

# Why not a Week-end in Canada?

*There are parts of Canada that are surprisingly balmy... and we don't mean kooky!*

by George M. Hubert

Photographed by Michael Leonard



To many of us who live in the United States, the word "Canada" signifies a cold, vast, northern wilderness dotted with isolated cities. The weatherman is partly to blame for this false image when he says, "Cold arctic air descending from Canada is responsible for the drop in temperatures today." Continuing, he might say, "A warm front moving in from Texas and the Central States will bring us seasonable temperatures tomorrow."

Yet how many of us realize that the southern part of the Niagara peninsula lies farther south than the California-Oregon border—than Erie, Pennsylvania; Buffalo, New York; and Boston, Massachusetts? Yes, they do have warm, balmy weather across the Canadian border!

It has often been said that people's temperament vary with the climate in which they live. This could well be true, judging from a recent trip to Glen Echo, the home grounds of the Toronto Gymnosophical Society. A warmer, more friendly group would, indeed, be difficult to find. Following the directions to the park, we arrived at a gate constructed of barked cedar logs which read "Glen Echo." A small but conspicuous sign read "Members Only." Proceeding along a winding gravel road cut through the woods in true logger's fashion, we arrived at a parking area obviously cleared to conform to the lay of the land with the object of preserving the natural scenic beauty kept foremost in mind. This first impression lingered throughout our stay, for every building at Glen Echo has been constructed to blend unobtrusively with the park's







natural wooded setting. Slightly wearied by the trip, we made our way to the snack bar, a modern glass and rough-sawn plank structure overlooking a sight which would be dear to any nudist's heart. Here wide, sloping spread of green fringed by a stately stand of Scotch pine and white spruce leads the eye to a lake partially obscured by the trees in the glen. A truly engaging prospect!

Before we could savor fully the beauty of the surroundings, a cheerful voice broke the silence with a pleasant "Hello!" That was Eddie, who with his wife Mary are the people we can thank for the existence of Glen Echo. Introductions over, we were invited to tour the park while being shown to our tenting site. We walked through the sunbather-crowded sunning area towards the lake and crossed a gently rolling mound leading to the playing field. It was only then that we realized that this lake had once been no more than a spring-fed creek emerging from the woods, for this mound is a cleverly constructed earth and boulder dam concealing a constant-level overflow system quite similar to an inverted syphon. Eddie, in his quiet, modest way, explained this mechanism to us as we gazed upon the fieldstone grotto which houses the overflow. This overflow, as we were pleased to find out later, serves a dual purpose as a wonderful natural shower, like taking a shower under a waterfall. This activity is limited to the brave at heart, however, for the water comes from the bottom of this spring-fed lake and can be rather brisk. Its volume makes it singularly invigorating, particularly after a rain.





Onward to the playing field, where two volleyball courts displayed a measure of activity not often seen! Closer scrutiny indicated a black-board with a list of names of players who were to play the winning teams. Glen Echoans certainly take their volleyball seriously, continuing to play in a local gymnasium during the winter months. A badminton court, horse-shoe pitch, swings for children old and young, a teeter-totter and a may-pole completed the sports field which was bordered by spectators, mainly women and children, reclining to watch the games. Skirting the

playing field is a veritable forest which conceals a host of trailers spaced seemingly at random but upon closer investigation found to be far enough apart to provide a suitable measure of privacy for all concerned. Arriving at the end of this area, Eddie said, "Well, now, you've seen about one third of Glen Echo. We have one hundred acres, you know, and the remaining part takes care of our permanent tent sites—of which there are a hundred or so—and provides us with all kinds of trails for a quiet walk in the woods."

The aspect of the tents, virtually







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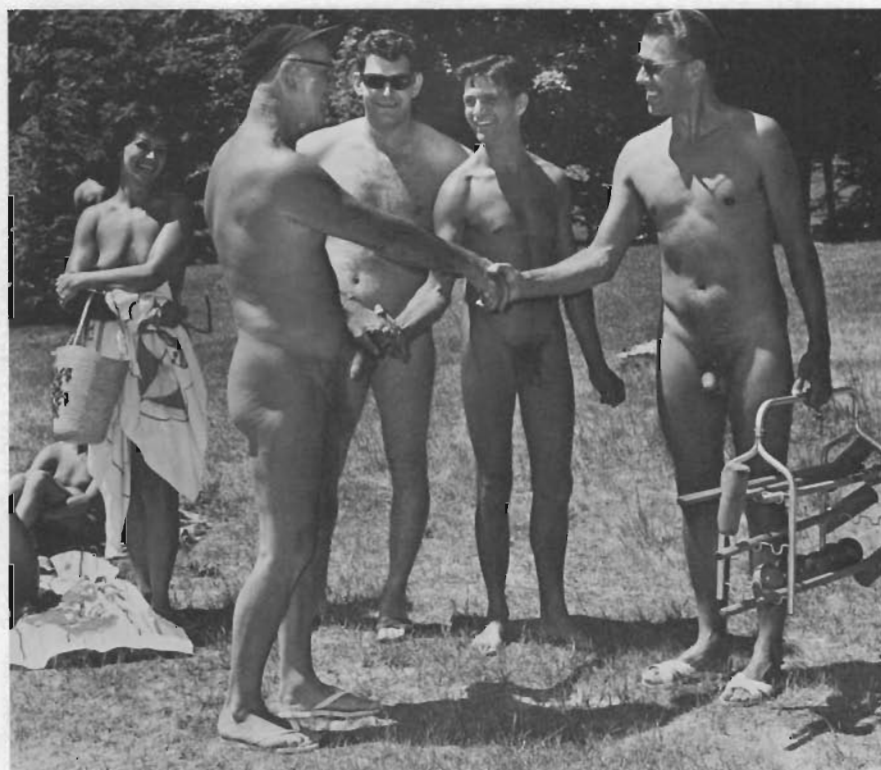
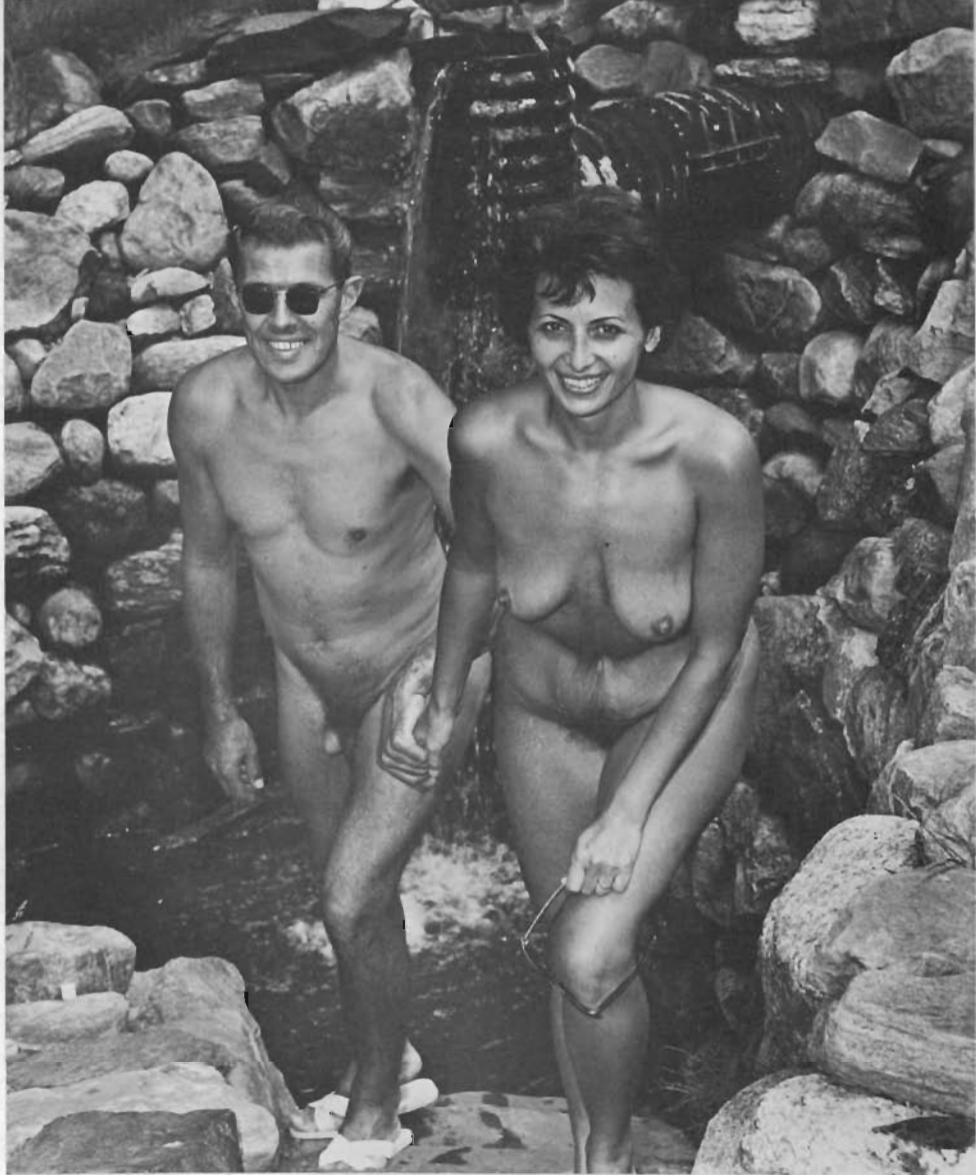
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Eddy and Mary Todorowsky, owners of the very popular Canadian park, Toronto Gymnosophical Society.

## WEEK-END IN CANADA/CONTINUED

nestling among the trees, is a pleasing one. Good planning has made this so, for to obtain a permanent tent site a spot is selected at least fifty feet from any neighboring tent and one of the conditions of tent-site use is to clear the brush and prune the lower dead branches of trees within a twenty-five foot radius of your site. This requirement has resulted in creating a park-like effect, free of the eye-sores very often connected with a camping area.

If the foregoing impresses the reader as a rather glowing description, the writer's purpose has been achieved—for the feeling that this tour had imparted to us was second only to the pleasant atmosphere that prevailed among the people. T.G.S. is composed of people not only from all walks of life but from many countries. In the evening, by the fire, the spell cast by the melodious sounds of English spoken in a German, Dutch, Polish, Hungarian or Scottish accent produced an inner glow which must be experienced to be understood. Yes, a visit to Glen Echo is one which will long be remembered.

### Author's Note:

The Toronto Gymnosophical Society is run by the members on a democratic basis. An executive committee which is elected yearly by the membership. Glen Echo is a member club of the

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Eastern Canadian Sunbathing Association and, in conjunction with other Canadian clubs, has accomplished a great deal to further the cause of nudism. As a result of these efforts, a directory of accredited Canadian nudist clubs appears in the Canadian Government Travel Bureau publication concerning places to visit while in Canada, and also in the booklet published by the Department of Travel and Publicity of the Province of Ontario, where nudism enjoys the protection of the provincial authorities. These are strides that have been made to further the acceptance—rather than merely the tolerance—of the nudist movement in Canada.

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