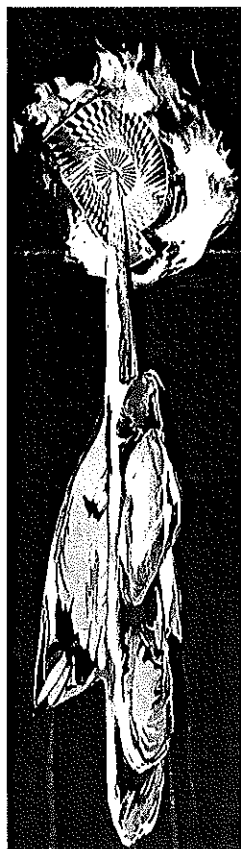


The train keeps a rollin'

Want to enjoy the brilliant colours of autumn? Look no further than the Agawa Canyon Tour Train. Mel Borins shows you how to stay on the right side of the tracks

Mourning the death of summer is not easy, but some consolation can be found in the dazzling colours of leaves during the final weeks of their lives. Many people have told me that if I really wanted to see a spectacular demonstration of autumn leaf colours, I must take the Agawa Canyon Tour Train.

To catch the train you must go to Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., a city of 80,000 people nestled between Lake Superior and Lake Huron. From there, the train takes you 181 kilometres miles north



No Known Drug Interactions.

PANTOLOC
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through the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Forest Region of the rugged Canadian Shield to Agawa Canyon. The granite bedrock underlying this area is more than 2.5 billion years old. A series of ice ages altered the canyon, the last ice cover retreating 10,000 years ago. The walls of the Agawa Canyon reach 170 metres at their highest points. More than two million passengers have travelled aboard the Agawa Canyon Tour Train since 1972.

I was stunned to learn there were 1,400 passengers on the train with me. There were people from all over the U.S., mostly in bus tour groups, but there were also tourists from Asia. The best time to go is in the autumn when the leaves turn, usually during the first two weeks of October. But there are also winter train tours every Saturday and Sunday from January to March which are supposed to be a frosty photographer's paradise.

The train departs at 8 a.m. and reaches the canyon at 11:30 a.m. You then get off the train for a few hours and explore the trails, waterfalls and lookout point in the Agawa Canyon park. Then the train leaves from the park and arrives back at Sault Ste. Marie at 5 p.m.

The day I took the train, I watched out the window as we left Sault Ste. Marie and passed the St. Mary's Paper Co. and Algoma Steel Corporation. The train travelled through forests, granite rock, beside flowing streams, across trestle bridges and beside pristine lakes—with good views through the windows from both sides of the train.

The train travels at a speed of no more than 65 km/h. Beware

DOCTOR ON THE WING

By Mel Borins

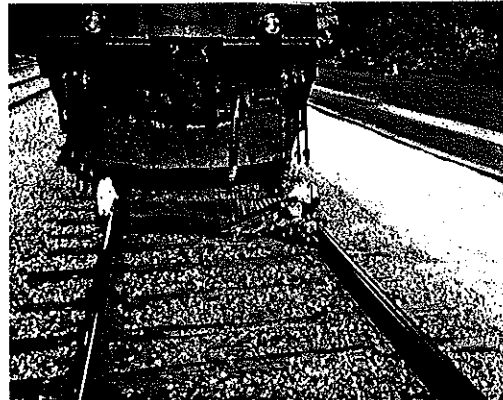
that the rocking back and forth motion puts many children, including me, to sleep. About halfway along on the trip I dozed off. When I first awoke I was disoriented and couldn't figure out where I was. A moment later, I caught a sight of the incredible scenery going by and realized where I was. I knew I shouldn't have stayed up so late the night before!

There is a dining car where you can sit and eat a simple meal for breakfast and lunch. You can also get a not-too fancy box lunch, which you can take on your excursion in the park.

At the end of the journey the train descends 150 m in 20 km to reach the canyon floor.

If you go, during your two-hour stop in the Agawa Canyon park, visit Otter Creek Falls, Black Beaver Falls and Bridal Veil Falls. The easy walks pass through the forest and are well marked. There is also a challenging climb ascending 75 m up 372 wooden stairs to lookout platforms which provide a breathtaking panoramic view of the canyon. The scene from the top is worth the exercise, but it is a difficult climb and shouldn't be undertaken if you have health problems.

There is also a passenger train that will take you all the way to the town of Hearst. Many people



Dr. Mel Borins hams it up during a break in the train's journey. The train winds through the river valley on the way to the Agawa Canyon.

go in the winter, load their snow mobiles onto the baggage car and then spend some days snowmobiling on the 2,000 km of beautifully groomed trails around Hearst.

There is excellent cross-country skiing and some downhill skiing as well. You can also hire a private railway car for weddings, private parties or meetings and travel the same route.

If you are a camping enthusiast, you might take the train to Agawa Canyon, and set up your tent on one of the six camp sites. If you are really adventurous then you can load your canoe or kayak onto the train, travel to the canyon park and then paddle down the Agawa River over the many rapids all the way to Lake Superior.

Be sure to get off the river before going over the 12-m waterfall—take the portage instead. The river can get quite rapid during the spring but is easier during the summer months. You can camp on the side of the river and fish on the way.

If you want to take your car then you can drive to Lake Superior Provincial Park, rent a canoe, load it onto the train at Frater

which will then take you to the canyon park. You can canoe back to the provincial park. A passenger train travels northbound from Sault Ste. Marie on Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, and then southbound on Thursdays, Saturdays, Sundays and Mondays. You can get off at any point and just wave the train down when you want to get back on.

Many tourists from the U.S. and Asia know about Agawa Canyon so call early as the train tour in peak season sells out quite early.

Mel Borins is a physician, travel writer and the author of the book, An Apple a Day—A Holistic Health Primer.

IF YOU GO
Agawa Canyon Tour Train: Round trip in the fall is \$66. On the Web: www.agawacanyontourtrain.com or call 1-800-242-9287.
Algoma Regional Travel Guide: You can get a travel guide by calling 1-800-263-2546.

