

the wilderness canoeist

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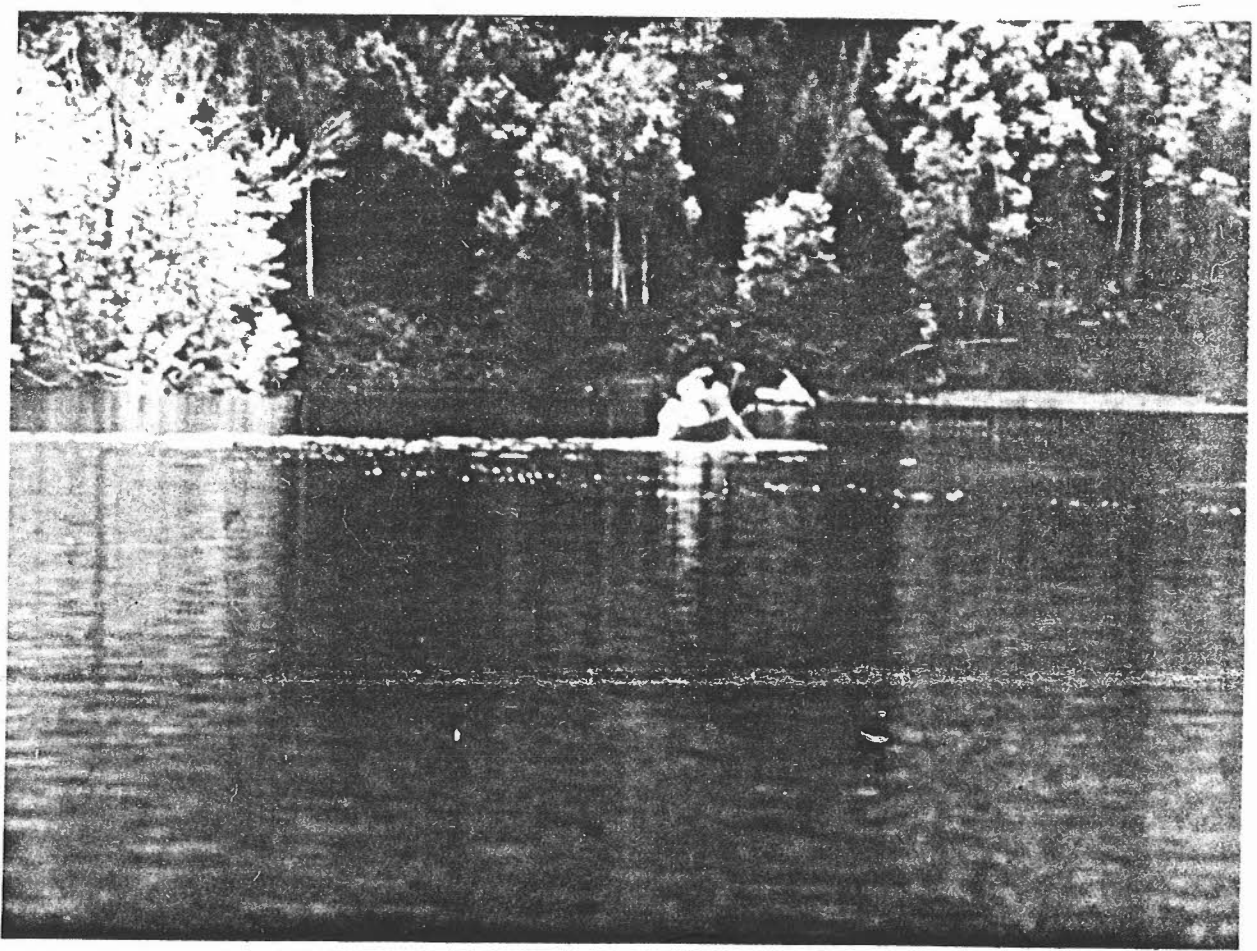


Photo: Yu Jin Pak

Spanish River

Story: King Baker

Eric Morse, I do hope you will let me break my promise to you. Surely you'll agree that writing about the Spanish River is now in the best interest of the river.

But of course that's getting ahead of myself, for the beginning of this story starts not on the river but in a plane going over the Rockies, with the sun dazzling on the Spring snow. On the other side of the aisle was Eric Morse, so I wandered over to talk - enticed by the hope of good conversation, and certainly not unhappy to note a flask of Scotch. Hunkering down after accepting his offer of fluid, managing to lose the bottle cap, and stealing some ice from the stewardess, we talked of canoeing. A hard-to-be-beaten combination - magnificent scenery and Canada's senior canoeist. Where tripping canoeists are concerned, Eric has set the standards through personal example.

The conversation ranged widely, but at one point I said that I was having trouble deciding

on a river to paddle that summer. He, of course, was full of suggestions from his vast repertoire but when I suggested that I was also broke and had only a couple of weeks he sat and thought for a moment and then said yes, he knew of an unspoiled river with easy access, untrampled landscape that he had just run. He compared it to his vast recollections and proclaimed it one of the best. Running the nearly continuous but easy rapids he said his legs got tired standing up at the head of each rapid, looking for the route, kneeling to run it, then standing up again to scout the next rapid. (Some of the children's camps with their kneeling only rule should take note of the expert's technique.) Yes, he said there was a jewel of a river still flowing freely, but he hardly wanted it advertised; in fact, he apologized but said he couldn't tell me.

Now you must remember the bottle cap was lost and after all, evaporation sets in at high altitudes, so the conversation continued. The problem

Spanish River



was well known to both of us. Certainly I have had a hand in ruining at least one area by advertising it. Yet, this area might also have been bought up by a developer, so it's debatable which is worse. Certainly the Missinaibi will lose much of its prestige, beauty and haunting loneliness when the hords of canoeists find out about it from the Sierra Club campaign to save it. The only hope is to teach canoeists "No Trace" camping; to instill in them a respect for their fellows, as well as the river. There is no doubt each year brings an improvement in people's care of the environment. But unfortunately the slob can still cause irretrievable damage.

Well, after several hours of conversation, Eric said it was the Spanish. This article would never have been written if I had not been invited to a meeting by INCO personnel explaining why it was essential that the Spanish be destroyed to help them with peak loads of their electrical needs.

That settled it - I talked Don Bent, his son Jim, and Dennis Barry into running the river. We gathered the maps, set the date, and started paddling. Well nearly - first we had to go to Bisco. Dennis knew the logging roads so we rattled the pickup across the Eddy forest roads. Now we had two canoes and four people at the top and had to get the truck down to Lake Agnew, west of Sudbury. My truck - so I got the privilege of driving out, down to Sudbury and across to Lake Agnew. Leaving the truck, I hitchhiked back to Sudbury; three rides and a local bus. From there I took the train north to Bisco. Don picked me up at one o'clock in the morning and paddled me out to the island campsite on Lake Biscotasing. While I had wandered around in the 30° plus heat, Dennis had eaten and picked blueberries, and Don had visited the local people, learning tales of Grey Owl who lived there for a spell until being run out of town.

Then a spell of flatwater paddling to the dam at the top of the river. Here true to form we fished, swam and ate. It's only fair to tell you we seldom work hard at canoeing. Don't tell anyone, but leisurely mornings and long evenings are the rule unless there is real need. After all, why rush past what you came to enjoy? The section we ran was only 160 km and we had lots of time. Dennis and I had to go bird watching, though I think Dennis turned into a cloud watcher on the trip. He took roll after roll of photographs of beautiful cloud formations.

The river has high cliffs on either side in spots and the wind turbulence made fantastic patterns. The curly rapids were the most challenging. Boulder gardens, with complex routes and precision required. A rapid would go around a bend into a canoe destroying drop just to keep you alert. That suited me for I hate portage signs and highways of muddy paths. Save money on signs and portage cutting and make people learn to read a map. I had taken a 300 mm telephoto lens for rapid shots, so at one point I

talked Don and Jim into potaging back across the trail so I could get more slides. We ran a very technical set then had lunch.

Right after lunch we were lethargic and both canoes made a very poor run. My canoe bears witness to a rock that attacked it. On a river, carelessness is not forgiven.

In spots the river would be calm and there were rapids mixed with long lakes, but the scenery was rugged and the time paddling never boring. The lower we got on the river the more numerous the rapids became, but now they tended to be gravel rapids with easy routes. One day we spent most of our time in rapids of this sort.

The fishing was poor with only a few pickerel but it was probably the hot weather, although at the Elbow we saw a man fly fishing for speckled trout and we saw some rises in this area.

The rounded stones tend to be black along the shore because of staining, and against the grey sky made a memorable picture. We passed under the railway and past abandoned sawmills and even a railway station, but still the river swept us south. Most of our river trips are north and the sun in our faces caused us some problems with lip blisters and sunburn.

Ravens wheeled against the stately march of the wooded cliffs on either side as we dropped through one rapid after another.

We had a day of rain and two violent thunderstorms which sent us to shore once and tried to blow our tents apart one night.

One rainy morning nothing would do but Don had to make a fire and cook bacon in a downpour. The usual cook lay in bed until the last minute. That day we paddled in rain, only stopping when the raindrops came down so heavily that we couldn't read the water to run the rapids.

The Graveyard rapids below the Elbow turned out to be a beautiful set of short drops with easy liftovers.

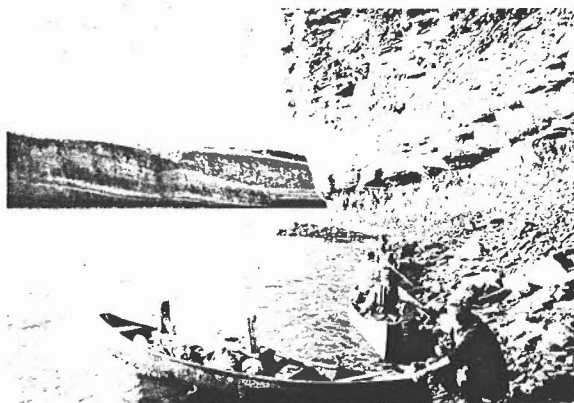
The very best part of the river is the lower section that INCO wants to destroy with dams. This river may well be the best in north-central Ontario. It has an accessible 160 km of river travel with little public intrusion, few portages, and mainly easy, but in spots continuous rapids.

INCO's proposal would create new access routes and create flat lakes where the rapids now are. If ever a river deserved to live, this one does!

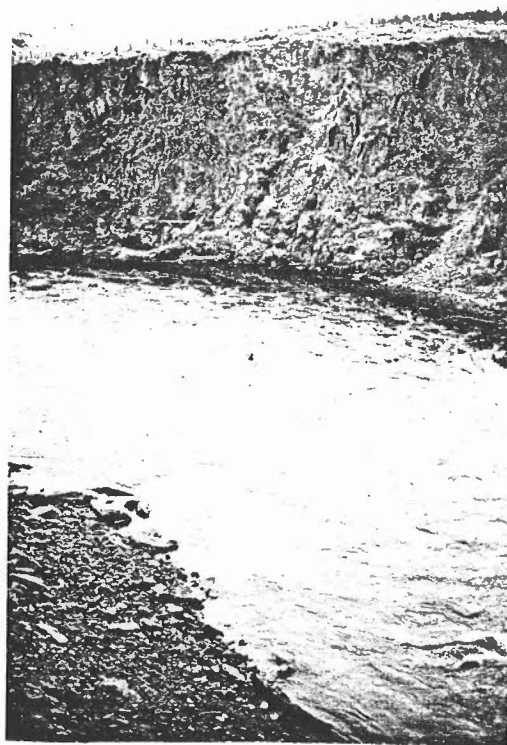
Now, don't get ideas about my honour. Yes you can still trust me with your secrets, for you see I talked to Eric Morse before I allowed this to be printed. He agrees that it is better to have canoeists love the river to death than have it crucified forever by dams.

Following Franklin

This past summer John Fallis followed Franklin's route down the Coppermine River. The river has changed little in the last 150 years as the following excerpts from John Franklin's journal of 1821 and John Fallis' photographs of 1977 indicate.



July 15, 1821: "The river in this part flows between high sand stone cliffs, reddish slate clay rocks and is full of shoals and dangerous rapids."



Photos:

John Fallis

July 10, 1821: At eleven we came to a rapid which had been the theme of discourse with the Indians. The river is confined between perpendicular cliffs resembling stone walls varying in height from 80 to 150 feet. The canoes after discharging part of their cargoes ran through the defile without sustaining any injury."

July 5, 1821: "Most of the trees had put forth their leaves and several flowers ornamented the moss covered ground; many of the ...summer birds were observed in the woods."

July 8, 1821: "We picked up a deer which the hunters had shot and killed another from the canoe."





EDITORIAL

THE QUALITY OF WCA TRIPS

It has happened to most of us. We return from a wilderness canoe trip to be greeted with the question: "How many times did you dump?" The question implies a belief that wilderness canoeing is a very chancy activity where mishaps are the norm. Dumps, swampings and battered canoes are normal and expected occurrences. It is only "good luck" if one avoids them.

When the question, and the idea of canoeing that it implies, comes from a non-canoeing friend it can be brushed off as ignorance of what wilderness canoeing is all about. But when it comes from another canoeist it is downright insulting; and if the person is a member of the W.C.A. it is a cause for concern.

In the past year or so, a number of active and long-time members of the association have noticed a rather disturbing casual attitude toward wilderness canoe trips creeping into the club. It comes not only from being asked "how many times they dumped", but from off-hand comments made about some trips, the tone of some trip reports submitted to the newsletter and observations of the attitudes and actions displayed on club trips.

The W.C.A. has a good record for running safe, environmentally sound, and enjoyable trips. However, there is a very real concern that this will not continue to be the case if people approach wilderness canoe trips as a "lark" where dumpings and the like are a matter of routine.

In December, the Outings Committee and the Executive instituted some new policies to try to ensure the continued quality of W.C.A. trips. Meetings will be held for trip organizers to ensure that everyone is aware of what is expected on W.C.A. trips. Organizers and participants will be asked to fill out a "Mishap Report" whenever a dumping or other potentially

dangerous situation occurs on a trip. All organizers will be asked to schedule trips carefully, to describe them adequately in the newsletter, to take care not to under-rate the difficulty level, and to screen potential participants who may over-rate their abilities to handle a trip.

However, no measures taken by the Outings Committee or the organizers can guarantee safe and enjoyable wilderness trips. The quality of our trips really depends upon the attitudes and actions of each and every one of us who participates.

Wilderness canoeing offers us many opportunities - an escape from the mind-numbing routines and restrictions of urban life, solitude, the aesthetic appreciation of the grandeur and beauty of unspoiled nature, spiritual renewal, the natural high that comes when canoeists, canoe and current blend and move as one - but only if we approach it with the proper attitude. To make any trip a meaningful wilderness experience we must approach it in a serious, thoughtful and respectful way.

The unthinking, devil-may-care, "gee-whiz-we-came-out-alive" approach - what Bruce Rogers called the macho approach - may be exciting, but has no place in the wilderness, and certainly not in a group that calls itself the WILDERNESS Canoe Association. It is not only dangerous and destructive, but misses the whole point of wilderness canoeing - the wilderness experience.

We are all responsible not only for our safety on W.C.A. trips, but for the quality of the experience for ourselves and others. And it is the attitude with which we approach each trip that will ensure both safety and quality of experience. We all must consider seriously why we are making wilderness trips and guide ourselves accordingly if W.C.A. trips are to continue to be safe and enjoyable wilderness experiences.

news briefs

W.C.A. AT SPORTSMEN'S SHOW

We will be participating in the 1978 Sportsmen's Show in Toronto. The show runs for 10 days from Friday, March 17 until Sunday, March 26.

The W.C.A. booth will need to be manned and volunteers are required.

The shifts are:

Weekdays:	noon	-	5:30 p.m.
	5:30 p.m.	-	11:00 p.m.
Saturdays:	10:00 a.m.	-	2:00 p.m.
	2:00 p.m.	-	6:30 p.m.
	6:30 p.m.	-	11:00 p.m.
Sundays:	noon	-	5:00 p.m.
	5:00 p.m.	-	9:00 p.m.

Volunteers to man the booth should contact Jim Greenacre by telephone (416) 759-9956, or mail 34 Bergen Rd., Scarborough, Ontario, M1P 1R9, stating the days and times when they will be available.

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE

Our next issue will be coming out in early June. Anyone with articles, poetry, trip reports, or photographs to submit should send them to the editor no later than May 12.

FINAL REMINDER!

All members are reminded that their 1977 W.C.A. memberships have expired. This will be the last newsletter you receive unless you renew your membership now!

VOYAGEUR 300 CANOE RACE

The Rainbow Country Travel Association is planning to run a 7 day 300 km canoe race in mid-July. The route will be from Dokis Indian Reserve on Lake Nipissing down the north channel of the French River to Georgian Bay, through the three inland lakes of Manitoulin Island (Manitou, Mindemoya and Kagawong), along the north channel of Lake Huron to the finish point at Gore Bay. The Manitoulin portion of the race will involve extensive and special events in the towns of Little Current, Shenguiandah, Manitowaning, Mindemoya, Kagawong and Gore Bay.

Participants from Canada, the U.S., Europe and New Zealand are expected.

Anyone interested in participating can obtain detailed information by writing:

Voyageur 300
c/o Rainbow Country Travel Assoc.,
1769 Regent Street, S.,
Sudbury, Ontario,
P3B 3Z7

Fellow members,

It has often been said that the human being has a strong instinct for self-preservation. Perhaps this is true within a short time span, but self-destruction is where we are headed on a global scale. Our technology has found ways to postpone the date of this destruction, but there can be no escape from something as inevitable as the collapse of our environment.

Perhaps you need reminding, so here are a few pertinent examples. The Great Lakes are continuing to deteriorate at steady rate, despite a signed international treaty to clean them up by 1981. The United Nations has warned that the Mediterranean Sea will become a dead body of water by 2025 at the latest. Fossil fuel supplies will be depleted at some point in the 21st century, apparently leaving nuclear power as the major source of electricity. This will put pressure on governments to increase coal combustion, a process which will accelerate the increase of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. The present rate of increase is approaching 1% per annum, an alarming statistic that foreshadows radical changes in the world's climate.

The destruction of the environment has been well-documented, but there has been almost no organized effort to reverse the process. It is true that the environment has become a fashionable political concern, but there are few politicians who have attempted to follow a systematic policy of environmental protection. This is not because politicians are particularly stupid or insensitive, but rather, it is because the electorate doesn't care enough to make it a feasible political programme.

The general policy of our society has been inconsistent on the vital issue of environmental protection. There have been a few interventions on behalf of specific groups, but very few examples of initiative or alternative planning.

Despite all of the enthusiastic talk about solar heating and wind power, no large corporations or levels of government have been active in developing these systems. As a result, only 20 Canadian homes are presently solar-heated, with no major improvement around the corner.

The problem, hard as it may be to admit to ourselves, is that we can't find the necessary initiative to develop alternatives now, before we have no options available. Clearly, this is a time for individuals to act, in the hope that society will begin to make effective decisions to protect the environment.

At the present time, I am personally considering three possible courses of action. These are not meant to represent official policies of the W.C.A., but I do hope that other members will take similar initiatives. The three options for political activity on behalf of the environment are:

- 1) the formation of an independent political party, whose major objective is to decentralize technology, and work for a better quality of life.
- 2) intervention in the present political structure to achieve similar goals as above, and
- 3) organizing a campaign of public education about environmental issues

In my discussions with friends and acquaintances, I have discovered a widespread pessimism about our ability to make any headway against the technological society and its mindless expansion. I move that we at least make the effort.

Roger Smith

BRIEFS...

WHITEWATER TRAINING COURSES

For the third year Algonquin Waterways will be running whitewater training courses especially for W.C.A. members at reduced prices. The dates for this year's courses are Mon. June 19 - Wed. June 21 and Mon. June 26 - Wed. June 28.

These courses have been very successful in the past and interested members should contact Algonquin Waterways at 416-469-1727 for full details.

NORTHERN ONTARIO CANOE TRIP

John Cross is looking for people interested in canoeing a little-known Northern Ontario river. Known to some Indians as a canoe route in the 1880's, it has probably never been canoed by whites. However, if Reed Paper were to go ahead with its northern expansion (rumoured to be unlikely, fortunately), it would quickly lose its wild character. It will not be an easy trip and previous experience is needed. Anyone interested should contact John in Toronto at (416) 654-9805.

YOUTH ENCOURAGEMENT FUND

This fund was established last year to encourage our young student members to participate in major wilderness trips and to improve their skills by attending available courses. The Y.E.F. Committee has already received a number of contributions for 1978, but needs more help if it is to repeat its successful work of last year.

Any members who are interested in helping with this significant W.C.A. programme are encouraged to send contributions to the treasurer. Cheques should be payable to the Wilderness Canoe Association, and should indicate that the money is for the Youth Encouragement Fund.

MISSINAIBI REVISITED

George Lusté will be presenting a slide show depicting two aspects of the Missinaibi - the unspoiled natural beauty of the river and the threat to it through misuse and pollution. It should be a show of interest to all wilderness canoeists.

The show will be held Wednesday, March 29 at 8:00 p.m. in Room N401 of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education building, 252 Bloor St. West in Toronto.

CANOE-A-THON

Temagami Wilderness Camping (formerly the Temagami Children's Project) is planning to hold a canoe-a-thon on the Credit River on Sunday, April 2, in conjunction with the W.C.A. Participants will be sponsored for the distance covered. Proceeds from the event will be used to support the work of Temagami Wilderness Camping and the Youth Encouragement Fund of the W.C.A.

Members interested in helping out these worthwhile projects can assist in one of two ways: either by canoeing approximately 25 km on the Upper Credit, or by sponsoring one of the participating canoe teams.

Anyone interested in assisting in the venture can obtain full details from Penny O'Brien at the Temagami Wilderness Camping office at (416) 630-3183 (during the day) or from Roger Smith at (416) 635-6689 (evenings).

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.

CANOE ONTARIO ANNUAL

Canoe Ontario has published its first Canoe Ontario Annual. It contains articles of interest to all canoeists, including ones on canoe tripping, river reading, history, environmental concerns, competitive canoeing, etc. It will also list outfitters and canoe manufacturers in Ontario.

Proceeds from the sale of this magazine will be used to support Canoe Ontario's work on environmental projects, competitions and other programmes for canoeists.

The magazine will be ready by mid-March and can be purchased by sending \$2.00 to Canoe Ontario, 559 Jarvis St., Toronto, Ontario M4Y 2J1.

GOOLAK BACKWOODS CO-OP IS HERE

An experienced and dedicated group of canoeists, X-C skiers and climbers, fed up with the inflated prices of camping equipment in eastern Canada have begun a major co-op to service this area. Reports thus far have been pretty exciting.

The co-op is located near Renfrew (R.R. 2 Douglas, Ontario, K0J 1S0) and will be operating mainly by mail. Don Kaffirson, who was formerly the technical manager for the Canadian and Colorado Outward Bound Schools, is the man at the centre of the group, and brings to the co-op the technical knowledge and high professional standards of the Outward Bound Schools.

The Goolak catalogue will be out in March and rumours are that it will be carrying the best of backpacking, canoeing and climbing gear, comparable to if not better than the lines carried by the better known stores, while being underpriced by some 20-30%. The membership is \$5, and the co-op is now soliciting memberships. For more information or a membership form please contact Yujin Pak at (416) 531-0713.

SIXTH ANNUAL DON RIVER DAY

This annual outing will be held on Saturday April 15 starting at 10:30 a.m., and all canoeists in the Metro Toronto area are invited to bring their families and join in the event. It is a semi-serious canoeing venture, and a serious effort to raise awareness about the Don River and its ravine landscape. For full details please call George Luste at (416) 534-9313.

UN VOYAGE EN CANOT AU QUEBEC - BILINGUE

Gord Fenwick et Glenn Spence projettent de faire un voyage en canot de deux semaines parcourant 400km, au Québec, vers la fin de juillet. La route commencera près du lac Mistassini et se continuera sur une piste non brisée, dans un terrain raboteux, pour aboutir à une rivière se jetant dans le lac St-Jean.

Cette rivière comprend plusieurs sections de rapides difficiles et ceci demandera, de la part de tous et chacun, une habileté considérable, de l'expérience et beaucoup de jugement.

L'importance de ce voyage en canot est le désir d'avoir des participants francophones et anglophones. Ceci donnera à chacun l'opportunité de partager la langue, la culture et tout spécialement notre héritage commun, la forêt.

Ceux qui sont intéressés à faire parti de ce groupe, doivent s'adresser à Gord (416) 431-3343 ou à Glenn (416) 355-3506, pour plus d'information.

UPPER MISSINAIBI TRIP

Stew Gendron and Bill Kipkie are planning an 8 day, 250 km trip on the historic upper Missinaibi River from Missinaibi Provincial Park to Mattice. The trip offers excellent whitewater and beautiful scenery.

They would like 3 canoes for the trip, and the dates are flexible, either July or September depending upon the response. Anyone interested should contact Stew (705) 692-9261 or Bill (416) 822-6514 for further details.

PUKASKWA RIVER TRIP

A group of canoeists planning a mid-May trip down the Pukaskwa River (west) would like trip reports, information regarding hazards, fishing and points of entry from other members who have canoed this river. The group has tentatively planned a 6 day trip to begin at Widgeon Lake and end at the mouth. Any information would be greatly appreciated. Call Wayne Wallace in Burlington (416) 634-3183.

equipment

JOYS OF A TUMPLINE

John Cross

One of the results of the mass of new ultra-lightweight equipment flooding the market has been causing us to lose touch with the equipment and techniques of the past, even when they are superior to our own. Tradition-minded authors like Calvin Rutstrum still extol the virtues of the tumpline; northern Indians still use it; but it is rare to find a recreational canoeist who has ever seen one. Lately, it seems, the tumpline has been undergoing a revival, and two sizes were on sale in Eddie Bauer's in Toronto. However, most canoeists still erroneously believe a "tump-line" to be the buckled-on headstrap on Woods canoe packs, and regard it as a means of occasionally relieving the weight on the shoulder straps.

In fact, the large loads of the voyageurs, and the season's supplies of trappers, were usually carried by a head-band alone, without any shoulder straps. My own packing tumpline, custom made by a luggage shop, consists of two four-metre straps from either end of a broad one-metre triple layer crown. The straps can be tied around a load of any shape. It is possible by this means (given a little training and acclimatization for the neck) to carry much greater loads than would be possible with shoulder or hip-carry systems.

Despite all the manufacturers claims that their particular frames enable you to carry heavier loads more comfortably, it must be remembered that frames are designed for backpacking, in which the load should rarely exceed eighteen kilograms. Colin Fletcher says his heaviest pack weighed twenty-seven kilograms (including a water tank) during his Grand Canyon trip. A backpacker cannot carry much more if he wishes his walking to last all day and be a pleasure. He also would like to keep his head up and view the scenery as he goes.

A canoe tripper spends most of his time on the water; for the relatively short portion of the trip on land, he may plod along, eyes on the path, with a much larger load. (He can view the scenery on the return trip for the canoe.) While a frame pack may hold the gear for a short canoe trip, a long trip requires several fully-loaded canoe packs, each of which usually weighs at least twenty-five kilograms, and possibly forty kilograms. To reduce the time spent trekking back and forth it is desirable to combine two or more of these loads in one trip. I doubt if many WCA-ers could manage "more", but some who try it may be surprised to find that they can handle loads in excess of seventy kilograms without undue fatigue (though I would suggest conditioning for the first part of the trip with a single pack).

When I'm alone I load like this: one of the packs is stood up on the bow seat (or a higher rock or stump, if one is available) and the wannigan box on the junction of centre thwart and gunwale (assuming the canoe is drawn up on shore). I crouch, back up against the wannigan, place the tumpline over my head, and roll forward, bringing the weight onto my back and head. I then waddle to the bow seat, kneel down like a Muslim at prayer (face to earth) and with one hand, topple the canoe pack onto the back of my head, neck and wannigan, adjust it and rise.

At least one hand is needed through most of the portage to steady the load; minute adjustments to the position of the tump require both hands and careful

attention to strain on the neck. I find the ideal position for the head band to be at the rear of the centre-skull saddle.

While two packs are probably the maximum practical for most of us, professional portageurs carry immense loads of ninety to one hundred eighty kilograms in this manner. Paul Provencher's book *The Last of the Coureurs du Bois* contains some striking photos; also, he describes a method of carrying two injured men simultaneously by tumpline.

The tumpline is useful for odd loads as well as large ones. The advantages to Indians carrying sacks of beans and tubs of lard is obvious; for recreational trippers it is the handiest method of carrying

Tumpline....

wannigan boxes. Cal Rutstrum points out that there is really no purpose in stuffing and unstuffing bulky items like sleeping bags, tents and the like into and out of packsacks every night. He rolls tent, sleeping bag and mattress all up together in one bundle and can then either tie a tumpline around it, or perch it on top of another load being carried by the tumpline. (His tent has a non-sewn in floor which can be used to waterproof the whole bundle.

I have found that, finally, the tumpline or headstrap is easier to use than shoulder straps, even for a single canoe pack. There is no more dangling the pack by one twisting (ripping?) strap, groping

for the other one, struggling to get them both up the shoulder, straining the straps, rucking your sleeve up to your shoulder, untwisting the straps,.... just a simple bend-and-straighten in the headstrap of the pack, already propped up on the canoe or log. If you like have your lifejacket on.

The tumpline is also a valuable addition to the list of canoe-carrying shifts and contrivances. Of course, everyone must choose his own favourite method; I cannot manage the fampack-and-canoe double carry described in Ruge and Davidson's book, though this method has the advantage of saving a trip across. For those who pack the canoe alone, there are advantages in rigging a tumpline to the centre thwart. I use the familiar lashed paddle yoke and run the tumpline over the

top of my head, under the paddle blades and across to be tied on the outer ends of the centre thwart. (For this the two metre strap plus headband plus two metre strap tumpline sold by Eddie Bauer is adequate.) Weight can be continually shifted from the shoulders and forearms to the head and neck by a slight tilt of the canoe. It is more restful on long carries than a yoke and is the preferred method of the Montagnais Indians described in Provencher's books.

WCA-ers setting out on long trips would do well to consider the possibilities of applying these techniques; they might begin practicing on short trips simply by making more use of canoe pack headstraps, and if they find the method suits their muscle and bone frames, try to extend it to larger loads with full-size tumps.

the other wilderness I remember

Ed O'Connor

In between canoe trips, home is here beside Lake Ontario and is not always peaceful and quiet. Even as I write this I can hear the waves pounding the shore and see them leaping into the air. Sometimes the sound of waves and the cries of circling gulls starts my thoughts back in time, and the wind strumming the steel rails of the balcony becomes the sound of the sea wind strumming the steel guy wires and plucking at the halyards. The hiss of water on sand as the waves retreat is much like the sound of the sea pouring across the focs'l, above my head, as I hung suspended in a cramped hammock. It was here it all started - in wilderness without a tree in sight - in the north Atlantic.

I was in the Navy in those days, and before I'd turned 21 I had some twenty Atlantic crossings behind me, in all seasons and weather. There was no comparison between this wilderness and the one most of us know in the north country - at least not one that many would recognize. Still, it was there.

Those without experience think of the sea as mile after mile of nothing but water - a boring nothingness. Boring? Tell that to any sailor or fisherman and you're apt to get an earfull about landlubbers, and with a colourful choice of words. The sea I knew was anything but boring - 15 m waves, gales and hurricanes. Or perhaps you're used to sailing through an ice flow with the hull of the ship screaming in agony, or in the shadow of a berg as high as the Toronto Dominion Centre. Even in its quieter moments the sea inspires the same awe you feel when looking out over endless miles of forest or at the infinity of stars on a clear night.

There was wildlife too, but it didn't run and hide from man as our forest creatures do. Only the much hunted seals seemed to want to avoid any contact with us, and if our ship approached too close to a berg dotted with seals, there was an immediate mass exodus to the sea with accompanying wild barking.

Not all the wildlife out there was welcome - like the sharks that followed the ship for days feeding on the garbage thrown overboard. I recall a 3 m Blue Shark that followed us for 4 days - until a school of dolphin came on the scene - and was given the name Sam by the crew. After his first look at Sam nothing could entice our cook to toss garbage over the stern, and a few of us earned an extra slab of pie doing it for him. Even an attempt to catch the shark did not deter his following us, but only succeeded in hospitalizing 5 of us with a few broken bones, rope burns, cuts and scrapes. If you've ever played crack-the-whip on skates and been the end person, you have an idea of what it was like for us on the end of that rope with Sam.

Something warned Sam of the approach of the dolphin long before they came into sight, and he was suddenly gone. I've learned since that it isn't rare for them to gang up on a shark, flashing in and using their heads like battering rams to finish him off. Watching them at play, they certainly did not look like they'd attack anything. They'd easily overtake our ship, skipping over the sea in line and looking like some great sea serpent - then suddenly break formation to play in our bow wave. For the better part of an hour they'd leap across our bow and back, and gave us as much pleasure as they were enjoying.

Whales too were always a welcome sight at sea, though we most often only saw their flumes of spray against the blue of sea and sky. Once, in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, we came on a group of half a dozen whales blowing and basking on the surface - bright sun flashing on their broad, sleek backs. Evidently we were seen and considered with some curiosity by the group. One detached himself and swam over within several hundred metres to look us over, being joined by our crew who came on deck to look him over. Beautiful and friendly monsters that man is destroying.

Our attention was drawn from the whales that day by the fact we were sailing into a wheat field and all that showed of the ship ahead of us, over waving wheat, was the funnel and superstructure. Mirage. Many people don't realize these are almost as common at sea as they are on the desert, and any sailor can tell you of seeing land where there is no land, cloud formations you'd swear were mountains, islands floating in mid-air. We even had our own form of tornado that was every bit as deadly - great twisting waterspouts hanging down from a black cloud cover to touch and explode the wave crests, or some unfortunate ship. One made brief contact with us one night and completely destroyed our lifeboat and boat davits, twisting 8 cm steel like a pretzel.

Those of you who travel the wild country by canoe know how it gets into your blood until you only exist from one trip to the next, when you can take up a paddle again and face the challenge of wilderness and whitewater. The sea's like that too. I've seen crews face 2 to 3 weeks at sea, under the toughest conditions, have 1 or 2 days of blowing steam ashore, then get the itch to be back out there. It's in our nature, like a disease, with the only cure being to get back to it again.

As for myself, I'm not sure I want to be cured. I still think of the sea with deep fondness - have even been called back to it several times - but I've since discovered the beauty of our northern wilderness. To know one of these worlds is all a person can ask for. To have experienced them both makes me a very fortunate person and I count my blessings.



POLAR GAS PIPELINE

The Canadian Association in Support of Native Peoples, the Canadian Nature Federation and Energy Probe have called for the immediate establishment of a full scale Berger-type Inquiry into the proposed Polar Gas Pipeline. This request follows the filing of the multi-billion dollar application to build a pipeline through the eastern arctic and northwestern Ontario to deliver high arctic gas to American and Canadian markets. The position was taken in support of Inuit and native organizations in the N.W.T., Manitoba and Ontario.

Explaining the joint statement, Terry Meagher, President of CASNP said, "The magnitude of the project demands that its potential social, environmental and economic impacts be examined thoroughly by an independent inquiry. It is absolutely vital that the people most affected by this pipeline be involved in this inquiry from the very beginning and have the opportunity to participate fully and effectively."

SAVE OUR STREAMS

Each year, hundreds of miles of Ontario's streams draw nearer and nearer to death. Habitat is lost through sheer ignorance and inconsiderate misuse of our waterways.

Save Our Streams is a new project being cooperatively carried out by the Canadian National Sportsmen's Show, the Federation of Ontario Naturalists and the Toronto Anglers' and Hunters' Association. It is aimed at getting wide-spread involvement in improving and protecting stream and river quality in Ontario. The idea centres on concerned people from clubs like the WCA adopting a stream and accepting responsibility for its rehabilitation.

Beginning this spring it is hoped that many groups will begin the four phase programme:

- 1) Assessment and Clean Up
- 2) Planting and Fencing
- 3) Construction of Habitat Enhancing Devices
- 4) Ongoing Surveillance and Maintenance.

Adoptive groups will be given as much technical assistance as they require, and workshops are being planned.

Any WCA members interested in participating in this effort to preserve our waterways should contact the Conservation Committee immediately.

ROAD THROUGH KILLARNEY PARK?

The Federation of Ontario Naturalists have informed us that MLA John Lane and some Killarney town residents have renewed pressure for construction of a roadway between Killarney and White Fish Falls through Killarney Provincial Park.

The controversy over this road is essentially the same one that prompted former Minister of Natural Resources Leo Bernier to shelve development of a park Master Plan in 1972. Since that time, the park has bobbed around like a ship without a course, suffering from severe overuse and damage to its fragile environment. The FON has asked Natural Resources Minister Frank Miller for a commitment that the plan will be provided immediately.

In regard to the specific road proposal, it is difficult to see how it could spell anything but disaster for the small Killarney Provincial Park. It would open up more access to an already over-used area.

The FON statement on the proposed road says: "Roadways of this kind have no place whatsoever in Ontario's provincial parks. This is especially the case with Killarney, a unique gem which derives much of its quality from its wilderness state and uninterrupted connection with Georgian Bay. These are qualities that would be permanently and seriously compromised by construction of a highway."

ONTARIO HYDRO'S MANDATE SHOULD BE CHANGED: CONSERVATION CRITICAL

Ontario should be divested of its responsibility for forecasting Ontario's future electricity needs and for settling electricity rates. The Government of Ontario should now take over these powers, according to a brief from the Conservation Council of Ontario to the Royal Commission on Electric Power Planning. Hydro's management might have to be reorganized and its mandate changed in order to do this.

The council feels that Ontario Hydro's policy of meeting all new demands for power is not realistic for the future and that Ontario's obsession with growth must give way to a conservative ethic. Only in a framework of Government energy policy, based primarily on conservative measures, can Ontario's wasteful use of electricity be curtailed. Ontario Hydro would then not need to expand to the degree it believes necessary.

The Nuclear Issue

The brief reflected the division of public opinion on the nuclear question and did not support a full moratorium on new nuclear plants. Opposition to nuclear expansion was countered by the idea that until conservation measures can have a real effect, some new nuclear generating plants will be required. Uranium and coal should be used in deference to oil and gas which have other, more important uses than generating electricity. But the council cautioned that the problems of environmental and health hazards associated with uranium and coal must be solved without delay. The Council is particularly worried about the storage of nuclear waste, a legacy we have no choice in facing.

Other Recommendations

1. New Hydro plants should be built where their waste heat can be used in district heating schemes, for example, so that garbage can be used as a fuel, and where transmission lines can be positioned to avoid, as much as possible, Ontario's best farmland and recreation and natural areas.
2. The Environmental Assessment Act must be applied strictly to Ontario Hydro operations and expansion without exception.
3. Ontario Hydro's research budget should be increased to allow it to develop new power generating methods, to improve efficiency of its existing plants, to incorporate renewable energy technologies and to reduce the pollution hazard of coal.
4. The Government of Ontario should give real and meaningful support to conservation measures through i) legislation, ii) monetary incentives, and iii) education. Rights to sunlight must be legislated.
5. New hydraulic sites should be surveyed, but Ontario's northern "wild rivers" must be avoided.
6. Public participation in future Ontario Hydro planning must be assured with funding and full disclosures of information.
7. Both the Ontario Energy Board and the Ontario Hydro Board should be expanded to include people with environmental experience.

The brief makes 26 recommendations in all directed to both Provincial Government and Ontario Hydro.

ATIKOKAN POWERPLANT IMMINENT

Despite protests from conservationists in both Canada and the United States for tighter pollution controls, Ontario Hydro will soon begin site clearing for its 800-megawatt, coal-fired generating station near Atikokan. The choice of this site is most unfortunate considering its proximity to Quetico Provincial Park and the Superior National Forest in Minnesota, established in 1909 to create an international sanctuary.

Both the Canadian Nature Federation and the U.S. National Parks and Conservation Association claim that Ontario Hydro has not properly analysed the impacts of sulphur dioxide emissions on air and water quality. Minnesota, with much more stringent restrictions on sulphur dioxide emissions than Ontario, has urged that Hydro install flue gas desulphurization equipment. Ontario Hydro claims this is not necessary, and will increase the construction costs.

Most of the argument has centred on the permissible sulphur dioxide levels. Largely ignored, however, is the issue of aggravating the serious acid rain problem in eastern Canada. Already fish and other aquatic life face gradual extinction while vegetation and some grades of soil are being damaged by increasing acidity of precipitation.

ONTARIO HERONRY INVENTORY: HELP REQUESTED

Do you know the location of a heronry? If so, the Ontario Heronry Inventory needs your help.

The Inventory is a new province-wide survey, launched as a joint project of the Long Point Bird Observatory, Canadian Wildlife Service (Ontario Region) and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. Its objective is to compile a catalogue of all known heronries in Ontario.

Heronries are the colonial breeding sites of herons. Many are traditional sites occupied year after year for as long as anyone can remember. In Ontario, heronries are made up primarily of Great Blue Herons, but there are some with Black crowned Night Herons, and Great Egrets may also be found.

As fish-eaters, herons are vulnerable to all the ills that pollution can cause, and are therefore good indicators of environmental change. Also, their habitat and traditional nest sites are often under pressure from man. It is important that we know where these sites are before they are threatened, and that we have the ability to assess changes in heron populations. The Heronry Inventory is designed to do this.

The Inventory depends on volunteers - naturalists, canoeists, fishermen, conservation officers, wildlife biologists and the general public - for information. If you know the location of a heronry in Ontario, please write and tell us where it is. We will send you forms requesting more details about the site, and if you are in a position to check the heronry in the 1978 breeding season, we will tell you how to do this with minimum disturbance to the birds. Even if the heronry's location is the only information you can contribute we will very much appreciate hearing from you, as it will help to make the Inventory as complete as possible. Don't assume that someone else has already reported your site. Heronry locations will be kept confidential, if you so request.

To report heronry locations and to obtain further information and data sheets please write to Philip Taylor, Heronry Inventory, c/o Long Point Observatory, P.O. Box 160, Port Rowan, Ontario NOE 1M0.

POLAR BEAR PARK PLAN

Last August, the Polar Bear Provincial Park Planning Proposal was released for public comment. Briefs were invited until December, and the Ministry of Natural Resources is now preparing a Master Plan. Since Polar Bear was the first provincial park classified as "primitive", I was curious to see what sort of proposals would emerge.

At the time the park was announced in 1970 some suspicions were voiced that it was chosen for its almost total lack of resources, so that the government could counter criticism of its "multiple-use" policy in Algonquin and Quetico without worrying about a loss to industry. Fortunately, intense public pressure has forced the government to classify Quetico, at least, as wilderness. In comparison, Polar Bear was bound to attract very little attention. Commercial timber, minerals, and hydroelectric power are non-existent; hunting, trapping, and guiding by the local natives are to continue as before. Most people of the canoeing-backpacking persuasion will probably not find Polar Bear very attractive: "the topography is ... unscenic", the weather, even in summer, is often chilly, and "possibly, there is nowhere else on earth where biting and sucking insects are more of a nuisance". Planning Polar Bear, therefore, must have seemed like a relaxing assignment: there was no need for anyone to search for a wording that would enable him to slip a commercial concession past environmentalist noses.

Since the principles were fairly non-controversial, the Planning Proposal practically wrote itself. The actual drafting seems to have been delegated to a second-string man, but, hopefully, a park Plan need not suffer from faults in the Plan-writing planning.

The park will be closed to commercial exploitation (traditional native activities excepted) and development outside the park which might affect the park should, it is urged (but not promised), be kept on a leash.

Mechanized vehicle use is restricted to motorized canoes, snowmobiles, and aircraft at the five Access Zones. (That sounds like a fair degree of unrestricted on motor use, but in fact, non-mechanized access is scarcely feasible, even for local natives.)

Access will be by permit only under a quota system.

"Environmental protection is given top priority."

In some places (particularly the Access Zones), campsites will be built. Four hiking trails will be built in suitable locations.

Certain Nature Reserve and Historical Zones will be open to "special interest groups" only. "The best canoeing possibilities should be inventoried to provide accurate canoe route descriptions"; however, "some rivers suitable for canoeing should purposely be left undocumented".

The Cree fishing camps at Brant and Sutton Rivers, and goose hunting camps at Sutton and Shagamu Rivers will continue operation. Natives of the nearby bands will be allowed to hunt and trap. The question of native hunting rights vs. environmental protection is not properly resolved in the Proposal: different statements imply contradictory priorities. A reply to a letter I sent on the subject to the Ministry implies that protection of the species will be the first concern. It is to be hoped that, should the polar bear population be threatened, the Winisk Cree can be persuaded that some present day profits should be foregone for the sake of future generations of animals and people. It is an argument which has not impressed, for example, Reed Paper, or the Russian whaling fleet.

The Regional Parks Coordinator wrote that response had been "sparse". He implied that, though the deadline was past, additional comments would be welcome, particularly if they "pose some hard questions and force our planners to reread and think carefully about some of the things which they have written". The Planning Proposal and the beautiful and much better-written Background Information booklet are available for \$3 from the Ontario Government Bookstore.

John Cross

ATIKAKI

About 1600 square kilometres of the Atikaki wilderness area in Ontario will be given park reserve status by the Ministry of Natural Resources. The Minister, Frank Miller, also promised an additional 800 square kilometre reserve north of Atikaki. River corridors will be reserved to provide access.

The Ontario Atikaki Council had asked that the entire 4300 square kilometre Ontario Atikaki wilderness be given park reserve status. Mr. Miller cited conflict with mining and logging interests as the reasons for designating only 2400 square kilometres of wilderness area.

Designation of the park reserve does not guarantee that a park will follow, but provides interim protection so that the park option will remain open.

ALGONQUIN PARK MASTER PLAN:

THE FIRST FIVE YEARS

(The following is a report on the Conservation Council of Ontario study of the first five years of the Algonquin Park Management Plan, by Tom Roach, a member of the study committee.)

In September 1976 the Conservation Council of Ontario set up a committee consisting of Pat Hardy, of the Algonquin Wildlands League, Dave Stewart and later Joe Baird of the Ontario Professional Foresters Association, Terry Green of the National and Provincial Parks Association, Bruce Hodgins of the Ontario Camping Association, and myself from the Wilderness Canoe Association, with Dick Howard of the Parks Council of Ontario as chairman and Clive Goodwin, Director of the Conservation Council of Ontario as secretary. It has taken us a year, meeting in committee once a month, to study the implementation of the Ontario Government's Master Plan for Algonquin Park, and produce a brief.

The Master Plan set up a "Forest Authority" which organised the progress of the extraction of forest products and management of the forests, divided up the Park into a number of use zones, laid out guidelines and plans for the use and/or development of the various recreation zones, set guidelines for the restriction of some activities and the banning of others, and curtailed the use of certain mechanized devices. The plan as a whole was to be reviewed at the end of its first five years. Thus the C.C.O. decided not to comment at the time of its inception, but rather to observe the effects of implementation and make a submission as part of the fifth year review.

As a committee then, our first concern was the degree of implementation of the regulations formulated by the master plan. It at once became obvious that the major weakness of the legislation enabling the plan was that all its regulations were not to be promulgated by the act, but by Order in Council. It was thus much to its sorrow that the committee found that while the Algonquin Forestry Authority had been quickly set up (and with it the boundaries of the use zones) by Order in Council, not much else had been accomplished. The regulations governing recreational activities had not been implemented, the ban on throw away containers had not been fully applied, and the use of outboard motors was only partly restricted. Our hoped-for review of the plan after a full five years of practice was thus thwarted. We did, however, consider it worthwhile to comment on the plan as it appeared to be developing into actual practice.

It soon became apparent to the committee that a major concern was the progress of park development. This was a term which covered a lot of ground. It included the creation of the "Madawaska Highway" (the adaptation of an old rail road bed to a circular drive around nature trail), the metamorphosis of highway 60 into a major east-west route, the creation of a car camping area at Achray, as well as better interpretation facilities and more interpretive aids along the sides of the highway. In these instances we feared that the park might be over interpreted,

and we felt that highway 60 should, if anything, be given a lower status with alternative east-west routes being developed. We also felt that interpretation should lean towards getting people out of their cars while recognizing the case for a display usable by those not so mobile.

We moved on to consider the plan's policy concerning a number of park features. We agreed with the current policy of phasing out cottages in the park and felt that a government policy concerning camps and lodges should be decided upon. The master plan calls for their eventual removal but no dates have been set, leaving operators in limbo. In cases where leases have run out, owners have been allowed to remain, operating without any legal agreement.

We were particularly distressed to note that the plan called for moving the Wildlife Research Station. We felt that the existing site was a good one and that the accumulated data was one of its greatest resources. Further, the new area was very small, in the middle of a heavy-use recreational zone, and without any buffer area around it. We felt that the continued use of our park areas for research was appropriate.

One of the plan's objectives which had been implemented, was the regulation of canoeing party size. We concluded that the issue appeared to be the number of people in an observable group, which is defined as the number using one campsite. However, the regulation was being circumvented very easily by large "mobs" simply by distributing themselves over a number of campsites resulting in even poorer supervision than before. Thus while the letter of the regulation was being observed, its spirit was being ignored.

Perhaps the most peculiar of the issues which we discussed were those surrounding the townships of Branton and Clyde which form the southern "panhandle" of the park and are its most recent addition. Snowmobiling, hunting, and the establishment of camps are all allowed and the fishing regulations are different from the rest of the preserve. We felt that if these two townships were separated from the main body of the park, then the implementation of the regulations for the remainder would be simplified.

When I look back over our meetings and review our report, I think there are two issues which stand out. The first is the issue of forest management. I quote our brief: "The Forestry Profession advocates managed forests, and its definition of management includes the objective of utilisation for at least some of the timber. ... management which does not permit the extraction of mature timber for commercial use is not considered adequate management." A lot of people disagree with this attitude of the forestry profession (c.f. Dennis Kuch, Agawa, the River and the Forest, *Ontario Naturalist*, 17, 4, Oct. 77, pp. 4-11, and A Discussion of Parks and Forest Policy in Ontario, Algonquin Wildlands League.) Before the advent of the forest industry, Ontario managed to keep itself nicely treed and nobody fought the forest fires! Since Algonquin Park is generally considered to consist of a number of self-supporting ecological units, I fail to comprehend why it has to be managed.

The second issue is what I call the "let's improve it" syndrome, and unfortunately, Algonquin Park seems to be suffering from this too. A typical scenario sees a given area in our remaining wilderness having a significant attribute being "protected". This means that shortly it will be visited and then publicised and then visited more often. The process quickly becomes self-defeating. In Algonquin there is continuous pressure to allow public access to the system of interior roads created by the lumbermen. The proposal for the development of the Barron Canyon area advocated vehicular access points off the Achray Road to observation posts on top of the canyon walls. The Madawaska Highway concept was aimed at providing a self-guiding interpretive "trail" for vehicular traffic. The whole problem with the "let's improve it" syndrome is that nothing can be let alone. It is a crime of major proportions that we, as a society, cannot refrain from tampering with the areas that we have set aside for, it is often said, future generations.

Tom Roach

Killarney in Winter



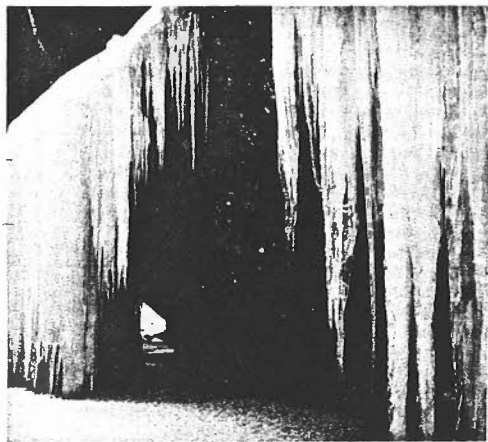
All true wisdom is only to be learned far from the dwellings of men, out in the great solitudes.

shaman Igjagurjuk
to Rasmussen



Photos: Sandy Richardson





Maps and Wilderness Canoeing

This text was written by Eric Morse who was among the pioneers of recreational canoeing in Canada's far north. He has been canoe tripping for nearly sixty years. Retracing by canoe the early fur-trade and explorers' routes, during vacations in the past twenty-five years he has paddled from Montreal to the mouth of the Mackenzie, from Hudson Bay to Alaska, and from Winnipeg to the Arctic Sea.

He is author of "Fur Trade Canoe Routes of Canada: Then and Now", and of various articles in magazines and journals.

Before starting out

For a long canoe trip in the north next summer, let's assume you have at least bought the map sheets covering the course. Don't let the maps just sit there, to be unrolled at the first campsite. There are at least two things that need to be done with your maps before trip-planning has gone too far: a *profile* and a *schedule*.

A young man in 1955 led a canoe party on Dr. J. B. Tyrrell's route down the Dubawnt River in the NWT. He never came back; his grave is under a rock pile at Baker Lake. The chief cause of the tragedy was that he had no schedule, and arctic autumn overtook him just after the end of August. In early September his canoe upset going over a drop when he "thought" he was coming to only a rapid. He was rescued, but the temperature was below freezing. On the Barren Lands there were only twigs for firewood. He died of exposure - at age 36.

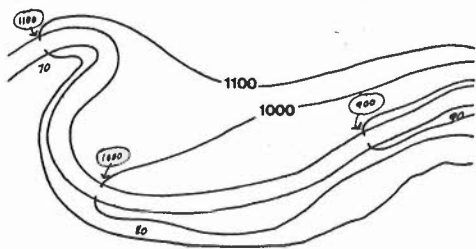
Making a profile

A profile has to come first because a schedule cannot be made without knowledge of the river's character; particularly its rapids, its number of portages, the size of its big lakes with risk of pin-down, and how many feet to the mile it is dropping or climbing. A profile tells nearly everything - even if the map has omitted a rapid.

The key is the contour.

Contours are the lines which wiggle and circle all over the land, never on a lake, linking all the points with a particular elevation above mean sea level. The altitude is shown here and there by numbers in the contour line. On the 1:250,000 maps, in areas of low relief generally associated with canoeing, the contour interval is 100 feet.

First, put on the map two rough pencil lines, half an inch or so apart, on both sides of your course (a line down the middle might blot out an important map feature). Then mark a small arrow at every point where a contour line crosses the river, marking the altitude in a small circle attached to the arrow. On the other side of the river, write in the cumulative trip mileage for every ten miles. A scanner is helpful for this: a small wheel with little points is rolled along the course on the map and registers on a dial how many miles it has "rolled". Or just use a piece of string. This is what a prepared map will look like when it is done.



The data for a profile are now available at a glance. For any section of the river, quick arithmetic will tell how many feet to the mile the river is dropping (in the example illustrated above, the river is dropping at about 200 feet in 20 miles or 10 feet to the mile). To the experienced canoeist this figure alone will summon up a picture of the river: whether placid, bouncy, white or boiling. Three or four feet drop to the mile is nice cruising; twenty feet is getting close to the limit of tolerance for an undecked, loaded canoe. A profile may help warn a canoeist against one of his greatest dangers, an unmarked rapid suddenly come upon around a bend. If the profile shows a drop of over three or four feet to the mile, even if the map shows no rapids, stay alert.

Another danger shown up by the contour lines is a canyon, where two or more contours run very close together along the river bank. Even if no actual obstruction is indicated on the map, a canyon needs to be scouted, for once committed the canoe usually cannot stop nor turn back.

Making a schedule

Now that you have studied the character of the river, how fast do you want to go? Do you need to cover miles in order to reach a certain landing strip for a scheduled flight out, thereby reducing the cost of chartering? Are you a fitness nut with a compulsive urge to establish a record? Or do you intend to photograph, to collect plants, to explore? A strong, expert party can average handily twenty or twenty-five miles a day, across the board, but the daily runs might vary between 10 and 40 miles, depending on wind, current and number of portages. On some rivers, like the Mackenzie, fifty or sixty miles a day is par. The 80 miles of the Great Bear River can be run in a single day. Going over the continent's spine, up the Rat from the Mackenzie delta, on the other hand, takes up to nine days travelling at only five miles a day. The schedule needs to be only approximate, simply showing where the party should have reached, say, every Wednesday and Sunday. Whether you propose to average five miles a day or twenty-five, detailed study of the map tells where to expect delay, where time can be made up. Having a schedule allows a party to know when to push, or when advantage can be taken of a nice day to camp early and fish or explore. Above all, a schedule gets you out on time.

Map symbols and wilderness canoeing

On each map sheet is a "legend" indicating what the symbols used in a certain map series mean. That is the standard legend for the series showing all symbols even if some are not used on a given map. For wilderness canoeists, three of these symbols don't relate to scenery but to survival: the symbols for a *rapid*, a *falls*, and a *portage*. It is important to remember that a river in spring flood may carry twenty or fifty times the volume it does at the end of a dry summer. The skill factor of the party has a bearing too. A single map could not possibly allow for all such variables, so it shows mean, or mid-summer water levels.

The two main types of obstruction are shown as follows:

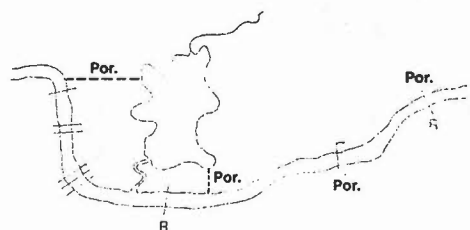
- a *rapid* - by a bar or series of bars sometimes marked "R" (or in a wide river, by groups of short dashes parallel with the flow);
- a *falls* - by a bar with points on each end pointing downstream (or in earlier maps, by a bar marked "F" or "Falls").

Marking a *portage* is something more complicated since: (a) there may be an old path or trail visible in an air photograph; (b) a portage path might have been taken over by lumbermen and diverted to a lumber road, or become overgrown since the map was made; (c) very high, or very low, water could make a difference in the length of the portage - or could affect the need to portage at all. Portage marking in the 1:250,000 series, as map sheets come to be revised, accordingly will be based on three principles:

1. A trail if visible in an air photo at the time the map was compiled has to be shown - but forest trails can get overgrown or change direction.
2. Where the correct side of the river for portaging is known, a portage symbol will appear; this symbol on earlier maps was "Por.", but as map sheets come to be revised, the "Por." will be replaced by a small silhouette of a man carrying a canoe.
3. A portage not on a river bank but between two different bodies of water will always show as a broken line.

A portage may be marked therefore by a symbol alone, by a symbol and path, or only the obstruction itself may be shown. The canoeist on a strange river should inspect from the shore - as the experts do - any rapid marked or making a noise, and should approach the portage with caution until a landing place is obvious. There are exceptions to these good rules, but they aren't safely explainable to a beginner.

The following illustration summarizes the marking of rapids, falls, and portages.



Other map symbols sometimes useful to wilderness canoeists' convenience, though not necessarily survival, are those for sandy, rocky or swampy areas. (See legend)

Barren lands maps

The Canadian Barren Lands, north of the tree line, is the area above all where accurate map-reading can be a matter of survival. Polar gales, ice-cold water, bugs, and the total absence of human habitation give no second chance. Everything above about map symbols applies equally to this area except that the *portage* symbol on future Barrens maps will not be shown at all – except between isolated bodies of water, or past canyons. Just the obstruction itself will appear. In the absence of trees, there is almost complete visibility over a portage; and also with permafrost near the surface and no trees, there is no sponge effect: the spring run-off is so fast that a portage landing could vary by half a mile in a fortnight. Or the portage could be made on either side of the river. In other words there is no set portage landing or path; usually there are caribou trails beside the river, and the caribou, of course, face the same terrain difficulties that affect man.

Another Barren Grounds characteristic is that with only nine or ten inches total precipitation in a year and the sharp spring run-off, the smaller creeks cannot be counted on to be navigable for more than a month, roughly between mid-June and mid-July, when the bigger lakes may still be locked in ice.

A further warning to the uninitiated regarding far northern maps: a Hudson's Bay Co. Post shown on the map doesn't necessarily mean a fully-stocked store and city lights. Don't count on finding more than basic supplies; a wider range can be assured by writing two or three months ahead and placing a firm order for pick up on a given date.

Making fullest use of maps in general navigating

In uninhabited wilderness, the party which cannot at any moment pinpoint its exact position on the map is the party that courts "adventure" (sometimes another word for disaster). Constant map contact is demanded. Be sure a map doesn't blow away. Having at least two navigators map-reading independently of each other – and preferably in different canoes – is important, for a lapse in a navigator's alertness can then be cross-checked and any difference of opinion resolved before the party has gone five or ten miles off course. What helps greatly is to keep selecting, a mile or two ahead, some easily recognizable feature such as a sharp bend or a creek-mouth, and estimating at what time it will be coming up. Map features such as a prominent hill, or a long vista between islands, or a line-up of points along a lake will often sort out a difficulty in navigation. Two other tricks in the navigator's trade are dead (for "deduced") reckoning, and observing oddities in vegetation. Dead reckoning is calculating the distance back to a known point simply by multiplying the rate of travel by elapsed time, and then applying the number of miles to the map. In rare instances, where the mainland may have become forested with poplar after a fire, an isolated patch of conifer may show up a group of islands which thus escaped the fire, and the map would show just where such a group lay. Sometimes too, on a day with broken cloud, the sun or shadow may suddenly chance to reveal a prominent gap or headland easily identifiable on the map. Above all, if you are temporarily "lost" or want to solve any problem as to where you are on the map, set the map out flat and *orient* it in such a way that some known feature is exactly in the line pointed to by the map. Once the map has been properly oriented, any other feature can be immediately identified simply by its direction.

Navigating in the far north

There is an item below on compass reading, but two far northern factors have a bearing on the use of compasses in that area: (1) the magnetic pole is so close as to seriously complicate compass reading; (2) at least to the west of Hudson Bay, it is sunny enough that the sun alone usually is sufficient for direction finding. Moreover, the sun that far north and in the canoeing season is above the horizon for twenty hours or more. Solar orienting requires simply extending one's ordinary awareness that the sun is south at noon to recognizing that at 6:00 p.m. it is due west; at 9:00 a.m. it is southeast; at 3:00 a.m. it is northeast, and so on. If you are paddling north of the Arctic Circle in mid-summer, the mid-night sun will be due north. On an east-west course, watches need to be kept adjusted to proper sun time for the longitude. Compasses in the far north are generally reserved for navigating in fog or smoke, or on a cloudy day. It is dangerous, however, to go any distance into the forest or to explore a portage away from the river without a compass in your pocket.

Far northern canoe navigators, in the low-relief country they are usually travelling through, find a useful landmark in an *esker*, a white ridge of sand and gravel (the piled-up detritus of a sub-glacial river) snaking across the land. Eskers are shown on the map and included in the legend.

1:250,000 scale for wilderness canoeing

The 1:250,000 scale, which is close to being 4-miles-to-the-inch, at present gives the only complete topographic coverage of all Canada. Especially as compared with the earlier, 8-miles-to-the-inch scale, it allows a detailed enough depiction of relief, drainage and other features needed by wilderness canoeists. While the 1:50,000 scale (about 1¼ inches to the mile) is much more detailed, its two disadvantages are that for a long trip it entails carrying a considerable weight of unnecessary paper, and the 1:50,000 scale does not yet cover all of Canada "north of sixty". The 1:250,000 scale is therefore the popular one with wilderness canoeists on a 400-600 mile trip.

Other scales and map forms available

Three other sometimes useful map forms are available to the canoeist: maps in the 1:50,000 scale mentioned above, the air photo, and the hydrographic chart.

As indicated above, for a *short* canoe trip of only 100 or 200 miles, the large-scale, 1:50,000 maps with their much greater legibility and twenty-five foot contour intervals may be preferable. However, the present lack of 1:50,000 scale maps in some northern areas is a handicap, to be overcome only at the inconvenience and added cost of taking certain air photos in lieu. The 1:50,000 sheets can be ordered at the same place as the 1:250,000 series, as indicated in the ordering instructions shown below.

After examination of the topographic maps for a trip, certain navigational problem-areas may be revealed: an obscure portage to be located, a course through a large archipelago, a section of river dropping fast with many rapids and falls, or canyons with rapids as on the lower Coppermine. Here it may be advisable to buy a few air photos, which come in fairly large scale. In ordering by mail it would be well to stress legibility for a canoe trip; ask for approximately a mile-to-the-inch scale and for a photo that is neither too dark nor too light. There is a 60% overlap in the photos, which offers reasonable choice.

If instead of a river trip – or as part of a river trip – you should elect to paddle on a Great Lake, such as the north shore of Lake Superior, Lake Huron or Georgian Bay, a hydrographic chart is better than a topographical map. Its advantages are its large scale, easy legibility and its very accurate detail of submerged shoals and rocks.

Homework

Preparation for a canoe trip can go on all winter and is a part of the trip that is fun in itself. This includes not only making the profile and schedule and examination of the air photos, spoken of earlier, but reading everything available published by those who have gone before: Geological Survey reports, explorers' journals, recent accounts by modern voyageurs – as available. The Topographical Survey concentrates on maps (though sometimes a particular historic portage may show a name, or a historical site will be shown by a historic-site symbol). The various Provinces concentrate on canoe course descriptions. The better of these sometimes give historical references, or even a short bibliography. Where the canoe course description lacks this information, the Provincial archives could be approached. Both National and Provincial Parks in Canada have preserved some of the choicest scenery and canoe country: they also offer generally easy and inexpensive access. Parks are where to begin getting the experience and expertise to equip oneself for canoeing in wild and isolated areas.

Wilderness canoeing ethics

Here we are not speaking of the more heavily-used sections of Parks, but about unspoiled wilderness. The northern wilderness can be preserved, if its travellers will continue to appreciate its extreme-fragility. In an earlier day, boys' and girls' camps were taught to make small runnels around the tents and to cut balsam or cedar boughs for beds; they sometimes cut down trees for "furniture". All these practices are now outdated. With today's traffic load, extreme care in garbage disposal and sanitary arrangements is more than ever necessary. A wilderness canoeist treasures the natural environment, and his aim is to leave as visible signs of his passing only his footprints and his fireplace – the latter well doused.

None of which has anything to do with maps – except that wilderness maps will become rather academic if the pressures now exerted on Parks ever come to be extended into the northern wilderness.

You can help other canoeists – and why

All the above about maps has assumed near perfection in the maps themselves, which as everyone who has used them knows is not the case. In the horizontal two dimensions Canadian maps are extraordinarily accurate. With modern automation and with highly sophisticated mapping machines now doing what people used to do, our maps have suffered mainly in the "third dimension" – many rapids and small falls having been left out. Such information was on earlier maps made from ground surveys, but when the bush pilot began moving supplies in the north, river transportation ceased to have the same importance. It is only in recent years that recreational canoeing has restored the need for strict accuracy of river maps. The seventies have seen a vast change and now, of course, recreational canoeists are paddling through nearly every corner of Canada. No one needs accurate maps more than does a canoeist on an unknown river in uninhabited country.

Accordingly, the Topographical Survey of Canada is launched on a program to restore our river maps to the accuracy they once had. Your help in this is needed. If you should have *positive* and *precise* information about a map error, please write to the Topographical Survey, 615 Booth Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0E9. In due course corrections will be made, either by reprinting a particular sheet or by overprinting.

Missinaibi Memories

Story & Photos: Toni & Ria Harting

The exceptionally low water level during our 260 km trip down the Missinaibi from Mattice to Moose River Crossing gave us lots of extra work. We spent many hours of the 21 river-days last August pulling and dragging our canoe over ledges, shoals and gravel, and maneuvering it through long rock-gardens and rapids, knowing that just a few weeks earlier the water level had been comfortably higher.

But all that being part of wilderness canoeing, we immensely enjoyed nearly every minute of this varied and relaxed trip down the Missinaibi, the Great River of the Native People. And it gave us even more respect for the toughness and craftsmanship of the Indians and later the fur traders who travelled these waters long before we outfitted ourselves with modern, strong, light-weight canoes and gear. It is amazing and a little sad that, although the modern tripper follows almost exactly the same route as the early travellers, only a few traces of these long gone river men are found along the centuries old trails.

Of all the picturesque places on the river, the Thunder House Falls complex undoubtedly offers the most magnificent spectacle, even at low water. The second of the three falls, the famous Eight Foot Gap, is indeed only about 2.5 m wide, and all the waters of the river boil through this narrow passage. But only when the level is really low; at higher levels the water spills over the surrounding rocks. Imagine the Spring break-up when the canyon is filled with a wild foaming mass of water, ice and tree trunks, when its incredible thundering voice can be heard for many kilometres.

As we were making the trip in the middle of the tourist season, we were quite prepared to see some fellow canoeists. But not the 137 people who raced down the river in all kinds of canoes, overtaking us because our tempo was so delightfully slow. And there must have been hundreds more we did not see because we spent a lot of time hiking and exploring away from the river. So, lovers of the lonely wilderness, the Missinaibi River in August is right out! And even July may be too crowded. It is not only the number of people that you see on such a trip, but also the incredible lack of preparation by many of them that is so astounding. The ultimate in mass-recreation stupidity was represented by a group of 28 people, most of whom were inexperienced in canoeing and camping, stuffed with all their gear in 11 canoes, banging from one rock to another and swamping at frequent intervals. No wonder



Jack Pine Island



Canoeist's paradise

they were always wet and tired, did not enjoy the trip at all, and were only interested in sleeping. Just imagine what their campsites looked like, especially down river where sites for even one tent are often hard to find. And what about the other parties we saw who were desperate because they did not know where they were, not having brought any maps, and sometimes suffering from insufficient food and clothing?

But fortunately there were also the others, the nature lovers who try to be part of the environment, who prefer a quiet paddle in the evening to a noisy beer party, and for whom Thunder House Falls merits more than a 10 second, one photograph stop. It was always a great joy to meet them.

It was a delightful trip and many highlights will remain in our memories: the three days at Thunder House Falls - the hundreds of enormous mushrooms bursting out of the ground at the Falls campsite after a few rainy days - the tiny squirrel swimming across the 40 m wide river - the strong smell of bear when we were on top of the sand hills north of Bull Moose Bay - the view from the sand hills - the little girl slogging for hours back and forth along the muddy, slippery, cold 4 km portage around Hell's Gate, carrying her part of the gear without one complaint - the three drying out days we spent at a great campsite after swamping in the easiest rapid of them all - the 9 sandhill cranes flying and landing in perfect formation - the mother otter with her baby on her back swimming and diving about the boat, chattering in their high-pitched voices - meeting Fred Neegan, a great canoeist and very interesting man - the chipmunk eating pudding from a spoon - and the sunset against a sky partially filled with black storm clouds at Jackpine Island.

Some years ago a climber reached the top of Conjuring House Rock and left there a bright blue nylon strap 3 m long and 25 mm wide used to rappel down the rockface. This highly conspicuous article was such a blemish on the Rock that the Hartings climbed the rockface and removed the strap then jumped into the water. The earliest reports of this strap known to the Hardings date from September 1976. They would appreciate any information that anyone can give them about who put the strap there and when. Call (416) 964-2495. (Ed.)



coon lake camping trip

As the strong winds and blowing snow of a storm that set record low barometer readings in southern Ontario withdrew, our group of seven headed north for a weekend of winter camping north of Peterborough.

The weather in the wake of the storm was cold and clear as we set off across the slush and snow covered surface of Coon Lake. Following the edge of a marshy river, we reached Egg Lake where we set up an early camp in the shelter of a small knoll.

Two of the group explored the area around the lake, while the rest of us set out with maps and compasses to follow a 10 km loop to the north. The going was fairly easy as we traversed open hilly country and lakes, only occasionally encountering thick brush. We returned to camp tired and exhilarated with the fading light of evening.

Sunday we headed out along a summer canoe route. The scenery was beautiful: tumbling rapids and swift moving streams cutting through the undulating blanket of white, broken only by the tracks of wolves and rabbits.

It was a weekend without the heat of fires, but one that left us with a warm feeling inside.

Story & Photos: Gord Fenwick



black lake trip

Glenn Davy

Frosty was the word to describe the beginning of our winter weekend in the snow of Haliburton; a chilly -30°C when we started. But organizer Finn Hansen had ordered up some perfect weather: a lot of sun, some snow and perfect travelling conditions.

Our first day took us across Wren Lake, down the Black River, into Black Lake for lunch, then a little bushwhacking into two un-named lakes lying side by side with an elevation difference of about 12 m. We set up camp early on the upper lake, leaving the skiers plenty of time to practice on the "kamikaze" hill (my own description, being the only snowshoer in the group) between the two lakes, while I photographed them in case their next of kin wanted the details. After exploring

some of the surrounding country, dinner was served and finished by nightfall. We gazed at the stars filling the clear sky until the chill set in and we went to bed.

Sunday brought a gentle snowfall, and after a very comfortable night we were eager to hit the trail again. This day brought heavier bushwhacking giving Sandy Richardson a chance to try out his now splinted ski pole (after breaking it on "kamikaze" hill the day before). It seemed to work fine, but he mentioned feeling slightly lop-sided. We had only a couple of minor problems on our trip out; a slight problem with a pack and a minor but infuriating problem of my snowshoes not going exactly where I wanted them to. (Who said snowshoes are better than skis???) It was a good day's travel, however, with interesting terrain and beautiful ice formations along the creek we followed. All in all a very enjoyable trip.



Again this spring we are offering a wide variety of canoeing and other wilderness experiences from which, it is hoped, everyone can select something to his taste. We have tried to keep trips small and informal in order to enhance the wilderness experience as well as for safety reasons. Spring seems to be the most popular season for outings, and so we would again ask each participant to call the organizer of his trip not more than four and not less than two weeks ahead of time as indicated in the trip descriptions below. We hope this will give everyone involved a fair chance to get on the trip of his choice and the organizer time to make his arrangements.

Our trip guidelines, safety rules, and river rating system are included again this year in the spring issue, and everyone is asked to read these carefully before participating in an outing. Also, please remember that the trip organizers are not paid professionals, but fellow members volunteering their time to help put a trip together, and that each participant is responsible for his own transportation, equipment, and safety. (Trip leaders will, however, endeavor to match up people who may be missing either equipment or transportation.)

We sincerely hope that all of you will have a safe and enjoyable season of canoeing and wilderness experience.

April 2 HUMBER RIVER

organizer: Norm Coombe 416-751-2812 or 293-8036
book between March 5 and March 13

This trip in Metro Toronto is suitable for novices but not for beginners. The run is a pleasant piece of fast-flowing water in spring conditions and it is intended to choose a section appropriate to the level of ability of participants and water conditions at the time. Limit 6 canoes.

April 8 NOTTAWASAGA RIVER

organizer: Glenn & Debbie Davy 416-621-9037
book between March 11 and March 25

This is an easy 25 km run in the Barrie area. If you are just beginning to undertake river canoeing this is a good place to learn. Limit 6 canoes.

April 9 UPPER CREDIT RIVER

organizer: Barry Brown 416-823-1079
book between March 12 and March 26

This will be a one-day trip in the area immediately to the north-west of Metro Toronto. It is suitable for novices with basic canoeing experience who would like to run some rapids and fast water. Limit 6 canoes.

April 16 SALMON RIVER

organizer: Glenn Spence 416-355-3506
assistant: Sandy Richardson 416-429-3944
book between March 19 and April 2

This run between Belleville and Napanee is becoming an annual event in the WCA. It provides experienced canoeists with a chance to warm up for the season and the not-so-experienced canoeists with a chance to perfect their technique. Suitable for the novice with a year or two of experience as well as the better canoeist, the river is an almost continual stretch of rapids which can be quite heavy in high water. (This trip will be divided into small groups for safety.) Limit 8 canoes.

April 16 UPPER CREDIT RIVER

organizer: Jim Greenacre 416-759-9956
book between March 19 and April 2

Another chance to enjoy the scenic Credit and run a few rapids. For novices or better. Limit 6 canoes.

April 22 MAITLAND RIVER

organizer: Sandy Richardson 416-429-3944
book between March 25 and April 8

A white-water trip through the limestone gorge of the lower Maitland near Goderich. In high water this stretch can be very wild - spray covers recommended. Experienced canoeists. Limit 4 canoes.

April 23 GRAND RIVER

organizer: Herb Pohl 416-637-7632
book between March 26 and April 9

Just north of Kitchener, the Grand is a fast flowing river at this time of year with enough ripples to make it interesting. Suitable for novices with some experience. Limit 6 canoes.

April 28-30 MAGNETAWAN RIVER

organizer: Bill Kipkie 416-822-6514
book between March 30 and April 14

This will be a three-day trip in the area north of Parry Sound down the Magnetawan River from Wahwashkesh Lake to highway 69. Plenty of white water for experienced canoeists. Limit 4 canoes.

April 29-30 BEAVER CREEK

organizer: Gord Fenwick 416-431-3343
book between April 1 and April 15

This river runs south towards Marmora through mainly wilderness area. The chosen date will put the trip at a time of high water causing many difficult rapids. The trip includes overnight camping and is for experienced canoeists and campers. Limit 4 canoes.

April 29-30 OXTONGUE RIVER

organizer: Herb Pohl 416-637-7632
book between April 1 and April 15

This river, flowing out of the south-west corner of Algonquin Park, has a few short rapids runnable at this time of year but for the most part meanders through the countryside. Suitable for novices or better. Limit 4 canoes.

May 6-7 SAUGEEN RIVER

organizer: Norm Coombe 416-751-2812 or 293-8036
book between April 8 and April 22

This weekend spent in the area north of Owen Sound will actually consist of two one-day trips. Saturday we plan to travel from Walkerton to Paisley where overnight camping can be arranged. Sunday we will finish the run to Lake Huron. Participants may come for either day or both. Suitable for novices. Limit 6 canoes.

May 6 MISSISSAUGUA RIVER

organizer: Don Bent 705-799-5673
book between April 8 and April 22

An exciting white-water trip for experienced canoeists in the area north of Peterborough. Appropriate craft are recommended, especially for those planning to make a weekend of it. (See next trip.) Limit 6 canoes.

May 7 UPPER EELS CREEK

organizer: King Baker 416-987-4608
book between April 9 and April 23

Also north of Peterborough, this includes the wild upper portion of the creek, from Long Lake to Haultain. Suitable for experienced canoeists with suitable craft. Limit 6 canoes.

NOTE: For paddlers wishing to attend both of the above trips camping is available near Burleigh Falls, close to both rivers. Contact King Baker.

May 13-14 MADAWASKA RIVER

organizer: Roger Smith 416-635-6689
book between April 15 and April 29

An exciting whitewater run on the upper Madawaska River near the southern border of Algonquin Park. As this is a scouting trip for the organizer, it is rated for experienced whitewater canoeists only. Limit 4 canoes.

May 13-14 MOON RIVER

organizer: Glenn Davy 416-621-9037
assistant: Jerry Hodge 416-449-9212
book between April 15 and April 29

In the Gravenhurst area, this trip will run from Bala to Healey Lake including plenty of good scenery and some nice white-water. Suitable for intermediates. Limit 4 canoes.

May 20-22 KILLARNEY WILDERNESS TRIP

organizer: Barry Brown 416-823-1079
book between April 22 and May 6

This will be a three-day canoe-backpacking trip to explore a section of the La Cloche Mountains in this rugged wilderness area. Depending on the group it will be: (a) canoe from George Lake to Killarney Lake, cache canoes and backpack 6 km to the top and along a quartzite ridge to Little Superior Lake where we will set up a two-day camp with the second day open for exploration of individual interests, or (b) an exploratory trip up the Mahzenazing River to Johnny Lake and north to Clearsilver Lake where a base camp will be set up in position for a hiking trip to the top of 600 m Silver Peak the following day. Suitable for intermediates. Limit 8 people.

May 20-22 PETAWAWA RIVER

organizers: George Luste 416-534-9313
Roger Smith 416-635-6689
book between April 22 and May 6

This three-day trip is being run in conjunction with the Sierra Club in the north-east part of Algonquin Park. It offers challenging rapids, beautiful scenery, and quiet lakes. Suitable for intermediates or better. Two or three groups may be created in order to maintain a sense of solitude.

May 20-22 MADAWASKA & OPEONGO RIVERS

organizer: Gord Fenwick 416-431-3343
book between April 22 and May 6

On Saturday and Sunday we will travel from Latchford to Griffith (south-east of Algonquin Park) along a stretch of the Madawaska River soon slated to be a Wild River Park. On Monday we will travel a 35 km section of heavy rapids on the Opeongo River (in the Park). Due to the fact that this is a time of heavy spring run-off and that it is a scouting trip for the organizer, it must be rated for experienced canoeists. Limit 4 canoes.

May 27-28, SKOOTAMATA RIVER

organizers: Cam & France Salsbury 416-445-9017
book between April 29 and May 13

This river north of Tweed, was very popular when it was last run by the W.C.A. two years ago. It offers many challenging rapids, broken by calm stretches, as it winds its way through beautiful shield country. Intermediate canoeists. Limit 4 canoes.

June 3-4 BURNT RIVER

organizer: Dave Auger 705-324-9359
book between May 6 and May 20

We plan to paddle the stretch from Kinmount to the village of Burnt River north of Lindsay. The river flows through scenic country and has a few runnable rapids and some short portages. Suitable for novices. Limit 4 canoes.

June 3-4 BACKPACKING TRIP

organizer: Barry Brown 416-823-1079
*book between April 29 and May 13

This will be a demanding two-day trip with the location to be determined by participants response. Call early so that we can plan together an exciting trip. Intermediate. Limit 8 people.

June 10-11 AMABLE DU FOND RIVER

organizer: Sandy Richardson 416-429-3944
assistant: Cam Salsbury 416-445-9017
book between May 13 and May 27

A challenging trip down the Amable du Fond River north of Algonquin Park. This 40 km trip includes a scenic gorge and falls, long rapids, and many portages. Experienced canoeists. Limit 4 canoes.

June 10-11 MUSQUASH RIVER

organizers: Glenn & Debbie Davy 416-621-9037
book between May 13 and May 27

Flowing from the power dam below Bala to Go Home Lake, the Lower Muskoka offers a combination of rivers and lakes with few portages. Suitable for novices. Limit 4 canoes.

June 17-18 ALGONQUIN CANOE TRIP

organizers: Glenn & Debbie Davy 416-621-9037
book between May 20 and June 3

This will be a simple flat-water canoe trip for those with some portaging experience. The exact area in the Park is not yet decided. Suitable for novices. Limit 4 canoes.

June 17-18 MADAWASKA RIVER

organizer: Stewart McIlraith 416-698-1519
assistant: Sandy Bruchovsky 416-534-8100 or 362-6092
book between May 20 and June 3

Another chance to run the famous Snake Rapids and admire the beautiful Madawaska hills! This run will cover the traditional stretch (for the W.C.A.) from Latchford to Griffith. Suitable for intermediates or better. Limit 4 canoes.

July 1-3 MADAWASKA RIVER

organizer: Norm Coombe 416-751-2812 or 293-8036
book between June 3 and June 17

Another run on the traditional Madawaska. However this one will be much more relaxed than most WCA trips, with plenty of time to re-run rapids, fish, photograph, swim, etc. We will take three days to cover a run normally taken in two days. Suitable for intermediates. Limit 4 canoes.

guidelines for wca trips

1. Trip information will be circulated in the newsletter prior to WCA trips.
2. All trips must have a minimum impact on the environment. To ensure this, trips organizers will limit:
 - a) the number of canoes (or participants) permitted on the trip,
 - b) the type of equipment and supplies used for camping.
3. Participants must register with the organizer at least two weeks (but not more than four) prior to the trip. This is necessary:
 - a) for participants to get detailed information about meeting places, times, changes of plan etc. (It is suggested that organizers send out written information),
 - b) to avoid having too large a group,
 - c) to screen participants as to skill, if necessary.
4. Food, transportation, canoes, camping equipment, partners, etc. are the responsibility of each participant. (In some cases, however, the organizers may be able to assist in these areas; particularly the pairing of partners.)
5. Participants are responsible for their own-safety at all times, and must sign a waiver from. (Organizers should return completed waivers to the Outings Committee to be kept on file.)
6. Organizers reserve the right to:
 - a) exclude participants based on experience level,
 - b) determine paddlers' positions in canoes by experience,
 - c) exclude any canoe deemed "unsafe" for any particular trip.
7. In the event of any dumping or other potentially dangerous situation occurring on a trip, the organizer and participants involved will fill out a Mishap Report to be sent to the Outings Committee, immediately after the trip.
8. Lone paddlers and / or Kayaks are permitted on trips at the discretion of the organizer.
9. Non-members are permitted to participate in only two trips.
10. Organizers should write a brief description of the trip (or arrange to have this done) and send it to the newsletter editor as soon as possible after the trip.

trip ratings

In order to avoid confusion over the level of difficulty of WCA canoe trips each newsletter description will state the level of experience required. The following international river rating system, advocated by the Canadian White Water Affiliation, should serve as a guide.

<u>CLASS</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>MINIMUM EXPERIENCE REQUIRED</u>
	<u>Very Easy</u> : moving water with no rapids, some small riffles, and wide passages.	Beginner (with some instruction)
I	<u>Easy</u> : some small rapids with small waves and few obstacles. Correct courses easy to recognize. River speed is less than hard backpaddling speed.	Novice (beginner with some practice)
II	<u>Medium</u> : frequent but unobstructed rapids. Passages easy to recognize. River speed occasionally exceeds hard backpaddling speed.	Intermediate
III	<u>Difficult</u> : numerous rapids, large waves, and many obstacles requiring precise manoeuvring. Courses not easy to recognize. Current speed usually less than forward paddling speed. General limit for open canoes.	Experienced
IV	<u>Very Difficult</u> : long rapids with irregular waves, boulders directly in current, strong eddies and cross-currents. Scouting and fast precise manoeuvring is mandatory. Courses difficult to recognize. Current speed often exceeds fast forward paddling speed.	Expert
V-VI	<u>Exceedingly Difficult</u> : very strong current, extreme turbulence, big drops, steep gradients, many obstacles. <u>Limit of navigability</u> !	Team of Experts in covered canoe)

NOTE: This rating system is flexible, and just a rough guide. It is not based exclusively on the above descriptions. Factors such as remoteness, water temperature, river width, etc. can make a river more or less difficult, and vary the level of skill required. Further, a river may change its rating drastically depending upon the time of year. Finally, a stretch of river may be classed as easy, but may contain rapids of any grade which may influence the overall rating of the trip very little.

Lake trips cannot be so readily rated for difficulty. Generally, lake trips are suitable for beginners; however, strong winds on a large lake can be dangerous for any canoeist, no matter what his experience.

THE RATING OF TRIPS IS THE DECISION OF THE ORGANIZER.

canoe safety rules

SIGNALS

(These rules are to be applied at the discretion of the trip organizers.)

- 1.) Paddlers will not be allowed on any trip without:
 - i) a flotation jacket that can be worn while paddling,
 - ii) a "safe" canoe (minimum length 15 ft for 2 paddlers),
 - iii) lining ropes (at least 25 ft) on bow and stern.
- 2.) Paddlers should always bring:
 - i) spare clothing, well waterproofed,
 - ii) extra food,
 - iii) matches in waterproof container.
- 3.) The signals used on WCA river trips should be known ahead of time.
- 4.) On rivers, canoes should maintain a definite order. Each boat is responsible for the one behind, giving signals after finishing any rapid, and positioning itself below the rapid ready to assist in case of trouble. Always keep the canoe behind in sight.
- 5.) Canoes should keep well spaced in rapids. Do not enter a rapid until the preceding canoe has successfully completed its run and signalled.
- 6.) The organizers' decisions on all trips are final.



difficult - use own judgment



danger - do not run



all clear - with caution

FORT TEMISKAMING AND THE FUR TRADE

By Elaine Allan Mitchell

(Published by University of Toronto Press, 1977.)

Reviewed by: Bruce W. Hodgins

Although this important book is not specifically about canoe tripping, it is of great interest to the wilderness canoeist who voyages anywhere in northeastern Ontario or northwestern Quebec. It is, in fact, not so much a book about Fort Timiskaming at the Narrows of the lake of the same name as it is an extensive story and analysis of the fur trade (and the river travel that went with it) in the whole headwaters area north and south of the James Bay - Great Lakes divide, from the French regime down to 1902. It is particularly exciting reading for the years 1790 to 1821, when intense competition between the Nor'westers out of "Canada" and Hudson's Bay Company traders out of Moose Fort (or Factory) produced dramatic clashes and conflicts on rivers and at wilderness posts in today's canoe trip country. Although the Height of Land, south of present day Gogama, Timmins and Noranda and north of present day Temagami and Kipawa, was the boundary between Canada and Rupert's Land, the Bay people wanted to control trade and Indians down to Superior, Huron and Timiskaming, and the Montreal people wanted to push their enemies back to the James Bay shore and even compete with them there.

Most readers know about the clashes between the two forces in the Northwest, but this is the first time that the story has been sketched adequately for the Northeast. Furthermore, Elaine Mitchell discusses the events after the merger of 1821 (when "Canada" was the enemy), often analyzing vividly the arguments over different routes for provisioning, in such a way that sensitive canoeists can feel the excitement of the wilderness fur trade into this century.

She deals in considerable detail with travel and events on the following rivers: the Abitibi, Mattagami, Groundhog and Missinaibi of the Moose watershed; the Michipicoten; the upper Ottawa streams and lakes (e.g. Grand Lac Victoria) emanating in today's La Verendrye Park or the Kipawa area; the Montreal River; and Lake Temagami. She also considers briefly the Sturgeon, Spanish, Dumoine, Coulonge, Gatineau, Harricanaw, Waswanipi, Rupert and Eastmain.

Although regrettably, she does not show the interest in river details and portages which avid canoeists might have liked, she whets our appetite for more and figuratively reopens numerous water routes used long ago and now rarely, if ever, considered. When, for instance, was the last time someone paddled to the Bay from Lac Abitibi via Rivière La Reine, the Burntbush, Kesagami Lake, the Nettogami and the northern French to the Moose? Did you know, for instance, that some of the greatest competition in the Northeast took place on the very upper Mattagami between Kenogamissi Lake House and nearby Matawagaminque Post, necessitating frequent paddles and winter snowshoe walks over to the Montreal and down to Timiskaming and Mattawa or over to Frederick House and Fort Abitibi? Unfortunately the fold-out map somewhat confuses the reader when he or she tries to distinguish between old posts and today's towns, and it has a few errors. It has, for example, Lake Temagami emptying east down the Matabitchewan to Lake Timiskaming rather than south to the Sturgeon. Lac Barrière should empty via Gens de Terre into Baskatong and the Gatineau, and Lac Dumoine significantly also empties into the Kipawa. Furthermore, the upper Eastmain is inaccurately simplified. But these are minor criticisms relating to a very fascinating book.

THE OUTDOORSMAN'S GUIDE TO WILDERNESS CAMPING

By Douglas Durst

(Published by McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1977)

Reviewed by Sandy Richardson

This book covers a wide range of basic topics, including trip planning, equipment, sleeping bags, clothing, tents, food, weather, camping in the wilderness without destroying it, safety, survival, etc. In trying to cover so many areas it is inevitable that some will be dealt with in less than full detail. However, the information found in this well illustrated book will be of more use to wilderness campers, especially novices, but not exclusively, than they are likely to receive from salesmen in camping stores.

These salesmen and indeed many books and magazines seem to imply that elaborate and expensive equipment is all that is necessary to set off into the wilds. Consequently we have many over-equipped and under-prepared people in the bush - "equipment freaks" who seem to believe that their \$300 tents, \$200 packs and sleeping bags etc. are all that is needed to make them instant experts.

Doug Durst's approach is a refreshing departure from this. He points out early that "the average person probably has enough gear in his home to get started." When discussing the contents of first aid kits he notes that some campers prefer larger ones than he uses, but warns that the extra items should not take the place of first aid knowledge. In his discussion of tents, more space is given to the design and construction of your own tent than to those that can be purchased. In fact, the detailed plans for tents will be of interest to many experienced wilderness campers who want the "perfect" tent to suit their style of camping.

This disdain for the "equipment freaks" comes out in his brief dismissal of the salesman's favourite, the differential cut sleeping bag - which just happens to be the more expensive cut. Durst points out quite rightly that the differential cut creates air pockets around the body, while the space-filler cut bag hangs loosely around the body leaving no spaces and insulating better.

A number of interesting ideas about food, including a good looking recipe for bannock are also included. There is also the reminder, that unfortunately is still needed, to pack out all your garbage.

It is obvious that Doug Durst enjoys the wilderness. He has no use for wilderness campers who approach a trip as if it were a campaign:

"Each day, they pack up before dawn and strike off as if it were a continuing rat race. For all they see and experience they might as well be hiking laps around a quarter-mile track. Their pleasure seems to come from a sense of achievement based on conquering as many miles as possible in rough conditions. But the wilds are full of subtle changes. Each new land formation brings a change in vegetation and of the creatures living in it. As you travel, take notice ... What is important is to see and feel a world not under the influence of mankind."

It is in this spirit that he has written his book, and it comes through in many places as he discusses equipment, planning and travelling through the wilderness. And it is this spirit that makes the book an interesting reading experience for the wilderness camper as well as the novice, although there are a few ideas that even the most experienced may want to try. For the novice this book contains a wealth of basic information that will get him started in a sane and sensible way that can lead to a lifetime of enjoyment.

products and services

Coleman Craft Canoes are now available in fiberglass, fibreglass & polypropylene, and fiberglass & Kevlar, in 12' 8", 14' 8", and 16' L.O.A. (available with laker-type keel or shallow keel for river use). Custom made and sold only at our shop. Maximum production is limited to 100 per year. Please phone if you are interested in viewing films of our canoes and discussing their features. Bill Coleman, Galt; 519-623-1804/1894. Shop located at 333 Dundas St. (Hwy. 8), Galt, Ont.

Canoe Packs: A.B.C. Sports in Toronto have started manufacturing their own fine canoe packs with double bottom, wide shoulder straps, side pockets, D-rings, heavy-grade canvas and large capacity. Available only through A.B.C. Sports.

Wilderness Camping: Subscribe to this stimulating and entertaining magazine through the WCA. You'll receive a year-round cache of ideas for self-propelled wilderness enthusiasts, with feature articles and columns about canoeing, backpacking, ski-touring and snowshoeing; and you'll help out your club at the same time. (We receive \$2 for each new subscription and \$1 for each renewal.)

Send \$6.95, payable to Wilderness Camping, your name and address to: Subscription, c/o the WCA Postal Box.

Mad River Canoes will be available again from Rockwood Outfitters this year, in particular the kevlar and royalex Explorers. We have some royalex Explorers for rent. As well we handle an assortment of other excellent lines of canoes such as Bluewater and Novacraft. Come up and see us in Guelph. ROCKWOOD OUTFITTERS, 15 Speedvale Ave., E., Guelph, Ont., N1H 1J2. Telephone: (519) 824-1415.

Auction Sale: Huron Recreation will be holding an auction of accumulated stock on Saturday April 22 at 1:00 pm. Items include canoes paddles, life vests, etc. The sale will be held Jamestown Store, north of Brussels. Call (519) 887-9042.

Discounts on Camping Supplies: WCA members who present a membership card will receive 10% discounts on many non-sale items at:

MARGESSON'S, 17 Adelaide St. E., Toronto.

DON BELL SPORTS, 164 Front St., Trenton.

A. B. C. SPORTS, 552 Yonge St., Toronto.

(Members should check at each store to find out what items are discounted.)

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WILDERNESS-CANOE ASSOCIATION

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I enclose a cheque for: \$5.00 — student under 18
\$8.00 — full time student
\$10.00 — single membership
\$12.00 — family membership

for membership in the WILDERNESS CANOE ASSOCIATION, which entitles me to receive The Wilderness Canoeist, and gives me the opportunity to participate in W.C.A. outings and meetings.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

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NEW: _____ RENEWAL: _____ (1978)

Other Information:

Canoe Trips Taken: _____

Interested in serving on committees? _____

How did you hear about the W.C.A.? _____

Please send completed form and cheque (payable to the Wilderness Canoe Association) to:

Mary Jo Cullen, 122 Robert St., Toronto, Ont. M5S 2K3

Membership expires January 31, 1979