



Basic Black by Arthur Black

CROSS-COUNTRY HIKING: THE NAKED TRUTH

Well, the summer of '03 is history and so are the adventures we all had during it.

So how did you spend your summer vacation? At the beach? In the hammock? Touring cathedrals? Fighting forest fires? It's always handy to have a nifty comeback to the what-did-you-do-on-your-holidays query and I reckon Steve Gough has one of the niftiest comebacks of all.

Steve can tell his pals around the water cooler that he spent his entire summer hiking.

From Land's End in the south of England all the way to John O'Groats, high on the flinty forehead of Scotland.

Impressive enough, as odysseys go - we're talking nearly 1500 kilometres of hills and dales, not to mention lorry exhaust and ankle-biting canines - but Steve gave himself one extra handicap. He made the trek au naturel.

Many Britons out for a drive were undoubtedly nonplussed to see a figure doggedly trudging along the English wayside toting a heavy backpack and dressed in a floppy army fatigue hat, good heavy work socks, sensible hiking boots and nothing else.

But being British, they mostly averted their eyes, stiffened their upper lips and drove on by.

Not that Steve was always naked during his trek. He did don a pair of shorts when it came time to knock on doors and ask for permission to recharge his cell phone.

Ah, it's a splendid saga and I'm pleased to report that there's even a Canadian connection. Although born in Britain, Steve did his basic training in Vancouver. A trip to that city's famous Clothing-Not-An-Option Wreck Beach got him interested in nudity as a lifestyle.

Pretty soon he was lounging starkers around the house with his girlfriend and their two children. Then he got up the nerve to hang around in the backyard nude.

And finally, his big breakthrough: "I went to Blockbuster to return a video" he recalls with a grin.

It was only a matter of time before Steve Gough, Occasional Nudist became Steve Gough, Bareass with a Mission.

"I wanted to raise awareness about the paranoia we have about our bodies" he told a reporter. "Man plus naked equals pedophile or pervert or both. I hoped I might widen those conclusions. I wanted people to become conscious that we are ashamed of our bodies."

So, naturally, he decided to stroll the length of Great Britain naturally. Not that it's been a total walk in the park. Ten times over the summer the coppers threw Steve in the back of a cruiser and toted him off to jail. And two blokes in Lancashire took violent exception to Steve's skinny safari and put the boots to him. "You

can't do that" one of them growled, "In front of kids no less."

"They pushed me down and kicked me in the face" Steve recalls. "There was blood everywhere." But Steve's a stubborn guy, as nudists go. He just picked himself up, dusted himself off and kept walking due north.

Call me perverse, but I find it kind of inspiring that a body could walk from one end of a country to the other without a stitch of clothes on. Not that he'd never try it in Canada. It's a lot farther from one end of the country to the other, for one thing. I suspect our Mounties would be a little less forgiving and then there's the wildlife.

Can you imagine walking east to west through Canada in early summer? Whatever the Northwestern Ontario blackflies left would be carried off by the mosquitoes of Winnipeg.

Not that I want to discourage Steve Gough. Far from it. I like to think that Steve could expand his nudist horizons from naked trekking to... I don't know. Nude golfing perhaps? Nude curling? How about nude music?

Sure! That's the ticket! Steve Gough should take up a musical instrument!

Although I'm betting it won't be the accordion.

Community Care News

by Isabelle Challice

The first fall meeting of Community Care was held on Sept. 24, in Orono United Church.

President Dini Schoenmaker called the meeting to order and opened in prayer.

The lovely fresh flowers on the table were donated by members and the meal was catered by members of Kirby United Church.

Diner consisted of potatoes, carrots, cabbage, salads, tomatoes, ham and cheese, fresh tea biscuits, coffee, tea, apple crisp, and pudding topped with whipped cream for dessert..

Guest speaker for

the event was Samantha Peerse, a very interesting young lady described for those present her great display of teddy bears.

Our guest was thanked as were all the busy folks from Kirby for the lovely luncheon.

Next meeting is on Oct. 29th.

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ORONO COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUP

Clarington Council has initiated a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) for the Orono area. The main purpose of such a plan is to articulate a vision for continued prosperity of Orono, based on an assessment of past experience and future prospects along with realistic implementation policies, programmes and steps. To guide the development of the CIP a community focus group will be appointed. To ensure we have a cross-section of representation from the community, we are looking for volunteers from Orono stakeholder groups, property and business owners, residents and including those that live outside the core urban area of Orono.

The Committee will provide advice to Clarington Council, from a community perspective, regarding the draft Community Improvement Plan Work Program and bring to the table their unique interest and perspective for incorporation into the CIP. We are seeking representatives with knowledge of environmental, social/historic, cultural/recreational and economic issues associated with Orono.

Application forms are available at the Municipal Administrative Centre, Orono Lumber Yard, Clarington Board of Trade or call Faye Langmaid at 905-623-3379 x216.

If you are a resident of Clarington and are interested in an appointment to this Committee, please submit your application to the Planning Services Department Municipality of Clarington 40 Temperance Street Bowmanville, Ontario L1C 3A6 by 5:00 p.m., Monday, October 6th, 2003.

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