



The Grand Portage Guide

Grand Portage: A Special Place

*Tim Cochrane, Superintendent
Grand Portage National Monument*

*Norman Deschampe, Chairman
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Late this winter near Fort Charlotte, otter were using the Portage as a thoroughfare. Hard pan snow outlined their belly slides and icy paw pints marked hops along the Portage. Once long ago, perhaps a similar game trail led Native Americans to investigate the Portage route and found it a convenient transportation route and thus trading artery. It permitted goods – obsidian, copper, sea shells, medicinal plants – to be traded east and west. Much later this route was adopted by fur traders. During the fur trade era, otter and beaver dared not tread or waddle on the Portage or they were trapped, killed, and their fur traded east.

Like the sight of otter tracks on the Portage, much has changed this last year. We are moving closer to having a long sought-after Heritage Center. It will introduce visitors to the history and heritage of Grand Portage, for example, the technology and information exchange between Ojibwe and traders. We are currently planning what the Heritage Center will hold and what stories it will tell, so we espe-

(Continued on page 7)

Welcome to Grand Portage, home of the Grand Portage Band of Chippewa Indians. Our band is one of six bands making up the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe. Through a common constitution and elected officials we deliberate about mutual issues and concerns. A different, five-member tribal council governs the Grand Portage Reservation, home to our ancestors for hundreds of years. One visible aspect of our independent governing is our own Band symbol, imprinted on this newspaper and on the flag flying alongside the U.S. flag welcoming you to the monument.

Our 44,700-acre reservation is used for recreation and is a paradise for campers, hikers, hunters, and sightseers. Be sure to go to the scenic overlook off Highway 61, a few miles north of the monument, for the breathtaking view. On a clear day, you can see Isle Royale or what our ancestors called “Minong” – the beautiful place – which was the eastern end of our traditional territory. We are proud of the reservation and its resources. For example, in Grand Portage Creek are “coaster” brook trout or trout that run into Lake Superior. Through reintroduction efforts, we have a vibrant stock of “coasters” which are unusual and not to be found often in Lake Superior waters and tributaries.

In the last few years, the Grand Portage Band has worked closely with the national monument. It is difficult to keep track of our many collaborative efforts, but they include: the Band operating all maintenance activities at the monument, the Passage sled dog race, providing park housing, planning efforts (reservation transportation study and general management plan for the park), and the annual Pow-wow and Rendezvous. You may chat with Grand Portage youth mentoring at the monument, learning valuable job skills. And, of course, we are working together to build an exciting Heritage Center.

For us, Grand Portage is a peaceful island in a sea of turbulence and frantic speed. We can control our own destiny here and we hope you will notice the difference and be refreshed by the beautiful Grand Portage forests and waters. Our life is unhurried and old traditions are at the core of our existence in this place we call home. Best wishes for a pleasant visit.

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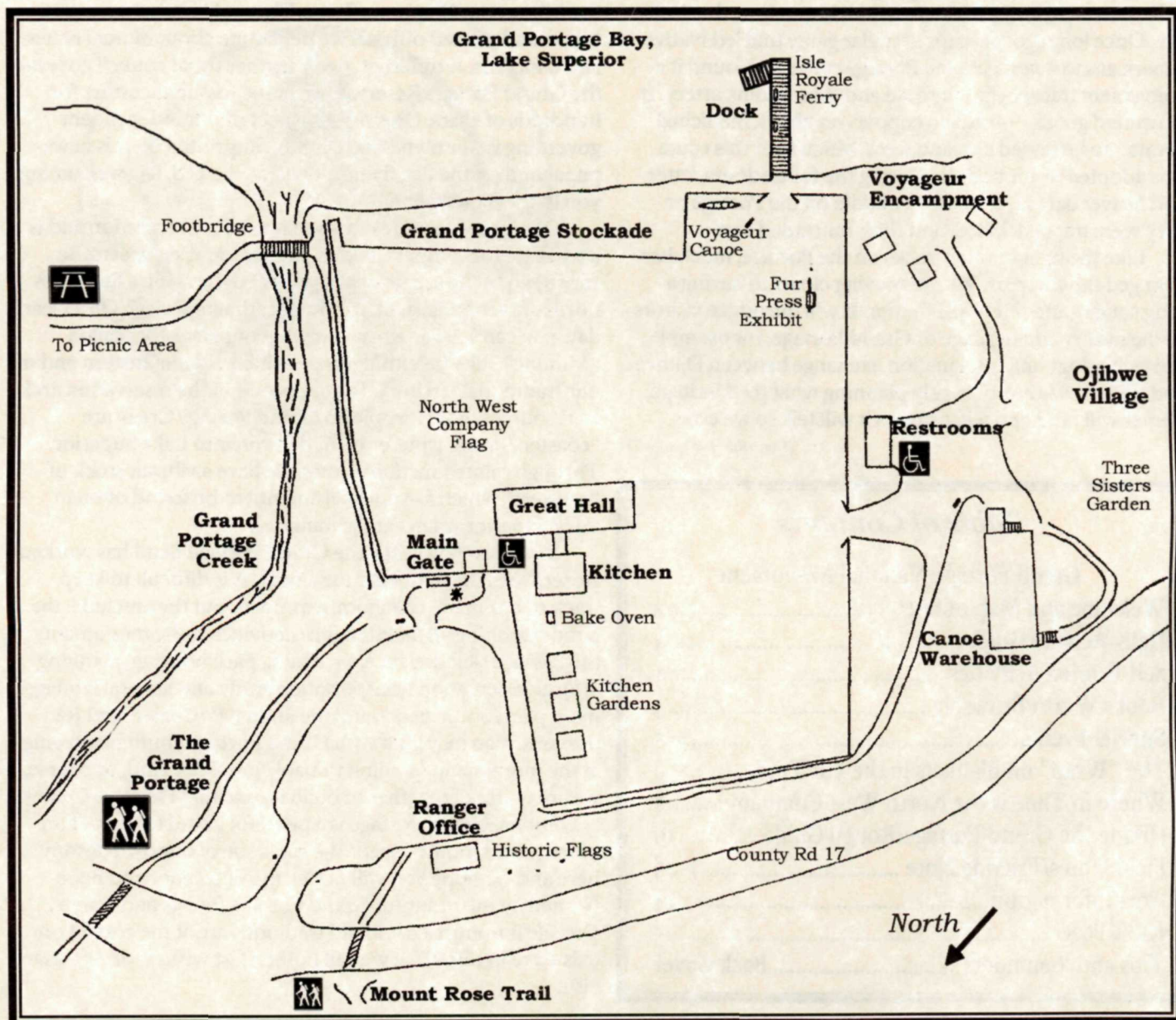
Boozhoo
Bonjour Welcome

Welcome to Grand Portage. We are pleased you are here and exploring "Portage" with us. There is much to see and do. Please join our interpreters and participate in the past. Please ask us about the fur trade and its ingenious technology, or its novel customs. Or come and learn about the intrinsic links between the fur traders and the nearby residents, the Grand Portage Ojibwe.

The Staff of Grand Portage National Monument

A GUIDE TO HELP
YOU FIND YOUR WAY AT
GRAND PORTAGE NATIONAL
MONUMENT

More than 200 years ago, the North West Company concentrated its business activities in and around the stockade. Four of the most important structures have been reconstructed on their original foundations: The Great Hall, kitchen, warehouse, and gatehouse. National Park Service employees staff these buildings. You will find rangers wearing dress appropriate to the period, or in the NPS uniform. The stockade and most of the buildings are open daily from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.



ACTIVITIES & RANGER-CONDUCTED PROGRAMS

Welcome! Our ranger staff looks forward to talking with you as you visit the park. We invite you to spend a day, or even two, and let us help you walk in the footsteps of all those who have gone before us. We encourage you to ask questions, but most importantly, to participate in all that we have to offer. Enjoy your visit. Please, if we can be of any assistance to you, don't hesitate to ask.

Ranger Pam Neil, Chief Interpreter

LIVING HISTORY DEMONSTRATIONS

Come to the Voyageur Encampment and Ojibwe Village, where you will see demonstrations of Ojibwe and voyageur life in the late 1700s. While there, see our American Indian Three Sisters garden, and witness the firing of a North West Company trade gun.

Visit the Great Hall, historically furnished circa 1790s, and while you are there, stop by and visit with Grand Portage Ojibwe craft demonstrators. Their craft items are for sale from mid-June through early September. Also in the Great Hall, there is a Try-It-On historic clothing exhibit where *you* can fit into history!

Follow your nose to the kitchen, where you can see period cooking and baking demonstrations from mid-June through early September. Don't miss our historic heirloom garden and outdoor bake oven located just behind the kitchen.



RANGER-CONDUCTED INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS

History comes alive when you take part in an interpretive program here at Grand Portage. Park rangers will transport you back in time, where you can become part of the story that unfolds before you!

These programs range in length from 20 minutes to 60 minutes. Be sure and check the "Program" sign next to the main gate for program topics, locations, and starting times. *Please note: Our program schedule is subject to change without notice due to staffing or weather conditions.*

VIDEO PRESENTATIONS

We offer video programs, on request, inside the Great Hall. A staff member there will be happy to start a program for you. There are several to choose from:

- The Northwest Passage – Running time is 10 minutes
- On the Road With Charles Kuralt – Running time is 5 minutes.
- The Voyageur – Running time is 20 minutes.
- The Birch Bark Canoe Builder – Running time is 30 minutes.

SELF-GUIDED ACTIVITIES

HIKING TRAILS

The Grand Portage: The 8½-mile *Grand Portage* is open for hiking. Two campsites are available for primitive camping at Fort Charlotte. A free permit is required, and can be obtained at the ranger station or at one of three registration boxes located along the Grand Portage.

Mt. Rose Trail: The Mt. Rose trail, located across from the parking lot entrance, is a paved ½-mile long nature trail which climbs 300 feet for a spectacular vista of the depot and Lake Superior. Approximate hiking time is 1 hour. A self-guiding trail brochure is available at the trail head.

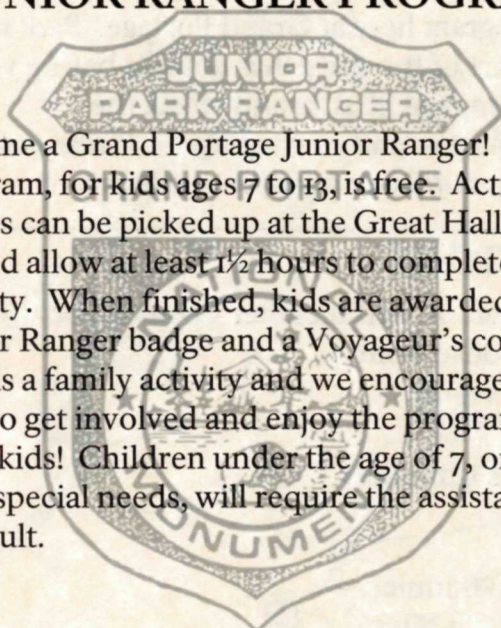
BROCHURES AVAILABLE

We offer several brochures for your use and enjoyment:

- NPS Grand Portage Map and Guide
- The Grand Portage (Also available in large print and French)
- Historic Garden
- Bird Checklist
- Mt. Rose Trail

JUNIOR RANGER PROGRAM

Become a Grand Portage Junior Ranger! This program, for kids ages 7 to 13, is free. Activity guides can be picked up at the Great Hall. You should allow at least 1½ hours to complete this activity. When finished, kids are awarded a Junior Ranger badge and a Voyageur's contract. This is a family activity and we encourage parents to get involved and enjoy the program with their kids! Children under the age of 7, or those with special needs, will require the assistance of an adult.



BOOKS WORTH BROWSING

To help alleviate the isolation of winter posts, the North West Company provided reading materials. Daniel Harmon, a North West Company clerk wrote,

"Most of our leisure moments (and which is nearly nine tenths of our time) will be spent reading, and conversing on what we have read."



The following titles may be

"The Journals of Alexander Mackenzie: Exploring Across Canada in 1789-1793" by Alexander Mackenzie, 2001. The Narrative Press, Santa Barbara, CA. 418 pg.

"The Grand Portage Story" by Carolyn Gilman, 1992. Minnesota Historical Society Press, St. Paul, MN. 160 pg.

"Seed to Seed: Seed Saving and Growing Techniques for Vegetable Gardeners" by Suzanne Ashworth, 2002. Seed Savers Exchange Inc., Decorah, IA. 228 pg.

"Canoe Country Flora: Plants and Trees of the North Woods and Boundary Waters" by Mark Stensaas, 1996. Pfeifer-Hamilton Publishers, Duluth, MN. 209 pg.

"Life in an Anishinabe Camp" by Niki Walker, 2003. Crabtree Publishing, New York, NY. 32 pg. (For Kids)

"Ojibwe: Waasa Inaabidaa, We Look in all Directions" by Thomas Peacock and Marlene Wisuri, 2002. Afton Historical Society Press, Afton, MN. 159 pg.

"A Toast to the Fur Trade: A Picture Essay on its Material Culture" by Robert C. Wheeler, 1985. Wheeler Productions, St. Paul, MN. 105 pg.

"Talking Rocks: Geology and 10,000 years of Native American Traditions in the Lake Superior Region" by Ron Morton and Carl Gawboy, 2000. Pfeifer-Hamilton Publishers, Duluth, MN. 213 pg.

All are also available at the Eastern National bookstore in Grand Portage National Monument's Great Hall!

SPECIAL EVENTS:

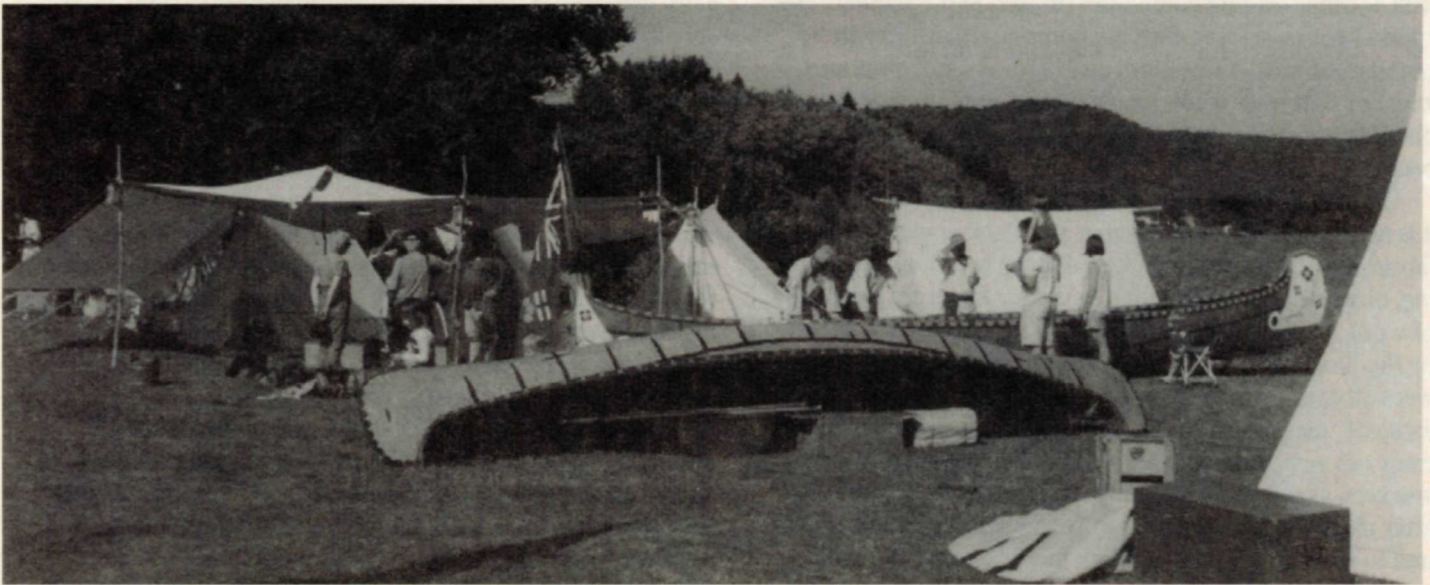
Ranger Karl Koster

The Grand Rendezvous

The hustle and bustle of summer activity peaked with the North West Company Rendezvous held here at Grand Portage. This was the time when furs from wintering posts, which reached into Canada, were delivered down the historic "Grand Portage." The annual Rendezvous is still celebrated here during the second weekend of August. The event is held in conjunction with the Rendezvous Days Pow Wow, sponsored by the Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior

Chippewa. The annual gathering is our biggest and grandest celebration of the year, a time when Grand Portage comes alive and reflects on its rich heritage. Re-enactors from across the country and Canada gather to camp and challenge each other. This is one event you do not want to miss. Music, dancing, craft demonstrations, and hands-on workshops ensure an exciting weekend at the National Monument.

The Rendezvous and Pow Wow will be held August 8 through 10, 2003



The Winter Frolic

In contrast to the frenzied summer, winter brought a slower pace to the Post. The North West Company Headquarters nestled on Lake Superior became a sleepy village. Less than twenty occupants were left to maintain the buildings and await the coming of spring. Few buildings remained open and life slowed to a crawl. Camaraderie and friendship were valued in winter, as local natives and traders assisted each other in the struggle to make it through the season in good health. To help tell this story the Grand Portage National Monument holds a "Winter Frolic" in January. This event is held during the Portage Passage Sled Dog Race, which is sponsored by the Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa. The "Winter Frolic" showcases winter life at the post, with many hands-on activities for young and old. Snowshoeing, historic sled-dog demonstrations, and the popular "snow-snake toss" are a few of the events one can participate in. Come warm yourself by the fire with a hot beverage and see what the National Monument has to offer.



The "Wrap" on Blankets in the Fur Trade

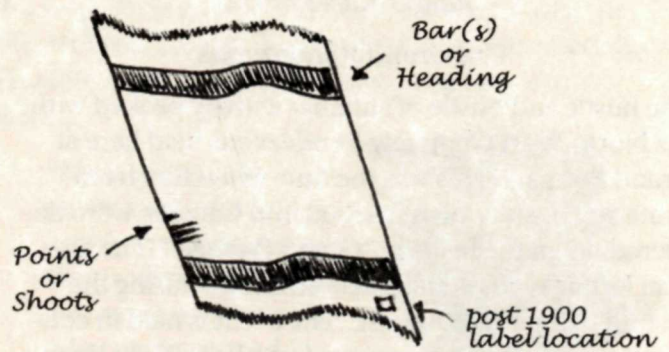
Ranger Karl Koster

Most of us fortunate enough to live in the 21st century take our "creature comforts" for granted. In fact some things, including a warm blanket, are so basic to our everyday lives that we don't even give them a second thought. For just a minute though, imagine living in a time when owning more than a few blankets signified a level of wealth, a time when blankets were important enough to list separately on estate inventories. Now, imagine a time when hearty young voyageurs risked their very lives to transport blankets and other trade goods from Montreal to Grand Portage for The North West Company. In fact, the North West Company as well as other trading companies offered extra blankets as "perks" for re-signing with the company. Contrary to popular legends, it was cloth and blankets, not guns and whiskey that were traded most during the fur trade era and blankets soon became as synonymous with the trade as the beaver.

In historical accounts and journals of the fur trade era, it is not unusual to discover that any right-angled piece of fabric easily gains the moniker of "blanket." Largely speaking, blankets used and traded in the fur trade era were made of wool. Those traded by Hudson's Bay Company, and also by the North West Company right here at Grand Portage, were all coming from Europe, primarily England. The majority of "factory made" wool blankets in use during the fur trade era were actually hand-woven on looms by talented weavers, as the power loom was not generally in use until after 1850. It is interesting to note that hand weavers continued to work in the large woolen factories until the early 1900s. It was often they who decided the dimensions of a blanket unless otherwise dictated by the companies themselves.

Trade blankets became a popular and valuable trade item early on with the Dutch and French traders in North America (1600-1760), and they were very common around the Great Lakes. This was evident as early as the 1600s when sailors, who accompanied the French traders, were reprimanded for selling their personal blankets to the native people. For the natives, blankets were a great improvement over buffalo/bear hides and rabbit strip blankets. Though blankets were not generally adorned for trade, there is evidence that some trading companies may have provided blankets decorated with ribbons, intricate applique and/or fine borders that made them very appealing. Natives also decorated their blankets with gartering and ferreting (a narrow cotton, wool or silk tape) supplied by the trading companies. Frequently mentioned in Jesuit papers of the time period, these early "laced" or "gartered" blankets slowly lost popularity as blanket function prevailed over fashion. In general, there were two types of blankets being traded: "Duffields" and "Kersey's".

"Duffields" (also called *duffels*) were named after the region in England where many were produced. Duffels



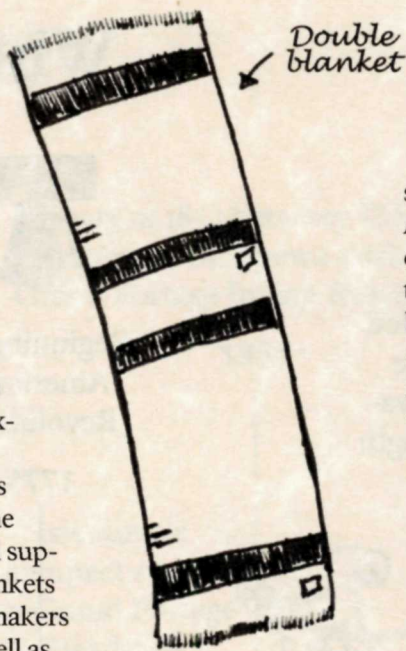
were common during the early colonial period (mid-1700s), yet as early as the mid-1600s, we find Dutch merchants trading and using Duffels. These coarse, heavy blankets were also the first blankets offered in trade by Hudson's Bay Company. This particular blanket, with a plain weave and thick texture, was produced in large rolls. A Duffel was commonly 54 by 48 inches in size, weighed 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ pounds, and was sometimes used to create clothing. This wool's unique raised nap on both sides sheds water which made it popular for use in making mittens, moccasin liners, and coats. The blankets were produced in different colors with red and blue being preferred by the traders' Native American customers. This wool is hard to come by today.

The English "Kersey" blanket, also named after the region in England where it was produced, began to grow in significance during the mid-1700s. Kerseys grew in popularity because they were a tighter-woven blanket than the Duffel, were made from longer, tighter wool fibers and were always twilled (a textile weave that gives the appearance of diagonal lines). Kersey blankets were woven together in pairs and sold whole, or sometimes torn/cut into single blankets. Kersey "double blankets" were still in production in the 20th century. It is the Kersey blanket that has evolved into the well-known and often coveted "Point blanket." The points on a blanket are truly a French innovation. The term "point" came to us in the 1690s, derived from the French verb *empointer* which means *the act of stitching a mark*. In the early days of the fur trade, when most of the trade was centered on the east coast, the points on a blanket designated its price (i.e. a blanket with two points cost two beaver hides). But once the fur trade spread into the Great Lakes region, transportation and delivery costs pushed the blanket prices higher in more remote areas. As a result, the "points" or "shoots" were then used to allow traders/customers to easily identify the *size* of a blanket, not necessarily its worth in beaver hides. Although the oldest surviving point blankets show points as short as one inch, over time, the length of blanket points has been increased to the size commonly seen on these blankets today. Kersey blankets were in use by several trading outfits, prior to use by the Hudson's Bay Company, but it was Hudson's Bay Company that began using the point system on the Kersey

blankets in 1779. This famed rival of the North West Company began using points on blankets at the suggestion of a new employee, Germain Maugenest. Maugenest was a former Montreal trader who was already familiar with the point system. Incidentally, it was several of these independent traders who would form the North West Company in 1779.

The main producer of Duffield and Kersey blankets for trading was Thomas Empson's Woolen Mills of Witney in Oxfordshire, England. Witney supplied the Hudson's Bay Company with blankets as early as 1737 and continued for at least the next 140 years. The date Witney stopped supplying Hudson's Bay Company with blankets is debatable, though by the 1930s other makers included Womald and Walker Ltd. as well as Lee & Sons Ltd. Ironically, what has become commonly known as a "Hudson's Bay Blanket" was never produced directly by Hudson's Bay Company.

Witney was also the main supplier of blankets for the North West Company from 1779-1821. Additionally, Astor's American Fur Company, a successor to the North West Company located in Grand Portage in the 1800s, ordered their blankets from mills in France, Germany, and even Buffalo, New York and Lowell, Massachusetts. Blanket colors varied during the 18th and 19th centuries with off-white/cream being the most common color traded. Hues such as red, blue and green were also standard during this time period. The familiar dark blue or black bar on the ends of blankets is relevant to this time as well. Blankets with many bars were also available. White blankets with several colored bars known as "Chief's Blankets," "Candy-Striped," "Duffle" (not to be confused with Duffield),



"Hudson's Bay," or "Multi-Stripe" were made beginning in 1798 and after. Modern pastel colors are a Hudson's Bay Company innovation from the late 1920s.

The practice of adding tags/labels to blankets started sometime between 1865 and 1890, with American produced blankets being the first to carry labels. Blankets of this time also lacked the whip stitching and binding found on later blankets. The most common sizes and weights of pointed blankets today differ from those of fur trading times. One- to three-point blankets were very common around the Great Lakes while four-point (double bed size) and larger sizes were available, but rare. The most common size during the fur trade era seems to have been the three-point (single bed size). Not until the 1960s did the four-point and larger blankets surpass the three-point blanket in popularity.

Wool blankets remain as popular now as they were 200 years ago. Most of us can count ourselves among those who have owned or used a "Trade Blanket," "Hudson's Bay Blanket," "Point Blanket." The history of blankets in trade is certainly a curious one, with many of the names, places, and makers of these coveted warmers of days gone by still in business today! While you are visiting the park, feel free to take a close look at our blankets. Many of them were made by the historic Witney Company. Of special interest will be our "double three-point blanket" on display in the video room of the Great Hall. Cozy up to history by trying on a capot (a blanket coat) in our "Try It On" clothing area, also located in the Great Hall. Here at Grand Portage, where the climate can be harsh, you are surrounded by warm wool! Could it be the sheep in England were as important to the fur trade as the beaver in the North Country?

(Continued from page 1)

cially welcome your thoughts about what you would like to see in a new facility.

Also changing, and hopefully for the better, is our fire suppression system for our reconstructed buildings. After the disastrous 1969 lightning strike that burned the first Great Hall and its priceless contents, many made by Grand Portage elders, preventing a fire has been important to us. You may see some archeological work where the water lines will be laid in the ground.

Much remains the same here as well. This year you have a chance to see and even buy Witney blankets, the type sold for making *capots* or wool coats at the North West Company posts, including Grand Portage. The blankets are made much the same in England as they were 200 and more years ago. We also intend to be fully ready to answer those tough questions you might ask staff. We urge you to contemplate how the Grand Portage history remains pertinent

and interesting to us today. For example, without the renowned reputation of Grand Portage (influencing negotiations on where the international border should be located) you might be standing in Canada as you read this!

Like those before us, peer out the bay towards Hat Point imagining the perennial wait for friends, food, news, and goods coming by canoe or ship. You are in good company – many have stood here: ancient big game hunters, Ojibwe children and mothers, Ojibwe headmen such as *Peau de Chat* (skin of the cat) and later Little Caribou, French *courir de bois*, British redcoats (here to build a road and protect the Portage from falling into American hands), Scottish traders, scientists, and later American fishermen. All these people have stood here, warmed by wood fires, waiting for people to arrive with their connections to other parts of North America, Europe, the Orient, and elsewhere. Please keep a sharp eye out for our changes and appreciate worthy traditions that remain the same. Enjoy your visit with us!

Where In Time Is the North West Company?



Grand Portage National Monument established

1958



MN Historical Society conducts first archaeological excavations at Grand Portage. Indian CCC begins reconstruction of stockade

1936-1937

1854

Treaty of 1854 between U.S. and Minnesota Chippewa establishes Grand Portage Indian Reservation

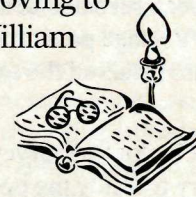


Isle Royale compact signed by Grand Portage Headmen relinquishes control of Isle Royale "Minong"

1844

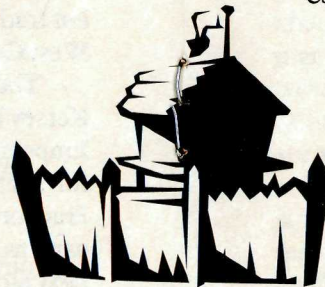
1802

The NWC holds its last Rendezvous at Grand Portage before moving to establish Ft. William



A faltering NWC merges with Hudson's Bay Company

1821



NWC partner Alexander McKenzie reaches the Pacific Ocean 11 years before Lewis and Clark!

1793

1785

NWC depot expanded, Ft. Charlotte likely built



Surrender of British at Yorktown ends American Revolution

1781



Beginning of American Revolution

1775



Treaty of Paris cedes Canada to the British

1763



La Verendrye guided to Grand Portage from Nipigon. Voyageurs mutiny at length of portage

1731



Ojibwe people immigrate to North Shore from Sault Ste. Marie and become established at Grand Portage

1200-1500

1938-1940

Reconstruction of Great Hall begins. This structure burns down in 1969. Current Great Hall built in 1972.



1882

Harbor project in Grand Marais creates jobs. Many Grand Portage residents relocate for work and establish "Chippewa City" in Grand Marais

1861

American Civil War begins. U.S. Army engineers survey Grand Portage Bay



1843

Grand Portage Ojibwe families number 35. Since the NWC left, an American Fur Co. post and a Catholic mission have been established. The AFC also ran a fishery at Grand Portage between 1837-1841



1804



NWC founding partner Simon McTavish dies, company tries to stay competitive with the Hudson's Bay Company

1804

Lewis & Clark's Corps of Discovery begins trek to Pacific Ocean.

1794

Jay's Treaty signed. NWC is required to leave U.S. soil

1789

George Washington becomes 1st President of the U.S.



1789

Beginning of French Revolution

1783

Peace of Paris Treaty places Grand Portage on U.S. side of new border

1768

British independent trader John Askin builds a small post at Grand Portage



1779

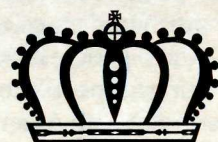
Wartime restrictions on fur trade cause independent traders at Grand Portage to combine efforts and resources to form the North West Company!

1754-1760

French & Indian War

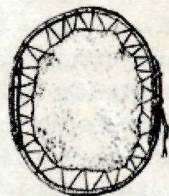
1760

George III becomes King of England



1670

Hudson's Bay Company founded



AD—1000

Archaeological evidence of earliest Native American activities at Grand Portage

Hiking the Grand Portage: ...to Boldly Go Where Many Have Gone Before..

Suzanne Gucciardo,
Resource Assistant

During summers of the 1790s, the "Great Carrying Place" was a well-worn path crowded with voyageurs and *courior du bois* (woods runners) sweating under one, or more often two, 90-pound packs. Today, visitors who venture along the Grand Portage find a completely different world than greeted the fur traders. Or do they...?

One goal for the Monument is to manage the 8½-mile Grand Portage trail corridor to reflect the landscape as it existed during the 1790s. Unfortunately, few descriptions are left from that time to provide clues to the scene of 200 years ago. A sentence or two is scattered among the writings of traders and adventurers who passed through Grand Portage, but even taken together, these provide an incomplete picture.

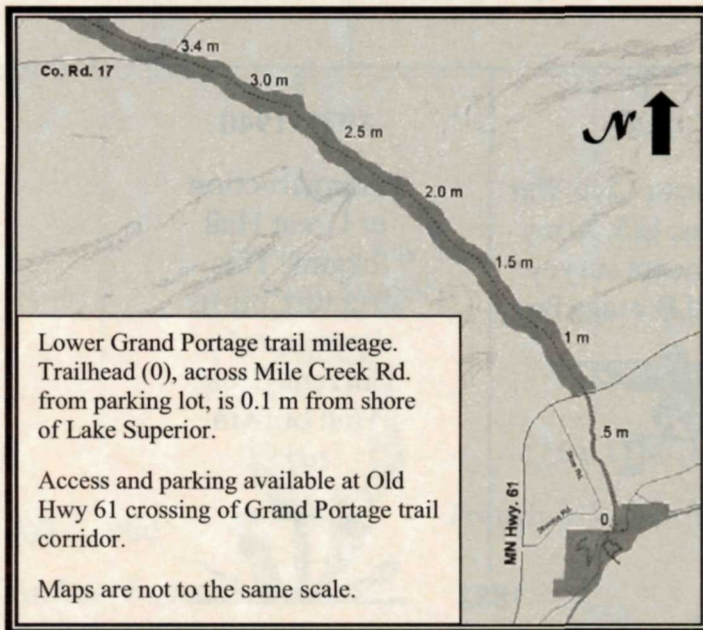
In recent years, the Resource Management staff of the Monument (currently an archeologist and a biologist) has guided new research to understand the differences, or similarities, between today's trail corridor and its historic condition and use. These studies encompass a wide range of scientific specialties, some using time-tested methods, others

using the latest technologies. Information gained by each study contributes a different piece of the complex cultural and natural resource picture. Although this picture is still incomplete, enough has been revealed to suggest that today's hikers of the Grand Portage pass through a forest little changed since the voyageurs walked the same path.

Blazing an old trail

Geologists from the U.S. Geological Survey used ground-penetrating magnetometry to study the bedrock of the Monument in 2001. Exact locations of exposed and buried basalt ridges were mapped, and analyzed in conjunction with recent information from the Minnesota Geological Survey. Two important features are responsible for location of the Grand Portage so far from the mouth of the river it bypasses.

Many of the larger highland ridges run southeast to northeast, presenting formidable barriers to inland travel. Grand Portage Creek, which enters Lake Superior adjacent to the stockade, flows through a gap in the first ridge. This gap corresponds with a fault in the bedrock, or a zone of weakness where erosional forces could remove materials more easily, creating the low saddle in the ridge. Along the



Mile 0

There was probably no single trailhead for all the traders spread along Grand Portage Bay. The most direct route from the Grand Portage possibly ran to the lake on the east side of the stream.

0 to 0.5 m

During the 1930s and 1940s, several Village structures were relocated from the lakeshore area of the Monument to sites further inland. This first section of the Grand Portage passes through the heart of the modern Anishinabe (Ojibwe) community.

A Rough Guide to the Grand Portage

0.5 to 1.0 m

The Grand Portage crosses through time, and across MN Hwy 61, along this stretch. Trader journals mention the "parting trees" near this area, where they entered the woods and lost sight of Grand Portage, the Bay and Lake Superior. It is still where you enter the woods of the voyageurs.

1.5 m

A gap in the steep highlands was an important landscape feature that determined the location of a suitable portage. It developed along a geological fault zone, where erosional forces could remove materials more easily than from the surrounding ridges.

1.5-2.5 m

This section of the Grand Portage has short steep slopes where the trail passes through two smaller gaps and stream drainages.

3.0 m

A footbridge carries the trail across Poplar Creek. Analysis of surveys from the 1820s and recent field research provide evidence that today's trail is closely aligned with the historic Grand Portage at this point.

3.4 m

Registration boxes at the trailheads on both sides of Old Hwy 61 make it easy for hikers to check in or leave comments, whether headed to Ft. Charlotte or Lake Superior.

first three miles of trail, the portage passes through this gap and two smaller ones lying farther inland. A few other ridges run more directly west to east. Beyond the gaps, the Grand Portage climbs the end of one of these and follows the relatively level crest for several miles. Fort Charlotte, at the western end of the portage, is located where a smaller ridge cuts across the Pigeon River forming rapids.

A geomorphology study looked for clues to landscape change along the trail corridor from both natural and human causes. As the most recent glacier melted, lake levels were much higher than today, inundating the lower portage until relatively recent times. Remnants of former beachlines are apparent as cobble ridges running across the trail in several locations. Ox carts were used as early as the late 1700s along the portage, although horse drawn wagons and eventually motorized vehicles were more commonly used by loggers early in the last century. Evidence of this use remains as paired tracks paralleling the present trail.

During the 1820s, David Thompson, a former employee of both the Hudson's Bay and North West companies, surveyed the border between the U.S. and Canada, as well as the Grand Portage trail. Original field notes from his surveys were entered into a Geographic Information System (GIS) and compared to the current trail position. This computer-based analysis permitted easy adjustment for differences in magnetic north that occur over time. Compensat-

ing for the surveyor going up hills more slowly than down was another important adjustment, since Thompson estimated distance based on walking time. This study revealed the current trail corridor is closely aligned with the historic route, at least as known in the 1820s.

The combined evidence of these studies suggests that, for most of its length, the Grand Portage trail corridor comprises the land actually traversed by the voyageurs. Considering the number of men transporting goods along the portage during the few weeks of the annual rendezvous, it seems likely that the trail may have been very different than the current single track path. It may have been a broad path through the forest, permitting ample passage in both directions. In some places wet or boggy areas may have been avoided, while water sources were sought out along drier sections. Historic records indicate at least 16 rest areas (poses) were about a half mile apart along the portage. On-going archeological studies are trying to locate these sites and verify the actual alignment of the original trail.

Seeing the forest for the trees

Limited descriptions from fur trader journals suggest the landscape was a mosaic of forest communities ranging from hardwood stands of maple, quaking aspen and birch, to pine forests. Open or burnt-over lands were common, since

(Continued on page 12)

3.4 to 4.5 m

A few large red pine are scattered among the aspen-birch-spruce-fir forest as the Grand Portage gradually ascends a ridge. A historic pose (rest spot) may have been located along this grade.

4.5 to 5.5 m

Distant highlands can be glimpsed through the trees as the trail passes along the crest of a ridge. Large white pine are found amid ancient white cedars, which were well grown trees even when the voyageurs passed here.

6.0 m

The 1820s surveys indicate the Grand Portage cut through a dry "beaver meadow," instead of the pond-wetland complex found today. Beavers were driven nearly to extinction by the fur trade, but today a 1/8th-mile-long footbridge tops an actively maintained dam, and passes within a few feet of the resident beaver's lodge.

6.5 to 7.0 m

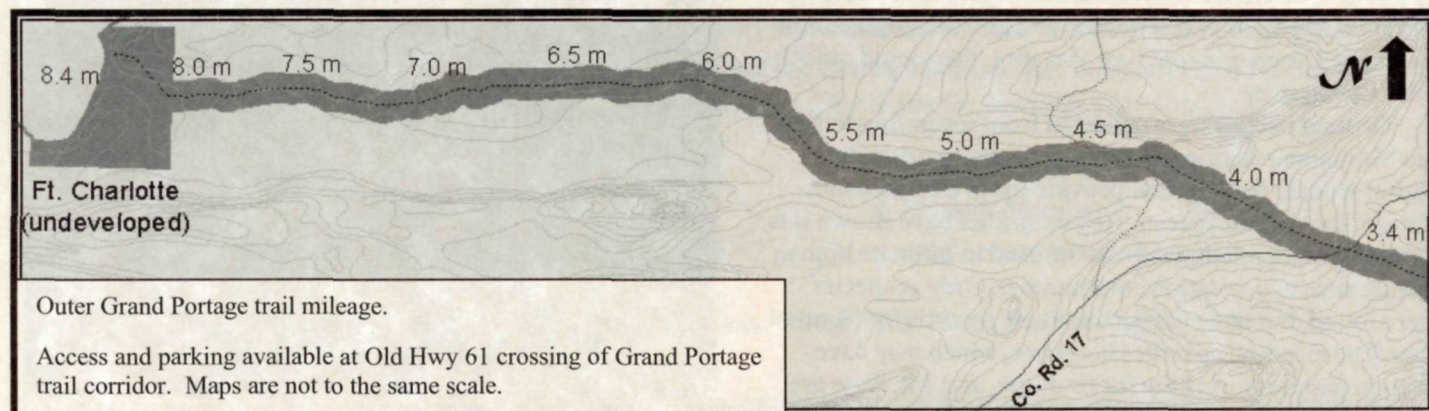
The outer portage is shielded from the moderating effect of Lake Superior by the ridges and highlands it passes through. As a result, both daily and seasonal temperatures are more extreme than along the eastern sections of trail. It can be 25-30°F warmer near Ft. Charlotte than on the lakeshore during the summer.

7.0 to 8.0 m

The distance from roads and other sources of disturbance makes evidence of wildlife more abundant along the outer portage corridor. Watch for moose and bear, and listen for wolves.

8.4 m

Canoeists still use the Pigeon River and the Grand Portage to complete journeys from the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. Two group sites and a latrine are provided for overnight campers.





Archeologists beginning a "dig" along the Grand Portage.

(Continued from page 11)

disturbance by fire, wind and insect infestations occurred on a more or less regular basis. The extent and intensity of all these factors varied from site to site, resulting in uneven stand ages. Three recent projects help determine the degree to which the forests along the Grand Portage are similar to those of 200 years ago.

A forest history study begun in 2001 examined living and recently windfallen trees for evidence of fire scarring. Cores were taken from the largest trees for aging from annual rings. The few large red and white pine scattered along the corridor, mostly from the middle of the trail to Fort Charlotte, are 120 to 160 years old.

Typically found in low wetlands, a group of northern white cedar grows in the poorly drained soil along a ridge west of Old Hwy 61. Two things distinguish these trees: their age and apparent use. This stand probably originated after an intense fire, perhaps more than 300 years ago. Although several incomplete cores yielded ages of 150 to 160 years, another held more than 300 annual rings. Many trees in this stand have scars that taper from the base to six or more feet up the trunk. While most of these unusual scars are grown over with bark, others have heartwood exposed and display crude axe marks near the top of the openings. The source of these scars remains unexplained. Perhaps if we could step back two centuries and join the voyageurs as they rested for a moment near this spot, they could quickly solve the mystery.

Ground beetles were collected from seven sites within the Monument during 2002. These beetles tend to stay within specific habitats that provide the preferred conditions of the various species. Recent studies have shown this habitat-species relationship can be used to estimate human disturbance to vegetation communities. Only 33 species were found, but five of these were new records for Minnesota. The meadow near the lake shore, which may have been in pasture during the fur trade era, and Mt. Rose are

probably the most altered from pre-historic times. High numbers of introduced species from these sites support this theory. Beetle species from sample sites along the trail corridor suggested declining disturbance with increasing distance from Lake Superior.

Recent revision of the Wildland Fire Management Plan for the Monument permitted a review of local land management history. The historic significance of the Grand Portage lakeshore area was acknowledged in the 1930s, but the trail corridor was not afforded historic recognition until establishment of the National Monument. Land use along the corridor between 1854 and 1958 was the same as the rest of the Grand Portage Reservation. Commercial logging, slightly interrupted by limited homesteading efforts in the early 20th century, has been the primary natural resource-based industry since the 1880s. During unusually dry years, slash from logging the original pine forests contributed to major fires that swept across large areas in 1917 and 1936.

The Grand Portage trail corridor is now protected from harvest and wildland fires, but still subject to periodic windfalls and insect infestations. Current management of adjacent lands includes relatively small scale harvests of hardwoods for pulp and paper production. This leaves little slash to fuel wildland fires, and enhances habitat for wildlife. The result of the complementary management practices is a mosaic of stand ages and habitat types which duplicates, but imperfectly, the natural disturbance regime. As a result, the forests visitors hike through today, appear very similar to the mixed hardwood-conifer forests encountered by the voyageurs.

Unexplained scar found on centuries-old northern white cedars along the Grand Portage.



Field Notes



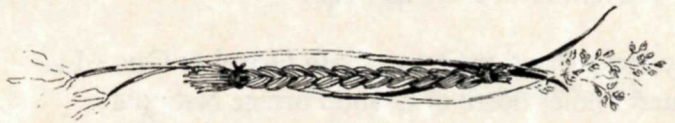
Dave Cooper
Chief of Resource Management

Though the ground is frozen as I write, the bright winter sunshine and water dripping from the eaves are a reminder that the busy field season lies just ahead. Soon we'll be pulling out the snowshoes and long johns for another early spring survey of breeding owls in the park, and enjoying some late night hikes on the portage to hear these nocturnal creatures. As soon as the ground has thawed, National Park Service archeologists will begin work in the fort, excavating a route for the installation of water lines for a new fire suppression system. This project will help us protect our reconstructed buildings from fire danger, while helping preserve information about the old buildings which once stood in the fort. A second archeological team will continue its work along the portage, searching for old encampments and rest stops of voyageurs and other historic users of the portage.

After we've sharpened up our night vision with the owl survey, we will join a university team, led by noted wolf researcher Rolf Petersen, conducting a study of bats in the park. And, we'll conduct our annual June breeding bird sur-

vey, an event as eagerly anticipated by the Grand Portage mosquitoes as any of the researchers. A soil survey is planned for later in the summer, which will help us to understand the Monument's soils and the natural resources they support. You can learn about other research on our old growth forest in an accompanying article by park ecologist Suzanne Gucciardo.

In these difficult times, a place like Grand Portage takes on special meaning. The Monument becomes a refuge for visitors where one can enjoy the outdoors and a step back into another time, a time that was perhaps simpler. But it was also a difficult way of life in an environment which constantly challenged the human spirit and body. In an effort to see the human and natural history of the Monument more clearly, our research projects help us to better appreciate the many faces of the Grand Portage story.



FRIENDS OF GRAND PORTAGE



As a member of our non-profit association, you can support the National Monument. We invite you to join us for the opportunity to be personally involved in Grand Portage's vibrant historic & contemporary communities.

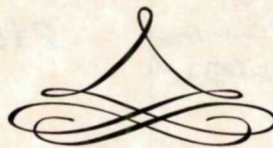
Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Province _____ Zip/Postal Code _____

- ☐ Keep me posted on Friends of Grand Portage news by e-mail at: _____
- ☐ I love Grand Portage! Please contact me, because I'd like to assist the board to plan events & projects!
- ☐ Enclosed is my check (US funds) payable to *Friends of Grand Portage*. My dues or contributions are tax-deductible, because we are a 501(c) 3 organization. Enroll me for calendar year 2003 as a:

- ☐ Patron \$100
- ☐ Sustaining Member \$50
- ☐ Contributing Member \$35



- ☐ Regular Member \$25
- ☐ Student Member \$10
- ☐ Add'l contribution \$ _____

Mail to: Friends of Grand Portage, c/o MHS, 345 Kellogg Blvd. W., St. Paul, MN 55102-1906

AREA INFORMATION:

There are a few places nearby to purchase light meals, snacks, gas, and other necessities.
*The food and lodging information provided here is for the convenience of our visitors,
and is not an endorsement by the National Park Service.*

SERVICES:

Grand Portage Trading Post & Post Office – Located just up the hill from the main stockade parking lot on Store Road. Go straight out of parking lot. Then, at fork in Stevens Road, bear right. The Trading Post is on your left just after the fork.
Phone: 218-475-2282

Grand Portage Lodge/Gift Shop – Located a short distance from the monument. Turn left out of main stockade parking lot onto Mile Creek Road. The Grand Portage Lodge is approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ mile on the left. Phone: 218-475-2401

Ryden's Border Store, Cafe Hotel & Gas – Located 3 miles north of Grand Portage National Monument on Highway 61. Go straight out of the stockade parking lot on Store Rd. Take the right fork past the Trading Post to Highway 61. At Highway 61 turn right. Follow Highway 61 to Ryden's. Phone: 218-475-2330

Voyageurs Marina – Located about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the monument. Turn right out of main stockade parking lot and go over stone bridge. Follow County Road 17 to your left, up over the hill and past the church and school. Continue to follow County Road 17 $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles, to the east side of the bay. The marina will be on your right. Under new management.
Phone 218-475-2476.

CAMPGROUNDS:

Grand Portage Marina & Campground – Marina Rd. (adjacent to Grand Portage Lodge & Casino), Grand Portage, MN, 55605. Phone 218-475-2476

Judge Magney State Park – 4051 E Hwy 61, Grand Marais, MN, 55604. Phone: 218-387-3039

Go-Fer Campground – 1201 East 5th Street, Grand Marais, MN, 55604. Phone: 218-387-1252

LOCAL STATE PARKS:

Grand Portage State Park – 9393 E Hwy 61, 5 miles east of Grand Portage. Offers a scenic trail to the spectacular Pigeon Falls. The park has a visitor contact station and sales area. There are no camping facilities. Phone: 218-475-2360

Judge C.R. Magney State Park – 4051 E Hwy 61, 14 miles west of Grand Portage. Offers trout fishing and white-water kayaking on the Brule River. There are 6 miles of summer hiking trails and 5 miles of winter ski trails. A well-maintained trail winds along the river to the Upper and Lower Falls and the Devil's Kettle, a large pothole into which half of the river disappears. Phone: 218-387-3039

Cascade River State Park – 3481 W Hwy 61, 45 miles west of Grand Portage. Offers spectacular waterfalls along the Cascade River. There are also scenic overlooks of Lake Superior. There are 18 miles of trails through a birch and spruce forest. The park has a 40-site campground, picnic facilities, and plenty of lake and river fishing. Phone: 218-387-3053

Need Special Assistance?

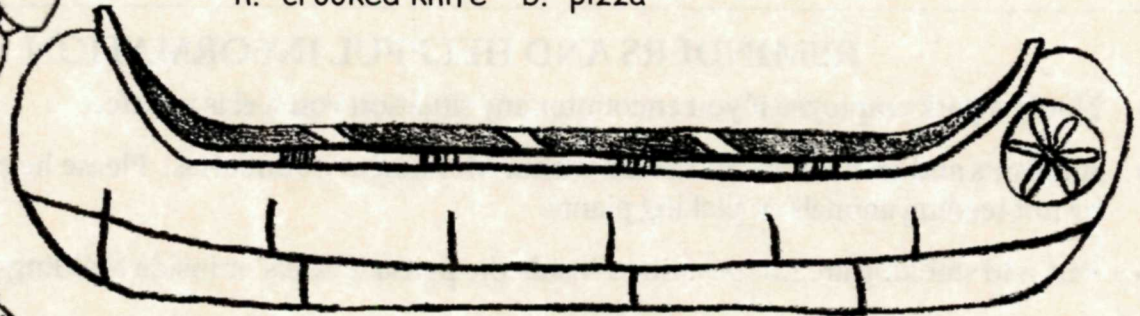
***For help or questions
concerning accessibility
at the park,
please contact
any park ranger, or
Accessibility Coordinator,
Ranger Jon Sage.***

218-387-2788 Voice/TDD

218-387-2790 FAX

jon_sage@nps.gov

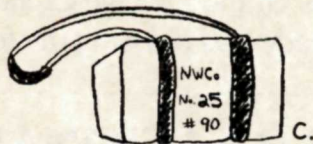
Help Pierre pack his canoe for winter in the north woods. What will he need?



- | | | |
|------------------|----------------|----------------|
| g. barrel | a. flag | d. sneakers |
| j. capot | p. flashlight | e. striker |
| i. cell phone | m. iron kettle | (fire steel) |
| n. clay pipe | c. pack | o. trade beads |
| k. corn | l. paddle | f. trade knife |
| h. crooked knife | b. pizza | |



a.



c.



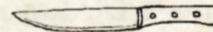
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g.



h.



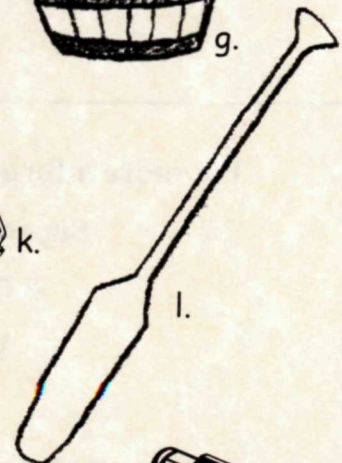
i.



j.



k.



l.



m.



n.



o.



p.

Circle the items he should pack, then color Pierre and his canoe!

Pierre would not have the pizza, cell phone, sneakers or flashlight.

A FEW TIPS TO HELP YOU ENJOY YOUR VISIT

Lead Park Ranger Jon Sage

- Wear sturdy footwear when walking on Monument trails. Please stay on the trails. Watch closely for roots and uneven ground to avoid tripping.
 - Do not drink water from streams or lakes unless you first boil or treat it.
 - Never hike alone. Always tell a friend/relative where you are going, and when you plan to return.
 - When hiking in the backcountry during summer months, the use of insect repellent and/or head nets is strongly recommended.
-

REMINDERS AND HELPFUL INFORMATION

- Notify a park employee if you encounter any situation you feel is unsafe.
 - All plants and animals are protected within Monument boundaries. Please help us protect them by not feeding animals or picking plants.
 - Pets and smoking are not permitted inside the palisade walls or inside buildings.
 - Please keep bicycles out of the palisade and secured to the bike rack provided. Do not lock bicycles to sign posts or trees.
 - A picnic area is located east of the palisade across Grand Portage Creek, and may be reached by walking the path between the creek and the palisade and crossing the footbridge.
-

VISITING ISLE ROYALE NATIONAL PARK

Information about ferry service to Isle Royale National Park is available at the Ranger Station.
Ferry schedule information is posted on the information board
located next to the ranger station entrance.

For more information about Grand Portage National Monument, contact:

Superintendent, Grand Portage National Monument,

P.O. Box 668, Grand Marais, Minnesota, 55604.

Voice/TDD: 218-387-2788 Fax: 218-387-2790

Visit our website at www.nps.gov/grpo,

or contact us by e-mail at GRPO_interpretation@nps.gov

This document can be obtained in alternate formats.

Please contact the park's accessibility coordinator to make a request.