

Awakening the Giant

Second Place Amory Adventure Winners

BY THE 1ST KANATA VENTURER COMPANY

Legend has it, that the Spirit of the Deep Water, Nanna Bijou, once rewarded a great tribe of Ojibways the location of a rich silver mine. If the mine was ever revealed to the white man, Nanna Bijou would be turned to stone. Through treachery, the mine location was discovered, but before it could be reached, a terrible storm blew up. Where once was a wide opening to a bay, now lay the sleeping figure of a man — The Sleeping Giant — and the mine was lost.

The 1st Kanata Venturers were looking for a new place to explore; something different, even more challenging than some of their other trips. The lure of inexpensive air fare (which later turned out to be just a



myth), convinced them that exploring the Sleeping Giant Provincial Park, near Thunder Bay, ON, would be more than enough challenge to provide for excitement. Along the way, they made new friends and discovered untapped strengths in themselves.

Challenges

Discovering that it would cost more than \$150.00 to fly to Thunder Bay, option number two was a 22 hour bus ride from Ottawa to Thunder Bay. There's not much to do on a bus for

22 hours, but the time passed quickly with sleeping and discussing the upcoming hike. Had we estimated enough food? Could we really hike 39.5 km over challenging terrain in five days? Would our advisors make it to the park on time? (The advisors elected to fly in order to save two days' travel time.) How would we recognize the people picking us up? These questions and more were answered with a simple "No problem", by the end of the trip.

New Scouting Friends

Retired Scouters Bill and Jeff met the bus to give us a hand with getting to Sleeping Giant Provincial Park. Along the way, they gave us a "better than any tour guide" tour of Thunder Bay and the Terry Fox Memorial. Dropped off at the park office, with the cheery words "See you in a few days" ringing in our ears, we found our campsites, set up and crashed into sleep.

Tackling the Giant, August 25 – August 28

The next day we were ready to tackle the Giant. Our route would take



Photos: the 1st Kanata Venturer Company

us from the Giant's head to his feet, with side excursions along the way. The first day's trail was mostly flat, with a beautiful campsite on Sawyer's Bay as the reward. Since we arrived earlier than expected, after setting up camp, we decided to climb to the lookout on the Giant's head. The trail went up and up and up, and then up some more. Even without our packs on, it was a torturous climb. But the view from the lookout was absolutely phenomenal: you could see for miles and miles. A reading of the height above sea level at the top (1595 feet) compared to at our site (637 feet) meant that we had climbed an incredible 958 feet up!

No Room

Arriving at our second planned campsite by noon the next day, we discovered it was too small for six Venturers and two advisors. In fact, there was barely room for one pack! A quick decision resulted in us trekking onward to our next day's reserved campsites, on the other side of the peninsula.

Thunder Cape Bird Sanctuary

Along the way, we stopped to visit the Thunder Cape Bird Sanctuary. Migrating birds are caught, measured, weighed and banded here, providing useful information on their habits and patterns. If you've never held a live bird in your hand, feeling its heart beating like a small drum in your palm, you can't understand how doing so makes you feel more connected to nature. Before we knew it, we had to say goodbye to our new friends, and continue down the trail to reach our campsite.

Our relatively easy day of only 8.8 km turned into 15 km, with a difficult boulder field to cross before reaching our site. The extra hiking was definitely worth it, as our site was on a rocky shoreline with a fresh water spring. It had been a strenuous day, and we went to bed exhausted after a quick campfire.

No Room, Again

The sounds of brewing storms prompted us to get going early in the morning. It must have just been the Giant snoring, because the rain never materialized. Arriving at our next campsite at noon, once again we discovered that it wasn't suitable for our group. We decided to push on to Sawyer Bay, where we had spent our first night. Along the way, we passed a trail to the

Nanabosho lookout. Half of us elected to make this second climb, the other half decided to continue on to the site.

A Flintstone Camp

The first group arrived at the Sawyer Bay site, to find it redecorated — Flintstone style! A shale windbreak protected the fire pit, but best of all was the "Flintstone WROK TV" made from flat shale and charcoal.

The "look-outers" found us without mishap, so we set up camp and went exploring for firewood. It was then we found it — the remains of an old ship. Perhaps it had to do with the silver mine?

Trail's End

In the morning, not having to rush to our next campsite (since we were already on it), we went for a walk around the bay and discovered two broken down shacks and several rusty metal tools. Were they part of the old logging operation, or a previous fishing lodge? No one knew. Eventually we packed up and traveled back to the park headquarters for our last night.

New and Old Friends

Scouting friends, both new and old, picked us up and we returned to Thunder Bay. After dropping our advisors at the airport, they took us out to Fort William Historical Park. This is a log fort with all sorts of interesting historical activities to try. We did our best to carry the heavy loads as the voyageurs used to do (way too heavy!) and threw axes at a target (not too successfully).

Afterwards, Scouters Bill and Alan picked us up and treated us to a barbecue, swim and hot tub. Before we knew it, we were saying goodbye to our new friends and settling down for another long bus ride.

It was a great trip. Not only did we challenge ourselves, but we learned that Scouting makes traveling easy. Wherever you go, when you meet a Scout (or Scouter) you'll find it's true: once a Scout, always a Scout; ready to lend a hand and be a friend. ∞

Venturers:	Advisors:
Daniel Parker	Don Stephen
David Thomson	Doug Bancroft
Doug Carson	
Gord Stephen	
Kate Brown	
Taylor Goldthorp	

A Great Big Thank You

It all started when the phone rang at our meeting with a long distance call. "This is Bill Dickerson, in Thunder Bay, calling... I hear that your company needs transport out to the Giant this summer? I'll round up some retired Scouting friends, and we'll take care of you!"

And take care of the 1st Kanata they certainly did. Retired Scouters Bill Dickerson and Jeff Jones, formerly of the 17th Westminster Group (Thunder Bay North), retired Scouter Al Creighton, formerly of the 15th Port Arthur, and retired Scouters Mike and Daryl Jones were unsurpassed hosts.

This wonderful example of "beyond the call of duty" efforts on the part of Bill and his Scouting friends was responsible for turning a summer hiking trip for Venturers into a life experience for youth transitioning into adulthood. It also proves that there are no "strangers" in the Scouting Movement, only friends yet to be met.

On behalf of the 1st Kanata Scouting Group, considerable thanks to our new friends in Thunder Bay. We hope one day to be able to return the favour!

Night Safari
A Camping Adventure

- * Wildlife Show- see the animals upclose!
- * Guided night walk in the zoo!
- * Accommodations & Supper included!

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