



The Grand Portage Guide



History's Gift to The Present

Superintendent Tim Cochrane

Welcome to Grand Portage and the new Heritage Center. Please explore the new exhibits; some with objects that have been unearthed from archeological investigations and some made by Grand Portage Ojibwe artisans. And be sure to make time to visit the historic depot area where you can be immersed into the spirit of the fur trade and chat with staff about life at historic Grand Portage.

But the Grand Portage story is about more than old objects or times gone by. As you spend time here, there are many surprises to encounter and reflect upon. The Grand Portage story is not over, nor should it be tucked away in a dusty book. There is much that happened here a long time ago that can teach us, and give us

perspective on the trials we face today. The time of the North West Company here at Grand Portage – 1780s to 1803 – is our historical “bullseye.” The NWCo operated its summer headquarters and shipping hub from this location. Cross continental in scope, the “NWCo” partners made huge profits trading cloth, goods such as kettles and knives, guns and ammunition, and alcohol.

In its rawest form, without restraint, fur trade competition was ruthless. When prime beaver fur was becoming hard to find in this and nearby districts, Peter Pond opened up the fur rich area centered around Lake Athabaska in what is now northern Alberta and Saskatchewan. The largely untapped Athabaska District became extremely valuable and Pond tried to hold exclusive rights to it. His headstrong ways led to killing two rivals. Pond never stood trial, likely protected by imposing company partners. Unrestrained competition would sometimes inflame tempers if rival traders sought to gain an extreme advantage or try to run their competitors off. These struggles often took places in remote lakes, during the cold and dark of northern winters.

During the height of the power of the North West Company, clerks would sometimes beat Ojibwe trappers who wished to trade with another company. Occasionally their furs were taken under hostile circumstances. These harsh

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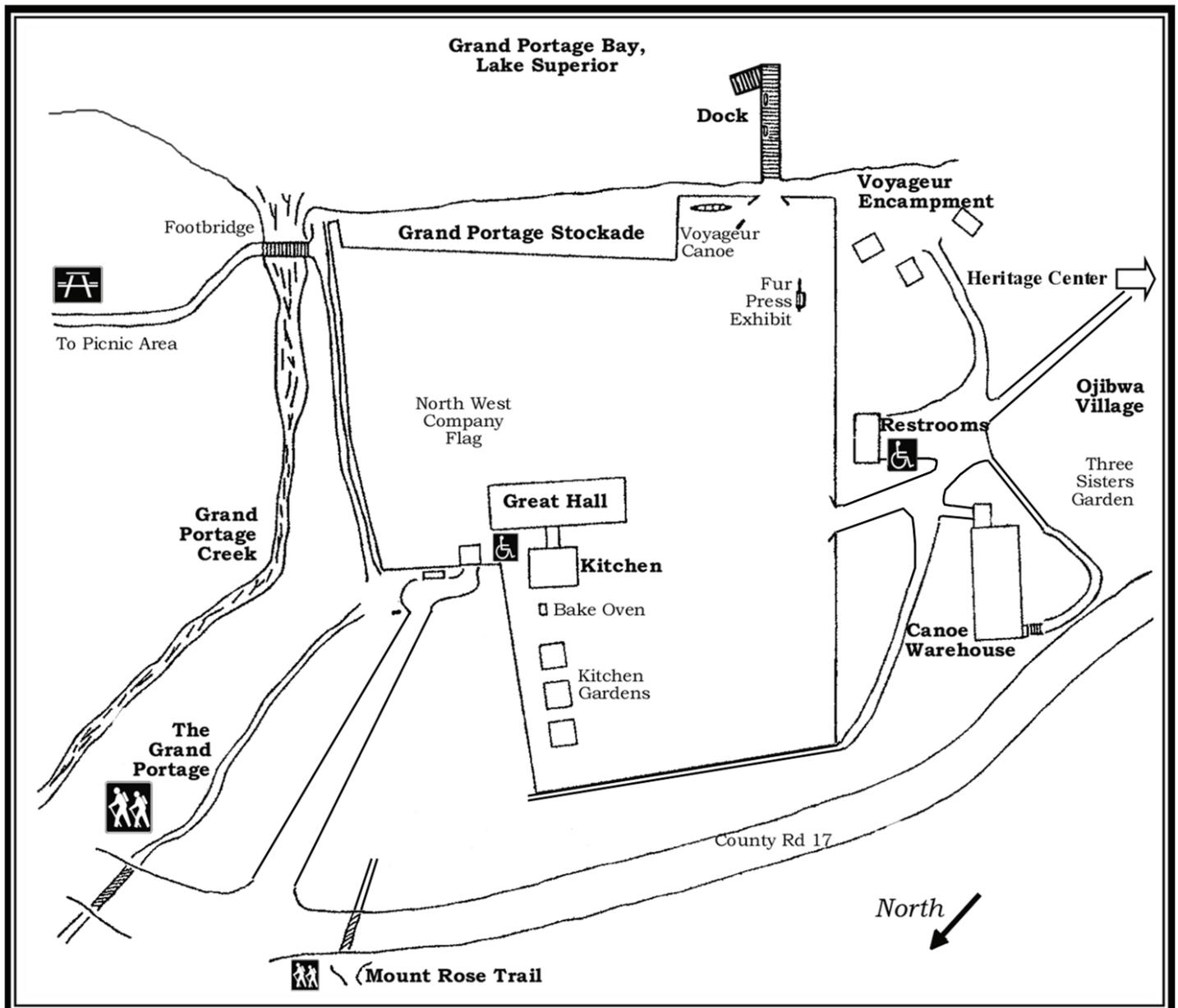
Boozhoo *Bonjour* Welcome

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 and Volunteers-In-Parks (VIPs) staff these buildings. You will find rangers and VIPs wearing dress appropriate to the period, or in the NPS uniform.



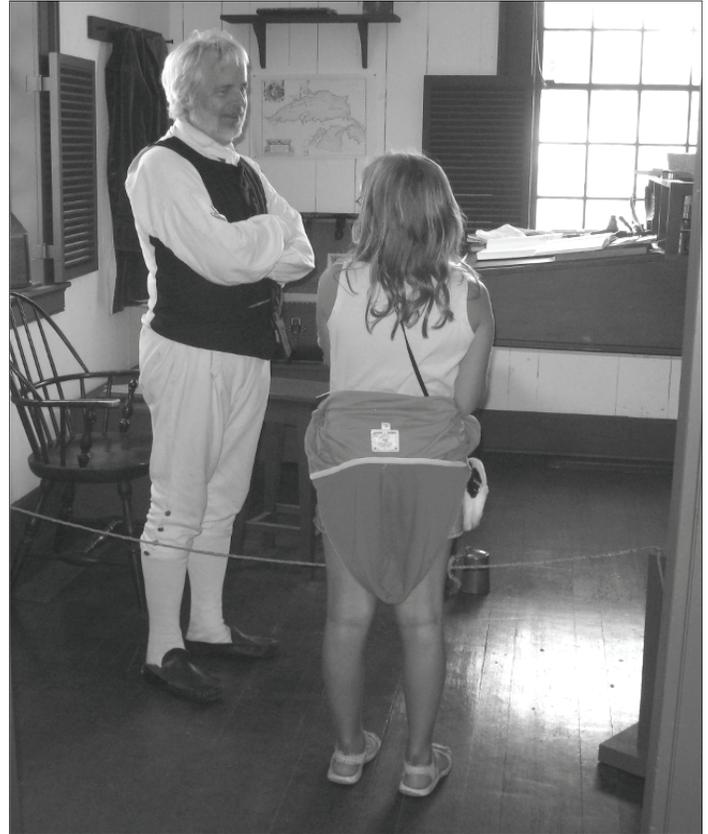
ACTIVITIES & RANGER-CONDUCTED PROGRAMS

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. 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.



Wayne Krefting re-enacts the life of a clerk for the NWCo. during Rendezvous Days.



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 in the Heritage Center or ask information desk staff 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

Video programs are offered regularly in the Heritage Center classroom. There are several to choose from. *Please see "Notes" below - Schedule subject to change.*

- Northwest Passage: The Story of Grand Portage – Running time is 10 minutes. - *Note: Shown on the hour.*
- The Voyageur – Running time is 20 minutes. - *Note: Shown on the half-hour, except 10:30 & 2:30.*
- The Birch Bark Canoe Builder – Running time is 30 minutes. - *Note: Shown at 10:30 & 2:30.*

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 Heritage Center or at one of three registration boxes located along the Grand Portage.

Mt. Rose Trail: The Mt. Rose trail, located across from the historic depot, 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 Official Map and Guide
- Ojibwe Lifeways
- Historic Garden
- Bird Checklist

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 Heritage Center and 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 found in *your* local library:

“A Historical Guidebook: American Indian Places” edited by Frances H. Kennedy, 2008. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, MA, New York, NY, 335 pg.

“Minong - The Good Place: Ojibwe and Isle Royale” by Timothy Cochrane, 2009. Michigan State University Press, East Lansing, Michigan, 285 pg.

“Celebrating Birch: The Lore, and Craft of an Ancient Tree” by North House Folk School, 2007. Fox Chapel Publishing, PA, 178 pg.

“John Beargrease: Legend of Minnesota’s North Shore” by Daniel Lancaster, 2009. Holy Cow Press, Duluth, MN, 173 pg.

“We Are at Home: Pictures of Ojibwe People” by Bruce White, 2007. Minnesota Historical Society Press, 260 pg.

“Fingerweaving Untangled: An illustrated Beginner’s Guide Including Detailed Patterns and Common Mistakes” by Carol James, 2008. Published by Carol James, Fiber Artist, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, 64 pg.

“The Sound the Stars Make Rushing Through the Sky: The Writings of Jane Johnston Schoolcraft” edited by Robert D. Parker, 2007. University of Pennsylvania Press, 292 pg.

These books are also available at the Eastern National bookstore in the Grand Portage National Monument Heritage Center.

The Grand Rendezvous

Ranger Karl Koster

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 full weekend of August. The event is held in conjunction with the Rendezvous Days and Powwow, 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. Reenactors 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 National Parks: America’s Best Idea,” A New Film Series

Acclaimed filmmaker Ken Burns can now add “honorary park ranger” to a resume that already includes two Academy Award nominations, seven Emmy Awards, and 20 honorary degrees.

Acting National Park Service Director Dan Wenk recently presented Burns and his production partner Dayton Duncan with honorary park ranger certificates and traditional ranger hats during a ceremony in the Department of the Interior Auditorium. After receiving the awards, Burns and Duncan previewed and discussed a short film based on *The National Parks: America’s Best Idea*, their six-part, 12-hour series scheduled to air on PBS stations nationwide this September.

“Ken and Dayton have created a documentary film on the national parks and the origin of the National Park Service that provides Americans an opportunity to reflect on the significance and value of our national parks,” said Wenk. “Their film will assist the National Park Service in communicating important messages and themes, such as the wonder of our natural and cultural heritage preserved in the National Park System; the unique American ideas and ideals that the System represents; and the inclusion of America’s diversity in its past, present, and future.”

Duncan, the series’ writer and co-producer, first thought of making a film about national parks during a cross country vacation in 1998. The project, eight years in the making, traces the birth of the national park idea in the mid-1800s and follows its evolution for nearly 150 years. Creating the series was a labor of love for Burns and Duncan who both said that many of their fondest memories include experiences shared with family members in national parks.

Burns, the director and co-producer, said the cinematography in the series is the most stunning of his nearly 30-year career. He mixed scenic shots with archival footage and photographs and supplemented them with first-person accounts from historical characters as well as personal memories and analysis collected from more than 40 interviews. Like his prior epic works including *The Civil War*, *Baseball*, and *Jazz*, Burns’ latest documentary has a quintessentially American theme.

“National parks embody an idea as uniquely American as the Declaration of Independence and just as radical: that the most magnificent and sacred places in our land belong not to royalty or the rich but to *everyone*- and for all time,” said Burns. “While making this series, we discovered more than stories of the most dramatic landscapes on earth. We discovered stories of remarkable people from every conceivable background. What they had in common was a passion to save some precious portion of the land they loved so that those of us who followed might have the same chance to fall in love with that place. Without them, parks would not exist.”

(Continued from page 1)

methods were known enough that some Ojibwe families would not travel on the Grand Portage trail for fear that their furs would be stolen. Instead, they sometimes made a path parallel to the trail to escape detection by some of the more violent fur trade men.

Head to head competition between the North West Company and its chief rival, the Hudson Bay Company, generally shifted trading advantage to Indian trappers. In order to secure trade the competing companies would seek the favors of Indian trappers. One way to please the Ojibwe who brought in furs, was to raise the value of “made beaver” or what one pelt could be traded for. With companies competing, Ojibwe could get a little bit more cloth or a larger kettle for their pelts than before.

Competition also spurred traders to be more liberal with gifts and alcohol. Company clerks would be more lavish with their gifts such as gartering (for trim on garments), molton and stroud woolen cloth, tobacco, ammunition, and other goods. The objective of gift giving was to reinforce trading “bonds” with a particular trader, but these gifts were an additional cost to the company, or occasionally if the trader was working on a commission it would cost him money as well. When companies combined, or cooperated, the economic advantage shifted to the Euro-American traders. The North West Company itself came into being when rival traders created a partnership and pooled their investment, employees, and tactics.

But successful trading was as much about cooperation with Ojibwe as an economic endeavor. Trading was more akin to alliance making with an Indian group. Trading rituals were created and a temporary friendship or better yet kinship between trader and trapper was a key to success. Each side had different ideas of the value of furs, cloth, and what were considered good manners. Ojibwe customarily fed and made sure friends entering their camp were well taken care of before any important talks or trading. Traders often emphasized their

kinship – some were married to Ojibwe women – or close relationship with Ojibwe trappers prior to any negotiations.

The fur trade was, at its roots, a cross-cultural endeavor, and we continue, even today, to reap the benefits of our cross-cultural connections in many positive ways. Unfortunately, this year Grand Portage lost a remarkable leader who understood two very different worlds and was cross culturally adept. Gilbert Caribou knew traditional ways and Anishinaabemowin (Ojibwe language), and taught them to anyone who would try. He was also the long time secretary-treasurer of the Grand Portage Band’s tribal council. In one of his last conversations with me he pointedly called the new Heritage Center, “not just part of a national park, but his park too.” He felt good about helping with the exhibits. He was a role model of the power of working together. We will miss him.

Gilbert was above all a teacher. He would deliberately tell stories that pointed out the richness of Ojibwe life and subtly remind us that history is not always as it first appears. He was always learning. He would not be surprised to know that fur trade history – like all history – is more complicated than one might first guess. After the North West Company left Grand Portage an upstart company, aptly named the American Fur Company, attempted to get a trading “toe-hold” here. First based in Grand Marais, operating out of hastily built log structures, the main workforce was initially dominated by Afro-American-Ojibwe brothers, the Bonga brothers. Accomplished woodsman and trader, George Bonga was the go-to-guy, not the French-Canadians or Scotch, or English that we might imagine.

When we are alert, history can be full of surprises. Thinking about the story of Grand Portage, it has much to teach us today about business practices, competition, and cooperation. Please enjoy your visit with us.

The Maple Sugar Cone

Ranger Bernard Olker

At the one room country school I attended in northwestern Wisconsin during the 1950's, there were students from more than six ethnic backgrounds. Of all the cultural traditions brought to the school, the best was the maple sugar cone. My Ojibwe classmates would bring these enticing treats to school each spring. Made from a piece of birch bark formed into a cone and filled with hardened maple sugar, they would last for several weeks, providing the lucky owners with a seemingly unending supply of this sweet treat. Each spring, their grandmother would make them for her grandkids when she made maple sugar, as her grandmother had done for her. What we were seeing was a tradition that was being handed down from generation to generation since long before recorded history.

When Europeans first arrived in North America, they found Native Americans making maple sugar each spring. Alexander Henry was one of the first English fur traders to enter the Great Lakes region right after the French and Indian War. In his book [*Travels and Adventures in Canada* page 68 -70] he talked about the Ojibwe that he was living with making thirty-six gallons of maple syrup, sixteen hundred pounds of maple sugar, plus eating three hundred pounds of maple sugar while they were in their sugar camp. He also stated that

maple sugar was their principal food for the entire month of April. Today we know that maple sugar has the same calcium content as whole milk. It has fifty calories per tablespoon as opposed to sixty calories per tablespoon in corn syrup. It also is rich in many minerals, vitamins, and amino acids. The Ojibwe used the maple sugar as a flavoring in their food in place of salt, as a medicine, as a preservative, made it into sweet drinks, and used it in trade to obtain European trade goods. Here at Grand Portage during the 18th century, especially when the North West Company was lo-

cated at this site, maple sugar was used to obtain trade goods and its production increased substantially.

In the hills in back of Grand Portage, as well as all along the north shore of Lake Superior, large groves of sugar maples (*Acer saccharum*) can be found. The rights of a family to harvest maple sugar from a given grove were usually passed down from one generation to the next. Since the work of harvesting maple sugar was at this time done primarily by the women, they were the ones who held the rights to the groves. A family or an extended family would gather together at the camps each spring for the harvest. The men at this time would usu-



Maple Sugar Cone

(Continued on page 8)



Sugar Bush

by Carl Gawboy

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ally be off doing the late winter trapping, hunting, and fishing.

Maple sugar making season, even today, lasts from three to four weeks during March and April when sunny warmer thawing days are followed by cold frosty nights. Traditionally, maple sugaring season was such an important time of the year that it had its own name, *Izhki-gamisegi*, the month of the boiling moon. Native peoples knew that when the crow returned to the northland from its annual winter migration it was a signal to start the move from the winter camp to the sugaring camp among the maple groves.

Once at their grove, a wigwam had to be setup. Alexander Henry describes this structure being twenty feet long and fourteen feet wide. It had an opening in the top and a fire-pit in the center running the whole length of the structure. Birch bark containers, as well as other supplies previously stored at the camp, would be retrieved and made ready. It was important to be prepared when sap first started to flow because at the start of the season, it usually took thirty gallons of sap or less to make one gallon of syrup. Later in the season would take forty or more gallons of sap to make one gallon of syrup. One gallon of maple syrup makes

about seven pounds of maple sugar. A maple tree will generally yield about ten gallons of sap per tap. To tap a tree, a short slanting gash was made in the bark on the sunny side of the tree. At the bottom of this gash a spiel, made out of wood, was inserted into the lower end of this gash. The sap would then flow down a lengthwise groove in the spiel and drip into a waterproof birch bark container positioned below the spiel. Many camps would tap 900 to 1,000 trees each season. It would take many trips to collect the sap and haul it back to the wigwam where the boiling was done. Prior to the introduction of the European metal kettles, the sap would have been allowed to freeze and then the ice that had formed on the top would be thrown away. This would help concentrate the sugar in the remaining sap below the thin layer of ice prior to its being boiled. Sap was boiled and stirred all the while to remove the excess water and thus transforming it from sap into maple syrup and then into maple sugar. The boiling was done in containers made of birch bark, or hollowed out logs by dropping hot rocks into these sap filled containers or by using clay vessels suspended directly over the fire. In Johann Georg Kohl's book [*Life Among the Lake Superior Ojibwe*, page 323 - 324] he describes three different kinds of sugar the Ojibwe would make. Granulated sugar was made by boiling and



Tapping maple trees, Wigwam Bay on Mille Lacs Lake.
Photo Courtesy of The Minnesota Historical Society

stirring the sap until it began to crystallize. This granulated sugar was packed into birch bark containers called *makuks* (like those that visitors will see in both the Kitchen and Great Hall inside the historic depot). The second form of sugar produced was “Cake sugar.” This was made by pouring the thickened syrup, just prior to crystallization, into various kinds of molds. The birch bark maple sugar cones my classmates brought to school were one form of cake sugar specially made for children. The third kind was produced by throwing the thickened syrup onto the snow where it would cool rapidly. In this case it did not crystallize, but would remain pliable for some time much like taffy.

When the European fur traders arrived, they introduced the metal kettles, pails, metal axes, and drills. This helped make the sugaring process in camps more efficient, and allowed the Ojibwe to produce even more. As mentioned earlier, maple sugar became a valuable

trade commodity when the North West Company started buying large quantities of it. The legendary fur trade company used it as a flavoring, especially in pemmican. Pemmican was a food made by combining dry pulverized meat with animal fat and some flavoring such as maple sugar or dried berries. This was a high energy food that would remain edible for five years or more. It is pemmican that solved the food provisioning problems the North West Company encountered with their long supply lines between Grand Portage and their far flung distant trading posts.

In the reconstructed Ojibwe camp and Heritage Center exhibits at Grand Portage National Monument, it is easy to overlook the maple sugar displays and the large *makuks* containing maple sugar in both the Kitchen and in the Great Hall. It is not until one understands the important role that maple sugar plays in the lives, traditions, and culture of the Ojibwe, and the fur trade era as represented here at Grand Portage National Monument, that one can appreciate the significance of these exhibits. Seeing these displays certainly helps me appreciate the simpler times of my school days and my classmates enjoying their maple sugar cones as well as the traditions that it represents.



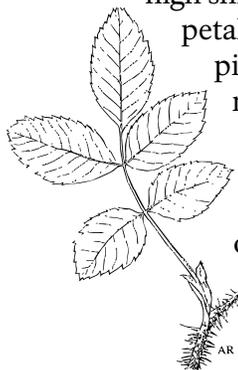
An enticing treat

What's That Plant?

North American Ojibwe people traveled through country abundant with vegetation in diverse states of bloom and maturity of fruit. They were astute observers of nature and used knowledge of plants handed down from generation to generation. Early European immigrants and the voyageurs, guides, clerks and partners of the North West Company learned North American plant uses from Ojibwe people and other tribes along the routes. Europeans also brought plant seeds either on purpose or by accident. Look for plants both familiar and new as you discover Grand Portage National Monument, but please, take only pictures and stay on paths so that our other visitors may enjoy the plants as you have. Please note: line drawings are not to scale.

Prickly Rose (*Rosa acicularis*)

Take a walk over to the picnic area or near the warehouse in June. Your nose will soon detect an intense fragrance near thickets of these pink-flowered, waist-high shrubs. Five-

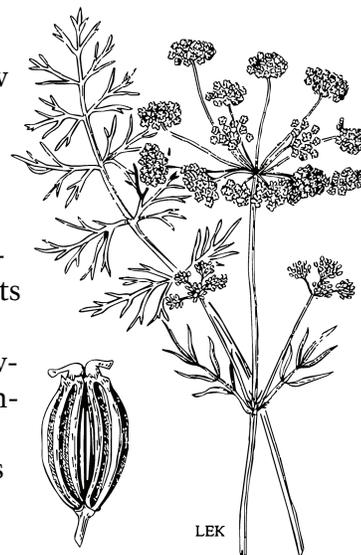


petaled white or pink flowers laden with numerous stamens are characteristics common to all members of the rose family. Ojibwe children ate the red-orange fleshy vitamin C-rich rose hip fruits after scooping out dry "furry" seeds. Ojibwe people call the shrubs O-GINII-mi-NAGA-wunj or Rose-Tree.



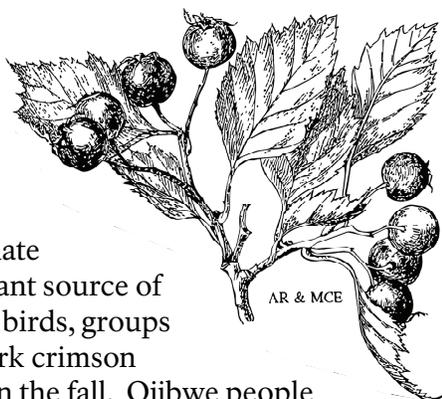
Caraway (*Carum carvi*)

Introduced from Europe, these biennial plants grow from deep taproots. Widespread around the palisade and picnic area, botanists are not positive whether fur trade gardeners introduced these plants or they escaped from settlers' gardens. White flowers appear during the summer. Used to season foods, caraway seed fruits are mature by fall.



Fireberry Hawthorn (*Cretaeus chrysocarpa*)

Thorny shrubs about 15 feet high just north of the three sisters garden are Hawthorns, O-GIN-ik in Ojibwe. Note the frequently toothed leaves also characteristic of the Rose family. Five-petaled white or pinkish flower clusters appear in late spring. An important source of food for migrating birds, groups of three or four dark crimson "apples" develop in the fall. Ojibwe people crafted awls from the thorns of the local hawthorn species.



Fireweed (*Epilobium angustifolium*)

Ablaze in purple, Fireweed often grows profusely in clearings where fire has passed and along roadsides or singly around campsites and portages. Four-petaled flowers bloom beginning at the bottom of the spike up from mid-summer into fall. A single plant may have buds on top, blossoms in the middle and newly formed slender seedpods on the bottom. Ojibwe people used poultices of oja-cid-JII-bik leaves on bruises and to remove slivers.

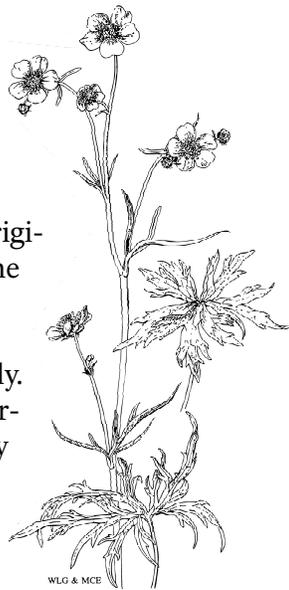


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Wild Buttercup

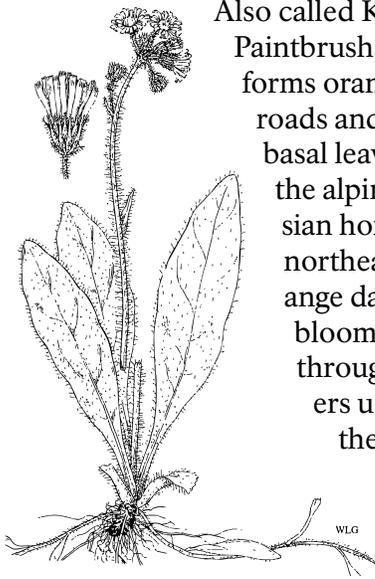
(*Ranunculus acris*)

Common in unmowed areas around the palisade and along roadsides, Wild Buttercup is originally native to Europe. Note the deeply lobed palmate or “crowfoot” patterned leaves placing buttercups in that family. Five to seven bright yellow overlapping petals bloom from May to September. Ojibwe hunters used the seeds of a related native species as a hunting medicine.



Orange Hawkweed (*Hieracium aurantiacum*)

Also called King-devil and Devil’s Paintbrush, this low perennial forms orange-red patches along roads and in clearings. Elliptical basal leaves are adaptations for the alpine habitats of its Eurasian homeland. Common in northeastern Minnesota, orange dandelion-like flowers bloom from mid-summer through autumn. Ojibwe hunters used the yellow flowers of the similar native Canada Hawkweed (*H. kalmi*) for hunting charms.



Bird’s-Foot Trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*)

This European legume is often planted in disturbed areas to control erosion. Note rounded clusters of flowers that mature into “bird’s feet” of slender erect pods. Look for



If you want more beautiful vistas of the lake and to familiarize yourself with more Northwoods plant life, take a self-guided Mount Rose Trail brochure from the box at the trailhead. Did you notice plants not identified in the available literature? A notebook containing plant names and photographs is offered in the Heritage Center. Just ask a National Park Ranger in uniform or period dress for help! Planning to look for wildflowers along the Grand Portage? Before you go, take a look at the wildflower and tree books in the nature section of our Eastern National store.

the showy yellow flower patches near the lakeshore about mid-summer.

Elderberry (*Sambucus pubens*)

In 1988 efforts to control shoreline erosion included the placement of rock boulder barriers. Upon placement of the barrier, PA-pash-kisi-GANAK, Elder-Trees in Ojibwe, were planted on the rocky banks to help stabilize them. In early spring the small yellowish-white flowers bloom in pyramid shaped clusters. Compound leaves with five to seven sharply serrated leaflets are characteristics common to the elders. Avoid the poisonous bright red fruit, mature in late summer and autumn.



Ninebark (*Physocarpus opulifolius*)

The Ojibwe’s misk-WAZI-wusk is a native shrub in the Rose Family that grows well on shores and rocky banks. Horticultural varieties were planted along the shore in 1988 for erosion control. Toothed leaves are oval or three-lobed and the bark peels off in strips. White flowers bloom in mid summer producing pale-brown fruits in clusters of two to five that persist into the winter. In traditional Ojibwe medical practice, the root was used to induce vomiting.



Line art from *Illustrated Companion to Gleason and Cronquist Manual*, N.H. Holmgren, 1998, and *Canoe Country Flora*, M. Stensaas, 1996.

Field Notes

Chief Resources Management Dave Cooper

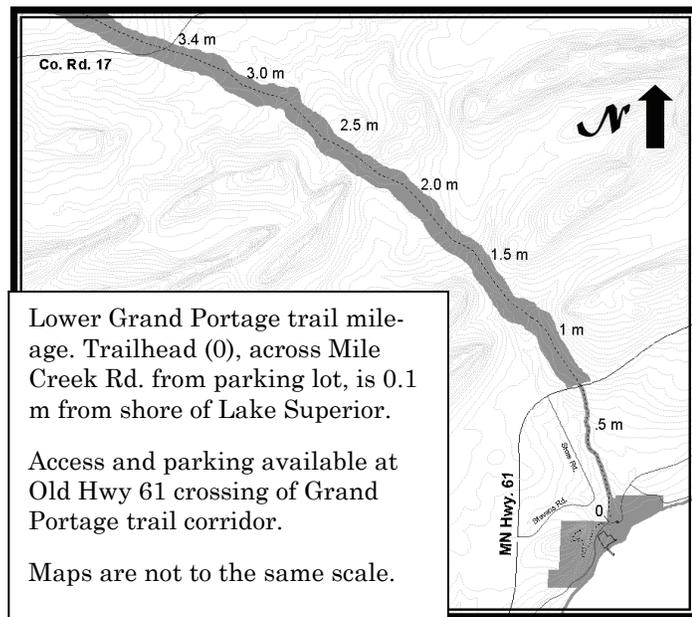
Like the voyageurs of two centuries ago, the resource management staff at Grand Portage eagerly sniff the late winter air and watch the thinning ice for signs of spring. Each spring begins the hectic period we call the “field season” when researchers hit the woods and new projects get under way. Some early season projects need to be completed before leaf-out; others (like breeding bird surveys) are done at the peak of the humid mosquito season; while other projects (like prescribed fire use) need periods of dry weather.

A major project for 2009 includes archeological explorations at Fort Charlotte, at the west end of the park on the Pigeon River. A team of archeologists from the NPS Midwest Archeological Center will work with park staff to document and assess the condition of the rival North West Company and XY Company forts which in the late 1790s

stood glaring at each other across the quiet meander of Snow Creek. The team’s goal is to develop a management plan for preserving the remains of these important fur trade resources.

Two other research teams will be studying populations of “ethnographic” plants, that is, plants that were used by and important to the native Grand Portage Ojibwe. These studies will include sweet-grass, caraway, chives, Jerusalem artichoke, and a very special grove of white cedar, some of which were alive at the time of the voyageurs! Again, the teams’ goal will be to recommend ways of protecting and continuing these plant populations, which are living ties to the landscape of the 1700s-1800s.

In an effort to restore traditional native land management practices to part of the national monument, the park will be working with the Grand Portage tribal fire crew to bring yearly prescribed burning back to the meadow area east of Grand Portage Creek. Spring burns were traditionally used to keep this area open until the 1970s, reflect-



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 farther inland. This first section of the Grand Portage passes through the heart of the modern Anishinabe community.

0.5 to 1.0 m

A Rough Guide to the Grand Portage

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.

ing the extensive use of fire that Native Americans employed for maintaining forest openings for living space, agriculture, berry picking, and attracting wildlife. While annual mowing has helped keep this area (the original village site of Grand Portage) open, fire is an important tool for reducing the buildup of dead thatch and invasive grasses which are slowly choking out native species like sweetgrass and rushes.

Other research teams will be helping study other aspects of the park’s ecosystem and environmental health. Sampling of park soils and aquatic species (both fish and tiny invertebrates) will be used to detect the presence of contaminants (like mercury) in Grand Portage’s soils, streams, and wetlands. Another team will be seeking evidence of invasive earthworms which may be disrupting park soils and vegetation. The health of the local beaver population (which has rebounded since the days of the fur trade) is being studied from both on the ground and in the air, in partnership with the Grand Portage tribal fish and wildlife



biologists and a University of Minnesota researcher. As seen below, #44 was an eager participant.

Please enjoy your visit to Grand Portage National Monument, and please help us preserve the Monument’s fragile resources by practicing the ethic of “take only pictures and leave only footprints.”

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

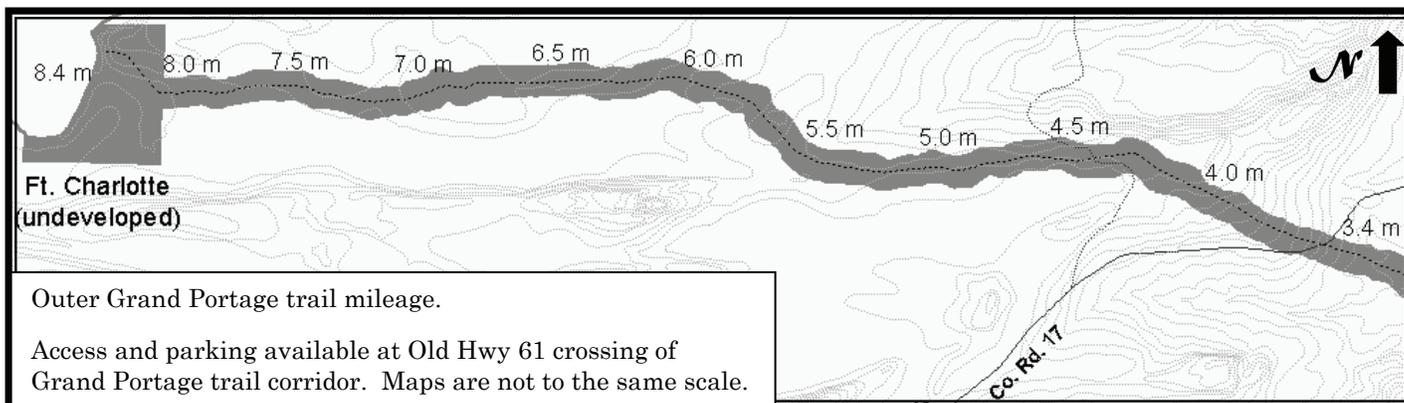
The outer portage is shielded from the moderating effect of Lake Superior by the ridges and highlands it passes through. As a result, both daily and seasonal temperatures are more extreme than along the eastern sections of trail. It can be 25-30°F warmer near Ft. Charlotte than on the lakeshore during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



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, & Rendezvous Grill, Post Office & SPUR Gas – Drive about 1/2 mile west (a right hand turn out of Heritage Center parking lot) on Mile Creek Road. The Trading Post, Post Office and SPUR gas station are on the right between Mile Creek Road and Highway 61. Phone: 218-475-2282

Grand Portage Lodge/Gift Shop/ Island View Dining Room – Drive about 1/2 mile west on Mile Creek Road. The Grand Portage Lodge 100-room facility is on the left at the stop sign. Phone: 218-475-2401

Ryden's Border Store, Cafe Hotel & Phillips 66 Gas – Located 3 miles north of Grand Portage National Monument on Highway 61. At any junction to Highway 61 in Grand Portage, turn right (east) on Highway 61. Follow Highway 61 to Ryden's on your left. Phone: 218-475-2330

Voyageurs Marina – Located about 1½ miles from the monument. Follow Mile Creek Road east 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 1½ 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

Grand Marais Recreation Area – Highway 61, Grand Marais, MN, 55604. Phone: 218-387-1712

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?

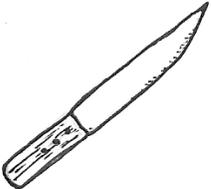
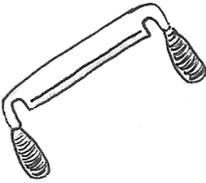
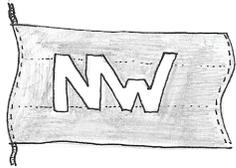
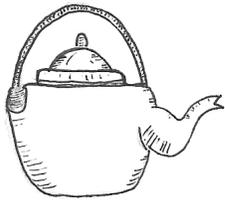
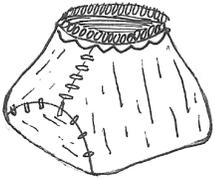
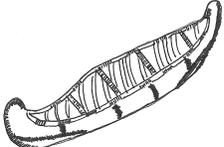
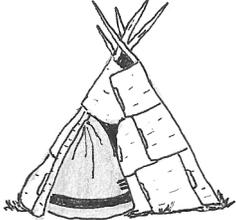
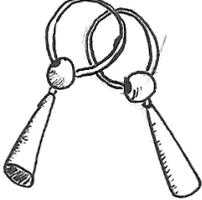
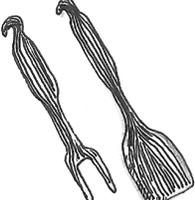
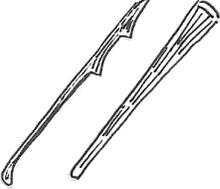
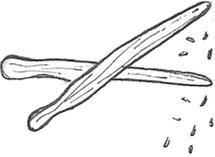
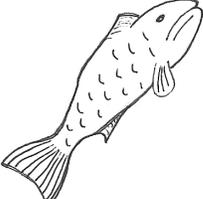
For help or questions concerning accessibility at the park, please contact any park ranger, or Accessibility Coordinator, Ranger Jon Sage.

218-475- 0123 Voice/TDD

jon_sage@nps.gov

Kids Page: Fur Trade Bingo

Circle objects you see in the Heritage Center, Ojibwe Village, Voyageur's Encampment, Warehouse, Kitchen and Great Hall as you tour Grand Portage National Monument. Find five objects in a row—vertically, horizontally or diagonally and you win!

B	I	N	G	O
				
				
				
				
				

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.
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VISITING ISLE ROYALE NATIONAL PARK

For information about ferry service to Isle Royale National Park please ask park staff.

For more information about Grand Portage National Monument, contact:

Superintendent, Grand Portage National Monument

P.O. Box 426, 170 Mile Creek Road, Grand Portage, Minnesota, 55605.

Voice/TDD: 218-475-0123

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.