

Busby tailed in Penobscot

by J.T. Shields

I went to Hurricane Island unprepared. I suppose that was partly accidental and partly unavoidable. The accidental part consisted of all of those days of training when I really should have run or swam farther or faster. Of greater significance, however, were the challenges which defied preparation. How, when one boards a plane one morning in 85° heat can one be prepared to sleep in temperatures below 40° that night? How, after facing the trials and tribulations of Boston's Logan Airport can one dehustle and debustle one's self to adjust to the pace of a Maine lobster town? How, after a semester of sitting, studying, and sleeping until 11:00 can one adjust to rising at 5:00 for a long day of running and other exhaustion provoking activities?

Adapting is, of course, one of the primary objectives of the Outward Bound experience. The brochure is probably purposefully sketchy on the details.

All the information I had about Hurricane Island when I went was that there was a lot of time on a 30-foot open pulling boat, some rock climbing, a ropes course to be navigated, and a very vigorous time of experimentation.

There is much discovery right from the beginning. Of course we all wondered about where we'd sleep and change our clothes and how we'd go to the bathroom. Who could have guessed it all would be so unavoidably obvious?

The obvious was, I suppose, an issue of some significance on the trip. One of our instructors, for instance, was called "John" and "Spence," but I was never sure until the end of the trip that his name was "John Spencer." Then of course it seemed that the answer was obvious. But simple things look complicated when you are off balance.

We did learn to pay attention despite ourselves. As our class of eleven sailed out of Rockland the first day in T-shirts and cutoffs, we watched another HIOBS boat sail in. All the crew aboard the other boat were in wool pants and heavy sweaters.

Forty-five minutes after we looked at each other and shrugged, we were digging in our bags for long johns and watch caps. (By the end of the trip, I had a greater empathy with sheep and other wool bearing beasts than I had ever imagined possible.)

There is little effort made in Outward Bound courses to buffet the participants from a direct encounter with their environment, be it the sea or the mountains. There are real risks. One works on being prepared, but confrontation with circumstances beyond one's control is a regular occurrence.

All the Outward Bound programs place some emphasis on personal development. The

unique aspect of the program that stresses the individual is "solo." For solo at the sea school, each student was placed on their own island. It is not so much a survival test but more a chance to sell how well you can live with yourself (no distractions allowed) for three days. I wondered "What would I do? What would I think about? What would I eat?"

By the end of the time alone on my own island, I would have made Maslow proud. My indignation had such vivid images of every good meal I had ever had. I was stuck on food, which was pretty amazing when one considers how slimy the stuff available was. When left to our own devices on the island, our diets consisted of variations of heavily salted, slightly gritty muck-mussels, clams, sea urchins, snails, etc.

During that time, I became convinced that the one thing less edifying than an immature woman was an immature strawberry. (Does that sound sexist? We're all friends and if it sounds dirty, it's in your mind).

When not left to our own devices, we fared much better. The food philosophy of those who cooked and packed our food tended to be macrobiotic (which I was surprised to find out, did not mean "big living things"). It was great, except that the sudden change in diet frequently left many of us with our butts over the bow, taking excessive boat speed checks.

The life at sea was great. But just as we were getting our sea legs, we were dropped off at Hurricane Island, nicknamed the Granite Hilton, featuring latrines and mattresses. The island itself used to be a quarry. We were not on earth long however, before we were led to unnatural heights. Rock climbing and a ropes course were survived without nosebleeds, though my ribs did suffer from perpetual belay.

The weather was unbeatable -- cool crisp days and arctic nights. The water temperature was equally as cordial, soaring to 45° by the time we left. The morning run and dip always left everyone bright eyed and bushy tailed, even though eyes had been blood shot and tails downright droopy when we got out of our bags an hour before.

There are many "acceptable" benefits of the Outward Bound experience. For instance, learning the value of the "high energy investment/high return" lifestyle. But, deep down, maybe the most important thing was just running away to the sea. Part of me was born in the wrong period of history. I'm sure it was just an accident, but there has always been a yearning to have been of the period of sailing ships. Hurricane Island is a perverse luxury, but such perversion has its proper place.

Jim Shields was allowed to attend the Hurricane Island Outward Bound School through the courtesy of the Center for Creative Leadership, Smith Richardson Foundation, Greensboro.



The Outward Bound Experience

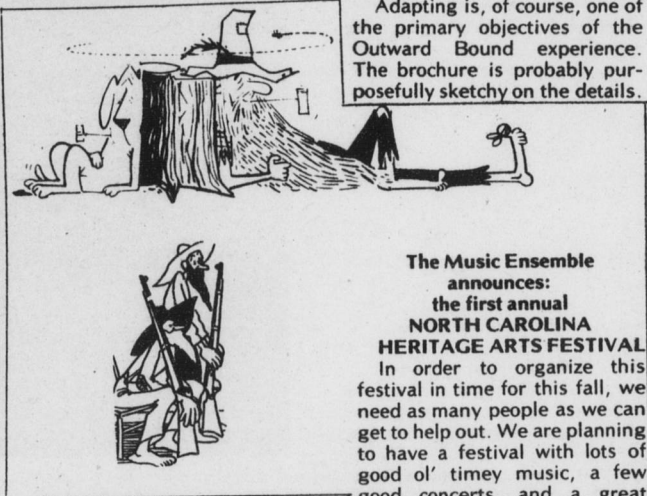
Another warm, sunny day in Maine.

Letters cont.

I have felt in a sense apologetic for my doing reasonably well in my courses and for my demanding harder and more valuable courses here, and I'm tired of it.

In the Statement of Purpose adopted by the Trustees of Guilford College, the first sentence reads, "Guilford College is an educational community..." and then goes on to qualify that statement by proclaiming adherence to several traditions. I feel it is time for the administration, the faculty, and the students of Guilford to reaffirm the basic purpose of an educational institution: providing the best education possible for each student. This purpose does not offer support to professors' whims, likes, and prejudices; it does not pledge itself to extracurricular activities at the expense of academics, and it does not allow students to breeze through courses that are simplistic to the point of childishness.

Further in the Statement is the statement: "Guilford College expects each student to develop a broad understanding and appreciation of the important elements of our intellectual and social heritage and at the same time to develop a special competence in one chosen discipline..." Should this understanding and competence be limited by the laziness of students and teachers to the bare minimum required or should it be forced to be the utmost maximum possible in each student? To receive just value for the tuition, time, and effort surrendered by each student for their classes, I feel that a student should be offered, indeed required, to work if not the



The Music Ensemble announces: the first annual NORTH CAROLINA HERITAGE ARTS FESTIVAL

In order to organize this festival in time for this fall, we need as many people as we can get to help out. We are planning to have a festival with lots of good ol' timey music, a few good concerts, and a great square dance to end it all! If you have any ideas and/or if you'd like to help us organize this festival, please contact Susan Ide, P.O. Box 17287 or Debbie Deich, P.O. Box 17121. THANKS!

utmost load then a load heavy enough to convince the student college is not a party. If one does not wish to work at what the job of student entails, then, as in any other profession, he should not be a student.

What I have said may, and probably will to some, seem to be exclusive in that a student must be all work and no play. I do not feel this is so; the reason for this is that I have constantly made my requirements relevant to the individual. Also I wish to say that I do not want a student to work even 40 hours a week at school; indeed, I only argue with only a small percentage of the courses and with the dearth of upper level courses in certain areas. I enjoy having fun, partying, and being lazy. I do not enjoy, however, taking courses which are easy to the level of boredom. If a course is to be required either by all or for a major, all I ask is that the level of work be required to be worthy of necessity.

Sincerely,
John Steely

Adele Groulx Exhibit

Greensboro artist Adele Groulx will open an exhibit, "Recent Watercolors: Flowers," from 3 to 5 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 7, in the Founders Hall Gallery at Guilford College.

The public is invited to the opening, which will have live music by Bobby Doolittle, newly appointed Guilford College physician. The exhibit will continue through September.

Ms. Groulx, head of the art department at Guilford College, has studied with Magda Mader in Greensboro and at Vassar College, the Art Students' League in New York City, the Corcoran School of Art in Washington and the Tyler School of Art in Rome.

She earned her M.F.A. in painting at UNC-Greensboro.

