

REMINISCENCES AND A BIT OF MOOSE CONFERENCE HISTORY

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ABSTRACT: The North American Moose Conference and Workshop began in 1963 with an informal meeting of biologists in St. Paul, Minnesota. Since 1966 the meetings have been held annually from Alaska to Newfoundland. While still retaining its informal nature, the group began producing written proceedings in 1967. These publications became increasingly substantial, ending in the launching of the peer reviewed journal *Alces* in 1981. The moose conferences have served an important function in facilitating the exchange of information, especially by providing useful meetings and field trips in different parts of the North American moose range. The Conference membership has helped to organize 4 International Moose Symposia and in the publication of the award winning book *Ecology And Management Of The North American Moose* by the Wildlife Management Institute and The Smithsonian Institution. These accomplishments resulted from the long-term voluntary efforts of a core group centered around Lakehead University and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources in Thunder Bay. The Moose Conference continues to flourish and grow after 35 years providing a useful focus for work on all aspects of moose ecology.

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THE BEGINNINGS, 1963 TO 1971

Many a tale can be told...

Any history of an organization is hard to write without leaving out something or someone others feel is important. The history of the North American moose group is no different. The group is made up of caring individuals from around the world, all of whom have made their contribution to moose management and to the organization in its nearly 40 years of existence. I am sure others would see it differently. I have tried to relate it as well as I can remember it.

The North American Moose Conference and Workshop had its early beginnings as a special interest group within the Great Lakes Deer Group and Northeastern Chapter of the Wildlife Society back in the early 1960's. The Great Lakes Deer Group was a group of deer managers and biologists from the states of Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, and the province of Ontario who

gathered annually to commiserate with each other about deer management in their particular state or province. Both Michigan and Wisconsin deer management in those days can best be described as the "deer wars" where the department deer managers were at odds with their various publics over deer population management. Neither Minnesota nor Ontario had buck hunting laws at that time. To keep the costs down and the members humble, the Great Lakes Deer Group meetings were held at some relatively cheap primitive facility during the off season for tourists. The Great Lakes Deer Group had no officers, no charter, and no formal organization. Sometimes a meeting summary would be issued, but there were never any formal proceedings from the group. It did produce one formal report on the research needs of white-tailed deer in the lake states.

I became involved with the Great Lakes

Deer Group in 1960 when I assumed my duties as the area wildlife manager for the Section of Game in the Minnesota Department of Conservation. I was stationed at Ely in northeastern Minnesota, responsible for the state's wildlife management program in the 3 county area of northeastern Minnesota. The province of Ontario was my northern border from Pigeon Point on the east to International Falls-Ft. Frances on the west.

At that time the Minnesota Division of Fish and Wildlife was just starting an aerial survey of moose in the area in recognition of the increasing moose populations that were being observed here and in northwestern Minnesota. In the winter of 1959-60 Game Wardens Bob Jacobsen and Bob Hodge had flown over 600 miles of section lines looking for and recording the moose tracks they saw to delineate the moose range in northeastern Minnesota. This formed the basis for our aerial surveys in the subsequent winters using the Gogoma method-searching with low flying aircraft randomly selected 25 square mile plots for moose in the winter-that had been developed in Ontario and brought back to Minnesota by our biologists attending the Great Lakes Deer Group meetings.

The moose special interest groups at these Great Lakes Deer Group meetings were attended by Dick Passmore, Don Simkin, Harold Cumming, and Robin Hepburn from Ontario Lands and Forests; Arnold Erickson, Forest Lee, Bernard Fashingbauer, John Idstrom, Milt Stenlund, Bob Farnes, Vern Gunvalson, and myself from Minnesota Division of Fish and Wildlife; Larry Krefting, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Lester T. Magnus and Herman Olson from the U. S. Forest Service; Burt Dahlberg or Keith McCaffery from Wisconsin. I am sure there were others attending that I have forgotten. The informal approach was the key. I remember my

supervisor Milt Stenlund telling me that "*The Canadians always want to make these things so formal*".

After being in Ely for several months I realized that I needed to know more about moose, and I wanted to meet my nearest professional biologist neighbor, the man with whom I shared a long common border. After all, he was Canadian so he would know all there was to know about moose, right? So, I contacted the Ontario Lands and Forest office in Ft. Frances and made an appointment to see this fellow by the name of Al Elsey to learn all there was to know about moose and moose hunting seasons. Minnesota's moose hunting season had been closed by the state legislature in 1922 and we were interested in opening a moose hunting season again.

I found the Lands and Forest Building in Ft. Frances, and was I ever impressed. It was a massive building of stone and brick on the outskirts of town. In Minnesota most of us still had our offices in our homes. My office was on our back porch so my family got an early introduction to all kinds of wildlife, including moose. With such an office for this Al Elsey I knew all my questions about moose were soon to be answered. I entered the building and came to a large reception area where I asked for Mr. Elsey. I was escorted back to an inner office where I was introduced to Mr. Al Elsey and his assistant Ted Swift. Now all my questions about moose would be answered.

After our brief introduction we queried each other about what we knew about moose. I told him I was very new to my job in Minnesota and most of my knowledge came from Randolph Peterson's recently published book on moose. Al told me he was a fisheries biologist and knew even less about moose. I was shocked! Certainly all Canadians knew everything there was to know about moose. Wasn't it in their birth-

right as Canadian?

Al was a fisheries biologist by training, and he was responsible for all fish and wildlife management in the Ft. Frances District. He did have a map of moose densities in his district and we found that our density estimates along our common border agreed fairly well. This was before we knew that *Parelaphstrongylus tenuis* was the cause of moose disease so I made arrangements with Al to come back during the moose season to collect some blood from moose carcasses. I was working with Keith Loken, University of Minnesota on moose disease at the time. We thought the malady might be caused by a virus and we were anxious to look at moose blood to see what we could find.

In our discussions about moose we got to wondering what the rest of the world knew about moose. Randolph Peterson had just published his book on North American moose that provided a summary of what was known about moose to the mid-1950's. I had already met most, if not all the people, responsible for moose management in Ontario at the Great Lakes Deer Group meetings. What about people in other areas of North America? What did they know? Game managers in Minnesota wanted to reestablish a moose hunting season. I was particularly interested in getting any information regarding moose hunting from other areas that might be of some help. Al was a great help. He gave me a free moose hunting license to hunt moose anywhere in Ontario.

We hit on the idea of a moose conference similar to the Great Lakes Deer Group. Something informal. Just a gathering of people involved with moose management. Al advanced the idea of having a moose conference in his organization and I did so in Minnesota. Ontario biologist Dick Passmore bought the idea, and we had a great time discussing it while collecting sharp-tailed

grouse just west of Ft. Frances for his studies.

The idea of a moose meeting met with favorable response on both sides of the border. By 1962 we began planning for the first conference that Al and I would host in St. Paul, Minnesota. St. Paul was decided upon because it seemed easier to work with our state government than the Ontario bureaucracy. To get our mailing list we went through the North American Conservation Directory to find the addresses of the natural resource agencies in the known moose range. Invitations were mailed out to the directors of these agencies asking if they would like to share their knowledge of moose. We had an excellent response for our first conference. The first meeting was held on 7 March 1963 following the Great Lakes Deer Group rules and kept everything, including the group memory, informal. Notes were taken at the meeting, mimeographed and sent to the participants. We were all facing the same problems; how to survey moose populations and what are the effects of hunting. We also discussed moose disease and wondered what might cause this strange malady.

The participants at the first meeting agreed it was a worthwhile venture, and agreed to another meeting in 1964 in St. Paul. The group met in March. The agenda for the 1964 meeting was pretty much the same as our first meeting; how to determine moose populations, what were the effects of hunting on the moose population, and what caused the malady known as "*moose sickness*"?

Representatives from Ontario tentatively agreed to host the 1965 conference. It was stymied somewhere in the Toronto bureaucracy. Seeing the movement in danger of collapsing I contacted Gene Bossenmaier in Manitoba, who attended the meetings in St. Paul, to see if he would host the group's third meeting in Manitoba. Gene said "*No*",

that he didn't have the time to organize the meeting. I asked him if I did all the work would he host it? Gene agreed to this and the third moose conference was held in Winnipeg in March of 1966. I still remember the roar of the earthmovers working to save Winnipeg from the spring flood of the Red River as we met on the University of Manitoba campus. I also remember listening to a distinguished gentleman, Gerry Malaher, telling us about his life in the north country. John Stelfox agreed to host the fourth meeting in Edmonton, Alberta.

The fourth meeting of the group was in Edmonton Alberta in 1967. It produced *The Transactions of Fourth Workshop on Moose Research and Management*, a ten page document on legal size paper. There were 42 delegates at the meeting. Here Don Simkin of Ontario gave an extensive report on the moose special interest group associated with the Northeastern Section of The Wildlife Society. Representatives from Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Maine, the University of Toronto, Laval University, the Canadian Wildlife Federation, and the Canadian Wildlife Service were at the meeting.

The first field trip the group ever took went to Elk Island National Park and Al Oeming's Alberta Game Farm. The high populations of moose, elk, white-tailed deer, mule deer, and bison in the park was an impressive sight. The park's entire 75 square miles was fenced, so it amounted to one gigantic game farm operation, complete with animal handling facilities and a slaughter house for handling the surplus animals. Seeing Al Oeming's African lion enjoying his nap in the Alberta sunshine at twenty below zero completely unperturbed by the cold was also impressive.

Ed Telfer recalls " *...The first one that I attended was here in Edmonton. I think that was the fifth meeting of the group. (It was the first time I met you and also the*

first time I had been in Edmonton). I remember particularly the field trip to Elk Island National Park, a place where I would later do a lot of fieldwork. I remember having a long chat on that occasion with Larry Krefting. He praised my work on browse which encouraged me greatly. Larry was the dean of ungulate habitat studies in those days. He remained a good friend and a source of ideas and encouragement until his death in 1978.

I also recall watching you take pictures. I think one subject may have been a porcupine that we encountered. I didn't think anything of it at the time because porcupines were very common in the Maritime Provinces. However, I have never seen another in Elk Island. Wildlifers remember things like that!"

Ed's comments highlight one of the bonuses of the meetings. We got to meet people face to face and discuss our common problems. Ed and I had corresponded for several years before we met for the first time in Edmonton. We were all in the moose family.

Bob Rausch from Alaska volunteered to host the Fifth North American Moose Workshop, as it was known by then, in Kenai, Alaska in 1968. Will Troyer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Bob Rausch, Alaska Fish and Game Division co-chaired the event. When Alaska volunteered to host the meeting there was some concern that it was too far away and our agencies wouldn't fund our trips to Alaska in the summer. Twenty-four people appear on the roster as having attended the sessions in Kenai and the field trip to McKinley National Park. It was also the first meeting to be attended by moose biologists from Scandinavia-Jon Lykke from Norway and Ingemar Ahlen from Sweden. The proceedings were published as a 95 page spiral bound volume. A break with the Great

Lakes Deer Group tradition, but a treasure in anyone's moose library who is lucky enough to own a copy.

Field trips at the Alaska meeting were made to the recently completed moose pens at the Kenai Moose Research Center and to Mt. McKinley-now called Denali National Park. The grizzly bear tracks and plane wreckage in the moose pens impressed everyone. I remember on the field trip fly fishing for grayling near Paxson in the late night summer sun on the tundra-what a present for my 32nd birthday!

Not a cloud in the sky and Mt. McKinley was spectacular for our 2 days in the park. We drove in to the park and saw caribou, grizzly bear, and other critters-but no moose. After the meeting Don Simkim and I took Will Troyer's advice and went up the Kenai River where we fished with a couple of trappers who lived on the river. We caught our limits of silver salmon and watched the giant king salmon breaking water, but didn't catch any.

The sixth moose workshop was hosted by Ralph Ritcey in Kamloops, British Columbia in 1970. Ed Telfer recalls *"I attended a moose meeting in Kamloops BC, organized by Ralph Ritcey. We had a great field trip to Wells-Gray Provincial Park to see a large herd of moose wintering in an old burn on a mountain side that was visible from the public road across the valley. We also went by turns in a helicopter from Ralph's father-in-law's ranch buildings to view the moose.*

After that meeting Joe McGillis, John Kelsall and I got weathered in by fog. John managed to talk the airline into refunding our ticket cost and we returned to Edmonton by train. Since we had to wait until night for the train, Ralph took John and I out in the hills and showed us his mule deer trapping operation. I remember that his truck got a flat tire in a muddy spot. At that point John

told Ralph, "I hate to break it to you but you have two coronary patients here who can't lift anything so you are on your own!" It probably helped that all three of us were expatriate Nova Scotians! Well, I don't expect that any of this is useful for your historical research but your question did cause me to think back to interesting times!"

The seventh meeting was in 1971 in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Again, no minutes are available to me and while my memory is excellent, my recall is sometimes hell.

THE CONFERENCE AND WORKSHOP

The eighth conference in Thunder Bay Ontario was hosted by Tim Timmermann and Ray Addison in 1972 and we saw the demise of the Great Lakes Deer Group pattern and a more formal presence of the group. Just as I had been warned in those early years, you let the Canadians get ahold and things get formal right away. The word *"Conference"* was added to the title and a formal proceedings was issued for the first time. I insisted the word *"Workshop"* be retained in the title to make it easier for some of us to attend. I had seen a growing resistance in my own organization to sending people to *"conferences"*, which were just seen as more meetings, but *"workshops"* were all right in the Minnesota-Scandinavian work ethic.

The meetings became known as the *"North American Moose Conference and Workshop"*. The proceedings of the eighth conference are contained in a 339 page volume edited by Ray B. Addison and published by the Province of Ontario. There were 102 delegates at the meeting, including one fellow who dropped by because he was in town for a job interview at Lakehead University, also in Thunder Bay. Murray Lankester accepted the position at Lakehead

University and has been a dynamic part of the moose group ever since.

This was also the year that we were joined for the first time by Dr. Tony Bubenik, a recent refugee from Czechoslovakia and employed by the Ontario Department of Lands and Forests. C. H. D. Clarke had hired Tony to bring his European perspective to wildlife management in North America. Tony's research and management interests covered a broad spectrum of wildlife biology. He introduced us to sociobiology in the moose world and used calves, teens, primes, and seniors to describe the social classes in moose. Tony was an ardent hunter and started the moose hunter workshops in Ontario, as well as being a top wildlife artist. We all gained from his enthusiastic discussions and challenges to our way of thinking. Tony was awarded the Distinguished Moose Biologist Award in 1982 for his contributions to moose biology and to the moose group discussions. Tony passed away on 4 February 1995.

AN INTERNATIONAL MOOSE SYMPOSIUM

The ninth North American Moose Conference and Workshop was convened in Quebec City, Quebec in 1973 in conjunction with the First International Symposium on Moose Ecology chaired by J. Bedard, Biology Department, University of Laval, Quebec. Although the Conference was overshadowed by the Symposium, it produced a volume of 243 pages. The Conference and Workshop was held after the Symposium and chaired by Ray Addison of Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. The proceedings were published by the Ontario Government. Anyone who was there will never forget Quebec, with the wine and cheese tasting in the Seminary, nightly visits to the Convent, and excursions to le Pumpernickel. This meeting also introduced the Quebec moose people to the workings of

the Conference and Workshop. Up to this time they, for whatever reason, had not attended any of the previous workshops.

The International Moose Symposium was convened in 1973 by J. Bedard, University of Laval, in Quebec as a separate entity from the North American Moose Conference and Workshop. Moose are circumpolar in distribution, and the symposium was organized to bring the moose world together to review and update the knowledge of moose by biologists from around the world. The proceedings were originally published as a *Supplement to Naturaliste Canadien 101* and then combined into 776 pages and published as a single volume, *Alces: moose ecology* in 1974.

The 10th Moose Conference and Workshop was held in 1974 in Duluth and chaired by myself. The 10th marked a few firsts in the 10 year history of the group; being the first meeting outside of Quebec attended by Quebecers, the first for invited papers, the first for papers from our Soviet colleagues, and the first recognition award given by the group. Invited papers were given at the conference by; Lou Verme, Michigan Department of Natural Resources on assessing reproduction in cervidae; Miron Heinselman, U. S. Forest Service on the role of fire in shaping the vegetation in the taiga; and U. S. Seal, Veterans Administration Hospital, on population genetics. Invitations were sent to several Soviet moose biologists and they submitted 3 papers that were published in the proceedings.

The group acknowledged the lifelong work and contributions to cervid ecology by Larry Krefting who had recently retired from the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Among other things, Larry had carried on the moose studies on Isle Royale for nearly 40 years! The published proceedings produced 316 pages of moose literature published by the State of Minnesota. At this



time the host jurisdiction had to pay all costs associated with the conference and the publication of the proceedings, and it took 3 years after the tenth conference before the publication was available.

The conference was an independent entity and never sought or gained the official sanction of any sponsoring group, such as the Wildlife Management Institute, making it difficult sometimes to convince administrators that costs for the conference as a legitimate expenditure of government funds. Registration fees would go to covering some of these costs, sponsors were found to cover some of the costs, and other money would have to come out of the host's budget.

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

For the 11th conference we returned to Winnipeg in 1975. The meeting was chaired by the new kid on the block, Vince Crichton, who had recently completed his college training at Guelph and was employed by the Manitoba Fish and Wildlife Branch. The theme of the meeting was research, boon or boondoggle? I remember arguing with Joe Robertson of the Manitoba Wildlife Branch over the need for predator control in moose management. Joe said predator control was needed if we were going to hunt moose, and I took the opposite tack. Looking back, Joe was more right than I was on that issue. Our field trip included a stop at the garter snake hibernaculum, never a great favorite place of Vince's at any time of the year.

The 12th conference took us to St. John's Newfoundland in 1976, hosted by Gene Mercer. The distance and travel cost was prohibitive to many, and only 53 delegates were registered, about half of those that normally attend a conference. For many this was our introduction to life on "The Rock", as the Newfoundlanders call it. The fellow sitting next to me on my flight into St. John's was the provincial economist. I thought *"What better way to learn*

about Newfoundland?" First I asked about the provincial economy, and he replied simply *"It's welfare."* Okay, second question. *"Where are the good eating places in St. John's?"* *"St. John's is a culinary disaster."* He told me. The group did venture out to the Woodstock Inn and had the Newfoundland delicacy of seal flipper pie-the front flipper of a baby white seal that were still being harvested -in a brown gravy and encased in a pie crust. We also found the seafood in the restaurants to be very good. Our field trip was by helicopter to private cabins on Keokuk Lake. We did see some severe browsing on balsam fir by high density moose populations, and even a few caribou. There were 2 camps, and one was almost weathered in by fog. Fortunately the fog lifted before they ran out of beer, and in time to get them back to civilization for their homebound flights.

The 13th meeting was in beautiful Jasper National Park, Alberta chaired by Gerry Lynch in 1977. The park wildlife met us on the highway and demanded they be fed before they would let us pass. The noble mountain goats and bighorn sheep were so tame that I was taking close-up pictures of their heads with a wide angle lens.

The 14th meeting of the group was held in Halifax, Nova Scotia in 1978 hosted by Art Patton. Art was perplexed by a low moose population and asked for our input on ways to measure the population and the effects of hunting. The field trip focused on the problems of managing moose in the eastern red spruce-fir forests of the eastern seaboard. Al Franzmann and Rolf Peterson gave a paper on moose calf mortality that set the moose world on end. They described how black bear are a very effective predator on moose calves in the spring of the year. This explained for many of us why we weren't seeing the number of moose calves in late July and early August that we expected to see. Here we became mem-

bers of the *"Order of the Good Time"*, a fellowship founded by Champlain in 1606. The banquet featured all you could eat lobster and we reaffirmed our status as an unorganized group. The *Proceedings* was the first to be coordinated by Harold Cumming and printed at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ontario. Up to now each jurisdiction printed their own volume and there were many problems associated with the quality of the finished product and getting it out in a reasonable amount of time after the conference. Harold volunteered to take on coordinating the printing at the Lakehead University print shop and for many years thereafter Harold was our chief editor, printing coordinator, business manager, and salesman. This started our long term association with the folks at Lakehead University for our printing, sales, and financial services that continue to be an important part of producing *Alces*.

In March of 1979 we met for our 15th conference in Soldotna, Alaska. The session was cochaired by Al Franzmann and Wayne Regelin, Alaska Fish and Game. The conference was dedicated to the memory of Larry Krefting who passed away on 18 November 1978. The weather in Soldotna was beautiful. Clear and temperatures in the low 40's, while people back home were slugging it out at some 30 below zero with a spring blizzard. Made it hard to call and tell the folks at home how tough it was here on the last frontier. The banquet was memorable in that it featured Alaskan seafood. If it swam in Alaskan waters, it would be there. *"All the seafood we could eat."* We were guaranteed. They grossly underestimated the amount of seafood this bunch of landlubbers could eat, and we cleaned them out. Moose were wandering around town during the meeting, adding the proper flavor for the group.

On St. Patrick's Day in Alaska the 2 lads from Newfoundland broke out in Irish

song. They sang from morning to night without ever repeating a tune. When I asked how they knew so many songs they replied *"Well, you know how it is on the rock, Pat. We didn't have any TV or anything like that until just recently. When we get together at someone's house we gather around their piano, or someone would play the fiddle, and we would all sing. We make our own fun. Lately we've been having contests to see who can learn the most new songs while we are out on a field trip, and that's helped, too."*

After the conference Al Franzmann gave a week long guided tour of Alaska to Jim Hancock and Gene Mercer from Newfoundland, Vince Crichton from Manitoba and myself. At the end of our 7 days Al remarked *"I didn't know that I could spend a whole week laughing."* Such a good time was had by all!

Prince Albert, Saskatchewan was our destination for the 16th conference in 1980 chaired by Bob Stewart. I was the master of ceremonies at the banquet, which included a moose calling contest that was won by Miss Prince Albert. She was recruited from the queen pageant going on in the adjacent ballroom. When I asked if she would join our moose calling contest she asked me *"What's a moose?"* She was up against some pretty stiff competition in the likes of Tony Bubenik, Vince Crichton, and others that had entered the contest before I recruited Miss Prince Albert. When it came to vote, which was by applause from our group, she won by popular acclaim over the others.

DISTINGUISHED MOOSE BIOLOGISTS

Thunder Bay was the place we held the 17th North American Moose Conference and Workshop in 1981, hosted by Tim Timmermann. The workshop session fo-

cused on Managing Moose in the 1980's. Here the group agreed to change the name of our journal from *The Proceedings of the North American Moose Conference and Workshop* to simply *Alces*. Harold Cumming, in making the proposal to change the name, told, us for one thing, that secretaries around the world would forever thank us for this change, as it would save them a lot of typing every time the journal was cited. Those were the days before word processors, and secretaries did our typing. Now some 18 years later we all do our own typing, I'm certainly glad we made the change. The logo was changed to include the world wide distribution of moose on the globe, recognizing our role in the world of moose management.

The "*Moose Mafia*" were named for the first time, comprised of Karns, Crichton, and Timmermann who were recognized for the behind the scenes role they played in keeping the organization running. Their role was sanctioned at the business meeting when they were named to be the standing program committee.

The "*Distinguished Moose Biologist*" award was unveiled in 1981 to recognize people who provided leadership in moose management. The first award was given to Al Elsey and Pat Karns, the group's cofounders. This was not meant to be an annual award, and the criteria and nominating procedures were established for future Distinguished Moose Biologist Awards. Nominations can be made by anyone to the Distinguished Moose Biologist committee who passes on the merit of the nomination. The award, if there is one, is made at the annual meeting.

From the 17th we also have perhaps the only 2 recorded limericks by the well known moose bard Art "Cuddles" Flynn.

Moose Management

North American moose should be managed
To everyone's mutual advantage
But the moose is the one
Who's under the gun
To produce or become disadvantaged.

A Bell That Ticks Or For Whom the Bell Told

There once was a tick named D. Albipict ...
That plagued moose but hardly made sick
It lodged on the bell,
And surely raised hell,
But the toll we may never lick.

For the 18th meeting we met in Whitehorse, Yukon Territory in 1982, hosted by Doug Larsen. At the banquet in Carcross they served a potion called "*moose milk*". I think it was made from rum and sweetened evaporated milk. Whatever, it had a real moose kick to it. The banquet speaker was a local attorney by the name of Whitewater Willy. In his opening remarks Whitewater told us he was trying to come up with a name for people who work with moose and after giving it much thought and consideration came up with the term "*mooseter*" for us. Tony Bubenik was awarded the Distinguished Moose Biologist Award for his outstanding contributions to moose management.

The 19th session was convened in 1983 in Prince George, British Columbia and chaired by Ken Child. Al Franzmann was awarded the Distinguished Moose Biologist Award at this meeting for his outstanding contributions in moose physiology and predation work. The group made some major changes regarding the publication of our journal *Alces*. The first was that the publishing costs, which to this time was borne solely by the meeting sponsor, should be borne entirely by the group. The host would no longer be expected to subsidize the pub-

lication from their budget.

The second change being that Pat Karns would serve as the scientific editor, assisted by Tim Timmermann for *Alces* 19, 20, and 21. It was hoped to share the editor duties with others in the group if we each took a 3 year turn and passed it on to another team. More reviewers would be recruited for the peer review of papers for *Alces*, with each paper receiving 2 reviews. Prior to this the peer reviews fell to a handful of people who already had enough to do. Spreading out the reviews among many would lighten the work load for each individual and decrease the time papers were out for review. Harold Cumming had made arrangements with Lakehead University Bookstore in Thunder Bay, Ontario to distribute *Alces* and set up a special fiscal account to handle the proceeds.

THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL MOOSE SYMPOSIUM

Sten Lavsund from the Swedish University of Agricultural Science announced the Second International Moose Symposium would be hosted by Sweden in August of 1984. To maintain the continuity of the North American moose group we decided to hold the 20th conference in beautiful Quebec City in the spring of 1984.

The 20th meeting of the group was held in Quebec City in the spring of 1984 chaired by Michele Crête. Ed Telfer was awarded the Distinguished Moose Biologist in Quebec City for his outstanding contributions in moose range ecology. Nearly 100 delegates delivered 16 papers at the Quebec conference, despite the fact that the International Moose Symposium was to be held later that year in Sweden.

The Second International Moose Symposium was convened in Uppsala, Sweden on 21-23 August of 1984 followed by a week long field trip. The sponsors; the National Environmental Board, the Swed-

ish Sportsman's Association, and the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences were very generous in their support of the symposium, and provided travel grants so many of us could attend. The support provided by the Swedish people and organizations to the conference and conferees was tremendous.

The moose group became "*of age*", 21 years old in 1985 at Jackson Hole, Wyoming, and chaired by Larry Irwin, University of Wyoming. The featured topic at the workshop was strategic planning for moose management. Wyoming was a leader in the wildlife planning effort led by planning guru Doug Crowe. The Distinguished Moose Biologist Award went to Ralph W. Ritcey from British Columbia, in recognition of his many significant moose publications. Certificates of Appreciation were presented to the Swedish Sportsman's Association, the Swedish Environmental Protection Board, and the Swedish Agricultural University for their role in sponsoring the Second Moose Symposium in 1984.

It also marked the end of my turn as chief editor, and the beginning of what was to become the Lankester-Timmermann reign that would last 14 years, until 1997 when they turned their duties over to Art Rodgers, of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Warren Ballard, Texas Tech University. The format of *Alces* was changed in 1988 from 5.25 by 8 inches to 7 by 10 inches, gained its Irish green cover, an improved binding, giving it more durability and a professional appearance.

My remarks, published in *Alces* 21 summed up my feelings about the group. "*I have watched us expand from humble beginnings in the early 1960's with a small group of North Americans gathered to share their knowledge of moose, summarized in a few pages of mimeographed notes, to an international family reaching around the world, with it's own refereed publication. More im-*

portantly is the sharing and caring, professionally and personally, on the part of everyone involved, which goes a long way in bringing the family through Alces 21. The steering committee (sometimes referred to as the "Moose Mafia"), is a loose association with an ever changing membership. It has served well to keep the group on course through the years and it will do so for as long as we continue to function. Too often groups get "organized" only to be polarized and divided by those very things designed to provide structure."

Our Wyoming field trip visited the riparian habitat so important to moose in this part of the country where we saw many moose feeding on the willows growing there. This was a good opportunity for those of us who had been to the moose symposium in Sweden to call this to the attention of our Swedish colleague what moose really look like. Despite the very high moose densities in Sweden we didn't see a single moose on our week long trip of their moose range. So every time we saw a moose on this field trip we would tell our friend Finn that this is what moose really looked like, and for him to take a good look so he would know if they had any animals like this back in Sweden. More moose were harvested in Sweden in those years than most North American states and provinces had in their entire moose population.

THE ORDER OF ALCES

The 22nd conference was convened in Fredericton in New Brunswick in 1986 and chaired by Arnold Boer, with a workshop on moose population dynamics. Tim Timmermann received the Distinguished Moose Biologist Award for his scientific work applied to moose management and his long standing enthusiastic support of the worldwide moose cause. A new recognition was initiated at this meeting, "*The*

Order Of Alces" to recognize some of the local workers who are vital in carrying out the group's mission. The first recipients were Judy Summers, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for all the help she gave me in my workshop duties through the years and to Arnold Boer, New Brunswick Department of Forests and Energy.

The 23rd was convened in Duluth, Minnesota in 1987 and cochaired by myself and Ed Lindquist. The theme of the workshop was modeling in moose management. Our guest speaker was Mit Parsons, U. S. Forest Service ecosystem modeler who talked about land management planning and modeling for habitat managers. Bob Cornell, from the Lakehead University Print Shop was honored for his work on creating the journal. Bill Gasaway was awarded the Distinguished Moose Biologist Award for his research in predation and survey techniques. The Order Of Alces went to myself and Ed Lindquist.

In 1987 P. L. Hauta and M. W. Lankester published a *Subject and Author Index for Alces for Volume 5 and Volumes 8 through 22*. There were 387 papers by 237 authors included in the index. The authors classified the papers into 17 categories; 20% of the papers were on management, 13% on nutrition, 12% on population dynamics, 11% on effects of hunting, 10% on habitat, and the remaining 34% were distributed over 10 other categories. Al Franzmann and Tim Timmermann were the most prolific authors, with 19 papers each, followed by Michele Crête with 15 and Tony Bubenik with 14 papers published in *Alces* from 1968 to 1987.

The 24th was held in 1988 in Winnipeg and on Hecala Island, Manitoba and chaired by Vince Crichton. Vince often described Hecala Island in Lake Winnipeg as Manitoba's Isle Royale. The Distinguished Moose Biologist Award had 2 recipients; Vince Crichton for his research and management

work in Manitoba, and Michele Crête, for his research in population dynamics. The Order Of Alces went to active, retired citizens living in the Winnipeg area; Joe Oremba, Ross Singleton, and Fred Wright; Conservation Officer and auctioneer Jack Kowalchuk; conference organizing committee Vince Crichton, Larry Bidlake, Brian Gillespie, Merlin Shoesmith, Hank Hristienko, and JoAnne Joyce from the Manitoba Wildlife Branch. There was an auction to raise money for *Alces*, the first, and it was presided over by a never to be repeated performance of the "*Whistling Dwarfs*". The field trip included a stop, and getting stuck in the rain at Vince's favorite Manitoba attraction, the snake pit in the prairie gumbo of central Manitoba.

In May of 1988 I traveled to the USSR as the guest of the Soviet Academy of Sciences to meet with our Russian colleagues regarding the Moose Symposium they would host in Syktyvkar and Pechora in 1990. I found everything to be far beyond my expectations, and came back with an approval rating for the Symposium.

SILVER ANNIVERSARY

The group celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1989 with the conference returning to St. John's, Newfoundland, hosted by Sebastian Oosenbrug and Denis Minty of the Newfoundland and Labrador Wildlife Division. Education and public participation in moose management was the theme for the meeting. Dennis Schenborn, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources was the guest and related his experience as a planner in getting the public involved in resource management issues. Warren Ballard received the Distinguished Moose Biologist award for his work on predation and moose population dynamics. The Order Of Alces was presented to Sebastian Oosenbrug, Bill Collins, Ian Thompson, Dennis Minty, and Lucy O'Driscoll. We spent many a night in

an Irish pub listening to the good music and watching the step dancers.

We were officially initiated and became Honorary Newfoundlanders in an impressive ceremony where each of us kissed a cod fish, ate Newfie steak-big baloney-, and pounded down a shot of Newfie screech. We also went cod fishing in the North Atlantic on a sailing sloop. Those that weren't seasick enjoyed jigging for cod and the excellent cod soup prepared in the bowels of the ship. Our Silver Anniversary was also celebrated in a congratulatory cable from our Russian colleagues from the Soviet Academy of Sciences signed by Academician Sokolov, and fellow moosesters C. Filinov, Leonid Baskin, Olga Chernova, and Nadezda Chernyk.

The group met for the 26th time in 1990 in Regina and Ft. QuApells, Saskatchewan. Bob Stewart chaired the sessions and the conference theme was GIS Systems and Integrated Moose Management. Rolf Peterson, Michigan Technological University received the Distinguished Moose Biologist Award for his work on the Isle Royale ecosystem. The Order Of Alces went to Bob Stewart's group, Terrestrial and Aquatic Managers, Ltd. and to Bob Sutton of Weyerhaeuser Canada.

THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

The Third International Moose Symposium was hosted by the Komi Science Center, Ural Division of the USSR Academy of Sciences in Syktyvkar, Komi Autonomous Socialist Republic, USSR on August 27 through September 5, 1990 and was attended by biologists from Canada, Finland, Germany, Norway, Sweden, United States, and the USSR. The Symposium was structured into sessions on Moose in the Culture of People, Common Problems of Moose in the Forest, Moose Population Status, Population Dynamics and Moose

Management, Moose, Physiology, Domestication of Moose, and Modeling. Over 80 papers were presented at the conference and published as *Alces* Supplement 1 in 1992. The National Organizing Committee consisted of V. E. Sokolov, M. P. Roschevsky, L. M. Baskin, V. D. Golovanov, N. A. Chermnykh, O. F. Chernova, K. P. Filonov, N. E. Kochanov, V. M. Neronov, and A. A. Ulitin. The field trip took the participants to the Pechora-Ilych Biosphere Preserve and the Chemam Forest-Game Husbandry Reserve and learned about wildlife management programs in the Soviet Union.

Anchorage and Denali Park were the sites for the 27th meeting, chaired by Chuck Schwartz in 1991. Chuck was also the winner of the Distinguished Moose Biologist Award that year for his pioneering work in moose physiology and population dynamics. Bruce Bartley of the Alaska Division of Fish and Game was presented with The Order Of Alces Award. At this meeting the group discussed and agreed to put together a comprehensive book on moose ecology and management. Tim Timmermann "volunteered" Al Franzmann, who had recently retired, to head up the effort. Al agreed, and chose Chuck Schwartz as his coeditor. It took 7 years to see the cooperative effort published by the Smithsonian Institution as a Wildlife Management Institute book in 1998.

For the 28th meeting Howard Smith hosted the group in Ontario's Algonquin Provincial Park in 1992. Moose population productivity was the theme of the workshop. The meeting is notable for the great pig roast put on for the group. The Order Of Alces was presented to Mike Wilton, Mike Buss, Chuck Jane, Howard Smith, and Rosaleen Cosgrove from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. *Alces Supplement 1* was published, with the papers from the Third International Moose Symposium,

held in Syktyvkar, Russia in 1990.

Kristine M. Bontaites hosted the group at Bretton Woods New Hampshire for the 29th meeting in 1993. Kristine has the honor of being the first woman to host the group. Kristine received The Order Of Alces award for that year. Murray Lankester was designated as the Distinguished Moose Biologist for his research into parasites, the many good students he has turned out, and his many years of hard work for the *Alces* cause. The focus was on methods of population estimation and monitoring, especially in the closed canopy forest of the eastern seaboard. The conference was held at the world famous Mount Washington Hotel in Bretton Woods New Hampshire that opened early to host the conference. Those who stayed at the hotel were treated to dining beyond comparison.

For the 30th conference the group was convened by Lloyd Oldenburg, Idaho Department of Fish and Game in Idaho Falls, Idaho. The theme was the biology and management of Shiras moose in western North America. Jim Peek, University of Idaho received the Distinguished Moose Biologist Award for his research on moose range ecology and the many good students he has turned out in his teaching career. Lloyd Oldenburg and Barbara Lewis of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game received The Order Of Alces.

The 31st met at Fundy National Park and was cochaired by Gerry Redmond of the New Brunswick Department of Forest and Energy and Warren Ballard of the New Brunswick Wildlife Cooperative Research Unit. Intensive forest management and moose was the theme of the conference. The Distinguished Moose Biologist was not presented in 1995. The Order Of Alces was presented to Gerald Redmond, Warren Ballard, Ardith Armstrong, Bob Currie, Cindy Lanteigne, Heather Whitlaw, Ken Eagle, and Paul Gauthier. The group was sad-

dened by the death of Tony Bubenik in February of that year. Tony's participation in moose conferences will be missed by all for years to come. A scholarship fund has been established in Tony's name at Lakehead University.

The 32nd met in 1996 in Banff National Park, Alberta, cochaired by Tom Hurd of Parks Canada and Gerry Lynch from Alberta Environmental Protection. The workshop session dealt with the use of GPS technology in wildlife management and research and the problems associated with the habituation of wildlife to humans. Charles Kay presented evidence that aboriginal human populations did exert an influence on the distribution and abundance of wildlife in North America. The Distinguished Moose Biologist award went to Vic Van Ballenberghe, U. S. Forest Service, for work in moose behavior and population dynamics. The Order Of Alces was presented to Gerry Lynch, Lyle Fullerton, Dave Poll, and Vicki Perkins from the Alberta Fish and Wildlife Department and Tom Hurd from Banff National Park.

THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

The 1997 meeting was held in conjunction with the Fourth International Moose Symposium chaired by Charles Schwartz in Fairbanks, Alaska. Two issues of *Alces* were published, one containing the conference proceedings, and the other containing the Symposium papers. Margareta Steen, Swedish University of Agricultural Science was the Distinguished Moose Biologist. The Order Of Alces went to Gino Del Frate, Kris Huntermark, Sarah Richards, Art Rodgers, Chuck Schwartz, and Tom Stephenson. This meeting marked the 25th consecutive meeting attended by Vince Crichton.

For our 34th meeting in 1998 the group returned to Quebec City, Quebec and were

hosted by Rehaume Courtois. The Distinguished Moose Biologist Award went to Peter Jordan of the University of Minnesota for his long term studies on Isle Royale, and his many students that are now making their mark on the world. Rehaume Courtois received The Order Of Alces Award. A long time contributor to *Alces* Bill Gasaway passed away this year. Bill will be long remembered for his diligent work on moose survey methods and population dynamics.

In 1999 we met at the Grand Portage Lodge and Casino in Grand Portage, Minnesota for the 35th meeting. The chairs for this meeting were Peter Jordan, University of Minnesota, Mike Schrage from the Fond du Lac Indian Reservation Resource Management Division, and Bill Peterson, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Bill Peterson received the Distinguished Moose Biologist Award for his contributions to moose research and management and the moose conference. The Order Of Alces was presented to the Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa. The themes of the workshops were 40 years of ecological research on Isle Royale and urinary metabolites for enhancing ecological interpretations. There were 156 people registered for the conference, an all time high. The panel discussing the 4 decades of research on Isle Royale had just about every one there that had done ecological research on the island. The one day field trip to Isle Royale was also a big draw for the crowd. Shortly after this meeting, Eric Cox, Leader of the Northwest Minnesota Moose Project, and Minnesota Conservation Officer Grant Coyour were killed in an airplane crash while tracking moose from their Piper Cub aircraft in northwestern Minnesota.

TIME MARCHES ON

The group is flourishing. It's with the annual meetings across the continent where

local people share the responsibility of putting on the meeting, tied to the core at Thunder Bay that is responsible for its success. Having the meetings at various sites across the continent allows those who attend regularly to see moose in all various habitats, and just as importantly, allows local people who don't get to every meeting, to participate whenever the meeting comes their way.

Throughout the history of the North American moose group there is one common thread, the influence and centering of the group on the support people at Thunder Bay, Ontario. Dedicated people at the lakehead for over 30 years have put a tremendous amount of their time and effort into making the group a success. It is with this concentration of power that Thunder Bay has become the focal point of the North American moose world. Starting in the early 1960's when Harold Cumming and Tim Timmermann moved to Thunder Bay, and their affiliation with Lakehead University and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, followed by Murray Lankester in the early 1970's. These 3 people have provided the long-term commitment at the lakehead that has been the backbone of the organization. These 3, along with the many who worked on the production of the journal made it happen. No official job description included the responsibility and time they spent working on *Alces*. They spent many hours of their own time committed to making sure the organization flourished. Their diligence and hard work produced and upgraded our old annual meeting proceedings to *Alces*, a respectable scientific journal. Sure, they had help from the rest of us, but it was their steadfastness and vision that has produced today's journal over the long haul, that is the hallmark of the organization. Without these 3 we would still be in the dark ages of the old, and now dead, Great Lakes Deer Group. It is through their work that Lakehead University and our group is now

looked upon as the leader in the field of scientific moose management and research literature.

The leadership role in moose affairs was further demonstrated in 1998 when the Province of Ontario singled out Lakehead University to receive a bursary to help support graduate level research into moose ecology. The reasons sighted for selecting Lakehead University were its northern location and long association with the editing and publishing of *Alces*.

Another testimony to the groups' productivity is the 733 page book *Ecology and management of the North American moose*, all written by fellow mooseters from across the continent, edited by mooseters Al Franzmann and Chuck Schwartz, published in 1998 as a joint effort of the Wildlife Management Institute and the Smithsonian Institution. The book received The Wildlife Society's award for outstanding ecology and management publication for editorship. This same year 4 mooseters received the award from The Wildlife Society for their work reported in *Timber Management and Natural Disturbance Effects on Moose Habitats: Landscape Evaluation* coauthored by Rob Rempel, Phil Elkie, Art Rodgers, and Mike Gluck.

During this time the moose have fared well too. The very basic knowledge of their physiology was researched and revealed to us at these meetings, as was important findings in population dynamics and predator-prey relationships. Methods for conducting meaningful moose surveys were developed, reported and put into practice. During this time moose populations have expanded their range; some to occupy range they had been extirpated from, others to occupy new range that has never seen a moose. There are about a million moose now on the North American continent providing many publics with satisfaction.

As Al Elsey summed it up in his e-mail

to me on 3 May 1999: *"It is wonderful to know that moose still get the associated scientists together. Such a magnificent animal deserves it. Congratulations. Keep up the good work."*

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