

Alwynne Beaudoin

Editor GEOLOG magazine

First of all, I want to thank you for emailing me the GEOLOG for Summer, 2015.

I would like the opportunity to respond to Sandra Barr's rebuttal to my letter. When she uses terms

"I question", "in my opinion", "the beauty", "feels like wilderness", "we selected as the best", "it appears", "it is the best" and "arguably the best" she is voicing opinions and not facts.

The National Parks were not created to preserve natural beauty. Parks Canada has a dual mandate to preserve and present the cultural and ecological heritage of certain areas. The Management Plan for the Cape Breton Highlands stated that the cultural heritage of the Ingonish area must be preserved and presented. This area has a long cultural connection of service and sacrifice to Canada through the Armed Forces. During the two Great Wars, the area North of Smokey had the highest recruitment rate per capita than any other place in Canada. During World War two, nearby New Waterford, for towns of its comparative size, had the highest rate of recruitment in the whole of the British Commonwealth. Even today, Nova Scotians, who represent less than 3% of the Canadian population, make up 10% of the Armed Forces. In addition, the Park must preserve and present the stories of the First Nations, the Scots, the Irish, English, French and Metis settlers in Ingonish.

The site at Green Cove does not belong to the Never Forgotten National Memorial Foundation; it is to be leased to the Foundation as per Parks Canada policy .

The safety of the site is undermined by the fact that, in recent years , a couple slipped to their deaths on Green Cove Head. You have to be very careful walking at the site and it is not accessible to mobility challenged persons despite the boardwalk that is built on the outcropping which extends from the paved parking lot to the middle of Green Head.

Please take notice of the rubble in the foreground of the photo accompanying Ms. Barr's rebuttal. The rugged, jagged facets of these rocks show that they have not been weathered for any length of time. This rubble was placed there when the roadway for the world famous Cabot Trail was blasted during construction.

Ms. Barr brings up her failure to locate the Stantec drill holes. Since she is fond of allegories, I offer her this: " If you have a toothache and you do not see it – is it still there ?" Did anyone request the drill cores so that they may be used for geological investigation?

Stantec, on page 41 of its DIA, has stated that the restaurant was deleted from the report because of public objection to this proposal.

Archaeological investigation has already taken place; a shard which appears to be a cutting edge has been the only artifact found.

I have walked the trail from Black Brook to Jigging Cove on many occasions and I can report that there are many outcroppings similar to Green Cove along the shore and inland. You may be already aware of the outcroppings at Lakies Head, MacKinnon's Cove, and Bluff Head on the northern side of Green Cove.

Parks Canada characterizes the ecological sensitivity of all areas of the Park into one of five Designated Zones; two of these are Wilderness Zones- Green Cove is not in any of them. It is classified as a Zone 4 Designation the same as picnic sites, campsites, the golf course and the entire length of the Cabot Trail.

Finally, I cannot believe that a geologist of Ms. Barr's stature and worthy accomplishments would include this sentence in her rebuttal: "It is a glacially shaped and polished granite surface, kept clear of weathering and seaweed by waves and winter ice." My Grade 7 Earth Science students are quite aware of the freeze/thaw cycle, the formation of ice wedges, the physical weathering by wave action and sea ice, not to mention, the chemical weathering by sea water. And, there is seaweed and sea water in the fissures of the Green Cove outcropping.

Here is my opinion. I believe that the Geological Association of Canada should embrace the Never Forgotten National Memorial. It could provide an opportunity for the Association to present an exposition on the geological heritage of the area; it could be one of the stories told in the interpretive centre when it gets built.

Respectfully Yours

Ray Stapleton