

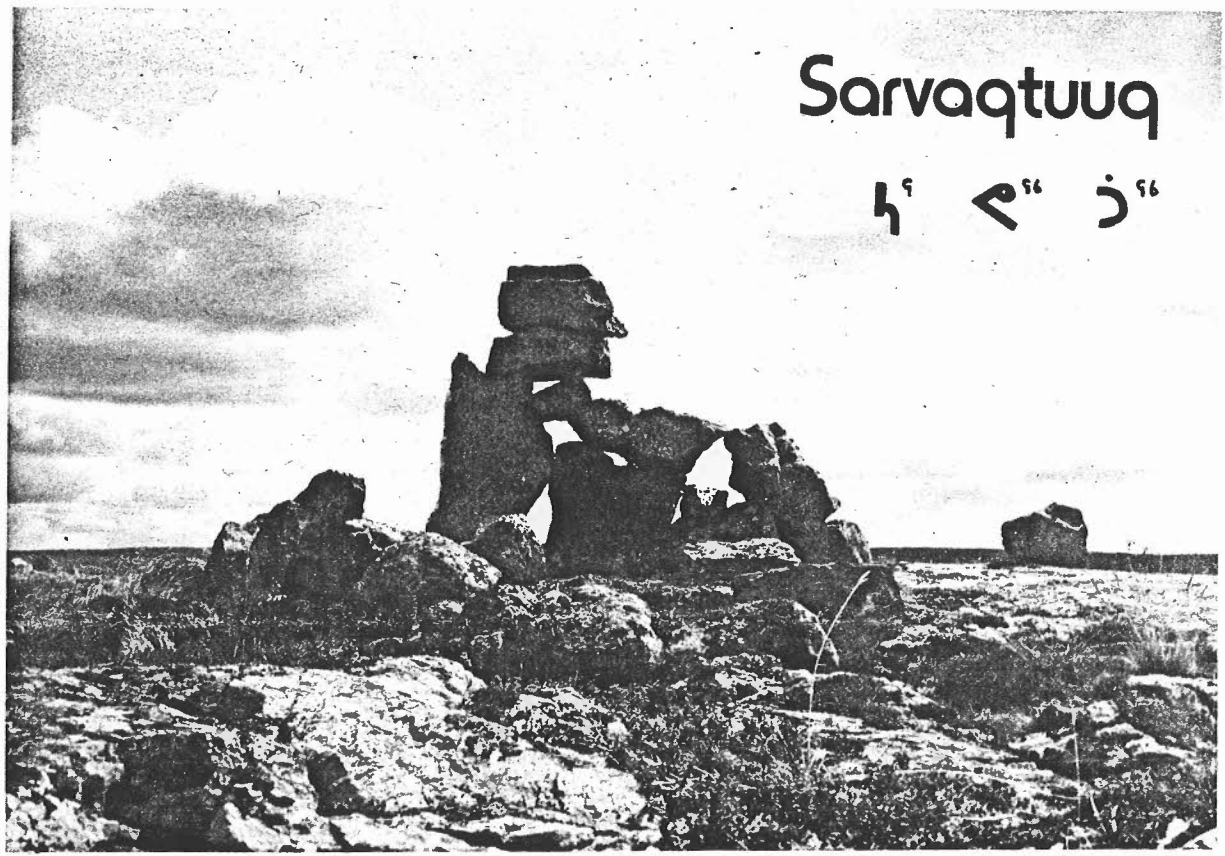


the wilderness canoeist

Volume 4

Number 3

September 1977



Sarvaqtuuq

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Story & Photos: Sandy Richardson

With a throaty roar, the cold green waters surged and boiled over hidden boulders, plunged round a bend, and disappeared out of sight. Ferrying left, then right, pausing in one eddy after another to scout the run, we threaded our way past shoulder-high standing waves, angry white holes, and powerful back-currents. Resting in the calm pool below, our bodies tingled with exhilaration; Sarvaqtuuq had welcomed us.

Sarvaqtuuq: the Kazan River to the mapmakers. For centuries its shores had been the centre of the inland Caribou Eskimo culture. Here, at numerous river crossings, skilled hunters met the migrating caribou herds with kayaks and spears. The deer killed in these hunts provided the Ihalmiut, as they called themselves, with food, clothing and shelter — with life itself — in what can be one of the most inhospitable environments in the world.

So inhospitable did the land appear to the first whitemen that they called it the Barrenlands, and no-one seriously penetrated the country until J.B. Tyrrell descended the river in 1894 for the Geological Survey of Canada. Tyrrell estimated the Ihalmiut population at that time at over 1000; but by the 1950's, a sad series of events — epidemics, decimation of the life-giving caribou herds, loss of traditional hunting skills with the coming of the rifle, and ultimately mass starvation

— brought the people to their knees, and the few score survivors were forced to leave their ancestral homeland.

This was the historical backdrop to our trip, and provided the motivation to canoe the Kazan, rather than another Barrens river. In 1977, a mere 80 years after Tyrrell's journey, we found only deserted campsites at the traditional caribou crossings, crumbling graves atop lonely ridges, and sightless inukshuk along the shores to remind us of the the once vital people of Sarvaqtuuq.

At Ennadai Lake the taiga — through which we had been travelling since starting on Kasba Lake — withdrew, leaving only the occasional pocket of stunted spruce and scrub willow. We had entered the Barrens, home of the Ihalmiut, and signs of the people appeared often along the shores.

We found Enetah's campsite on Angikuni Lake; however, no kayaks came out to herald our arrival in the Great Lake as they had on Tyrrell's visit. The site, located at the narrowest part of the lake, revealed tent rings, hunting blinds, meat caches, and graves. These graves, mounds of rocks marked with upright poles, gave us the best insight into the lives of the people. All a man's worldly possessions, the things his spirit would need in the next world, were placed on his grave. Some revealed tent poles, sled runners, cooking utensils, wooden meat platters, the now disintegrating frame of a kayak, and perhaps a rifle.

Sarvaqtuuq



Kazan Falls

Others had only a few rusted cans and a tin cup — all depending upon the affluence of the deceased.

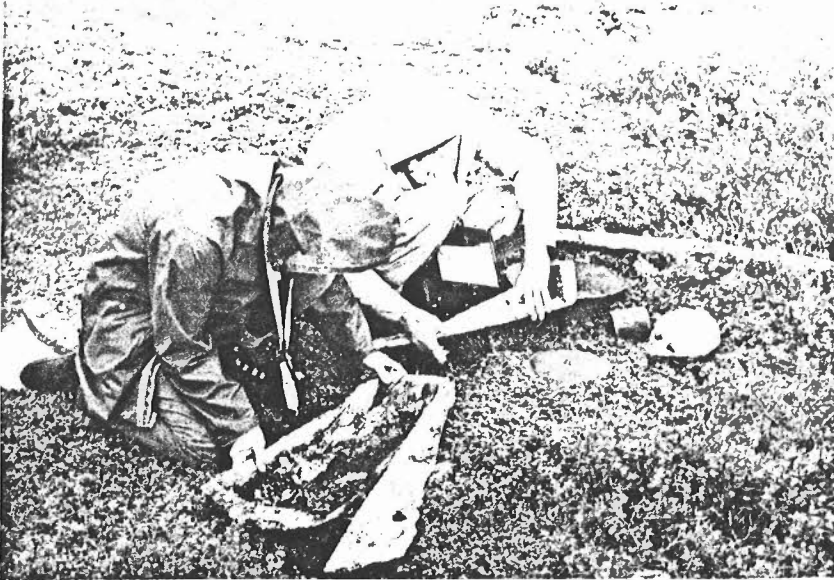
Below Angikuni, an idyllic campsite at the lip of a falls, with falcon soaring overhead, replaced thoughts of the people and their fate with ones of the land and its beauty. Here we spent a day in quiet reverie: hiking about the falls, photographing, fishing, and just sitting on the rocks letting the ever-changing sights and sounds of the churning waters fill our senses. Fresh grayling and trout, part of the bounty of the Kazan, provided delicious and filling meals. As we gazed out over the glistening band of river and the miles of golden tundra, the soft light of evening bathed the land in an unforgettable serenity and beauty. We felt with Tyrrell that: "The whole landscape...presented such a picture of wild, but quiet beauty, as I have seldom had the good fortune to enjoy."

The river banks abounded in wildlife. As we paddled the river and lakes, or hiked on the shores, we encountered moose, caribou, wolves, arctic ground squirrels, geese, arctic terns, peregrin falcon, cranes, curlews, jaegers, swans, and numerous other species almost everywhere.

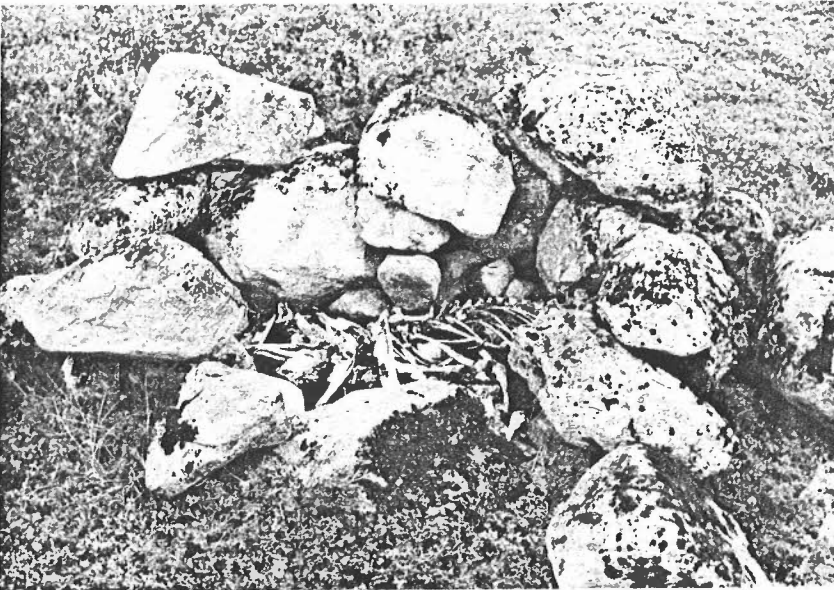
Esker on Kazan River



Inukshuk on Thirty Mile Lake



Examining food platter at Eskimo grave site



Food cache with caribou skeleton



Eskimo grave along Kazan River

As the trip progressed, strong northwest winds became a common occurrence, often making paddling difficult, and at times dangerous. Taking advantage of a calm spell, we crossed the broad expanse of Yathkyed Lake in the semi-dark of an arctic night. However, the few days that we were windbound merely gave us more opportunity to climb the hills and ridges for spectacular views of the surrounding country, to explore numerous Eskimo sites, and to examine the many large and beautiful *inukshuk* lining the shores and islands of Thirty Mile Lake.

Kazan Falls, below Thirty Mile Lake, was the foremost natural spectacle of the river. Here, the green waters of the Kazan thunder and cascade over and around huge reddish-brown rocks, dropping sixty feet into the canyon below. Approaching cautiously through the upper rapids, we set up our tent near the brink of the falls, and spent a day exploring. With the roar of the water as background music, we watched gulls nesting on the huge slab of rock jutting out of the mists in mid-river, and falcon nesting in the rugged cliffs above the swirling waters of the gorge; drinking in the awesome splendour of the scene, in the realization that our trip was nearing its end.

Below the falls, the current becomes stronger and the banks steeper as the river makes its final descent to Baker Lake. At a narrowing in this stretch we found solidly constructed red sandstone cairns stretching out in two lines. Located at a caribou crossing, they likely served as a "fence" to guide the migrating deer to hunters waiting in the blind near the water's edge.

Our final day on the Kazan was a constant series of exhilarating rapids — a fitting finale for the broad and powerful river. In contrast, Baker Lake was a picture of tranquility, with sandy beaches, and calm blue water meeting a clear blue sky.

We finished our trip a day later in Baker Lake Village, our minds filled with the images of five weeks and 600 miles canoeing through a vast and beautiful land, amidst silent reminders of a people who live there no longer.

The experience was moving, humbling and immensely satisfying.



EDITORIAL

CANOE SAFETY

We continue to hear and read about the "need" for certification of canoeists and regulation of canoeing in the interests of safety. However, are such measures really needed? Is the sport of canoeing really all that unsafe?

No one has ever produced hard statistical evidence that canoeing is unsafe. Yet it seems that many people accept this tacit assumption, and proceed not to argue the need for regulations, but the details of what those regulations should be.

Most calls for regulatory measures use some specific canoeing accident as evidence of the "need" for the measures proposed. But arguing from one or two specific cases is misleading. It is largely a scare tactic that fails to put the overall situation into proper perspective. How many canoeing deaths are there in relation to other accidental deaths? Is there really a major social problem here, or merely a perceived one? Surely we need some evidence before we set about solving a problem that may not even exist.

Carl Trost, who has been active in the Sierra Club in California for 20 years, had some interesting comments on this problem in his state in a recent interview published in Down River magazine:

"[Canoeing's safety record] has been exaggerated in the press to the extent that even some paddlers believe something must be done. The entire state of California averages only 16 moving water fatalities a year, mostly in inflatable rafts. Not canoeists in our sense, but people with canoes on reservoirs add another 4 per year. That's not good, but by comparison with 800 drownings in California each year, neither is it a special problem! 250 Californians (125 of them under the age of 5) will drown in home swimming and wading pools, but no one seems to notice.... If the public had this in perspective, I think they might cut off the funds of agencies who are reaching down to our level, and show more concern for something like cancer research or toddlers falling into swimming pools... But with federal money available for boat-safety programs, the growth of our sport, and the possibilities of exploiting the safety and training issues, it is obvious in some states that boating agencies and even private groups are going to want to secure their positions by getting into the act."

On Mr. Trost's last point, it is interesting to note how many of those now calling for certification and regulation in Ontario are part of the educational establishment that will directly benefit from such programmes. It just so happens that many of them own camps or outfitting establishments where these courses will have to be held. Others happen to be professional instructors who will, of course, be able to teach the courses. Could we possibly have a case of conflict of interest here?

Even if those calling for regulations are sincere, and are not merely trying "to secure their positions", they certainly appear to be misguided; assuming that the California figures are also representative of the situation in other parts of the continent as well. And there is no reason to believe that they are not, for with 10% of the U.S. population, 800 drownings is roughly their share of the national total.

When seen in true perspective, Ontario's canoe safety situation will likely be similar to California's. Canoeing accidents are simply not a major problem. They do not cause nearly the misery and suffering to people, nor do they cost the taxpayers anything like the amount of money that automobile accidents (a situation where, by the way, people are certified and regulated), or numerous other social problems do.

Isolated incidents may be tragic, but they show little about the safety of canoeing in general. Before we listen to any more strident calls for certification and regulation, we need detailed statistics that put canoeing accidents into perspective with other accidents and social problems.

Perhaps we, the active canoeists (as opposed to the professionals with positions to secure) should be the ones to search out these detailed figures, as Carl Trost has done in California. (Those calling for regulations certainly are not presenting us with any hard statistics.) We should get on with this task of finding out the actual picture of canoe safety and presenting it to the public, rather than accepting the regulators' premises and simply arguing with them over details of implementation.

When the public and the politicians see the situation in true perspective - that canoe safety is simply not a major problem - then the movement toward regulation will lose its support and vanish like the substanceless fog that it is. Then will we be able to direct our concern, our time, and our money toward battling the real social problems of our country: poverty, our treatment of Native peoples, fast dwindling energy supplies, environmental destruction, etc., etc., etc...



Canoe Country

Northern Manitoba Saskatchewan

Story & Photo: Alan Brailsford

Are you looking for wilderness lake country to canoe, but want to avoid the crowds that Algonquin and Quetico attract? Perhaps northern Manitoba and Saskatchewan is the place to go: a land of endless lake and river systems.

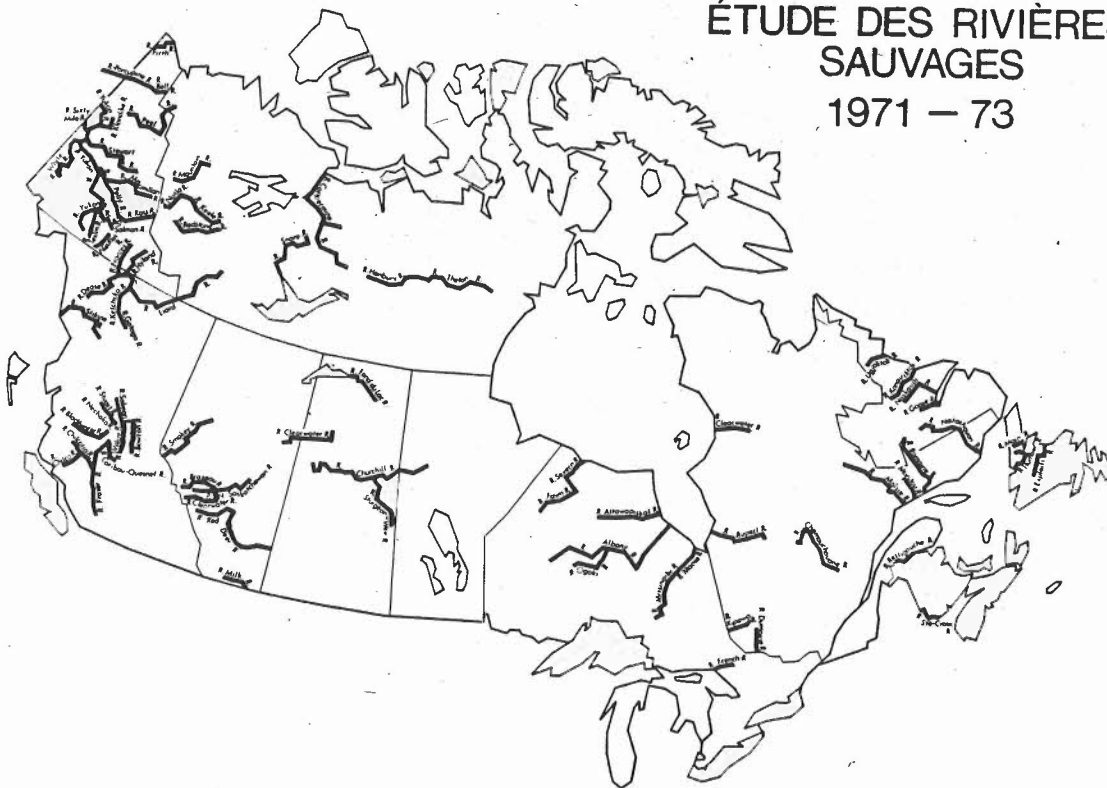
Tourism plays a major role in the economy of northern Manitoba; however the bulk of tourists in these parts are fishermen, mostly from the Dakotas, but a few come from as far away as Texas and Florida. Being away from the big centres, most of the tourists, including canoeists, seem to pass this area by, travelling to more accessible areas. Few of the fishermen venture very far from the fly-in fishing lodges and lakes adjacent to the highways, which leaves the remote areas to the more adventuresome wilderness canoeists.

Northern Manitoba and Saskatchewan, like northern Ontario, is predominantly shield country, forested mainly in spruce, jack pine and aspen. The stately red and white pines of more southern areas like Quetico and Algonquin are missing, however. This is not quite the "land of the

midnight sun", but with upwards to 17 hours of daylight there is plenty of time to put all the things you want into a day. If fishing is to be part of your trip, northern Manitoba has certainly the reputation to attract the most avid fishermen. These parts also abound in wildlife; canoeing along a swampy shoreline may find you staring into the eyes of an angry she-moose guarding her calf, or spotting a bald eagle perched at the top of a tall spruce. Wolves may be heard howling in the distance or bear and even woodland caribou may be spotted.

This area is rich with the history of our native people, and with early frontier settlements, many of which have transformed into the modern cities and towns that are supported by mining and forestry operations and the tourist trade.

Information on canoe routes in the area may be obtained from the Manitoba and Saskatchewan governments. For anyone planning a trip in this area, the book Cranberry Portage: Frontier Life at the Crossroads of the North by Ruth and Jack Patterson (published 1974 by J.J. Douglas Ltd., Vancouver) makes excellent background reading.



WILD RIVERS SURVEY ÉTUDE DES RIVIÈRES SAUVAGES 1971 - 73

This map shows the rivers that have been studied as part of the federal government's Wild Rivers Survey. The results of these studies are currently being published in 11 booklets that describe the canoe routes surveyed. Each booklet covers a particular geographical region, and about half are completed and available at this time. The booklets cost \$1.50 each, and can be ordered from: Printing and Publishing, Supply Services of Canada, Ottawa K1A 0S9, or from local booksellers.

chairmans letter

Fellow canoeists,

I trust that you have all returned safely from your travels this summer. Already, I have heard from many of you about your experiences, and I hope to be in touch with many more of you at our September meeting, or on autumn trips.

While many of the executive members of the association were away for the summer, Jim Greenacre held the fort here in Toronto, ably handling the requests that came in to our postal box. Thanks again, Jim!

I understand that we have about thirty new members over the course of the summer; to you, welcome to the W.C.A., and please make full use

of our various services and programmes. The W.C.A. takes pride in an active, involved membership that now numbers about 275.

Please note that I have moved again, this time to scenic Downsview, where my new phone number is 633-?????. Urgent requests for help should be directed to 715 Finch Ave. W, Apt. 905, Downsview, Ont. I will reveal my new telephone number after Bell Canada reveals it to me, in the next newsletter.

As many of you know, my work has kept me rather busy since last spring, but I now hope to have more time to devote to our association and to individual members' requests.

Yours sincerely,

Roger Smith

news briefs

YOUTH ENCOURAGEMENT FUND

This fund was established at the last annual meeting to encourage student members to participate in major wilderness trips and to improve their skills by attending available courses. The Y.E.F. Committee contacted all those members eligible for assistance to make them aware of the fund and to actively encourage them to make use of the opportunities it provided.

This summer the committee used the \$380 that was contributed to assist two of our members: one to attend the Algonquin Waterways white water training course, and another to go on a northern canoe expedition.

The committee would like to thank all those who contributed in the past year, and to invite those members who think that this work is important and should be continued next year, to send their contributions to the treasurer. These should be payable to the Wilderness Canoe Association, and indicate that the money is for the Youth Encouragement Fund.

WILDERNESS EQUIPMENT CO-OP OPENS

Southern Ontario is sadly lacking in stores that cater to the wilderness traveller, a fact that becomes painfully obvious when one visits the many fine outdoor specialty shops in western cities. In January, a group of outdoor enthusiasts in Peterborough decided to do something about this situation; they started the Wilderness Equipment Outfitter as a co-op to sell quality outdoor equipment to members at economical prices. Their arrival on the scene should be greeted with pleasure by wilderness enthusiasts in the area.

At present W.E.O. is operating on a mail-order basis, but there are plans to open a store in the near future. Membership on the Co-op is \$3. Their catalogue offers a good line of tents, packs, sleeping bags, clothing and other camping gear at very reasonable prices.

For further information on the Co-op and a copy of their catalogue, contact: Wilderness Equipment Outfitter, 559 Downie St., Peterborough, Ontario; phone (705) 745-2244.

MEMBERSHIP LISTS AND CONSTITUTIONS

Copies of the W.C.A. membership list and constitution are available to members on request. Please send a self-addressed 9" X 6" envelope with 30¢ postage to the W.C.A. Postal Box.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR POSITION AVAILABLE

The Conservation Council of Ontario is seeking an Executive Director to assume responsibility for the operation and administration of its affairs. The successful candidate will be responsible to and receive direction from the Council and its Executive Committee. His or her duties will include programme development, preparation of briefs and submissions, investigative research, editorial responsibility for two publications, liaison with member organizations, and management of the Council office, including budgeting and day-to-day financial affairs. Reply in confidence, stating salary requirements to:

The Search Committee,
Conservation Council of Ontario,
6th Floor, 45 Charles St. East,
Toronto, Ontario, M4Y 1S2.

Applications should be received before November 30, 1977.

W.C.A. SLIDE SHOW

The W.C.A. is hoping to put together a permanent slide show with a taped sound track for use at the Sportsman Show, those occasions when other clubs ask us to make a presentation, etc. The show will attempt to portray what the W.C.A. is all about through representative pictures of our activities. Any members with one or two good slides of W.C.A. trips, which they would be willing to donate to the show, are asked to contact Sandy Richardson (address on back page).

OUTDOOR BOOKS

Those outdoor enthusiasts who have yet to discover the relatively new OPEN AIR BOOKS AND MAPS have a real treat in store for them when they visit the shop. Their shelves are well stocked with books on canoeing, backpacking, X-C skiing, winter camping, nature and wildlife - including those titles that are often hard to find general book stores.

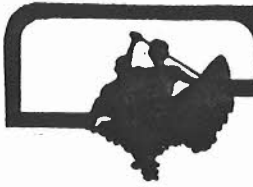
Open Air Books and Maps is located at 10 Adelaide St., East, Toronto, Ontario. Phone: (416) 363-0719.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE SEEKS HELP

Nominations are still needed for 1978 executive positions. Anyone interested in standing for one of these, or in nominating someone else, please contact the Nominating Committee c/o Gord Fenwick via the W.C.A. Postal Box.

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE

Our next issue will be published in early December. Anyone interested in submitting articles, poetry, trip reports or photographs is asked to send these to the editor no later than November 15.



Sandy Richardson

SPANISH RIVER

The WCA and the Sierra Club of Ontario co-sponsored a meeting in June with INCO representatives to discuss their proposed hydro-electric generating station on the Spanish River. Following this meeting, the Conservation Committee had a number of concerns about INCO's plans. These included the fact that a free flowing wilderness river, within reach of the large population centres of the province, would be lost for short-term economic gains, while the future value of wilderness areas to the quality of life in Ontario were being ignored; the fact that the environmental data presented seemed inadequate; and the fact that the building of a dam by INCO might serve as a precedent for other private companies to dam other public rivers.

The date set by INCO to receive briefs was August 19, which did not allow our committee sufficient time to prepare a detailed statement. We did, however, send a letter of intent briefly outlining our concerns, and promising a detailed brief in the fall.

INCO has responded to this letter, and has offered to meet with our committee to provide further information on their environmental assessment study. We will attempt to set up a meeting this fall to aid in the preparation of the detailed brief which the committee is currently preparing. (Any member interested in working on this project should contact the Conservation Committee.)

It is our hope that by coordinating efforts with other conservation groups we will be well represented in the hearings under the Environmental Assessment Act.

NORTHERN INQUIRY SET UP

A special inquiry headed by Mr. Justice Patrick Hartt, into the social, environmental, economic and cultural impact of development in Northern Ontario was formally established in mid-July. Although the inquiry will look in particular at the impact of the proposed expansion by Reed Ltd. of its timber rights and milling operations in 19,000 sq. mi. of Northwestern Ontario, Judge Hartt's terms of reference are more general. He will study the effects of "any public or private enterprise" which in his opinion would have a major impact "north or generally north of the 50th parallel". Projects to be considered would include timber harvesting, milling, smelting, gas and oil extraction, hydro-electric development, water use, tourism and recreation, transportation, communications, and pipelines. Mr. Hartt will also look at methods by which to assess, evaluate and make decisions concerning the effects on the environment, in all its aspects.

PROVINCIAL PARKS COUNCIL

The brief prepared by the Conservation Committee for the Trails Council was also submitted to the Provincial Parks Council.

In this statement we expressed our desire that sizeable tracts of wilderness be set aside and protected in their natural state for all time, areas where no logging or mineral extraction is permitted, and where the only means of travel are non-mechanized ones. We also suggested ways in which the integrity of these wilderness areas could be maintained; concentrating on education of the public in the value of wildlands and their preservation, but also suggesting regulations that might be needed in areas of heavy use. Finally we indicated a need for different areas and facilities designed for different types of use; no one park can be all things for all people.

The Parks Council considered our brief at the public meeting held in May in Niagara Falls. Although the Council decided to table detailed consideration of the points raised until they have an opportunity to consider the findings of the Trails Council and the matter of "Visitor Services" which they are doing this year, they did send a copy of our brief to the Hon. Frank Miller, Minister of Natural Resources, along with their comments. These comments to Mr. Miller read in part: "The Council is generally sympathetic with the contents of this brief. Several Council members have stated emphatically that they agree with the entire statement."

From this response, the Conservation Committee is hopeful that our submission will have an important impact on overall park policy.

MISSISSAUGA RIVER

Enclosed with this issue of the Wilderness Canoeist is a colour photograph of the beautiful Thunderhouse Falls on the Mississauga, courtesy of the Sierra Club of Ontario.

Although the river was granted park reserve status in January, this is only a first step. To ensure that the Mississauga is fully protected from future damming and mining exploration we must work to make certain that it receives full Wild River Park status. The back of the photograph tells you what you can do right now to help preserve this part of our wilderness heritage.

TRAILS SYMPOSIUM

Having received briefs from many trail users throughout the province, the Trails Council held a day long symposium in June, attended by representatives of the various groups of users. The WCA, which submitted 2 briefs was represented at this symposium.

The Council outlined some of the many issues that have confronted them at their regional meetings for discussion. The use of public and private lands, the roles of government and trail clubs in an Ontario Trails Programme, multiple use of trails, financing, liability, updating legislation, educating the public in trail user ethics were a few of the issues discussed in the small workshop sessions.

The symposium was a success in that it allowed representatives of many groups to sit down together and begin to appreciate and understand their different points of view. In fact one suggestion was that a Trails Council should continue to exist in order to give trail users this opportunity to get together and discuss matters of interest and concern.

Hopefully, the symposium also assisted the council in formulating their formal report to the provincial government. Whether or not canoeists have succeeded in making clear the fact that, unlike other trails, our natural water trails cannot be replaced or re-routed once lost or destroyed, and hence need special consideration, will be clear once the Trail Council's report is issued this fall.

LAKE SUPERIOR PROVINCIAL PARK

The preliminary master plan for Lake Superior Provincial Park north of Sault Ste. Marie is now ready, and public response to it is being invited until October 1. The Conservation Committee is studying the plan and will be submitting our comments in September.

Some features of the plan are: to continue to classify the Park as a natural environment park with 26% rezoned as wilderness to expand the 601 sq. mi. area by an additional 27 sq. mi., and to allow commercial logging to continue in 49% of its area. Provisions would also be made for trapping and hunting.

Members who would like further information or wish to make their own comments should write the Regional Director, Northeastern Region, Ministry of Natural Resources, Box 1900, Sault Ste. Marie, P6A 5N9. (The report costs 50¢.)

equipment

WANNIGAN BOXES by John Cross

I should like to say a word on behalf of wannigan boxes for those who have never tried them. For an automobile trip, most people would probably prefer to pack their groceries in boxes or coolers instead of bags; because the rigidity of the sides makes them so easy to pack; because they protect the food better; and because it is so easy to get at things. So why not on a canoe trip? The objection will probably be raised that they are hard to carry around, but in fact they need be no more trouble than packs. I carry mine by tumpline, but people who prefer to use shoulder straps could mount theirs on a packframe (see The Last Wilderness by Browning). For people who want to use this method, I would point out the Camp Trails Freighter frame for special attention.

For weekend trips, a large party can chuck all its food into the box; as long as there is a reasonable share of heavy items on each side, little care need be taken in packing. Cookies can be protected from crumbling, jam jars from breaking, and corners of tins from sticking into your back.

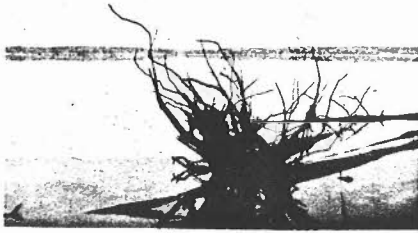
On longer trips, I pack with more care: reflector oven goes behind a removable partition up front; pots go in the bottom along with jars

of the staples I use every day (oatmeal, sugar, raisins, flour, salt, powdered milk, etc.); lift-out tray above holds everything I might want to get at during the day (first aid kit, gloves, cup, canteen, lunch, and the like). Since the lid is held on with suitcase clasps, getting at these things for a mid-river lunch is as easy as flick, flick, flick. The tump straps are on occasion used to hold a map in place during tricky navigation, or a raincoat during fickle weather.

The box is squirrel and mouse-proof, and more coon and bear resistant than a pack. It makes a dandy camp seat, coffee table, bread board, chart table, or tent guyline anchor. It is rainproof and waterproof if properly made, and it floats.

Mine is made entirely of 1/2-inch plywood, but though strong, it is a little heavy, and I intend to try hardwood screwed to a frame next time I make one. Each seam is held with 4 screws and sealed with Resorcinol marine glue. Two large wooden handles are bolted on the sides. The lid, held on with clasps, is sealed with weather stripping. Size, proportions and partitioning are up to the maker.

Cost of materials for mine was about \$18 — far less than a pack. Weight is about 20 lbs. (though a lighter one could be built), and for the saving in mental and physical fatigue getting at things and packing them, the few extra pounds are well worth carrying.



Otoskwin - Marten Drinking Rivers

John Cross

One of the themes of discussion often seen in this newsletter is the importance of good judgement, all too often ignored in favour of certified skills. I felt that the contrast was very well illustrated on my Otoskwin trip this summer. Very often there were decisions to be made, such that no degree of skill could repair the effects of a wrong one.

In spite of the talk of drought earlier in the summer, and the forest fire warnings, heavy rains had by late July caused almost flood conditions along the Otoskwin - Attawapiskat. The Ministry of Natural Resources' Trip Guide attempts to give directions for all water levels, but the authors apparently never imagined levels this high. Although the guide is very detailed, and in fact one of the better MNR guides, it contains a few glaring errors which make identification of some dangerous rapids difficult.

All the shore rocks were flooded, which made both scouting and lining impossible. Behind the shore was a line of screening alders which could not be penetrated for a view, since the outer rocks were deep in rushing water. Rapids which could normally be run without scouting were now characterized by high waves, huge rollers and powerful backwashes. Around rapids that are normally run or lined, there are either no portage trails or very poorly maintained ones. The timber is tangled, much of it horizontal, making the cutting of one's own trail very difficult.

Thus one is faced only with a choice of evils.

As you drift down the river toward a rapid, trip guide in hand, you think: "Is this the small set he says can be run easily? (In which case there will be no portage trail.) Or is he referring to that swift half a mile back, and this is the set with a portage? Or is that swift more like a rapid at low water and this is the next set?"

Portages, if they exist, are more difficult to find and land at during high water on the Otoskwin. There is normally a sand, clay or rock beach followed by a vertical bank over which the bushes hang. At high water the beach is flooded and the landing difficult to see. A vertical bank is not the easiest place on which to land either, particularly with the increased current trying to suck the canoe under the alders. Most of the portages seem to start at the very brink of the drop, so that if the set of rapids is mis-identified, there is no time for recovery.

I was fortunate enough to meet an Indian from Fort Hope coming upriver from Ozhiski Lake. This demonstrated that the portages to the Marten-Drinking River (which were mentioned in a 1906 G.S.C. Report) were still open. The Marten-Drinking route to Lansdowne House is shorter than the Otoskwin; it lacks the huge open-water stretches of Kabania and Attawapiskat Lakes; and it is a small river, without such powerful currents and backwashes. Furthermore, the portages are shorter (which was a powerful inducement for me, with 4 loads to carry across each portage). One Otoskwin portage below Ozhiski Lake is 4 miles long. Although the rapids are said to be runnable at low water, I thought



that they would have been out of question this summer.

I carried across to the Marten-Drinking River and was delighted to find the rapids small and easy. Nearly all of them can be run on sight. Consequently I let my guard down and tried one that cannot be run, and so lost half a day extricating and repairing my canoe.

The Marten-Drinking would be a difficult route at very low water, since all the easy rapids would become trickling shallows. However, I have since discovered a third route which is shorter still and replaces about 9 sets of rapids with 2 medium portages (3/4 and 1/2 mi.).

The canoe, damaged but still usable to make further trips, was stored at the Bay store in Lansdowne House. By leaving the canoe in the north, it is possible to save fly-out and fly-in costs, and to cover a longer route, spread out over several summers, than would otherwise be possible.

thern Trips

Missinaibi River

Glenn Davy

It was early summer when Ken Brailsford and I decided on the Missinaibi River for our summer canoe trip. After researching the river we were off and paddling the afternoon of July 17. We encountered two major rapids the first day: Rock Island and Black Feather. After camping at Kettle Falls, we moved on the second day to Thunderhouse Falls, approaching cautiously so as not to miss the portage. We had made excellent time as most of the paddling had been through riffles and occasional rapids, including one stretch of riffles that were a good two miles in length.

As for being in a remote wilderness area, the filled campsites along the Thunderhouse portage made us feel as if we were in "Tent City". However, the falls were as beautiful as we had been led to believe, and we thoroughly enjoyed our day there despite coming down with rather severe bouts of the flu. As a matter of interest, this was the point at which we encountered our first wildlife sighting. It was seen on one of my frequent mad dashes out of the tent in the middle of the night. The animal (which was quite bold, approaching within 10-15 feet of me) was, of all things, a SKUNK!

It was a day later before we could travel again, in a definitely weakened state. Because of this we planned to camp on the long portage bypassing the gorge that contains Hell's Gate and other assorted goodies. After portaging the slight falls at Stone Rapids, we put in and promptly swamped in the 3-4 foot standing waves just below. Recovering our gear in short order, we were off again to meet the portage just above the gorge. The portage itself was very wet from the previous night's storms, and at times we were slogging through knee deep water and mud. We camped at the campsite located about 200-300 yards short of the end. At this site we met a group from an assortment of places including Vermont, Connecticut and Keewatin, and travelled with them for the remainder of the trip.

After a restless night's sleep we were off again; this day managing about 30 miles, and seeing our one and only moose. The group we were travelling with were a bit behind at this point, and they surprised a bear crossing the river.

The remainder of the trip was uneventful; the most striking thing being the vastness of the land after reaching the Moose River. At this point the river is about a mile wide, and with the short trees the sky seemed endless. These things all combined to give a feeling of huge, wide-open space.

We finished at Moose River Crossing on a very wet and windy day, nine days after we had started. The trip down the Missinaibi and Moose Rivers is well worth the effort for the beauty alone. I, for one, pray that it is never touched by the hand of man, other than to traverse it by canoe.



drawing by finn hansen

Mattagami River

Graham McCallum

Canoeists who wish a good safe whitewater practice run before going down the Missinaibi should seriously consider the Mattagami. This river is also an excellent alternative should the Missinaibi be low, as it was much of this year, or too crowded.

The trip from Smooth Rock Falls to Moose River Crossing provides a good 7-8 day run. So far this summer there have been only 15 parties on the river. Two factors probably act as deterrents. First, the smell from the paper mill permeates the air below Smooth Rock Falls for a few miles. Second, a ride of 13 miles must be arranged with the school bus operator in Fraserdale to get

around a group of 5 dams. (This can be done easily ahead of time by phone, and costs about \$70 to transport 5 canoes.) However, to offset these two factors, there only 2 portages of 150 and 800 yds., and virtually no lining or mid-river walking even in mid-August.

Campsites are not established, and can be set up on the higher flats anywhere along the river banks. A couple of spots, Fish Rapids and Pike River, appear to be used regularly.

In retrospect, the two disadvantages mentioned fade away when compared to the excellent water conditions of late summer, the good fishing, the forgiving nature of the rapids, and the overall beauty of the river on the grand scale of the mid-north.

Canoe Materials: Past, Present, and Future

W. Henderson C.E.T.

As a relatively recent convert to canoeing, this author was at first confused by the myriad materials and designs available, but after several escapades with rented canoes, it became obvious that an extensive knowledge of materials acquired from my previous experience in the aero-space industry was directly applicable and it is this knowledge that your editor has asked me to share with the members of the Wilderness Canoe Association.

As with the earliest aircraft the classic canoe is constructed of wood and canvas, but the immediate post-war era saw the production of aluminum and polyester/fibreglass canoes and more recently the thermoplastics such as ABS (Acrylonitrile-Butadiene Styrene) and polyethylene have made a significant impact on the canoe market. Each of these materials has its advantages and problems and I will attempt to outline the most important of these below.

WOOD

Wood is a cellular and fibrous material which is easily formed into complex shapes, has natural heat and sound insulating qualities and, being lighter than water, floats. Unfortunately its combined fibrous cellular structure allows it to absorb significant quantities of water and, if not well looked after, wood tends to decay and rot. To achieve extreme lightness (as with aircraft) a rib and stringer structure covered with waterproofed canvas is used. Such construction is typical of folding Kayaks as produced by Hans Klepper Corp. and Folboat Corp. but it is sometimes used in open canoes such as that produced in kit form by Trailcraft Inc. in Concordia, Kansas. More typically the wood canoe is constructed of cedar planks fastened with copper nails onto steam formed ribs. To minimize water absorption the complete structure has several coats of varnish and an exterior covering of canvas which is impregnated with paint or varnish. Such construction allows fine and graceful lines to be produced, but water is gradually absorbed through unprotected areas such as rib/plank crossovers and this spots in the canvas coating. The weight of the canoe can increase easily 5 to 10 pounds on an extended canoe trip and requires constant attention to repair scratches and gouges until such time as it must have a complete revarnishing and re-covering. Minor repairs are easy on this type of construction, but major repairs are difficult and require expertise on the part of the repairer. To overcome these problems some cedar strip canoes are produced with thin fibreglass/polyester laminates replacing the canvas. Although the problem of water absorption is reduced it is not eliminated and major repairs requiring replacement on planks or ribs are very difficult.

Despite the difficulties mentioned above the canoe connoisseur will always appreciate the workmanship and feel of the wooden canoe and would rather own a piece of fine cabinet work, with all its flexibility, than concede to the advantages of the new finished materials that have now arrived on the scene.

ALUMINUM

As with aircraft the next development in construction was the use of aluminum alloys, but whereas aircraft designers started using the materials in the late 1920s, aluminum canoes were not fully developed until the mid-1940s. It was the aircraft manufacturers, with their sophisticated stretch-forming techniques, that perfected the methods of producing aluminum alloy half shells that were then heat-treated and flush riveted to inner and outer keels and ribs. Unfortunately the stretch-forming process does not usually permit production of the fine lines of the wood canoe and hence the aluminum canoe does not necessarily have the liveliness and maneuverability of its wooden counterpart.

Although the aluminum canoe is strong, rigid and able to take a great deal of abuse, it still has disadvantages. Since aluminum is heavier than water the canoe must have flotation material incorporated, usually, fore and aft flotation chambers. It also conducts heat and cold much more readily than other canoe materials and has reflective surfaces that can be blinding at some sun angles unless the surfaces are specially

treated, such as by painting. This raises another problem; since aluminum oxidizes as a natural part of its aging process, the oxide layer must be chemically removed to provide a surface that will allow paints to chemically bond to the metal to reduce the possibility of chipping and peeling. Two types of aluminum canoes are available, those made of stretch-formed, heat-treated marine quality aluminum alloy described above and those made from flat sheets, cut, bent and the joints fastened by welding and rivetting. These latter generally have poor lines and often add flotation material along the outside of the gunwale. The latter are probably acceptable for weekend cottage paddling by the kids, but cannot match the former in whitewater work or serious canoe tripping. The durability of the former has made them the favourite of outfitters since they are virtually maintenance free; small dents can be rubber hammered out, but punctures must be patched and welded requiring professional skills with specialized equipment.

PLASTICS

Although plastics have been with us for over 100 years it was the development of the high strength composite materials for aircraft use that led to their use in canoes. What are composites? They are essentially two phase materials, one phase being a plastic binder or spacer and the other phase being fibres or skins that distribute the stress through the material enabling it to carry very high loads in comparison to the plastic binder phase alone. At this point we should explain that plastics come in two forms: thermosets or thermoplastics.

Thermosets are so called because once heat has been used to cure them, further heat will only cause them to burn or decompose rather like adding more heat to a properly baked loaf, creating a cinder if continued too long. Thermoplastics on the other hand can be reheated to softening point, remoulded and cooled into its new shape in the same way as gelatine can be heated and cooled any number of times into any number of jelly moulds that take one's fancy. Up to the early 1970s only thermoset/glass fibre composites had been used for canoes, notably polyester/fibreglass and epoxy/fibreglass, but recently thermoplastic sandwich composites in the form of ABS skins over ABS foam core have appeared in canoes. More recently non-composite polyethylene sheet has been formed into canoe hulls. Each of these materials has its own special characteristics and will therefore be discussed under separate headings.

FIBRE REINFORCED THERMOSETS

As a class these materials are extremely versatile allowing for the production of extremely fine lines as well as unusual and novel contours. By the use of a multisection mould a one piece hull can be moulded incorporating multiple keels and significant tumblehome. The strength and durability of such a hull and its ability to flex over rocks etc. without breaking is determined by the composition of the laminate. The higher the glass content the stronger the canoe; the lower the amount of air entrapped in the laminate the less susceptible to local failure; the better the reinforcement is wetted by the resin the higher the strength of the laminate. The above conditions are further controlled by weight considerations leading to a series of "best possible" alternatives.

(a) Glass reinforcement can be supplied in the form of woven cloth or as randomly oriented fibres in a mat similar to felt. (The mat can also be produced at the mould by chopping glass fibres and injecting them into a stream of resin from a spray gun, but this method is not used in the construction of quality canoes.) Mat produced by any method absorbs a large amount of resin resulting in a laminate with little directional strength, though some builders claim higher impact strength. Woven cloth is available in many configurations, but the one that is usually used in the hand lay-up technique of canoe building is a heavy woven roving. Roving is an untwisted bundle of long fibres, usually 64 fibres to the bundle, and this is woven into a plain weave cloth. When properly rolled out after resin impregnation it gives a high glass to resin ratio laminate.

Good success has been obtained with fibreglass canoes constructed of both hand laid-up mat and woven roving. Of prime importance is the laminate construction, which should be balanced; i.e. mat — woven roving — mat is balanced, but mat — woven roving with no other layers is unbalanced and will tend to delaminate under stress. The end use will tend to determine the laminate choice, mat well suited for lake use and some sandwich type laminate best for hard whitewater use.

(b) Kevlar, a new synthetic fibre produced by Dupont as a tire cord fibre to replace the steel in belted radial tires, has rapidly penetrated the aero-space and boat industries as a substitute for glass in glass reinforced plastics. It is claimed to produce laminates that are significantly stronger and lighter than those using glass fibre, as well as having better sharp point impact resistance.

Being a new material, it is still very expensive and since it does not become transparent, like glass-fibres do when impregnated with resin, it is much more difficult to tell when the laminate is properly saturated without too much or too little resin. Thus any boat produced with a Kevlar laminate will be considerably more expensive than the same boat with a glass fibre laminate. If you feel the extra strength and reduction in weight are justified then by all means consider a Kevlar reinforced canoe.

(c) Resins from two major plastic families are usually used: polyesters and epoxies. Both can be formulated in rigid and flexible forms and these forms are used in varying combinations depending on the canoe manufacturer.

(1) Polyester resins for exterior use must be stabilized to prevent ultra violet degradation and in this respect pigments are beneficial. Thus the surface gel-coat (which protects the laminate from abrasion and gives a smooth, hard, polished finish) and the main reinforcing resin are usually pigmented, but the use of pigment prevents visual inspection for air entrapment and similar laminate defects. Due to the use of styrene monomer in the formulation of all polyester resins some shrinkage occurs on curing, leaving internal stresses in the laminate. These stresses can be minimized by careful hull structure design as well as by careful control of the resin/catalyst combination, such that excessive exothermic reaction heat is not produced.

(2) Epoxy resins must be similarly ultra-violet stabilized and are usually pigmented, but they have very little shrink on cure, producing a high strength unstressed laminate. The best laminates are heat cured and are normally beyond the capabilities of the amateur boat builder. Epoxy/fibre laminates are generally stronger than the same Polyester/fibre laminate and hence the epoxy laminate can be thinner and lighter for the same strength. Epoxy resin is more expensive than polyester so that in spite of the thinner laminate the epoxy/glass-fibre boat will be more expensive than its polyester/glass fibre equivalent. The ultimate in high strength, lightweight laminates on the basis of the data presently available would be epoxy/Kevlar.

All thermoset glass reinforced laminates are heavier than water and require buoyancy materials to prevent sinking and these are usually placed in bow and stern compartments. These laminates also tend to be heat and sound insulators similar to a wood/canvas canoe. Repairs are easily effected to all types of these laminates, both in the field and in the home workshop, even when such repairs involve large damaged areas.

SANDWICH LAMINATES

Such laminates use a low density core material faced with rigid skins that distribute the loading stresses throughout the structure. The theory behind this laminate construction is the same as the one that created the steel I-beam that carries heavy loads for minimum beam weight. The core materials can vary from wood to foam and the skins can vary from glass fibre reinforced thermosets to specially formulated thermoplastic sheets.

As with the previous group of plastic materials a series of "best possible" combinations is available and will be dealt with separately below.

MATERIALS

(a) Wood core/glass fibre reinforced skins. Several variations exist in this type of construction based on the core materials. Both cedar strip and balsa wood cores are somewhat thicker to give a stronger construction. This type of construction has all the advantages and weaknesses of the fibreglass covered wood canoe described at the beginning of the article and since the skins use the lighter woven cloths rather than woven roving, they are more susceptible to damage compared to a standard glass fibre/polyester canoe. Nonetheless, if you cherish fine hand craftsmanship in wood, this type of canoe may be for you.

(b) Foam core/thermoplastic sheet skins. Several variations on this theme have been tried over the years, but in the early 1960s considerable research went into an all ABS laminate that incorporated a centre layer which became cellular on the application of heat. The advantages claimed at that time for the new structural laminate included:

- High stiffness to weight ratio (for the same thickness the laminate is lighter than and almost as rigid as glass-reinforced polyester).
- High impact resistance
- Impervious and lighter than water
- Lower tooling costs compared to glass reinforced/thermoform.

Its disadvantages were listed as:

- High materials cost
- Limited temperature range in service (in 1963 it was quoted as -10 F to 175 F)
- Degradation by embrittlement on long term exposure to ultra-violet light.

In 1964 Uniroyal introduced Royalex which was essentially the same laminate as above, but with a rubber modified vinyl on each outer skin to minimize ultra-violet degradation. It has therefore been in use in canoe construction for over 10 years and has proven to be a very tough material. Unfortunately there are no great weight savings in the use of ABS sandwich construction and such a canoe will weigh as much as its standard wetted aluminum equivalent. The process used to produce such a canoe is called thermoforming, wherein a large heated sheet of the ABS sandwich is sucked by vacuum into a female mould. Because of this method of construction in conjunction with the inherent stiffness of sandwich laminates (even when hot) the fine lines of the wood or fibre-glass canoe cannot be achieved, particularly the rapid contour changes at bow and stern or pronounced tumblehome. Although rubber modified vinyl is quite resistant to ultra-violet degradation, the temperature limits on the material

give some cause for concern, particularly if the canoe is left out baking in the mid-summer sun for any length of time (remember the characteristics of thermoplastics noted at the beginning of this article). As Brian Back noted in the June 77 issue of the Wilderness Canoeist the chief merit of the ABS canoe lies in whitewater usage because of its durability. Dents are easily repaired by the application of local heat, but actual rips or cracks will require more careful patching with suitable sheet materials and solvent based cements.

THERMOPLASTIC SHEET

The polyethylene that most people come into contact with in kitchen containers and disposable ice cream tubs does not have the stiffness required for use in boat hulls. Polymer chemists have gradually improved on the original polyethylene and have now developed an Ultra High Molecular Weight type (sometimes known as Ultra High Density) by creating cross-links between the polymer chains, greatly increasing its stiffness and impact resistance. The present method of fabrication is the same as for ABS sandwich i.e. thermo-forming of a softened sheet by sucking into a mould with a vacuum. The same problems regarding the inability to produce fine lines and contours occur with UHMW polyethylene; it costs about the same as the ABS sandwich and has similar service temperature limitations. Its one big disadvantage is that no adhesive known will stick to polyethylene (it is basically a very sophisticated wax) therefore all flotation chambers, seats etc. must be either welded in place (if they are polyethylene) or rivetted with large-headed fasteners to spread the loads. The examples available in Canada to date use foam flotation strips rivetted along the outside of the gunwale and an aluminum stiffening frame that braces the keel to the thwart, transmitting the loads to the aluminum gunwales. The very high impact strength of UHMW polyethylene is the reason for the interest in this material, particularly for white water canoes. Many single-seater kayaks are currently rotationally moulded in UHMW polyethylene (moulding pellets are heated in a rotating mould producing an even thickness skin on the mould surface) and are renowned for their ability to survive rock impacts in whitewater racing.

Thermoplastics, such as ABS and Polyethylene have an elastic memory i.e. on heating they will return to their original form, thus a thermoformed shape has a tendency to return to the original flat sheet, if heated to a temperature that causes softening. A rotationally moulded shape in its original form and there is no tendency to return to the original shape when heated. This property has been the reason for a great deal of development work in rotationally moulded canoes. In 1974 Winnebago produced just such an experimental canoe then dropped the venture and sold the moulds to Inter-Marine Corporation of Boston. We may see the production of fine lined polyethylene canoes for whitewater work in the near future, since rotational moulding has very few limitations on the shapes that can be produced, although pronounced tumblehome could give problems. Repairs to rips in any polyethylene canoe requires considerable skill in the use of a hot air welding gun with plastic filler rods.

POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENTS

Another thermoplastic that has outstanding impact can be ultra-violet stabilized and rotationally moulded is Polycarbonate. It has been rumoured that a Canadian company has rotationally moulded a 15 foot sailboat on an experimental basis. Originally a high cost material, polycarbonate could become competitive with other materials giving yet another possible canoe material.

The acrylics (Perspex, Plexiglass etc.) have long been renowned for their total resistance to ultra-violet degradation hence their extensive use in illuminated signs, skylights, etc... Rohm and Haas has long been interested in the marine field and has been promoting a glass-reinforced acrylic for use in marine hulls, with a few experimental sailboat hulls already having been produced in the U.S. The acrylic/glass fibre composite has the stiffness of the glass fibre reinforced thermosets, the intrinsic deep gloss and weatherability of acrylics and can be processed by standard thermoforming techniques. Both polycarbonate and acrylics have high gloss surfaces resulting in low water friction compared to that resulting from the matte surfaces of ABS and polyethylene and could be one of the major stimuli to their development for use in canoe hulls.

The ultimate choice of canoe materials and canoe shape is up to the customer, but maybe the foregoing analysis of the materials currently available in canoe hulls will be of help in analysing whether or not a particular canoe will meet your particular needs.

Temagami Children's Project

Roger Smith & Aidan McAuley

Most children of all ages enjoy canoeing, and adapt very quickly to the challenges of a wilderness canoe trip. Unfortunately, some children don't have the same opportunity to go camping. It's not really a question of money. On a total budget of \$5000 the Project provided 41 kids and 19 of their adult counsellors with authentic wilderness trips from four to seven days in length. The question, or at least the reservation in people's minds had always been, "could they handle the challenge?"

Could they ever! We discovered more than a few very able young trippers — girls and boys — who had never been in a canoe before this year. Better still, everybody who participated found those inner resources that we all need to complete our first long trip successfully.

We feel that the T.C.P. is one idea whose time has come and we are approaching the Ontario government for funding. We want to provide more extensive service to the families of our participating children, partly through a family camping programme. We also see the merit of a year-round programme, and we hope to offer some longer, more challenging white water trips in 1978.

We couldn't have done it without the willing co-operation of Camp Wanapitell, or the enthusiastic assistance of Jerry Hojce, and we gained considerably from the support of a number of our fellow members. Dave Auger led one of our trips to the summit of Maple Mountain. Almost a dozen others accompanied various trips as adult counsellors.

On behalf of the kids who canoed with us, we thank you.





rivière dumoine

Story & Photos: Cam Salsbury

La Rivière Dumoine, flowing south into the Ottawa River west of Pembroke, is considered by many to be one of the finest easily accessible white-water tripping rivers in the area. Thus it was that, in a mood of heightened anticipation, we converged on the small settlement of Rapides-des-Joachims for our flight in. The weather was beautiful: sunny, not too warm, and with enough breeze to keep away the bugs of late July.

Unfortunately the weather of the previous day had not been as obliging and our pilot was now facing a large back-log of flights. "I can get you in tonight, but I can't bring your canoes until tomorrow", was his best offer. After considering the merits of a night in the Quebec forest on Lac Laforge against the pleasures of another night in civilization, we accepted. Thus we found ourselves on a beautiful island campsite at the top of the river, admiring the sunset and anticipating the joys of the coming days.

Bright and early we were awakened by the roar of the Beaver bringing in our first canoe. In a couple of hours we were ready to go, and when our third boat arrived we set off. By this time it was obvious that the reputation of this area was well known. We had already seen two groups depart, and were beginning to wonder about this "wilderness".

About 5 km down the lake we came to our first portage, around a crashing cascade in a narrow part of the lake. Another 5 km brought us down past the end of the lake, through a couple of easy fast-water sections to our first major obstruction. Here, about a 1.5 km series of very fast rapids was taken in a single carry. At this point we overtook the first of our neighbours. From here the river runs on in a series of rapids and calm stretches with the odd falls thrown in, and we thoroughly enjoyed the variety, setting up camp just past Little Steel Rapids about four in the afternoon. By this time we had the river to ourselves and enjoyed a leisurely evening lying about the camp, talking, and exploring the high ground along the river behind camp.

The next day brought us through gradually gentler terrain until by late afternoon we found ourselves searching for a campsite along a swampy bank. We eventually took a second-choice site near a rapid because of the hour.

On the third day the weather was still sunny and pleasant, and mid-morning brought us to Grande Chute. Here the river crashes over falls and through a narrow canyon for close to 2 km. If only we had travelled on to here the night before!



It was mid-afternoon before we left this scenic spot, after using up several rolls of film on the spectacle that some members of the group felt rivalled the famed Thunderhouse Falls on the Missinaibi. The speed of the river seemed to pick up from here on with lots of runnable rapids, and we found a good site early, on the edge of a small waterfall.

That night we had our first rain, but morning dawned dry, if a little cloudy. We enjoyed a beautiful view of the river from the top of a 150 m hill shortly past this site. One easy run and a short portage brought us out to the Ottawa River at Holden Lake which we crossed to retrieve our cars.

We had enjoyed a perfect four days on the river which lives up to its reputation in every way; with the possible exception of the fact that its very popularity and accessibility may be removing it from the "wilderness" category.

magnetewan river

Mary Jo Cullen

Our 3-day trip on the lower Magnetewan, which runs into Georgian Bay north of Parry Sound, required more than the usual amount of pre-trip organization. After setting out on a cloudy, windy day from Wahwashkesh Lake (which we had been warned can get quite rough), our three canoes passed through small white caps to the river and our rendezvous point above Canal Rapids where we met our fourth canoe, which had just done the upper part and was now joining us for the long week-end.

The mile long Canal Rapids is perhaps the most scenic part of a particularly scenic river. Here it flows through a narrow canyon about 15 ft. high, all of which we ran despite extremely low water.

One canoe had arranged to leave the group on the second morning, and we reluctantly said good-bye to them as they prepared to track their canoe back through the canyon to Wahwashkesh Lake.

The rest of us continued down the river and spent the second night beside a crooked chute about

1/2 mile below Snye Rapids. It was a beautiful site with smooth pink pre-Cambrian rock sloping gently down to the dancing rapid. But obviously for the men, the main charm of the spot was the rapid. They couldn't stay away from it - running it over and over again, trying to avoid a very powerful eddy that insisted on tipping the canoes!

The next morning they awoke with a new plan of attack. Perhaps it was inspired by the beautiful moonlight that had flooded the camp as we went to bed the night before, or perhaps by that incredible bear story told as we sat around drinking coffee - reluctant to leave such a beautiful setting and go to bed. Whatever it was, next morning they found that the secret of that rapid was to lean out and brace the canoe and take a sharp turn into the eddy. It worked.

On our last day, we reached Highway 69 in the late afternoon, just as the rain clouds arrived. After a 3-hour car shuffle, one of the canoes continued down the river to Georgian Bay and south along the coast to a cottage at Pointe au Baril, realizing a long-time desire to "paddle all the way home" from a WCA trip.

anson's creek and tim river - almost

Glenn Davy

I suppose the idea of running any exploratory or white-water trip in early summer or late spring is an "iffy" idea at best, owing to declining water levels. This was the case on both of my first two trips as a leader.

On the first of these trips, Anson's Creek in Haliburton, the water level had been quite satisfactory up until about two weeks prior to the trip when it dropped drastically, to the point where we had to change the location. We decided upon the French River as the alternate. Even here the water levels were considerably lower than normal; however, to me, the trip was a big success. We had an excellent group of three canoes, some rapids in the upper portion of the river and much good natured fun despite Saturday's rain.

Leaving from Wolseley Bay, we took the southerly route missing Big Pine and Little Pine Rapids which had too little water coming over them to run.

We camped by Blue Chute on Saturday night. Sunday we made our way lazily through the remaining rapids and camped in a beautiful location about 6 miles east of highway 69. That day we had fine weather, although a good headwind did tire us out toward the end. Monday we again took our time and finished the trip at noon on a hot and hazy day. All in all, everyone seemed to enjoy both the trip and the rugged scenery.

The Tim River was another trip that had to be changed at the last minute due to very low water conditions. We stayed in the same general area, however, doing a lake loop out of Rain Lake, to Islet Lake (where we camped), down through a series of lakes to McCraney Lake, and up to Rain Lake again. The trip covered 10 miles, and included 7 portages.

Although there were one or two small problems on the portages, the trip went very well, with good weather and typically beautiful Algonquin scenery.

two madawaska trips

Glenn Spence

Again this summer we had a very successful trip on the Madawaska. Most people arrived Friday night which enabled us to do some extra canoeing down to Griffith on Saturday. This section is not overly challenging, but still provides pleasant paddling.

On Sunday our six canoes tackled Snake Rapids. It is certainly amazing how one can travel the same river numerous times, but find it different each trip due to changing water levels. This year was the lowest that I have ever seen it. This meant that we were able to run a couple of new rapids.

It is certainly gratifying to me to see our basic WCA philosophy of travelling and learning in small groups paying off. On this trip I had canoeed with everyone except one person before. This meant that we had a very cohesive and knowledgeable group which showed good judgement, and ran all the rapids successfully. This proves to me that you do not need to have mass registrations in courses certified by goodness-knows-who in order to improve your canoeing skills.

Our group certainly enjoyed canoeing Snake Rapids, and hope that nothing will ever be done to change or destroy this area.

Norm Coombe

In August of a dry season the deservedly popular Madawaska still came up with enough water for us to run all the runnable rapids.

Two cars arrived late on the Friday night, and met the third at Palmer Rapids the next morning, along with the usual mob, including another unofficial WCA trip. After the car shuttle, we set off to Griffith.

Although Friday had been quite wet, the trip itself was gorgeous, with fine weather and few bugs. All three canoes ran the rapids successfully, except Sandra and I, who dumped in a short right angled chute that we were running empty. We named it "Tricky Dick" after a famous American president. The river was very busy, and we watched 5 canoes in another group all dump in the same chute. However, with the guidance of the trip-leader Finn Hansen, we carried up and made another run, successfully this time.

Finn and Mary Jo Cullen had made a special trip to scout the run prior to the trip, and it paid off in good timing, knowledge of many alternate campsites, and a trip that went well and had plenty of time to enjoy the river.



Come out with us and enjoy the beauty of the woods in fall, or make that one last canoe trip before freeze-up! Our fall schedule offers a variety of hiking and canoeing trips for members with any level of experience. As always we have tried to keep the trips small and informal. If you are interested in any trip, please call the organizer for full details at least two, but not more than four, weeks before the trip. This gives everyone a fair chance to participate.

Also, please remember that the trip organizers are not paid professionals, but fellow members volunteering their time to help put a trip together. On all trips, each participant is responsible for his/her own transportation, equipment, and safety. If you have transportation and equipment but no partner, or if you have no facilities, do not hesitate to call the trip organizer. He will attempt to match you up with a suitable person from among others contacting him. Good luck!!

October 15 - 16: Madawaska River

Organizer: Roger Smith (416) 534-0600
Assistant: Stewart McIlwraith (416) 698-1519

Last chance this year to try the Madawaska. Plenty of whitewater and rugged scenery. Limit of 4 canoes. (Please contact the assistant organizer.)

November 19: Burnt River

Organizer: Dave Auger (705) 324-9359

Last WCA outing before putting the canoe away for the season. A novice run on the Burnt River below Kinmount. Plan for sunny but cool trip! Limit of 6 canoes.

October 16: Upper Credit River

Organizer: Jim Greenacre (416) 759-0057

The Credit River below Cheltenham offers pleasant rural scenery, and some tricky rapids if the water is high. A good day trip for beginners or better. Limit of 6 canoes.

October 1 - 2: Moon Falls

Organizer: Jerry Hodge (416) 449-9212

A trip down the Moon River and along the scenic Georgian Bay coast. Several portages along the route, and the possibility of strong winds on the Bay make it suitable for intermediates or better. Limit of 4 canoes.

October 22 - 23: Black Lake Loop

Organizer: Glenn Davy (416) 621-9037

A 22 km canoe trip through a chain of lakes south of Orset. This route is also good for cross-country skiing in the winter, this is a chance to explore it in the fall. Rated for novices, although there are several portages, the longest just under 1.5 km. Limit of 5 canoes.

October 1 - 2: Western Uplands Trail

Organizer: Ken Brailsford (416) 691-2358

A chance to enjoy the fall colours while backpacking the Western Uplands trail in Algonquin. The route involves a number of steep sections, and possibly some bushwhacking, making it a good trip for backpackers with some experience. Limit of 6 people.

October 29 - 30: Ottawa River

Organizer: Cam & France Salisbury (416) 445-9017

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 retraces the voyageurs' route of 200 years ago. A good family trip suitable for novices or better. Limit 4 canoes.

October 8 - 10: Wild Cat Route

Organizer: Glenn Davy (416) 621-9037

A 40 km canoe trip through scenic lakes (Kawagana, Wildcat, Havelock) in the Haliburton Highlands for the long Thanksgiving weekend. Rated for intermediates chiefly because of some strenuous portages. Limit of 4 canoes.

November 5 - 6: Robertson to Cypress Lake

Organizer: Glenn Davy (416) 621-9037

A backpacking trip along one of the most scenic stretches of the Bruce Trail. This 22 km route includes some rugged and rocky terrain along the coast of Georgian Bay. Limit of 6 people.

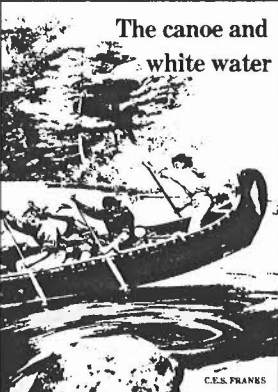
October 8 - 10: Killarney Wilderness

Organizer: Barry Brown (416) 823-1079

A three-day canoe-bushpack trip to explore a section of the two billion year old La Cloche Mountains in Killarney on the long weekend. From George Lake we will canoe into Killarney Lake, cache our canoes and backpack about 6 km to the top of a quartzite ridge 125m above the lake. Here, beside a small remote lake, we will set up camp for two nights and spend one full day exploring the ridge along a portion of the Silver Peak Trail. Limit of 8 people.



THE CANOE AND WHITE WATER



The canoe and white water

By C.E.S. Franks
(University of Toronto Press, 1977, 237 pp., \$7.95 paper.)

Reviewed by:
Jamie Benidickson

As W.L. Morton once remarked, canoeing "is the one mode of travel which still unites the traveller, the medium by which he travels and the country he travels by." In many ways, Franks' new book is a development of this theme and as a result of his efforts to integrate commentary on several aspects of canoeing in Canada - historical and intellectual, practical and environmental - The Canoe and White Water has a lot to tell us about this country. The book is not intended to be a primer or beginner's handbook. It deals mainly with open canoes, but occasional references to covered canoes and kayaks may be found.

Franks' treatment of the canoe's traditional role in the fur trade relies heavily on the available literature, and is valuable primarily as a backdrop for subsequent discussion of more recent developments in Canadian canoeing which were influenced at several points by European personalities and events. Interesting transatlantic anecdotes such as the story of John MacGregor and A Thousand Miles in the Rob Roy Canoe on Twenty Rivers and Lakes of Europe highlight thoughtful reflections on the often awkward process of transmitting the Indians' white water skills across cultural barriers at an early stage and then through succeeding generations of Euro-Canadians. Canadians lost contact with their frontier hinterland and its traditions for a variety of social and economic reasons. Through urbanization and increasing affluence, for example, interest in white water canoeing had largely disappeared in this country by the middle of this century and the post World War II resurgence owes a good deal to European enthusiasts, especially in the areas of kayaking and white water weekending.

Recreational wilderness travel or canoe-camping, on the other hand, had only begun to emerge as a popular pastime around the turn of the century, and it is not yet possible to measure and assess its development. Men like Eric Morse have provided some general indications about the

development of recreational wilderness canoeing based on their own wide range of observation and experience. (See, for example, "Recreational canoeing: its history and its hazards" in Canadian Geographical Journal, August/September, 1977.) However, a final evaluation of the growth of canoeing as a twentieth century sport in Canada will not be accomplished for some time.

Franks is critical of the overly cautious approach to white water (abstinence) and canoe travel generally adopted by many organized camps. And while there is some justice in his comments, there are also more reasons than he suggests for public apprehension. Leonidas Hubbard, editor of Outing magazine, Tom Thompson and John Hornby gave Canadians prominent wilderness deaths, not necessarily resulting from white water, but associated with canoeing nonetheless.

Technical and practical aspects of canoeing, including both white water strokes and reading white water are dealt with in The Canoe and White Water. The brief discussion of about a dozen paddling strokes provides a good overview, but there are moments when the presentation becomes a bit basic for a book not intended to be a primer and assumes that the reader will already be familiar with the fundamentals: "The draw stroke is used to pull the canoe towards the paddle. It moves the canoe sideways." In contrast, however, the analysis of river tactics and judgment is very informative and full of good sense. The author explains the dynamics of white water, the relationship between speed and depth and obstacles, and comments on the problems of maximizing manoeuvrability and safety on the river. The grading of rivers and paddlers as well as the issues of leadership and risk all come under discussion. There is also useful, though occasionally idiosyncratic, advice on trip planning and preparation, equipment and route selection.

The concluding chapter, "The Canoeist and the River" echoes and develops earlier references to the legal and environmental dimensions of canoeing and leads to the author's final reflections on the conflict of social and personal values and priorities surrounding contemporary attitudes to nature. After a brief review of the law as it affects those who use Canada's waterways for recreational travel, Franks touches on selected aspects of river pollution and its causes. Although neither comprehensive nor authoritative, these sections make several important points that are not always fully appreciated in canoeing circles.

Limited use was made of Canadian literary images of white water such as the Gillingham ride in Harwood's White Eskimo, and many readers will wish that some of Franks' comments had been more fully developed. However, The Canoe and White Water is a good book for this winter's reading. Most of us could either learn from or cheerfully argue with nearly any page.



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