



THE HISTORY OF THE CAMP CRESTS

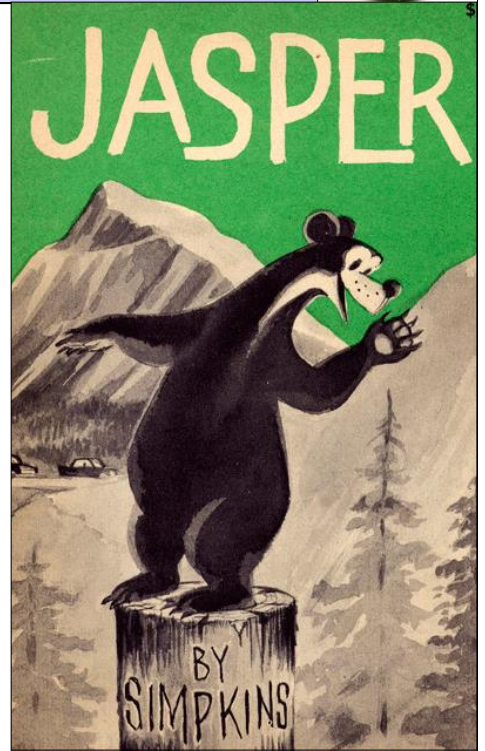
Part Four: The “HSR Bear” years, 1972—Present (Article by Ken Wrigglesworth)



This is part four of the on-going series of articles discussing the history of the Haliburton Scout Reserve crests. The first two articles covered the 1980s and 1990s. The third discussed the very first crests from 1947 to 1953, when the Scout Reserve was known as Camp Kennabi. In this article we'll look at the enduring “Bear Mascot”, a theme that was started in 1972, the year that marked the 25th Anniversary of the founding of the camp.

Adopting the bear as the HSR mascot was the brainchild of Ken Cooper. He took over as the Director of Camping Operations for the Toronto Region in January, 1970, and held the position until 1991. One of the responsibilities of the Director of Camping was to order and approve the design of the crests for the four GTR Camps every year. Ken was inspired by his predecessor Don McLean who had chosen a Beaver to be the mascot for Camp Obasateeka starting in 1968. This had proven to be popular theme with the campers, so

Ken made the decision that in 1972 the other three GTR camps began to have themed crests with a mascot: Woodland trails got a Wolf, Goodyear Memorial a Raccoon, and HSR the Black Bear. The Bear was chosen for reasons that Ken can't remember specifically. He speculates it probably made sense because HSR was true wilderness setting, where bears were occasionally encountered, so it seemed like a logical choice. Also, the bear had made an appearance on the 1968 crest, and even earlier on the 1953-54 crests.



Jasper the Bear as first designed by James Simpkins in 1948



It should be noted that design owes a lot to a character invented by James Simpkins (1910-2004): “Jasper the Bear”. Here is an excerpt from his Wikipedia biography: “James Simpkin’s most familiar creation was “Jasper the Bear.” He began drawing this cartoon in 1948 for Maclean’s magazine. The company originally commissioned 35 cartoons and the relationship lasted for 24 years. Jasper the Bear has been used by the **Boy Scouts of Canada** and Jasper National Park, as logos on cards, and bear warning posters in parks. Jasper the Bear has dealt with issues such as ecology, pollution, hunters, and littering”.



“Jasper as a Scout” as seen in Scouting Magazine in the 1960s, commissioned illustration work from James Simpkins for the National Scouts of Canada

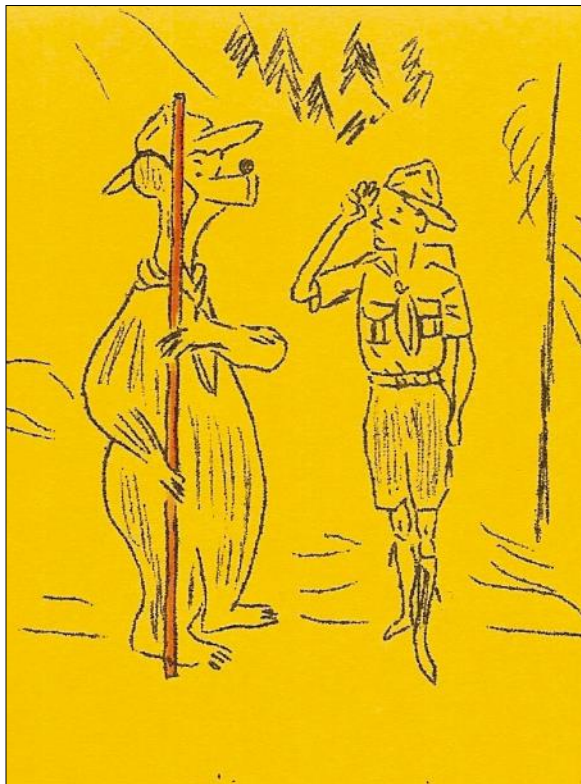
The HSR Bear made an early appearance on the 1968 crest, and then started his current 44 year run in 1972. By 1977, seen upper left, the bear closely resembled James Simpkin’s “Jasper”

HISTORY OF HSR CRESTS

Ken Cooper says he never specifically requested that the HSR Bear be designed to resemble Jasper, that it was the choice of the graphic artist at Grant Emblems to make that creative decision. In the first two years, 1972, and certainly 1973, the reference was not so obvious. The HSR Bear began to resemble Jasper in 1974 and 1975. The 1976 Bear looked a little like Mickey Mouse, perhaps my least favourite from that era. But by 1977, 1978 and 1979, the similarity was unmistakable: Simpkin's Jasper. Ken Cooper says Scouts Toronto never directly paid James Simpkins for this design work. Perhaps he was hired by Grant Emblems graphics department? It's possible; James Simpkins was based in southern Ontario. What is more likely is that his popular and attractive design was ripped-off. I know when I designed 8 crests through the 1980s and early '90s, I tried to emulate the best that I could the HSR bears that most resembled Jasper, to keep the look consistent.



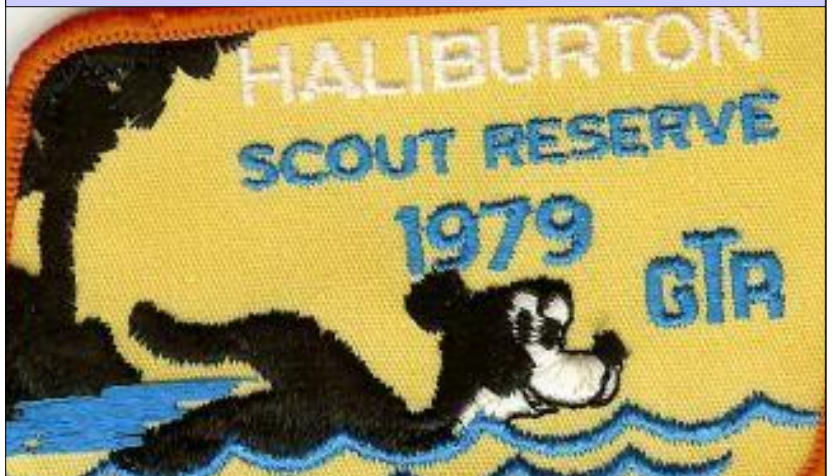
James Simpkins, seen here in his Dundas, Ontario, studio in 2003, aged 93



This sketch above was from an invite sent by Camp Kennaway (the original name for the HSR Composite Camping program) 1958 Camp Chief Don McLean for a pre-Camp May training session to the Staff. He obviously traced a Simpkin's "Jasper as a Scout" illustration from one of the National Scouting magazines that Simpkins had done design work for



The 1976 HSR Bear looks like a mash-up of Disney's Mickey Mouse and Simpkin's Jasper, showing the creative department at Grant Emblems had many popular culture influences in their designs



As seen in the 1979 swimming Bear crest, by the late 1970s, the design influence of the James Simpkin's "Jasper the Bear" is unmistakable.