

# THE GREY OWL SOCIETY

Bulletin No. 24



Edited by Betty Taylor

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Our thanks to member, Dagmara Ginter, for typing the final version of this Bulletin!

## The Bear Island Indians and the Grey Owl Connection

Michael G. Johnson

The Bear Island Indians were probably the first group of native Canadians that Grey Owl (then Archie Belaney) met, shortly after his arrival in Toronto in 1906. Bear Island is a small Island in Lake Temagami (also spelt Timagami), about 250 miles north of Toronto and 60 miles north of the town of North Bay, Ontario, which now lies on the Trans-Canada Highway. Who the Bear Island Indians are is more difficult to explain. The Canadian Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Indian Affairs Branch, Ottawa, has listed them as a distinct band called Timagami or Temagami, numbering 106 (1949), 126 (1959), 160 (1970) and 189 (1978) and calls them Ojibway and Cree. Traditionally, it appears that they held family hunting territories to the north and west of Lake Temagami, but gathered in summers near the Hudson Bay Company trading post on the island.<sup>1</sup> Referring to the *Handbook of North American Indians*, Vol. 15 "Northeast" and Vol. 6 "Subarctic", the band is assigned to the Southeastern Ojibwa regional subgroup. Rogers includes them in his treatment of the Southeastern Ojibwa (Rogers 1978: 764), however curiously, they are listed by Smith as a band of Western Woods Cree (Smith 1981: 269). They are missed completely by Rhodes and Todd in their list of settlements of Cree and Ojibwa (Rhodes and Todd 1981: 53-54), but Johnston, himself an Ojibwa, includes their location within his boundaries of the "Southeastern Ojibway" (Johnston 1976: 10). However, their Cree admixture suggests family ties to the north.

In 1906, thousands rushed north to Cobalt on the west side of Lake Timiskaming, northeast of Temagami to the new silverfield. Archie seems to have followed with friends shortly thereafter but moved to Temagami the following May, working at the Temagami Inn which was newly established to accommodate tourists and hunters from the south.<sup>2</sup> It is at this time that he made friends with Indians on Bear Island and attempted to persuade the manager of the Hudson Bay Company post to back him as a trapper.

He returned to England in 1907 but was back at Temagami in 1908 when he met Angele, a Bear Island Ojibwa, whom he married in 1910, producing a daughter, Agnes, in 1911. However, he left the area in 1912 for Abitibi and later Biscotasing. After serving in the Great War, Archie returned to Biscotasing and stayed and trapped with the Whitefish Lake and Spanish River Ojibwa, only returning occasionally to see Angele. A second daughter, Flora, was born in 1925, but shortly after Archie left and Angele never saw him again.

In 1913, the anthropologist Frank Speck, visited the Bear Island Ojibwa, interviewing two band chiefs, Aleck Paul and Frank White Bear, who both knew Archie. Speck later published a monograph which contained myths and folklore from the Timagami (Temagami) and Timiskaming Indian bands (Speck 1915).<sup>3</sup> During the spring of 2004, Colin Taylor rang the writer to discuss details of a trip that he planned to make – the Rupert's Land Studies Colloquium being held in May 2004 at Kenora in western Ontario.<sup>4</sup> He explained that whilst in Canada he planned a visit to Bear Island and did I have any information about the Indian band there? A postcard from him suggested he was well received by local people and was taken to the Island by Albert Lalonde, Grey Owl's grandson; unfortunately, I was never able to share any further details of his visit.

In the summer of 2000, the writer and his wife accompanied by Cath and Ron Oberholtzer,<sup>5</sup> made the long drive from Cobourg, Ontario, to Manitoulin Island, visiting a number of Southeastern Ojibwa reserves en route, including Rama, Shawanaga, Whitefish River and Wikwemikong (an unceded reserve on Manitoulin Island). We witnessed a huge Indian gathering and pan-Indian pow-wows which have been enthusiastically adopted by the Southern Ojibwa of Ontario from their kinsmen farther west, since the 1960s. Craft workers on many

reserves produce birchbark boxes decorated with porcupine quills in floral and realistic designs, a craft probably arriving in the Ojibwa domain from the eastern maritime area of Canada; one full sized birchbark canoe was seen for sale on Manitoulin.

The Ojibwa's original homeland, when first contacted by the French, was the northern rim of Lakes Huron and Superior. Between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries they fanned out – in promotion of the Fur Trade – southwest into the present states of Wisconsin and Minnesota and west into what is now Manitoba and Saskatchewan and a few bands found their way into North Dakota, Montana, Alberta and even British Columbia. They also moved east and south into southern Ontario, occupying areas once home to the Huron and gaining ground from the Iroquois. In this huge area there was no “tribe” in the popular sense but a shared heritage, language and some customs. Ethnologists have divided them into the Southeastern, Northern, Saulteaux and Plains divisions, simply for convenience. The Ojibwa are also known as Ojibway, Ojibwe, Chippewa (in the United States), Mississauga (in southern Ontario) but they prefer their own name, *Anishinabe* “The People”. The U.S. Census for the year 2000, returned 106,000 “Chippewa” with an equal number of “Ojibway” in Canada and thousands of Metis with their ancestry competing with the Navajo, Cree and Cherokee as the largest “tribe” in North America.

### Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> See Bulletin 22:27 for an interesting photo of this Post.
- <sup>2</sup> The Temagami Inn was destroyed by fire in January 1999 (See Bulletin 18:27).
- <sup>3</sup> There is one Speck Memoir in the Society archives – on the Algonkian Bands of the Ottawa Valley (See Bulletin 23:9).
- <sup>4</sup> See Bulletin 23:17.
- <sup>5</sup> Cath Oberholtzer is a lecturer in anthropology and native art and archaeology of the Americas, at Trent University, Peterborough, Ontario. She has a specific interest in the native cultures of the Northeast and Subarctic regions, particularly the James Bay Cree.

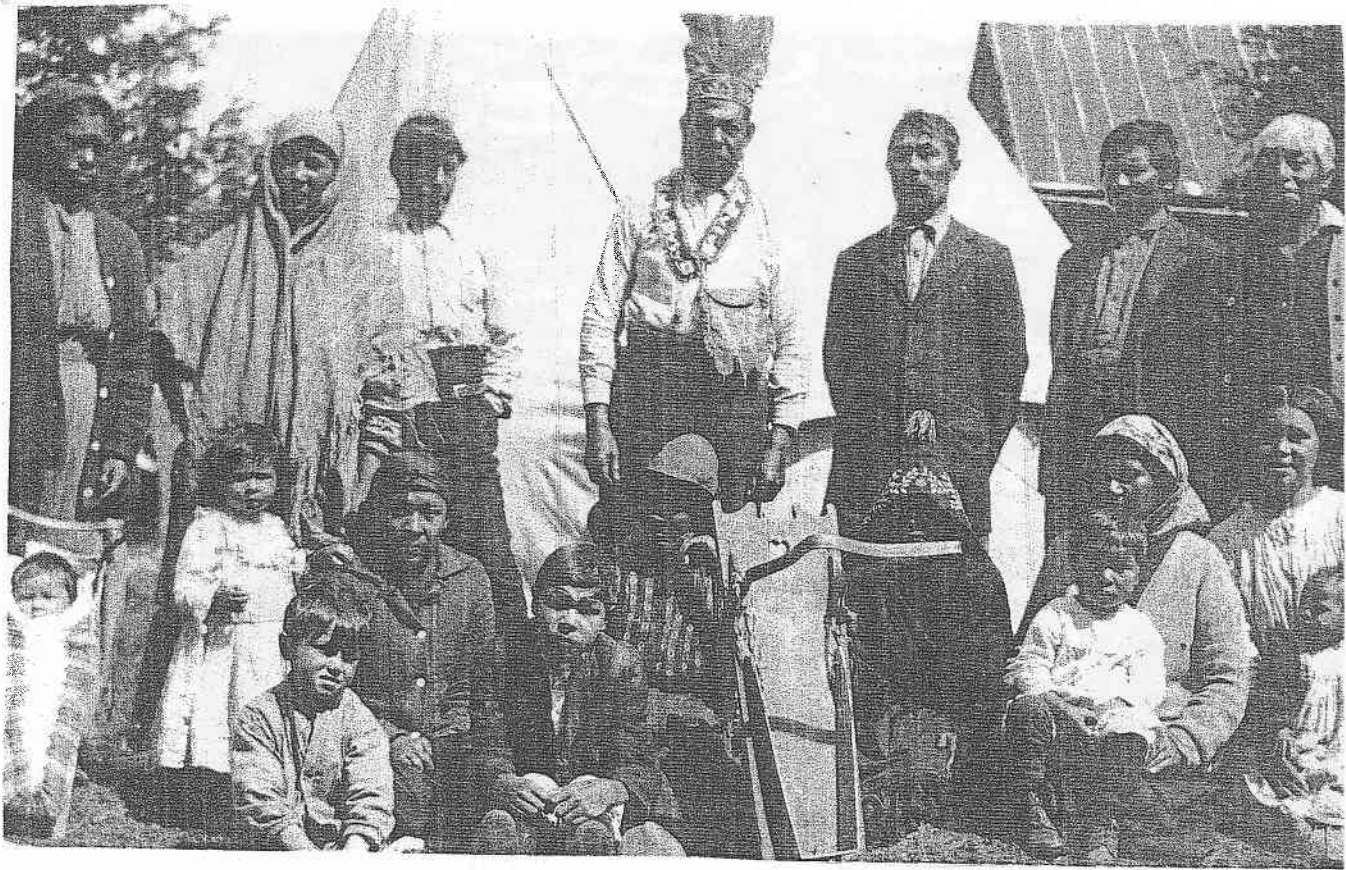
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Mike Johnson (long time member of The Grey Owl Society) is an independent scholar with a specialization in the linguistic relationships of Native Americans. He has published extensively over the past forty years, both in the United States and the U.K. He has made many field trips in the Northeast (Woodland Indians region) and has amassed a large and interesting collection of artefacts.

NORTHEASTERN OTJIBWA  
MAIN AS DEFINED BY JOHNSTON & ROGERS.  
RELEVANT TOWNS & CITIES  
MIXED WITH CREE  
MIXED WITH OTTAWA (ODAWA)  
MIXED WITH POTAWATOMI  
19<sup>TH</sup> & 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY NATIVE COMMUNITIES & RESERVE

2005





**Above:** Bear Island Ojibwa Indians in 1913. Chief Frank White Bear in the centre and Chief Aleck Paul to his right. Angele (Archie Belaney's first wife), standing second left and her daughter, Agnes, immediately in front of her. (Photograph by Frank Speck).



**Left:** Chief Frank White Bear, Bear Island Ojibwa, 1913. Note the beaded headdress, collar and pouch. (Photograph by Frank Speck).

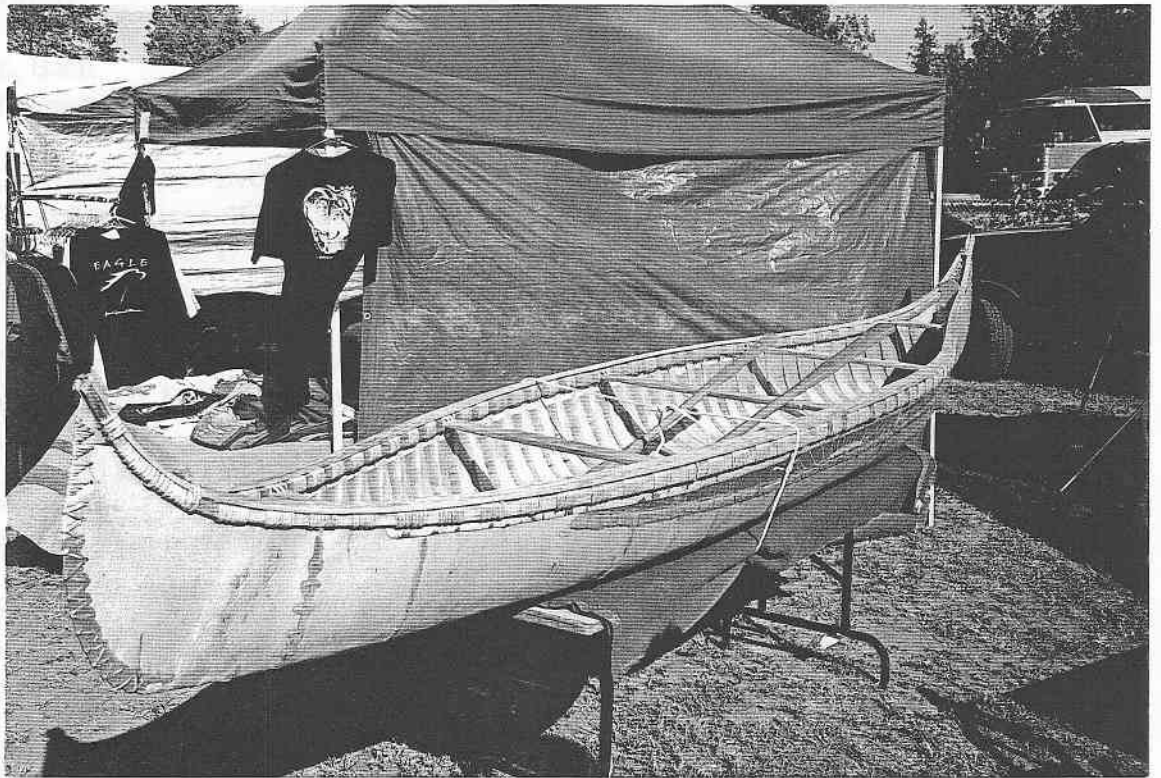


**Above:** Contemporary porcupine quilled bark boxes, offered for sale at the Curve Lake Whetung Centre, Curve Lake Indian Reserve, Ontario. (Photograph by Michael Johnson, August 2000).

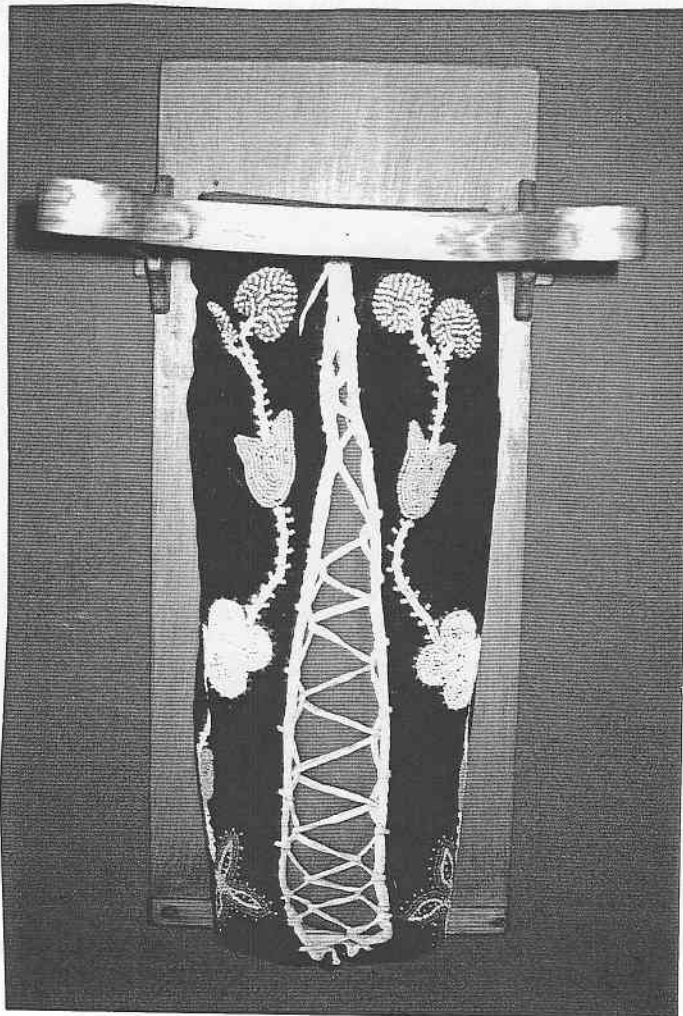
**Below:** Contemporary and old porcupine quilled objects of birchbark in the Whetung Centre Museum, Curve Lake Indian Reserve, Ontario. (Photograph by Michael Johnson, August 2000).







**Above:** Birchbark canoe on display at Wikwemikong Indian Pow-wow, August 2000. Probably Southeastern Ojibwa. The prow and stern on Southwestern Ojibwa canoes had a much more rounded profile. (Photograph by Michael Johnson, August 2000).



**Left:** Large doll's cradle board, similar to the full size cradle boards used by the Bear Island women in Grey Owl's time. Note the curved bow which gave protection to the baby's head. Canadian Ojibwa and Cree cradles had a laced cloth bag to hold the babies, whereas the Minnesota and Wisconsin Ojibwa (Chippewa) style had a rectangular piece of black cloth wrapped around. (Michael G. Johnson Collection).



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May 2005



The author, 'Mike' Johnson (centre) at the annual Grey Owl Society Dinner. December 1998.

## “...Of The Right Heart”

Brad Muir

(In last year's Bulletin (No. 23:17-18), Dagmara Ginter wrote up her reminiscences of a trip to Grey Owl's Cabin on Ajawaan Lake. Brad Muir, a guide with Prince Albert National Park, arranged the visit for Colin and Dagmara and he sent the following report which appeared in the *Parks Canada Employee Newsletter* for July 2004).

“Far enough away to gain seclusion yet within reach of those whose genuine interest prompts them to make the trip, Beaver Lodge extends a welcome to you if your heart is right”. So wrote Archie Belaney, better known as Grey Owl, of the sojourn to the lakeside cabin that was his home in Prince Albert National Park from 1931 to 1937.

With the ice only two days off Kingsmere earlier this spring, I hosted a visit to Ajawaan on behalf of the park, for Dr. Colin Taylor of the U.K. and Dagmara Ginter of Poland. Colin Taylor is the secretary of the Grey Owl Society based in Hastings, England, which was Grey Owl's birthplace. Ms Ginter is a university lecturer and expert on the writings of Grey Owl. Our trio hiked 23 km after helicopter drop-off at Northend on Kingsmere, as we made our way in and out from the cabin site and back to the trailhead. For many people from around the world this is no routine excursion, whether the distance is travelled on foot or by boat or canoe. Rather, it is often a “pilgrimage”.

I felt this sense of respect and thoughtful consideration from both Colin and Dagmara as they stepped into the clearing, stopped and silently absorbed the cabin scene. Perhaps thirty seconds passed before Colin uttered a greeting, as if expecting to have come upon Grey Owl and the beaver unexpectedly. This, along with several other moments in the day, assured me that he and Dagmara were indeed, of the “right heart”. Both of them genuinely appreciated the time and effort Parks Canada committed to hosting their visit. The connections between Grey Owl's Hastings roots and the literary and conservation fruits of his Canadian branches will continue to thrive. The importance of the Grey Owl-PANP history will be noted not only as it was through Colin's presentation at the Nature Centre seasonal opening the night before the trip, but in articles and first hand accounts this inveterate storyteller will relate in his travels.

Experiences like these remind me of the best kind of work I do for the national parks of this country.



Brad Muir and Dagmara Ginter in front of Grey Owl Cabin (Prince Albert National Park, Saskatchewan).

# The Ethnological Content of Grey Owl's Writings

## Part III: The Woodland Indians' ceremonial life

Dagmara Ginter

Grey Owl, being a participant observer of the Indian activities for at least six years, must have seen and even taken part in some of their ceremonies. He gives some glimpses of his knowledge of the Ojibway ceremonial life in *Pilgrims of the Wild* where he boasts of his ability to "dance the Grass Dance to a drum, and sing the Wabeno very creditably" (Grey Owl 1934: 17). In the footnote he explains the Grass Dance as "part of the War-Dance" and *Wabeno* as a "Ceremonial Dance accompanied by singing". He is absolutely right in regarding the first of these as a War-Dance. The Grass Dance, according to James Howard, was the term applied to the warrior's society in the Omaha tribe. The term "grass" referred to the ancient custom of wearing, by the society's members, some grass in their belts. It spread from the Omaha amongst such Plains tribes as Pawnee, Ponca, and Dakota, as well as the Plains Ojibways called Bungi from whom their Woodland cousins could adopt it. At the time that Grey Owl was associating with the Ojibways the Grass Dance, although apparently still retaining the historical status of a war society, had already lost many of its previous ceremonial features and had evolved into an ordinary social dance.<sup>1</sup>

As for the *Wabeno*, Grey Owl gives a too general and vague definition to be of any real ethnological value. But it is certain that the ceremony, named as such, existed. Donald Smith explains that it was a thanksgiving ceremony accompanied by all-night fasting and dancing held in autumn before the Indians' return to their winter hunting grounds (Smith 1990: 261). James Howard defines *Wabeno* as "the ceremony performed by an organized religious group similar to the Midewiwin", which "seems to have constituted a rival organization" (Howard 1964: 127).<sup>2</sup> It must be pointed out here that the *Midewiwin* had great religious significance for the Ojibways. Its ceremonials were held once a year either in late spring or early autumn and were concerned with healing sick individuals. Its popularity amongst the Ojibways stemmed from this tribe's great preoccupation with health and gaining knowledge about the medicinal powers of herbs was one of the most significant objectives of this Society's members (Taylor 1991: 245-248).<sup>3</sup> It is a great pity indeed that Grey Owl does not mention in any of his books this characteristic Woodland festival. But, on the other hand, it is highly probable that its ancient religious significance was lost in the first decades of the twentieth century or might not have even been practised by those Ojibways that Grey Owl associated with.

In *The Adventures of Sajo and Her Beaver People* the author gives a very interesting account of *Wabeno* as a ceremony "used only by the Medicine Men, or for reciting of great events" (Grey Owl 1935: 166). The reason for organizing this festival is the safe return of Sajo and Shapian from the far-away city with two luckily retrieved beaver kittens. Whether the term *Wabeno* is used here correctly or not and whether the described event did actually take place cannot be really testified. But the description does have certain ethnological validity since Indians often celebrated unusual events by dancing and recounting, in spontaneous chanting, what really happened. The depiction of *Ne-Ganik-abo*, the Chief, is noteworthy indeed. He wears a great eagle feather bonnet and dances to the rhythm of drums holding a turtle shell rattle which he shakes violently. Grey Owl also points to "the hollow deer-hoofs" which "fairly rang, like little copper bells, keeping time with the swift movements of his feet" (1935: 165). Apart from the various drums and rattles which were used as the main rhythm-providing instruments and which accompanied all sorts of Indian ceremonies, those deer-hoofs were an important element in the dancer's outfit. They are usually referred to as dew-claws and they performed the function of noise-makers. Attached to the legs of the dancers they "[added] the rhythm of sound to that of motion,... [possessing] a delightful ringing-rattling quality when shaken against each other" (Mason 1946: 68).

One can only question the information about the Chief's bonnet of eagle feathers. Such bonnets were an essential feature of the Plains Indians' material culture and were not originally worn by the Woodland tribes. However, in Grey Owl's time the process of the emergence of the Plains Indian as the symbol of the North American Indian was already in full swing and eagle feather bonnets were amongst the main Plains accoutrements to receive widespread Indian recognition (Ewers 1965: 531).<sup>4</sup>

In *The Men of the Last Frontier* the author describes a very interesting ceremony during which he was to receive his Indian name "Grey Owl". His mentor, *Ne-ganik-abo*, performed "the conjurors' dance" to the rhythm of drums, reed pipes, and turtle shell rattles "before a sacred bear-skull set beneath a painted rawhide shield" (Grey Owl 1931: 225). The Indians intoned cadences consisting of meaningless syllables: "Hi-Heeh, HI-Heh, Ho! Hi-Heh, Hi-Heh, Ha!" transferred later into the excellent imitation of the owl hoot: "Hoh-Hoh, hoh-hoooooooo!" Grey Owl's biographer, Donald Smith, discards this ceremony as the offspring of Belaney's vivid imagination on the basis of the fact that *Wabeno* was supposed to be the only ceremony to which special non-whites were invited and no naming ceremonials were held at that time (Smith 1990: 261). One can agree with the supposition that no naming or adoption ceremonies occurred during *Wabeno*, but one could question Smith's assumption in relegating this to merely a product of the author's imagination. The Ojibways, as most Northern American Indian tribes, often held totally spontaneous ceremonies, the reasons for which were many and varied. They could be initiated for example because of the hunter's success, or for the people's thankfulness for the plentitude of food. The Algonquians had many informal feasts such as "eat-all and spring thanksgiving" ones, which were usually accompanied by dancing (Honigsmann 1978: 730).<sup>5</sup>

Another theory is that Grey Owl could have observed the *Midewiwin* ceremony, referred to by Ritzenthaler as the Medicine Dance, and come up with his own version of what he called "conjurors' dance".<sup>6</sup> He, as a white man, could not, of course, become a member of the Grand Medicine Society of the Ojibways. Having condemned the white man's world, he could only dream about being "shot" by the magic shells which, he might have believed, would drive out wholly the 'sickness' of civilization from his mind and body.<sup>7</sup>

Whether a fact or just a product of Grey Owl's imagination, the description of the mysterious naming ceremony has considerable validity in it and must have been something very important for the author, since he even made a sketch of it (Fig. 1). The conjurors, whoever they were, are depicted very convincingly as holding small flat hand drums and turtle shell rattles utilized, as has been observed, during all sorts of ceremonies. Besides, the bear-skull was endowed with a lot of symbolic meaning and was being turned frequently into a ceremonial object. Indians' singing does have an authentic ring as well. As Hoffman has noticed, the Indian songs consist of "mere repetitions of short phrases, and frequently but single words, to which are added meaningless sounds or syllables to aid in prolonging the musical tones..." (Hoffman 1891: 192).

#### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> See Howard 1951: 83 and 1964: 130; see also Densmore 1918: 468.

<sup>2</sup> The term "*Wabeno*" was originally applied to the third class of mystery men or shamans. (The word literally meant "Men of the Dawn", "Eastern Men", or "Morning Star Men"). They were known as being favoured by evil spirits and pretending to practise magic. In the ancient times they used to provide the so-called "hunting medicine". If the hunter was successful, *Wabeno* organized a thanksgiving feast to his tutelary daimon, which was accompanied by singing and dancing during the night. The word "*Wabeno*" was, therefore, also applied to, what Schoolcraft terms, "midnight orgies" perceived as "degraded form of the mysteries of the Meda [*Midewiwin*]"; see Hoffman 1891: 156-157 and also Ritzenthaler 1970: 101.

<sup>3</sup> For the description of the whole ceremony see Hoffman, 1891.

<sup>4</sup> Grey Owl and the Woodland Indians such as Ojibways and Cree might have, in fact, come into early contact with the Plains, especially the Sioux, some of whom occupied the Prince Albert region after the Minnesota Massacre and the Custer conflicts in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Certainly, there could have been an exchange of



<sup>5</sup> I am indebted to Colin Taylor for drawing my attention to the spontaneity with which Indians organized various feasts.

<sup>6</sup> There was probably nothing wrong with special non-Indian guests observing such rituals. Frances Densmore saw the ceremony at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century conducted by Shingibis from the Ojibway village on the north shore of Lake Superior; see Densmore 1977: 7-8.

<sup>7</sup> One of the most important features of the ceremonials was “the magical ‘shooting’ of the shells into the bodies of the candidates”. The Mide priest had special medicine bags called *mi’gis* which were “full of a mystic vital force” and were supposed to “drive out the sickness and renew life”. They were pointed at the candidates, and the shell was dropped in front of each of them who was to behave as if he had been shot; see Ritzenthaler 1970: 90.

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11

## **Society's Summer Visit: Hucking Estate, Kent** **Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> May**

We were only nine this year for the annual early-summer get-together. It was an unfortunate coincidence that so many members "phoned in with 'regrets'", through illness or prior engagements.

However, the nine of us had quite an adventure even getting to Hucking, which was as isolated a hamlet as could be found in southeast England! After driving for some miles along lanes that were barely wide enough for one car and where signposts were virtually non-existent, we miraculously all met up at the lonely pub "The Hook and Hatchet Inn", albeit some of us a little late! We were lucky again this year with the weather – sunshine and intermittent cloud, the rain keeping at bay – and after a picnic lunch, we 'trekked' off to find the **Grey Owl Society's** trees!

The "Woodland Creation Scheme" at Hucking Estate, near Maidstone in Kent, is run by **The Woodland Trust** who wrote that Hucking was "falling victim to the rigours of intensive agriculture", adding that tree preservation orders were being flouted. The Woodland Trust is the U.K.'s "leading woodland conservation charity" and Hucking is their "largest community woodland scheme in south east England". **The Grey Owl Society** made a donation to the Hucking scheme in 2001 (for further details, see Bulletin 20:18) and were subsequently sent two Certificates giving the Plot Locations of our trees (A0097 and A0098). When we at last discovered our section, there was some wry amusement at the comparatively small size of the trees (small oaks). Of course, they were only planted – we assumed – in 2001 so perhaps we shouldn't have been so surprised! We then had a photograph session (Peter Marsden and Adrian Barak taking the snaps – see next page) before strolling back to our starting point for cups of tea and coffee.

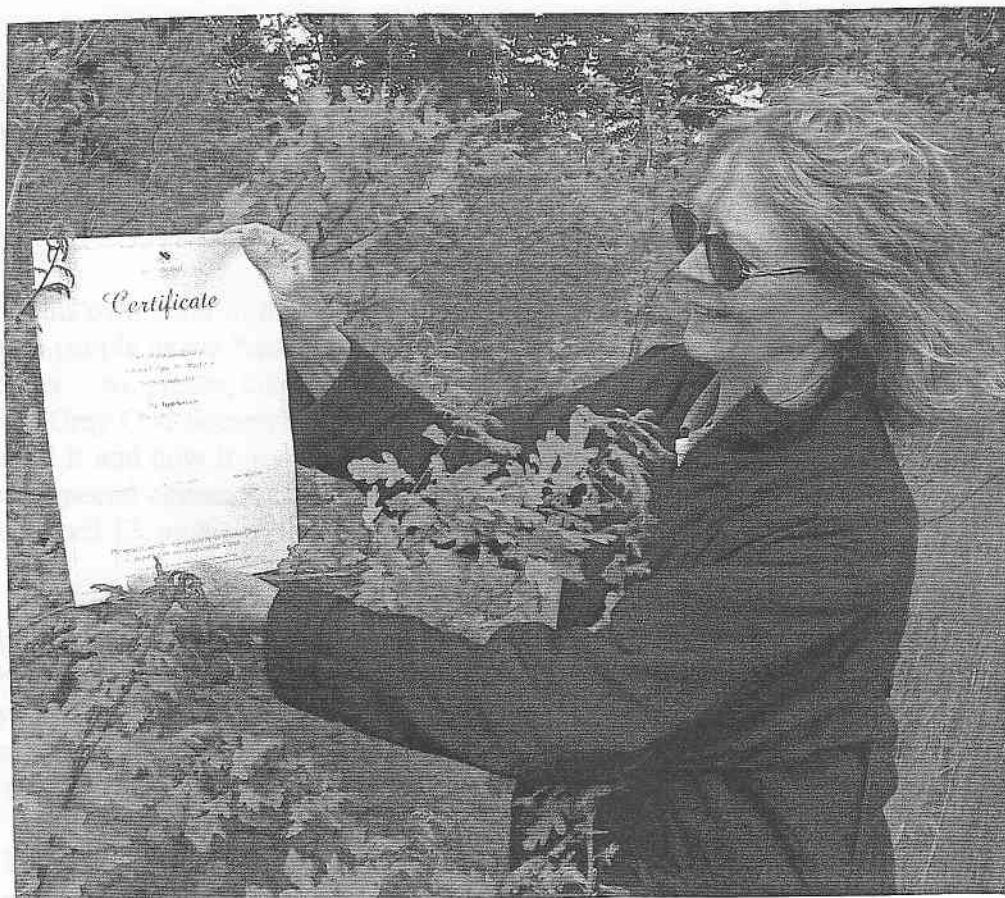
There were clumps of wild flowers (including speedwells, stichworts and vetch) but not a lot of bird life (wrong time of day perhaps?).... however, we did watch a serin!

The Hucking area, as already stated, is remote and rather difficult to find, but the surrounding scenery with views across the North Downs Way is beautiful – which is to be expected, of course, in the county known as "the Garden of England". The journey is well worth the effort to take a picnic and have a day out!

Barry Taylor with the Grey Owl Society's Certificates giving the locations of the new trees.



Grouped by the Society's oak trees at Huckling, Kent.  
Members (from left to right): Ian West, Betty Taylor, Jenny Ridd, Adrian Barak, Jenny Logan, Janet White, Norman Epton and Pat Held. (Photograph by Peter Marsden). (See previous page).



Betty Taylor with the Grey Owl Society's Certificates, giving Plot Locations for the oak trees.

## *The Adventures of Sajo and Her Beaver People – a Bulgarian Translation.*

A paperback copy of *Sajo...*, in Bulgarian, has been donated to the Society's archives by **Lyubomir Kyumyurdjiev** of Sofia, Bulgaria. Lyubomir had corresponded with Colin several years ago and had tracked down some of Colin's books. But it was through his correspondence with our Hon. member, **Paul Goble** of Rapid City, South Dakota (see p. 26), that mention was made that the Society was endeavouring to add a copy of all G.O. translations to the archives.

Lyubomir is the founder and chairman of the first and only, up to now, Bulgarian Indian Society which is called "Eagle Circle", and he refers to *Sajo* as a "wonderful" book, adding "it is the only Grey Owl's work ever published in our language. It happened exactly 30 years ago, in 1975. Then I was only 10 year-old – and extremely happy to receive *Sajo* as a gift from my parents. Since that time it is among my favourite books! After I read it, I started imagine that the wild geese I could see at times when I went to a lake near my mother's village, could take my 'message' to the 'Beaver Land' (somewhere in North America, in 'the heart of the wild Indian country')... And I kept sending my 'messages' through the flying geese. It was a kind of magic for me! This magic came true many years later – and thanks to Paul & Janet Goble! With their kind help in the summer of 1995 I had the best of luck to visit the U.S.A.; there I visited the sacred Black Hills, Bear Butte, Badlands and great Dakota Plains..... I also take a keen interest in Grey Owl, his life and his writings myself. After learning that there is a **Grey Owl's Museum in Hastings**, the U.K., I hope that one day I could have the opportunity to visit it. Unfortunately, in our small, ex-communist Bulgaria it's really difficult to find any Grey Owl's books.... I still thought that he was a half-Indian – Paul Goble told me the truth about Grey Owl's origin and life. Thanks to Paul again I'm happy to have two more Grey Owl's books (in English) – *Tales of an Empty Cabin* and *The Men of the Last Frontier*. I just love them!..."

In promising to try and track down a Bulgarian copy of *Sajo* for us, Lyubomir said it "would probably take some time... It's not easy to find this book today (it was published here only once)..." In the event, a copy was tracked and sent to us within one month!

In thanking him on 6 May, we sent on behalf of the Grey Owl Society, a copy of *Pilgrims of the Wild* (1935) as this was the only Grey Owl book missing from Lyubomir's collection.

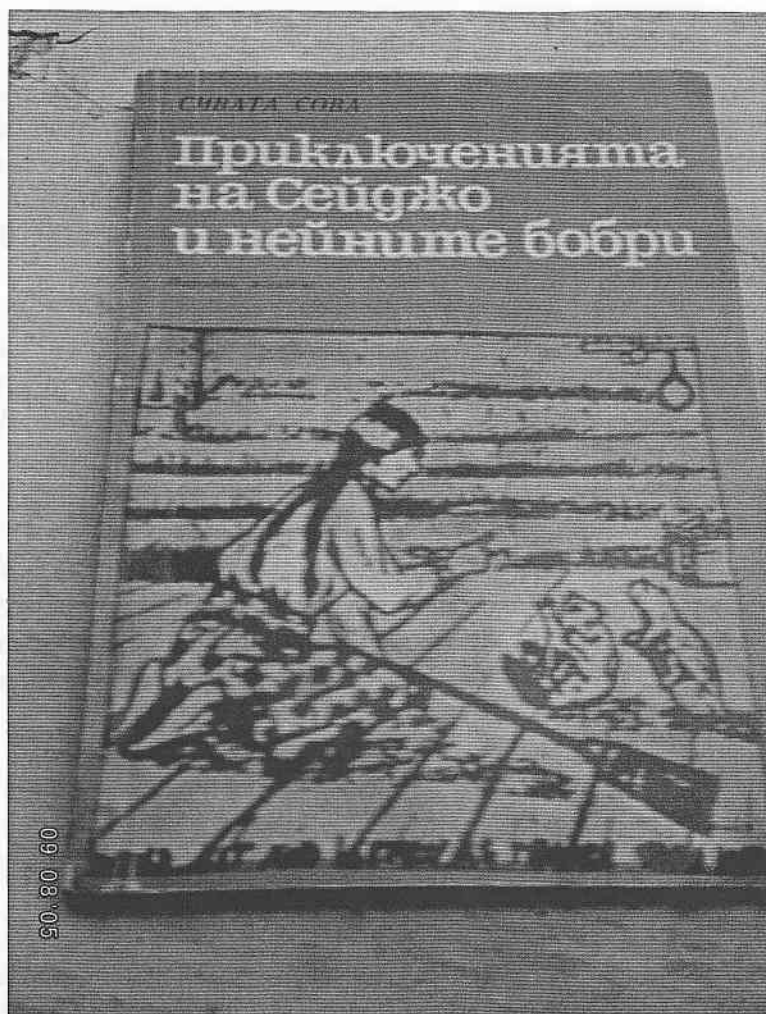
In his own letter of thanks to the Society he said that the book would be shared with the Eagle Circle people as we "share all these precious foreign-language books about the North American Indians... so, please, take the honest thankfulness of the entire Eagle Circle Society – to you and to the Grey Owl Society!". We also sent Lyubomir the G.O.S. postcard which he says "I already framed it and now it is on my working-desk, giving me much strength and inspiration. I really feel a special connection to this man – by the way, Grey Owl has died exactly on my birthday date, April 13, although that happened in 1938 and I was born in 1965..."

Lyubomir's only complaint is that he has to work so hard for a relatively small salary! As an editor and translator ("I am much better in translating from English into Bulgarian than vice versa, and I can do translations from Russian into Bulgarian, too), he has to work almost seven days a week – and "sometimes at night, too"! He is particularly interested in publishing and translating more of Grey Owl's writings into Bulgarian and has asked me more than once about Copyright rules.

I explained that works of Grey Owl had been translated into many languages (including Japanese in 1987) and so I could see no problem.

However, I am no expert on the complications of Copyright and if any member would like to pursue this subject or has any comments Lyubomir's address is:





Paperback edition of *The Adventures of Sajo and Her Beaver People*, in Bulgarian. Illustrated. Published in 1975. Inscribed "To the Grey Owl Society in Hastings, England, from a Bulgarian admirer of Archie Grey Owl – Lyubomir 'White Horse' Kyumyurdjiev. April 2005, Sofia – Bulgaria".

## Grey Owl Society's Annual Donation (1)

### The Woodland Trust: Victory Wood

At the Committee Meeting held on 28 April 2005, it was decided to make two donations this year, the first to the Woodland Trust to support their appeal to commemorate the bicentenary of the Battle of Trafalgar.

The Society's donation of £540 will go towards the Trafalgar Woods Project and more specifically to the Victory Wood Appeal.

The Woodland Trust for 2005 has joined forces with The Society for Nautical Research, the aim being to create twenty-seven new woods across the U.K. Lord Nelson led a fleet of twenty-seven wooden ships at the Battle of Trafalgar and each of the new woods will be named after one of the ships. According to the official newsletter from the Woodland Trust, the Trafalgar fleet used around 50,000 oaks in the building of the ships.... 5,000 on HMS Victory alone.

The flagship site, Victory Wood, was decided on after a long search – 347 acres of land at Lamberhurst Farm, Kent, near the mouth of the River Medway, and not far from Chatham Docks where HMS Victory was built. The fact that this area in Kent is only 40 or 50 miles or so from Hastings, was another factor to support this 'Donation'.

This land for Victory Wood lies within "an important concentration of ancient woodland but this specific area has been intensively farmed over the last couple of decades or so. It is now hoped that the rare heath fritillary butterfly and the increasingly rare dormouse (established nearby) will spread with the planting of Victory Wood.

Thousands of children and young people will be involved in the planting of the trees and in their letter of thanks dated 26 May 2005, the Woodland Trust state that our donation "will inspire 30 children about nature at a special tree planting day".

It is also worth noting that the Trafalgar Woods programme aims to reach out to all schools in the U.K. and will be linked to the curriculum for upper primary and lower secondary pupils.

Victory Wood will eventually have 90,000 trees and the Trust have written "Many thanks again and [we] hope that your members will at sometime be able to visit this brilliant new woodland to enjoy".

I am sure we will include it amongst our 'summer visits' at sometime in the future.

Betty Taylor

## Grey Owl Society's Annual Donation (2)

### Wildwood Trust

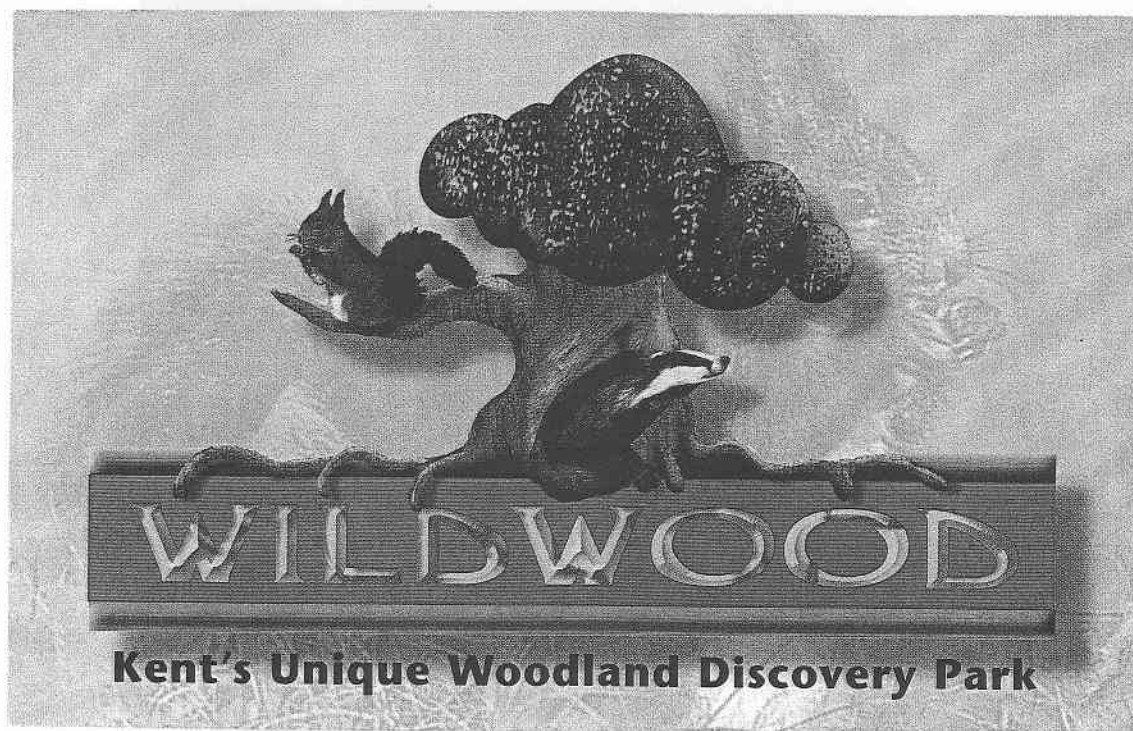
It was decided to support the **Wildwood Trust** near Herne Bay, Kent, for the Society's second donation, and in consequence a cheque for **£400** was sent to them on 10 May.

We had, in fact, donated to Wildwood in 2000 (see Bulletin 19:28) but because of their plans for a new beaver enclosure, it was agreed to make a second donation although the Society usually tries to find new ventures.

In his letter of thanks, the Chief Executive, Peter Smith, wrote that "Grey Owl has been an inspiration to us all as a pioneer of the conservation movement and one of the first people to truly understand the importance of natural ecosystems. His spirit will live on in many of us and it is Wildwood Trust's aim to promote his teachings and to restore the European beaver back to Britain. Our efforts have already borne fruit at the ground breaking Ham Fen project and hopefully our efforts in partnership with Scottish Natural Heritage will see the beaver returned to Scotland in the next few years. The new beaver enclosure at Wildwood will be used as a way of communicating the importance of beavers to our ecosystem. In time we hope we can tell the story of Grey Owl and carry on his teachings to a new generation with your help. Your donation has prompted me to dust off my old copy of tales from the empty cabin (sic) and re read his wonderful writings. Thank you once again and I look forward to meeting you all".

In an e-mail from the Curator, John Collier, he writes: "... We have finally been able to put our current pair [of beavers] on display together in a temporary exhibit with some of our waterfowl. As usual the beavers only occasionally show themselves, but we hope to rectify this problem with viewing into the lodge in the new exhibit.... We plan to put all our sponsors on to one board on display within the new exhibit. I hope to show you more than a blank canvas when your group pays us a visit".

Henrietta Smyth put forward the suggestion of supporting **Wildwood** again and so it seems that **Wildwood** will be on the itinerary for another future summer visit.



## **Chiaroscuro: The Life of Arthur Spencer Roberts. Wildlife Artist\***

Mavis Roberts, Port Lympne, Kent, 2003. (Available from Hastings Museum).

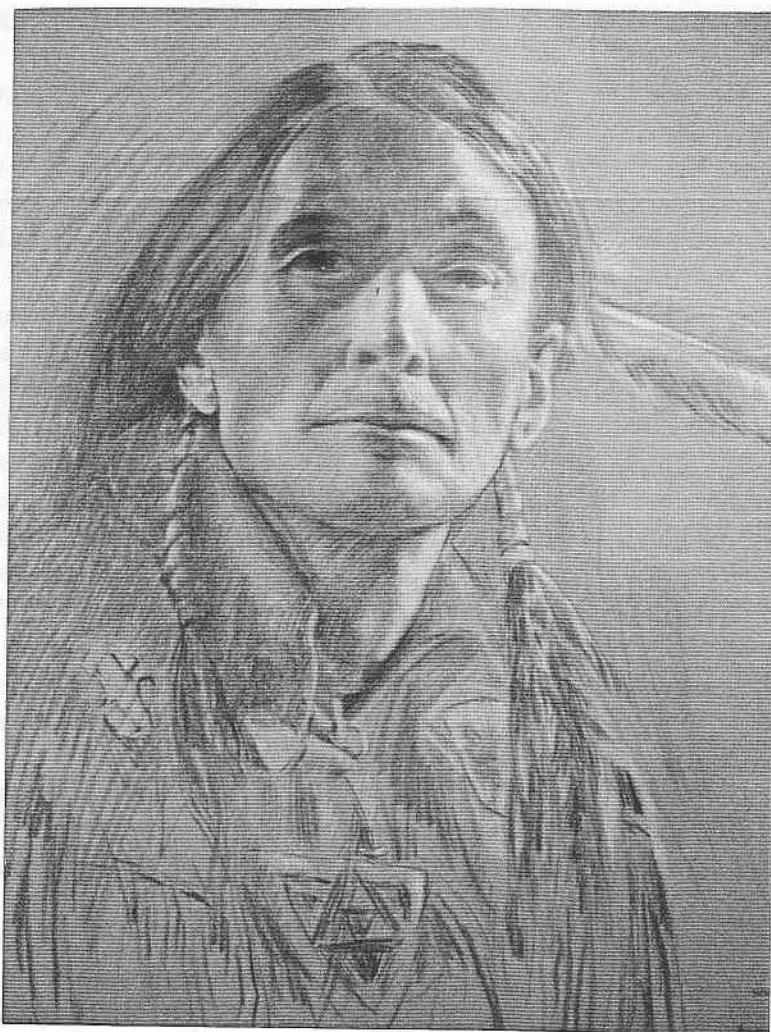
This biography of The Grey Owl Society's first Vice-President is divided into nine chapters with the Foreword by John S. Bennett, OBE. Part of the proceeds of the book will go to The John Aspinall Foundation, a registered charity which runs Howletts and Port Lympne Wild Animal Parks in Kent, southeast England. These "parks" "specialise in the keeping and breeding of rare and endangered animals with the purpose of putting them back into protected areas in the wild".

Spencer Robert's portrait drawings of Grey Owl are shown on pp. 130-131; the latter shows Sir Richard Attenborough with the drawing of Grey Owl on the wall behind him, taken at the Premier of the film *Grey Owl*, at St. Mary in the Castle, Hastings (photo by D.H. Richards).

Spencer Roberts' most enduring legacy must be the amazing murals at Port Lympne and pp. 101-127 "Come Fill Up My Cup", illustrate and document this achievement. For more background to his career, his contribution to the Society of its beaver logo and the history behind his drawings of Grey Owl, refer to Bulls. 3:5-6; 7:5-6; 10:21; 13:24; 16:4 and the Society's Special Publication (2002:51).

A signed copy of *Chiaroscuro* has been added to the Society's archives.

\***Chiaroscuro:** "Treatment of light and shade in painting. Light and shade effects in nature..."



Arthur Spencer Roberts' portrait of Grey Owl (1984). For Arthur's comments on this drawing see Bulletin 3:5-6.



## DONATIONS TO THE SOCIETY

We are, as usual, extremely grateful to members who make donations towards the Society's expenses, especially Margaret Charko and Jennifer Phiri. Our genuine thanks also to Kristin Bonney, Catherine Carpenter, Paul Goble, Tom Watrous and Margaret Wolley.

**Ian West** has given the Society a complete beaver pelt, in excellent condition. This will be used in exhibitions such as the one Henrietta Smyth organized at Hastings Museum last year, which attracted a number of school children.

**Don Smith** has sent us a copy of a new paperback, *Grey Owl: The Curious Life of Archie Belaney* by Irene Ternier Gordon. Published by Altitude Publishing Canada Ltd., Canmore, Alberta (2004). ISBN 1-55153-785-0. This illustrated book is part of the "Amazing Stories" series and Don's book *From the Land of Shadows: The Making of Grey Owl* is, of course, listed in the Bibliography. The author lives in Manitoba and "shares Grey Owl's love of canoeing in the wilderness...".

**Don** also donated a copy of *The River Flows: A History of Putnam County, Florida* by Brian E. Michaels. Published by The Putnam County Archives and History Commission, Palatka, Florida (1976). This hardback copy is No. 892 in the First Edition limited to 3,500 copies, and runs to 491 pages! In sending the book, Don wrote "Please accept the enclosed as a gift to the Grey Owl Society. When Grey Owl's parents lived in Florida, they lived at Palatka, Putnam County. Here is the history of the area! No mention of the Belaney's, but good context for their years there...". This is good to have and adds to the 'comprehensive' nature of the Society's library!

In addition, **Don** has sent two articles. (i) "Tartan and Pure Laine" by Louisa Blair from *The Beaver* (1 March 2005, pp. 14-19). This will be of interest to the members who attend the AGM and Christmas Dinner each year, at The Beauport Hotel, which was originally the family home of James Murray – "the first civil governor of Quebec". As Don puts it, "essential background for the Annual Dinner, essential background on James Murray of Beauport Lodge!" (ii) A copy of *The Globe and Mail* (Canada's National Newspaper) for February 2, 2005. An article on William Nicholson "Free of Hollywood's Comforts" by Simon Houpt. It refers to Nicholson's scripting of the film *Grey Owl* (although the article is mainly about his "first novel for adults in 26 years"). Quoting from the article: "... There was also *Grey Owl*, the widely ignored 1999 film starring Pierce Brosnan as a white fur trapper in the 1930s who passed himself off as a native Canadian. Nicholson still doesn't know what went wrong with the picture, but unlike most Hollywood players, he's willing to admit that part of the problem may have been the screenplay. After all, he says, his life's work as a writer is trying to understand and articulate truth. And pointing the blame elsewhere would be lying. "Like any writer, I spend my whole life thinking about motives and how people conceal the truth from themselves" he explains. "So all the time in my mind I'm saying, 'Tell the truth, tell the truth'. Because why should I not want to tell the truth? In order to impress, in order to make people love me. So: *Grey Owl*? I screwed up. Tell the truth. You have to do that. And that process never ends....".

**Lyubomir Kyumyurdjiev** has donated a copy of *The Adventures of Sajo and Her Beaver People in Bulgarian* (See pp. 14-15). The Society now has seven translations of G.O.'s books (French, German, Dutch, Czechoslovakian, Russian, Japanese and Bulgarian)! Nineteen to find!

**Ralfe Whistler** has sent us the following newspaper cuttings: "Grey Owl's Crime". Reprinted from *THE STAR*, Wednesday, April 20<sup>th</sup>. 1938. (See p. 22) *The Globe and Mail*, February 2, 2005. (A second copy – see above).

## DONATIONS TO THE SOCIETY cont.

**John Gregg** from York, Maine, has sent (via Dagmara Ginter) a copy of an article in the *North Bay Nugget*, Ontario, for 28 October 2004: "A trip to Lake Temagami's Bear Island" by Doug Mackey. "...it was here that 37-year-old Archie met Agnes' acquaintance, [sic] the beautiful 19-year-old Gertrude Bernard from Mattawa.... They developed a relationship that changed Archie's life to the brilliant actor, author and conservationist known as Grey Owl". Doug Mackey took this trip to Bear Island with the North Bay painter, Arli Hoffman, and Dermot Wilson, director of the W.K.P. Kennedy Gallery, who are working on an exhibition based on the early life of Archie Belaney. Albert Lalonde (son of Agnes and grandson of Archie and Angele) was the guide for the trip. (See also Bull. 23:20 where we first mention this forthcoming exhibition).

**Betty Taylor** has donated the following items during the year:

(i) Paperback copy of *GREY OWL* by Vicky Shipton. Part of the Penguin Readers series for schools. Level 3 (Pre-Intermediate 1200 words). Published by Pearson Education Limited, Harlow, Essex. 2003. "A step-by-step approach" to the life of Grey Owl, a man who tried to change the world... a man with a big secret". Nicely illustrated – 43 pages with a section at the end on "Activities". (See also Bull. 23:9).

(ii) A copy of *Ray Mears Bushcraft Survival*. A BBC publication produced to accompany the television series of the same name. (Published by Hodder and Stoughton. 2005. ISBN 0-340-83480-3). There is an interesting chapter "On the Trail of the Mountain Men" in Wyoming with references to the Shoshone Indians but the interest for our members is the previous chapter "Canoeing Down the Missinaibi" with references to Grey Owl (and one illustration) on pp. 183-185. The vast Canadian wilderness is now protected by "strict environmental laws" but Mears goes on to say that this was not the case until the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He then adds that it was thanks to "one of the century's most extraordinary and colourful characters" that the world became aware of the exploitation of the wilderness. The character was, of course, **Grey Owl**, who Mears describes as "the first true eco-warrior" adding that his books were "read by millions around the globe". (See p. 23).

(iii) A copy of *The People of the Buffalo: Essays in Honor of John C. Ewers*. Volume 2. Coordinated and edited by Colin F. Taylor and Hugh A. Dempsey. Tatanka Press/Verlag fuer Amerikanistik, Wyk auf Foehr, Germany (2005).

The volume has been 'dedicated' to Colin Taylor with an introduction "In Memoriam Colin F. Taylor (1937-2004)" by David F. Halaas and Andrew E. Masich. There is a section on Grey Owl and the Grey Owl Society on p. 7 where Halaas and Masich write "Colin loved the story of this extraordinary individual. Belaney had awaked the world to the conservation movement through his creative storytelling, but Colin also found intriguing the plot twists and turns of Grey Owl's controversial life...". There is another reference to G.O. on p. 8 and in the list of Colin's writings, on pp. 10-12. A copy of Volume 1 of *The People of the Buffalo* has also been donated to the archives although no mentions of G.O. appear in that volume.

**Ben Southwell**, the Producer of the BBC series *Ray Mears Bushcraft Survival* has sent a video for the Society's archives, which covers the "Canoe Journey" programme which features an interview with Margaret Charko together with excerpts on Grey Owl. We were pleased to receive this because most of our members missed the transmission, as the Society was not informed in advance of the date. We had originally put the Producer in touch with Margaret, so the Society did play a part, so to speak! (Also see p. 23)

**Richard and Wendy Johnston** of Orillia have sent (i) a cutting from the Orillia Packet and Times (4.12.2004) on the influx of great grey owls from their normal habitat north of Lake Superior, down to southern Ontario, during a severe winter. They arrived, apparently, on a "phenomenal scale.... We may never see anything like this again in our lifetime", an Orillian naturalist, Bob Bowles, reported. For some interesting comments on the "rare, very large Great

## DONATIONS TO THE SOCIETY cont.

Grey Owl" see Don's book *From the Land of Shadows* (Smith, 1990:91-92). (ii) a CD Rom entitled *Experience Temagami* (issued by the Temagami Chamber of Commerce). Our member **Jenny Logan** has watched it and writes: "This CD was created to promote the Economic Development of TEMAGAMI. It contains pictures and information on a place that has lured generations of indigenous peoples, traders, naturalists, photographers, painters, poets and, of course, tourists! There are 16 or so different titles you can click on – Activities, Parks, Local artists etc. If you click on the heading "Historical Highlights", you will find **GREY OWL** – a nice piece about who he was and what he did: "He became one of Canada's greatest conservationists & one of the foremost Canadian writers of his day". I then clicked on "Parks" & took a virtual tour on one of the Temagami Trails; it was lovely to see that fantastic scenery & to think that perhaps Archie had been on that very trail – and who knows, maybe even initiated some of the routes they show." **Jenny** adds that there is also a list of accommodation (from lodges to cottages and cabins and campsites) for anyone planning a visit.

**Colin Crocker** (one of our new members) has sent a copy of the **Attestation Paper** for Archibald Belaney when he enlisted for the Canadian Army in 1915 (it is dated May 6, 1915, Digby, Nova Scotia). A copy of the **Certificate of Medical Examination** came with the **Attestation**. We are very pleased to add these copies to the archives (see Smith, 1990:52 for more details).

**The Temagami and District Chamber of Commerce** kindly sent copies of the following articles – which are all new for the archives. These were sent in February 2004, but were not listed in last year's Bulletin:

(i) A review of *The Spirit of Grey Owl* from the theatre magazine *Temagami Talker* (August 2003?). This documentary was shown at Temagami's Municipal Movie Palace on 25 August (2003?)

(ii) A review of the play *Indian Heart* (a "journey of discovery undertaken by Lovat Dickson" following Grey Owl's death). This review is probably also from the *Temagami Talker*. We have other cuttings on *Indian Heart* but this one is new for the archives. (See also Bulls. 20:6 and 21:20).

(iii) An article entitled "Mattawa woman Grey Owl's inspiration" by Doug Mackey under "Heritage Perspectives" from the paper *Community Voices*, June 16, 2000. The article has been cut short but it appears that there is a display on Grey Owl and Anahareo at the Mattawa Museum on the Ottawa River (see p. 31).

**Hamsey School, Lewes** has given the Society a large batch of postcards of North American Indians, to sell for our funds! We are very appreciative of this gesture (please see p. 30 of this Bulletin).

**Ian West** has given a copy of *The Beaver* magazine (Winter 1975) with an article by Don Smith entitled "The Belaneys of Brandon Hills" (pp. 46-50). It is sub-titled "Grey Owl's Canadian Cousins". In fact, Grey Owl never met these cousins and the cousins never tried to make contact with Grey Owl, probably – as Don suggests – because they had had a disastrous visit from G.O.'s drunken father! (There is one other copy in the archives).

## GREY OWL'S CRIME

THE case of Grey Owl reminds us a little of the new race phantasies which poison life in Germany. There it matters everything what a man's grandmother was, and less than nothing what his own achievements in life have been.

Who Grey Owl was at his birth seems to be the great question; whether he was a clever schoolboy at Hastings with a passion for animals and Red Indian life, or the son of a Scotsman who had been an Indian Scout with an Apache mother. There is romance in either case for people with sympathy and imagination, for the thing that really matters about a man is where he is going to, and not so much where he came from.

When we come to Grey Owl's career, there is happily, no disagreement. He worked with Buffalo Bill and he fought in the Great War, two pretty good passports to the heart of a boy. He became a first-rate tracker and guide in the parts of Canada where a man has to be a man to be either. The Indians thought him enough of a man to adopt him into the Ojibway tribe and to give him his name of "Grey Owl." For ten years the Canadian Government engaged him in preserving wild life in Saskatchewan.

His books and lectures recreated for thousands of young people the romance of the wild and enraptured them with his knowledge and love of wild animals. It was a mission of which any man might have been proud. And now comes his publisher, Mr. Lovat Dickson, to tell us that in the last few years of his life he earned over £10,000 and devoted the whole proceeds to bettering the lot of wild animals the world over. He looked his part and he lived his part. It may amuse a few people to potter about with his origins. The great majority will go on remembering him and thanking him as the man who in a world where men are cruel to men, taught and encouraged millions of children in their natural love of animals.

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*Reprinted from THE STAR, Wednesday, April 20th. 1938*

**Ralfe Whistler** donated the above article to the archives along with some other newspaper cuttings written at the same time (already in the archives). This Reprint from *The Star* is a "first" for the archives and we're very pleased to add it to the collection!

**Margaret Charko** has sent in a copy of a magazine called *Westworld* (Saskatchewan), Fall 2005. On the cover it refers to "Grey Owl's Stomping Grounds" and the article is entitled "Jelly Roll and Rawhide, Where Art Thou?" (pp. 13-17). Guide, Scott Nesbitt, led a group of three up to the cabin through "an enchanting slice of backcountry that spurred one of Canada's first conservationists, Grey Owl, into action eight decades ago". The article is nicely written and well illustrated (including the photo of Margaret with Grey Owl taken at Beaver Lodge in 1934), and refers to Margaret as the "typist in the woods". The story and photos are by Liz Bryan who adds: "On Grey Owl's stone, visitors have left offerings – a thin braid of human hair, a flower, a small Canadian flag. Suddenly, the mood is subdued, as if we sense a presence. We sit in silence". In her letter accompanying the magazine, Margaret writes: "This is the centennial year for Saskatchewan. I hear they have put out more articles at Waskesiu in memory of Grey Owl". (Scott Nesbitt was the guide who escorted Margaret and Henrietta Smyth's visit to the cabin in 2003 – see Bulletin 22:17-20).

## Ray Mears' Bushcraft

This television series (shown on BBC2 in the spring of 2005) was to be, in the words of John Lister of the BBC (e-mail 27.2.04), "a celebration of wilderness skills in some of the most beautiful locations on Earth". He goes on to say "It's about Ray's deep love of nature and his respect for people who know every nuance of their native environment... the story of Grey Owl was a great inspiration to Ray when he was growing up, and one of the reasons that he has become so adept in bushcraft himself. Also there is the rather nice link that Ray lives near Etchingham, E. Sussex, not so far from Grey Owl's home town. Therefore I think the story of Grey Owl will fit in well with the programme.... I'm about to have a look at "Tales of an Empty Cabin" which looks a good read...!".

The programme called *Canoe Journey* (No. 2 out of 5) was shown on 28 April 2005 when Mears canoes "silently through the Canadian wilderness along a river\* that was once an arterial route for the fur trade" (Radio Times. 23-29 April 2005:104). In this programme, Mears talks about Grey Owl with Margaret Charko who, as most members will know, typed up Grey Owl's last book, at the cabin on Ajawaan Lake.

We now have a copy of the video and the accompanying book *Ray Mears' Bushcraft Survival* in the Society's archives (see p. 20).

\*the Missinaibi River

### Ray Mears' Bushcraft ★★ ★

BBC2 8pm (not Scotland) TV type:  
'So, Ray, what are your plans for

this week?' Mears: 'I'm going to canoe down the Missinaibi River in Canada.' 'Right... For the entire hour's show?' The Missinaibi is one of the great fur-trade rivers, visited by moose and beavers and billions of mosquitoes (an exposed forearm can be bitten 280 times in a minute). Mears tells his tales on it, of the voyageur fur-traders and of the 'Indian' Grey Owl, who befriended the beavers, then turned out to be Archie from Hastings. Ray's as natural with the camera as he is with a paddle; you can lose yourself in there with him (without having to get bitten). The hour isn't enough time.

### 8.00 Ray Mears's Bushcraft



2/5. *Canoe Journey*. Last week Mears realised a life-long ambition – to build a traditional birchbark canoe. Now he climbs aboard a canoe to make the ultimate bushcraft journey, paddling silently through the Canadian wilderness along a river that was once an arterial route for the fur trade. On the way he encounters moose and beaver, and shares his knowledge with canoe expert Ray Goodwin. Series producer Ben Southwell (S) (AD) 6683  
RT DIRECT: the new *Ray Mears's Bushcraft* DVD available for £24.99 including p&p. To order, call 0870 400 3850 (national rate)

*Radio Times*. 28 April 2005.

Several local members met at  
on the 2<sup>nd</sup>  
November to watch "Canoe  
Journey" together. It was  
fascinating to see the early  
(1930s) film clippings of Grey  
Owl and Anahareo.

Margaret Charko was, as usual,  
very articulate.

One small error – Ray Mears  
referred to King George V – he  
meant, of course, King George  
VI.

*Daily Mail* "Pick of the Day".

28 April, 2005.



## Members' and Friends' Correspondence

**St. Helen's Woods – the 'Grey Owl tree'.** Rodney Turner wrote to us in May and enclosed a photo of the 'Grey Owl tree' that the Society planted in St. Helen's Woods, Hastings, in April 1987. Our Polish member, Dagmara Ginter, had mentioned that she had also found what she thought was the G.O. oak tree, but that she hadn't noticed the plaque. In consequence, Rodney and his wife, Margaret, again visited St. Helen's Woods and wrote back in June that they had found the plaque "totally buried under bramble. Margaret and I took some gardening tools and the plaque and stone are now, again, visible and ready for visitors!... The tree itself is now an adult... and is a splendid example of oak. I think that Grey Owl would have been quite pleased to know that he is still in St. Helen's Woods...". It's nice to know that the tree is being so well cared for!



Member, Margaret Turner by the 'Grey Owl oak tree' during the winter of 2004. (Bulletin 6:13 shows the planting of the tree and gives the wording on the plaque. Comparing the two photos, one can see how well the tree has grown).

**Rodney Turner** has also sent us the following interesting letter (notes) written by his 90-year-old uncle, Mr. H. Cornwall of Hastings: "As a junior reporter on the Argus in the Thirties I used to attend the winter series of lecturers at the White Rock Pavilion, Hastings. It was there that I first set eyes on Grey Owl, a most impressive figure. He strode on the stage in his Indian robes and gave the audience a raised hand in greeting. Then for the next hour he entertained us with his enthralling story of his life and the animals in Canada. It was not until April 18 1938, the day I married, that the Argus exclusively broke the news through the late Harry Cawkell (a colleague of mine, who used to gather news and gossip from the Pavilion), that Grey Owl was indeed a Hastings Man named Archie Belaney, and obtained a copy of his marriage certificate at Hollington Church-in-the-Wood. The news caused a sensation and was quickly followed up by the National Press. I first read the news while on honeymoon in Cheddar, a copy of the paper with my wedding report inside!". (I found this letter fascinating partly because Mr. Cornwall got married on the day Grey Owl died but also because Mr. Cornwall, at the age of 90, is still using his typewriter! Ed.).

**Jenny Phiri** (in sending her usual very generous donation) wrote to us: "I shall continue to support your wonderful society as long as I live and breathe, and send you strengthening thoughts and warm wishes. It is so encouraging to be part of a society that has its values rather in the way that I imagine Grey Owl himself to endorse".

**Joanna Smith** wrote to us in April: "...You might be interested – Richard and I visited the Isle of Wight last year, Flamingo Park near Ryde, and saw live beavers for the first time. I can honestly say that to see these lovely intelligent creatures in their home made Grey Owl's writings all the more poignant..."

**Dorell Taylor.** We have received a number of positive comments on the 'Society postcard' (Bull. 23:3). Dorell wrote: "...I very much like that picture of Grey Owl – he looks so happy". When we were deciding on the photo for the postcard, the Committee chose this one partly for the same reason and also because G.O. looked so 'handsome'!

#### **Re: The GREY OWL (Attenborough) film:**

**David Lazell** of Loughborough saw the film GREY OWL again and wrote: "We watched "Grey Owl" again on TV recently; had rather better impression than when we saw it at the cinema. But Grey Owl had such a sense of presence – authority even – that it would be an awesome challenge to any actor..."

**Audrey Brooke** from Leeds also wrote: "Last week I.T.V. broadcast the film GREY OWL so we watched it again.... I still think it is a brilliant film..."

**Cathy Carpenter** from Little Clacton also mentioned in her last letter to us "... the film has given me so much pleasure...". (For repeat showings of the film for 2005 – see p. 29).

**Cathy Carpenter** also wrote in her last letter: "... Last night... I put on the video of *The Really Wild Show*, featuring Grey Owl... It was made quite a long time ago, but how lovely to see Grey Owl in his natural surroundings, going about the chores of his lifestyle. Also Anahareo playing with the beavers and clips of the little people invading the Log Cabin and chewing up the furniture etc. It all bore more resemblance to "Pilgrims of the Wild" than the film did....". (*The Really Wild Show* featuring Grey Owl was first shown on BBC in January 1995 – see Bulletin 13:23. Ed.).

**Margaret Charko** wrote last January and referred to the photo shown in last year's Bulletin (23:18). It is "of the upper cabin and is the cabin that my brother Stan and I stayed in and also was where I typed. When I look at those windows, it reminds me of the hours I sat in front of

them looking out and typing *Tales*. A beautiful scene looking down on the lake. They have let the trees grow up very large there now and takes most of the view away...". (It is sad when a 'historic' view is allowed to disappear; a similar situation to the loss of the 'famous' view of Hastings Old Town from High Wickham. Ed.).

**Paul Goble** (Hon. Member from Rapid City, South Dakota – see Bulletin 18:26) wrote earlier in the year: "... When I came to the U.S. in 1977, I came with £500 and a box of books and clothes came later. In the box were my Ernest Thompson Seton and Grey Owl books, together with other important books of course. But I could not part with them – yet, I just did part with my earliest Grey Owl books to a young man in Bulgaria.... When he asked for Grey Owl books I felt they were going to a most appreciative home as he and all his Eagle Circle Society will love them...". The young Bulgarian man was **Lyubomir Kyumyurdjiev** who, in turn, made a donation to The Grey Owl Society of *Sajo*... in Bulgarian! We were extremely pleased to add this book to the Society's archives (see pp. 14, 15 and 19).

### In search of Grey Owl

I AM enquiring if anyone knows of the Grey Owl Society which I had heard of a few years ago, concerning the Hastings man who in the early part of this century, had fooled the world into thinking that he was in fact a real Red Indian, although he was a genuine trapper, environmentalist and a conservationist, and was good enough to be adopted by the Indian tribes in Northern Ontario. His real name was Archibald Stansfield Belaney (1888-1938), and even his publishers accepted his status as did everyone else, as he published many books and gave hundreds of lectures world wide. His identity was only discovered by accident after his death. Any help would be appreciated.

WILLIAM MALCOLM

Hastings and St. Leonards Observer. October 7, 2005.

I contacted Mr. Malcolm who wrote back that he had a signed copy of *Men of the Last Frontier* which he had owned for "over 40 years – it came to me via family, former directors of the Hudson Bay Co, who were distant admirers of Grey Owl...". Mr. Malcolm concluded that he had "always admired him... he was in effect a century ahead of his time on conservation of wildlife" and compared him with the Scotsman "Grizzly Adams" who "at the same time was persuading US Congress to preserve Yellowstone and Yosemite as national parks...". In acknowledging Mr. Malcolm's letter I mentioned that Grey Owl's half brother, Leonard Scott-Brown, worked for the Hudson's Bay Company at Moose Factory, Ontario, 1929-30. I also mentioned Don Smith's *From the Land of Shadows* – from where I obtained the above information! Ed.

## STOP PRESS

I want firstly to thank all the members who wrote to me after learning of Colin's death. I received so many kind letters, cards and messages from Britain, North America and Australia and they were all very much appreciated. I also received a large number of letters expressing pleasure that the Society and the Bulletin would continue along similar lines to heretofore, which I know would have been Colin's wish. With help from members, I hope we can continue for some years to come!

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We are very pleased to welcome the following new members:

Colin Crocker, London

Pieter and Dominique Shipster, Shefford, Beds.

Sheila and Tony French, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk

**Rob Anstey.** We were saddened to learn that one of our Hon. Members, Rob Anstey, died last November. (This news came too late for last year's Bulletin). Rob had a special place amongst the local members, being one of the very few who remembered attending Grey Owl's lecture in 1937 at the White Rock Pavilion, Hastings (See Bull. 9:17-18). Our condolences were sent to his widow, Pat.

**David Devenish.** It was a very sad autumn as another of our staunch members died in November. David had been Curator at Hastings Museum when Edward H. Blackmore's collection of North American Indian artefacts was transferred to the museum (1983) ('Ted' Blackmore was the first President of the Grey Owl Society). David went on to become some years later, Curator of the Wisbech and Fenland Museum in Cambs., where he curated an exhibition run by the Society (GREY OWL: September – October 1994). At this exhibition, Colin Taylor also gave a lecture (See Bull. 13:3). David wrote an article "A Review of the North American Galleries in Hastings Museum" when the new galleries were opened by Sir Richard Attenborough in March 1995 (See Bull. 14:2-4). Our condolences go to Dorothy who, we are pleased to report, is remaining a member of the Society.

**Derek Norcross.** Derek, one of our long-standing committee members, has had a very successful year and we would like to add our congratulations! In October 2004, Derek received the "Pride of Hastings 1066 Award" and then in the Queen's New Year Honours List (2005), he was granted an OBE for services to the East Sussex community. Derek has worked tirelessly for over forty years for numerous Hastings and East Sussex organizations and that includes The Grey Owl Society. (For some of Derek's comments see Bull. 7, Centenary Year, 1988:7-8; Bull. 23:22; and the Special Publication, 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary Edition, 2002:52).

**Margaret Charko.** Margaret e-mailed us in January to say that the photograph shown in Bulletin 23:12 should read "Kamloops" and not "Kelowna".

**Committee Meeting.** This was held at \_\_\_\_\_ on 28 April at 7 p.m. The main topics discussed were the Society's annual donations and the early summer visit. It was decided to make two donations this year, one to The Woodland Trust and the other to Wildwood (see this Bulletin, pp. 16-17) for a full report. As the Society had made a donation to Hucking Estate in 2001, it was decided to make this the destination for our early summer visit (see p. 12-13).

**Exhibitions.** No exhibition was planned for this year due mainly to the refurbishment of Hastings Museum. However, Henrietta Smyth was willing to organize more exhibitions in the future with help from local members. An exhibition, perhaps every other year during Hastings Week (October) was suggested. There was much discussion about an annual (or biennial) **Lecture** to commemorate the founding of The Grey Owl Society and Colin's name.

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This was proposed by Derek Norcross and enthusiastically agreed upon by all members. Bill Van Draat will work on this project with Derek and Henrietta Smyth who offered PR/secretarial support. It was thought that every other year would be more realistic, with an emphasis on top quality speakers. This subject was also discussed at last year's Committee Meeting (Bull. 23:25) and again it was suggested that Ray Mears (see p. 23) be asked to give the first lecture. Venue to be decided. The Committee is still looking into the viability of a Society lapel badge.

**AGM/CHRISTMAS DINNER, 2004.** The 23<sup>rd</sup> AGM/Christmas Dinner was held as usual at the Beauport Hotel (see p. 19 for a reminder on the Canadian connection) on 2<sup>nd</sup> December. Derek Norcross introduced the evening with Grace and a short 'memorial' to Colin, adding that he was sure Colin would want the Dinners to continue as in the past. Thirty-eight sat down to dinner and the usual good Xmas menu was served (albeit a few 'wails' because there were no brussel sprouts!). Betty Taylor read the 'Apologies' and then welcomed the new members. We were also pleased to welcome Dagmara Ginter to her first Xmas Dinner (Dagmara, our Polish member who now lives in Hastings, is a contributor to, and final typist of, the Bulletin!). The unexpected deaths of David Devenish and of our Hon. Member, Rob Anstey, were also announced. Bill Van Draat then gave the Treasurer's Report, adding that the Society were in the course of making a donation to The Woodland Trust but, because of the events in September, it did not get completed in time for Bull. 23. The evening was rounded off with an interesting and very 'personal' talk by Ian West, of his long friendship – over fifty years – with Colin and their experiences of numerous travels together: their many visits to Canada and the United States extending back over thirty-five years. Ian brought along display boards of photos taken on these trips 'out West' and everyone seemed to agree that this was a most apt end to the evening. The archive table was full, as usual, with recent acquisitions. Jenny Logan ran the raffle which made almost £50 for the funds! When the contingent left the Beauport around 11.30 p.m., it was unusually cold with a thick, swirling fog!

**A.G.M. and Christmas Dinner, 2006. Thursday, 7<sup>th</sup> December.** Please make a note in your diary now!

**Hastings & St. Leonards NEWS (Winter 2004).** This is the Hastings Borough Council Magazine and on p. 14 there is a short article "A road by any other name..." about the twittens\*\* around Hastings. There are so many of them apparently, and unnamed, "it is difficult to explain where they are". In consequence, they have now been given an identity and amongst the twittens around the Milward Road area, one has been named "Grey Owls Reach" (presumably because the Hastings scenes in Richard Attenborough's film GREY OWL, were filmed in Milward Road). We must now add this to the Hastings 'Grey Owl' map (Bull. 1:10)! Thanks to member, **Pat Held**, for bringing this to our attention!

\*\* twitten – a Sussex name for narrow passages, connecting one road to another!





**GREY OWL film** (Attenborough/Brosnan). The film was shown a number of times during the year, on different television channels, including:

**New Year's Eve, 2004**, at 9 p.m. ITV2. The *Radio Times* had the captions "Pierce Brosnan goes native in this biopic", and again "Intelligent biopic about a pioneer conservationist".

**23 January, 2005**, at 4.25 p.m. ITV1. The *Radio Times*, 23 January, has the caption "A bird-related biopic, perhaps? No. Archie Grey Owl was a native American whose conservation work brought him recognition in the 1930s. But he wasn't all that he seemed; for a start, his real name was Archibald Belaney. Who's in it? Pierce Brosnan (..with co-star Annie Galipeau), trading his Bond tux for moccasins and a ponytail. He still gets the girl, though. Was it a success? No. It went straight to video in the US; distributors told director Richard Attenborough they didn't know how to sell it." In the **Review** on p. 49, the *Radio Times* writes: "Pierce Brosnan stars in this worthy biography about one of the first eco-warriors. As Archie Grey Owl trapper Brosnan flutters the heart of a young Iroquois woman (Annie Galipeau) who wants to learn his ways. He gives up the cruelty of snares and works as a guide and naturalist before his memoirs make him famous. Brosnan never looks the part, although he works hard at the role, and the revelation of Grey Owl's background somehow fails to impress". Then again on p. 65 "Intelligent, biographical drama... In 1930s Canada trapper Grey Owl becomes a spokesman for native Americans. Soon, however, he has to face up to questions about his credibility". In the *Daily Mail*, 22 January, the caption reads "Brosnan gives a romantic portrayal of pioneering 1930s Canadian conservationist Archie Grey Owl in Richard Attenborough's beautifully shot biopic, which is always more interested in its crusading eco-message than the contradictions in Brosnan's character". (See p. 25 for more members' comments). (Thanks to member, Pat Held, for telling us of the New Year's Eve showing and Cathy Carpenter for sending us the *Daily Mail* review).

**Sussex Life** magazine for October 2004 (p. 101) has an article "Hastings Hoaxers, Frauds & Phonies". Needless to say, Grey Owl is included in the list as a man "who fooled the world". (The list also includes Titus Oates, Charles Dawson, Lewis Abbott, George Bristow and Aleister Crowley). We only have this one page and there is no author's name but he or she thinks that John Logie Baird was the only man to bring "credit to the town"!

**European Review of Native American Studies (ERNAS) (2005:19.1)**. Under the "Current European Bibliography of Native American Studies 58": p. 64, two entries from the *Grey Owl Society Bulletin* No. 23 are included. Under "Languages and Literature", (i) "The Ethnographical Content of Grey Owl's Writings" by Dagmara Ginter (ii) "Colin Taylor: Founder of the Grey Owl Society" by Barry Johnson.

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**Hamsey School, Lewes.** Derek Norcross gave a talk on Grey Owl on the 1<sup>st</sup> July to all the classes at Hamsey School who had been given "Red Indians" as their term's project. Derek did this at the request of the Lord Lieutenant of East Sussex (see Bull. 22:25) and took along a number of items from the Society's archives including a Japanese copy of *Sajo*..., a sample of birchbark and a pair of Eastern Woodland (Iroquois) moccasins. According to Derek, the children were fascinated by the Grey Owl story and the Indians he lived amongst. In return, the school donated a large batch of postcards of North American Indians, for the Society to sell:



Sample of postcards for sale. On the reverse of this series are the words of **The Ten Indian Commandments**.  
(10p each plus postage)

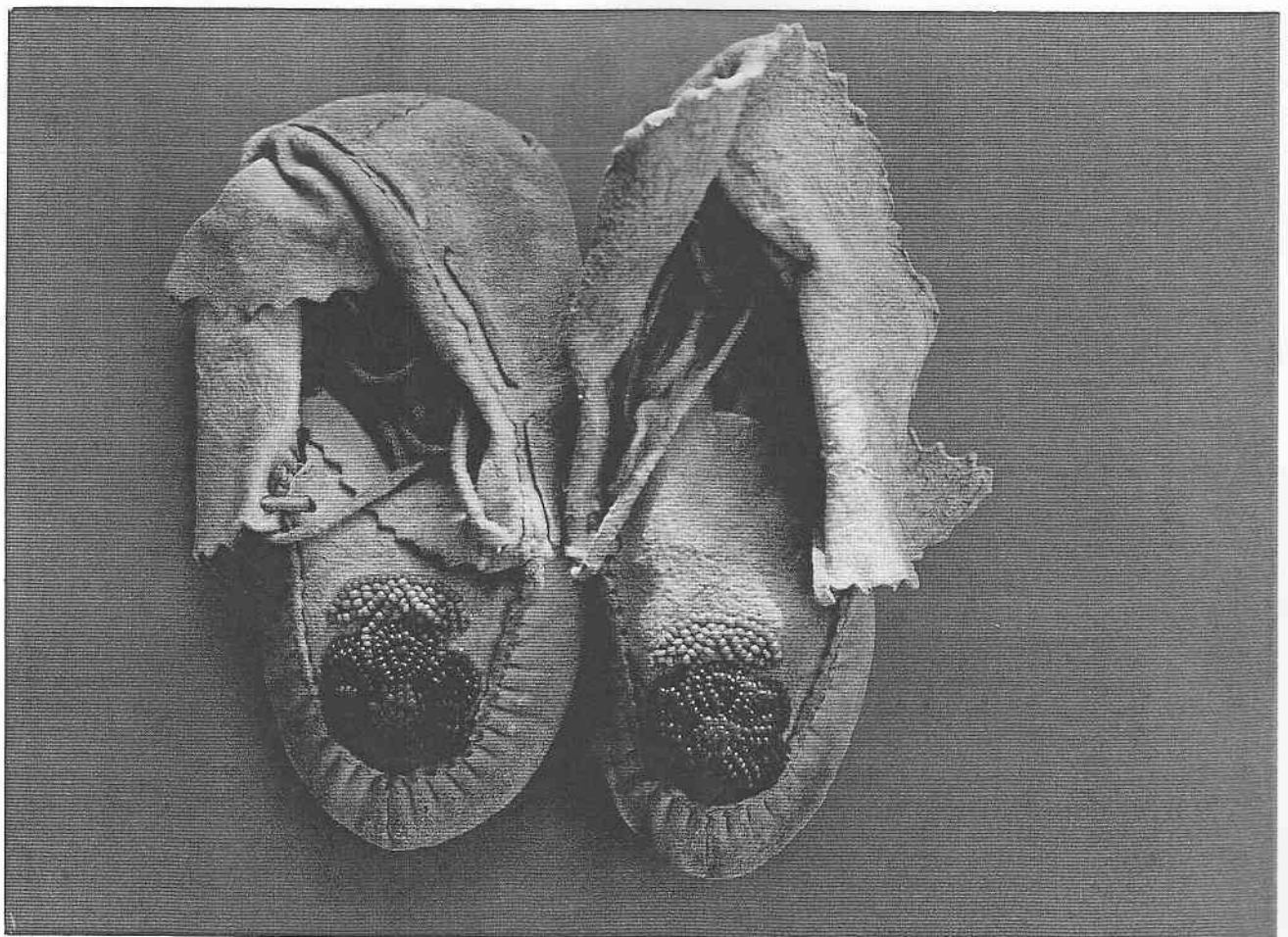
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**W.K.P. Kennedy Gallery, North Bay, Ontario.** The Guest Curator/Artist, Arlington Hoffman, has given a date for their forthcoming exhibition entitled **Grey Owl and his Descendants**. It is now set to open in **June 2006**. This is part of the Angele Project and it is hoped that the exhibition will tour other Canadian galleries. (See Bulletin 23:20 for fuller details of this exhibition).

**Anahareo: Plans to celebrate the centenary of her birth.** There are plans in the town of Mattawa, Ontario, to celebrate the centenary of the birth there of Anahareo, on June 18, 2006. This information has been passed to us by our members, Gabriel Fritzen and Ralfe Whistler, who have been in touch with the man (Edward Sapiano) who has initiated the project. The Mayor of Mattawa – the Honourable Mayor Dean Becker – has agreed to “throw a big celebration... in honour of its most famous citizen” and plans have been made to “have her grandchildren flying in”. There is a small display on Anahareo in the town’s museum and it is hoped that this will be expanded. Further details can be obtained from Mr. Rene Lamarsh, Mattawa Historical Society and Museum, or from the Mayor,

For further details on Gabriel Fritzen and his website on **Anahareo**, see Bulletins 22:30 and 23:27.

So Canada is going to be busy in 2006 with exhibitions!



Moccasins made by Agnes Lalonde (1911-1998), the daughter of Grey Owl and Angele Egwuna. These moccasins were kindly sent to the Society by Tracey Armstrong, Agnes' granddaughter. (See also Bulls. 17:1 and 18:32).