



# REFLECTIONS



NORTHERN TIER NATIONAL HIGH ADVENTURE

## Thank You Sandy

by Dave Hyink

Scouting is organized under the concept often referred to as the "Key Three." For example, a Council President, a Council Commissioner and the Council Executive. It's a great concept! In engineering, the triangle is fundamental to strength in construction because it is one geometric form that can only be deformed by breaking it. Like the simple three-legged milk stool that becomes steadier and more stable under increased pressure; the Northern Tier Committee, the Sommers Alumni Association, and the BSA professional staff make up a formidable Key Three indeed!

As a Director and current President of the Alumni Association, it is my honor and my pleasure to offer a few remarks about Sandy Bridges on behalf of hundreds of former staff and thousands of past program participants.

I'll do that by using the two of the most important words in the English language ... Thank You!

Thank you for choosing the Boy Scouts of America. Cub Scouts, the Arrow of Light, Boy Scouts, Eagle rank, Order of the Arrow, Vigil Honor member, Council Camp Staff, Region 10 Staff, National Executive. Your citizenship, character, and cheerful service have made — and continue to make — a real difference in the lives of your fellow man.

Thank you for combining your innovation and creativity with your vast on-the-ground experience to continuously produce leading-edge advances in outdoor equipment, trail food, wilderness programs, program delivery and wilderness safety.

Thank you for your faithful and devoted stewardship of the wilderness canoeing program that your predecessors placed in your care in 1970. The many voices that each of us hear when

we sit quietly in the Lodge echo a resounding "Thanks for a job well done."

Thank you for the vision, insight and determination it took to slowly but surely build a solid foundation for future expansion designed to meet the ever-increasing need for a high quality wilderness experience by a rapidly growing BSA membership. Future generations of scouts and scouters will be indebted to you for the creation of the cold weather camping programs and for establishing the satellite bases in Atikokan and Bissett.

Thank you for your wonderful sense of humor. It helped us through many tough situations and provides many wonderful memories for those of us fortunate enough to have spent time with you. Uncle Dan and Aunt Sue, #5, chipmunks, grub hoes, Randy Kits, handcuffs, outboard motors and many other "memory joggers" will ever remind us of your wit and wisdom. And, our lives have been enriched by those events.

Thank you for understanding that in addition to providing high adventure experiences to scouts and scouters; the Canoe Base, Sea Base and Philmont have both the obligation and the ability to deliver one of the best leadership devel-

opment opportunities anywhere for their young adult staff members. Many of us "came of age" under your mentorship by being given challenges that we thought were "beyond our reach" and by taking responsibility "beyond our years."

Thank you for always recognizing that change is inevitable; for accepting it — even embracing it — and responding positively to it. The net effect has always been an improved product, program, procedure or service for high adventure participants and staff. Despite the tremendous and traumatic changes in your own life these past 6 months, your recent monograph entitled *The Outdoor Professional* demon-

strates that your career-long commitment to our shared vision will continue as a Charter Life Member of the Alumni Association.

Thank you — Cherie, Katie, Michael, Sandra, Susana, and Daniela for the many sacrifices that each of you undoubtedly made in sharing so much of Sandy with us. Hundreds of Sommers Alumni feel a part of your family and we are deeply grateful for the role that each of you played in enabling that experience. We will be forever in your debt!

Finally Sandy, Thank You for never losing sight of Charles L. Sommers' singular vision of providing scouts with the opportunity to come to the Canoe Country to take a 10-day wilderness canoe trip. Thanks to your devotion these past 32 years, the opportunity that existed in June of 1923 still exists today as we enter our 74th continuous season of operation. For past, current and future generations of scouts I say "Thanks for a Job Well Done."

*\*Text of the comments by Master of Ceremonies, Dave Hyink, at the Sandy Bridges' Recognition Dinner, June 7, 1997, Duluth Entertainment and Convention Center.*



Cherie and Sandy

## A Note from Cherie Bridges

The Recognition Dinner held for Sandy was a grand tribute to his years of service, and the outpouring of love and support was good medicine as he struggles to regain his health. Our family appreciates the considerable time and effort spent by those who planned the event, and thanks each of you who were able to attend or sent letters for his "memory book." Thanks also to everyone who contributed to his "retirement fund."

He has enjoyed pouring through computer catalogues in trying to choose a new system to support the writing he hopes to do in the years to come.

I believe that the greatest legacy the Canoe Base has given us has been a tremendous extended family which extends all over the world! Many of you hoisted the paddles as we left the Lodge after our wedding 27 years ago. Later, you helped to welcome our chil-

dren as they arrived and have been their aunts and uncles as they have grown up. And, so many of you have been supportive and encouraging over these last few months. We deeply appreciate this.

Our door continues to be open and we look forward to your visits as you are passing through Duluth! We treasure your friendship!

# President's Message

I love canoeing in the north-woods — paddling, portaging, sunny days, starlit nights, catching fish, listening to loons, lying on a warm flat rock watching northern lights, and enjoying the simple serenity that accompanies the silence deep in the Quetico-Superior wilderness. I cherish the memories of the trip I took as a Scout and the many that I later guided as a Region Ten staffer. I've always recognized and appreciated the positive impact that the "Sommers experience" has had on shaping my life and my career. And thus, have been committed to ensuring that the "experience" will always be available to others.

Until recently I would have said that those were the primary factors that motivated my service to the Northern Tier Program through the Alumni Association and the Northern Tier Committee. Today I know better. Yes, they're certainly the "vehicle" that drives me to participate, but the "fuel for the journey" is supplied by the many dedicated people with whom I serve! Let me give some examples.

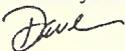
The Recognition Reception and Dinner for Sandy was, bar none, the finest event of its kind that I've ever seen! There is probably no way to fully recognize the efforts of the organizers — **Al Batterman, Butch Diesslin, and Linnea Renner** to make it so. It was tremendous! Among the unsung heroes is Roger's Printing in Ely who donated all of the invitations (some 1,500), reply cards, and program materials.

There were 175 people for dinner. Another 150 for the afternoon reception. Every one of these people cared about the Base and were there to thank Sandy for the excellent job he did for the past 32 years in both maintaining and enhancing the "experience." As I scanned the audience from the podium, I saw at least four Northern Tier Committee Chairmen: **Jack Osborn, Ted Carlsen, Charley Hann, and Steve Fossett**. Thirteen of the fourteen Alumni Association's Directors and Officers were present, as were the vast majority of the Northern Tier Committee members. Scouting professionals: **John Pettifer**, CEO of Scouts Canada; **Jere Ratcliffe**, Chief Scout Executive - BSA; other national executives **Doug Smith**

(National BSA Program), **Bill Spice** (Philmont), **Sam Wampler** (Florida Sea Base) and **Don Wilson** (National Jamboree); not to mention retirees **Jim Tarr**, former Chief Scout Executive - BSA, **Chuck Buenger** (Philmont Director) and **Joe Davis** (Philmont Camping Director).

There was **Ed Chapin**, Northern Tier Committee member who is currently in his 35th year of service to the Committee! And all three recipients of the George D. Hedrick (who was certainly there in spirit) Volunteer Service Award: **Robert "Red" Renner, Allan Batterman, and Craig Pendergraft**. Elsewhere in the room were the twenty Sommers Alumni that had come to the Base to help out with work projects and seasonal staff training; many of the returning seasonal staff; and year-around Northern Tier staff members: **Judy Bovitz, Doug Hirdler, Liz Hyrkas and Joe Mattson**.

It was impressive, inspiring and humbling. I feel so fortunate to be a part of this fine group of individuals. Your energy, enthusiasm, and dedication to our shared vision is infectious. I leave each Alumni meeting, staff training, work week, reunion and/or Committee meeting with heightened spirits and a renewed sense of purpose. Thank you so much for all that you do to support the Northern Tier National High Adventure Program. And, thank you what do for me and your fellow alumni.



## Executive Board Members Re-elected

The five current members of the Association's Executive Board were re-elected by the directors of the association at their meeting on June 8, 1997. The re-elected members of the Executive Committee are **Barry Bain, Association Vice President and Director; Zane Beaton, Member-at-Large; Nigel Cooper, Association Treasurer; Blaine Diesslin, Association Secretary and Director; Dave Hyink, Association President and Director**.

The Executive Committee are elected by the Board of Directors and are empowered to transact business with the same powers of the board as a whole, between board meetings. Every effort is made to involve all directors in the decisions made by the executive committee.

# Alumni Association Directors and Officers

Director/President (1)*	Dave Hyink	(253) 863-6406
Director/Vice President (3)	Barry Bain	(612) 944-5178
Director/Secretary (1)	Butch Diesslin	(218) 365-6904
Director/Newsletter (1)	Roy Conradi	(770) 496-0920
Treasurer	Nigel Cooper	(612) 738-1242
Director (2)	Patrick Cox	(214) 342-8786
Director (2)	David Greenlee	(605) 594-6287
Director (2)	Jay Walne	(901) 278-2633
Director (2)	Wade Herbranson	(218) 365-3162
Director (1)	Robert Welsh	(425) 454-5628
Director (3)	John Christiansen	(417) 646-8526
Director (3)	Mark Norstrom	(614) 833-9219
Director (3)	Linnea Renner	(218) 365-3655

\*Number in parentheses is years remaining in current term.

## Program Liaisons

Mr. Bill Spice	National Director of High Adventure Philmont Scout Camp, BSA Cimarron, NM 88714 (505) 376-2281
Mr. Doug Hirdler	Director and General Manager Northern Tier National High Adventure Program P.O. Box 509 Ely, MN 55731 (218) 365-4811
Mr. Norman Augustine	Chairman, National High Adventure Committee Lockheed-Martin Corporation 6801 Rockledge Drive Bethesda, MD 20817-1877
Mr. Steve Fossett	Chairman, Northern Tier National High Adventure Committee Marathon Securities 401 So. LaSalle Street, Suite 200 Chicago, IL 60605

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# Words from General Manager Doug Hirdler

On June 16, 1987 there was much to celebrate at the Charles L. Sommers Wilderness Canoe Base. It was the first time since its development in 1923 that the Boy Scouts of America could claim ownership of the Base. The deed for the 55-acre tract of National Forest had been under special use permit since 1941 and was exchanged for 160 acres of land that was also well suited for National Forest ownership.

The Regional Forester at that time was Butch Marita who noted that the Forest Service and the Boy Scouts had had a long history of working together for the benefit of the youth of America and for the benefit of the National Forests. In remarks made at the exchange ceremony, he noted that "National Forest lands and areas such as the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness have, over the years, provided

opportunities for young people to get to know the out-of-doors, to learn skills that will last them a lifetime, and to develop traits that are valued by our society. Without question, Scouting adds to the character of those who take part in it, as Scouts and leaders."

Marita also acknowledged the many returns that the Sommers Canoe Base provided for its use of the Superior National Forest such as: The Base staff does an excellent job of instilling a wilderness and conservation ethic in the thousands of young men and women who pass through the facility each year.

Sommers has provided training to Forest Service BWCAW crews and personnel in health and safety.

The Scouts from Sommers have assisted in the operation of the BWCAW by "adopting canoe routes," providing maintenance

of campsites and portages, serving as a supply link between BWCAW volunteers and the Ranger District office; transporting supplies and latrines to remote locations; and providing valuable assistance in search and rescue operations.

When June 16, 1997 arrived, it marked the 10th anniversary of that great event. In Marita's speech he commented that since 1941 over \$1,500,000 had been invested in facilities and improvements. Isn't it great to know that what took 46 years to accomplish originally has been duplicated in the last ten years?

What Sommers has meant for 74 years still holds true today. As the new General Manager, who was fortunate enough to have been involved in that great day in June of 1987, it is now my pleasure to be partaking in another great decade in the life of this fantastic facility.

I cannot think of a better way to thank the Sommers Alumni Association members, who helped us get this 74th year of the operation going with what I saw as one of the greatest training opportunities our young adult staff could have ever gotten, than to put their names down in this space and thank each and every one of them for a great experience from June 3 through the 12th.

Thanks: **Allan Batterman, Sandy Bridges, Dr. Thomas Beaton, Zane Beaton, Blaine Diesslin, David Hyink, Wade Herbranson, Mike Holdgrafer, Jim Barrott, Bob Cary, Dave Greenlee, Barbara Cary Hall, Dr. Richard Shank, Michael J. Sawinski, Craig Pendergraft, Linnea Renner, Robert Renner, Dr. Lynn Reeve, Dr. Robert Welsh and Larry Whitmore.**

## Association Directors Elected

The alumni association members elected four directors of the association at annual meeting of the members. The elected directors included three incumbents and one new director. The reelected directors are **Barry Bain, John Christriansen and Mark Nordstrom**. The new member to the board of directors is **Linnea Renner**. These terms will expire with the annual meeting in 2000.

**Barry Bain** is Chemistry Teacher in the Richfield, MN public schools. Barry originally came from Del Rio, Texas in 1957, served on the Sommers staff through 1962. Barry has been a director since the association's inception in 1992.

**John Christiansen** is Properties Manager for the Heart of America Council, BSA and lives in Osceola, MO. John originally came from Shawnee, KS in 1969, and served on the Sommers staff through 1974. John has been a director since the associations inception in 1992.

**Mark Nordstrom** is a Broadcast Communications Instructor at Ohio State University and a Freelance Writer, living in Canal Winchester, OH. Mark came originally from Cincinnati, OH in 1970 and was a staff member

through 1972. Mark has been a director since 1996.

**Linnea Renner** is a Registered Nurse and First Aid Consultant, living in Ely, MN. Linnea originally came from Mankato, MN in 1980 and was a staff member through 1982. Linnea has also been a member of the OKPIK staff during the 1995-97 winter seasons. This is Linnea's first term as director.

The fifth nominated director candidate was **Corey Kolodji 1974-79, '85-'89**. He is a Science Teacher from Hibbing, MN. This year Corey was the odd person out, but will no doubt seek election to a director position in the future.

Outgoing director, **Zane Grey Beaton (1969-75, '90)** did not seek another term. Zane is a Technical Service Representative for Alpha/Owens Corning and recently moved to Colliersville, TN. Zane is originally from Paragould, AR. The association ends its appreciation to Zane for his five years of service on the board of directors, the executive board and as co-chair of the membership committee since the formation of the association in 1992. Zane will continue to serve as a member-at-large on the executive committee.

## Work Week / Seasonal Staff Training a Huge Success

Twenty members of the Alumni Association gave generously of themselves (and had a great time!) as they converged on the Ely Base, May 24-June 11, to help out with important work projects and with seasonal staff training. Training organizers **Craig Pendergraft** and **Mike Holdgrafer** and work party leader **Red Renner** were joined in their efforts by: **Al Batterman, Sandy Bridges, Tom Beaton, Zane Beaton, Butch Diesslin, Dave Hyink, Wade Herbranson, Jim Barrott, Bob Cary, Dave**

**Greenlee, Barbara Cary Hall, Dick Shank, Mike Sawinski, Linnea Renner, Lynn Reeve, Bob Welsh and Larry Whitmore.** There was plenty to do and plenty of fun and good fellowship. It was gratifying to see former Sommers Staff members from the early Fifties through the early Nineties working together to prepare for our 74th consecutive season of operation. And, the old-fashioned "steak fry" at Diesslins was certainly a highlight! Why not make plans to "lend a hand" in 1998?

## Craig Pendergraft Receives Hedrick Volunteer Award

At the June 8, 1997 annual members meeting of the SAA, **Craig Pendergraft (1968-75)** of Belmont, California was named as the 1997 recipient of the George D. Hedrick Volunteer Service Award. Established by the Directors in 1995, this award recognizes significant long-term contributions to the Base — particularly in the form of "hand-on" par-

ticipation. In that vein, the Annual meeting was temporarily adjourned so the attendees could move to the Lodge for the presentation, where Craig was busy teaching a map and compass course to new seasonal staff members. Past recipients include **Robert "Red" Renner and Allan Batterman.**

# Sandy Shares His Thoughts From The Dinner

by Sandy Bridges

I have been asked to recall some of the thoughts I shared at the Recognition Dinner. My talk that evening was extemporaneous. It was a very emotional time for me and I had no idea how long I could speak, so consequently I had no notes. It was the second time recently that I have really been at a loss for words. The first was when, during the dedication of the new Gateway at the Base, I turned around to see our mentor, Joe Seliga, portaging a canoe that he and his wife had lovingly constructed to be presented to me by a group of alumni and friends calling themselves the "Bridges Brigade." Through the years I have been able, through my little friends the chipmunks and chik-a-dees, to pretty well keep abreast of the "secrets" at the Base. But this time their lips were sealed. In fact, I think they really enjoyed seeing me so surprised.

Like most of you, I was fortunate to have had a very rewarding early Scouting outdoor life. I have always felt that the best of Scouting takes place on the local level. The Pack and then the Troop and Post, with their leadership, are the real key to the success of the early years in Scouting. I have wholeheartedly supported, and still do, the importance of a strong local Council outdoor program with particular support to the Scout camps. Local Camping and the Council Camps continue to need all of the support we can give. The early years are important to the development of our youth in the values, ideals and principles of Scouting through a successful camping program.

But then there is High Adventure!

The very design of "High Adventure" originally, and to this day, is to be a natural extension of the local Council camping program. They offer something that is unique and not usually available on the local level. The High Adventure Bases are not camps, but rather outfitting bases for wilderness and wilderness-like adventures. They are

based entirely on the principles of the Scout movement but are the "next step." How lucky we are to have them!! The Scout Camp is designed to be the ultimate for Scouts from eleven to fourteen years old. The High Adventure Bases are for those who have already had the Scout Camp experience and are ready for new adventures. The High Adventure Bases are the platforms for leadership development. The goal is the training of youth leaders to carry camping on to the future generations. During the early days of the Region Ten Canoe Trails, later to become the Charles L. Sommers Wilderness Canoe Base, dedicated Scouters set up a program that was to pass the test of time. Canoeing, the border country, the length of the trip — coupled with the use of "guides" — were all part of the chemistry that helped make it successful.

Traditions have always been important. The Wilderness Grace, the Far Northland, the emblem presented only to those who successfully complete the trip have served as a link from one generation to the next. Now the Alumni Association forms a bond for all.

One of my goals has always been to continue to offer the adventure of a lifetime to our participants. To be able to provide the young Scout from Texas or Nebraska a true ten-day wilderness adventure. Paddling and portaging in the same country and enjoying the same group spirit that **Henry Bradlich** and others did in the 1920's. To keep the dreams of **Carl Chase, Hod Ludlow, Oren Felton, Cliff Hanson** and many, many more alive and well. To keep the faith like **George Hedrick**. As I stand here and reflect, I can hear **Cliff Hanson** addressing the young voyageurs as they prepared for their trip, "...you will leave here tomorrow as kids (Scouts) but will return as young men." The canoe country has a way about that, it helps to mature our young men and women and give them a purpose. We are all stewards of one of the greatest programs Scouting has ever offered. Thank you for the opportunity of letting

me be a part of this stewardship for so many years.

During the interview for the newspaper article in the *Duluth Tribune* I was asked, "What regrets do you have, what did you leave unfinished?" My response was possibly quicker than it should have been. But my answer was "I have no regrets." There are, of course, many things I would have enjoyed seeing completed, but that should always be the case. I have enjoyed working on the fur trade history program "Portages Through Time" and hope that this will be continued. The International Program has always been a favorite of ours and I will enjoy hearing how it is going. The OKPIK leader train-

ing program is something that I hope will grow and expand. The opportunities at the Canadian Bases are unlimited. It will be a pleasure to see these programs expand and mature. Our association with Scouts Canada is really a special one that should be continued and nurtured.

In closing, I would like to again thank each of you for your kind words and support. And, a very, very special thanks to my family! The time has come!! With a soft breeze at your back, pick up your paddle with a firm flexible grip, not too tight though, and boldly take your program into the twenty-first century.

## Lodge Renovation Nears Completion

The alumni association funded portions of the Lodge building at the Sommers Base is nearing completion. Since the renovation began in 1993, the association has contributed more than \$57,000 toward the project. Of this expenditure, more than \$47,000 was raised through the **Lodge Renovation** special project with the balance coming primarily from the "**Crossing Portages** special giving program.

The Lodge renovations have included a new floor with in-slab heating, the addition of an insulated roof, the installation of a propane-fired hot water heating system, storm windows and removable screens, new lighting and wiring, and the renovation of the upstairs into the Hedrick

Memorial Reference Library. The majority of the renovation has been completed by alumni association members **Dick Hall** and **Bob Oliva**.

**The Hedrick Memorial Reference Library**; a memorial to **Rogbert Hedrick** and **George D. Hedrick** will be a controlled access library housing the base's collection of books of limited availability, and books and materials related to the history of the canoe country.

Alumni interested in helping with the arranging of the materials in the library are being sought. If you are interested in helping, please contact the association or the Sommers base.

## Associations Non-Profit Status Reaffirmed

The U.S. Internal Revenue Services has reaffirmed the alumni association's non-profit corporation status. The IRS's advance ruling period of tax exempt status for the alumni association ended December 31, 1996. In a letter dated May 7, 1997, the IRS reaffirmed that the association's tax exempt status is still in effect under section 501(a) and section 501(c)(3).

By falling under section 501(c)(3), donations to the alumni association are fully tax deductible by the donor, less the value of any services or merchandise received.

The IRS also determined that the alumni association is not a private foundation and is considered a publicly-supported organization as described in sections 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(vi)

# Scenes From Sandy's Recognition Dinner



# A Salute to Sandy Bridges

by Bob Cary

They came from the east coast and the west coast, from the Gulf of Mexico to Canada. They filled the ballroom at the Duluth Entertainment and Convention Center (DECC) to honor the retirement of the northland's most famous Boy Scout: Clyde S. "Sandy" Bridges, age 58, Director of the National High Adventure Canoe Base at Ely.

He first arrived at the Boy Scout Base from Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1959 as part of a youth camping group. At that time, the facility was operated by Region 10, representing the Scout organization from the Twin Cities.

Bridges loved the northwoods and following completion of a military commitment, came to Ely permanently. He began as a summertime staff guide for the base, working at various jobs during the winter, including trapping beaver with veteran woodsman and deputy sheriff **Martin Carlson**.

He went on the base staff full time in 1968 and became director in 1970. At the same time, the canoe base changed from a Region 10 facility to the Charles L. Sommers National High Adventure Canoe Base.

Bridges' background in snowshoeing and trapping led him to initiate a winter camping program called OKPIK (ook-pick), the Inuit name for the Arctic owl. Starting with a few sleeping bags, some tents, skis and showshoes, the winter program grew to become the National Cold Weather Facility for the Boy Scouts of America.

At the same time, Bridges became acutely aware that quotas and other restrictions would be appearing on canoe use of the Boundary Waters. His travels had taken him north into Ontario and Manitoba where he felt there were considerable opportunities for youth canoe adventures.

After numerous meetings with Ontario government officials plus a donation of land from a U.S. businessman, an outpost base was opened at Perch Lake,

near Atikokan, presently a popular facility used by both Canadian and U.S. Scouts and largely managed by Canadians.

Bissett, Manitoba, 90 miles northeast of Winnipeg, was the site provided by the Manitoba government for another outpost facility. Located in the center of a vast river-and-lake wild area, Bissett offers access to some of the most scenic canoe country in the northland. Eventually the Boy Scouts designated the expansion as the Northern Tier High Adventure Program.

In 1993, Bridges led the charge against a move by Twin Cities environmental groups and their allies to eliminate organized youth groups from the Boundary waters. Not only were the Boy Scouts threatened, but also Outward bound, Girl Scouts, YMCA and church camps. The battle was taken to Wash-

ington, D.C. where the youth groups prevailed.

Fittingly, Bridges' retirement party at the DECC started off the a presentation of colors by Scout Troop 7, Duluth, and an invocation the **Rev. Craig Carlson**. Master of Ceremonies **Dave Hyink**, a forest ecologist from the State of Washington and a former canoe guide at the base, introduced prominent Scout officials and retired Scout leaders from all over North America. Included were **John Pettifer**, representing the Boy Scouts of Canada; **Steve Fossett**, chairman of the Northern Tier Advisory Committee, and **Jere Ratcliffe**, Chief Scout Executive, Boy Scouts of America.

Lastly, **Sandy Bridges** addressed the assemblage, touching on the memories he had of a lifetime he and his wife Cherie devoted

to the youth of America.

Bridges recently faced another challenge, this one personal and physical. Diagnosed with cancer, he has been under treatment for over a year. But as with other problems he met and overcame during his long career, he is facing this one with resolution and good humor.

He concluded his remarks to a standing and well-deserved ovation ... a salute from the Scouts assembled — the very old, those still serving and young men in uniform who will carry on the honored traditions of the nation's largest and most famous youth organization.

*\*Bob Cary's weekly column, Monday, June 16, 1997, The Ely Echo. Reprinted with permission.*



## Can You Identify the Guide?

Sam Cook, author and newspaper writer will be the speaker at the reunion banquet on September 5, 1998. Sam was a member of canoe base crew **702C** back in 1965. Sam is third from left in the front row of the crew picture.

Sam seems to remember that his guide's name was "Jerry." Could you help with a positive I.D.? It would be nice to have Sam's guide at the banquet. If you recognize the guide and/or know his current whereabouts, please contact the association.

## New Member Directory Out

A revised directory of the members and staff alumni non-members is being printed and should reach you about the same time as this newsletter.

This revised directory will be sent to all alumni association members in good standing — Honorary members, Life members; and Sustaining, Annual Staff members who have paid their dues for 1997. If you are a member in good standing and do not receive your directory, please contact the alumni association.

Others desiring a copy may receive one upon payment of the \$10 annual membership fee. Donations through special giving programs or other fund raising activities of the association do not apply as dues payments.

## Mark Your Calendar For 75th Anniversary Reunion

Don't make any plans for the 1998 Labor Day weekend unless they include attending the Sommers Alumni Reunion commemorating the 75th Anniversary of the summer canoeing program at the Ely Base. It will be a time to remember! The Base will be

available for gathering and events from Friday, September 4 through Monday, September 7, 1998. Plans call for the Saturday evening dinner, September 5, to be held in Ely at the Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort with northwoods writer Sam Cook as the

featured speaker. If you have ideas for reunion events and/or you can help with organization, arrangements, registration, or events, please let us know. Watch for additional details in upcoming editions of *Reflections*.

# Charles L. Sommers Alumni Association, Inc.

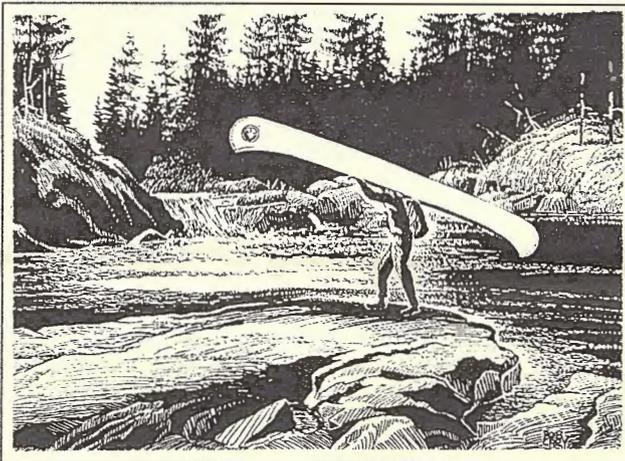
P.O. Box 428 Ely, MN 55731-0428

## 1997 SAA Holiday Greeting Card Sale

Charles L. Sommers Alumni Association is now taking orders for the 1997 edition of our annual Holiday Greeting Cards. Through the use of these cards, SAA members and supporters have the opportunity to send holiday greetings to their friends, business associates, and fellow scouts, and to send a message of their commitment to programs of Northern Tier High Adventure, BSA. Orders will be shipped in November.

This year's card will feature a Bob Cary drawing of the "Portage at Lower Basswood Falls," with highest quality thermography printing on premium cards made of recycled paper. The inside message is HOLIDAY GREETINGS. The back of the card carries a message about Northern Tier High Adventure. This is a distinctive and very handsome greeting card. The cards come 25 per package including envelopes.

A limited number of 1993, 1994, 1995 and 1996 cards featuring the "Lodge," "Hanson House," "Canoe Yard" and "Gateway" are also available at a discounted price, while supplies last. A special series package, including all five years will be available at a special price while supplies last.







The person sending this card has contributed to Sommers Alumni Association's efforts to promote character development and outdoor skills through wilderness canoeing programs at Northern Tier National High Adventure, BSA.



Charles L. Sommers Alumni Association, Inc., Box 428, Ely, MN 55731  
A Non-Profit Organization

**"PORTAGE AT LOWER BASSWOOD FALLS"**  
Original Art by Bob Cary  
Series #6

**CHARLES L. SOMMERS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION, INC.**  
Holiday Greeting Card Sale  
c/o Dan Wangerin, 715 Barberry Place • West Bend, WI 53095

Quantity		
_____	1997 Cards — Portage	x \$25.00 = _____
_____	1996 Cards — Gateway	x \$20.00 = _____
_____	1995 Cards — Canoe Yard	x \$20.00 = _____
_____	1994 Cards — Hanson House	x \$20.00 = _____
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# How Was the Fernberg Road Named?

by Taune Maki (from 2/24/97 article in *The Ely Echo*)

On occasion I have been asked "How did the name Fernberg Road come about?"

My answer comes from a *Cook County News Herald* article by Raymond Naddy, Superior National Forest Information Specialist.

He told a story about a six-man party that left Ely in three canoes in early August, 1910 to build the first lookout tower in the one-year-old National Forest. Air patrols were far in the future that day when Beryl McLaughlin of the Minnesota Forestry Department at Tower, John Handberg, U.S. Forest Service, and four others set out for a hill Handberg had selected as a lookout site east of Winton.

The party traveled by canoe through White Iron and Farmlakes and the Kawishiwi River to the proposed site, which became known as the Fernberg Lookout. The name was a combination of Handberg and Ole Fernland, another

member of the party.

McLaughlin said, "We had packed in some block and tackle, some rope and wire and other hardware. We cut two other tall sticks adjacent to the growing one and snaked them up to the base of this tree. There we raised them up to form a tripod and after cleaning the branches off we built a small platform and a ladder by which it could be reached." He said the tower, such as it was, took about three weeks to complete. On the way to the Fernberg site, the party had followed blazes made by Handberg. Portages followed blazes made by Handberg. Portages followed in time and later... the Fernberg Trail. Also, the wooden structure was replaced later by a taller, sturdier steel tower.

Now, though, Fernberg Lookout is among the names, such as Angleworm, Sioux Lookout, Sioux River, East Bearskin Cabin, Pine Mountain and others in the Superior Forest that have passed into history.

My first experience traveling

down this narrow, winding road happened some 64 years ago when friends Henry, Alex, Art and I decided to go on a canoe trip down the Kawishiwi River. Henry, the oldest, drove an old four-cylinder Chevrolet with two re-canvassed Old Town canoes on the roof and parked at the base of the tower.

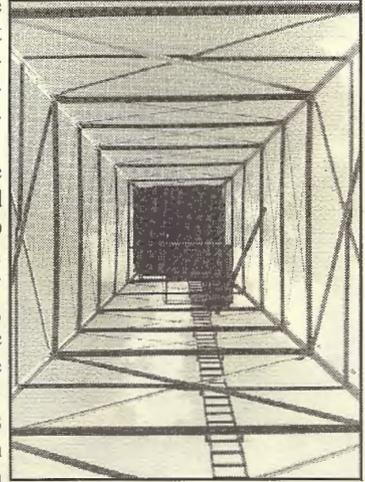
From that point on it was a downhill portage one mile to the river. It soon occurred to us that coming back up this mini-mountain would be arduous and back-breaking. It was not a very pleasant thought.

Once on the river, we were looking forward to some good fishing and a very enjoyable trip on a beautiful meandering river. Several days later, after a steady diet of salami, beans and fish, some of us developed some severely upset stomachs and the whole trip turned into a disaster.

The return to the portage was not a picnic. Where does one run when one has the "runs" in a canoe? The "fun part" came when we loaded our gear on our backs

and started the long haul up a 25-degree hill completely dehydrated, sullen and totally teed off, wondering if we would survive. Survive we did.

This had turned out to be an unforgettable journey and it was my first one down the Kawishiwi River. It was also the last. 1932 was a wonderful year! ALMOST.



*Fernberg Tower*  
photograph by Roy Conradi, 1960

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