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# Cat Tracks

Bates Outing Club

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of the Bates Outing Club

Editor: Bonnie Richman

Issue 1: Nov., 1958

## B. O. C. MEMBERS SPEND SUMMER UP NORTH

The following is from Fred Ziegler, Equipment Director:

This summer it was my fortune to live and work among the Highland Scotch near Antigonish, Nova Scotia. This is a land of fir-covered mountains and quaint fishing villages, and greatly resembles, I am told, the ancestral home of the Nova Scotians. These people preserve a very proud and strong tradition. Once every year during the summer months the "skirl o' the pipes" may be heard as the clansmen, dressed in their family tartans, come to the Highland games. This is a day of folklore and competition as the Sword Dance and the Highland Fling, the "tossin' o' the caber" and the tug-o-war are reenacted.

Of more specific interest to Outing Clubbers perhaps, are the opportunities offered by the Maritimes in the regions of hiking and camping. Although my private interest this summer was that of studying, I found time on weekends to travel a bit. During these travels such places as Cape Breton Island and Prince Edward Island were visited. On both of these islands, very beautiful provincial parks are maintained. Another attraction is the fabulous Oak Island Treasure which, although it never has been found, almost certainly exists. May I suggest then, that if you are a vacationist, treasure hunter, honeymooner, or just a geologist, you will be well satisfied with a visit to the Maritime Provinces. You will not be getting your money's worth, however, unless you stay for a while and get to know the people.

Bonnie Richman, CAT TRACKS editor, reports:

Alaska is a land of strange paradox and striking contrast. I discovered this while building log cabins with the American Friends Service Committee in a little village called Beaver, in the Yukon Flats region of interior Alaska. Though we were located just six miles south of the Arctic Circle, the temperature at noon was often in the 80's, and we enjoyed swimming daily in the Yukon. This river is an odd one--it's so muddy from glacial silt deposits that fishing with regular gear is impossible, for the fish couldn't see the bait! Instead, the natives use "fish wheels," 8 ft. square scoops of wood and wire construction that revolve on an axle in the current.

Frost heaving and ice lenses in the soil are more of a problem in building than the weather of 30°-40° below zero. If a cabin is built atop an ice lens which melts from the heat, the floor



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will sag and the walls buckle. This is only one big problem faced by homesteaders and natives in this strange land which might be almost desert if it weren't for the permafrost a few feet below topsoil. Permafrost, or frozen ground, keeps the slight rainfall from soaking through quickly; thus poor drainage accounts for the thick vegetation and spruce forests. How the tree roots find enough top soil, or how they penetrate the permafrost, remains a mystery to me.

It seems strange that a village of log cabins, many without electricity, and 90 miles from civilization should receive mail several times a week by airplane. I always thought pony express would be more appropriate. Since the inhabitants are too isolated to feel the effects of statehood, there were no fireworks when the bill was passed. It seemed ironic that you in the States were reading about wild celebrations while Beaver people maintained a quiet indifference to their now status.

The woods are deep and lonely, but above them our jet fighters screech through maneuvers, streaking the sky with white vapor trails.

As Fred said in his report, the people are what make a trip worthwhile. I feel that the Indian-Eskimo population of Beaver is far more civilized, in the genuine sense of the word, than a great many of my fellow classmates. It was an exciting summer.

## FRESHMEN WELCOMED WITH OPEN HOUSE

The first Saturday in October witnessed an afternoon "get acquainted" open house at Thorncrag for the freshmen interested in O. C. doings. Bill Earle and Jean Tuomi saw to it that everyone was kept happy with refreshments and kept busy with cleaning up the plateau for a song fest that evening. This event, arranged by Mary Stafford and Ray Leibfried, attracted students from all classes; Pete Acorn led the singing of ballads, spirituals, and college favorites in this first O. C. songfest of the year.

## B.O.C. COMPLETES SUCCESSFUL MOUNTAINEERING SEASON WITH 3 CLIMBS

Hikes and trips Directors Joan Engels and Bob Finnie made the arrangements for trips to Mt. Washington on Sept. 21, Mt. Avery on Sept. 28, and Mt. Jackson-Tumbledown on Oct. 12.



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On the 21st, about 35 students got up at 5 to travel by bus to Pinkham Notch Camp where they enjoyed one of the famous "hut breakfasts" before starting the climb. Unfortunately, the summit was socked in, but we did get a chance to greet the train tourists with the traditional exclamations: "WHAT?!! You mean those people actually came up on a TRAIN??"

Next week's Mt. Avery climb was a tough one, and everything conspired, without success, to make it a bad day--loosing several hours on the wrong trail, a drizzling rain, a late start home. Somehow, though, it turned out a good climb. Maybe that indefinable quality called spirit?

Jackson-Tumbledown in Oct. is cold, really cold, and several people turned back to the warm haven of the bus before reaching the summit. Some hardy souls proceeded up one small peak, over the saddle-back, and onto a neighboring summit, while the rest of us watched from a more sheltered spot. That day Jackson was almost as popular as Mt. Washington, and we saw many kids from near-by colleges.

## PUSSY FOOTIN'

Many thanks to Jan Baker for her lively and well-written STUDENT articles about B.O.C. activities.

M. J. Mears and Dave Nelson are going great guns on Carnival plans. So are we all, for that matter. And we've got a terrific theme; it's all about... oops, can't tell!

It's not who threw the overalls in Mrs. Murphy's chowder, but who dropped the bandaid in the M.I.T.O.C. stow on their Fall Circus.

Speaking of that glop, does anyone know the secret ingredient? If so, don't tell our less strong-stomached friends.

Oh, these 21st birthdays! Will wonders, and paper towel wrapped bottles, never cease? Best wishes to the lucky recipient.

As of a boner pulled the other night at Council meeting, it has been decided that the B.O.C. is composed of a number of "Gung who gropers."

Nicknames, anyone? Who started those--Chit (Sara) Chatterton, Yukon Bon Richman, and Moo (Suo) Hord?

Darn-- No room left for that Zen poetry I'd planned. Next time...