



Beaverdam

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WILDERNESS CANOE ASSOCIATION, VOL.2, NO.3, SEPT.1975

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* * * *

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

A great summer for canoeing! WCA members travelling the Otoskwin, Attawapiskat, Missinaibi, Groundhog, Mississagi, Nestawakow, Spanish and Dumoine; on Lake Superior, in Quetico, Killarney, Algonquin and other areas, shared the bond of wilderness.

I hope you enjoy reading a few members' memorable summer adventures in this newsletter.

For our General Meeting near Bowmanville on September 20th, Vice-Chairman Sandy Richardson would like you to send him your slides of WCA outings so that he will be able to prepare an integrated slide show for the meeting. All possible care will be taken with your slides and they will be returned immediately following the meeting.

If you haven't yet received your copy of the planned agenda for the Saturday meeting and Sunday outing on the Moira River, write or call one of the Executive. I hope you can attend but, if not, be sure to send in your proxy.

Your executive is at a low of 2. We invite members to offer help in such areas as editor, typist, advertising, membership and coordination for the Sportsman's Show, safety, ecology, etc.

We've grown about 400% since last February's meeting and I look forward to seeing many of you at the General Meeting ... on fall and winter trips ... or other activities to come.

Gord Fenwick

MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 75, POSTAL STN. "U", TORONTO, ONTARIO M8Z 5M4

THE MISSINAIBI RIVER

BY MARGARET MacMILLAN

The Missinaibi River has changed little since the days when it was part of the Moose-Michipicoten trade route which funnelled furs from the lands around Lake Superior to the Hudson's Bay Company post at Moose Fort just south of James Bay. Pike, pickerel and trout still swim in its clear, unpolluted

reach of the inhabitants of the crowded cities of southern Ontario. Its waters are still clean enough to drink, its flow has not yet been choked by dams, and the vegetation along its banks has not yet been ravaged by logging companies.

Only luck has saved the Missinaibi from the fate which has befallen its sister rivers to the east — both the Abitibi and the Mattagami are already polluted and dammed. And time may be running out for the Missinaibi as well. Last summer, chain saws broke the silence along its banks and canoe-trippers passed ugly gaps in the forest.

Although there are few minerals along the Missinaibi to tempt the mining companies, Ontario Hydro in its unending search for sources of power, has not overlooked it. Already, Thunder House Falls has been designated as a suitable place for a peaking dam. Such a dam would ruin not only one of the most beautiful spots along the river but much of its aquatic life both upstream and downstream. By holding back the normal flow of the river, a peaking dam would drown the banks above it while draining the bed below. Then, when the

waters. The thick boreal forests on its banks still provide a home for a rich variety of northern wild life. Birds, from swifts to ospreys, still fly through the clean air above it.

The descendants of the fur-trading Indians still fish and trap along the river. And, in this century, they have become guides for those who visit the Missinaibi for pleasure. In the past few years, increasing numbers of canoe-trippers, travelling either independently or as members of parties organized by associations like the Sierra Club of Ontario, have discovered the river. They use the same portages that the voyageurs used before them and they can see the remains of the trading posts. In some places, Indian pictographs that were there before the white men came, can still be seen.

Travellers on the river can start from Peterbell, where the southern CNR line stops, or from Mattice which is reached by both the northern CNR line and the Trans-Canada Highway. The journey is never the same because the flow of the river varies from some 22,000 cubic feet per second in the spring to a mere 1,000 by the late summer.

accumulated water is released to rush through the turbines and create power, the situation would be reversed.

The Ministry of Energy has promised that there will be no dam on the river without a full public inquiry, but the Missinaibi needs more protection than this if it is to be saved from the effects of haphazard commercial exploitation or from damage by careless travellers. The Government of Ontario has the legislative powers to protect the Missinaibi by making it into a Wild River Park. What it needs now is the impetus.

The Sierra Club has prepared a specific proposal, endorsed by the F.O.N., which has been presented to the Honourable Leo Bernier, Minister of Natural Resources, to senior parks administrators, and to Premier William Davis. Other groups, such as the Conservation Council of Ontario, have given their support and it is hoped that interested individuals will write Mr. Bernier or Mr. Davis.

The proposal calls for a wild river park that would protect the whole river without excluding all activity in the watershed. Specifically, the proposal

There are rapids enough for the most adventurous but there are also well-marked portages.

North of Mattice, the Missinaibi's banks grow higher and the water is forced to make its way over and around slabs of Pre-Cambrian rock. At places, the river is squeezed into narrow channels between the high walls of stone. Over the centuries, the rock has been carved into extraordinary shapes to which earlier travellers have given names — Thunder House, Black Feather Rapids, Conjuring House Falls. Hell's Gate marks the last thrust of the Pre-Cambrian Shield. The river drops down through Long Rapids to the James Bay lowlands, running smoothly over banks of gravel and sand and finally joining up with Moose River to flow into James Bay.

One tripper who recently travelled the Missinaibi by canoe describes the river as a constant delight, with challenging canoeing in beautiful surroundings. The same thing could perhaps be said about other rivers in Ontario. But what is important about the Missinaibi is that it is the last unspoiled river of any size within easy

calls for a one-mile strip along each side of the river to be set aside. This would be a buffer between the river and the noise and pollution of commercial undertakings, which could still go on outside the limits of the park. And the local Indians could continue their guiding and fishing secure in the knowledge that the river was not going to dry up or die.

Because access to the Missinaibi is limited to a few points, the management of a park along its course would be simplified. At the moment, some of the canoe-trippers who visit it are not properly prepared or equipped; last summer there were three drownings. Government control could be used to filter out the unwary and to ensure that the campsites and portages are kept clean. Hiking trails could also be made along the banks of the river which could be linked in time to a province-wide system.

Unless the Ontario Government acts soon, however, the Missinaibi will be added to that long and sad catalogue of wild rivers that have already been lost to us and to future generations.

The Premier
of Ontario

Parliament Buildings
Queen's Park
Toronto Ontario

Mr. Gord Fenwick,
Chairman,
Wilderness Canoe Association,
140 Porchester Drive,
SCARBOROUGH, Ontario.
MLJ 2R7

July 21, 1975.

Dear Mr. Fenwick:

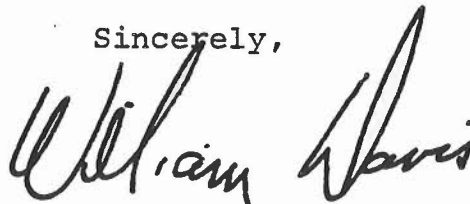
This will acknowledge your recent letter which lends support to the preservation of the Missinaibi wild river system.

The government will be following an initial course of action which I believe is consistent with the proposals of such groups as the Sierra Club of Ontario. My colleague the Honourable Leo Bernier, Minister of Natural Resources, assures me the Ministry is planning an inventory of the natural and historic resources of the Missinaibi and that no development will take place on or adjacent to the river while this study is being conducted.

There is no question that the Missinaibi River is of importance. In fact, the Ministry of Natural Resources has been interested in the river for some years. A major portion of the river was withdrawn from land disposition and staking in 1970. I understand that the northern section of the river was not withdrawn at that time because sufficient surveys and inventories were not available for a responsible determination to be made.

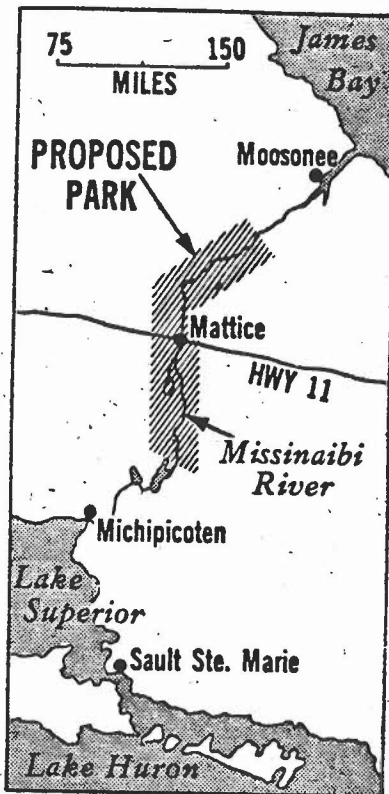
Thank you for your interest and encouragement for the wise use and preservation of our natural resources. I trust this reply confirms our mutual interest in, and concern for, the beauty and integrity of the Missinaibi River.

Sincerely,



William G. Davis.

The Missinaibi Wild River Park proposal, vividly and succinctly described by Margaret MacMillan in the article reproduced here, is endorsed by the W.C.A. Further information on the Missinaibi and the proposal may be obtained from the W.C.A. Vice-Chairman, or write the Sierra Club, 47 Colborne Street, Ste. 308, Toronto, M5E 1E3. If you are equally concerned, write your local M.P.P. or the Ministers named in this article. Voice your opinion and make yourself heard!



A memorable historical description of the Missinaibi over 60 years ago is available in Bulletin One from the W.C.A. Secretary for 75¢ .. send stamps if you wish.

RAPIDS & WATERFALLS ON THE MISSINAIBI RIVER

By Dean Norman, Cleveland, Ohio

In mid-June, 1975, I paddled the upper Missinaibi from Missinaibi Lake to Mattice. The trip began at Hawk Junction, a convenient put-in point allowing return rail connection from Hearst.

I had read an article saying inexperienced paddlers could take portages around difficult rapids and falls. That is a misleading comment. From Bull Moose Bay, downstream from Mattice, there are no portage trails marked, and perhaps a hundred rapids to run. They are not all easy--I was told an Indian boy was killed in one in 1974.

The Missinaibi has white water .. from Class I through Class VI, plus unrunnable falls. I'd recommend kayaks, or standard canoes with spray covers, to keep boats dry in big waves. With open canoes, you will either have to portage or run in congested channels. With a decked kayak or canoe, wear a crash helmet; if you capsize you will drag your head over rocks before you are able to kick out of the spray-cover cockpit.

Specific descriptions of some likely trouble spots:

Above Mattice . . .

Island Rapids: This is short, but almost impossible to scout. We spent an hour or more crawling through brush, wading secondary channels, and still couldn't get a close look at the toughest part. So we sent a kayaker down, who caught small eddies below each pitch and said the unloaded, decked canoe could run straight through. We slammed into a hidden ledge in a curling wave--the river was so narrow we had to go into the wave--the stern man was thrown against a thwart, had to walk with a crutch for the

rest of the trip and couldn't carry gear over portages or help much in camp. This was at high water in mid-June. Later in the summer, the ledge would probably capsize boats, perhaps pinning boat and paddlers, causing a genuine tragedy. It's a short and easy portage, and much faster and easier this way than to scout and make a risky run.

Greenhill Rapids: A Class III to IV rapids about 3/4 mile long; difficulty would vary considerably depending upon water level. We could not have made it in an open canoe in mid-June. If you want to run it, I'd suggest first portaging all of your heavy gear. The trail comes to the Missinaibi River just upstream from Greenhill River junction, and does not go to the Greenhill River as shown on the maps. It will take about 1/2 hour to portage one load. Then walk back upstream on the river bank to inspect the rapids. This will take about an hour and is tough scrambling.

Next, either run the rapids or portage depending on your own judgment of what you've seen. Don't go into this rapids and scout it as you go down. What you see at the top is more difficult than it looks; the part you can't see in the middle is much more difficult. There are eddies where you can rest as you paddle through, but if you swamp or capsize you will probably swim the whole rapids and may lose a boat on a pinning rock. We talked to a man who headed down the rapids, came to the tough part and decided to line: it took him 1/2 a day to get through! It will only take 1-1/2 hours to portage; or 2 hours to portage gear, scout, and then portage your boat. This is a beautiful rapids to run if you can do it safely.

Stone Rapids: The portage trail is far above the pitch of the falls; many people have missed the trail, come to the brink of the falls, and had to tow their boat back upstream through rapids to find the trail. You'll have to look hard for it!

Hells Gate & Long Rapids: There is disagreement on maps and in printed information as to whether the sequence is Hells Gate-Long Rapids, or Long Rapids-Hells Gate. At any rate, the first white water below Stone Rapids is an impassable canyon, and I like to call it Hells Gate. After a long portage around it, you put in to run about 5 miles of rapids and pools which I prefer to call Long Rapids. Long Rapids can be run by open canoes at low water. At high water, you might need a spray cover, or you may have to line down some of the drops.

About 4 miles downstream from the junction of the Moose & Abitibi Rivers, a gravel bar constricts the mile-wide river to a narrow chute where huge waves pile up. You run toward the bar thinking it is an island, then turn sharp left, go a very short distance in smooth, fast water. Suddenly you are on the crest of a smooth wave, looking down into the trough. At this point, you are committed. At low water, waves are about 5 feet high, but open canoes with high sides can run it, as the distance between crests is sufficient that the bow doesn't submerge, if you steer away from the curling white waves. I cannot imagine what it would be like at high water. Check your miles very carefully past the Abitibi Junction and try to stop on the gravel bar before going on. If it looks too wild to run, it would be easy to portage on the bar. If you swamp, there are a couple of pinning rocks in the rapids that could ruin your canoe.

These notes are based upon my own experience; there is no substitute for using your own eyes and ears, and exercising your own judgment!

(A condensed version of Dean's story, the full text is available on request from any W.C.A. executive member.)

It's time to charge northern campers

Northern Ontario's 330,000 square miles of crown land with its forests, fields and streams, has long had an irresistible lure for campers. They come, in their self-sufficient motor homes, not just from Ontario but from other parts of Canada and the United States.

The campers aren't attracted only by the beauties of nature in its wilderness state. Aside from groceries and gasoline, camping is free in the north's crown lands.

And that presents some problems, particularly with garbage disposal. To keep the wilderness areas in their unspoiled state, somebody has to clean up after careless campers.

As an indication of the cost of clean-up to the Ontario taxpayer, the bill for cleaning the interior of Algonquin Park runs to \$100,000 a year.

This week, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario asked the province to institute a licensing system for non-Canadian campers in the north.

We see no reason why Canadians, including resi-

dents of Ontario, shouldn't also be required to have permits. About three years ago, Natural Resources Minister Léo Bernier suggested that campers' permits be issued at \$5 for Ontario residents and \$25 for others.

Whatever the fee level, and we agree that it be lower for residents but suggest that it also be graduated depending on the length of time a camper intends to stay up to a maximum of perhaps \$50, it's a good idea.

Besides helping to pay for cleaning up after the campers, the money raised through the permit system could also be used to institute regular patrols to keep track of visitors and to keep them informed about regulations on lighting fires and launching boats.

Campers in southern Ontario, who use publicly or privately owned campgrounds, must pay fees. There's nothing inherently unfair about asking campers who go north to do so too. Especially when the result is to preserve nature unspoiled for the benefit of residents and visitors alike.

SOMETHING TO PONDER

Is the creation of national or provincial parks the best way to preserve our wildlands? Some think not.

A park designation publicizes an area and brings in visitors who otherwise would not have come. Canoeists on the Nahanni, for example, have expressed concern about the clutter of tour boats carrying noisy groups to Virginia Falls. How much longer can an area like the Nahanni remain a wilderness if tourist development follows its designation as a park?

R. Huggins of Kitchener sent a provocative letter to Outdoor Canada (June, 1975) in response to an article on preserving our wild rivers:

"If you really want to save wild rivers, then leave them alone. Don't advertise them or make them more accessible to man (the Destroyer). By making parks out of wild rivers, you will only destroy them... I agree, let's save the wild rivers and wild places, and the best way I can see to do-it is LEAVE THEM BE."

...Something for conservationists to ponder before advocating the setting-up of parks to preserve our wilderness.

W.C.A. Outings
by Sandy Richardson

Trips continued as popular as ever through the summer months, with many new members participating.

In June, 8 people in 4 canoes tackled the Amable du Fond River north of Algonquin. Despite rainy weather, the group enjoyed the rough country: many rapids and portages and a good preparation for members going on their own wilderness expeditions later.

Seventeen people - 6 canoes - had a very successful family outing on the Drag & Burnt Rivers near Kinmount. Trip Leader Dave Auger of Lindsay has written up a report. Lack of space precludes printing it here but it is available by writing the W.C.A.

Most ambitious outing to date was a 5 ~~mile~~ fly-in to the wild Dumoine River in Quebec. Weather over the July 1st holiday was perfect for enjoying scenery and tackling the challenging rapids. A small group of 4 people - 2 canoes - was ideal: large enough to provide a measure of safety; small enough to avoid overwhelming the wilderness and creating our own environment. Look for more long wilderness trips like this next summer. (One of the participants, Mary Jo Cullen, shares impressions of the trip elsewhere in this issue.)

Our Moon River outing in July had a number of last-minute drop-outs -- forcing cancellation of the trip: unfortunate, as the Moon provides some fine paddling.

Another July trip, a weekend on the Madawaska, fared better. Four canoes met on Friday night and discussed strategy for next day's rapids. A good deal of manoeuvring provided an excellent learning situation. Glenn ~~once~~ says an unnamed team gave a fine demonstration of how to run a rapids backwards!

TRIP REPORTS

For most W.C.A. outings to date, reports by trip leaders can be obtained by writing W.C.A. They may be useful in planning personal or family outings. We hope to be able to issue a trip guide to our members in the near future. Anyone interested in helping out on this project should get in touch.

FREEZE-UP TIME

What do canoeists do in the winter when lakes and rivers are frozen over? Indications are that many of us are wilderness travellers in all seasons. With this in mind, we plan a programme of snowshoe hikes, cross-country skiing and winter camping. Anyone interested in leading outings should contact Sandy Richardson as soon as possible. Dates and details required. Watch for a list of winter adventures in the next Newsletter.

FALL TRIPS

Once again, we offer a varied trip schedule. All are welcome, including non-members (maximum of 2 trips). No charge: all you need is your own equipment and transportation. Lacking these, call the Trip Leader, who will try to pair you up with someone who can help. For an explanation of experience ratings, see the last issue of Beaverdam.

Contact the Trip Leader at least 2 weeks in advance on what to bring, where to meet, plans, etc. Life-jackets and signed waiver forms are required for all participants.

SEPTEMBER 13: SAUGEEN RIVER ..
A 1-day outing on the lower Saugeen offers quiet waters flowing through pleasantly varied country with a good mix of forest and open fields. With few portages, the trip is suitable for novices. Limit, six canoes. Leader: Sandy Richardson

SEPTEMBER 21 - MOIRA RIVER ..

The Moira below Tweed offers an easy trip with a couple of short portages. Primarily an instructional outing to introduce beginners to the basics of river canoeing, it should provide a good run for all. The Moira is within easy driving distance of our general meeting on the 20th. We'll try to accommodate as many canoes as possible in small groups of 4 or 5, with a leader/instructor for each.

Leader: Glenn Spence, Box 121,
Colborne, Ontario
355-3506

OCTOBER 4 - 5: MATTAWA RIVER ..

Flowing east into the Ottawa from near North Bay, the Mattawa formed part of the main fur-trade route from Montreal to Lake Superior, and is now preserved as a Wild River Park. Relive the past and revel in the fall colours as we retrace the voyageurs' route of 200 years ago. An excellent family trip, suitable for novices and better. Limit, 6 canoes.

Leaders: Cam & France Salsbury,
65 Wynford Heights Cr.
Apt. #915, Don Mills
445-9017

OCTOBER 18 - 19: CROWE RIVER ..

From Chandos Lake to Cordova Lake, a 30-mile trip, with a fair number of rapids and many steep drops. We haven't run this river before, so this will be a scouting trip. All participants should be intermediate or better, and be prepared for a relatively strenuous weekend. Limit, 4 canoes. (In the event of low water, trip will move to the Madawaska River from Palmer Rapids to Griffith.)

Leader: Gord Fenwick

OCTOBER 26 - LONG LAKE ..

A 1-day outing through a chain of creeks and small lakes in the picturesque Kawarthas near Peterborough: a good family trip with a chance to see fall colours and some wildlife.

LEADERS:

King Baker, c/o Bethesda School,
R.R. #5, Bowmanville, Ont.
987-4608 (Residence)

&

Don Bent, R.R. #2, Omeme, Ont.

705 799-5673

NOVEMBER 1 - 2: MEAD & BLACK RIVERS

The Mead & Black near Washago flow quietly through scenic wooded country with a number of short, relatively easy rapids to amuse the experienced and challenge the newcomer. With one short portage, it is suitable for novices or better, offering a pleasant outing to close the canoeing season. Limit, 6 canoes. Leaders:

Ken Brailsford, 21 Kingsmount Pk.Rd.
Toronto, Ont. 691-2358

&

Randy Wallace, 62 Keystone Avenue,
Toronto, Ont. 694-5585

NOVEMBER 22: CREDIT RIVER .. West of Toronto, the Credit has pleasant scenery, a few challenging rapids, and should be a good final fling of the year - for novices or better. Limit, 8 canoes, in 2 groups of 4.

Leader: Sandy Richardson



DUMOINE RIVER TRIP

BY Mary Jo Cullen

The plane taxied quietly down the early-morning river; turned; passed in front of our floating dock; then roared its serious intent and lifted off towards the rolling Laurentian hills with Gord Fenwick's Grumman, shining bright green against the pontoons, promising an adventure to come.

That's how I remember the start of our trip, though the 4 of us (Gord, Sandy, Finn Hansen and I) had actually met the night before at Driftwood Park on the Ottawa in anticipation of the 6 a.m. departure with Bradley Air Service at De Swisha. Bradley was to fly us in 2 groups to Lac Laforge, 55 miles up the Dumoine. We would paddle out to where the Dumoine joins the Ottawa, then down the Ottawa 7 miles to the dam at Rapides des Joachims, taking our time to fish, swim and explore - doing the trip in 5 days.

If you like running rapids, you'd love the Dumoine. It drops 10 feet a mile here. Rapids are a continual challenge, either from the sheer violence of the water at Big Steel Rapids, the unexpected direction of the currents, the manoeuvring necessary to negotiate right-angle bends, or where a series of rocky shelves line up to present a double or triple line of defence. This, fortunately, was Gord's second trip on the Dumoine and he knew the rapids well - anticipating the problems and recommending methods and routes. Thanks to him, we were able to run most rapids without incident; but we were geared to a fever-high pitch of concentration. Excitement and tension were not at all relieved, for me at least, by the sight of a red fibreglass canoe literally "wrapped" around a rock.

There was relatively little portaging. Most of that was on the upper part and usually offered compensation for one's efforts: of a bright and sparkling waterfall to look at and, for our two anglers, a chance to make a few casts and try to catch the day's supper. (Somehow, the

fish in the Dumoine were extremely stubborn and uncooperative. Gord did catch a pickerel one night but, unfortunately, it was too big to get into the canoe. At our final camping spot, Finn got a bite which turned out to be a tough old fire grate .. he let it go. Oh well, there was always HarDee's dried beef!)

A mile-long portage lower down the river was fairly easy going as long as you'd put on lots of insect repellent, didn't run ahead of the leader, or go off on an old, overgrown portage instead of the correct one further up. (No names will be mentioned here in the interests of self-preservation!)

Passing down this beautiful river amidst rock and pine, I kept recalling Thoreau's words, 'In wildness is the preservation of the world.' The early morning mists; the clear bird calls in the dawn air; the sparkling water running over bright shingle beds and golden sand; the moose, otter, loons, hawks and other wild creatures we saw .. were all food for the soul. It was good to know a request had been made to the Federal Government that this river, so rich in beauty and steeped in the history of the great fur and lumber eras, be made into a Wild River Park. Should the Ontario Government show its concern for conservation and the wilderness by preserving the Missinaibi, perhaps the Quebec and Federal Governments might be urged to follow suit with the Dumoine.

A section of the map intrigued us with its tangle of contour lines and was reached on the next-to-last day. The Laurentian Shield rose sheer out of the river on the east side in granite cliffs 300-400 feet high. Sandy, (a "cliff-snob" after the mile-high precipices of the Nahanni) refused to be impressed, but the rest of us were filled with admiration. The view from the top was magnificent .. well worth the climb up (the back way, of course!) We did have a few bad moments beforehand wondering about the eagle who is supposed to have claimed this territory. There was no sign of him at all, but there were hawks playing in the updraught from the river.

A few "riffles" downstream from the cliffs, our last campsite was at a boiling waterfall where the Dumoine makes a last display of power before resigning meekly to the mighty Ottawa. The spot is visited by powerboats ..

a few arrived while we were there, preparing us for the return next day to civilization.

After beaching the canoes near the dam at Rapides des Joachims next morning, and getting ready to hike into De Swisha, we happily accepted a ride in a pick-up truck. Hanging on to the sides, we finished the trip in a cloud of dust as the truck banged and bounced over the gravel road. It was great fun, but rather an ironic ending to a trip filled with silence, water and clear air. We had five days of glorious sunshine, beautiful campsites, exciting, challenging canoeing and good companionship .. and felt refreshed and ready to face again the pressures of city life.

BACK TO EARTH .. NOTES & NEWS

RISING COSTS: The W.C.A., like everyone else these days, is faced with higher costs. At present, a family membership barely covers printing and mailing of 4 newsletters a year, leaving little to spend on other projects and activities. Were it not for a few members' kind donations and others' subsidizing many endeavours out of their own pockets, our situation would be grave.

To deal with this, the executive has mulled over ways of cutting costs and raising more money. The Newsletter is no longer mailed 1st class, the list of organizations receiving complimentary copies was drastically reduced and a trip-guide is being produced for sale to members.

Two major changes affecting all members now appear needed: (1) membership fees will have to be raised and this will be discussed at the Sept. 20th meeting. (2) A change in policy would have all memberships run from January 31st of one year to January 31st of the next--cutting down on mailing costs and vastly simplifying the recording of over 100 renewal dates. Suggested mechanics of the latter change: all W.C.A. memberships commencing before July 1/75 will expire in January/76. Memberships after July 1 will expire

in January/77. In future, all new memberships will expire the following January. (Those whose memberships will expire this fall will be encouraged to renew early for 1976, in order to provide needed funds in the winter months.)

A complete picture of our financial position will be presented at the September meeting, where both of these proposals will be up for ratification. Plan to be there with your own additional (or alternative) proposals.

DISCOUNT: Dave Margesson, an original founding member, has helped us both financially and by printing and distributing flyers. His store in Toronto at 17 Adelaide E. (416 - 366-2741) carries a complete line of camping & sports equipment. For WCA members only, Dave offers a 10% discount on most items upon presentation of your membership card and identification.

NAHANNI RIVER: W.C.A. member Craig Oliver has an article, complete with spectacular photographs, on his trip down the Nahanni. It's in the Imperial Oil Review, Vol. 59, No. 3. Well worth picking up a copy!

LOGO: We're still looking for a logo to be used on letterheads, etc. If you have any ideas, send a sketch to any member of the executive. We do have 3 or 4 now, but would like more to give us a wider range of choice. Final logo will be decided by vote at September's General Meeting -- winning entry to be awarded a free membership renewal for its designer. (As mentioned in an earlier issue, don't worry about artistic ability; we'll have the winning idea professionally drawn for printing.)

THE PRINTED WORD: BOOKS, MAGAZINES

"ONE COSMIC INSTANT"

John A. Livingston

Professor of Environmental Studies at York University and former president of the F.O.N., the author gives his personal philosophy as a lifelong naturalist and conservationist, in a discussion of man's fancied separation from nature. Interesting and thought-provoking reading for anyone concerned about conservation.

"THE WOLF"- by L. David Mech

An examination of the biology, social behaviour and predator-prey relationship of the wolf. While absorbing new and interesting facts on wolves, you may find yourself relating the wolf's social situation with your own.

"A JOURNEY TO THE NORTHERN SEA"

Samuel Hearne

Hearne's overland trip to the Coppermine River and the Arctic Ocean about 1775: a vivid account of the hardships of living in the Barren Lands, of the Indians and wildlife of the area.

"INTRODUCTION TO CANOEING"

Bradford Angier & Zack Taylor

A useful book for the novice, it describes everything from choosing a canoe to white-water know-how.

"CANADA CANOE ROUTES"

Nick Nickels

Fall isn't too early to begin planning next summer's wilderness trip. Nickel's book provides, in a single source, information on routes in the 10 provinces and the territories. Outside southern Ontario, descriptions are, of necessity, brief, but addresses are provided for detailed information. Packing in numerous tips and historical tid-bits, it's a useful book for any tripper.

"THE BEAVER" - published by The Hudson's Bay Co., Hudson's Bay House, Winnipeg, Man.
3RC 2R1

This magazine combines historical and current articles on many aspects of Canada's far north.

"NORTH" - pub. bi-monthly by The Dept. of Indian & Northern Affairs, Ottawa, Ont.

Excellent source of information on the outdoors and the north. Recent articles include 'Mackenzie Corridor', 'Wilderness', 'Winter Climb', and 'The Paddle'.

"OUTDOOR CANADA" - 181 Eglinton E. Ste. 201, Toronto, M4P 1JP

A Canadian magazine, while a little heavy on motor-camping, fishing and hunting, it has many articles worthwhile and interesting to the wilderness canoeist: 'The Edible Wild', 'Choosing Your Canoe', 'Wild Rivers', to name a few.

"CHE-MUN" - Nick Nickels, Box 479, Lakefield, Ont. KOL 2H0

An outspoken international newsletter for canoeists, published quarterly and containing trip reports and other useful information.

"WILDERNESS CAMPING" - 1579 Union St. Schenectady, N.Y. 12309

An excellent magazine for wilderness travellers. Articles cover hiking, canoeing, biking and cross-country skiing...from equipment to the aesthetic and philosophic.

"ONCE UPON A WILDERNESS"

Calvin Rustrum

The fruit of half a century's love and respect for the wilderness, Rutstrum's latest book encapsulates reminiscences, a lifetime of wisdom through learning. Profusely illustrated and absorbing.

Following last issue's view of open-water canoeing, Gord Fenwick initiates here a series on river canoeing. First are situations that may be encountered on rivers and, in later editions, Gord will show some canoeing techniques used to meet them.

RIVERS ... CURRENTS .. & RAPIDS:

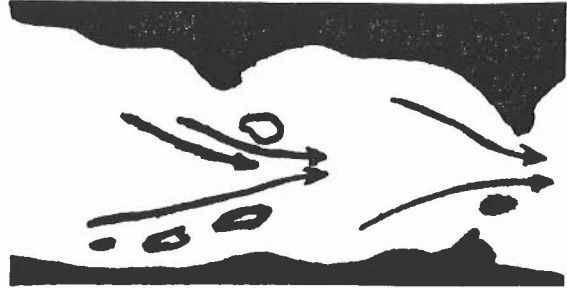
To canoe a wild river safely: (1) learn situations you will encounter en route; (2) endeavour to gain experience in similar situations to fully comprehend the problems; (3) have, or acquire, the confidence, physical conditioning and sound judgment to make the right decisions. Comments and illustrations following may give you an awareness of basic things to look for the next time you're on a wild river.

A river's speed varies with downstream slope of the riverbed, width and depth of the river, and obstructions in and along it.

Friction between riverbed and water slows the water down considerably so that current is fastest in the deepest channels. In a given river section, the same number of cubic feet of water must pass each point in the same length of time. Water must, therefore, speed up where the cross-section of the river grows smaller (i.e., narrows and/or becomes more shallow). Similarly, when the river widens and/or deepens, the current should slow down. Any obstructions--rocks, trees or shoreline--which block the natural flow of water, deflect and impede this flow, setting up new current patterns. At a given cross-section, there may be vast differences in water speed, varying from very fast downstream.. to fast upstream currents.

The deepest, fastest channel, usually the safest, can be recognized by the water forming a downstream "V" as it sweeps out from the slower water of the shallows past obstructions to the deeper channel. The immense force of this current has cleared

channel of rocks and debris. Head into the "V", unless the waves are too large, in which case find a channel through shallows where waves are smaller .. but much manoeuvring is necessary to avoid obstructions .. and conscious effort must be made to avoid being swept into large waves.



Standing waves pile up at the base of a drop: the first wave is the largest and steepest..second wave large, but smooth and regular. Split the waves dead-on (bow first). The faster your speed, the more your bow will tend to bury itself in the wave and cause water to break over the gunwhales. Hard back-paddling will minimize speed and give your canoe time to lift over the wave.



At a bend in the river, the outside of the turn tends to have the strongest current and deepest channel but, often, high undercut banks. Fallen trees blocking the route are extremely dangerous and can mean capsizing, entanglement or drowning for the unwary or careless! DO NOT commit yourself to a turn unless you have first scouted around the corner and are sure of safe passage! Many mishaps have resulted from canoeing around a rocky bend in a light current, only

to be swept over, for instance, the many consecutive, powerful drops of Thunderhouse Falls on the Missinaibi! DON'T RELY ON SOUND! .. SECOND-HAND INFORMATION .. MAPS .. OR LUCK! GO TO SHORE! WALK DOWN AND CHECK IT OUT FOR YOURSELF!



EQUIPMENT ...



As the "end-of-season" sales draw near, many of you will be in the market for a canoe and choosing the best one for your needs is difficult .. largely a matter of compromise and choice of price, material, length, capacity, type of keel and hull shape.

Prices run from under \$200 to over \$800 for canoes within the range of what might be called "popular", and in length, from 14 to 18 feet. Beware of cheap canoes: generally poorly built, many are grossly overpriced: a high price tag does not ensure good design or construction. Expect to pay \$300 to \$500 for a good canoe.

Canoes are made of wood/canvas, fibreglass and aluminum. There are some ABS plastics, but few in this area as yet.

Wood canoes are silent, warm and aesthetically pleasing. However, they are costly and require more

maintenance in the form of painting and varnishing. Though their toughness is often under-rated, they can be expensive to repair if badly damaged. If you plan to spend much time canoeing wild water, it's best to look to other materials. If you plan to canoe lakes (and weight not being a factor, as wood soaks up water), a wood canoe may be best. You are less likely to find a poorly designed wood canoe than any other.

Aluminum canoes - noisy and cold - but durability borders on the almost incredible: dragged over, or bounded off rocks, there is little or no damage. This can, however, lead to a false sense of security. A badly damaged aluminum canoe, particularly in the wilderness, is often impossible to repair. Don't be lulled into the thought that you can run rapids that should be carried! There are many bad designs in aluminum canoes; you must be careful not to end up with something that paddles like a bathtub.

Fibreglass is, in some ways, an ideal material. A compromise between wood and aluminum, it has some of the silence, warmth and craftsmanship of the former, with the durability and freedom from maintenance of the latter. Though suffering more from abrasion than aluminum, repairs are easy and inexpensive and damages repaired (rebuilt?) relatively easily. Check out the design (there are many inferior ones) and the construction. Avoid canoes made by spraying chopped fibreglass and resin into the mould: the cheapest way to make a canoe, but tending to a brittle hull prone to puncture. Instead, look for a hand-laid canoe: layers of glass mat placed by hand and excess resin rolled out -- this gives a much stronger boat. Generally, anyone taking the time to build a boat by hand will take the time to have created a good design. To avoid maintenance, look for a canoe with aluminum and fibreglass gunwhales, seats, etc., rather than wood. Many fine manufacturers, often working independently in small shops, exist in southern Ontario. Search them out!

Size of craft you choose depends on expected use. A 15-foot canoe is adequate for 2 paddlers and gear on small lakes and short river trips, but too small for long wilderness trips and heavy water. A 16-ft. craft is a compromise, and is quite popular. If deep enough and wide enough, it's adequate for smaller streams and short outings. Canoes of 17 and 18 feet are preferred for long wilderness trips with bulky gear, but awkward for weekend outings. Capacity depends on width & depth as well as length. Generally, the larger the canoe, the more it will hold. But..the wider a canoe, the slower it will be to paddle -- the deeper the canoe, the more it will be adversely affected by winds. A good width is 36".. a good depth at least 12" in the centre. With a full load, it should have at least 6" of freeboard.

Hull design and keels .. also very important. The ease with which a canoe can be propelled through the water depends on both length and width. In general, the greater the ratio of length to width, the faster the canoe.

A flat bottom with a standard keel will provide a canoe that tracks well on a lake but is slow in manoeuvring. A canoe with a rocker bottom (lengthwise) and no keel, is excellent for white-water. It will turn "on a dime", but is difficult to paddle in a straight line. A slight rocker with a keel is a good compromise. Intended use has to be the guide here.

Obviously not the whole story, this gives some major things to consider. Before laying out a lot of money, seek out a reputable dealer--and, possibly, try to find a place that rents the model in which you are interested. Nothing beats first-hand knowledge of the canoe you plan to buy!

Happy canoeing!

QUOTABLE QUOTES:

"Canoeists and other primitive-trippers are not delighted to encounter others intent on the same private experience. How many visitors constitute the end of wilderness?" John A. Livingston - "Man and His World: A Dissent," Wilderness Canada (1970), edited by Borden Spears .. from Colombo's Canadian Quotations, ed. J.R. Colombo Hurtig Publishers, Edmonton, 1974

* *

"A good camper knows that it is more important to be ingenious than to be a genius."

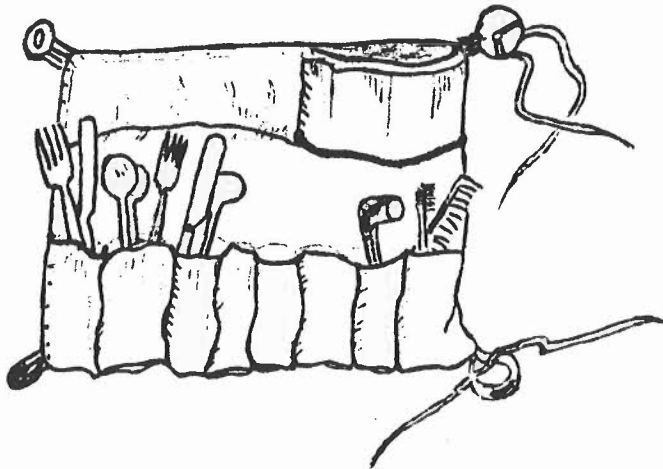
Pierre Elliott Trudeau - "Exhaustion and Fulfilment: The Ascetic in a Canoe," *ibid.*

* *

"Let no one say,
and say it to your shame,
That all was beauty here,
.....until you came."
Claude Cousineau, Department of
Recreology, University of Ottawa

* *

"Take a housewife camping."



"Algonquin's beauty is of the quiet, subtle kind but we do have our share of the spectacular. What may be the largest yellow birch in Ontario stands just a few hundred feet from Harry Lake. It is about 200 years old, has a height of 103 feet, a diameter of 45 inches, and a girth of over 11 feet. That's your big birch."

--reprinted courtesy of "The Raven", Algonquin Provincial Park

When wilderness trippers reminisce they sometimes recall that perfect campsite, that incredible stretch of salubrious weather or that time and place where monstrous trout struck hungrily at every cast of the fly. But often attention is focused on more harrowing tales-- on what I call the bittersweet of wild canoeing, the incidents .. longest and most keenly remembered that keep spurring us on to our next excursion.

Rapids are a case in point. Once, in younger, brasher days when I was sure we could handle Class III and, moreover, recognize it at a glance or by brief scouting, my strong bow man and I started down one we had thus diagnosed. We had an 18-foot Grumman with a good load of gear lashed in. There was just no feasible route for carrying, we told ourselves. The rapid began with a long steep slick which then descended into a jumble of boulders and white-water boils. "Right, Right, Right," I heard myself shout as a low-lying, pointed rock that could have ripped our bottom stern to stern shot hissing close by on the left. Then came a stretch of strenuous manouvering followed by a long ferry to the left to miss an outcrop of ledge.

I remember thinking, as the ledge came up to us much too fast: "Work, work - my God, can we make it? This so-and-so has graduated from Class III! Work, man," as we grazed by the end of the edge, leaving a silver streak and putting another "character line" on the canoe. Ahead lay a sickening drop narrowing to a gap between two mommoth rounded rocks. Once through that, we slanted off a series of high standing waves and into the haven of an eddy. Wild whoops, more of relief than triumph, from both of us. Muscles still taut and trembling, we spat balls of cotton. Then simultaneously, in low voices .. "How about that?"

Ever camp on the musket after 6 days of paddling upwind in unrelenting

rain? Where your every footprint becomes a puddle 4" deep as you lift your foot? We chose to because:

(1) it was getting late, (2) there was some level ground, or rather, soggy space of a consistency between soup and mush, and (3) a nice stand of birches along the riverbank which we eyed covetously as firewood. Our tent, which had become impregnated in spots with riverbank clay, and with its inadequate fly, was nightly becoming less shelter than symbol. We pitched it in a 4-foot pile of brush - spruce boughs, poplar and birch clippings for the most part. It settled down easily and early to just above the level of the surrounding bog. For our "campfire", we engineered a considerable stone platform of sorts. May the gods of forests and of fire forgive the seething, birch-fueled pyre we stoked that night! A pot of beans cooked merrily on its own little stone island two feet away. At some distance, steam spiralled upward from each of us and from the tent, to be added unto the gathering subarctic gloom.

Three rainy days later, we camped early for our last night out, this time on terra firma in the form of an elevated bluff. With better visibility, the site would command a wide expanse of wild country. Abruptly, as we set up the sodden tent: miracle of miracles, a clearing sky! The sun! This prompted a little dance by all hands--something in the nature of a jig. The long September afterglow faded into starry night with only a thin veil of clouds to the north over James Bay. We retired to our sleeping bags exulting in the prospects of a dry night as a crowning luxury and fitting benediction for a wet trip. Short hours of sleep .. and suddenly we were all awake, a rain squall pounding the tent with determined fury. A brief pause, while each of us realized what was happening--then a spontaneous roar of laughter from all.

The mention of portages usually elicits a few choice tales, for the most part, grim. You've all taken that one through mud up to your knees. And the one that goes endlessly up, steeper than a mountain trail, until .. lo!, you are letting the canoe down over a series of 75-foot cliffs. Long carries, too--mile after weary mile, then back for another load--until, at the end of a numbing day you drop your last pack and float forward and up, as if the earth's gravity unexpectedly diminished.

One I remember with rather more pleasure than probably experienced at the time was 2-½ days long and involved blazing and swamping-out a trail through the virgin wilds, holding to a compass course as closely as the terrain and cover would allow. There was oppressive heat the first day that brought out black flies and mosquitoes in droves while we quickly sweated off frequent applications of repellent. Warm rain on the second day soon washed away our bug dope, and brought out black flies & mosquitoes in droves. One stretch was a long upgrade through a thick growth of spruce, with a spring ground cover of Labrador tea and sphagnum moss. We stepped high to clear the tea bushes, then sank deep into the moss--an exhausting exercise with heavy loads, like walking uphill on a feather bed. Occasionally, we crossed hard, boulder-strewn ground which demanded some agile hopping from stone to stone. The manoeuvring over this and around trees growing in the rocky interstices with one end of a canoe on your back, the other 17 feet away on someone else's, produced a somewhat grotesque, but lively, dance, not much appreciated from underneath.

The heat, the rain, the flies, the bone-weariness, are vivid in my memory, but I haven't forgotten the oases along the way where we drank from spring-fed pools of clear,

cold water - the well-trodden caribou trails that sometimes ran our way, giving us intervals of easy walking - the big stag that stood his ground at thirty feet while looking us over curiously. Nor coming out, at last, almost precisely on target at the river. These were rewards assuaging the portage pains, but I would gladly trade them all for one spectacular scene engraved indelibly on my mind. Near the end of the trail, we stood on the brink of a deep canyon, in an August snow shower, contemplating a broad vista of awesome beauty: the rugged Labrador plateau undulating eastward to the horizon and, far below us, a chain of small lakes connected by a series of waterfalls, a flock of Canada geese swimming peacefully on one of the nearer ponds.

Hairiest of all the bittersweet adventures of wilderness travel and travail, where you really will "do your work on water: .. as the poet says, is battling big wind on big water. .. But -- it's getting late -- and I'll save that story for another campfire.

-Henry H. Franklin
Attorney & Counsellor At Law
Peterborough, N.H.

An untested recipe, garnered many long years ago from the Victoria Canoe Club:

"First, you pour out one quart of water. Into this you add 3½ to 4 cups flour, 1½ cups melted shortening, 1½ cups of packed brown sugar, 1 lb. honey, 1 lb. Blackstrap molasses, ½ cup powdered whole milk, 2 tsps. baking powder, and one lb. of dates, cut in large pieces.

Place in a pan about ½" thick and bake at 300 degrees for about an hour. This bread is guaranteed to last indefinitely and is bound to be a favourite, whether Maui-bound or just out for a jaunt .. around the Gulf Islands".

- Courtesy of Tom Smith, Victoria
Canoe Club

MEMORY OF THE NORTH ... In the summer of 1969, 6 men flew to the headwaters of the Dubawnt River, 100 miles north of Uranium City, to begin a 750-mile trip through the Barren Lands to Baker Lake. This impression of their journey was written by WCA member George Luste and originally appeared in the Summer '71 issue of "The Beaver".

MAN SPEAKS

We came to the North with canoes
and the summer sun...
and were swallowed into the land
so immense...so lonely...
...so barren...so beautiful.

A land cloaked in growth and grass
and water and sky...
and more of the same
as far as the eye could reach
overwhelms the spirits of the
solitary visitor.

A land so warm and kind
could turn to chill and ice..
or cover the waters with wind
tossed white..
and punish the weak or foolish
with an icy tomb...
whispered beware in our ear.

We bent our backs into the wind...
under the sun or rain...
with the portage pack...
across the late ice...
down the Dubawnt to Baker Lake.

THE LAND SPEAKS

I am and you must receive me as I am.
When we meet...do not come
with hope or a faint heart...
accept each day
do your best
there are no guarantees.

Take care...
avoid the seething rapids
and sleep soundly on the soft moss...
dreaming...of glorious sunsets
and what the morrow may bring.

A few frail footprints
were left by those before you.
A decayed cabin...
moans of endless
frozen winter nights.

A stone image...
silently communes
from someone long ago.
A child's grave on a hilltop...
is blest with tears
of love and sacrifice.

The birds and fish
the animals
the Unuit
they are my family
Fragile, innocent of evil and avarice..
treat them gently as you pass.

But an ominous change
blows with the south wind.
'How long can I be as I am?
Will your children's children
recognize my face...your memory?'