



## GOING PLACES

by Lorraine O'Donnell Williams

# Sudbury: A City RECLAIMED!

In the last issue, I wrote about North Bay, one of the gateways to Northern Ontario. This is about another gateway, the city of Sudbury, west 125 kms. from North Bay along Highway 17. Sudbury is Northern Ontario's largest city and it's a model for the world of successful reclamation through the planting of eight million trees on 3,000 hectares of slag mounds created by mining. The natural beauty of the city (called The City of Greater Sudbury since 2001) is enhanced with over 330 lakes within the city limits. A university, a community college and a large Francophone population add to Sudbury's flavour.

The city, originally an offspring of the Canadian Pacific Railway, developed first as a lumbering community. It rested on the Sudbury Basin, created two billion years ago by a massive meteorite impact that propelled the world's richest known deposits of nickel and copper to the surface of the earth.

Sudbury has taken advantage of this by linking its two greatest



The Big Nickel – symbol of Sudbury

tourist attractions to this geological miracle. The “must see” attractions when you hit the city are Science North, its sister attraction Dynamic Earth, and the Big Nickel erected beside the latter where visitors have their picture taken beside this impressive 30-foot tall replica of a Canadian nickel! Alongside it stands Dynamic Earth, concentrating on mining and its developing technology over the decades.

I didn't think such a subject would interest me, but gave it a shot. Am I glad that I did! My tour of this relatively new attraction began with donning a hard hat and taking an elevator ride seven stories down into the earth. Once on ground, I walked through mine shafts displaying the most rudimentary (and highly dangerous) methods of mineral mining then through others showing the increasingly safer developments regarding dynamiting to find and remove

the ores. The tour guide provided first-class insight into the complex story which put Sudbury on the map. It is truly a memorable trip through time and it's wheelchair accessible!

After the shaft tour (which is quite lengthy), we went upstairs to view unique exhibits. Two that I particularly enjoyed were the movie showing the transformation of Sudbury from lumbering to nickel and copper mining, and the breathtaking display of all the minerals to be found in the area. Some are semi-precious gems that are startlingly beautiful.

The next logical stop was to visit its sister attraction, Science North, located on the shores of picturesque Ramsey Lake. This was my third visit to Science North and I find something different every time; for instance, the smaller theatre featured a film on bush pilots, the daredevils of northern aviation. Then it was on to the Imax theatre, Planetarium. Butterfly Gallery, and the animal and mineral exhibits, including an offer of a meal of crickets and worms!



Display attracting butterflies

After an insect and worm-free cafeteria snack, we strolled the adjoining boardwalk to take a leisurely cruise on Ramsey Lake in the Cortina. We viewed luxurious homes rising from the shores, while hearing details about the city. For a



Beautiful Ramsey Lake, Science North



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change of pace, we visited the family-owned Sudbury Downs Harness Racing/Slots, then thoroughly enjoyed our dinner at M.I.C. (Made in Canada), Sudbury's only Canadian Eatery and Whisky pub. After enjoying its casual ambience, good food and live soft music, it was back to our comfortable accommodations at the Marriott Fairfield Inn.

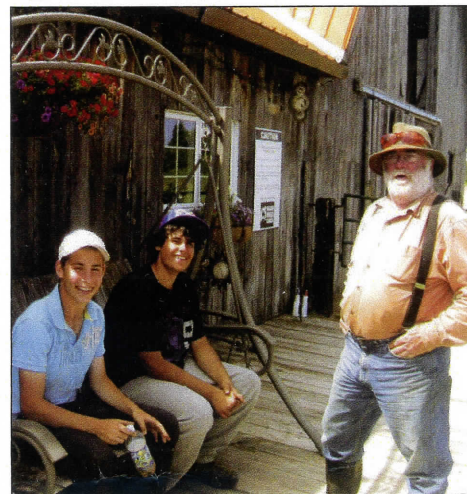
Exploring the "Greater" Sudbury exposed us to attractions we ordinarily would not have known about. One such was the 63-hole Dinosaur Valley Mini Golf. The one-of-a-

The dinosaur theme was inspired by the owners' young son who planned it with his parents before cancer claimed him. We also drove over to Wagon Wheel Ranch, where the cowboy-attired owner was very happy to tell us about this horse-riding project along scenic trails.

Probably the highlight for me in Sudbury's expanded city limits was a visit to the Northern Ontario Railroad Museum and Heritage Centre in Capreol. This look at railroad and lumbering history held many surprises. One was the nostalgic boxcar house on the museum grounds. Railroad men in the early days came here to work, but there were no houses for them to stay in, so baggage cars were converted into cozy homes with a kitchen and living rooms at one end and a bedroom at the other.

Many artifacts – kitchen equipment, cooking utensils and pictures – were identical to ones we'd inherited from our

parents and grandparents. Even the chenille bedspread brought back memories. On the grounds, in addition to engines and cars, is a completely furnished "school on wheels". It would travel from community to community in the sparsely populated north, stay for a decent length of time to teach children, and then move on to the next. Another car in the train would be the living quarters of the



Horseback Riding Ranch

travelling teacher, often accompanied by his family. The museum itself is housed in a lovely home, the former residence of the railway superintendent. There are interesting displays in the rooms and you can end your tour with a delightful afternoon tea in the museum's Victorian-style parlour.



Inside Box Car home at Railway Museum

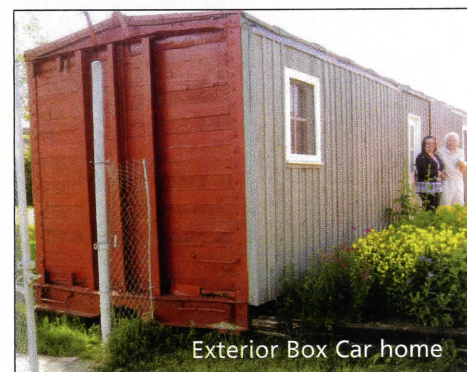


Miniature golf course

kind sculptures at each hole were created by the owners, the Rainvilles. This attraction has a special focus: it's dedicated to families who have experienced cancer.



Railway car school



Exterior Box Car home

For further information on these and other attractions, including Sudbury's many Festivals, contact [www.sudburytourism.ca](http://www.sudburytourism.ca) or call 1-866-451-8525.