

# Summer Reruns Let The Children Laugh 1980

by Mary Hubelit

Did I ever tell you about the time we pulled in, steaming, to a privately-owned campground on a hot, sticky day? It was not

where we had intended to camp, but we were just too uncomfortable to go any further.

Well, we checked in, found our lot, started to

freshen up, when the back of my neck started to prickle - the heat, I thought, and washed it again in the delightfully cool water. The feeling

seemed to go away, so after we had washed we sat down with a nice cool lemonade - the good kind, you know - and again I felt uneasy. Then N. started to

list all the factors that he thought wrong with the place: the gravel was too soft, that tree was too low, the picnic table couldn't be levelled, and the john was

full of spiders.

We took another sip of our lemonade thinking the situation might look better. We looked at each other across the table. I said "I can't stay here." He said "You close up - I'll go tell them we're leaving - I don't even care if they give me back my \$5.50."

Ten minutes later as we eased out onto the highway again we both sighed with relief. "What was wrong back there?" he asked. Inviting him to laugh if he wished, I replied simply, "Bad vibes."

Later that evening in a campsite that felt good, he asked if I was feeling better. "The heat kinda got to you today?" So I had no choice. I asked him to recall a few other campsites, in the bush, in a gravel pit, beside a lake, privately-owned or government installation, where he had seemed uncomfortable with no physical reason for it. I hadn't spoken of it before because more evidence was needed, and besides, I had wanted to observe this pragmatic individual in the 'unfriendly' areas to determine if his activities went well or if things went wrong for him.

We sat long after dark comparing, and found that while our analyses were different, we could easily identify the sites where we had been a little unhappy. While we have camped coast-to-coast in Canada, naturally our greatest volume of experiences has been in this area of north-western Ontario.

D'you know what I think? I think there is still an active aura in many areas emanating from the people who lived there hundreds of years ago. Beside the shores of many lakes there must have been settlements which existed for many generations - cer-

tainly long enough for people to leave their personalities and problems and philosophies permeating the very atmosphere of the place.

There is a provincial park east of here where one can feel presences indicating that a wayfarer may stop, but not for too long. Outsiders are unwelcome - there is not a feeling of belligerence - rather one is advised to avoid a tragic environment.

There is a rock overhang on the edge of a clearing off a bush road. If one walks along the base of it in the quiet of evening, there is a faint scent of wood smoke, and something else. Could there have been an appeasement altar in one of the shallow cave-like formations of the overhang? Or is it just the residue of heat from the sun-warmed rocks and lichens still radiating in the calm evening?

And how about that little stream up north, just where it empties into the rock-rimmed lake? An occasional faint wave of children's laughter comes on the breeze. Or is it just the water hurrying over the gravel at the mouth of the little river? One feels a lovely peace in that place.

We camp, literally where 'the spirit moves us' when we are out on a weekend. Perhaps our love for the bush and our respect for its harsh laws makes us more receptive to the essence of whatever kind of living was followed long ago by the people whose wisdom and tolerance were as great as the land itself.

All I am sure of is that after camping in a spot where the vibrations are good, we come home refreshed and strengthened and humbly grateful.

## Getting back to nature (the 17th century way)

Woodsmoke, birdsong and a few sore muscles - they are all part of the new Wilderness Lifestyle Program sponsored this summer by the Friends of Sainte-Marie volunteer organization and Leitz Canada in Midland, Ontario.

Participants travel by canoe to a special wilderness encampment near Sainte-Marie among the Hurons. An authentic reconstruction of Ontario's first European community dating back to 1639. With the assistance of fully trained interpreters, experience peaceful co-existence with the wilderness in 17th century style, without styrofoam or electricity.

Like our forefathers, Wilderness Lifestyle participants learn to paddle the river and nearby marsh watching closely for wildlife, and gathering edible plants. They learn the basics of paddle and canoe maintenance. They achieve the satisfaction of completing a mini-canoe trip in safe, protected waters.

There is also time to explore the woodlands on foot, and to search for the hidden sweetness of wild fruits and berries.

Back at the campsite, Wilderness Lifestyle leaders show participants how to make emergency shelters from cedar boughs or deadfalls, how to make a campfire without matches, and how to use that fire most efficiently for outdoor cooking.

Appetites sharpened by exercise and fresh air welcome traditional food cooked in the 17th century way. A recent Wilderness Lifestyle feast included crisp bannock baked on a heated rock, fish infused with smoky flavour and cedar and lemon-balm tea. These back-to-basic foods are eaten with wooden or pewter utensils while the participants sit on deerskin hides around the dying fire.

Later, those who opt for the two-day, overnight, Wilderness Lifestyle program retire to their cedar bough shelters to dream of distant centuries while stars slide by overhead. Before

they retire, legends are told in the firelight, and adventures in craftwork in birch bark or leather are undertaken.

The program leaders Dennis Cutajar, Pierre Lefave, and Joseph Commodari are excited about the Wilderness Lifestyle program which is in its first year. "It puts people in touch with their environment," says Commodari. "A lot of people have forgotten how it feels to be self-sufficient, to live in tune with the natural world."

Dennis Cutajar agrees. "The sharing aspect is important too," he says. "We now realize that European newcomers to Canada would never have survived without the skills they learned from the Native people. I like to think that our 17th century ancestors may have learned them in the same way, beside a campfire."

Pierre Lefave finds that most people are really anxious to learn how things were done before 20th century technology made everything easy. "We show people how to smoke and tan hides, how to make beef jerky. For many of them, these are fascinating revelations."

Wilderness Lifestyle is available in one or two-day programs between July 2 and September 2. In order to keep the adventure on a personal basis, registration is limited to 16 persons per program.

Adults pay \$25 for a one-day program and \$40 for the overnight adventure. All supplies and food are included.

Already, many have registered for this unique and exciting Wilderness Lifestyle program. Those who have experienced it have learned a good deal about their environment.

There are still some openings in the Wilderness Lifestyle Program. For information or reservations, call (705) 526-7838, or write Wilderness Lifestyle Program, Friends of Sainte-Marie P.O. Box 160, Midland, Ontario, L4R 4K8.



Jackfish Reunion.

## Highlights From The Reunion

I know that there are a lot of people raised as I was on stories of Jackfish and the people who lived there. Those of us who had never actually lived in Jackfish were recently given the opportunity to meet a lot of people who had. On Saturday and Sunday, July 13 and 14 about 150 former Jackfish residents and their families assembled for the Jackfish reunion. People had come from as far away as Boston, British Columbia and several points in between.

What a wonderful weekend. Even the rainy weather couldn't dampen the spirits of those involved. The events on Saturday began at 4:00 p.m. with Registration and Wine and Cheese. A social followed in the evening.

In several cases friends had not seen each other for up to 40 years. There was a lot of shrieking, hugging and laughing going on. Everyone talked non stop, all at once, trying to get caught up on all the time that had passed.

There was a large display set up of old snapshots of Jackfish and several of its residents. Lots of laughter came from that corner of the hall as people found themselves and friends in the pictures.

Mrs. Anne Todesco of Rossport, Mr. Jim Clatworthy of Toronto, Mrs. Evelyn Falzetta of Terrace Bay, and Mr. Max Shapiro of Thunder Bay, had all taught at the Jackfish School and spent time Saturday evening greeting their former students.

On Sunday, beginning at 1:00 p.m. everyone gathered at Pebble Beach, just east of the old Jackfish town site, for a picnic. The afternoon was spent visiting, picture taking and walking back into Jackfish to visit what is left of a wonderful place to have lived in and known. Several people were able to find assorted mementos to take home as reminders of Jackfish. It is clear from the warm, loving way that old friends greeted each other, that Jackfish was a very special and unique community to have lived in. It was small in size and had none of our modern conveniences but it was rich in spirit, caring, giving and good times. All the things that fond memories are made of.

Jackfish people are linked by a special bond that survives time and distance. It is wonderful that they were able to get together once again to talk about old and new times.

Congratulations go to the organization committee of Freda Boucher, Rollie Sinotte, Val O'Keefe, Arnold Stortini and Evelyn Falzetta for their work in making this long overdue event a reality.

As several people remarked over the course of the weekend, "Good friends shouldn't wait so long to get together."

## Terrace Bay Public Library

A creed for the Third Millennium. Colleen McCullough.

Family Album. Danielle Steel. Hold the Dream. Barbara Taylor Bradford. Jubal Sackett. Louis L'Amour. The Lilacs are Blooming in Warsaw. Alice Parizeau. Lonesome Dove. Larry McMurtry. Warrick. Marilyn Harris. Inside, Outside. Herman Wouk. Our Lady of the Snows. Morley Callaghan. Heritage Lost: The Crisis in Canada's Forests. Donald MacKay.

The library has purchased a new 16mm projector and a microfilm reader with the financial assistance of the Ministry of Citizenship and Culture. This equipment is available for public use.

The summer reading club for children 8 to 13 is now underway with 19 children registered. The children are required to read and report on at least 7 books. The weekly meetings have been well attended. The children enjoy playing games, watching films, working on their reports and choosing books for the following week.

Take time to read, use your library!

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## DEATH

RILEY - Mrs. Ethel M.A. Riley, passed away in Kapuskasing on Friday, June 21, 1985. Ethel Evans, wife of the late George E. Riley, formerly of Mount Forest, in her 90th year. Dear mother of William of Belleville, George of Schreiber, and Betty Darling of Kapuskasing. Survived also by one brother, Percy Evans of Mount Forest; 10 grandchildren, and 11 great grandchildren. Rested at the Hendrick Funeral Home, Mount Forest. Funeral services were held Tuesday, June 25, 1985, at 2 p.m. Interment in Mount Forest Cemetery.



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As from 1st August 1985, flowers will be \$15<sup>00</sup> per 100 \$45<sup>00</sup> for the car top

We appreciated your orders in the past and look forward to serving you in the future, on behalf of the residents.

Joann LeBlanc  
Coordinator of Activities  
Birchwood