

Neys Provincial Park

Park reflects area's history

by Rob Cotton

The News

This weekend's Nostalgia Days celebration at Neys Provincial Park will bring some interesting historical facts to light as well as be fun and entertaining.

A Spirit Campfire, held on Friday night, will be visited by some ghosts of the past.

To reflect the varied history of the area prisoners of war, voyageurs and loggers will gather with campers around the fire to sing songs and tell tall tales.

On Saturday campers and visitors will be able to participate in traditional games such as a bucksaw competition and watermelon seed spitting contest. A voyageur encampment will be set up where people can enjoy some pea soup and bannock after a hard round of play.

There will also be a musket firing demonstration from Fort St. Joseph. On Saturday evening the volunteer dance group, Les Frivolents Du Nord-Ouest from Old Fort William, will sing, dance and give campers the opportunity to learn some traditional dances.

David Verbiwski of the Park's Visitor Services Program, said one of the more interesting aspects of the park's history is the Prisoner of War Camp that was situated where the campgrounds are now.

"Visitors are very interested in this because not many of them realized there were prisoner of war camps here during the Second World War," he

said.

"They really didn't expect German prisoners to be held here and are even surprised to find out that Japanese Canadians were held here."

On Sunday, during the Nostalgia Days weekend, Paul Mengleberg, who was a prisoner of war, will speak about life in the camps.

Members of the Park staff regularly conduct a hike through what is left of the prisoner's camp every Monday night. They wander through what is left of foundations and old cobblestone walkways. The camp was bulldozed under in 1958.

Verbiwski recounted one of many stories about the camp.

Each of the prisoners was given a sugar ration in a small tin at the beginning of the week.

About a month before Christmas the guards noticed that each prisoners ration of sugar was gone by Tuesday or Wednesday. When they inquired, one of the cooks, a prisoner, told them the sugar was being saved for Christmas baking - an explanation that satisfied the guards.

However, about a week later the guards were awoken by loud singing - in German.

Upon investigation they found eight intoxicated Germans. They also found forty gallons of home made whiskey the prisoners had made using the sugar, and enough fruit mash to make another forty gallons of whiskey.



Rosa Brown and David Verbiwski, staff members at Neys Provincial Park, try their hand at using at bucksaw. A bucksaw sawing contest will be one of events at Neys Nostalgia Days this weekend.

While the Prisoner of War Camps may stand out the Park informs visitors of the areas history starting about 4,000 years ago with native history.

Evidence that natives were on the Coldwell Peninsula, where the Park is situated, comes in the form of the Puskawsa Pits.

These huge pits have been dug out of the cobblestone and Verbiwski said no one is really sure what they were used for.

"Some people have a theory that the pits were used by

young men to sit in and meditate during rituals to become a man while others think they were used for storing fish," he said.

Historically, a lot of activity has gone on in the area where the Park is located. It has been assumed that the voyageurs made use of the large beach at the Park as a natural landing site during their travels to Fort William.

Later on, the Pigeon River Lumber Company logged the Little Pic River area, west of

the Park.

"Some of the old rings used to hold the booms until the tugs were ready for them can still be seen," Verbiwski said.

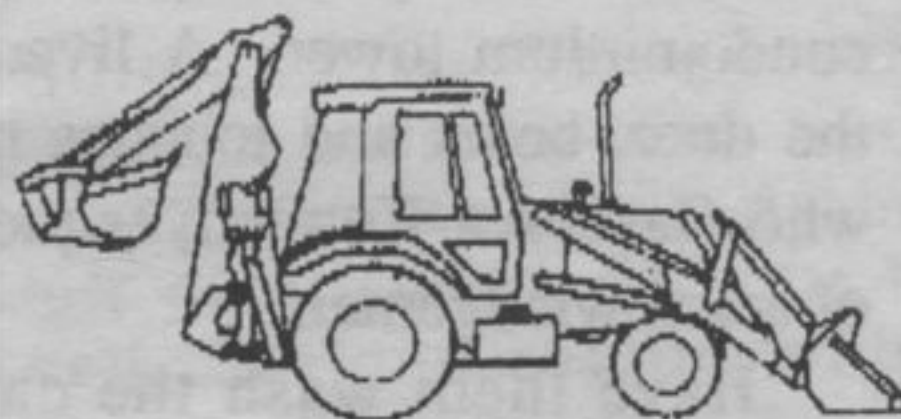
During the fishing boom, from 1905 - 1945, Port Coldwell, on the east side of the peninsula, was one of the largest fishing centres on the North Shore.

All of this and more can be explored at Neys Provincial Park and it will be brought to life during Nostalgia Days, Aug 9 - 11.

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Tenders

Quotations for the supply and installation of the following items; 2 display cases, office cupboards for the Terrace Bay Tourist Information Center. Quotations for the above project will be received by:

Susan Johnson

Township of Terrace Bay

P.O. Box: 1207

POT 2W0

807-825-9721

807-825-9576(Fax)

Up until 5:00 p.m. local time,
Friday, August 16, 1991

Specifications for the above items are available by contacting the Terrace Bay Tourist Centre Office at 807-825-9721

The lowest or any quotation will not necessarily be accepted.

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and Janis Russell of
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TERRACE BAY POLICE SERVICE

POLICE CONSTABLE

Applications for the position of Police Constable will be accepted by the undersigned until
Friday, August 23rd, 1991.

This position is open to male and female candidates who meet the requirements of the Ontario Police Service Act and have completed the Police Constables Training Program at the Ontario Police College, or an equivalent program.

Fluency in French is an Asset.

RESUME REQUIRED

Submit resume to:

Chief L.W. Fenton

Terrace Bay Police Service

P.O. Box 27

Terrace Bay, Ontario

POT 2W0