

The Voyageur News

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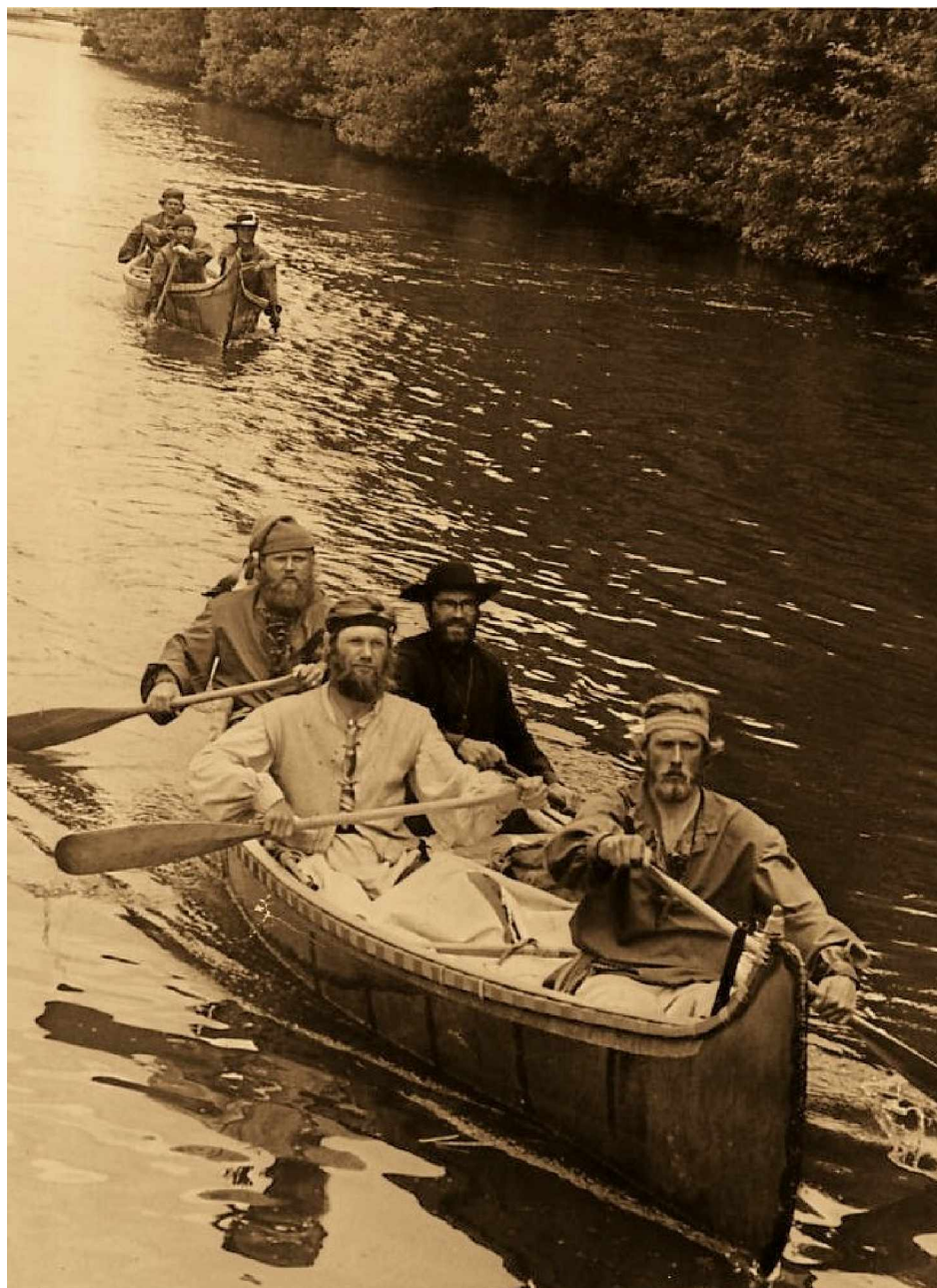
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Bill Dwyer speaks at this year's Fall Gathering about his 1973 trip with other re-enactors re-living the Jolliet and Marquette odyssey in 1673 from St Ignace to the confluence of the Mississippi and Arkansas Rivers!

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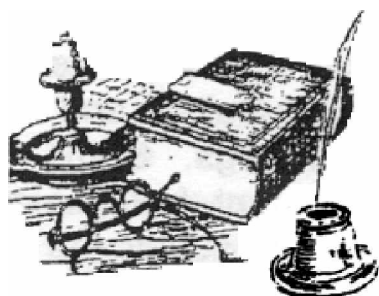
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What's in your wallet?

By Wayne Krefting

For most of us these days the answer is probably, "Not much." But even when there is something, figuring out what you have isn't too difficult. Legal tender in the U.S. is basically United States currency, with the occasional odd Canadian coin tossed in for those of us in the North.

Figuring out "what was in your wallet" wasn't always quite so easy. In the eighteenth century there was a plethora of currencies in use. Of course today there are dozens of currencies, but they aren't circulated nor used world-wide.

Currencies in play included French, English, Dutch, German, Spanish, and on (much later U.S. currency). Each had a rate of exchange by which one currency was measured against the other (usually figured upon the amount of silver in the "hallmark" coinage, shilling, pound, livre, ecu, pistareen, etc. whether or not that "coin" actually existed or not). Think of the "exchange rate" between Canadian and US dollars, and its variability and you will have some sense of what is involved, then multiply it by 6 or 7 different currencies traded or used for payment.

Add to that a perennial coin shortage. Coins did circulate, but the availability was more famine than feast, whether in Canada, England, or elsewhere on the Continent or North America. There was a constant competition to manipulate the exchange rate in order to attract coins, and governmental decrees to prevent the export of coins and metal.

In 1788 the Quebec customs collector noted that, "It is very rare I receive at my office either Bold or Silver . . . I generally accept notes." "Money and Exchange in Canada to 1900", AB McCullough, Dundrun Press, Toronto, 1984 p. 78) In 1792 three fur trading partnerships (Phyn Ellice & Inglis, Todd McGill & Co., Forsyth Richardson & Co.) were prompted by acute coin shortage to declare they would establish a bank (the bank ultimately failed).

These "notes", bills of exchange or commodity notes or other paper tender, also had their own exchange rate, whether drawn on London, New York, Canadian concerns, and discounts depending upon the length of the note before being redeemed.

Some very good references, though, on currencies, exchange rates, coinage available (and the coin famines) are: the McCullough book noted above and pretty much anything by John McCusker though "The Economy of British America", U of No. Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1985 and "Money and Exchange in Europe and America 1600-1775: A handbook" UNC Press, Chapel Hill, 1978 revised/reprinted 1995.

Where We're Meeting: MacKenzie Environmental Education Center



Located on 250 acres, the MacKenzie Environmental Education Center (MEEC), one of the most diverse environmental education centers in Wisconsin, has a variety of habitat types including prairie and forest land and many features including a live wildlife exhibit, self guided nature trails, museums, fire tower, large picnic area, lodge and dormitories and more.

Operated and managed by the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation (WWF) through a unique partnership with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the Friends of the MacKenzie Center in rural Poynette WI, MEEC is 25 miles north of Madison.

Find out more about the Mackenzie Environmental

Education Center at: <http://www.mackenziecenter.com/>



How to get to the MEEC:

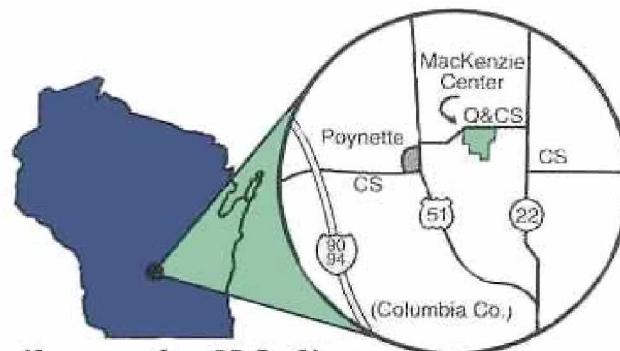
Coming from the south on I-90/94/39

- Take exit **115** for **CS** toward **Lake Wisconsin/Poynette**
- Turn **left** at **County Rd CS**

Coming from the north on I-90/94/39

- Take exit **115** for **CS** toward **Lake Wisconsin/Poynette**
- Turn **right** at **County Rd CS**

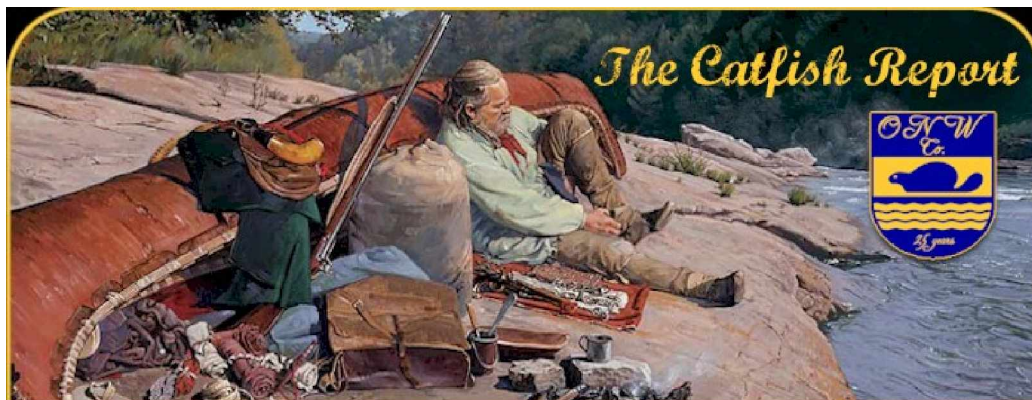
Continue on **County Rd CS and Q** through the village of Poynette and across business Hwy 51. The main entrance to MEEC will be on your right just 2 miles after crossing business Hwy 51.



**25 miles north of Madison
in Columbia County**



This year the Fall Gathering will coincide with the Old Northwest Company's Annual Ball. NAVC. and ONW members will dine splendidly, then dance to music provided by StoneRing, a four member band based in Madison, Wisconsin. Playing traditional Celtic music on acoustic instruments, they have a huge repertoire of Irish and Scottish ballads, war songs, rebel songs and drinking songs. StoneRing has performed at Milwaukee's Irish Fest, Highland Games, at the Irish Cultural Heritage Center and in concert halls all over the Midwest. Visit their website: <http://www.thestonerings.com/>



Who are the Old Northwest Company, our co-hosts this year? In the words of their online periodical, "The Catfish Report":

"The ONW is a brotherhood of men that all share a interest in the hobby. We come from varied backgrounds in the "real world" and portray an even wider array in the period. Among us you will find retired men, young men, family men, and singles... the defining thing that holds us together is our love in this brotherhood we call the ONW."

Visit them online at: <http://www.onwc.org/>

Some highlights of the upcoming Fall Gathering



In 1973, several years before the bicentennial rush into re-enacting, several men in historic clothing retraced the famed Marquette & Joliet route by canoe from St. Ignace, Michigan to the Arkansas River, down and BACK UP the Mississippi! This was done for several reasons, one being for people to take notice of polluted historic water routes. At Fall Gathering 2009 you will have the chance to meet one of these famous men and watch the film of the historic epic journey as it will be shown several times through-out the weekend! As re-enactors we should all tip our toques to these forefathers of re-enacting!

Coming all the way from Alaska, Thomas Swan, “Swanny”, presenting on Dog Use in the Fur Trade. Swanny is “an historical reenactor specializing in the day-to-day lifestyles of those affiliated with the northwestern fur-trade from the end of the Seven Years War (French and Indian War) and the amalgamation of the North West Company and Hudson’s Bay Company in 1821. At living history events I most often portray a North West Company “wintering partner” in the last decade of the eighteenth century.

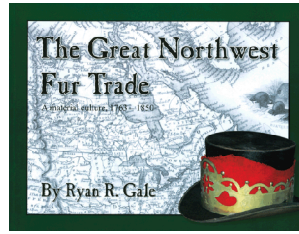


From New York, Michael Galban, familiar to many NAVC members from various events and a keynote speaker for the 2007 Gathering, provides a couple of workshops covering the making of a Petite Quill-worked Calumet Stem and Deciphering 18th Century Native Imagery.

And a few of the workshops you won't typically find anywhere else!



M. Duchene & K. Koster:
Trumps: The Jaw Harp in History /
How-to Play!



Ryan Gale:
Book Signing—
"Great Northwest Fur
Trade, A cultural history,
1763 – 1850



Sue Jurek:
Making the Canadian Cap



Kleffman & Miller:
[\(Custom Vestments Inc\)](#)
Historic Clothing, PowerPoint &
Originals



Nilson & DeLorme:
Natural Dyeing of Wool (Bring
wool yarn or an item)



Isaac Walters:
Creole Settlement in WI:
A Fur Trade Phenomena



Dale Harriet Rogavich:
Marriage; A La Facon du Payes
(Country-Wives)



Kyle Fingerson:
Two workshops on 18th
century Swordsmanship



Jeremy Kingsbury:
Ojibwe Language Primer for
the Trader/ Common Words

And much, much more!

Member News

A number of you have asked that more information and updates about members be added to newsletters and email communications. In an effort to meet your requests a new column is being added. Please send your “member news” either to the Newsletter Editor, Al Larson, or The Clerk (Wayne Krefting) for inclusion in future issues and emails.

On a sad note, from Diane Pool:

"I am sorry to give you the news that a member of the NAVC has passed away. Our good friend Libby Lazdins from Kankakee IL passed today 9/14 at 12:00pm from cancer. She found out in June that she had cancer and has been in and out of the hospital many times. There will be no showing but a memorial service will be held at a later date.

If you would like to send a card to her husband Juris and her family her address is 720 Cobb Blvd., Kankakee, IL 609601 USA.

Libby attended last year's Fall Gathering at Fort Williams which I know she enjoyed to the fullest. It was one of the special places she went to."

In other news, . . . Well, there aren't any more dispatches that have been received, so here's your opportunity.

Now, write!



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