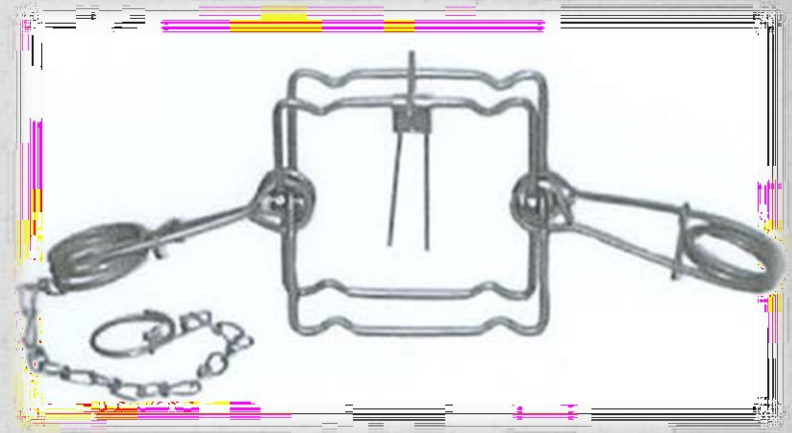


***“I have a dream
– a dream that
someday my
trap will
become the
SPCA of the
forest.”***

Manufactured by Victor as the Conibear in the late 1950's.



- Original trap of 1950s



- Today's trap

Frank's name is now in the Canadian Dictionary for the invention of a humane trap.

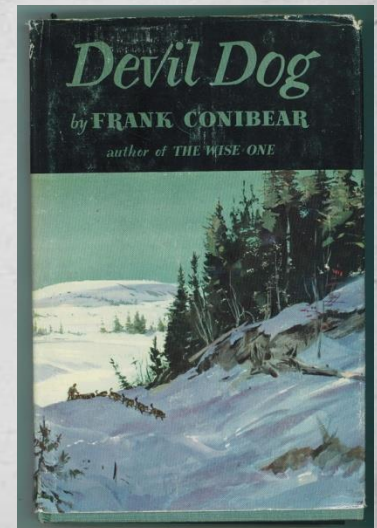
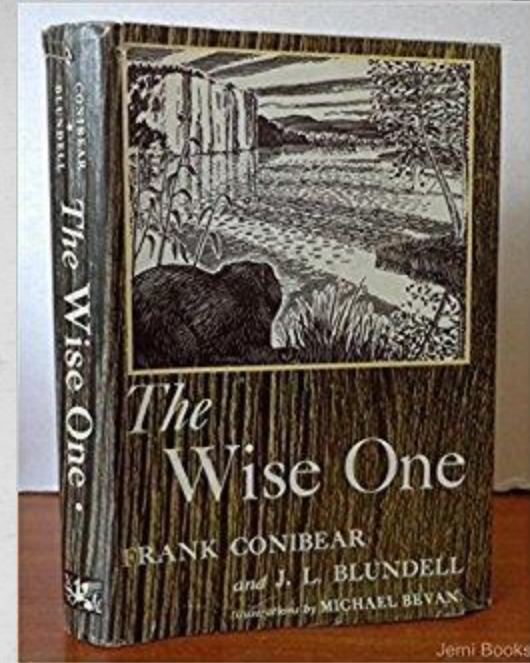
A man with many titles

- He was a trapper for thirty years
- He was also a forest ranger
- In 1917, he was drafted in WW1 so he could instruct the army how to travel by sled and use snowshoes and survival technique. He was sent to Quebec.



More than a trapper

- Almost completely deaf, he suffered Scarlet Fever as a child.
- He moved family to Victoria, BC and began writing in earnest.
- He sold one of his books "*The Wise One*" to Walt Disney about 1964. They later made an hour long show. It was a story of a black beaver and his life.



ARTIFACTS

Frank Conibear

they collect the artifacts to study the past.
out of the bone fragment, chipped stone and delicate
cedar weave is written a history long forgotten.

in all this where is the truth?
what is the history?
maybe history should not be the question,
for history is written
not passed on in a story at the bighouse,
or in a lesson to the young.

yet while the archeologist's artifact
and the historian's document
remain important,
too often, the record shows the history
from the historian's own living eye.

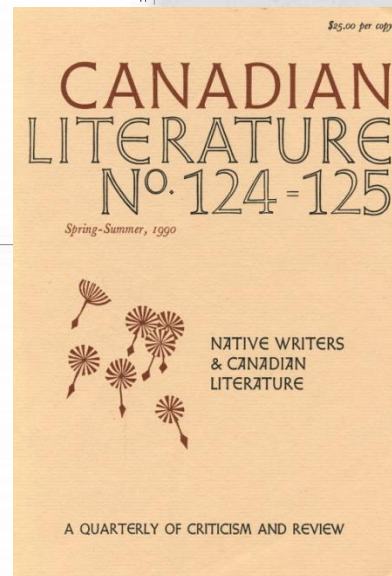
the truth is perhaps
in the elders who remember,
who are living and looking to the young.
what can be comes from
the spirit of the past,
the wisdom of the elder,
and the new strength of the young.

~~the history is alive~~
not to be found in an old site, but
present in the people.

and when the record changes to tell
a more accurate "history"
or our people, then the true
spirit of our past, present and future
can be given,
and in return valued.

Book written and published:

- The Wise One
- Devil Dog
- Water Trio
- Husky the story of Cap

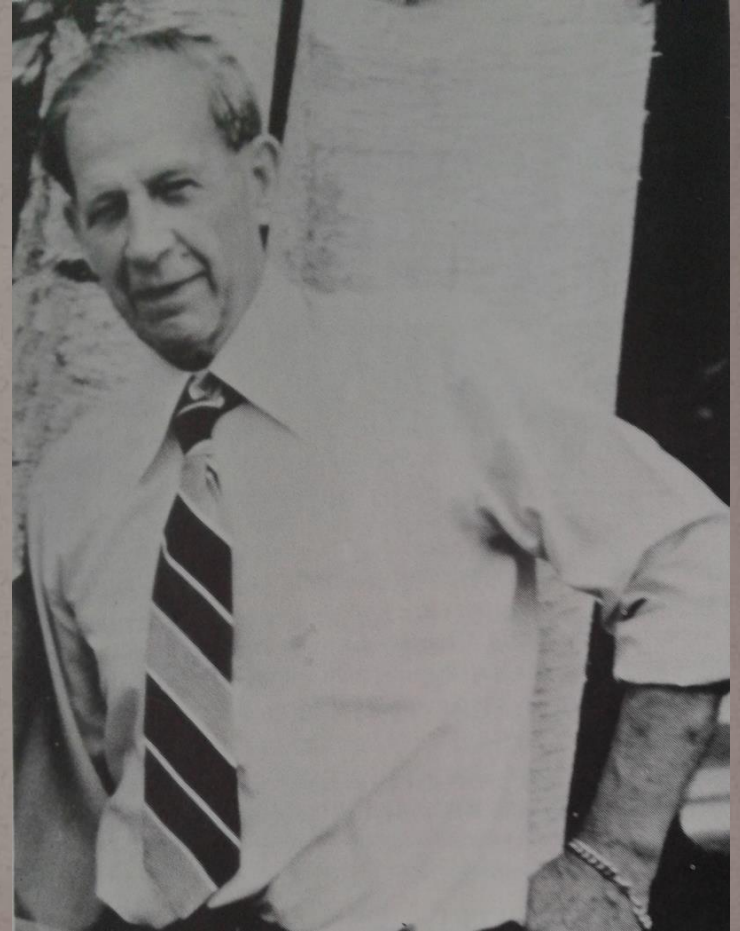


Lloyd Cook

A man with strong trapping convictions – a
true pioneer

A man with a trapping passion

- Lifelong involvement with trapping
- Joined OTA in 1956
- OTA president 1963-1979
- 7 years as president of Canadian Trappers Federation, which he founded
- 1972, taught trapping at Georgian College
- Was a member of the Federal Provincial Committee for humane trapping





Peter Kirkwood Dale

1948 -2025

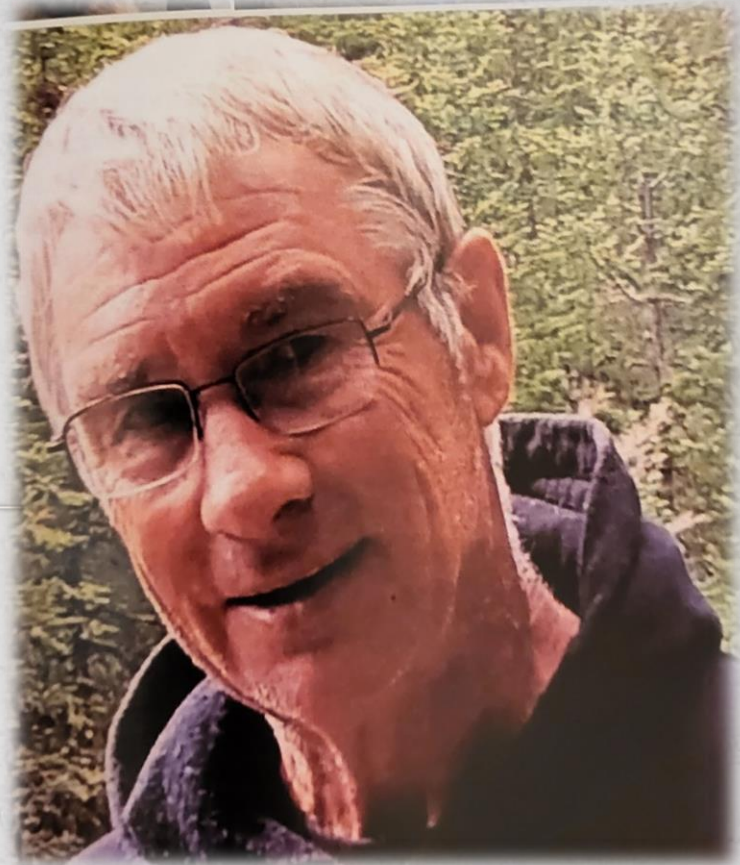
Brownsville

- Peter was a devoted trapper and spent many years teaching others the art of trapping. He spent 26 years as a trapping course instructor for Ontario Fur Managers Federation, training hundreds of new trappers.
- He was always full of stories of his adventures and enjoyed sharing his stories with anyone who would listen. He always enjoyed trips north with his family and cherished every moment spent with them. An avid hunter and fisherman, thoughts of his next fishing trip were never far from his mind right up to his final days.

Andrew Dean

1954 – 2023

Kenora's Trapping Educator



An Englishman our Canadian Bush

- Avid outdoorsman
- Immigrated to Canada at age 19 to work for Hudsons Bay Company in Northern Ontario
- Had a trapline in Sioux Narrows and built a cabin on Dryberry lake
- Active member & president of the Kenora Trappers Council
- He was an avid antique trap collector including many from England
- Married to Donna and father to 3 boys whom he loved dearly and shared his passion for the outdoors



Raoul Denonville

1893 – 1970

A River Valley Mystery



A woman pretending to be a man

- Lived the life of a man but was really a woman ... the reason is a mystery
- Was a lumberman and trapper
- Came to River Valley from Quebec
- Lived a very humble & meager life
- Spoke only French, was quiet & kept to her/himself
- Died with this secret

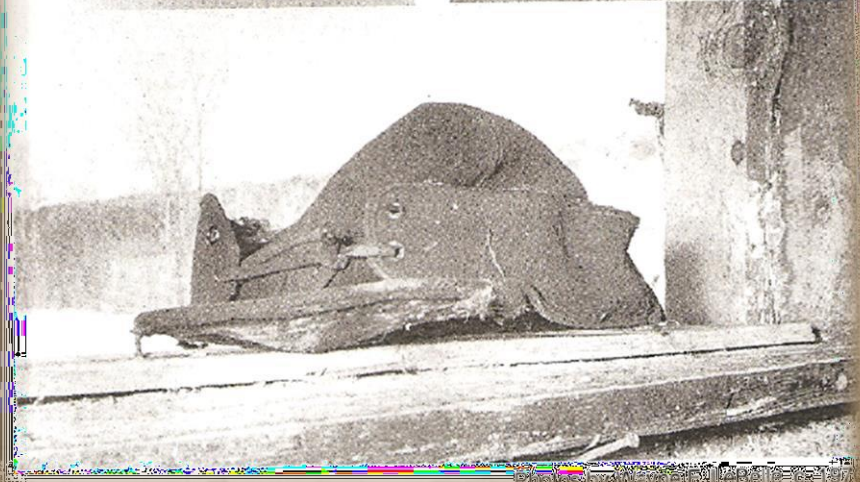
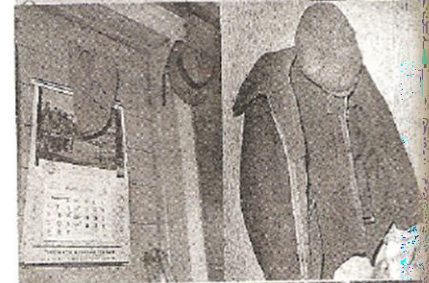
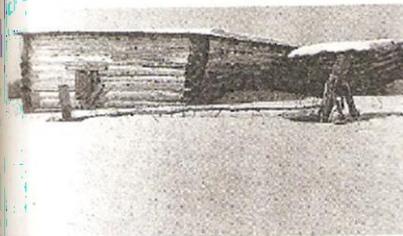


It will continue to be a mystery!

- Story and photos provided by Wayne LeBelle, reporter for the Nugget Sturgeon Bureau published April 1, 1971

Photos

The packsack, (top right) and neatly hung coat just below it were Raoul's latest clothes in his \$10 a month apartment in River Valley. His calendar marked the last days that he spent in River Valley before going to hospital where he died. The log cabin (below article) is the last bush home of Raoul Denonville. On the window sill, the black hat he wore for many years was the only witness of a very secretive woman who was a man for most of her life.



Patrick Dillon

1929 – 2015

A lifelong Hearst trapper



A dedicated Hearst trapper

- Born in 1929, eldest of 16 children
- Raised on a farm
- Age 7 – started trapping with father & never missed a year since
- 1942: he partnered with Anker Moen and spent all winter in the bush trapping with little gear & a team of dogs for transport
- He trapped his father's (George) line on Way and Irish Townships



- The old camp was a school bus and now a new camp has been built on the line.



- In 1973, he bought “Mac” Eldrige McCallum’s trapline on Levesque Rd
- He ran 2 traplines which he always fulfilled his quotas
- In his 80’s, Pat continued trapping nuisance beavers
- He promoted trapping at the National Level and was an avid member of OFA
- He was featured trapping in 2 TV programs and a few magazines
- A true outdoorsman, well respected & fondly remembered.



Arthur Dussault

1943 – Still Kicking
A Strickland Trapper



- Arthur started trapping at the age of 11. He would get .50¢ for each hare caught.
- In the 70's Arthur and Rita left the 4 kids in good hands with their Grandmother and stayed 2 months on the trapline. Many good stories came out of this trip.
- It was not rare for Arthur to get over 300 beavers in one season on his traplines.



- Arthur Dussault received a certificate of recognition from the Canadian Government for his involvement in the fur industry, for school presentations on trapping and his participation in the study of the LDL trap for martens.
- Arthur and Rita (nee Sicard) are still residing in Strickland (March 2019).



50th
wedding
anniversary



Hubert Froats

1937 – 2015

A Passionate Trapper

- Born and raised in Winchester, ON
- Was an instructor for the OFMF (then the Ontario Trappers Association)
- Was a fur grader for Fur Harvester back in the day.
- His home was a drop off point for locals shipping fur
- An avid trapper who loved telling stories
- Ate what was trapped & cooked wild game for special occasions
- Passionate about the outdoors, loved to trap, hunt, & fish with his wife Darlene of 57 years.



A man with a big heart

- Farmer in Apple Hill, ON & lived in Stormont County.
- A mechanic by trade
- Trapped on many private lands for farmers dealing with nuisance beaver
- A real family man, father of five children
- He had fur coats and hats made for all his children who wore them with pride and are now passed down the generations.
- He had raccoon hats made for all his grandchildren.



Hubert's workshop with oldest Granddaughter Christine



Being outdoors was a family affair!

La famille Giroux

..., Maurice & Alcide

Maurice Giroux



Maurice Giroux - Canadian Champion and Winner of the
Beaver Skinning Contest 1965

- Began trapping at young age along with his brother Alcide
- An avid trapper and super efficient skinner
- Loved playing music – would attend functions sporting his ukulele
- A storyteller – always keen to share his passions

Alcide "Ti-Loup" Giroux

1945 – 2018

Sturgeon Falls



Full of dreams & plans for the future

- Was a founding father of the Fur Institute Of Canada
- An avid trapper
- Taught trapping up north
- A mentor, teacher and book writer
- Father of two sons – passing on his love of life and the outdoors

- Claim to fame: loving life to its fullest & proud trapper.



Gerald Samuel Hinds

A Gogama Trapper

Still managing his trapline at 90 years old

- Worked at INCO in 1946 at 16 with 36 years of service
- In 1981, began second career in remote trapline in Gogama District
- Loves to be on trapline
- Taught sons and grandsons “Bush smarts” and trapping
- Loves to tell stories about his many adventures
- Still trapping!

Huron County Mighty Trappers

Submitted by Doug Vincent
of club members in the 1940s

From left to right: Merv Batkins member in 1945. Merv was one of the great fox trapper in the county. **Aylmer Trick** also member in 1945. Aylmer had a trapping store in his basement. **Herb Oakes** another member of 1945 and also a great fox trapper. **Jake McDougall, Charlie East & Trevor Moon.** Huron County Trappers paid for all 3 to go to the convention in North Bay.





- Art McDougall with a grey fox he trapped outside of Huron County.
- He would average 80 fox a year.

- Art McDougall's 2 daughters and son.





Simon Kelly

2014-2017

A Renfrew Trapper

- Learned how to trap with his dad in the 1930's & 40's in the Cormac area of Renfrew County
- Trapped for 70 years in the Renfrew area
- Used snowshoes mostly to move about
- Shared his passion with sons, grandsons and anyone interested to learn
- Honourary lifetime member of the Renfrew & District Fur Council.

Leo Kenopic

1937 - 2017

Renfrew's Outdoorsman



- Life long resident of Ottawa Valley (Renfrew)
- Farmed all his life
- At age 12 began trapping on his and neighboring farms
- Had a registered trap line until health failed
- *“Trapping is hard work but I loved it!”* he stated
- Passing down his knowledge and passion to great nephew Ethan Kenopic





Leo is in centre photo in 2009, was awarded the Hilbert Enright Memorial Award from the Renfrew Fish & Game Club for being the oldest successful hunter bagging a 132 lb doe.



Yvon Leblanc

1941 – still kicking!

Founding member of
Glengarry Trappers council

Trapping the beaver



- Trapping for 40 years in Dunvegan, St. Isidore and South Nation River watershed.
- Mostly beaver, muskrat and fox as nuisance animals and for management purposes.
- Angus McRae taught him method to use for beaver drowning sets. A great method ensuring beavers were caught/drowned and no one stole the traps.
- A barber by trade – he remembers in 1972 getting \$8-9/muskrat while he was paid \$1.25/haircut
- Had to give up trapping due to heart health issues.



Albert Lefebvre

1953 & still kicking

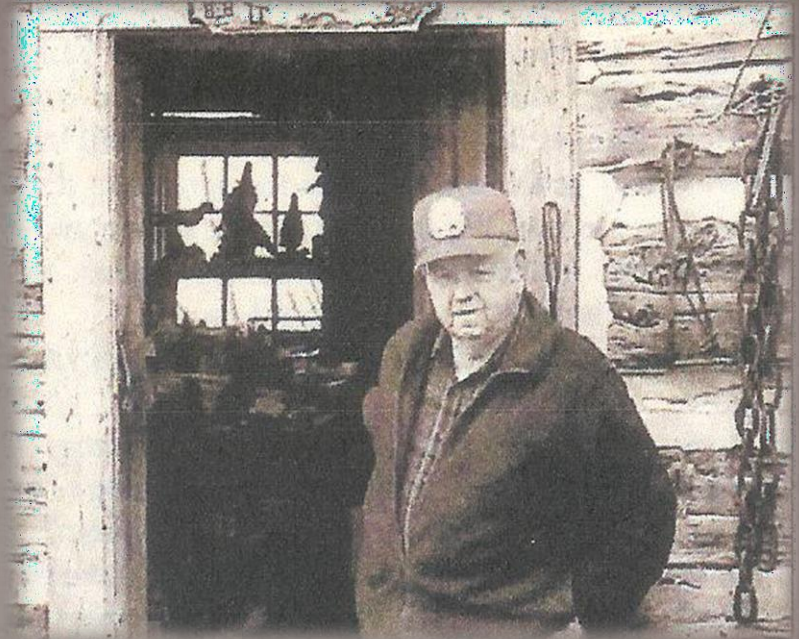
A history buff



- Began trapping in 1970's.
- Loves traps and everything to do with trapping.
- An avid collector for over 20 years (traps, vintage, fur trade items).
- Created a **Vintage Trap Fair** five years ago where 20+ people participate. Held first Saturday in June at Williamstown Fairgrounds.
- Collector of many Canadian instant kill traps & pieces.
- Claim to fame: has several early Frank Conibear traps



Angus MacRae



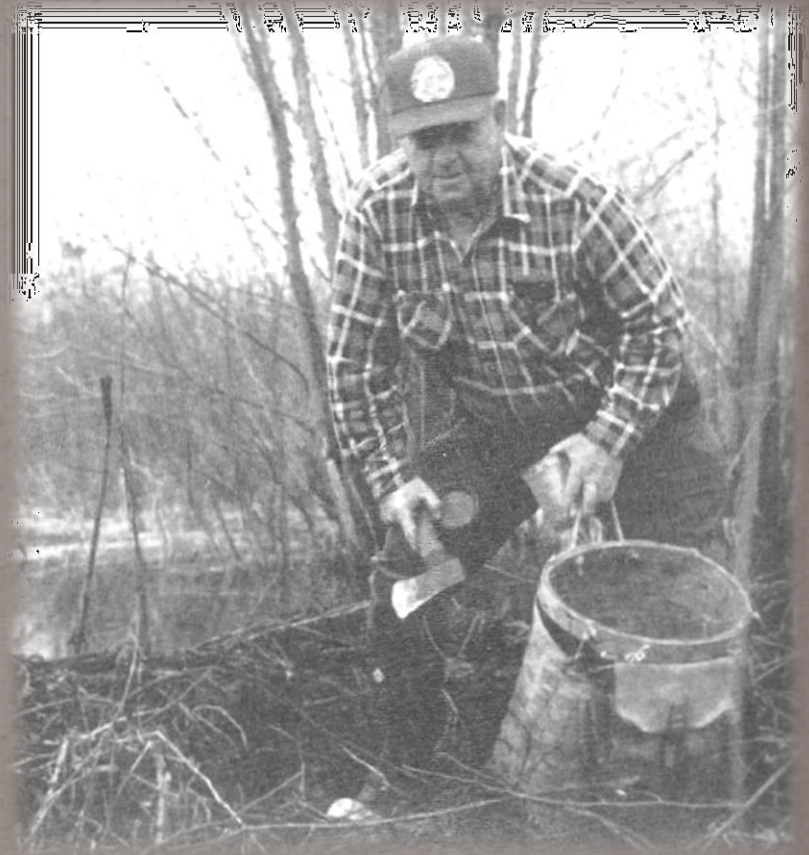
A Glengarry Trapper's Life
1921 – 2008

"Whit's fur ye'll no go past ye."

Gaelic for 'whatever is meant to happen to you, will happen to you'!

Angus MacRae A witty fella

- Born and raised in Glengarry County, Angus MacRae was proud of his Scottish heritage. Coming from a farming background, Angus had a passion for the outdoors and a love of the land.
- His father, a farmer and trapper, taught Angus at a young age the inner workings of being a good land steward. Like many boys, Angus earned extra money by trapping locally.
- He recounted earning \$1.50 for a muskrat skin while his dad earned \$1.25 for a veal calf.

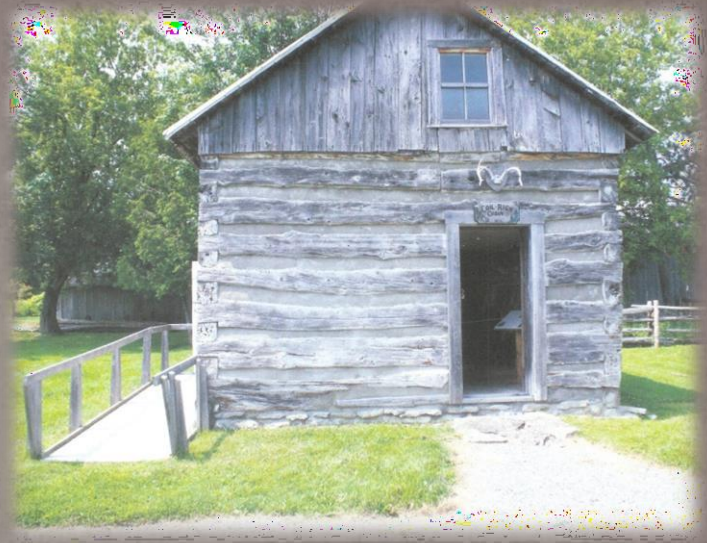


- During the depression, Angus financially helped the family farm by trapping and did so for all of his adult life.
- While trapping in Kenyon, Roxborough and Finch townships, McRae was contacted by the provincial government and was made the first official trapping instructor.
- Angus was an avid trapper and was always one to showcase the trade and share stories with anyone who stopped to listen.
- Angus was also involved in tanning and taxidermy work.



Angus MacRae's Trapper cabin

- Recognizing Angus as an important local legend, Ronna Mogelon made a short film about his life as a trapper in Glengarry which can be viewed at the museum.
- Angus' cabin was built in 1880 and was a two story log house measuring 20ft by 24ft aptly named "Coil Righ" – pronounced "coil-yur-ee" gaelic for King's Bush. It's humble beginnings were that of a home for a family of five and then moved to the McRae property to be used as a trapper's cabin in 1979.



*Log cabin now at the
Dunvegan Pioneer Museum*



Angus' trappers cabin was donated and moved in 2005 from Maxville to the Glengarry Pioneer Museum in Dunvegan along with his much loved traps and memorabilia. The collection of more than 1,500 items showcased his 70+ years of trapping.

It was officially opened August 17, 2008.

You can visit Angus' Trapper Shack at the Glengarry Pioneer Museum located in Dunvegan, ON. The museum is open Tuesday to Sunday, 10 am - 5 pm from Victoria Day to Labour Day weekend.

www.glengarrypioneermuseum.ca

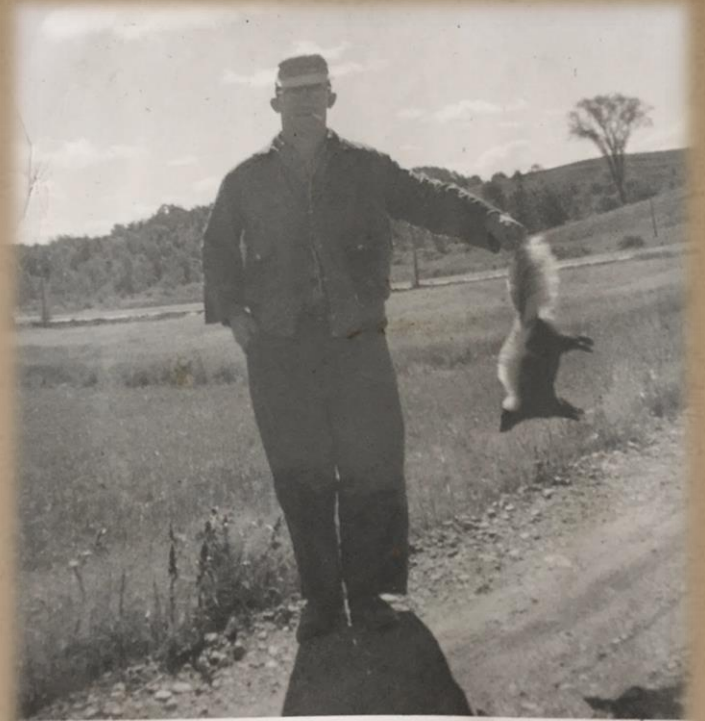




Jim "Coon"
Mckinnon

1930-2003

- Born and raised in “the Alps” of Culross Township, Bruce County
- He started trapping as a young lad in public school.
- Was happy when he would catch a skunk on his line on the way to school as the teacher would send him home for the day



TIMMIE SKUNK

- He trapped for almost 50 years
- Taught his grandsons, who now carry on the tradition the tricks of the trade and the ways of the forest.



PHOTO ABOVE: seen with friend Richard Duck

PHOTO LEFT: Taylor Taverner (his grand niece). She was pretty excited when we checked the traps and “she” caught her first beaver.



David Elmer Meek

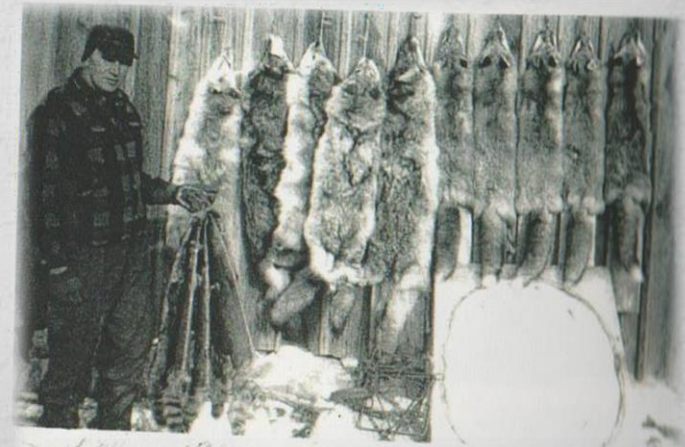
1909 – 2005

**A Glengarry man with a
keen sense of smell!**

- A descendent of the United Empire Loyalists
- Lived in Glengarry County his whole life raising his family.
- An avid trapper – made his living in the trapping industry and farmed.
- Instrumental in establishing the Glengarry Trappers Council.
- Owned and operated a trapping store (Glenbrook) from 1972-1987 where supplies (traps, lures and such) were sold across Canada & United States.
- Made his own lures. Came up with fancy, smelly recipes that worked!
- Post office complained many times about parcels he was shipping caused by the smells they emitted.



Elmer, left, with EJ Daly



- Was an extremely knowledgeable and successful wolf trapper thanks to his lures and years spent in the bush. The Ontario government would pay him to trap wolves in the Calabogie area as well as other locations in Ontario.
- Highly respected in the trapping industry.



Elmer with wife Daisy of 63 years.





ELMER WEEK TRAPPING SUPPLIES
WILLIAMSTOWN, ONT
1973 - 74 SEASON

TRAPLINE SUPPLIES

The following list of trapline supplies are ones found best by us on our own traplines. Trapline equipment must stand a lot of abuse. Everything listed has been found superior in every respect or we would not offer it to the trapper. Today, trapline equipment is expensive, so buy the best.

It looks like far will be well worth trapping again this fall. Now is the time to prepare for an exciting and lucrative season on the trapline. We receive hundreds of letters and photos from trappers and will welcome comments and suggestions. Good luck on the trapline.

BLACK MAGIC MINK SCENT - This we feel is the No. 1 mink scent on the market today. Mink will actually stop and roll and really track up an area where some has been placed. You can prove this to yourself on snow. Heavy liquid type, it is attractive to many furbearers and is really a "Super Scent." Because of the cost of compounding this scent we have to charge a little more for it but it will be the best investment in scent you will ever make.

\$1.50 per bottle, with instructions.

ALUMINUM PUSH PINS

For attaching all pelts smaller than beaver and otter to wooden stretchers. Can be used over and over again and requires no hammer for driving or removing and does not damage pelts. Has many other uses. Tempered steel points.

PRICE PER BOX OF 100, POSTPAID \$2.10



GLENBROOK PRESERVED FOX AND COYOTE BAIT - Preserved flesh bait is guaranteed 100% from wild animals, and all trappers know this is best. It retains all its natural flesh odors, plus additional ingredients that increase its value as a bait. It is tainted but not decomposed and will not further decompose at sets. It may be used with or without additional lure. It is handled right and free of contamination and is "Flesh bait at its best". While highly recommended for fox and coyote, it may also be used for any flesh-eating animal. This bait has been tested against all others and you can order with the assurance of obtaining the best. Put up in 8-oz. jars with screw caps and trapping instructions with every jar.

GLENBROOK BAITS AND LURES

Glenbrook paste bait for Fox and Wolf.

This is a new bait which is in paste form, which is being used to catch fox or wolf. It is not as loud smelling as our chunk bait. Used with a different lure or urine will give those old wise ones a different reason to get caught. Sold in 8 oz. jars.

Glenbrook Mink and Coon paste bait.

A new bait for mink and coon is preserved fresh with addition of musk and oils to make it highly attractive. 8 oz. jars.

Glenbrook All-Purpose Lure for flesh-eating animals.

If you make one set for various fur animals or if you feel you can not afford a bottle of Glenbrook Animal Gland Lure for each species, here is an all-purpose lure perfected after years of testing, that is in a class by itself. This is not a mild lure, but a powerful lure that will call animals from long distances, and is guaranteed to increase your catch. It is intended for all fur animals excepting muskrat and beaver, and high-priced ingredients and expert compounding and blending has produced this Super Lure.

Glenbrook Cold weather Liquid Fox-Coyote and Mink Bait.

If you are one of thousands who have found regular flesh baits did not give out enough odor in extreme cold weather to attract foxes and coyotes, you will find our new liquid bait will attract them at any temperature. It is put up in four ounce bottles and only a small amount is needed at a set and it is used the same way as flesh bait. This and a bottle of Dalley's Fox or Coyote Lure No. 2 will assist you to catch fur even far below zero when others cannot catch them.

Prices on Glenbrook Baits:

8 oz. Jars each \$1.35 Postpaid - 3 Jars \$3.25 Postpaid
1 oz. All purpose Lure \$1.35 - 4 oz. Pro. Size \$3.00 Postpaid

Animal Glands Wanted

We want all kinds of animal glands and will pay cash or trade for supplies.

We will also buy beaver oil sacs and muskrat musks.

Write for prices or get our booklet adv. in this catalogue.

- Made ash backpacks which were highly sought after.

- Held "Trapping Days" where seminars were offered including Hudson Bay representatives.

This was open to trappers from across the continent.

- Was involved in trapping well into his 80's until his health declined.

- Died at age 95.

A great story which appeared in Cornwall Standard Freeholder about Elmer's Lures



TRAPPER AND BUSINESS MAN Elmer Meek, maple veneer pack-baskets, an indispensable of Williamstown, models, one of his handmade carry all for anyone working a trap line.

Right scent can trap any kind of wild prey

By VIRGINIA JALKANEN

The clumsy shopper should avoid Elmer Meek's neat little trapper's supply store. He might drop a jar of skunk essence or fox gland lure and attract the wrong kind of company. He wouldn't smell like a rose.

But local trappers, with keen instincts and quick reflexes are quite at home among the traps and lures in Elmer Meek's busy supply centre overlooking the Raisin River, near Williamstown, Ontario, although the bulk of the business is mail order.

Trapping is considered a cash crop and is encouraged, under controlled conditions, by the ministry of natural resources.

Furs represent luxury, around the world. The Russians wear fur hats and the Chinese export fur-lined gloves. In Toronto, fur tails are the latest fashion accessory. And that's all grist for the mill, as far as the trapper is concerned.

But he doesn't try to influence the market process or milady's choice of fashion and fragrances. Nor is the consumer very interested in the subject.

A woman who receives a gift of perfume doesn't stop to ask the donor whether the fixative came from the sex organs of muskrat or civet cat — or, if it was artificially produced in a laboratory. A lady would never be so delicate.

Recently, I flipped through 'The Trapper' newspaper (an 80-page monthly published in the U.S.) which reprinted the article I wrote for The Standard-Freeholder, Feb. 1, 1978, featuring trapper Angus MacRae of Maxwellville. The names and advertising descriptions of basic supplies in 'The Trapper' are highly original.

FURRY ACROSS THE NATION

Williamstown has its share of nice people and Elmer and Daisy Meek are no exceptions. With a unity of purpose, this hard-working couple engages in a trapping supply bobby that has grown into a small business. Orders are filled and sent to many different parts of Canada.

Their mimeographed catalogue lists everything from books and traps to knives and lures. The Meek's pack-baskets are made locally. Elmer knows what most customers want because he has trapped all of his active life. He was born in Cornwall Township and spent his youth in the vicinity of the Post Road. The supply business had its beginning seven years ago.

Mr. Meek concocts some of the animal lures according to recipes he purchased from an U.S. supplier.

A customer wrote enthusiastically about Mr. Meek's lure for Cats, No. 2. A few drops are used to scent the trap. "It made a better Christmas," wrote the customer. Lynx pelts are worth about \$300 each and this year, an exceptional pelt sold at \$700. One pelt would buy a lot of turkey with all the trimmings.

Beaver Castor is used by perfumers and also by trappers because it makes anything smell stronger and last longer.

"Imitation Tonquin musk is better than the real stuff," claims Mr. Meek and "perhaps that's a good thing because natural musk comes from the deer in Asia and it's unobtainable."

Perfumes and odorous substances are of great interest to Mr. Meek. He recalls reading a book which stated the Queen of Sheba used Asafetida to make herself attractive to Solomon. Mr. Meek opened a jar and I took a sniff. It was haunting and mysterious. Trappers use it in wolf lures.

Muskat gland lure, available at the Meek's store, is mixed with vodka. "If you don't like the smell, you can always drink the vodka," said Mr. Meek with a straight face. I liked the smell.

Some of the most popular lure ingredients are preserved in alcohol and are labelled according to flavour—apple, walnut, cherry, anise seed and imitation catnip. Mrs. Meek, who helps out in the shop and also does the cooking, never gets her flavors mixed.

Gosh! Forgot to ask Daisy Meek if she ever uses Asafetida.

Published March 1978



Paul Millette

1928-2011

A Hearst Man With Many
Trapping Names

Submitted by his daughter Julie Rancourt
April 2019

- Born in Opasatika and lived all his life in Hearst.
- Paul started trapping at the age of 8 and continued until January 2011, at the age of 82.
- Paul made his last run on the trapline. He passed away on Token Lake. His final wish was granted, he left the way he wanted to go and where he loved to be.



- In 1962 , Paul bought Fred Parent's trapline. In a good year, he would get 175 beavers.
- In the early 1970s, Paul and his son Gerry got 1013 beavers that season.



He is referred to by those who knew him as: "The first star of the game", "A real Rocket Richard of trapping". "The Gretzky of trappers", "The Beaver Man", "The Flying Trapper".

- Paul served on the OTA board of Directors for many terms throughout the 70's and 80's.
- Paul also served as Assistant Director on the OFMF board of directors.
- In the 80's Paul Millette, Jules Proulx, Denis Levesques, Michel Gosselin and others started the Hearst Trappers Council.
- He was also involved in the otter study program with Fur Institute of Canada, a project that was very dear to his heart.



- Paul was also an instructor and gave numerous seminars, demonstrations and shared his experiences, his wisdom and tips.
- He influenced generations of trappers. You can still hear his name mentioned at conventions.
- Following his footsteps are his 2 grandsons Paul and Alex and son-in-law Claude.



PAUL MILLETTE



PAUL MILLETTE: Northern pilot on his trapline near Hearst with beaver pelts.

Flying Trapper

Paul Millette was 8 years old when he trapped his first mink. He got \$45 for it and that triggered a career that occasions some of his contemporaries to say Millette is the best trapper in the world. Paul allows he can skin a big beaver in six minutes.

At 18, he got into trapping seriously and would be gone from his home in Kapuskasing for a month or so, a packsack, tent, sleeping bag and light stove on his back, snowshoeing his line. That first winter he got 72 beaver, some fisher, otter and mink.

About 1962, he moved west to Hearst and got licensed for a much bigger trapline. Alone, he got more than 1,000 beaver that season. The carcasses were stacked for bait for carnivorous animals.

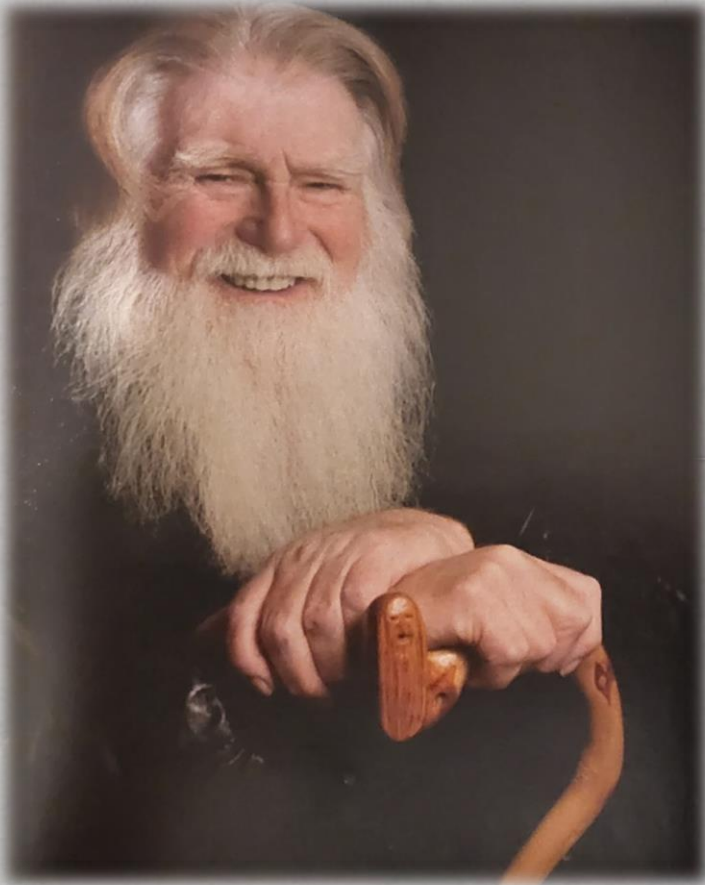
But there's always a better way, and Millette found it in 1968 when he took flying lessons, passed his exams and bought a Piper aircraft. He could zip in and out of the bush faster, but he pranged that plane in 1972 when the carburetor froze up. So he got another Piper, and he's still going strong.

Now he has a fulltime job as a manager for Domtar in Hearst, and he confines his trapping to weekends and holidays. It makes for a lot of work, but Millette likes that. Between managing and trapping, he will clear \$50,000 this year.

He defends trapping: "If we don't harvest the animals, they die from starvation because there isn't enough food for all." And he uses instant-kill traps rather than the tormenting leg traps of old.

He will trap "as long as I can walk." Since he's 51, he's got a lot of walking in him yet.

CONTINUED



Murray Monk

1946 – 2023

OFMF Founding President

A long time friend to all trappers

- Lived & trapped in Red Rock/Nipigon area
- A founding member of OFMF and was President for several terms
- Represented Ontario trappers
- A passionate trapper who used his voice to negotiate for trappers with government officials





Price Morris

1941 - & still kicking
Frankford Fella

- Grew up on family farm, the youngest of 5 children
- Always loved to hunt, trap and spent years in the woods
- Attended a one room school (SS#10 Meadowdale) located on the farm
- Attended Quinte Secondary School (Belleville) where he competed in weightlifting competitions around the world representing Canada in 1967 Pan Am games and Olympic games in Munich, West Germany in 1972.
- Met wife Louise in Winnipeg while competing, got married and had 2 children



- Purchased a farm and worked the land
- Later sold part of the farm and kept the Old House where they continue to live today
- Contracted with City of Quinte West as the animal control officer and does all the trapping for the city
- Continues to hunt, trap and enjoy the outdoors every chance he gets
- Passes on his passion to 6 grandchildren



Gerald Nadeau

1934 – 2019

A Chalk River

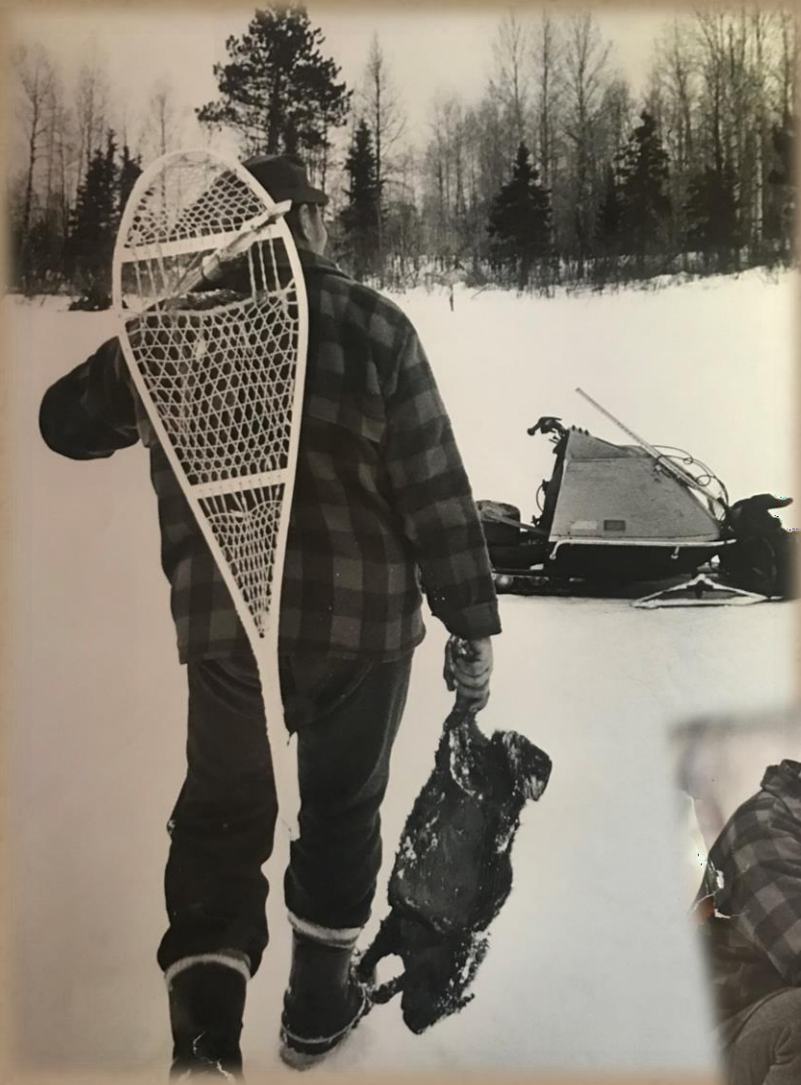
Man of Many Talents



A humble man

- A fabulous storyteller and historian
- Lived all his life in Chalk River
- Was humble and liked most things around him to be simple and as practical as could be.
- He was a self-employed, successful owner of a logging business, farmer, maple syrup producer, beekeeper, a local history expert for archiving researchers, birch bark canoe builder, sawmill builder, and in general loved to invent/reproduce various contraptions.
- Surrounded by a loving family, Gerald was a husband, stepfather, grandfather, great-grandfather who was cherished.





- Gerald started trapping in a Registered Zone in the early 1960's and was a lifelong member of the Renfrew County Registered Trappers Association since its inception. Trapping was one of his greatest passions.



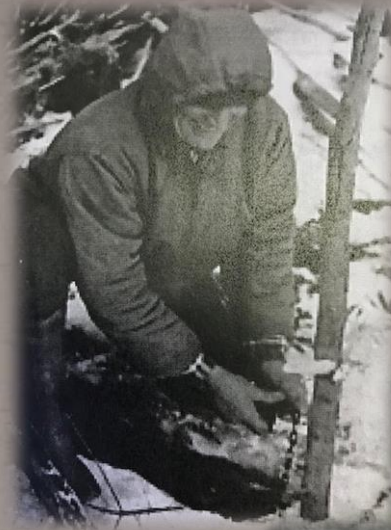
William O'Brien

1921 & Still Kicking
Bancroft Area Man

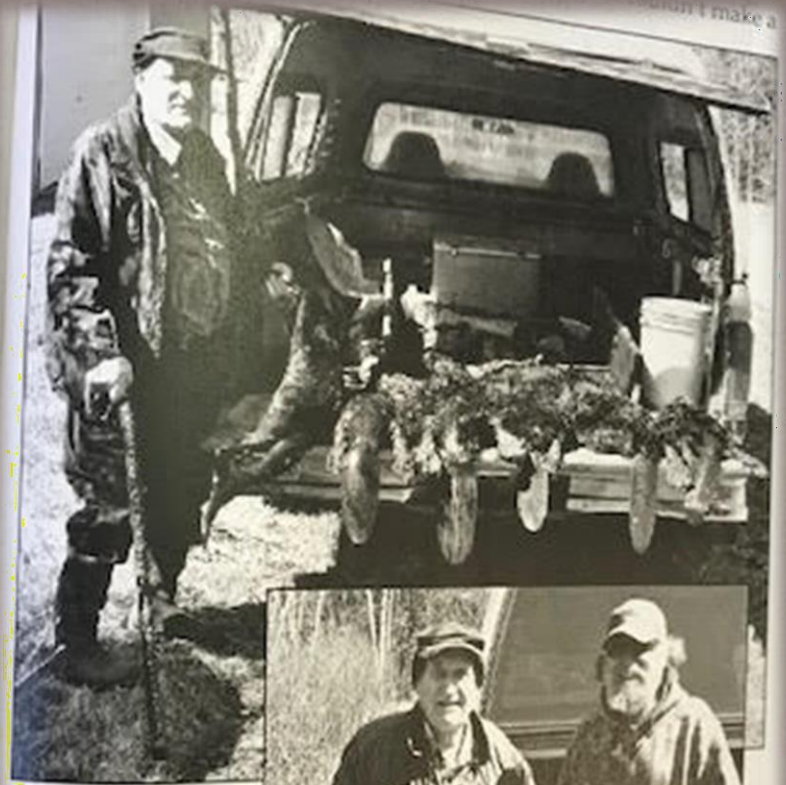


PROVIDED: March 2019 – by daughter Jackalin O'Brien

- Trapped all his life
- He grew up on O'Briens Road. He was born there, built his home there in 1945 beside the property he was born on, and resides there to this day.
- He currently spends part time in Bancroft at the Riverside retirement home. (likes having someone cook for him) but he still drives and is back and forth to the farm.
- Started trapping at age 7 with weasel traps – worth \$1 or 2
- Trapped lots of beavers



- He married Ruth Rebecca Ramage and they had four children. Ruth passed away in 1994 and he remarried in 2005, but his 2nd wife is also deceased.
- William did various things : farmed, logged, bought and sold real estate, was the Reeve for Wollaston Township for a few years & he drove school bus for about 20 years and of course trapped!
- His daughter Jackalyn asked him for a funny story and this is what he told her...On the first beaver pond on the farm.. Dad went through the ice, but it was shallow there so got out easily and when he looked back the ice had crystallized and he could not see the hole where he went through. So had it been really deep he would have gone down and never been found! On the same pond he caught a big beaver... it weighed 68 lbs.
- Another time he was in on Deer River a couple of miles in on his snow machine and he went through the ice. He made it out but was a walking icicle when he got home. He lost his axe there but went back the next day and got it. So he had a couple of close calls.
- The most beavers he ever caught on a private trapline in one year was 119.
- Also, one year he caught 553 muskrats (when they were a good price) averaging \$8 per rat.



With some of my pelts.



2016: Me and Chris Edwards trapping spring beaver.

- His story from a book published on trapping and the area

I was probably 17 or 18 when I caught my first beaver. There was no season—it was totally illegal. I sold it to a buyer who bought it—illegally, of course—for \$18. Today, that would still be worth \$18 or less.

There are a lot of beaver around here now, and they can cause problems for the township: beavers love culverts—they have less work to do.

You need a regular trapping license, but the quota the ministry gives you is not hard and dry. If there are more beaver than you expect you can get it raised.

There are two types of beaver houses—one that is above the water—and they go underneath into it—and one which we call a bank house—which they burrow into, which you can't see just walking by.

They like culverts, not to build a house in, but to store water. Beavers do not like the sound of running water. So they will use wood and sticks to block the culvert and have a place to hold the water. This causes problem for the township because water can't flow and can lead to flooding.

They don't hibernate in the winter but in the fall when it starts to get cold they cut wood and they drag it into the pond and store it so they have something to eat. We call it a feed bed. They will have a space maybe 10 feet by 10 feet and as deep as the pond. And they love poplar—more than anything else.

In the winter, you can trap them under the ice too. If the ice is clear enough you can see them swimming underneath—you can see the bubbles where they have been. They come out of the house half-a-dozen times a day probably and you can set a trap in the channel where they swim. You put down a poplar stick through the ice and they go for that. They like the fresh wood because later in the winter the wood they've taken in goes sour and they like the fresh wood.

Back in the day, I used to take the beaver pelts up to North Bay for the auction; sometimes I've taken a truck load of mine and pelts for about 30 other trappers. It used to be run by the Ontario Trappers Association, now it's called the Fur Harvesters—and they send a truck around. I don't go up there any more.

I used to be able to make some good money trapping: one year I made over \$10,000. Muskrats were selling well that year. They were averaging \$8 to \$10 a pelt—the choice pelts were running \$13 to \$14



Les Owen

“Superman”

Provided by friend: Greg Campbell – March 2019

White River Man

- He owned the White River Freezer Service and Trading Post catering to hunters and fisherman
- Les always had a love of the outdoors especially fishing
- This love of the outdoors led him to trapping which he has been doing for over half a century and is not planning on stopping anytime soon.
- Actively trapping into his 90's (still cuts all his own firewood to heat his home)





- Les is a true outdoorsman, father and friend who always takes the time to pass on all his knowledge and experience
- "Always positive. I looked forward to trapping with Les for many more years"
(Greg Campbell)



Joseph (Jos) Payeur

1931 – 2022
A Hearst Trapper



Mon oncle Jos

- He started his career as a lumberjack but gave it up due to bad back and started trapping in his 40's
- Learned trapping from Paul Millette
- In 1978, built a log cabin and he, along with his wife Therese, lived in it over the winter to trap
- At 58, he got macular degeneration but with help of family & friends, continued trapping
- He loved talking to people about trapping and the outdoors
- Known by everyone as “Mon oncle Jos”

Charlemagne (Charles) Poirier

A family man from Iroquois Falls
1910 -



Trapping: A family Affair

- Charles had a trap line in the Iroquois Falls area in early 1930's
- He married Edna Purdy in 1932 who assisted him throughout her life with the trapping
- His children accompanied them and learned the trade at very young age
- In 1970, Charles became too ill to trap but Edna continued with her daughter Rachel and her husband Ian for 5 more years.
- Edna was an excellent skinner and stretcher of fur.
-

- Rachel and Ian took over the trap line and along with their daughter Brenda and husband Oscar
- Once again, Brenda & Oscar's family accompanied their parents while on the trap line.
- This is a family affair as Rachel and Ian continue to trap alongside their son's Richard, James, wife Cathy and grandchild Tyler James
- The legacy continues



Back Row, left to right:
Oscar Morel, Brenda Morel, Katharine Morel, Ricky Beaton, Cathy Beaton,
Jim Beaton.

Front Row, left to right:
Denis Malherbe, Vanessa Malherbe, Evan Malherbe, Rachel Beaton, Tyler
James Beaton (T.J.), and Ian Beaton.

Rachel Beaton – 1935-2019
Ian Beaton – 1931-2017

Benjamin (Jim) Sawyer

1873 – 1960
Maple Lake



- Also known as “Long Ben”
- Could not read or write
- An active member of his community
- Reeve of Stanhope Township from 1911-1930, 1939-1938 & 1948-1950
- He spent three terms as county warden
- Brought telephone to Haliburton County
- Very generous man
- Ben was a Master of the Orange Lodge (#1406) along with Charles Taylor, N. Linton, H. Taylor and E. Sawyer between the years of 1907 and 1926.



Jim Sawyer (standing) with cousin

- A real rebel
- Followed family tradition of trapping in Algonquin Park
- Was arrested by Park Rangers for trapping & hunting violations
- Raised family in small community of Maple Lake (now gone)
- He built & operated Maple Lake Lodge during the Great Depression; a lake in the southern portion of Haliburton County, Ontario



Ode to Long Ben

The beaver ponds will know him no more.
The lakes are hushed and still.
Only the wind for a requiem
Echoes down the hill.
His guns and traps are gathering rust,
Time, his paddle mars,
For Long Ben has crossed the last portage
Where his deeds are writ in the stars.

A tribute written by Nila Reynolds.

*Long Ben married Florence
Powell and together they
raised 11 children.
A lasting legacy!*



James Sawyer

1838 -1930

Powassan

A Minden fella

- Spent 30 years as a ranger at Algonquin Park
- Lake named after him in the Park
- Was famous for his trapping and keen knowledge as a woodman
- Covered many rivers and lakes in the Park
- Father to Benjamin (Jim) Sawyer – another avid trapper in this collection





Donald Suffron

A Montague Man
1929 – 2021

PROVIDED: March 2019 – by friend Terry Bingley

Secret to long life:

"Good, hard, clean living"

- Born in Montague township over 90 years ago (Feb 5/1929).
- In 2018, he and his wife, Jean, travelled to Newfoundland to celebrated 60 years of marriage and Don took his third Newfoundland moose, all with just one shot from his 30-06.
- His trapping career started at age 10 when he began trapping skunks (mainly because no one else wanted to trap them) and squirrels, spreading out to include beaver, otter, muskrat, red fox, coon and fisher.
- Don was meticulous at handling his furs and his life as well, whether it was his maple syrup operation, wood operation or in building his own home (complete with two stone fireplaces which Don crafted by himself after studying up on a book from the library at the Burritts Rapid Correctional and Treatment Center where he worked for 31.5 years) for Jean, their three girls and one boy.
- With the deterioration of his vision and Jean's stroke over the past winter, they have conceded that it was time to sell their home and move into easier living, close to one of their girls in Perth, Ontario. This will finally break the chain of living in Montague township for over 90 years .

Joseph Veilleux

A quiet, gifted man
1927-



An artist & trapper

- Joseph Veilleux (Joe) was a shy and quiet trapper who lives in Hearst
- He has been trapping since childhood until last year (2022), at the age of 95, still living, trapped with his son Adrien.
- Between trapping seasons, Joe takes care of the trapline and the equipment is well-kept in good shape.
- He has been an active trapper even before he got his trapping license.
- Joe keeps busy in the off-season by carving and doing woodworking
- This handmade trap is functional except for the spring action. He has not mentioned how many hours he has spent working on both of these projects.





George F. Ward

1925 – still kicking

A real family man!

- Born on June 9th, 1925
- Celebrated his 94th birthday in 2019
- An avid outdoorsman
- He loves fishing - particularly for speckled trout on the brushiest, most bug - filled, flooded, slippery, rocky little streams imaginable - but trapping is his absolute favourite activity.
- If he can't trap, and he hasn't for several years, he seeks the company of trappers to swap stories.
- John from Jellicoe is perhaps the chum he enjoys most.
- He sailed the North Atlantic on the Corvette HMCS Rosthern in the WW2, survived cancer many years later, was instrumental, way back when, in the formation of a Trappers Council and an education outreach program in Geraldton, Ontario
- Perhaps his greatest accomplishment is being the best husband (married 73 years and counting, yes to the same woman!) father and grandfather a family could ask for.
-

Sources of information

- Paul Arkwright
 - Provided by Paul himself
- Bob Beck
 - Provided in story by Ralph Bice & website records
- Ralph Bice
 - Provided from family & from Algonquin Park history
- Gary Willem Bron
 - Story provided from Fur Harvester issue 24 & family
- Stanley Brooks
 - Story provided from Fur Harvester issue 25
- John Burnham
- Frank Conibear
 - Story provided from newspaper article
 - Websites (museum, book lists)
- Raoul Denonville
 - Provided from newspaper story Nugget Sturgeon
- Patrick Dillon
 - Provided by himself and trapping club
- Arthur Dussault
 - By himself & family
- Hubert Froats
 - Provided by Jordan Brunet & family
- Alcide & Maurice Giroux
 - Provided from family & book
- Leo Kenopic
 - Provided by Willis Deline
- Yvon Leblanc
 - Provided by himself
- Albert Lefebvre
 - Provided by himself
- Angus MacRae
 - Taken from Dunvegan Museum records
- Elmer Meek
 - Provided by Albert Lefebvre
- Paul Millette
 - Provided by daughter Julie Rancourt
- Price Morris
 - Provided by himself & friends
- William O'Brien
 - Provided by daughter Jackalin O'Brien
- Benjamin (Jim) Sawyer
 - Taken from Paul Arkwright and newspaper clippings
- James Sawyer –
 - Taken from newspaper clippings provided and Ancestry.ca
- Donald Suffron
 - Terry Bingley
- George Ward


Trapping Poems & Stories



A Trapper's Story

By: Art MacPherson




A decorative graphic on the left side of the page, featuring a series of orange and white swirls, loops, and small circles, resembling a stylized vine or a series of bubbles.

It's a lonely life up here in the north
Where the wolves and grizzlies roam
Where the nights are black as charcoal
And a small log cabin's my home.

But I love this way of living
It's the only life that I know
Me and the lynx and the arctic fox
Competing for life on the snow.


One is the prey, I think that's them
And the hunt, is my only thirst
I'll hand their pelts on a stretcher soon
But I'll have to catch them first.

A decorative graphic on the left side of the page, featuring a series of orange and white swirls and circles of varying sizes, some with dots, arranged in a vertical, flowing pattern.

I've come to know their habits
And most of the time win the game
But they've learned my tricks a bit also
And they even know my name.

Some call me another mad trapper
But that doesn't freak me out
This way of life I have chosen
Is the best one, beyond a doubt.


The frost at night surrounds my cabin
'til the door it freezes shut
Inside we're as cozy as bugs in a rug
Me and my long-haired mutt.

A decorative graphic on the left side of the page, featuring a series of orange and white swirls and circles of varying sizes, some with dots, arranged in a vertical, flowing pattern.

The bustling world that lives out there
A thousand miles away
Can have that life they think so fair
In their misery and dismay.

I sometimes ask who's the trapped
The fur-bearing beasts or me
'cause I just can't leave this home in the wild
A slave to it I must be.


For I cherish that cold in my nostrils
And sounds that no human has made
The howls and growls of predators
Echoing through mountain glade.

The decorative element on the left consists of several orange and white swirls and circles of varying sizes, some with dots, arranged vertically.

The storms and shows of nature
Aurora and lightning displays
Icicles dripping and northern ice ripping
Down rivers, in awesome arrays.

Then that quiet that cannot be measured
By even the best human ear
A leaf hits the ground and its own little sound
Is registered so loud and clear.

What makes me stay here, a hermit of sorts
In a world unlike any other?
No kin or friends to converse with
Parents nor sister or brother



A secret I'll spill, please do guard it
And never to others impart
Up here I must pine, as I check my trap line
A man with a sad, broken heart.

The love of my life, my young darling wife
Was taken from me in her prime
Her death sentences me to this lifestyle you see
With no further regard for time.

No other will ever that feeling replace,
Or her beauty outdo in my eyes
So I'll check one more trap, and snowshoe
some more
'Neath the star-speckled northern skies. ❖

Story taken from the Soo Newspaper

- Saturday, May 19, 1888 - Page 5
- Last fall two local trappers, McMillan and Golden, left Edmonton, N.W.T. for the Athabasca and Pembina Rivers. They lost their provisions, severe weather made hunting impossible. They boiled their furs and ate them and waited for death. Golden died April 20. Ice soon began to move and McMillan drifted down in his canoe, reaching Athabasca Landing in a most pitiable condition. ❖



Muskrat Trapping

Poem by Raymond Farrell



Widower, Father of 2, Grandfather of 3, Doctor
Perth, Ontario
Written in 2015

SOURCE: <https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/muskrat-trapping/>



I remember hearing
How my grandfather
Would take to trapping muskrats
Something to do in the winter

He'd earn a few dollars
But the hides
Weren't worth much
For all the skinning
And preparation required

But to top it all off
He usually came down with pneumonia
Spending more on medication and doctor bills
Than he made on the muskrats



Finally, my grandmother
Put her foot down
Come one winter
When he went to look for his traps

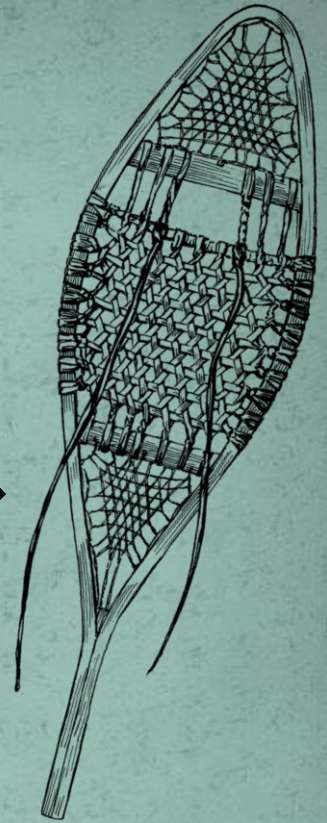
They were long gone
Because she'd sold them
And that was the end
Of the muskrat trapping. ❖



Limericks

Always good for a laugh!

There once was a man named *P'ti Loup*
Who set traps up on Manitou
Said he with a grin
While swallowing a gin
Caught the beaver who ate my snowshoe! ❖



There lived a trapper named Chester
Whose bad reputation in Dorchester
Was due to this fact:
The muskrats that he trapped
Outsmarted their brainless molester! ❖

A big beaver built a large dam
In a pond where he ate and he swam
He got caught in a trap
With a big sounding snap
That's the end of that pond's logjam. ❖



Glengarry's Elmer Meek made trap lures
That smelled worse than any pig manures
When he shipped it all out
The post mistress would shout
"That stuff ain't no appetizing epicures." ❖

A big burly trapper named Monk
Lived his life in a one room bunk
With hair & beard flapping
You could hear him snapping
“Who let in that gosh-dang skunk!” ❖



The life of a trapper is hard
Just look at their hands; all scarred
In the cold, sleet and rain
Setting traps for little gain
Is what makes them truly diehard. ❖



Created by

Carmen Cotnoir & Sue DeRochie

with input from the OFMF Heritage Committee & members at large.