

## Wolves Are Bothersome In Goudreau And Lochalsh

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In an age of traffic jams, urban sprawl, and congestion, it's rare to find families who enjoy solitude and isolation. Consequently, my interest in meeting the S medts of Goudreau and Lasts of Lochalsh rose, as Dennis Brocklebank's blue Jeep jolted slowly over frozen, snow whitened ruts of a barely discernable trail to Goudreau, at A.C.R. mile 178.

The first view of Goudreau's crumbling log cabins failed to reveal the community's full former glory; as flourishing hub of a vital World War I pyrite industry, focus of a gold rush, and centre of A.O.D.'s open pit mining from 1958 to 1962. Now amidst the tranquility and debris of abandonment, Mark S medt and his wife quietly winter alone, rarely visiting the exterior bustling world. An accomplished artist from Belgium, with a French wife, Mark became familiar with the Congo jungle prior to his arrival at Goudreau in the mid-1950's. Employed by A.O.D. as a steel sharpener, Mark grew with the town, establishing a large and beautiful home. Now, bear and lynx skins adorn the floor, long vines drape artistically around the windows, while Mark's superb paintings decorate the walls. A skilled hunter, trapper, fisherman and guide, Mark's love for nature and for the rugged, empty and untamed nature of the Shield terrain, compels him to remain in Goudreau, an employee of the A.C.R. His sons, employed in Wawa, frequently visit on weekends.

Continuing our trip, bumping eighteen miles north-east beside excellent pickerel and speckled trout waters, the Jeep followed the old 1934 government road built to connect the Goudreau and Lochalsh settlements with the interior gold camps.

Fortunately, Roxie Last and his wife were encountered, following their monthly fly-out trip to Wawa. First employed by the Pick Mine in 1960, Roxie is now a permanent caretaker of this mine, while he runs a successful tourist camp on the C.P.R.

His home, reconverted from the old hardware store with tremendous labour and expense, is large, clean, and homey. Roxie and his wife Isabel, winter alone in Lochalsh, and enjoy ski-dooing and other winter sports. Wolves frequently seen in the vicinity, cause the Lasts to believe they were responsible for the killing of their favourite dog.

The old pioneer, enduring solitude and hardship, is now gone. On today's pioneer fringe, settlers are equipped with all the modern conveniences; electricity, telephones, TV, and central heating. With these attractions, few Canadians would regret living at Goudreau or Lochalsh.