

October 10 - Did my first Gorge walk with Joan between 10:30 and 12pm. Wore my giant button and walked from the Schoelkopf to Whirlpool. They were not set up for registering at the museum as the pamphlet on the Robert Moses trail indicated. I was told that the pamphlet had even pulled because of that. How hard could it be to put a book and a pencil out? Since there is little space between the two roads and car noise and exhaust predominate, this was not a particularly pleasant walk. We saw no one on the road but 6 people were using the rim trail. I made a point to show Joan the few gulls on the river because I know in several weeks there will be thousands- a dramatic difference!

October 18 - Walked from Whirlpool to Devil's Hole between 3 and 4:30 pm with Joan and Paul Gromosiak. We counted 17 people on the rim and 5 on the road. There was no place to register at Whirlpool either. We question the appropriateness of the name "Robert Moses Trail." Certainly anyone who knows about the man would know that he is turning over in his grave now that his precious road is converted to a hiking/biking trail even if it is only temporary. The Bonaparte's gulls are in and loafing on the rocks just upriver from the Power Plant. There was a golden-crowned kinglet in the shelter at Whirlpool flying from light to light. Hope "he" figures out how to get out of there.

October 24 - Walked from Whirlpool to Devil's Hole between 3 and 4:30pm with Joan and Paul. What a beautiful day in the 70s with clear blue sky to view the colored leaves against. Saw 6 people on the road and 7 on the rim. People like to jog along the rim and I can't blame them. The views are spectacular. As we reached devils hole a young intern from the Gazette took our picture. He asked for our names and where we were from but that was all he wanted to know. We decided to take the rim trail on the way back hoping to run into more people to inspire. Saw many interesting trees and shrubs including a witchhazel in bloom. Birds seen or heard were golden-crowned kinglet, white-breasted nuthatch, downy woodpecker, White-throated Sparrow, blue jay and brown creeper. The Bonaparte's Gulls were feeding all along the river in good numbers.

November 1 - The three of us walked Whirlpool to Devil's Hole again around the same time as last week. It was very windy with temperatures close to 70. Saw 3 people on the road and 10 on the rim. We noticed that registration boxes had been placed on the Robert Moses trail but both boxes were empty except for pencils. Paul used one of our Did You Know? fact sheets to write a note saying that we wanted to register but were unable to. The wind combined with traffic noise caused us to not see any birds except gulls in the gorge and above our heads.

November 6 - Walked the same walk. Saw 7 people on the rim and 2 on the road. We checked those registration boxes again. Our note was still there but nothing else. As we stood at the box at Whirlpool and looked towards the shelter we noticed many trees that were spray painted with black paint. These were not marked to be taken down we hoped. Then we saw that under the black was florescent orange. Paul said he'd call the parks department to find out what was going on. It would be absolutely criminal to cut down that many trees for no good reason.

November 15 - Same walk. It is of course the prettiest. We have gotten into the habit of taking the Robert Moses Trail from Whirlpool to Devil's Hole and then taking the rim trail back. Saw 6 people on the rim and 2 on the road. Nothing new with the registration boxes. Paul found out about the trees and it was as we thought. They were originally to be cut down but someone came to their senses. Once in a while good things happen at the parks! We met one couple from Deveaux who were very supportive of our ideas. We stood in the howling wind exchanging ideas and gave them our fact sheet. Later we ran into a youngish man who was not for parkway removal. He said, "It's been here too long." Now, there is a very good reason! I'm always struck as I walk what a shame the parkway is. It is so ugly and decrepit. I don't know how our leaders in government think that we could possibly promote this trail for tourism the way it is. Let's see. Come to Niagara Falls and see the great beauty of the falls contrasted by the ugly work of man. Walk along a hard unsightly road surrounded by cut grass and garbage! If you are lucky cars will speed by you spewing exhaust and filling your ears with a roar that easily

drowns out the sound of our own great river. Very enticing don't you think?

November 21 - Did the Gorge walk between 9:30 and 10:30 this morning with Paul and Joan's niece, Laura. It was pretty chilly- upper 30s and 20 mile an hour winds but the sun was out and we were dressed for it and walking so we stayed pretty warm. Saw one person jogging on the road and one person walking their dog on the rim. The Bonaparte's were more numerous than on the weekend but maybe less than a few weeks ago when the weather was worse. Checked both registration boxes. In the Devils hole one were pencils and the other had our note that has been there for weeks now.

November 28 - Between 9:30 and 11am I did the walk by myself. I realized that this was my last chance to beat the rain this week. It was in the 40's and foggy and damp. Forgot my coat (!) but really didn't need it as soon as I got walking. Saw just two people again, both on the rim trail, one hiking and one jogging. Talked to the jogger when I saw him the second time. He didn't believe there was much hope and felt our leaders were not interested in doing anything for the people, just themselves. He gestured to the gorge and said, "Anywhere else a place like this would be loaded with people." The registration boxes were the same. Just pencils and our note, no paper. Still lots of Bonaparte's Gulls all along the river.

December 4 - It was a balmy 59 degrees today for our walk which began at Whirlpool around 2:30. I went early to check for rare small gulls with the Bonaparte's but found none. Paul and Joan joined me. We saw 5 people on the rim and 1 on the road. Checked the registration boxes. Same.

December 12 - It was almost 50 degrees today. Paul joined me and we walked from Whirlpool to Devil's Hole around 2pm. Saw one person on the rim trail and one on the road. In the Whirlpool registration box we found a hymnal and two pens. Forgot to check the one at Devil's Hole.

December 21 - Took the walk by myself today about 1:30. It was in the 30's but I dressed just right and really enjoyed it. The Bonaparte's Gulls were in the gorge by the thousands! Saw an Iceland Gull at Devil's hole roosting on the rocks with Bony's and other large gulls. It was a beautiful walk. One man pointed to my sign and said he agreed with me. Another blared his horn and gave me the thumbs down as he sped past. A policeman actually turned around and drove down the trail to ask me about the sign. He didn't appear to know anything about the issue. Saw three people on the rim trail. Checked both registration boxes. Still a hymnal and two pens in one and just pencils in the other.

Missed Christmas week. I had hoped to do it on Friday but then the snowstorm made it so we had to drive my mom home to Rochester.

January 3 - By myself today at 1pm I walked from Whirlpool to Devil's Hole. I was not cold despite the wind. There were zillions of gulls and though I tried to find a rare one, the only different one I could come up with was a first winter Iceland Gull. I saw one person walking along the rim wearing a walkman and I think I've seen him before. Pleasantly surprising were all the footprints. I was afraid I might have to break a trail on the road but it was totally flattened by several sets of footprints two ski trails- even bicycle tracks! So even though I don't see people when I walk sometimes, here is a record that people are using the trail. It will just be a matter of time I think before it gets more heavily used. Bring your camera next time! The registration boxes were the same - the hymnal and two pens at Whirlpool and just pencils at Devil's Hole.

January 10 - By myself I walked the usual route around 10am-12noon. I saw no one on either trail. Checked the registration boxes. Nothing new. So many gulls! I saw a lesser black-backed at Devil's Hole and an Iceland, a little, and a possible Nelson's gull at Whirlpool. Though I couldn't find anything rarer the most impressive thing was the spectacle of so many birds feeding and resting in such a beautiful landscape.

January 16 - Walked the same walk 1pm to 3pm. There was one man with his dog on the rim trail. He liked my sign and hopes it happens (total removal). The registration boxes were the same. I took some photos today of the landscape trying to show the parkway and the gorge contrasting. Thinking also about a man against nature motif.

January 22 - Did the walk today by myself 10am-11:30. It was sunny, in the 30's but a 17mph SW wind made it not so fun. Saw one person jogging on the road and one person on the rim trail. Lots of footprints though. This time I had my camera and did take a few pictures. The pens have been removed from the Whirlpool registration box but the hymnal is still there.

January 29 - It was overcast and misty with 6mph winds and 39 degrees. A perfect day for a walk! Starting at 9:30 and ending at 10:30 I observed 6 people using the rim trail and 2 on the road. Checked the registration boxes. Someone took the hymnal! Otherwise, still only writing utensils there. No paper. I really enjoy it when it's not windy. Took more photos and am thinking of a painting.

February 8 - From 9am to 10:30 I did the walk. It was 33 degrees with a SSW wind at 16mph and misty again. I saw no one on either trail. Juncos were singing!

February 19 - I walked from 12:45 to 2pm. It was really nice out, 43 degrees and a light SE wind. I saw no one on either trail just two young people crossing the parkway and at the end at Whirlpool a gazette photographer who inexplicably knew nothing about our cause or that I'd already had my picture in the paper. He was very nice but totally in the dark. Also two garbage men working in Deveaux were frustrated because they couldn't read my sign so I walked a little closer so they could see.

February 26 - I did the walk very early at 7:45am to try to beat the rain and I just did. It started as I reached Whirlpool around 8:35. I saw one person walking their dog on the road. Nothing new with the registration boxes. House finches were singing up a storm.

March 8 - It was 35degrees with light east winds on my walk that I took between 8:30 and 9:30. I saw 2 people on the road and 4 on the rim trail. Checked the registration boxes and there was nothing new there. Got two signatures for our petition, which I attached to the back of the sign.

March 14 - I had a sunny day for my walk today between 10 and 11am. The winds were Northeast at 8 mph. Noticed a spine and ribs of an animal beside the road - a squirrel? Took a picture. Saw one person on the road and 2 on the rim.

March 28 - Another sunny day but only 33 degrees with south - southwest winds at 9 mph. There was one person on the road (same gentleman that walks with a cane) and two people on the rim walking their dogs. At Devil's Hole the front of the registration box was torn off. That's too bad but not surprising I guess. I really can't see how these registration boxes can work when no one is maintaining them with paper or pencils and they can be so easily vandalized. The two leaning trees by the path were cut down which was not a bad idea. There is a fox squirrel at Devil's Hole that always makes me wish I had brought my camcorder. Also, when I was on the rim trail right near the stairs at Whirlpool an accipiter flew just over my head and down into the gorge.

April 10 - I saw two Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers and two Little Gulls on my walk today which I did between 10 and 11am. There was only a light, variable wind and the temperature was 41degrees. Bright sun! I saw two people on the rim and 4 using the road. No change with the registration boxes.

April 18 - A warm day for my walk - in the 70's with light south winds. Ran into the same person who claimed anywhere else this place would be filled with people. He was jogging. The Serviceberry is in bloom! Trout Lily, too. No changes to the registration boxes.

April 24 - Made myself wait `til afternoon for the walk so that I might run into a few different people. It was almost 60 degrees with a

light wind. I saw 11 people on the rim and 2 on the road - One of them, bicycling! No changes to the registration boxes. There were makeshift signs up to warn of pesticide application to the areas with newly planted grass. Don't they mean herbicide??? What would they apply pesticide to new grass for? Either way it is a stupid thing to do. The serviceberry is still blooming and all the Norway maples have popped. I need to identify the dogwood with fuzzy leaves that are emerging. Took more pictures of the trout lily. Saw the first butterfly for these walks - a red admiral on the roadside at the dandelions. At Whirlpool sailing below was a turkey vulture. Could they nest here? From the parking lot I saw three vultures.

June 1 - For Trails day Joan joined me on a walk from Schoellkopf almost to Whirlpool and back. It was pretty disappointing as we only ran into one person on a bicycle who had some very convoluted ideas about erosion. He thought people in Montana and Colorado were clamoring to have a roadway like ours built on top of their gorges! Also he was sure that if the road were not there, houses would be falling into the gorge. Yikes! Couldn't argue with him though I did try...

June 13 - Walked today in the afternoon 2:30 - 3:30. It was nice out - in the 70's with light east winds. I was hoping to see butterflies but was unlucky in that I picked the day that they were mowing. Did not see a cabbage white or a tiger swallowtail! Only three peck's skippers on the entire walk. There are more butterflies in my back yard! I noticed lots of sprouted oak trees where the mowers had not been yet and from the beginning to the end of the cement barricades at Devil's hole I counted 28 oaks. So if we wanted to replace the dead trees along the gorge it would not cost anything. We could either choose not to mow a few areas and let the trees grow or send someone around who can recognize a young oak and have them place stanchions by them and mow around them. How simple that would be! The registration boxes were the same. Two people were using the road and I saw 7 on the rim trail. Two plants of interest over the edge were spreading dogbane, and some kind of bushy honeysuckle that I took pictures of and hope to identify.

July 19 - Walked from Whirlpool to Devil's Hole in the evening with friends and without my button. Checked the Registration boxes and they were still empty. Was delighted to see the “natural meadow - no mow zone” sign beside the road and saw a banded hairstreak on one of the wildflowers. Wrote a letter to the editor!

October 6 - Spent several hours at the gorge today taking photos for this journal. It was in the mid sixties with a south wind around 10mph. Beautiful bright sun! I had hoped to get a photo of empty registration boxes but finally there was paper in them. At Whirlpool there was nothing to write with though a few people had written in anyway. At Devil's hole there was a pen on a string and lots of comments just from yesterday and today! It was very encouraging. I saw lots of people but I was concentrating on photos so I didn't count them but there were not a lot on the road. There was a woman jogging, a man walking his dog along the fence and a few bicyclists, but most people were on the rim trail where it is less noisy and there are great views. In fact, I find it amazing that anyone chooses the hard ugly road with views of cars over the rim trail. Of course the people on bikes have no choice. I checked out the new trail from Schoellkopf that goes down into the gorge. The good news is that they are putting it in without tearing out all the vegetation and that makes it feel pretty nice. The bad news is that it is paved with asphalt. Why don't they use cinders? It would look much better and be much easier on the joints. Asphalt is hard and unnatural looking and not suited for a nature trail. Still, the access is a giant step towards our goal of a world class park.