

# SPARROW LAKE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

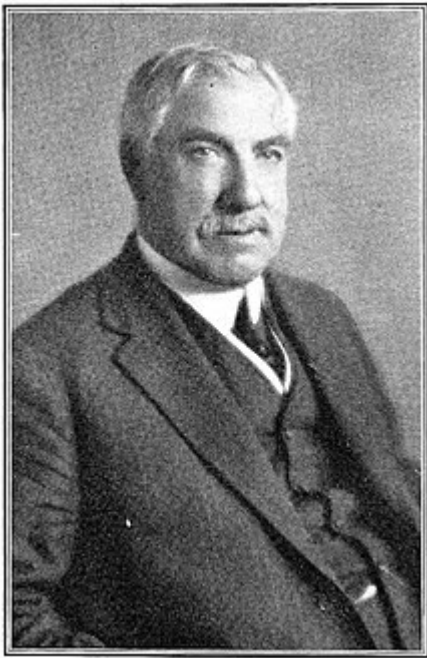
Summer 2022



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Please see our website [sparrowlake.ca](http://sparrowlake.ca) for a complete list of executive and contacts.

## The HANNA CUP

by Steve Stanton



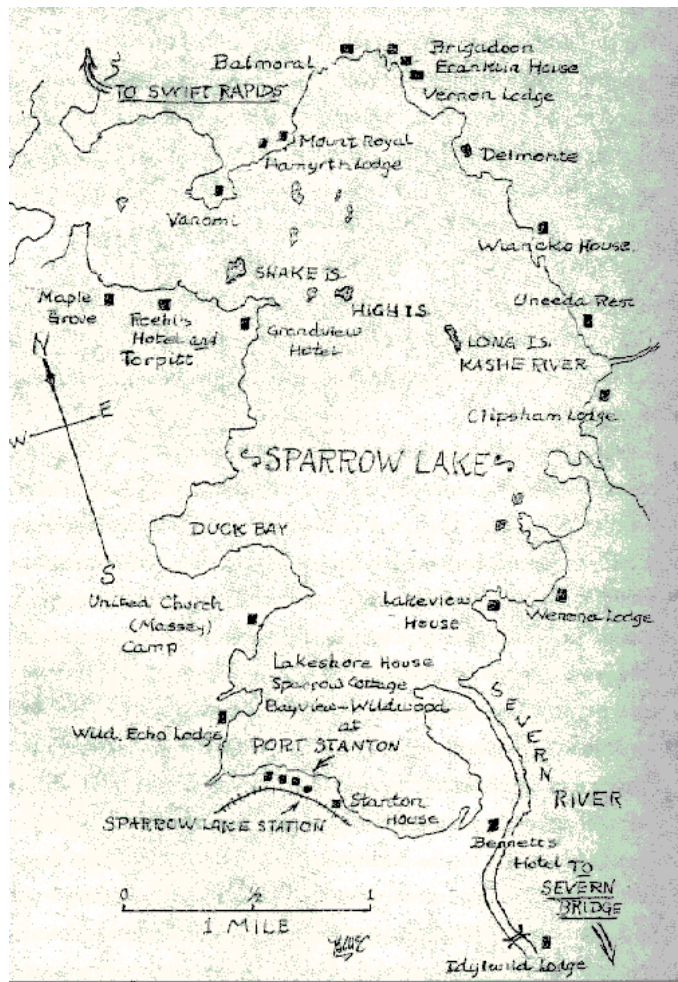
David Blyth Hanna (1858 - 1938) was born in Thornliebank, Scotland, and emigrated to Canada in 1882, employed by the Grand Trunk Railway. In 1896, he joined the Canadian Northern Railway during a period of national expansion and became third Vice-President of the company. The town of Hanna, Alberta is named after him.

In 1906, a connecting railway was being built from Toronto to Parry Sound in order to ship timber and minerals from the north. A local municipal representative, Thomas Stanton, used his influence to have the rail line redirected one half mile to the north so that it would touch the shore of Sparrow Lake on land donated by Thomas Stanton. A boom in tourism resulted at the newly established Sparrow Lake Station, and the village of Port Stanton was established.



I remember my father taking me on a hike back in the bush along a strip of abandoned rail gravel. We walked a straight line past weedy swamps interspersed with bare rock from the Canadian

Shield. Finally the coarse gravel ended abruptly in the middle of a beaver pond. Someone had halted construction at exactly that point in the Muskoka wilderness. Some railway executive had called back the work crews to a diversion point further east to begin construction on a newly surveyed trajectory. The evidence was tactile under my feet and my father's message was plain: his great-grandfather had literally changed the course of history.



The Passenger Department of CNOR printed an eight-page brochure advertising Sparrow Lake and Severn River, and landowners on the lake suddenly found themselves in the resort business. Some of the earliest families to take in tourists were Roehl House, Franklin House, Wianko House, and Uneeda Rest (Clipsham.) Otto Roehl

built a hotel that was later renamed Hotel Torpitt (Toronto-Pittsburg), and the Stanton Brothers, Albert and Frank, began building cabins in addition to operating the Stanton Steamship line from the railway station. All of the family resorts around the lake were accessible only by water. Hundreds of tourists arrived every week during the summer season. The Canadian Northern Railway operated three trains on weekdays and four on Saturday, as well as a late Sunday night train back to Toronto. One CNOR advertisement proclaimed that over 2000 customers had taken advantage of a 1910 Holiday Special.





The Hanna Cup eventually went into the custody of Otto Roehl, and sat on the fireplace mantle at Grandview Lodge for decades. It was donated to Sparrow Lake Historical Society by Grandview Lodge Resort owners Jim and Susan Seabrook in 1992. Tragically, Jim Seabrook drowned in a boating accident the following year, and Grandview Lodge was demolished in 2008. The Sparrow Lake Association continued to organize annual regattas featuring canoe races, swimming competitions, and eventually powerboat races. After the heyday of the Houses had passed,

Stanton Bros Store 1930s

Port Stanton

D.B. Hanna went on to become the first president of the Canadian National Railways in 1919. He retired in 1922 and was appointed the first chairman of the Liquor Control Board of Ontario in 1927-28. All of the competitors who vied for the Hanna Cup have long since passed away. Only the Artifact remains to remind us of the spirit of adventure that once filled this land.

**www.sparrowlake.ca**