



the wilderness canoeist

volume 5 number 4

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Pacific Rim

The West Coast Trail wends its way for eighty kilometers along the rugged west coast of Vancouver Island in Pacific Rim National Park. It leads the backpacker through the incredibly lush growth of the rain forest with its waist high ferns and Spanish Moss clinging to trees whose uppermost branches are forever hidden from view by those of its neighbours; and it takes him out onto the beach where the action of wind and water over countless centuries has created fascinating rock formations and crater-like carvings in the cliff walls. Waterfalls cascade spectacularly over the cliffs as mountain streams plunge into the Pacific.

However, the trail was not created for backpackers; it had a much more serious purpose. Between 1800 and 1854, sixty ships were battered and gutted on the shoals of this coastline. After the wreck of the Valencia in 1906, when one hundred and twenty-six people perished, the federal government decided to improve what existed as a game trail to serve as a lifesaving path. For many years afterwards, the trail was maintained by the local inhabitants, in particular the Nitinat and Ohiat bands. These residents, along with the lighthouse keepers and

linemen often performed heroic deeds in their efforts to rescue the survivors of ships that had foundered in what was known as the "graveyard of the Pacific."

While hiking the trail this past summer we often came across remnants of these ill-fated vessels; and for most of our eight days we found ourselves in the midst of a storm. Both circumstances conjured up thoughts of those ships and the men they took with them.

For days the blackness of the storm hovered low over the coast, enraging the surrounding waters so that they lashed out at the land. The extent of the ocean's fury was made evident to us when it washed one of its most prized inhabitants onto the rocks, a baby dolphin separated from its mother during the Pacific's rage. However, as forceful as this storm may have seemed to us, it would have been dwarfed by those which frequent the area in winter and plagued those stranded and battered ships of the 1800's. The waves which we encountered were a mere four metres, while the waves of the stormy season tower to heights of over ten metres and their thunder can be clearly heard even well back within the dense forest.

On those rare evenings when the rain and pounding surf subsided, we took advantage of the momentary calmness to explore the tidal flats exposed by the receding tide. It was on these occasions that we found many scattered remnants from those ships long since passed away and those still sailing along the continent's edge. We also found numerous tidal pools, whose depths were filled with a variety of crustacea in an impressive array of colours. Often our exploring was all too soon interrupted, either by the returning tide or by descending fog banks so dense that they seemed to push us up to higher ground as they slowly enveloped the shoreline.

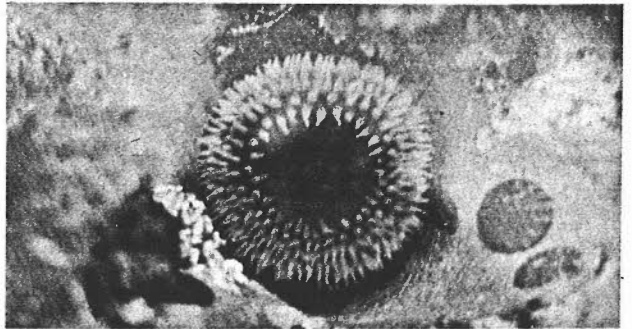
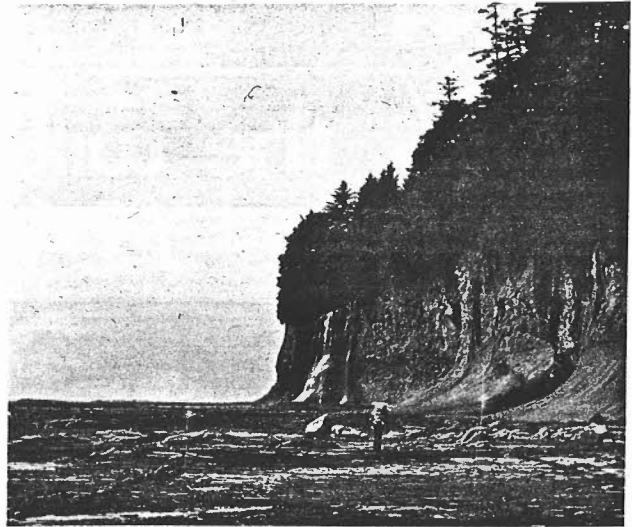
Near the end of our trip the storm began to retreat; and with the withdrawal of the dense, black clouds, we had our first glimpse of an ocean sunset, cut short however as it disappeared behind the distant blackness.

Though the storm had passed, its effects still lingered in the form of flooded and soggy trails that often forced us to make our way along the shoals below. Though the travelling here was much easier, we now had to pay careful attention to the surrounding waters for an unnoticed rise in the tide could have left us stranded at the base of a cliff with the safety of the forest an unattainable ten metres above our heads.

We made our final camp with plenty of sunlight still lingering on the horizon. Wet and tired, we reflected on the past seven days and marvelled at all we had seen and done; and yet we somehow felt insignificant beside the awesome power of the Pacific. Even though it was a minute portion of its great expanse that we had seen, we wondered whether it is the earth that possesses the oceans, or the oceans that possess the earth. With this thought we retired for our final evening on the Pacific Rim, not at all anxious to greet the next day and our subsequent departure.

Story: Rick Paleske

Photos: Rick Paleske and Paul Skinner



Old Fort William

Voyage into the Past

Story: Glenn Spence

Photo: Cameron Spence

As we approached Thunder Bay, we noticed the Provincial Road sign indicating the turn-off for Old Fort William. We thought that this was probably another 'tourist trap': but, since we had a few hours to 'kill', we decided to investigate.

There was a visitor services area, where the usual souvenirs etc. were for sale. This did not look too promising, but the admission price of \$5.00 for our family was not bad. We then walked down a pathway through a forest area. Pessimism still reigned 'Probably some 2 x 4 stockade.' Actually the trail became our time tunnel leading us back to the last century. The Fort's magnitude overwhelmed us. We had no idea that the fur trade has spawned such a complex.

From the Ministry of Culture and Recreation's pamphlet we were able to glean the following historical data. "Fort William 1803-1821. It can be termed in some measure an English venture...but the directing minds were traders and explorers who were nearly all Scots. Remarkably though, as Fort William flourished, it drew together men of many nations."

"It was...typically Canadian. It was the inland headquarters of a great Montreal-based commercial enterprise, (North West Company), which was served by the daring and skill of French voyageurs; by the technology of the native; by the canny, long range planning of the Scottish merchants."

Located on the banks of the Kaministikwia River, from its original site, Fort William reconstructed serves to remind us all of the birth of this great nation."

The Fort has been reconstructed faithfully from original drawings made by, I believe, Lord Selkirk, when he occupied the Fort for a while in his conflict with the North West Company.

However, it is the staff (university students and master craftsman) that really makes your visit so exciting and informative. They receive an intensive training session before the Fort opens for the season which enables them not only to act their parts but to live them. Each building or area is staffed by these experts.

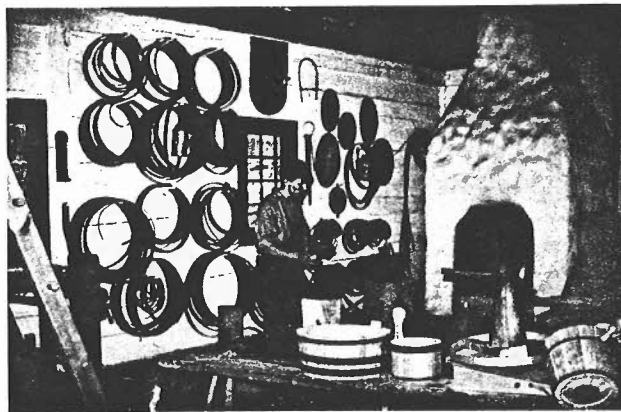
You may go on a guided tour or wander around on your own. The atmosphere is set as you wait for your guide. A habitant plays the violin and a greeter gleefully explains the format to the tourists.

Our guide gave us an expert talk about the Fort and then led us through a series of buildings. In each building the personnel, dressed in appropriate costumes

gave us a brief speech about the purpose of the area, showed equipment, and trade goods etc. Then the audience could ask questions. We really felt we were back in time because of the surroundings and the staff in their discussions would say 'we' or 'I' or 'our Company' not 'they'. This added so much to the realism.

Space does not permit me to list all of the areas since there are 54 of them! However, a few should be mentioned.

(a) Indian Shop. Here we saw the items that the Indians traded for, e.g. North West Company blankets (3, 3½ or 4 points), blanket coats, various sizes of shot, etc.



(b) Powder Magazine. The smell of the muskets' leather straps was very strong in this small dark, well fortified area. Other weaponry, such as small cannon, were in evidence.

(c) Canoe Shed. Here a 36' Montreal canoe being constructed. Did you know that Black Spruce roots were used as 'twine' to hold the birch bark to the gunwales?

(d) Council House. This was where the Partners of the Company plotted their business strategy. The gentleman here really lived the part of a snobbish, elite Partner who would not associate with the rabble. They, of course, had to have their comforts e.g. a stove, which had to be paddled and portaged in! Also, we learned of the symbolism of the era. You had to go up a few stairs to enter the Council House. This meant the Partners were above the lesser ones.

(e) Guides' House. As soon as we walked in, we noticed the bunks which were so small that they looked like children's. But then, voyageurs were only about 5'3" tall so that there would be more room for cargo. There was a typical 90 pound pack on display that they had to carry. (not one, but two plus a personal pack.) No wonder, many died from strangulated hernias. Most of the survivors, if not all, were worn out by age 40.

In order to be a guide, with their privileges of sleeping in the Guides' House, special hat, a little extra pay, extra butter, etc., a man had to serve 10 years as a voyageur. (it was here that I turned around and saw two WCA members who were on their way back from Quetico. WCA'ers are all over the place!

(f) Indian Camp. An Indian family was constructing a canoe as well as some baskets from Black Spruce roots (very handy material). We discussed today's Indian and the problems they have in retaining their culture. It was very interesting.

We thought our visit would be brief, but four hours later, we still had not seen everything. A return visit is a must!

Old Fort William should be seen by every Canadian. This is living history!

For more information, reservations etc.

write: Old Fort William
Vickers Heights P. O.
Thunder Bay, Ontario
POT 2Z9
Phone 807-577-8461



CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Dear Friends:

I expect that most of you are getting your skis or snowshoes ready for another winter. As you will see in this issue, the association is now able to support a full range of winter outings, and I hope that you will have the opportunity to join in.

We are looking forward to the annual meeting in March at the Leslie Frost Centre. The association is fortunate to have a dedicated hard-working committee planning this weekend. We hope you will respond with your participation. As usual, the weekend will be a mixture of business and pleasure, but mostly the latter, thanks to our committee under the leadership of Rob Butler.

Our annual display at the Sportsmen's Show will need your support, and I would urge you to contact Jim Greenacre, Barry Brown or myself if you want to help.

This will be the last opportunity for me to write to you as chairman. I have greatly enjoyed working with the many active members of the W.C.A., and I feel that we have accomplished a great deal together. We have seen the club grow, not just in numbers, but in maturity, scope and energy. Thanks to everyone for the support and co-operation in the programmes of the association.

I trust that our growth will continue through the years to come. We can keep this spirit of togetherness alive through communication and real sharing of ideas.

Hope to see you in the months ahead

Sincerely,

Roger Smith

news briefs

WCA PHOTO CONTEST

The WCA is holding a slide competition. Entries will be accepted from members in the following categories:

Canadian Wilderness: Photographs of wilderness scenery and landscapes, taken in Canada, that interpret the "feeling" of the wilderness. (There should be no evidence of man in the photographs.)

Man in the Wilderness: Photographs depicting man in harmony with nature, capturing the essence of the wilderness experience.

Nature - Flora & Fauna: Photographs of Canadian wild plants and animals in their natural settings.

Action Canoeing: Photographs depicting the action, joy, work, etc. of people engaged in canoeing (eg. running whitewater, lining, portaging, etc.).

- RULES:
1. The contest is open to WCA members only.
 2. Each entrant may submit a maximum of 3 slides per category.
 3. An entry fee of \$2 (regardless of the number of slides submitted) must be sent in with each entry.
 4. Each slide submitted should be clearly marked with the photographer's name, and numbered. Include with your entry a sheet of paper giving name, address, phone number, and indicate clearly by number for each slide: a) the category entered, and b) the title of the slide.

5. Entries should be sent to the contest chairman: Jim Greenacre, 34 Bergen Rd., Scarborough, Ont., M1P 1R9; and must be received no later than January 31, 1979.
6. Winners will be announced at the WCA Annual Meeting, where entries will be shown.
7. Entrants may pick up their slides at the annual meeting. For entrants not at the meeting, slides will be returned by mail.

JUDGING: The photographs will be judged on their subject matter, interest, technical excellence, and artistic merit by a panel of judges from the Toronto Guild for Colour Photography, headed by nature photographer

Colour Photography, headed by nature photographer Betty Greenacre.

PRIZES: The winner of each category will receive an 8" X 10" framed and mounted colour print of their slide.

A Grand Prize will be awarded for the photograph judged best overall in the competition. This prize will be a \$50 gift certificate courtesy of MARGESSON'S SPORTS LTD., 17 Adelaide St., E., Toronto - specialists in lightweight backpacking, canoeing, mountaineering, winter camping, and cross-country skiing equipment.

(Note: The slide awarded the Grand Prize will not be eligible for a category prize as well.)



THE BUDGET BACKPACKER

by L.A. Zakreski
(Published by: Winchester Press, N.Y.)

Reviewed by: Dave Auger

For the camping enthusiast on a tight budget, the title: "The Budget Backpacker" speaks for itself. For the avid do-it-yourselfer, this new book reaffirms the rewards of making your own camping gear. For the person (like me) who's not entirely satisfied with his present equipment, but is somewhat skeptical about the quality and reliability of a do-it-yourself project, here's a book that may persuade you to give it a try!

A discussion of the relative merits of various materials used in different projects is followed by the author's personal suggestions for tools to use and general procedures to follow. He then spends most of the rest of the book with a lot of step by step do-it-yourself projects complete with diagrams and photos. From packs to clothing and tents, specific designs are included.

It is always interesting to browse through someone else's checklists. With a background as a forest ranger in Jasper Park Alberta, Zakreski has compiled such lists as: first aid kit, survival kit, weekend camping equipment, and week-long wilderness trip gear. And a separate chapter

is devoted to using, maintaining, and repairing your equipment (whether home-made or store bought).

In particular, I found the comparisons of the properties of nylon, dacron, orlon, cotton, and wool very informative. The old "down vs. polyester fibres" controversy is again stirred up. Advantages and disadvantages of each are weighed. I found myself in agreement with his verdict of a down top and polarguard bottom for a sensible, warm sleeping bag. Not that I always agreed with him, however. Under the heading of Travel Equipment (for an extended backpacking trip into rough, rugged country), I was somewhat dismayed to see "dirt bike" and "dune buggy" listed. Nonetheless, I read on.

Having long ago despaired of finding an inexpensive, yet satisfactory form of rain protection (unlike my present nylon/rubber rain suit which suffers from condensation problems) I now have decided to try the combination of cagoule and rain chaps. This will involve making the chaps myself. (These are individual pant legs which tie on to your belt at the hips.) By next spring I look forward - well, as much as anyone looks forward to a rainy weekend - to trying out a pair of urethane coated taffeta rain chaps à la Zakreski. And I'm sure this book will convince others of you to try your own projects too.

BRIEFS...

ANNUAL MEETING

WCA T-SHIRTS

We have available for a limited time T-shirts with the WCA logo on the left breast (approx. 7 cm by 8 cm). The shirts are beige with a blue logo and are available in sizes S, M, L, XL at a cost of \$5.50 each.

Anyone interested in purchasing a shirt is asked to mail a cheque or money order to: Stewart McIlwraith, 38 Rhydwen Ave., Scarborough, Ont., M1N 2E1, before January 10 so that printing may begin immediately. Please include your name address and phone number, the number of shirts desired and the sizes.

The WCA Annual General Meeting will be held at the Leslie Frost Centre, south of Dorset, March 9-11, 1979. It will be a weekend event including cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and skating as well as film presentations and the business meeting itself.

Meals, accommodation and parking are all available at the centre. If there is sufficient support, a bus will be arranged from the Toronto area. Details and costs will be mailed out to members with notice of meeting in early January.

YOUTH ENCOURAGEMENT FUND

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE

This fund was created to assist our student members to participate in major wilderness trips and to attend courses to improve their canoeing or wilderness camping skills.

Thanks to the generous contribution of members, this fund has been successfully assisting our younger members for two years. The YEF Committee hopes to continue this important work again this year, and invites interested members to send their contributions to the treasurer (payable to the Wilderness Canoe Association, and indicating that it is the Youth Encouragement Fund.)

Articles, trip reports, book reviews, photographs, etc. for the next newsletter should be sent to the editor by February 1.

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP NOW!

Members are reminded their 1978 memberships expire in January. It is time for 1979 now! A membership renewal form, showing the new classes of memberships and new rates, appears on the back page. Send it in today.

(New members who joined after October 1, 1978, do not need to renew, their memberships have automatically been extended to include 1979.)

Historic Maps

John Cross

The longest canoe trips take place in winter. They are, of course, the trips of the imagination, taken in the warmth of your own study or the map room at the library, the ear shutting out the January sounds while the mind's eye scans the tangle of July alders, looking for a portage. Your real eye roams across the map, farther north than ever before, but somewhere along the optic nerve, a switch shunts the neat little threepronged swamp symbol to one side and substitutes an image of sphagnum moss heaving beneath your weight, spruce branches clawing at you neck, the canoe jammed between two tree trunks....and you ask yourself, "Could I.....?". The two blue lines on the topo map come within $\frac{1}{2}$ in. of each other, but you have no clue to the passability of either the ground or the creeks.. If only you could, you would cross the watershed to an untravelled basin and the wonders your winter mind assures you it contains.

Topo maps have the faults of their virtues: they are made from airphotos and treat all physical features impartially, striving for topographic accuracy. The old Geological Survey of Canada maps (before, say, about 1930) were made from canoes and hence are biased in favour of canoe routes; though occasionally less accurate than the topos, they are generally the finest canoe route guides ever drawn. However, the GSC travelled the main routes when they could, some of which are fairly well-travelled today; your search for your private forest kingdom may put you into the blank white spaces between the large rivers. The GSC surveyors were

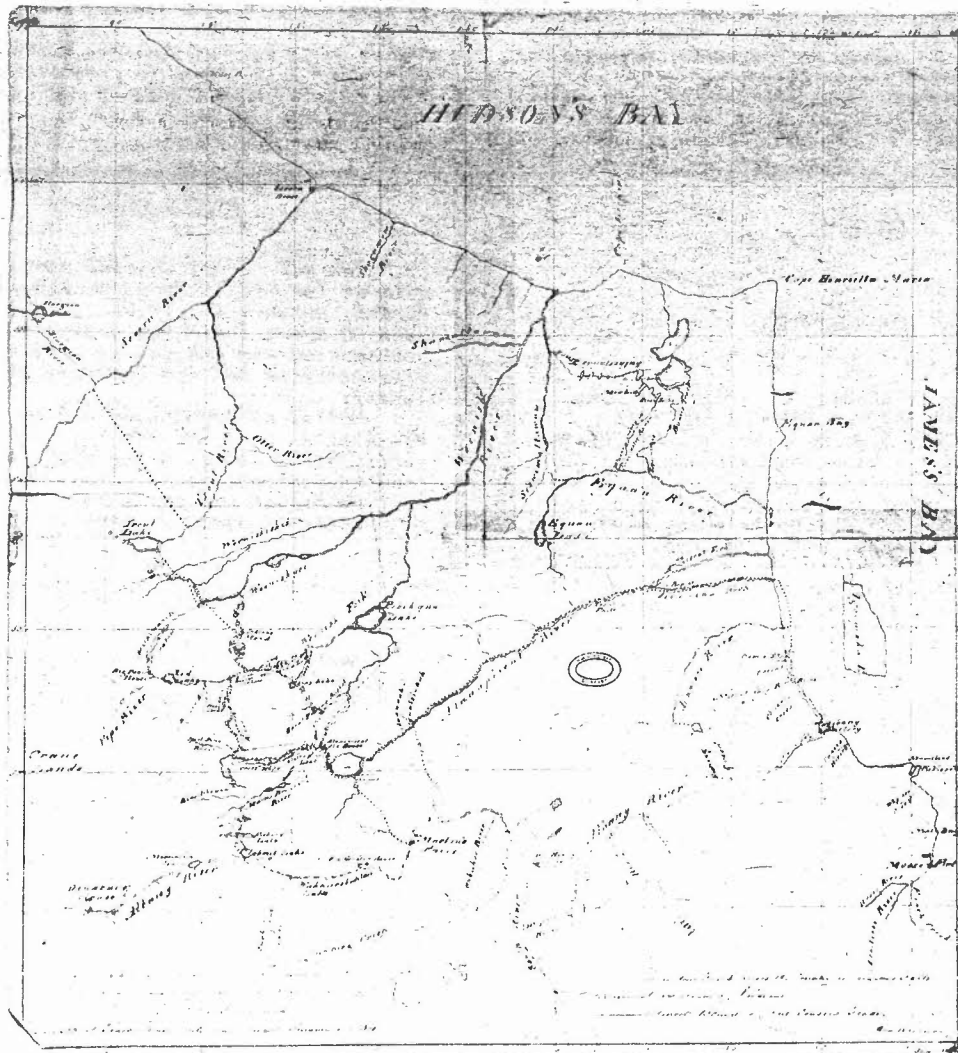
too scrupulous to mark down what they hadn't measured exactly themselves, so the small cross-routes, known only by Indian report, are represented at best by dotted lines, snaking away from the main rivers to peter out somewhere in the interior.

The armchair canoeist has one more resource: the old maps of the fur traders and pre-precision survey explorers. A glance will show how wildly distorted they are, yet they were distorted by canoeist, according to the route features which impress themselves on the canoeing mind.

Most historic maps of Canada are contained in the Dominion Archives, either as an original or as a photographic copy. Photographs and facsimiles can often be found in historical atlases or books on cartography. Some interesting books available at the Toronto Public Library are—

- a) Warkentins Ruggles: Manitoba Historical Atlas (Winnipeg, 1970)
- b) Trudel: Atlas of New France (Quebec, 1968)
- c) Trudel: Collection de cartes Anciennes et Modernes (Quebec, 1948)

Map reprinted with the permission of the Hudson's Bay Co. archives, Winnipeg, Manitoba.



HISTORIC MAPS

The map on the preceding page was drawn by George Barnston, factor of "Weenusk post" (on L. Wapikopa, not the present location) to accompany his annual report for 1834. It was found in the Hudson's Bay Co. archives, and so far as I know, is the most complete record of canoe routes northwest of Fort Albany. However, its existence was not known to the GSC, and many of the routes never followed up.

We can easily see the sort of distortions we would expect to appear: the fast-flowing, smooth Attawapiskat is shown as a direct line (through topo map shows it is anything but); the small-river routes to the Winisk are shown wiggly as they really are, but it only occurs to Barnston to draw them so because he had sweated over their portages and hauled over their shallows himself; the wide-open Attawapiskat simply never impressed him as tortuous. Lakes are shown only as they were perceptible: if the contrast in width between what we call a "lake" and the river it was on were not very great, it would be ignored, as in the cases of Windsor and Beteau "lakes" on the Attawapiskat.

Routes based on Indain report alone might be very inaccurate: I suspect that to the practical-minded Indians, a portage was a portage, whether it crossed a height-of-land or passed by a rapid and so they saw little need to distinguish between the two cases. The concern with precisely what river flowed where, and could be identified with what other one, was a European preoccupation. So the Kenogami ("South"), Albany, Wakashi, Chepy, and Chemahagan rivers are shown interconnected, as if they were alternate channels of the same river; they aren't, but we may safely assume the Indians had portage routes running every which way between them. On the other hand, the Ekwam-Shamattawa ("Seswimattawaw") portage is shown leading to a tiny tributary, just as it really does: either the tale was told by an Indian more concerned with precision than usual, or it was told to a white man more fluent in Cree. No white has since been over to survey this route, I believe, but some of the Winisk Cree alive today have used it.

The routes travelled by the Hudson's Bay Co. servants are more detailed, and, not surprisingly, look more difficult. From Attawapiskat L. north to "Pebiquia" L., there are indeed, as I can testify, three small lakes on the height-of-land; lake-expansions on the Wapitotem R. are not shown because not important to the route-map. The Marten-Drinking route to Attawapiskat L. is also shown accurately, including the cut-off that avoids the shallows near the end; I didn't know this in 1977, but luckily the water was high.

Once we have developed a feel for the reliability of the map by checking its depiction of known routes, we can search for others (without the advantage of hindsight). According to GSC reports, there is a

portage over the height-of-land between the Washagami r. and a tributary of the Shamattawa. On exactly which lakes it is located, they don't say, nor does anything else ever published. Fortunately, at the time Barnston drew his map, the journey made by George Taylor in 1808 was remembered (though he marks it as "Sutherland's Track") in sufficient detail to enlighten us today: up a creek through three medium-size lakes, then 7 tiny ones, then another medium one, and across to the Washagami. There is a creek on the topo which match this description exactly, and, swampy though the ground may be, we could go there with the certain knowledge: it was done before. (I was lucky enough in Winisk to find some Indians who confirmed the location of the portage from their memories of 25 years ago.)

Between the Attawapiskat and the Winisk, three routes were described in the GSC report of 1906. Three more are shown on Barnston's map, which, as seems often to be the case, are unpublished elsewhere. Admittedly the scale makes it difficult for him to show all the lakes (and when does a swampy widening of the creek qualify as a "lake", anyway?), but by placing side by side the GSC map, the topo, and the Barnston map, by putting 2 and 2 together and occasionally fudging to get rid of the 5's, we seem to discover the following treasures, lost for 150 years:

I from Attawapiskat L., through Obashi L., to Michikenopik Cr. ("Great Fishing Basket"), follow the route described by the GSC; then proceed down the Fishbasket to Webequie.

II or, turn up Michikenopik Cr., join the GSC route from the Pixustigwan R. across country to Coburn L., and descend the Chipai R. to the Winisk.

IIa The variation on route II travelled by Barnston in 1834 may be the GSC route between Coburn L. and Nibinamik ("Summer Beaver"), or it may be a new route through Steed L. to Wapikopa. The uncertain distinctions between lake and river segments on the Winisk make it difficult to be sure.

III Ascend the Pineimuta ("Pineymust") to Eyes L., cross to Peagwon ("Shoal") L. and Cr., and reach the Winisk.

Some of the portages will be grown over now; others will be kept open by Indians from Wunnumin, Webequie, and Nibinamik. Chances are that a canoeist between the Attawapiskat and the Winisk will have the whole territory (4800 sq. mi.) to himself -- summer after summer. A canoe and equipment could be left for the winter at any one of five villages on the perimeter, accessible by scheduled flight for \$50-\$70. Perhaps there are routes that Barnston didn't find either. Would anybody like to look?

GOOLAK DEFENDED

I've done business with the GOOLAK CO-OP several times this year and found that their strength is not their prices but their knowledge, concern and enthusiasm. Co-ops don't sell in the bulk of large stores so their prices are fair but no bargain. But this co-op is out to be fair; it's run by people who know and enjoy equipment, who set up a Snow Lion tent three times for me at the Sportsman's Show while I tried to shelter my Chargex card from overuse, and who delight in double stitched seams, strong ropes, and well designed equipment. Despite S.R.'s criticism in the last issue, the group is helpful and ready to talk about their equipment and your needs. They need support and some of you might like to do business with them.

Sandy Barnard

equipment

Catalogue available from:
Goolak Backwoods Co-Op,
R.R. 2, Douglas, Ontario Canada
K0J 1S0
(613) 628-2991

SKI TREADS

Ski Treads were developed out in the usually deep snows of Montana and Wyoming. They are lengths of pre-spliced polyethylene rope that can be slipped onto your skis in minutes for climbing, and are suitable for deep powder or wet snow.

And they work! They literally can help you climb walls. We used them in Killarney last winter to climb some of the peaks in the La Cloche Range which would have been impossible without them. They also let us get back down in one piece!

At about \$6 they are far cheaper than mohair climbing skins and a lot less messy than klisters. Although they have been used by the ski patrols in the Rockies for several years, they are not available in any stores here in the east. If you are looking to ski to new heights next winter you can order a set or get more information from Ski Treads, P.O. Box 1127, Hamilton, Mt. 59840, U.S.A.

(S.R.)

Second day - Thursday July 27

The gorge just above the Virgin River had to be portaged. The entire portage was 1000 m long, however only the first chute is difficult, and the remainder of the set could probably be run out the bottom.

All the rapids on the Clearwater including the rather minor ones were found to have portage trails around them. This is probably because the area is used by trappers who portage their way up the river. A good portage trail is not necessarily indicative of a difficult set of rapids. The state of the portage trails often reflects more the terrain rather than the state of the river. After a few days of trial and many errors, we found that not only the rapids had to be sized up but also the portage trails. Many of the portage trails were indistinct and carried misleading blazes. We found that walking over the trails to find out where they lead was a good procedure for it avoided the possibility of getting lost while carrying a heavy pack or a canoe.

There seems to be a healthy supply of fish in the Clearwater. Though we did not spend much time fishing during the trip, we saw many fish jump, and frequently the characteristic dorsal fin of Arctic Grayling was observed as they fed on the surface.

During the day, more eagles and nests were sighted along with the first bull moose which was found feeding in a few feet of water by the shore. When the wind is right, it is possible to approach to within rather close distances of wildlife. We found that bear and moose were unable to detect our presence until we were quite close to them. Canoes are certainly the way to go if you want to see wildlife.

All along the river, particularly the upper part of the Clearwater, there is evidence of forest fires. None appeared to be particularly recent. The forest in that region was like a plantation with all the trees in a given section being at the same stage of growth. There was an absence of older or younger trees. This is odd for one would expect to see young

growth in an open forest i.e., in a forest where the trees are widely placed and where the sun has access to the forest floor.

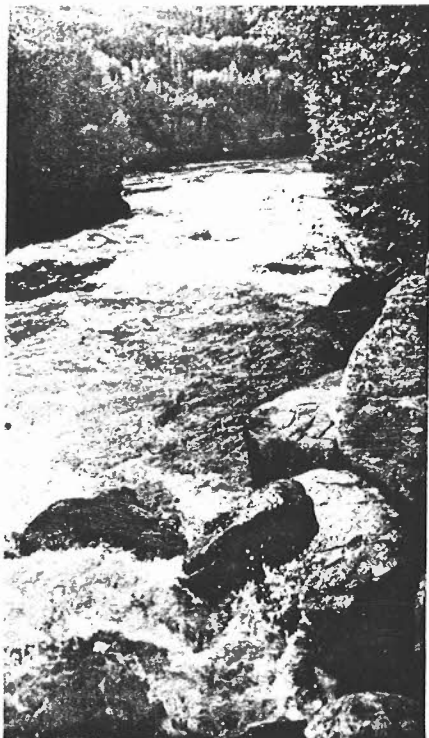
The further we were up the Clearwater, the more uncontaminated the forest and the more tolerant the wildlife. This is because the upper parts of the Clearwater are pretty well inaccessible except by air. The campsites are in a state approaching excellence. Another reason for the lack of debris at the sites is that campsites are easily found, and camp can be made just about anywhere one can put into shore. This changes the further down the river one goes.

Third day - Friday July 28

Just before the mouth of the Fortin River, what appeared to be a brownish baby bear was sighted momentarily on the shore by the lead canoe. It disappeared before a good look could be had of it, and no one went ashore to confirm the sighting.

We took an unscheduled three hour side trip up the Fortin River, mostly because the navigator had only an approximate notion as to where the party was. The river resembles a sandy bottomed fast moving stream. Here, the ducks were almost tame, and they let us get well within shotgun range. This was not the usual state of affairs on the Clearwater. In retrospect, it seems that the more accessible a given section of the river, the more jumpy the wildlife and the less there was of it.

The next side trip (scheduled this time) was up the Virgin River to the bottom of a magnificent set of rapids. Supper was caught at the base of the gorge. Two rather adequate fish of a type unknown in eastern Canada were caught. The portage to Careen Lake is on the North side of the river. It is well defined and appeared to be in good shape. The campsite at the beginning of the portage trail was not particularly inviting, and we returned to the junction of the Clearwater and Virgin rivers where the woods were of the customary inviting open Jack Pine variety.



(This past summer the Berthelets paddled the Clearwater River 300 kilometers from Lloyd Lake, Saskatchewan to Fort McMurray, Alberta. They spent 11 days on the trip - 7 paddling, 1½ "drying out", 1 resting when one member of the party felt weak, and ½ on side trips and fishing. The following is a day-by-day account of their trip.)

First day - Wednesday July 26

The flight from Fort McMurray to Lloyd Lake, about 160 air kilometres away, took an hour for a Beaver with a canoe on each pontoon. During the flight, we observed winter roads that were bulldozed for the purpose of bringing drilling rigs into the bush and for supplying Uranium City. These roads are not used in the summer since there are no bridges over the rivers. The road to Uranium City is groomed, in the winter, to a state that permits large trucks to travel over it. The soil up there consists primarily of sand and gravel with an inch or so of top soil on the surface. With the top soil removed, it appears that the evidence of these roads will remain for a very long time.

We landed at Lloyd Lake under overcast skies at 10 am and after a short snack we were on our way. Within a couple of miles of Lloyd Lake, we spotted two eagles nests occupying the tops of trees. The first day was rather an easy one. There was only one portage at the third chute of the first set of rapids. The high water and big waves could probably have been run but we decided to be safe and to portage. The Clearwater, at high water levels, is not a river that particularly lends itself to lining. If one decided that a particular set of rapids is too demanding, a portage would probably be necessitated.



clearwater



Fourth day - Saturday July 29

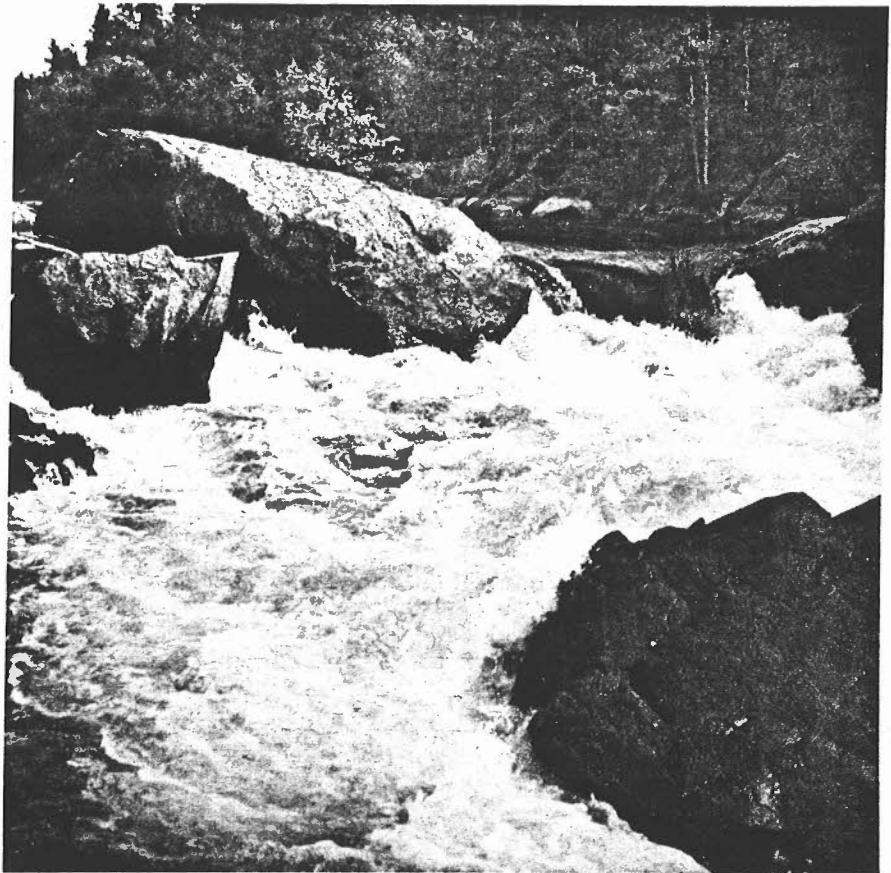
Rain was the mode of the trip. It rained on 7 of the 11 days we were on the river. Saturday the 29th was one of those endless days where we got up to gray overcast skies. We found our rain gear to be inadequate and we spent much of the time in a rather damp state. We lost at least 3 days to the activity of drying out. At times such as these, with the ground so wet, we did not feel the compulsion to go ashore in the wet surroundings. Lunch was frequently had as we drifted with the canoes tied together. A little extra ground (river) can be covered by doing this; however, if something is dropped, it invariably falls in between the canoes. A container of honey and a dandy knife found their fate this way. A thunder storm rumbled in late in the day, and we were forced off the river at Bielby Rapids where we made camp for the night.

During the day, we portaged twice and ran two sets of rather challenging rapids. One of these, one of the canoes committed an indiscretion and almost dumped. This was the closest we were to come to doing such a thing.

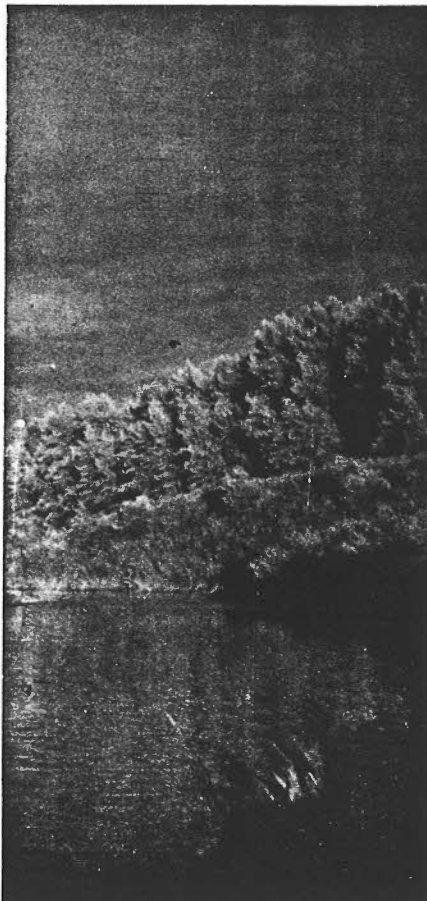
The wildlife sightings for the day were rather good. One who commented most strenuously on our invasion of his private domain; more eagles; lots of ducks, and a rather exotic looking pink bird about 18 inches high that looked rather like a flamingo which conspicuously disappeared into the shore cover as we silently slid past. Moose and bear droppings were everywhere to be found where we camped, and there was an animal trail paralleling the river on both sides. Presumably, the moose use these to move between feeding areas along the river.

Fifth day - Sunday July 30

During the day, there were no rapids that required portaging, and an exhilarating day was had running fast water throughoulder fields. At periods of low water, it is clear that lining would be necessitated and scraping of the bottoms of the canoes would occur particularly in the area near Nelson Rapids.



By Dave Berthelet



Few of the portage trails have any sign to indicate their existence other than an opening in the shore brush, and if one does not know where to look for them they could be time consuming to find. There is certainly a portage trail around Mackie Rapids; however, we did not find it. It is definitely not on the island. The left channel around the island is recommended at low water. At high water, it is very powerful indeed. It was a little tricky going down the right channel. It was not dangerous and we had no trouble there other than having to take cover from the lightning and the rars of thunder from a storm that overtook us as we scouted the rapids. Three inches of rain water accumulated in the canoes.

Warner Rapids, just under a recently constructed bridge, was the only spot that had to be examined during the day. About the worst thing that can happen to a wilderness area is a road. Easiness of access changes the character of wilderness area completely. Truck traffic and the far off drone of diesel engines alter the milieu. An old train bridge has recently been transplanted to span the river at Warner Rapids. It was used to support a significant amount of road construction equipment. Someone is eager to access this part of Northern Saskatchewan by road. It must have something to do with resources (uranium perhaps).

Right at the bridge there were some old cars and an encampment of people living in tents. From the river, the setup seemed to be somewhat permanent. This reminded us of the bitter complaints and comments the townsfolk of Fort McMurray had concerning the 'squatters' that invaded their municipal camp grounds showing a desire and willingness to live there year round forcing the town to close it down.

Sixth day - Monday July 31

This was a difficult day with modest distance covered, and three portages two of which were over 1000 metres. We made it as far as the first gorge below Gould Rapids.

The first rapids encountered during the day was just below Warner Rapids. After looking at them for a long time, we decided on the portage. This was one of those rapids we would like to have tried on a weekend trip with more canoes along. We were alone, far away, and therefore very cautious.

The next set, Gould Rapids, were powerful, extended, and difficult. Experts would probably attempt these, perhaps with a spray deck after portaging their baggage. The portage trail is on the right side of the river showing up as a break in the shore brush along side of an island some 150 metres or so before the white water. The trail is somewhat indistinct and should be scouted first before attempting to carry a heavy load across without fully knowing where it leads. Towards the end of the portage there are some misleading blazes on trees that could lead an unwary traveller astray.

The problem with Gould is that if a canoe dumps and there is no one waiting below to perform the rescue, there is a chance, not altogether remote, that the canoe and its contents would go over the falls and through the spectacular gorge that awaits a kilometre or so below.

The third portage of the day was at the aforementioned breathtaking waterfall and gorge just below Gould Rapids. The power and beauty of this sight was worth the five days of rainy weather it took to get there. Camp was made on the lower part of the portage at an open spot overlooking the river.

Seventh day - Tuesday August 1

It was raining steadily when we awoke. It was decided by unanimous consent to stay in camp and try to dry out, or at least not do anything that would make us any wetter than we were already. Around noon the skies cleared suddenly; camp was hastily broken and we pulled out.

The big portage of the day was the second gorge below Gould. The display of wild water here was not as spectacular as the first one but the cliffs, eroded rock formations, and especially the islands at this spot were very impressive. It is certainly worth the time and effort to walk along the edge of the gorge to photograph the formations.

The section of the river which seemed to have the largest amount of wildlife was the short stretch between the two gorges. Perhaps this had something to do with the inaccessibility of the area. There is a long portage at either end that discourages a lot of traffic. Over this short portion of river, we saw two mature bull moose feeding on the shore. On both occasions, the wind was blowing in the right direction and we got to within a hundred metres of them before they noticed us and took cover.

Just below the second gorge, as we were approaching a small set of rapids which the route description said was tricky, we came upon a sow bear and her cub foraging for roots on the shore at the start of the portage trail. They were deeply involved in their search for food, and did not notice us as we silently paddled along. We had to pull out into the river to keep from getting too close to them. Only after making some noise to alarm them did they become aware of our presence. They were quite startled to see us there for they jerked up and looked at us in a tense fashion before running off into the bush. After waiting an appropriate amount of time, a rather nervous noisy party investigated the portage.

After covering about 19 kilometres, camp was made at Simonson Rapids at the portage leading to McLean River. It is possible to portage to the McLean River and follow it down to the Clearwater thereby bypassing the Simonson Rapids. It would seem that bypassing Simonson would be a good procedure if one was paddling up the Clearwater. Our compass came in handy in helping us find the portage. By knowing at all times the direction in which the canoe was pointed and therefore in which way the river was flowing, the navigator was able to follow our movements on the map rather closely. (He was showing signs of improvement at this time.) Because of this procedure, we were able to detect more readily the abrupt change in direction of the river that suggested where we should look for the portage trail. It was where we expected it would be. Again, it was one of those that would have been very difficult to find if one did not have a notion as to where to look for it. We did not go down the portage trail but from the way it looked at the Clearwater end of it, it seemed to be in good shape.

Eighth day - Wednesday August 2

The description (Saskatchewan Canoe Trips, Number 40) suggested that the descent down the Simonson Rapids could be arduous. At high water, when we took them, there was no problem and the fast water was fun.

The portage around Contact Rapids begins in a sandy bank, a rather long way from the first white water, almost directly across the river from the place where the McLean River enters the Clearwater. The portage trail which is in excellent shape does not follow the river closely for it takes a cross country short cut. Contact Rapids consist of three sets of rapids spread over about a kilometre or so which makes it very time consuming to scout closely. The first set was tricky and powerful but we ran it without trouble. The second set consisted of an uninterrupted steep slope making the water powerful, and a bend in the river made it difficult to

see the cataracts at the bottom until after you were committed to running them. We bushwacked around this set and the next set that followed.

In retrospect, it would have been better had we not stopped at the beginning of Simonson Rapids the evening before but had pushed on to the portage around Contact Rapids and made camp there so that we would have been ready for the long portage the following morning.

We made camp at the historic 20 km long Methye Portage. The first European to make this crossing was Peter Pond in 1778. In later years, the voyagers used it to leave the Hudson's Bay water shed and enter the Arctic drainage basin.

Ninth day - Thursday August 3

The Methye Portage is still being used. Until recently, it was about the only way of accessing the area other than by flying in or by paddling and portaging up the river. The trail is in good shape though it could be a bit soggy when the ground is wet; say, in the spring. The walk up the Clearwater escarpment is worth the time and effort it takes to get up to the top, for the trail passes through uncharacteristically dense foliage containing immense poplar trees. The thick shrubs on the forest floor, in this location, give one the impression of being in a jungle. The overhead vegetation was so dense in many places along the trail that there wasn't enough light getting through to operate our little camera, even though it was a bright sunny day. The view of the Clearwater from the top of the valley was an impressive sight.

The Clearwater is not a particularly difficult river to do in the sense that highly developed canoeing skills are required. However, the canoeist must be mature, for a mistake in judgement could be most serious. The approach to some of the very dangerous spots on the river are sometimes very innocent looking and one cannot depend on the tell-tail far off rumble to forewarn of impending danger. Whitemud Falls is one of those places that must be approached cautiously. It is highly recommended that anyone going down the river for the first time should stop at the landing just before the flower pot island and scout ahead before going on.

The further we went down the Clearwater, the less frequent were the campsites. Though, finding an acceptable campsite was never a problem. An acceptable campsite can be found on the portage around Whitemud Falls. Stopping there would be a good idea for it would give one the opportunity to spend extra time to examine the gorge and rock formations there.



Tenth day - Friday August 4

It's a two day paddle from Whitemud Falls to Fort McMurray. All the remaining rapids between Whitemud and McMurray occur within about 20 km of Whitemud. At high water, all of these can be run without difficulty. At low water, there would be some scraping, wading and lining. The remaining half of the second last day and the last day was flat water canoeing.

Sulphur springs were observed at one point on the shore of the river. They were quite potent and they scented the air for several miles which followed.

The scenery along the river continually changed. The open Jack Pine landscape gradually seemed to disappear or at least become less evident. Natural fields with tall grass were occasionally observed along the last 55 to 65 km of the river. Our last night on the river was spent along side one of these fields. This was the only spot on the entire trip where deer tracks were observed.

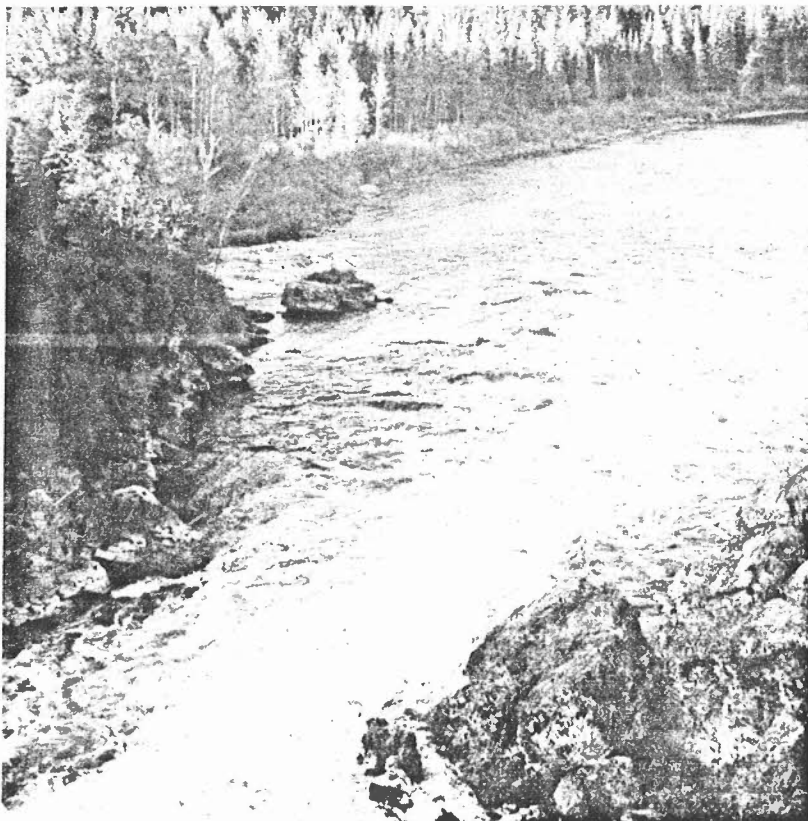
The segment of river between Cascade Rapids and Fort McMurray is accessible by motor boat which probably accounted for the abrupt drop in wildlife sighting. In addition, a large number of trapper's camps (some occupied) can be seen along with debris such as pull tops, bottles, plastic cups and gum wrappers at the campsites.

Eleventh Day - Saturday August 5

A few kilometres above Fort McMurray, a layer of something black was observed in the eroded shore gravel. This asphalt like substance was tar sand. Sightings of this material became more frequent as we progressed down the river.

At McMurray there is a large docking facility along the shore of the Clearwater served by a railway. A couple of tugs and several barges were anchored there. Some of the barges were loaded with oil drums and others with trucks and assorted heavy equipment. It would appear that this place is used as a staging area for exploration activities down the Athabaska River.

On that last day, it rained steadily all day. Thunder storms rolled over us and lightning forced us off the river a couple of times. The country up there is made of sand and gravel except at the float plane base where it is made of mud on rainy days. We were unable to bring our vehicle right up to the dock for fear of getting stuck, and we had to walk back and forth through the stuff to load up. By the time we were finished loading, it was late in the day and we were tired, wet and muddy; we were quite a sight. However, for some unknown reason, one of the hotels let us in, and after showering and changing we resembled something more civilized.





December 27-31 WILDERNESS CAMPING EXPEDITION

organizers: Sandy Richardson 416-429-3944
Cam Salisbury 416-498-8660

A major winter camping trip into a rugged wilderness area such as the Adirondack, Laurentian, or La Cloche Mountains, for experienced winter campers. The participants will plan the trip as a group. We will meet together before Christmas to chose a location, determine the type of trip we want, plan the logistics, etc. Limit of 6 people.

(Note: Because we will be planning the trip as a group, it is imperative that anyone interested contact the organizers immediately.)



January 20 WINTER PHOTOGRAPHY TRIP

Organizers: Rick Paleske 416-691-9074
Sandy Richardson 416-429-3944
book between January 1 and 13

A day of cross-country skiing with the emphasis on winter wilderness photography along Eels Creek, north of Peterborough. Suitable for intermediate skiers. Limit of 8.

January 27-28 WINTER CAMPING at CYPRUS LAKE

organizer: Roger Smith 519-433-6558
book between December 30 and January 15

This is a trip for novices or better. After a 2 km ski we will set up a base camp. Two 1-day cross-country skiing trips will be taken along a scenic accessible section of the Bruce Trail. Limit of 10 people.

January 21 CROSS COUNTRY SKI TRIP near COLBORNE

organizer: Glenn Spence 416-355-3506
book between December 28 and January 9

This cross-country ski day will appeal to novices who want to upgrade their skills by tackling some hills. We will ski 5-10 km depending on our party. Limit 10 skiers.

January 13 SKIING IN THE GANARASKA FOREST
(north of Newcastle)

organizers: Dave & Anneke Auger 705-324-9359
book between December 18 and January 4

This trip is for novice and intermediate skiers, and especially for families. The trails lead through a beautiful pine forest with some scenic vistas. There is a choice of 3 trails and we will divide the group if necessary. Limit of 15 skiers so bring the whole family.

February 17-18 WINTER CAMPING IN SILENT LAKE
PROVINCIAL PARK (between Peterborough and Bancroft)

organizers: Rob Butler 416-487-2282
Jim Greenacre 416-759-9959
book between January 15 and February 6

From the parking area we will ski a short distance and pitch camp. We will ski in the quietness of the almost wilderness trails on Saturday afternoon and Sunday. Ice-fish if you like. The trails call for experienced skiers and the limit is 10 campers, but others may join the skiing if they prefer the southerly motels at Apsley or the northern accomodation at Bancroft.

February 24-25 WINTER CAMPING IN ALGONQUIN
PARK

organizer: Herb Pohl 416-637-7632
book between January 26 and February 12

Here is a chance to visit Algonquin Park in winter. From a base camp at Mew Lake we will have a chance to explore the Highland Hiking Trail. Cross-country skiing will be very demanding, so you may prefer snowshoes on this intermediate winter camping trip. Limit of 6 campers.

February 10-11 WINTER CAMPING at LONG LAKE

organizers: Gord Fenwick 416-431-3343
Pat Shipton
book between January 15 and 29

This trip in the Long Lake canoe area north of Peterborough near Burleigh Falls offers an excellent chance for intermediate to experienced winter campers to ski, snowshoe, camp out and experience the joys of wilderness in winter. Limit of 8 people.





sandbanks park

Story by Claire Brigden
Photos by Sandy Richardson

Those of you, who for one reason or another, were unable to be in two places at once (on the W.C.A. September weekend) and who missed the outing to Sandbanks Provincial Park, missed a very good thing indeed.

Now mind you, 450 million years ago, the whole place was an inland sea, and the Park had not at that time been established. All the little venterilobites and ostracoderms which died at this time, turned up their calciferous shells and sank to the bottom until the salty graveyard resembled nothing so much as a vast underwater limestone quarry which reached from beyond Cobourg to Kingston and back, and on top of which 30 feet of Collingwood shale later had the effrontery to deposit itself.

Various ice ages eventually swept to and fro over this sea bed until the last one trounced away about 13,000 years ago leaving a great mess of limestone soil mulched with clay, lying flat on its back in Lake Iroquois; and as the last of the ice lifted its snowy skirts after it, the floor of the lake, like a great hippo released from beneath an iceberg, heaved itself up and part of it rose above lake level, where it shook the water towards the St. Lawrence, and dried itself off under a fitful sun.

What was left, among other things, was Prince Edward County, shaped something like a tattered flag blowing east, with two holes in it (East and West Lakes) and on its surface, over the shale and limestone, a thin deposit of sand, particularly prevalent along the western shoreline.

Sand can be very accomodating stuff, and it duly supported a boreal forest of spruce, tamarack, birches, poplar and willow, which gradually included maples, pines and basswood as things warmed up, and finally a few oaks, hickories and walnuts which migrated north, but white pine predominated in magestic grandeur on this thin, nutrient poor soil.

Bronzed members of Homo Sapiens appeared upon this splendid forest scene armed with fishing nets, hooks lines and sinkers, and this Creel and Arrow Club established camps along the shores and enjoyed the finest ichthyological harvest on the Great Lakes. They were wise people, these dark men, for they tampered not with the forests nor did they flout their power over the sandy veneer of the terrain beneath their feet.



Alas, in the early 1700s a new and dangerous tribe of different bent and colour made camp here and self-righteously proceeded to chop down all the pines in sight for the masts for their precious ships which were built to transport more Palefaces in, to cut down more pines to build more - - etc. - - etc., leaving dangerously bare the fine veneer of sand, until by 1850, when ship building fell off and every pine was gone (or is it the other way around?), these enterprising people turned to farming, finding fruit trees and grains and grasses particularly adaptable to the soil. Along the windswept shore in two specific places however, the settlers fought a losing battle against the awesome forces of wave and wind, and Sandbanks and Outlet Parks were quickly born. (Depending upon wind factor, waves move with a force downward equal to half their horizontal length, so that a 15 m wave in a hurricane would gouge 7 m down and scoop sand inland for its lesser fellows to further manipulate. The outer ridge of sand along the shore was thus formed, and inland, the wind alone took its pleasure.)

So again the sand was accomodating, and humped and heaved itself into great ridges and crests at the whims of these forces, and between 1850 and 1881 the settlers watched in helpless dismay these sandy dunes ebb and flow and surge and swell where never a hill had stood before, in the face of the vagaries of water and wind. For the first time in over a century, the people left Sandbanks and Outlet alone and water and air held the ace and king of spades in a strong trump hand.

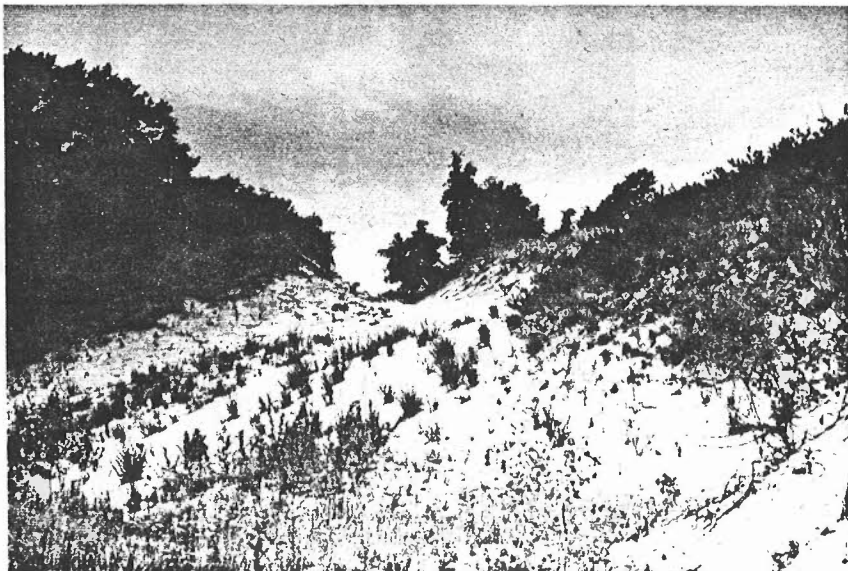
All was not completely lost, however, for every hill has its dale, and every ridge its valley. The low spots were scooped out (by the wind) to lake level, and as the great waters of Lake Ontario rose and fell with rains and melting snows, so did the waters in these little pannes, and mini-marshes fought to hold their own in the leas of the dunes, supporting the most delicate and beautiful plant and animal life.

In the vanguard of the fray (on the windward side of the ridges), wormwood, narrow grass and Carolina poplar faced dead into the wind and defied its tyranny. On the crests of the dunes, heart-leaved willow, sand cherry and wild grape spread-eagled themselves in low profile to hold and maintain tenacious footholds along with red osier dogwood, Canada wild rye grass and false Solomon's seal. In the bunkers behind these front lines, the marsh plants held their ammunition in reserve, and so the battle of nature ebbed and flowed.

Since the 1920s, Man has made palliative attempts to stop the erosion with snow fences (futile), and plantings of varieties of trees and grasses also failed. Scotch pine, poplar and locust have fared a little better, and are standing guard today. Finally in 1973 the Government tightened its hold on the whole area and drew up a Master Plan and controlled and delineated human activities in this unique and fragile corner of Ontario.

(Of course, if we were really doing Nature a favour, we would bulldoze the whole place level, lay down cocoa and burlap matting, add old leaves and pine needles and more matting and re-plant the trees of 300 years ago, but the Government has other aims most of which are very painful to contemplate by sensitive people, so like the ingenuous snail, I tend to pull in my horns and pretend that the Master Plan can't happen, and go about my business, protected by a shell of pleasant memories).

It was a beautiful day when we were there, (if overcast and windy) and 10 of us tramped across the dunes digesting the sounds and sights and smells. Rough winged hawks slid across the sky - flap, flap, g-l-i-d-e, flap, flap, g-l-i-d-e - in



the manner of all accipiters, and kestrels and pigeon hawks besport themselves, hovering, cruising, careening past, as is the want of all falcons. Only the circling, wheeling, soaring buteos were missing for those great birds depend so much upon special wind currents and updrafts for their transportation and hunting enterprises.

I left my compatriots at the crest of a 12m high dune, for a flash of feathers caught my eye, and wended my way obliquely down into a grove of poplars. The grey cheeked thrush, so sensitive and alert, was trying to keep foliage between itself and intruders to its privacy, as it sought grubs and insects. Farther along, chipping sparrows burst upwards, and farther still a white throated sparrow with its school colours of white and yellow on its cap, and the spectacular paint job under its chin, scratched and hopped among the leaves. Grasshoppers abounded everywhere and they raised in me a dim hope. I sat myself down in a lea hillside with my lunch spread before me and admired the variety of low ground plants, and sniffed the subtly perfumed air, and waited. Munching. Waiting. Ah ha! Sure enough. A hawk cruised into view and lit on the tip of a long-dead pine. Slowly I traded sardine can for binoculars, elbows on knees for greater stability, and brought the hawk into focus. It was a young pigeon hawk, the down of babyhood still evident in the wispy tufts on his crown, ruffling himself on his breezy lofty perch. He knew I was there, but I never moved. Statue. The old childhood game. Move and you're vulnerable. The hawk relaxed and eyed the little dried up bed of sphagnum and grasses before me. His fabulous eyesight missed nothing and he suddenly launched himself and treated me to the most spectacular flypast low over the ground, 5 m away, and swerved over my left

shoulder. I knew he was behind me somewhere perched on another pine probably, but move I dared not. Sure enough, he cruised back to his first perch and repeated the whole show twice more. He missed the grasshoppers every time, but that is one of the frustrations of youth (learning to cook it up for yourself) and he finally headed for richer hunting grounds with his parents who were higher overhead, searching for hapless small birds or even careless mice.

I moved on inland and strolled about, admiring the great array of grasses, bushes, flowers and seedlings which fought independently and collectively to hold their roots and hold the sand. They do it so slowly, patiently, each in his own special moisture zone from standing water (in the pannes) to water line, to dryer footing. They keep such a low profile that once I crouched very close to the ground to get a flower's eye view of a miniature meadow of fringed gentian and

grass-leaved goldenrod. It was so beautiful with all this brilliant blue and yellow amidst the green, encompassed in an area the size of a living room floor, that I thought it the most perfect spot in all the Park, and I can see it yet, the flowers so short, so courageous, so proud with no gardener to mollycoddle them nor force them into the artificiality of a man-made garden where plants are encouraged to "perform" much in the manner of tigers at the zoo or lions in the circus.

Well, there was more, much, much more, but time marched on and the heavens lowered, combining to steer us back to our "No Space Age". We left the delicate purple gerardias and the lovely tiny, tiny flowered (yellow) silverweed (silver on the underside) and the cattails and arrow grass and grasshoppers and sandpipers and pebbles and the ubiquitous and eternal sand. But we have the memories. We have the memories. And we will surely go back another time.



wanapitei river

Herb Pohl

The weekend did not appear to be very promising. The resident WCA weatherman showed concern about strong winds, rain, cold, possibly snow. Perhaps because of this, only two canoes showed up at the appointed hour and after waiting for 2½ hours Ken Ellison, Stuart McIlwraith and myself set off amid a mixture of drizzle and the occasional ray of sun on a river which was rain swollen and murky. The first few miles proved to be monotonous lowlands with little to recommend it except perhaps hunting for we saw a number of derelict huts which we presumed to be the occasional abode of the mighty nimrods. Before too long the pace on the river quickened as we came first to some mild rapids but soon to more worrisome spots as well. We had to carry around a couple of waterfalls, dutifully recorded as rapids on the map, the second of which caused us some anxiety since it came at the end of a chute of absolutely smooth rock with the only reasonable stopping point a mere fifteen feet from the lip of the drop. Another mile later we came to some rapids which were terminated by a waterfall with perhaps a 2-3 m drop. It was a rather appealing spot, the more so because the sun peeked through at this time with a little more conviction and brought contrast to the brilliant colour scheme. Because of this, and perhaps a reluctance to work longer hours than absolutely necessary, the crew meekly suggested that this might make a suitable place to terminate our labours for the day. In a very short time the tents were standing in one of several fine spots and the three of us applied ourselves to the second most time consuming activity - and by far Stewart's favorite - the cooking of supper. It's perhaps the wrong juxtaposition to mention it at this point, but the waters of the river are not potable, since Sudbury's sewage outfall is just 35 miles to the north. (Being extraordinarily resourceful we were prepared, and had brought along a waterbag).

Throughout the evening a cold north wind blew in little dancing snowflakes but just before sunset the western sky cleared and sunshine bathed the tree tops. I never fail to get excited about the serene beauty these last fading rays convey on even a very ordinary landscape. The brilliant yellow and orange of the tree tops was sharply contrasted by the setting darkness in the river valley and I rushed about trying to capture some of the mood on film - vain hope, no doubt. In the meantime

Ken and Stewart showed a greater feel for the practical side of things by gradually eliminating a small mountain of spaghetti with nary a burp between bites. About two seconds after cleaning the pots and putting things in order Ken declared that he had to get into the tent to fix up his blanket inside his sleeping bag, something which apparently takes great concentration. I was rather cold myself but since I didn't have a blanket to attend to I decided to freeze outside while pretending to carry on a conversation with Stewart. When it became too difficult to keep my tongue out of harm's way between my chattering teeth I mentioned that in view of the early start we better retire early for the second day was likely to be long and tiring.

When we turned in Saturday night it was with some hope for a nice day on Sunday for it seemed to clear in the West. It was with some dismay, therefore, that we heard the prattling of frozen rain pellets during the night. When I went outside in the grey morning to delineate my territory a la Farley Mowat, there were only faint traces of frozen precipitation. Apart from a few forlorn snowflakes drifting from the grey sky and a rather chilling temperature it was rather nice - sort of. After a plentiful breakfast which everyone agreed was best cooked in the shelter of my tent, we set off down the river. I was glad I had remounted the pogies on my paddle otherwise my hands would have been freezing. Just two miles below our campsite the river divides into two arms, one flowing in an easterly direction, the other, narrower channel which we chose, flowing in a southerly direction into Thompson Bay which itself is an extension of the Western French River channel. From Thompson Bay we proceeded in an easterly direction; between the northerly wind and snow squalls, conditions were not ideal but, ever the optimist, Ken declared several times without prompting, that he much preferred snow to rain. Somehow I was left with the distinct impression that he actually favoured neither of the two options.

Once we reached Ox Island we discovered that in the more confined river channel it required more effort to move upstream. We had to portage around one set of rapids and made lunch soon afterward. It was during this time that the cloud cover gradually broke up and the sun emerged. Two miles upstream we encountered "First Rapids" and

with a huff and a puff managed to make it without portaging. Recollet Falls, another mile further upstream, gave us an appreciation of the enormous amount of water which flows down the river constantly. Because of the high water level and the consequent turbulence we could not get to the foot of the portage - actually a boat-ladder - and instead landed on one of the two mid-stream islands. Putting in at the top was a bit tricky with the current dividing to flow on either side of the island and we paddled hard to get to safe territory. The next two miles to Dry Pine Bay were easily the hardest paddling we had done in some time and we had to use every eddy to make it against the strong current. When we finally made it to the campsite we had covered twenty miles and found our muscles protesting just a bit. With the sun nearly setting we had to rush through the usual routine. We were camping at the foot of Stony Rapids which I had portaged during the previous Labour Day weekend. Since then, the water level in the Bay had risen at least 2-3 feet.

Once again we went to bed early, without having lit a fire and fully expecting a cold night. The next morning dawned much later than the previous day, in fact the sun was shining when I started the daily routine. With the help of a noisy tin plate I also managed to get the attention of the other members of the party. Somewhat later than planned and with a listlessness which probably could be traced to the previous day's exertion we set off in a northerly direction toward the mouth of the Murdock river. Just past highway #64 we had to lift over an obstruction and it was then that we realized just how stiff we were. We had covered only four miles in what seemed like hours. The Murdock river is one long glacial groove which runs almost perfectly straight for 15 km with little change in the scenery. It was this feature which made the day less than exciting despite the brilliant sunshine. Following a brief snack after 15 km of paddling we pushed on to complete the last 7 km but ran into some unexpected portages and a stiff head wind. When we finally finished back on highway #69 it was four o'clock and I for one was tired. It had been an enjoyable weekend, partly because none of us had made the trip before and so we experienced everything together, and partly because two canoes make for a closer relationship than a larger group. I hope to be on many more trips like this.



Madawaska River

In the last issue we reported apparent renewed interest on the part of Ontario Hydro in developing power sites on the Madawaska River between Palmer Rapids and Griffith, despite the section having been designated a "park reserve".

The "park reserve" on the Madawaska acknowledges Ontario Hydro's flooding rights and power site reserves at Highland Falls and Racket Rapids (Rifle Chute). In July Ontario Hydro approved studies on 17 powersites up to the completion of environmental studies.

Another threat to the Madawaska is recreational abuse. The MNR introduced its interim management programme this year to control such abuse.

Niagara Escarpment

The Coalition on the Niagara Escarpment (CONE) has been formed by various groups, associations and individuals across Ontario, under the auspices of the FON.

The Ontario Government passed legislation in 1973, its intent being to "provide for the maintenance of the Niagara Escarpment and land in its vicinity subsequently as a continuous natural environment, and to ensure only such development occurs as is compatible with the natural environment".

CONE, who is working to bring some sanity into the issue, will undertake massive information and educational programmes. The future of the Escarpment does not only concern the residents in the planning area, but all citizens on Ontario and Canada.

Support for CONE's work is particularly critical at this time, and all help would be warmly welcomed. For further information contact: CONE, 1262 Don Mills Rd., Ste 76, Don Mills Ontario M3B 2W7

INCO SULPHUR EMISSIONS

The Honourable Harry Parrott, Minister of the Environment, has responded to the Conservation Committee's letter of concern over the high levels of sulphur dioxide permitted by the new pollution control order on INCO in Sudbury.

Considerable public attention has been given to the maximum allowable emission of sulphur dioxide as specified in the Inco Control Order. This is a maximum level and my Ministry is requiring the Company to manage and control emissions of sulphur dioxide based on daily meteorological data when indications are that the environment may not be able to cope with this upper limit.

I concur with you that the acid rain phenomenon is a serious problem; however, the available data we have currently, strongly indicates that the acidic condition observed in Ontario is an extension of the conditions in the northeastern sector of the continent. Emissions of oxides of nitrogen and sulphur from industrial areas in the United States and to a much smaller extent from smelting operations in Ontario and Quebec, contribute to a global problem.

I will, however, be reviewing the entire Inco Limited abatement program as further information is assessed. To this extent then, the current Control Order is an interim measure which reflects the best available information.

CANTRAKON PROPOSAL THWARTS PROPER ESCARPMENT PLANNING

The Conservation Council of Ontario, of which the W.C.A. is a member, believes that political gamesmanship may be thwarting the original intent of the Government of Ontario to conserve the Niagara Escarpment.

In the wake of the great public outcry over Escarpment affairs in the past few months, the Council today submitted a brief to the Niagara Escarpment Commission calling for a concerted political WILL to guarantee that the original aims of Bill 129 are not completely lost.

The brief gives solid support to the Niagara Escarpment Commission as the most sensible vehicle for overseeing the development of a comprehensive and uniform plan - a plan that recognizes the total Escarpment as a significant Provincial resource and a continuous natural environment.

The Council charged the Commission with defining new boundaries for the planning area which were flexible enough to include those natural features crucial to the area and urged it to be resolute in resisting those pressures seeking to prevent a fair and reasonable plan from being worked out.

When the final Plan is adopted, a new Agency should be set up to oversee the Plan's implementation. That Agency would facilitate both the gradual acquisition of lands for public ownership and the strict enforcement of the Plan in cooperation and accordance with the Municipalities' Official Plans.

Finally, the Conservation Council urged the Government to accept a greater share of responsibility for securing an uninterrupted footpath for the Bruce Trail and for operation of the Trail as well. The location of the optimum Bruce Trail route should appear in the final Escarpment Plan as a long-term objective to be reached through negotiation and compromise.

MADAWASKA RIVER USER'S QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name: _____ Address: _____
2. Name of Club: _____
3. Type of craft normally paddled: a. Open canoe _____ b. Closed canoe _____ c. Kayak _____ d. Other (specify) _____
4. Number of days use of Madawaska River per year (typical): _____
5. Section(s) of river used: _____
6. Type of use: a. White water instruction course _____ b. Single day use _____ c. Day use (with overnight camping) _____ d. Tripping (overnight, gear in boat) _____
7. If overnight use, was it: a. weekend _____ b. longer _____
8. Typical size of group: _____
9. Which access points have you used and for what purpose e.g. camping, car shuttling etc. Please specify _____
10. Reason for river use: Very Important Important Not Important
a. White water recreation _____
b. Wilderness type experience _____
For questions 11. and 12., please use a separate sheet of paper.
11. Have you any complaints or concerns about the present use of the river from your experience? _____
12. Suggestions for improvement: _____
Signature: _____

NORTHERN WILD RIVERS SEMINAR

(The Ministry of Indian and Northern Affairs held a seminar on "Northern Wild Rivers: Their Preservation and Use" at Jasper Park Lodge in Jasper National Park last September. Gord Fenwick attended the seminar on behalf of the WCA, and the following is his report of what took place.

The Wild River Seminar was hosted by the Honourable Hugh Faulkner, Minister of Northern and Indian Affairs in conjunction with Parks Canada in the hope that valuable input and support from those attending the meeting would serve as a worthwhile first step to the formulation and establishment of a distinctively Canadian "Wild River Heritage" system with various categories of protected status (such as Wilderness, Wild, Historic, Recreational...) for some of the finest examples of our Wilderness and Heritage rivers. The approximately 70 invited participants included officials and elected members of the federal, U.S., Provincial & Territorial Governments; non governmental interest groups, and individuals who have made significant contributions to river conservation and enjoyment.

The program started in earnest Saturday morning with an address by the Hon. Hugh Faulkner followed by three key speakers presenting papers on the following subjects:

- (i) Resource Use & Conflicts by Dr. K. Schliefer
- (ii) Canadian Wild River System, Legal & Administrative Considerations by M.S. Whettington, Dept. of Political Science, Carlton University.
- (iii) Wild & Scenic Rivers, Planning & Management Approaches by Robert L. Eastman, Outdoor Recreation Planner, National Park Service, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Washington D.C.

With much food for thought from the morning's presentations, and considerable pre-seminar background information we broke into three small groups to discuss the various aspects and problems of the following three case studies of wilderness rivers:

- (i) The Churchill River, is a possible candidate for a wild river system under provincial jurisdiction and faces the uncertainty of native land claims, resources and hydro electric development. Due to some of the adverse effects of dams and a strong lobby group the hydro projects on the Churchill have been shelved by the Manitoba government with a shift to coal hydro generation to meet the province's increasing needs for electricity for the present time, at least.
- (ii) The Coppermine River, with its entire watershed within territorial lands is directly under the jurisdiction of the federal government.
- (iii) The Yukon River, flowing through the Yukon Territory and Alaska requires international cooperation between our two countries if it is to be kept a wild river.

On Sunday morning a spokesman from each of the three groups gave a summary of points of concern both specific and general for the consideration of the Honourable Hugh Faulkner. One of the topics to be discussed was the possibility of establishing a Canadian Wild River System.

Some of the comments presented by the groups were as follows:

- (1) The establishment and maintenance of a river system will depend on the co-operation of Federal, Provincial, and Territorial Governments as well as local citizens and citizens groups in those affected areas.

- (2) The rights of native peoples to hunt and fish in their traditional life styles should be respected.
- (3) A variety of river classifications will serve to indicate the intended use of the protected river or river section.

Such classifications could be as follows:

- (i) Wild or Wilderness: maintenance of mainly isolated northern rivers in their wilderness state as part of our heritage, to permit research with respect to our natural environment, and to permit low intensity non mechanized travel.
- (ii) Historical: to maintain the historical aspect of the river.
- (iii) Recreational: for recreational use which would accommodate moderate use, with river sections often located near more populous areas; this would give opportunities for learning of such skills as canoeing, swimming, and generally offer an enjoyable outing to many people in a country setting.
- (4) For such a system to have appeal it must have something to offer to all Canadians not just an elite few who have the time and money to travel to distant and isolated rivers.
- (5) It must be sufficiently extensive and diverse in character so as not to cause overuse and deterioration of the environment and wilderness experience as a result of advertising of such areas to recreationalists in Canada and the United States.

Those of us present at the conference felt it was very worthwhile and certainly our executive appreciated the invitation extended to the Wilderness Canoe Association to participate in such an important conference.

Gord Fenwick

paddle, portage, and the great howned owl

Sandie Barnard

Last July the Missinabi River offered incredible challenges, wonderful runs and a few hours of slogging through mud swamp portages. The brochure from the Canadian Nature Tours arrived with one of my WCA bulletins and I signed up for a seven day trip on the section of the Missinabi from Peterbell to Mattice. At the time of sending in my deposit I wondered where the emphasis of the trip would lie -- canoeing or nature study. I'm an ardent canoeist and an interested but casual naturalist, and I hoped I hadn't signed up with the wrong group. Needless worry. The motley twelve who assembled by the edge of the train tracks at Peterbell were all interested in both aspects of the adventure, and there was an almost even split of those who were primarily for the river and those who had come for the naturalists' delights of the Ontario north.

The water was very high and the sets we ran were fast, occasionally tricky. One set in particular, Calf Rapids, had high rocks, normally visible, hidden by a few inches of water; it required the full skills of both paddlers to navigate the stretch successfully. The true partnership of river canoeists has always attracted me, and this trip required both people in the canoe to work with skill, speed, and precision.

High water brings with it increased volume of water and the attendant problem of swamping. Several times the standing waves we had to take caused us to swamp and I had a hasty trip to shore just above Thunderhouse Falls. We saved the canoe thanks to the determination of my partner and the luck of finding a rock to stand on in the middle of the river

The trip leaders were fine woodsmen and paddlers. Frank Longstaff is a man who knows rivers well and could accurately assess the skills of his group. White water instruction was given informally and by example but he made sure that everyone felt

confident with what he was doing or else alternate paddling arrangements were made. Peter Skoggard, a good naturalist and eclectic musician was Frank's partner and they worked well together. I assume the leadership of all CNT trips is just as carefully chosen and balanced.

The river finally stopped us at Brunswick Lake. After three days of persistent and heavy rain the water was higher than we could safely manage and we spent the last of the trip exploring Brunswick

Lake. It was a sound decision: the rapids ahead were likely to be higher than we could run and the portages were long and thigh deep with heavy black mud. The trip members, even those from as far as Minneapolis and Edmonton plan to come again to finish that section.

The Missinabi taught us a lot last summer. The days of white water canoeing were a delight; the decisions we made and care we took were valuable and hard components of any river canoeist's education. In addition, the seven moose we spotted, often at close range, added to the atmosphere of genuine remoteness. One of the men from Edmonton repeatedly commented on the incredible size and beauty of Brunswick Lake, and only then did I realize the water wealth of Ontario.

I recommend the Canadian Nature Tours canoe trips for those with considerable canoeing experience, and, with observance of the guidelines of the trip descriptions, for those with a more limited background. I'm going out with the CNT again and I recommend this group, run under the auspices of the FON to club members who want good canoeing, reasonable prices, and keen but not forced naturalist input. As ever there are the glorious nights of full moons, good food, and the eerie hooting of the owls of the north woods

products and services

Coleman Craft Canoes, of hand-layed-up fiberglass, are available in 12'8", 14'8", and 16' L.O.A., with either a lake 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 viewing films of our canoes and discussing their features. Bill Coleman: (519) 623-1804/1894. Shop located at 333 Dundas St. (Hwy. 8), Cambridge (Galt) Ontario.

Canoe for sale. A kevlar 18'6" Sawyer Charger, one year old and in good condition is available from Dave Shragge, R.R. #1, Newmarket, Ontario, L3Y 4V8. Phone (416) 895-1088.

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.

Water-proof Camera Bags: John Cross apologizes to those who got left out in the last batch of these bags. He has a new lot in. Army surplus gas-mask bags, rolled seams and snap closure, tough rubber. Write 106 Strathnairn Ave. Toronto, or call (416) 654-9805.

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 \$10 ___ student under 18
\$15 ___ adult

for membership in the WILDERNESS CANOE ASSOCIATION,
I understand that this entitles me to receive The Wilderness Canoeist, to vote at meetings of the Association, and gives me the opportunity to participate in W.C.A. outings and activities (together with my family and guests).

NAME: _____ ADDRESS: _____

_____ phone _____

Please check one of the following: () new member application
() renewal for 1979.

Notes: -This membership will expire January 31, 1980.
-Please send completed form and cheque (payable to the Wilderness Canoe Association) to the membership committee chairman (address above).