Regarding: the disappearance of Bruce Miller and Sandra Russell, on or about August 24, 1972.

Park staff were alerted by Ms. Russell's parents on August 26 that she had not returned from a planned ten-day trip commencing on August 14. Planned route was a Northwest loop from Lake Opeongo to Manitou Lake and back, however witnesses have confirmed their presence on Dickson Lake on August 16-17. There were no subsequent confirmed sightings of the couple, though we believe that they were seen on Philip Lake on August 20.

After being alerted by the Russell family we commenced a preliminary search centred on the Hogan Lake area on August 27. We discovered no evidence of Mr. Miller or Ms. Russell and expanded our search area to include all major lakes within a 15km radius of Hogan lake. On August 29 Bill and Nancy Emerson of Arnprior reported to the Brent Lake office that they had discovered an empty canoe on Carl Wilson Lake which matched the description of Mr. Miller and Ms. Russell's canoe.

A search party was mobilized immediately and dispatched to Carl Wilson Lake. We recovered the canoe - which had a large hole in the bow that had been poorly patched - but were unable to find any further traces of the missing campers. On September 9, after extensive aerial surveillance (with co-operation from CFB Pettawa) and repeated sorties by Park staff and volunteers, I suspended formal search efforts.

I have been in regular contact with the Miller and Russell families, and will receive them when they arrive at the Park office tomorrow.

Weather for the period was well within historical norms, though for over several days in late August overnight lows reached close to freezing. There has been no abnormal bear activity this season, and no documented attacks save for a non-fatal encounter with an underweight juvenile on Bivouac Lake, outside the Park boundary. The victim was able to fight off the animal and it was later destroyed by local hunters.

I can conclude only that Mr. Miller and Ms. Russell are lost to us, but, without any physical evidence whatsover beyond the canoe, I cannot speculate as to the cause of this tragedy or the ultimate fates of the missing campers. I am confident that we have done our utmost.

THE CARL WILSON LAKE MYSTERY

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