

THE 940th MEETING OF THE BRODIE CLUB
MINUTES

The 940th meeting of the Brodie Club was held on May 18, 1999 in the Ramsay Wright Building of the University of Toronto.

Chairman: Norm Martin
Recording Secretary: John Speakman
Attendance: 21 members and two guests
Tom and Isobel Boardman, guests of Claire Muller

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved on a motion by Martin.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Jock McAndrews is looking for a head and shoulders photograph of Howard Savage for his book "Birds from the Ground The Record of Archaeology in Ontario," which Savage co-authored with Douglas Sadler. Subscriptions for autographed copies of the book are still available for \$50 or \$100.

This would be a good time to include a short biography of Savage which got lost in the piles of paper on my desk two months ago and finally surfaced.

Savage - secretary of the Brodie Club from 1978 to his death in 1997 - was born in 1913 in Oakville and went on to an MD degree at UofT, graduating in 1937 at the young age of 24. He served in the air force during the war, became a pediatrician, and practised in that capacity until his retirement in 1969.

At the age of 56, his career took off and he became a research associate with the Dept. of Ornithology at the Royal Ontario Museum and the Dept. of Anthropology at UofT. His move to zooarchaeology was the logical culmination of his long-standing interest in animal skeletons and their potential for the understanding of Ontario's native peoples.

In 1966, he had suggested a faunal analysis of Ontario archaeology, and that led to the first full-scale faunal analysis of an archaeological site in Ontario. Over the next 30 years, he analyzed fauna from more than 20 prehistoric and historic sites across Canada and from Belize to Japan.

These studies led, in turn, to broad-ranging experimental research, including the analysis of osteological stress in sled dogs, a study of arrow-point damage on white-tailed deer bones and taxonomic studies of faunal samples from modern fox dens. In his late 70s, he even descended into a fissure cave on the Niagara Escarpment to retrieve prehistoric fauna for analysis.

Throughout his "retirement," Savage taught the ever-popular faunal course at UofT, served as president of the Ontario Archaeological Society three times and won the society's prestigious Norman Emerson Medal.

Formerly active member Bill Crins has moved to Peterborough and is hoping to attend meetings once again. His new address is 170 Middlefield Rd., (705) 749-5437 or crinsw@gov.on.ca.

William Rapley, club member and director of biology and conservation at the Metro Toronto Zoo, has invited the Brodie Club for a behind-the-scenes tour but it was impossible to find a mutually acceptable time. The tour will be held at some point in the future.

Instead of going there, the club will hold its annual Field Day on June 26 at McAndrews' summer home in Codrington, due north of Brighton. McAndrews will offer tours of the Oak Ridges Moraine, Codrington Esker, Red Cloud Cemetery with its original prairie flora, Peters Woods, the giant Glenn Miller erratic rock and nearby Presqu'ile Park. Directions to get there are included at the end of the report.

Treasurer Bill Carrick started the fiscal year with \$133.40. He collected \$280 during the year, giving him a total of \$345. Expenses have cut the final balance down to \$67.51 and 35 postage stamps, following this mailing. Martin moved to accept the Treasurer's report.

Michael Boyer visited David Fowle in April, and found him much improved. Fowle planned to travel across Canada by train on June 1, spending a few days in Victoria before returning to his home in Thornhill.

Bruce Falls started his birdathon on May 19.

Harry Lumsden invited members to the FON regional meeting in Peterborough next November. He said the provincial government received more than 10,000 letters, e-mails and petitions in a massive groundswell campaign to modify the Lands for Life program. "The province listened and put land aside," Lumsden said.

Keith Reynolds invited members to a woodlands conference at Trent University on June 8 and 9. Delegates discussed woodlands conservation south of the shield.

SPEAKER:

Jock McAndrews, club member, curator emeritus of the Royal Ontario Museum and professor emeritus of botany and geology at UofT, spoke on:

The Geology of the Oak Ridges Moraine.

The speaker used a series of slides, overheads and satellite images to illustrate and explain the development of the ORM. This encompasses a region just north of Lake Ontario which begins in the west near the Niagara Escarpment and extends easterly to the Trent River at Red Cloud Cemetery, a distance of 160 km. Four major deposits consisting mainly of sand and gravel have been located at Albion, Uxbridge, Pontypool and Rice Lake.

Brief mention was made of historical studies of this area by Bigsby, 1929, Putman and Chapman, 1943 and 1985, and Bennet, 1999.

The ORM had its beginnings as the last ice sheet began to retreat about 15,000 years ago. What began as a continuous ice cover perhaps 500 meters thick extending into upper New York State began to separate into a northern Laurentide sheet and an eastern Ontario sheet. Melt water from these two sheets formed a lake which covered the ORM region and drained from the east and south as the St. Lawrence escape was closed by ice. The level of the lake was determined by outlets through the Niagara escarpment.

Melt waters from both the surface of the glaciers and at ground level created large tunnel channels up to two km. wide which extended in a northerly and northeasterly direction from the lake. These can be easily identified in satellite photographs and probably include Lake Scugog, but not Rice Lake. The enormous flow of water through these subglacial tunnels carried debris into the lake and built up the deposits which form the moraine. Several types of deposits have been identified, including subaqueous fan, fan to delta and ice marginal.

A brief mention was made of the post-glacial history of the region, using pollen data from Wilcox Lake and the Beaverton Swamp to establish the changing forest cover.

The speaker concluded that the ORM was formed over a 100-year period about 15,000 years ago. Melt water carried debris into a lake which formed between the two adjacent glacial ice lobes.

Martin expressed the appreciation of the club for an excellent presentation. The talk was followed by numerous questions concerning the development of eskers and kettles, the difference between beaches and eskers, the definition of a moraine and the role of ice in producing a moraine.

NOTES & OBSERVATIONS:

Boyer has a crow's nest in his backyard for the first time in 40 years. It is 40 feet up in a spruce tree.

Martin described the predatory behaviour of crows in Presqu'ile Park. They rob other nests and drive the birds away.

McAndrews noted an oriole tried to use his hummingbird feeder, a rare event according to Speakman. Falls noted that orioles will eat oranges and other fruit. They try to eat from hummingbird feeders, but have a hard time getting in.

Carrick reported at least one - and perhaps three- Trumpeter Swans, that followed an ultralight aircraft to central Indiana last fall, have returned to the Sudbury area, indicating the experiment has been a success. Carrick is curious to see

whether they fly back to Indiana this fall.

Jim Bendell reported a friendly Barred Owl which made unsuccessful passes at red squirrels near his feeder. He has been thrilled to see wild turkeys "all over the place" near his home in the Ottawa Valley. They apparently like woodlots and the hot meals served up in farm manure piles.

Ron Tasker said the turkeys were probably introduced from Michigan and may never have occurred in the Ottawa Valley. Lumsden said turkey bones have been found in archaeological digs at Ste. Marie Among the Hurons, near Midland, dating back to the 1640s.

Lumsden commented on foxes in Aurora and believes they are responsible for several missing cats.

John Riley commented on the "incredibly dry spring" and the effect on water tables and rivers. Vegetation looks stressed as far north as Killarney. Falls doesn't think there was much impact on migration.

Muller has contacts with people in London, Toronto and St. Catharines who are proposing to assess spring migration by consistent counts of birds in flight. The project leader, George Fairfield, is looking for volunteers who will count birds every morning from early April to early June.

Muller discussed a conservation sanctuary project in Australia which excludes introduced predators. Oliver Bertin added that an ambitious Australian plans to clone Tasmanian Devils that were preserved in alcohol a century ago. He contemplates selling them as pets.

The meeting adjourned at 10:05 pm.

THE ANNUAL FIELD DAY:

The annual field day will be held on June 26 at McAndrews' summer home in Codrington, due north of Brighton. To get there, take Hwy 401 about 90 minutes east to Hwy 30, go north 10 km to Aranda Way in downtown Codrington, and proceed to #28 Aranda Way. McAndrews has invited the club for 10 am. If that is too early, members can arrive in time for lunch.