



the wilderness canoeist

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Revival of the O-Daw-Ban



A comparison of the narrow na-bug-o-daw-ban (translation - flat sleigh) and the wider and runnered o-kad-o-daw-ban

An era in Canadian winter travel has recently passed. Just a few generations ago the hand-pulled o-daw-ban served as the chief form of winter freight conveyance in the forested regions of Canada. Originating with the North American Indian, these sleighs predate the arrival of Europeans by untold centuries. Today as a commercial transport device, the o-daw-ban is virtually replaced by motor vehicles, aircraft and the snowmobile. Authentic examples have become nearly as rare as the large birch bark ra-bes-ka trade canoes which formed the basis for summer commerce and communication in the early days of our country.

In the winter on a lesser scale, the o-daw-ban played an equivalent role to the birch bark trade canoe. Once freeze-up came the voyageur and coureur de bois certainly did not hibernate. One important task was the visitation of outlying Indian camps to induce native trappers to come to the post and trade. These snowshoe trips often lasted several weeks requiring o-daw-ban to transport the necessary provisions.

In some areas when fur trade competition was keen, o-daw-ban were also used to carry trade goods directly to the Indian camps. Preoccupied by trapping and hunting, this convenient "door to door" service all but eliminated any incentive for native trappers to trade at opposition posts before spring break-up. Not only did the trappers benefit from trade goods brought by o-daw-ban at a time when they were most needed, but the voyageurs were often

able to secure the bulk of the returns from the fall trapping which accounted for most of the yearly fur production. The furs were usually transported to the post by o-daw-ban on the return trip.

Extreme competition greatly increased winter visitations and in some instances prompted trading companies to upgrade winter snowshoe trails for regular o-daw-ban freighting to Indian winter camps. These trails were known as bibon-o-meedina. Trail improvements on the most important routes included marking the optimal alignment, clearing this route of fallen timber and brushing slush holes with evergreen boughs. Small open creeks would be bridged and sometimes log and brush fill was used to smooth out the worst of the rough spots to permit the hauling of heavy loads. Bibon-o-meekina radiating from the former Hudson's Bay Company Bear Island Post on Lake Temagami, Ontario, upgraded by a colourful employee named Petrant in the 1800's, serve as an excellent example of what could be accomplished. Some of these still exist providing evidence of the former days of o-daw-ban freighting by the Hudson's Bay Company.

Despite an inferior freight capacity compared to trade canoes, o-daw-ban were sometimes used to transport supplies along canoe routes to trading posts. A recent example was the provisioning of the H.B.C. Marten Falls Post on the Albany River from Nakina, Ontario, shortly after the turn of the century. To save time and avoid being caught by freeze-up, the last canoe brigade for the

season usually cached half its load on a long portage to be retrieved by a fleet of o-daw-ban in the winter.

Not all voyageurs were employed making rendezvous with native people at outlying winter camps or freighting supplies. A very select group were chosen for the task of winter communication between trading posts. It was their task to carry the official company correspondence including news of changes in fur price, staff and trading strategies as well as personal mail and small parcels sent by friends or relatives coming often as far away as Europe. Voyageurs undertaking this type of work for the H.B.C. were known as packeteers because they were responsible for transporting this winter mail packet.

Many round trip mail runs exceeded 500 miles requiring great strength and endurance. The packeteers hauling their o-daw-ban often faced the grueling task of breaking a fresh trail on snowshoes for virtually the whole route, as there existed no packed snowshoe trails between trading posts in those days.

Twenty miles was an average days work. This rate of travel necessitated continuous labour from first light till darkness and travel during periods of extreme cold when the o-daw-ban were difficult to pull. Even worse, travel was occasionally necessary in thaw when little could be kept dry and heavy slush loaded the tops of snowshoes, making for great misery and hardship.

In earlier times, overnight accommodation was obtained in the rudest of shelters, the o-buck-wan. This shelter consisted of a simple tarpaulin lean-to placed before a fire. To stay warm at night it was necessary to chop and haul into camp at least a half a cord of firewood before retiring. Rest was not without interruption as the fire would have to be restocked every few hours.

This class of voyageur hauled a light outfit to increase speed. Included were the barest of essentials: rifle, axe, knife, frying pan, pail, snare wire, spare babiche, flour, soda, sugar, beans, grease, tea, two blankets, one change of clothes, several pairs of moccasins, and tarpaulin, as well as the mail bag. Provisions were kept to a minimum as animals and birds were intended to be shot and snared en route. If game was sparse and the snares set overnight failed, starvation was a real possibility.

Unlike summer canoe brigades these voyageurs often travelled for many weeks alone or with just a single partner. The routes they followed were the summer canoe routes, except for shortcuts or extended detours around weak ice. Breaking through ice and drowning was a common cause of death. A normal load was normally no more than 100 pounds, but under ideal conditions, these voyageurs were capable of hauling 300 pounds all day on their o-daw-ban which they themselves referred to as traîneaux.

Feats of exceptional snowshoe and o-daw-ban prowess were rarely witnessed as few observers were capable of sustaining the rate of travel or enduring the hardships necessary to accompany the very best of these men. The voyageurs and Indians themselves had considerably more admiration for these heroic man-testing accomplishments than for the more mundane labour of the canoe brigade. Certainly the names of McKenzie, Batisse, Polson, McLaren and Bonin will be long remembered in this regard.

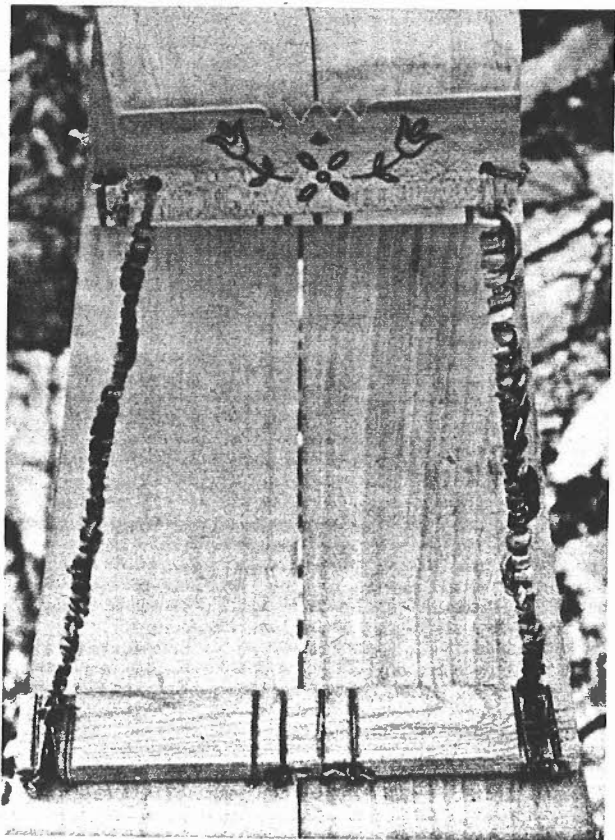
Some accomplishments of the older generation of voyageurs and coureur de bois border on the unbelievable, particularly those of Laguimonière. During the winter of 1815-1816 Laguimonière travelled alone approximately 2,000 miles from the Red River Settlement near present day Winnipeg to Montreal bringing news that the colony had been re-established and was in imminent peril at the hands of the North West Company. Contracted by Lord Selkirk to carry several letters back to the Red River Settlement, Laguimonière reached the western end of Lake Superior before being waylaid and robbed of them by Ottawa Indians working in collusion with Charles Grant of the Fond du Lac Post of the North West Company. The accomplishment of even being able to make the initial journey in the winter without the aid of modern maps is considerable. Today the specific details of his route or for that matter the principal trans-Canada snowshoe and o-daw-ban route from Montreal to the west remain largely an unsolved mystery. Certainly open water and unsafe ice could not have permitted a precise following of the summer canoe route.

Probably the most significant role for the o-daw-ban was its use for transport by native people who lived off the land by hunting and trapping. Before the advent of the snowmobile some form of this device was almost as necessary as snowshoes. The designs

that were developed have subsequently been modified by the introduction of European technology, particularly nails, screws and wire. Likewise several changes came about as a result of the more widespread use of dog teams for hauling around the turn of the century. For the purpose of this discussion, we shall focus exclusively on the most common hand-drawn models in their aboriginal form.

Two basic native o-daw-ban designs have evolved through centuries of development. The first and most important was a design that could be pulled behind a snowshoer breaking a fresh trail in deep, untracked powder snow as would be the case for mid-winter hunting and trapping. This o-daw-ban had to be extremely narrow for easy hauling, yet possess enough surface area to support a heavy load in the soft snow of a fresh snowshoe track. For these conditions, the North American Indian perfected the na-bug-o-daw-ban or "flat" sleigh. An example is shown in the photo. You will note that the children's hill sliding toboggan bears some resemblance to the na-bug-o-daw-ban. However, at least a half a dozen important design features are lacking making hill sliding models most unsuitable for hauling on a fresh snowshoe trail. Like the birch bark canoe, the na-bug-o-daw-ban at its finest, was a mastery of both functional and artistic form.

When travel conditions permitted, a second and more efficient class of o-daw-ban could be used which the Ojibwa called o-kad-o-daw-ban or "legged" sleigh. These sleighs were different from na-bug-o-daw-ban in that they consisted of two narrow widely spaced runners with an elevated carrying bed usually supported by cross bars and raves connected to the runners by vertical legs or staunchions (see photo). When these sleighs were used for hauling canoes over frozen lakes in late spring, a low carrying bed was preferred and thus the staunchions could be built as projections of the runners rather than separate members mortised to the runners.



Osh-tig-wan Na-bug-o-daw-ban (head of the flat sleigh) showing a typical floral pattern and a common method for knotting the Wingvas (the babiche tiedowns holding the front curve).

The narrow runners of all designs of o-kad-o-daw-ban will quickly bog down following a fresh snowshoe track in deep powder snow. However, for well packed and frozen trail surfaces, narrow runners make the o-kad-o-daw-ban easy to pull even with heavy loads. For this reason, o-kad-o-daw-ban were primarily used in the shallow snow depths of early winter or in the spring when thaws had melted the surface of the snow to form a crust strong enough to support the runners. During mid-winter o-kad-o-daw-ban were often confined to well-packed tracks in the immediate vicinity of winter camps where they could be used for hauling firewood, fresh evergreen boughs and water.

The utility of o-daw-ban eventually extended far beyond native hunting, trapping and the fur trade. In time, derivatives of the basic designs became standard equipment for timber cruisers, surveyors, and game wardens working in the winter. O-daw-ban were ideally suited for non-mountainous terrain where networks of frozen waterways provided the principal travel routes. These level surfaces made the hauling of heavy freight much more practical than carrying it on one's back, particularly while snowshoeing. Modern technology, especially the gasoline engine, ended all of this.

Is there a future for the o-daw-ban apart from museums? As with the canoe, the author believes that their revival lies with recreationalists. At the wilderness cabin or cottage the six foot o-kad-o-daw-ban is ideal for drawing in the winter's firewood, either in the form of split cordwood or turns (long logs), or for a quiet day's outing, possibly to ice-fish.

For the 'purist' winter camper, both the na-bug-o-daw-ban and o-kad-o-daw-ban can transport the traditional winter camping gear, such as the wood burning kee-jab-ki-sigans and large canvas tents which for years have provided a very high level of "indoor" comfort at the campsite, even in severely cold weather. With the o-daw-ban, the exploration of Canada's old snowshoe trails for sustained periods during mid-winter is feasible even for the most northerly woodlands. Apart from mountainous terrain, they are the most practical mode of transport in woodland areas prohibiting motorized snow vehicle travel. Every outdoor recreationalist should have one.

Persons wishing to obtain either style of o-daw-ban should contact the author for further information. Long live the o-daw-ban and our Canadian tradition!

Craig Macdonald

From Sioux Lookout to Fort Albany

For several years I had been looking forward to another long trip and this one of approximately 1000 kilometers seemed to be the one for 1978. On July twenty-second at nine a.m. my five young (18-22 year-old) companions and I were ready. After careful preparations, we left from Midland in the van pulling our canoe trailer. With us was a good friend who had suggested he drive the van back to Cochrane (such good friends are rare).

In view of the nearly fifty portages we had decided to go 'ultra-light' and after many trials had agreed on a maximum weight of fifteen pounds per person, not including our two tents, with a total average of seven pounds of food for the first half of the trip. (The other half had been sent in advance to Ozoki.) Thus the weight of food averaged one and one quarter pounds per person per day and provided 4500 calories. The cooking equipment weighed four and one half pounds. Our total weight, divided over three rather large packs, was therefore 210 pounds at the most (and less and less as the food disappeared). Everyone found that we had more than enough and the weight limitation certainly was no hardship. Our sleeping bags and covers kept us warm, our down vests and rain suits kept us comfortable even during the fifteen days it rained and with a bit of regular washing, easy with our mostly nylon wear, we kept clean and more or less neat. While we had lots of exercise during our twenty day trip, the total weight of the crew remained the same (some lost, some gained weight) which seemed to indicate our rations were 'right on'.

We had estimated that the trip would take between twenty and twenty-five days and had no other deadlines to meet. As an experiment we had three different canoes, all approximately under fifteen feet; a Gramma fifteen foot aluminum, a Mad River A.B.S. and a Pioneer Kevlar. All three canoes, notwithstanding an occasional bump on rocks in the frequently encountered white water (we shot 48 rapids and portaged 46 times), survived the trip well and were still in excellent shape at the completion of the trip. We can now wholeheartedly agree with anyone who has a bias towards A.B.S. — or aluminum — or Kevlar. The Kevlar was ten pounds less than the other two. This appeared to be the main, but a not-unimportant, difference. All three canoes had been fitted with spray covers, which were a real boon in some of the white-water encounters as well as in the frequent downpours. The luxury of keeping dry under these circumstances was a most welcome novelty for all of us. From now on we will always have spray covers on long trips!

On July 29 at 2:30 P.M., having taken turns to drive nearly continually, we were at our departure point near Sioux Lookout. We left our driver and started our trip with a short portage. We found these first few days that we had landed amongst beautiful, isolated, fish-laden lakes with excellent campsites.

The portages connecting the creeks and lakes, not being used regularly, were not easy to find and had quite often a great number of fallen trees across the old 'paths'. But with some grunts, effort, and rests, we got through.

After five very interesting days we arrived at Lake St. Joseph and the Albany River. The Albany starts slowly but fairly quickly picks up steam and descends with many a waterfall and beautiful rapids rather rapidly till it reaches Marten Falls. From that point there is still a very strong current, but no more portages, so the last 450 kilometers were completed in seven days without any real effort. However, one day of eighty-two kilometers, a little under eight hours of paddling, helped considerably, as did another day when we sailed for fifty-three kilometers and paddled another seventeen.

A meeting with two very energetic young men who were making an 'across Canada' trip from Vancouver to Tadoussac on foot, by dog sled and by canoe, as well as a passing meeting with nine young people from Minnesota in a "CANOT DE MAÎTRE" added some spice to a most fascinating trip.

While the weather did not cooperate fully, only five days without any rain, the trip was most enjoyable, the wildlife encountered (bears, wolves, moose, woodland cariboo) fascinating, the fishing excellent. We had to tell our fisherman several times to stop catching fish as we had more than enough and could not keep up cleaning the fish with the fish catches. Our meals were appreciated by all and the team work was splendid. Especially towards the end good camping spots were hard to find, yet we always appeared finally to find an acceptable spot, and never did it appear to interfere with our sleeping.

The variety of terrain was most interesting, starting in the Shield and ending in the much flatter, muddier James Bay environment. After a week or so, one seems to feel in tune with the river and one can anticipate some of the 'special surprises' lying ahead.

This is a trip that, with proper preparation, can be enjoyed by good intermediate canoeists. It has everything; lakes, creeks, rivers, falls to portage around, rapids to shoot and rapids to avoid, high cliffs, overlooking beaches, mosquito-laden bush, wetlands, and rocky walls — a variety that gladdens one's heart.

Arriving at Fort Albany at 10:30 a.m., we were lucky to find transportation by air for our canoes as well as for ourselves before three p.m. to Moosonee, where the next morning we got a "Polar Bear Express" south to Cochrane — and by road back home — with one big question remaining; "What about next year?"

Robbert Hartog



CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Dear friends,

This will be my last opportunity to write a Chairman's letter; I hope to continue to serve the association as chairman of the conservation committee in 1979-80. My work as chairman during the past two years has been made easy by the willing co-operation of many of you. To my fellow executive members, to the various committee heads and volunteers, and to all of the active and corresponding members of the Wilderness Canoe Association, let me offer once again my thanks for your support. Together, we have created an association that all recreational canoeists, and all those who love the wilderness, may justly take pride in.

As an active canoeist and skier, I learned that it is more important to look ahead than to look back. I hope that the association will have that same conviction during the next few years. We have managed to grow quite steadily in the first four years of our existence, to the point where most members have become concerned about the quality as well as the quantity of our association. I share the view that we should now concentrate on our philosophical aims and objectives, which place upon us the responsibility to develop safe and enjoyable wilderness travel and camping skills. Fortunately, our outings committee has always had this objective in mind when planning and reviewing our trip schedule.

We could continue to grow in numbers until the entire concept of our association becomes lost in the maze of humanity. On the other hand, we could become transfixed by some nostalgic yearning for the days of lost youth, and become more than somewhat irrelevant. I believe that we must continue to find the middle ground, to control our size effectively, but at the same time, to continue to expand our influence and our scope. In the past decade, citizens' groups have made important progress in upgrading environmental standards and in promoting the responsible use of wilderness. We should not expect that these gains will be permanent, however, if we now proceed to fall asleep at the switch. Eternal vigilance is the price that we pay for our freedom to use the wilderness in peace and enjoyment.

I have always favoured an active social and political role for the association, as a consistent part of my personal belief that, in a democracy, the state is only as strong or as viable as its individuals and their social groups. I have come to recognize that the association forms a harbour of the soul for many who have grown weary of politics and contemporary sociology. However, any student of modern history must surely conclude that the storms outside the harbour will continue to grow, until one day, perhaps sooner than we might like to admit,

there will be no safe harbours left. In my view, it is far better, and more honourable, to deal with this reality now, while there is still some chance of influencing the final outcome. This is why I have continued, and will always continue, to seek support for the social and political aspects of our programme. I firmly believe that we can participate in our society from a basis of strength, without necessarily losing our integrity, as some would have us fear.

I am planning to run for political office in the federal election this year, mostly as an opportunity to discuss the quality of our environment in the context of a national priority. I have the feeling that Canadians are unduly fixated on the issues of the economy and Quebec, and have been paying little attention to other important matters in the past few years. Those problems of pollution, loss of wilderness land, and unsafe development of the arctic, have not been magically cured; instead, they continue to rot away just below the surface of our national consciousness. They seem to me to be linked with equally important questions about the quality of life and the compassion that we feel towards our fellow human beings in Canada.

Perhaps the Wilderness Canoe Association is not the most obvious forum in which to try to make this connection, between the quality of our environment and the quality of life. After all, many wilderness travellers seem to have a strong chauvinistic streak in them, as any regular reader of *Wilderness Camping*, *Outside*, or (yes) the *Wilderness Canoeist* will surely have recognized. For example, I give you this slightly fictional tale of derring-do that might easily pass for copy in any of the above publications...

Well, we left the little women at home and mounted our sleek shiny canoes and crashed down through the rapids and skinned live bears with our naked hands and ...

I suppose that's enough for one sitting. The fine line between wilderness enjoyment and abuse is always there, always ready to test us and measure the limitations of our ability to live as one with nature. To me, it is one and the same thing to live in harmony with nature and with my fellow human beings. Even in a country with a sparse population, such as ours, the quality of life must depend upon how well we live together. This is what all of the best wilderness experience can ever teach us.

Roger Smith

news briefs

CHEMUN

Chemun is an informative quarterly newsletter, put out as a labour of love by Nick Nickels. It is a non-profit venture that Nick hopes can be a "campfire meeting place" for the exchange of ideas among canoeists. It should be of interest to all wilderness canoeists, and is a bargain at only \$4 a year. Write to Chemun, c/o Nick Nickels, Lakefield, Ont., K0L 2H0.

GREAT EXPEDITIONS NEWSLETTER

Great Expeditions is a newsletter about non-profit, non-commercial expeditions, travel, and adventure. It provides information about clubs, organizations, trips, etc., covering a wide range of interests including: biology, archaeology, geography, backpacking, diving, canoeing, sailing, etc. For more information, contact Lawrence Buser, Great Expeditions, Box 46499, Station G, Vancouver, B.C. V6R 4G7.

BRIEFS...

FAMILY MEMBERSHIPS

Following a recommendation from the Constitutional Committee, the Executive has reinstated the category of Family Membership in the WCA. The 1979 rate is \$20. A Family Membership will allow all members of one's immediate family the opportunity to participate in club trips and activities as full members. At all business meetings of the WCA there will, however, be only one vote per membership.

Members who joined as individuals, but would like to change their memberships to the Family category may do so by sending their current membership card and an additional \$5 to the Membership Committee. New cards will be issued. If there are any other questions or problems, please contact the Membership Committee.

YOUTH ENCOURAGEMENT FUND

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 contributions of members, the club has been successfully helping our younger members for two years. The YEF Committee hopes to continue this important work again this summer, and invites interested members to send their contributions to the treasurer. Please make cheques payable to the Wilderness Canoe Association, and indicate that the money is for the Youth Encouragement Fund.

WCA T-SHIRTS

Some WCA T-Shirts are still available. They are beige with a blue logo on the left breast (approx. 7 cm by 8 cm), and are available in sizes S, M, L, and XL at a cost of \$6 each.

Anyone interested in purchasing a shirt can get one by sending a cheque (payable to Stewart McIlwraith) to Stewart McIlwraith, 38 Rhydwen Ave., Scarborough, Ont., M1N 2E1. Please include your name, address and phone number, the number of shirts desired, and the sizes.

SUMMER CANOE TRIP

Jim Greenacre, Sandy Bruchovsky, and Rob Butler are interested in joining with other members on a 2-3 week trip in northern Ontario or Quebec. All are all-round trippers with whitewater experience, and are willing to help with organization. Preferred time, late July to early August. Interested members contact Jim Greenacre (416) 759-9956.

NORTHERN ONTARIO CANOE TRIP

Marg Eisner is planning a canoe trip to White Otter Lake in north-western Ontario to see the large log cabin built there. She is interested in talking with anyone who has made a trip in this area before. Anyone with information that may be helpful is asked to contact Marg at 30 Leacrest Rd., #6, Toronto.

VISITING NORWEGIANS

Four Norwegians who will be visiting Canada this summer are interested in making a canoe trip part of their visit. Any members who are planning a trip and who would be interested in sharing the experience with these visitors are asked to contact Faith Sutton (416) 481-7818.

BASIC WHITE WATER TRAINING COURSE

For the fourth year Algonquin Waterways are offering a three day white water training course especially for W.C.A. members at reduced rates.

This year's course will commence early a.m. on Tuesday, June 19th - Wednesday 20th - Thursday 21st on the Madawaska River south of Combermere. Instruction includes specialized strokes, reading white water, safety drills and rescue, and scouting rapids. Basic canoeing skills with flatwater experience is a prerequisite.

Canoes, paddles and life jackets are supplied, but participants are responsible for their own food, tent, sleeping bag and other camping equipment. Car parking at the area, however, car pooling is encouraged.

Class size is 10, plus two instructors. Fee is \$65.00 per person (\$5.00 discount if you use your own canoe).

Interested members should contact Algonquin Waterways, 271 Danforth Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M4K 1N2, phone (416) 469-1727 for registration.

ADVANCED WHITE WATER COURSE

Big water (standing waves). Back ferrying, reading water from the canoe, lining, etc. will be taught. A three day trip on an exciting section of the Madawaska River with lots of time for instruction and practice. If interested contact Algonquin Waterways at the above address.

CANOE INSTRUCTION COURSE

The Y.M.C.A. will be offering its' canoe instruction course, "Canoe '79" on the weekend of June 1, 2, & 3rd. at Camp Pine Crest. The Director will again this year be WCA member Larry Bagnell. For a more descriptive outline and course schedule, call or write Larry at the Y.M.C.A. Camping Service, 36 College St., Toronto, Ont., M5G 1K8. Telephone: (416) 922-7474.

W.C.A. AT THE SPORTSMEN'S SHOW

We will be participating in the 1979 Sportsmen's Show in Toronto. The show runs for 10 days from Friday, March 16 until Sunday, March 25.

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

The shifts are:

Weekdays:	Noon	-	5:30 pm
	5:30 pm	-	11:00 pm
Saturdays:	10:00 am	-	2:00 pm
	2:00 pm	-	6:30 pm
	6:30 pm	-	11:00 pm
Sunday 18th:	Noon	-	4:30 pm
	4:30 pm	-	9:00 pm
Sunday 25th:	Noon	-	5:30 pm
	5:30 pm	-	10:30 pm

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

Articles, trip reports, book reviews, equipment comments, photographs, etc. are urgently needed for our next issue. If you can make any contributions, please send them to the editor by May 1.

BRIEFS...

CANOEING RIVERS REVIEW

Eric Morse's term as a consultant with the Topological Survey is drawing to an end. Since 1975 he has worked on checking the accuracy of and correcting topo maps covering some 60,000 km of canoe routes. This work has been done with the generous collaboration of about 50 wilderness canoeists from across Canada and the U.S.A. The total number of corrections made to date is over 500.

The map-correcting programme is to be a continuing one, and one that is of importance to us as wilderness canoeists. Eric emphasizes the practical value and the urgency of letting the Topological Survey know of any unmarked rapids and falls that you should happen to run across on your canoe trips - in the same way a motorist reports a road washout or broken bridge to his local Highways office. The map makers (after first having done us in) have now enlisted themselves as allies of our canoeing fraternity, but they need information that we bring in from the field. The information should be as precise as possible and sent to Energy, Mines & Resources, Surveys & Mapping Branch, 615 Booth St., Ottawa, K1A 0E9. If a marked map is sent in, it will be returned or replaced as requested.

SEVENTH ANNUAL DON RIVER DAY

This annual outing will be held on Saturday April 14 this year. It is a semi-serious canoeing venture, and a serious attempt to raise awareness about the Don River and its ravine landscape. Additional water will be released from the Finch dam for the day. All canoeists in the Metro Toronto area are invited to bring their families and join in the fun. For full details contact George Luste (416) 534-9313.

UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH ARBORETUM

The Arboretum is located on a 134 hectare site adjacent to the University of Guelph campus. Its nature trails and interpretive centre are open on weekends.

A continuing programme of educational activities including bird surveys, maple syrup exhibits, owl hoots, edible plant workshops, and photo workshops is planned throughout the Spring. WCA members are invited to participate in these activities. (Special group programmes will be arranged on request.)

For information about the programmes offered contact Alan Watson, J.C. Taylor Nature Centre, Arboretum, University of Guelph, Guelph, Ont., N1G 2W1. Telephone: (519) 824-4120, ext. 3932.

SEASONAL POSITIONS IN PARK INTERPRETATION

The MNR is seeking applications for seasonal employment in park interpretation in the Algonquin Region. These positions are especially suited to student members of the WCA.

Complete job descriptions and application forms are available by contacting Sandy Richardson (416) 429-3944.

OUTWARD BOUND POSITIONS AVAILABLE

The Canadian Outward Bound Wilderness School has the following seasonal positions (May - September) open at their site near Lake Nipigon in north-western Ontario.

Instructors & Assistant Instructors: Minimum 5 years experience as canoeists (whitewater and flatwater); whitewater kayaking; rock climbing; experiential education; environmental awareness; demonstrated teaching skills; wilderness first aid; Bronze Medallion; campcraft; group dynamics and communications skills.

Cook & Kitchen Coordinator

Office & Business Manager

All salaries are negotiable, and room and board is included.

Send resume to: Wendy Pieh, Programme Director, Canadian Outward Bound Wilderness School, Suite 200, 11 Yorkville Ave., Toronto, Ont., M4W 1L3.

The following positions are currently open at the Outward Bound administrative office in Toronto.

Office Manager - Secretary - Admissions

Director: Multi-purpose person with demonstrated administrative skills, typing, dicta. Must be interested in adventure based education and have good communication skills. Outward Bound graduate preferred.

Business Manager & Book-Keeper: Part time position for highly skilled person who is interested in working for a non-profit, charitable organization.

Marketing & Development Director: Permanent position for creative, energetic person with demonstrated marketing and administrative skills.

Send resume to: Alistair McArthur, Director, at the above address.

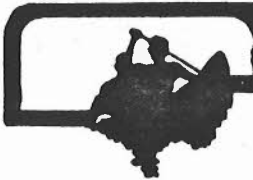
DISCOUNTS ON CANOES

Rockwood Outfitters in Guelph are now offering a 10% discount to WCA members - a saving that will be appreciated by many. For information on what Rockwood offers, see their ads in the Products & Services section on the back page.

ADVENTURE BOOKSHELF

Adventure Bookshelf in Long Island N.Y. specializes in outdoor and canoeing books - all those interesting titles that you can never get at the local bookstore. It is the official book service of the USCA, and is run by WCA member and long-time canoeist Ralph De Falco.

Along with Bob Williamson, Ralph has put together a Canoeing & River Touring Bibliography as a source of information for river trip planning. It is a catalogue of some of the over 200 canoeing books available from Adventure Bookshelf. But that is only the start. It contains a wealth of information that is of interest to the wilderness canoeist, and is well worth its \$2 price. See the ad on the back page for complete details of all that it contains, and how to order a copy.

CACHE LAKE COUNTRY

By: John J. Rowlands
 Illustrated by: Henry B. Kane
 Publisher: W.W. Norton, New York (hard cover,
 \$11.95, paperback, \$7.95)
 Reviewed by: Bill King

In contrast to most books selected for review, Cache Lake Country is far from new. It was originally published in 1947 and the current edition came out in 1959. Somewhat to my surprise, it is still available. Although I was unable to find this book in any general bookstore, Open Air Books stocks it or it can be obtained by writing to the publisher's representative, George McLeod Ltd., 30 Lesmill Road, Don Mills, Ontario.

The author, John Rowlands, like Calvin Rutstrom or R.M. Patterson, writes with the easy authority of a lifetime of wilderness living. He is a former timber cruiser who discovered the ideal lake of his boyhood fantasies and managed to persuade his company to let him stay to "keep watch over the timber country." He called it "Cache Lake" because he felt that here was stored the best that the north had to give, "the things you can't live without." His decision was cemented by the discovery that Chief Tibeash had a cabin nearby. The Chief had been a boyhood mentor of Rowland's and, although now over seventy, was still active and independent and a formidable woodsman and source of nature lore. The third member of their community, Hank, a nature photographer and artist,

came to visit some years later and found the life so congenial and the surroundings so perfect for his work that he stayed on. His illustrations are seen on almost every page of the book and they enrich it immeasurably.

The narrative is organized as a hypothetical year of living at Cache Lake although it is actually a compendium of many years' experiences. Each month has its share of anecdotes, nature tips, recipes and how-to-make-it instructions (albeit somewhat sketchy at times) for everything from wind gauges to moccasins to bacon turners. The Rowlands' lifestyle stresses making do with what is locally available and many of his ingenious methods have been superceded by modern materials or would run afoul of current ecologic standards. Nonetheless, many people will want to try some of his concoctions or contraptions. I have, and they work admirably.

One of the book's main virtues is the way in which it conveys the flavour of northern living. Perhaps few would want a lifetime of isolation and inconvenience, but in these days of shrinking wilderness, the opportunity to escape temporarily the pressures of society becomes all the more precious even if it involves a little extra effort. Rowlands states it best in his prologue; "As it is for so many other things worth having, there's no easy trail to Cache Lake, for it's protected by distance - mile after mile of forgotten woods and water - still clean and clear and safe from civilization."

We must try to ensure that there will always be enough "Cache Lakes" for us all.

photo contest

Ten people submitted a total of 83 slides to the contest: 30 in Canadian Wilderness, 18 in Man in the Wilderness, 20 in Flora and Fauna, and 15 in Action Canoeing.

The slides were judged by Dave Broadhurst, member of the Don Mills Camera Club and Focal Forum; Larry Thomas, member of the Don Mills Camera Club and the ESSO Camera Club; and Betty Greenacre, member of the Don Mills Camera Club and the Toronto Guild for Colour Photography. They explained what they looked for in judging the slides, and offered some suggestions to help members improve their photographs: "We tried to choose slides which best illustrated the given subject, and looked for technical excellence such as pleasing composition and good exposure. In some cases the slides had too much contrast. Colour film has not the latitude to render correct exposure in both sunny and shaded areas. To get detail in the shadow means overexposure in the sun. Also, in some slides a faster shutter speed would have eliminated camera shake, and ensured a sharper picture."

The winning slides in each category, as selected by the judges, were:

Christine Bailey, Delmar Ellis, Gord Fenwick and Sandy Richardson each received a framed and mounted colour print of their winning slide. As winner of the Best Overall Slide, Cam Salsbury received the \$50 gift certificate courtesy of Margesson's Sports Ltd. - Lightweight Camping Specialists, 17 Adelaide St., E., Toronto.

Best Overall Slide

"Morning Mist" by Cam Salsbury

Canadian Wilderness

"Sentinel Pass" by Christine Bailey - H.M.
 "Arctic Sunrise" by Barry Brown - H.M.
 "Kibee Lake" by Dave Ellis - H.M.
 "No Title" by Gord Fenwick - H.M.
 "Swamp - Jubilee Lake" by Paul Skinner - H.M.
 "Dawn" by Christine Bailey - First Prize.

Man in the Wilderness

"Canoe at Dawn" by Christine Bailey - H.M.
 "Lonely Valley" by Barry Brown - H.M.
 "Brink of Virginia Falls" by Shawn Hodgins - H.M.
 "Canoeist - Carheil River" by Sandy Richardson
 - First Prize.

Flora and Fauna

"Loons" by Christine Bailey - H.M.
 "Chickadees" by Christine Bailey - H.M.
 "Tundra Life" by Barry Brown - H.M.
 "Moose at Dinner" by Delmar Ellis - First Prize.

Action Canoeing

"Portage Trail" by Christine Bailey - H.M.
 "Running a Chute" by Sandy Richardson - H.M.
 "Portaging" by Cam Salsbury - H.M.
 "No Title" by Gord Fenwick - First Prize.

(H.M.: Honourable Mention)



killarney at christmas

Sandra Whittall and Lennabelle Winn
Photographs by: Cam Salsbury



A five day winter camping trip in Killarney? Sounds like a great way to spend the Christmas break, as well as a chance to pick up a few pointers from experienced WCAers. But could we keep up? Would the pace be too demanding, the style too rugged for sybarites accustomed to going our own relaxed way? Reassured by the organizers, we looked forward to sharing new ideas and techniques.

Sandy Richardson and Cam Salsbury, the trip organizers, set up the pre-trip meeting. For this planning session the seven participants from the Toronto area drove to Lindsay to meet with Dave Auger at his home. Sandy had dittoed a useful worksheet to help us arrange everything from logistics to -- logistics! Since each pair of cooking/tenting partners was an independent unit, some took it as a challenge to out-gourmet, out-equip, out-style the others. The absent ninth member of the trip (limit six) found himself on his own -- for the whole trip.

The trip began on the Killarney road just west of Carlyle Lake. Following an old trail into Kakakise Lake, with deep powder snow, even in minus fifteen degree weather trail-breaking was sweaty work; each person took a turn for several hundred meters, and then fell back to the end of the line for a "rest". Stringing together an old logging trail, portage paths -- all up and down!, bushwacking, and lake travel -- blessedly flat but frustratingly slushy, we arrived at our campsites on Norway Lake late in the afternoon.

We didn't have the wisdom to use our new hand-crafted ski treads on the way in, but after experimenting with their use on a day trip in to the LaCloche hills, we quickly realized their advantage for stability both up-hill and down. So on the return trip, two of us stopped to put on the ski treads, thinking we would remain well behind the rest of the crew by having taken ten minutes to de-pack, don the treads, and load up again. It was not long, however, before we caught up with and passed our travel-mates as they were inching their way down a steep incline by sidestepping or picking themselves up from a tumble at the bottom of a hill. As long as the trail had its ups and downs, the least muscular of the crew was quite happy to break trail with the treads on while the stronger members caught their second wind. As soon as the trail flattened out again and the treads were removed, positions on the trail were quickly reversed.

Our campsites were on opposite shores of Norway Lake, giving the two smaller groups a good measure of privacy and solitude, with sociability just a short, warming snowshoe away. Using several areas also has the advantage of cutting down on the ecological wear and tear.

Gourmet cooking proved to be one of the treats of the trip. For breakfast, try a quarter-pound of bacon served up in a pita bread, sliced at home and thawed inside the ski jacket. As a start to the day, it has a lot to recommend it: no dishes to clean except for the fry pan; no water to fetch before cooking; the bacon stays warm; it is easy to eat, even with mitts on; and has lots of energy-producing fat for the cold weather.

Thus fortified, we'd be ready to trudge down the hill to see if the water hole had frozen; we brushed snow and slush into it after using to keep it from freezing as fast or as hard. Tying a string around the neck of our liter plastic bottle made it quite useful for dipping water out of the hole.

Since frozen cheese, salami, and mountain bars are both hard to cut and next to tasteless, they were cut in chunks at home and carried in the "warmer", a large inside pocket, to be thawed for lunch. The plastic bottle for Russian tea made it easy to pour into the cups of hot water.

It was dinner that called for rival mouth-watering menus: Lobster Newburg anyone? or would you care to sample the Cashew Rice Curry? perhaps Shrimp Creole is more to your taste? or a hearty Chicken Top Ramen Casserole? All were either instant or one-pot or maybe even potless, if we could perfect using recycled milk bags to cook in.

The rubber gloves worn while washing up kept hands dry and so much warmer. They were also a real boon when rolling the tent for brushing off the snow and ice. Another item we found useful was a fifteen by twenty centimeter piece of ensolite covered with several layers of tin foil. It made a good "table" on which to sit hot pots, both keeping the pot warmer longer and keeping snow from freezing to the bottom of the pot.

We had hoped to climb Silver Peak on one of the day outings. However, the only day with sunny and cold weather conducive to this climb was the second day out, and most of us seemed content to sleep in late and have a leisurely breakfast. So when we were all finally ready to take off skiing, the short daylight hours made a shorter outing necessary.

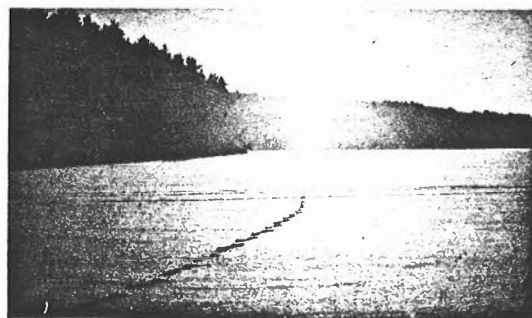
One of the many enjoyable aspects of winter camping is the freedom allowed by the season to travel across terrain that is probably next to impossible to cross in any comfort at any other season of the year.

An enjoyable run via Sandy Lake, in honour of two of the trip members, took us along a stream gurgling under the ice, through an open woods, and across hill-encircled lakes, flooded with bright sunshine. Another trek to Little Lake Superior was capped off by a delightful, lazy downhill run back to the marsh.

For evening prime-time entertainment, picture the campers decked out in down jackets, down pants, down hoods, and down booties, lounging on ensolite pads, doing a cryptic crossword by candlelight. Fernwood 2-nite?

And for the Late Late Show, try a frosty ski or snowshoe to get the circulation going before bed. The northland stars are always overwhelming, especially when one comes from a city where even the Milky Way fades into the reflected glow.

It's a long drive back from Killarney, especially if you're going on to Montreal, like Cam, or coping with a broken transmission that keeps you in second gear for ten hours, like Lenny. But we had lots to think about, recalling the shared experiences and skills of the trip, and anticipating the next escape into winter's beauty and challenge.



coon lake

Story: Gord Fenwick

Photo: Steve Kevins



Saturday dawned clear and cold as our little band met in the early morning hours at Coon Lake north of Burleigh Falls. Our group consisted of 2 females aged 12 and 7 males aged 13 to 45, five of whom had never winter camped before. We were full of excitement and anticipation.

Seven skiers and two snowshoers, we encountered our first of several cold weather problems after a 15 minute trek to the first lake! Lisa, my daughter, had trouble skiing with a pack, and her feet became numb with cold to the point where skiing hard back and forth on the lake was of no help. There was no alternative but to head back to the van with Lisa in considerable agony and get her warmed up before serious frostbite set in.

With Pat Shipton and Ken Brailsford taking charge, the remaining group continued northward, crossing several small lakes as they headed for our campsite on a lake some 8 km to the north. Fortunately there was little wind, but with the bitter cold temperatures Pat made frequent stops to check the group for frostbite; while at the same time being conscious of the fact that too long a stop could further cool down the remaining members of the group.

The route was fairly easy going, and camp was reached in the early afternoon. Chantel Berthelet was very cold on arrival in camp and was given lots of hot soup and food.

Meanwhile Lisa's feet had warmed up, and we relaxed and had lunch. Lisa was still game to go in so we decided to travel on snowshoes since her snowshoe boots were much warmer and more comfortable than the ski boots.

It was pleasant tramping along under the blue sky and radiant sunshine. Lisa spotted the odd animal trail, and we queried the riddle of the tracks that started at a certain point and ended at another. We paused to watch a woodpecker hammering out his meal 5 m ahead, oblivious to our presence. By late late afternoon we too reached camp, well protected in an island of white spruce.

Lisa and Chantel were glad to see each other, but as the sun vanished so did the girls! It was quite dark and supper was ready but no girls. We called in vain and were about to mount a search when they came in off the lake satisfied with their accomplishment of having tramped "LISA" in large letters on the lake.

The temperature plunged after the sun set, and after a fast nourishing supper we all headed to bed. The cold seeped into our sleeping bags as the temperature dropped to -42.

When we finally broke camp about 11:00 am., the temperature had reached a balmy -20, and we all enjoyed our stroll on this second glorious, clear, sunny and windless day back to the cars.

We all felt that this had been an interesting and worthwhile experience, and noted how well our novices had met the challenges and experienced the joys of winter camping.

silent lake

Jim Greenacre

It was a bright, sunny morning with the temperature hovering around a cool -25 when our group of 5 (Dave Auger, Rob Butler, Jim Greenacre, Joe Kelcher, Roger Nellis) met at Silent Lake Provincial Park.

We planned to have a leisurely first day, and only packed in a light load while looking for a campsite. Two and a half kilometers down the trail we turned off and bushwhacked our way until we found a secluded hollow, well protected by mature trees, with ample room for our two tents.

Rob and Jim, using snowshoes as shovels, dug out a pit in the deep snow for their tent, while Dave and Joe, because they thought the hollow was ample protection from any wind that might blow up, simply tramped down the snow with skis and snowshoes. Although there was lots of room in either tent, Roger elected to camp "voyageur" style and slept out. He just rolled out his ensolite on the snow, fluffed up his sleeping bag and that was it. A real hardy type and true outdoors man! We returned to the cars to pick up the remainder of our gear, and returned it to the campsite.

After lunch we skied back to the lake, down its length, bushwhacked up a gully, then picked up the 10 km ski trail back to camp.

Cooking supper began in daylight, but it was dark long before the meals were completed. Cooking takes a lot longer in winter, especially if you have first to melt snow to obtain water. And where do all those bits of leaves, twigs, pine needles all come from when the snow has melted in your pot? It seems that no matter how careful you are when you collect the snow, you always end up with some debris floating around in the tea.

Three of us decided to go for an evening ski on the lake so started down the ski trail through the bush toward the lake, but gave up after little more than a kilometer as we felt that it was too risky skiing in the dark on a trail that twisted and turned through the trees and was barely discernable

in the dark. We returned to camp where Roger had given up on trying to get a fire going, which left us with nothing to do but retire into the warmth of our sleeping bags for the night.

It was a long cold night. At least outside our sleeping bags it was cold; with temperatures in the Bancroft area reported as low as -44. One is always reluctant to leave the warm comfort of the sleeping bag when winter camping. You can sense the cold when, from the inside of your bag you peep out of that tiny ice-encrusted air hole which is just like a seal's breathing hole in the Polar Ice. However, there are limits to how long you can control your bladder; so out you get, cold or not.

Five stoves burning, five breakfasts cooking, and five heavily clad individuals running briskly on the spot trying to keep the blood circulating to the extremities of the body. Breakfast fare varied from Rob's simple porridge to Joe's pan of sizzling bacon and eggs.

Dave, Roger and Jim had lost all feeling in their toes by the time they had packed out the first load of equipment. In the parking lot, the occupants of a Winnebago Camper welcomed us in to thaw out our toes. The balance of the morning was spent breaking camp and bringing out our gear.

Just before noon Dave, Rob, Roger and Jim set out to ski the longest trail, while Joe opted for some snowshoeing. The ski trail required only intermediate skills, there being many long gradual uphill sections with matching descents. The faster downhill segments were all provided with a safe, straight run out - none of those crazy downhill sweeps with vicious 90° bends at the fastest part.

By mid-afternoon all members of the group were back at the parking lot, and five tired but happy camper/skiers were on their way home, having thoroughly enjoyed their week-end of winter camping - with a few tingling toe tips as souvenirs.

Saga of John Dennison

Algonquin Park Settler

Story and photo by: Ross Beagan

Much is known of the exploits of Davey Crockett and other legendary American frontiersmen, but little is heard of their Canadian counterparts. No doubt they were legion, and it is equally certain that, except for our national tendency towards reticence, their experiences would equal or exceed in excitement those of their southern cousins.

Unlike today, the daily lives of the early pioneers of Ontario were epic life-and-death struggles against a wilderness which was harsh and unforgiving. The laws of nature were simple, strict, and justice was swift. Therefore the people had to be astute, disciplined, and tough.

Captain John Dennison, who battled a black bear in Algonquin Park at the age of 83 in a struggle they both lost, was just such a man. He was buried almost a century ago between two massive white birch trees which have maintained a century's vigil over a simple grave.

His story stirs the imagination! He was born in 1799, almost two centuries ago, in Penrith, England. He was likely either a graduate of a military college, or obtained the field rank of captain during the Lower Canada (Quebec) Rebellion in 1837, where he served Canada with distinction in a regiment called the Beach River volunteers.

He settled in Ottawa from 1854 to 1869 between the ages of 55 and 70, and when most men would consider retirement, started a new career. He trundled his wife, two sons and all his possessions via the Ottawa and Madawaska Rivers to the present village of Combermere near Bancroft, thence by canoe and foot to the interior of present day Algonquin Park which was to come into being about two decades later in 1893.

He must have been in superb physical condition to even attempt such a journey at the age of 70. He may have known, however, that a major colonization road called "The Opeongo Line" was planned to connect the Ottawa Valley with Byng Inlet on Georgian Bay, and that the location he chose was roughly the half-way point. He may have planned to build a "half-way house" or inn to accommodate the envisaged traffic.

The new colonization road never reached that far inland after it was discovered that the soil beneath the magnificent forest cover was, for the most part, unsuitable for farming. Captain John Dennison, however, persisted with his farm and succeeded in clearing several hundred acres, perhaps as high as six-hundred. It must have been productive, at least initially, because he did a brisk trade with timber companies supplying food for woodsmen and horses alike.

To supplement his income, he turned his hand to trapping. Characteristic of the times, his end came suddenly and violently in June of 1881 at the age of 82. He was checking a bear trap near the North Arm of Opeongo Lake about eight miles northwest of the farm. Some days before he had baited a bear trap with rotten meat and chained it securely to a fallen log weighing several tons. Accompanied by his eight-year-old grandson, the 83-year-old poked his head over the log to check the trap when he was caught in the grip of a wounded, trapped bear. Both succumbed in the combat.

The eight-year-old grandson paddled alone and furiously the eight miles home for help only to find his father had left on an overnight journey. Upon his return, the father located the grandfather and transported his body home by canoe.

They buried him in a beautiful spot behind the barn guarded by two equally sturdy and superb white birches. Today the grave is still marked by a cedar rail fence measuring six feet by eight feet. The only identification on the fence is an oval copper plaque inscribed, "AT REST."

Almost two centuries of Algonquin Park history are bound up in that last fragile memento to a soldier, settler, and frontiersman. The gravesite itself is almost impossible to locate in an area almost impenetrable to man, and hidden in a jungle of underbrush strangling the former clearings.

The two magnificent white birches, both close to record size, which mark the grave may not last the next few harsh Algonquin Park winters. Already a massive 47 inch diameter lower limb of one tree, extending more than fifty feet in length, lies on the forest floor, a victim of last winter's heavy snows. When last seen on September 26th, 1978, it still bore green leaves even in its broken state.

Only a handful of employees of the Ministry of Natural Resources could, with some difficulty, find the site. One of them is Mick Martin, a ministry fisheries research scientist at Maple, Ontario, who first worked in Algonquin Park as a biology student from University of Toronto in 1943, thirty-five years ago.

Mick Martin's chief ambition prior to his retirement is to have the site restored and preserved. Our southern cousins would certainly do this much as a fitting memorial to a fine specimen of a man!



Simple copper plaque replete with sundry irreverent etchings on fence enclosing the grave of Captain John Dennison on last arm of Opeongo Lake. (Courtesy, Ministry of Natural Resources.)



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, endeavour 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.



March 31 SKI THE HIGHLAND HIKING TRAIL

organizer: Karl Schimek 416-222-3720
book immediately

A strenuous (30 km) day of skiing over some rough terrain in Algonquin Park. We will likely have to break our own trail. Limit of 6 skiers.

April 1 HUMBER RIVER

organizer: Norm Coombe 416-751-2812
416-293-8036
book between March 4 and March 17

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 7 CREDIT RIVER

organizer: Bill McKenney 416-637-7568
book between March 10 and March 24

The Credit River is located just west of Metro Toronto and we will be paddling the section south of Streetsville. Look forward to a day of exciting white-water canoeing for intermediate canoeists or better. The run includes nearly 10 km of continuous rapids if water is high. Limit of 6 canoes.

April 8 CREDIT RIVER

organizer: Jim Greenacre 416-759-9956
book between March 11 and March 25

This trip will occur on the easier northern part of the Credit. It is suitable for novices with basic canoeing experience who would like to run some easy rapids and fast water. Limit of 6 canoes.

April 13-14 BEAVER CREEK

organizers Gord Fenwick 416-431-3343
Pat Shipton 416-690-2219
book between March 16 and March 30

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

April 14 SALMON RIVER

Organizer: Glenn Spence 416-355-3506
book between March 17 and April 1

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 techniques. 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 of 8 canoes.



April 21-22 MAITLAND RIVER - BAYFIELD CREEK

organizer: Herb Pohl 416-637-7632
book between March 24 and April 8

Two one-day trips in the Goderich area. On Saturday a white water trip through the limestone gorge of the lower Maitland. Sunday, an exploratory trip on Bayfield Creek. Those doing both trips camp or motel in the Goderich area. Limit 5 canoes. Intermediates or better.

April 28 ANSTRUTHER LAKE LOOP

organizer: Rob Butler 416-487-2282
book between April 1 and April 15

A 28 km one-day loop involving lake travel in the area north of Paterborough. An early conditioner for the coming season. Suitable for novice or better in good physical shape. Limit 4 canoes.

May 5 MISSISSAUGUA RIVER

organizer: Don Bent 705-799-5673
book between April 7 and April 21

An exciting white-water trip for advanced 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 6 UPPER EELS CREEK

organizer: King Baker 416-987-4608
book between April 7 and April 21

Also north of Peterborough, this includes the wild upper portion of the creek, from Long Lake to Haultain. Suitable for advanced 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 5-6 FRENCH RIVER

organizer: Rob Hartog 519-621-9883
book between April 6 and April 20

We will paddle from Wollesly Bay to highway 69 on the famous French River south of Sudbury. There are a few rapids which can be portaged if water levels are dangerously high. The trip organizer is willing to arrange some equipment rental if needed. Limit 4 canoes. Intermediates or better.

May 12 LOWER SAUGEEN RIVER

organizer: Roger Bailey 519-832-5211
book between April 14 and April 28

From Saugeen Bluffs Conservation Area near Paisley to Denny's Dam just above Southampton. Perfect for novices and families. No portages, good current, and a few easy rapids to give one a taste of white water. Limit 6 canoes.

May 12-13 BACKPACKING near TOBERMORY

organizer: Ken Brailsford 416-691-2358
book between April 14 and April 28

Following the Bruce trail we will have a chance to explore the coast of Georgian Bay without the worry of bugs. We will hike with our packs but bring your camera, as our pace will be quite relaxed. Limit 6 hikers.



May 12-13 ALGONQUIN PARK

organizer: Karl Schimek 416-222-3720
book between April 14 and April 28

This flatwater trip offers a chance to enjoy the solitude of Algonquin Park before the summer crowds arrive. Our scenic, rewarding loop will include some river travel, and some typical Algonquin portages. We will set a not-too-strenuous pace. Limit of 6 canoes.

May 20 BLACK RIVER

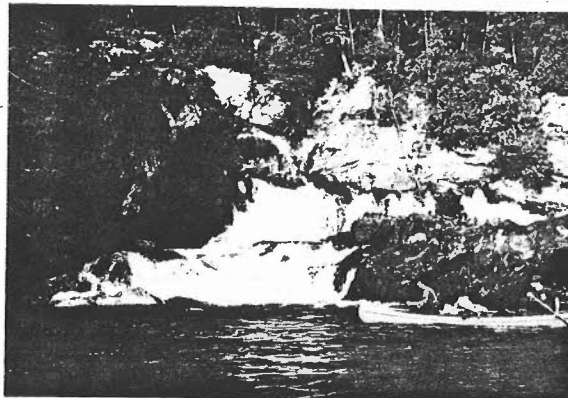
organizer: Bill King 416-223-4646
book between April 22 and May 6

We will paddle the lower Black River near Orillia. This is a 15km trip, suitable for beginners or families, including easy travel and little white water. Limit 6 canoes.

May 19-21 PETAWAWA RIVER

organizers: Don Austin 416-293-7872
Roger Smith 519-433-6558
book between April 21 and May 5

This three-day trip in the north-east part of Algonquin Park offers challenging rapids, beautiful scenery and quiet lakes. Suitable for intermediates or better. Limit 6 canoes.



May 19-21 FRENCH RIVER - GEORGIAN BAY

organizer: John Cross 416-654-9805
book between April 21 and May 5

This trip on the lower French River and west coast of Georgian Bay offers a chance to settle an historical question about the route of the Voyageurs. Although there is very little white water, there are some large open sections of water around the islands in Georgian Bay. Limit at organizer's discretion.

May 19-21 BONNECHERE & OPEONGO RIVERS

organizer: Gord Fenwick 416-431-3343
book between April 21 and May 5

South and east of Algonquin Park these rivers are cold with the high water of spring runoff. On the first day we will leave Crotch Lake in the Park and work into and along the Bonnechere over the next two days. This is a very small river at its headwaters and with a very steep gradient of up to 10m per kilometer it will demand high portaging, lining, and paddling skills.

On the third day we will travel about 20 km of the Opeongo River below Crotch Lake with a gradient of just over 4m per kilometer. This weekend will be physically demanding, requiring considerable canoeing skill and long days of hard work. Advanced canoeists. Limit of 4 canoes.

May 26 NOTTAWASAGA RIVER

organizer: Ernie Summers 416-690-2153
book between April 28 and May 12

A relaxing trip with a few small rapids south of Barrie. Suitable for novices with little portaging. Limit 6 canoes.

May 26 SAUGEEN RIVER

organizers: Howard Wickett 416-827-0383
Ken Riepert 416-845-3608
book between April 28 and May 12

The Saugeen from Durham to Hanover is an exciting trip for intermediates; a little white water and material hazards which require precise manoeuvring in the fast current, with adequate calm stretches to get rested up for the next challenge. Approximately 20 km without portaging. Limit of 6 canoes.

May 26-27 AMABLE DU FOND RIVER

organizer: Roger Smith 519-433-6558
book between April 28 and May 12

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. Advanced canoeists. Limit of 4 canoes.

June 2-3 MAGNETAWAN RIVER

organizer: Bob Almack 416-649-5703 (res.)
416-751-8351 (bus.)
book between May 5 and May 19

An exciting and challenging section (from Ahmic Lake to Wahwashkesh Lake) of a fast flowing river north of Parry Sound. Suitable for intermediates or better. Limit of 4 canoes.



June 2-3 WHITE WATER WORKSHOP: MADAWASKA RIVER

organizers: Bob Morgan 416-640-4892
Don Austin 416-293-7872
book between May 5 and May 19

This two-day workshop at Palmer Rapids will focus on an exchange between some of the more experienced WCA members and anyone wishing to improve their whitewater skills. It will include sessions on whitewater safety and rescue, and solo techniques among others. Camping information will be provided. Anyone interested in giving some input to this weekend, or possibly offering a session, please contact Bob Morgan as soon as possible.

June 9-10 GIBSON RIVER - McDONALD CANOE ROUTE

organizer: Eric Arthers 416-759-8232
book between May 12 and May 26

A circular trip in the area of Six Mile Lake Provincial Park. This trip is expressly planned as a father-son/daughter or mother-son/daughter (ages 12 years and up) outing. If your own youngsters are too old, bring a neighbour's. Youngsters should be able to swim. Suitable for novices. Limit 4 canoes.

June 9-10 MADAWASKA RIVER - SOLO TRIP

organizers: Sandy Richardson 416-429-3944
Cam Salisbury 416-498-8660
book between May 12 and May 26

A chance to run the beautiful and exciting Snake Rapids in a unique way - each member of the group will paddle solo. It should provide an opportunity to improve our paddling skills, and experience the river in a new way. (Canoeists will be paired for camping to avoid needless duplication of equipment.) For advanced canoeists with whitewater skills. Limit of 6 canoes.



June 16 BURNT RIVER

organizers: Dave and Anneke Auger 705-324-9359
book between May 19 and June 2

This stretch of river, south of Kinmount, is basically flat with 2 or 3 sets of runnable rapids. There are 2 portages (1000m) around some spectacular waterfalls. Suitable for canoeists with some experience in moving water. Limit of 6 canoes.

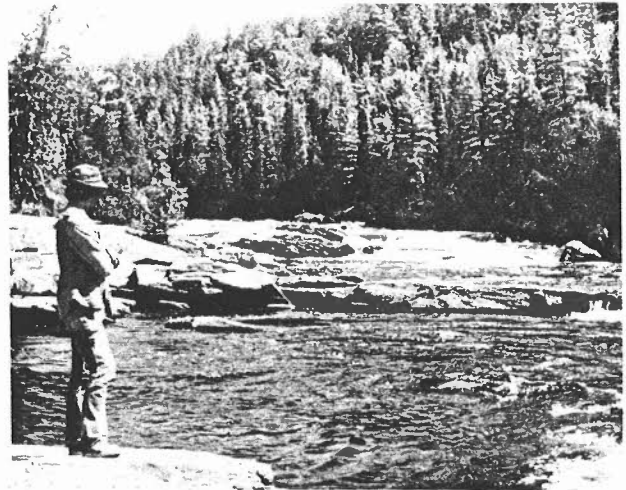
June 30 - July 2 APSLEY AREA

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

An easy, relaxed lake loop with time to enjoy the semi-wilderness; photograph, fish, swim, observe nature and enjoy the outdoors. Limit of 4 canoes. Beginners or better.

SUMMER TRIPS

We are also listing some of our longer summer trips early in order to allow members to arrange vacations and other plans early.



June 30 - July 8 SPANISH RIVER

organizer: Joe Kéleher 416-279-2534
book before June 1

North of Espanola, this unspoiled river winds its way through some of the most beautiful scenery in North Central Ontario. Many exciting rapids alternate with many long lakes. Suitable for intermediate. Limit of 4 canoes.

July 14-22 FRENCH RIVER

organizer: Claire Brigden 416-481-4042
book before June 17

Route from French River at Wolsely Bay down to Georgian Bay via Alexander MacKenzie's course, back up the East Channel and return via the Pickerel River to the highway (car shuttle only 17 km). Option of shooting (intermediate level) or portaging 8 rapids. Mostly broad river and gorgeous scenery. Time to fish, explore and photograph, on this 135 km route. Should be competent flat water paddler. Limit 4 canoes.

Summer trip MISSISSAUGI RIVER

organizer: Ernie Summers 416-690-2153

A one week exploratory trip in late June or early July. The exact dates and route are yet to be determined. Intermediate or advanced canoe trippers with experience are invited to contact the organizer after March 20 to help plan the trip.

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.

CLASS	DESCRIPTION	MINIMUM EXPERIENCE REQUIRED
	<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 maneuvering. Courses not easy to recognize. Current speed usually less than forward paddling speed. General limit for open canoes.	Advanced
IV	<u>Very Difficult</u> : long rapids with irregular waves, boulders directly in current, strong eddies and cross-currents. Scouting and fast precise maneuvering 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



PARKS CANADA VAGUE ABOUT WILDERNESS

The Conservation Council of Ontario, of which the W.C.A. is a member, submitted a brief to Parks Canada regarding the February 1978 Draft of Parks Canada Policy. With the broadening of Parks Canada's responsibilities in recent years, the need for a comprehensive new policy statement has become evident and the policy document is welcomed. Not only is it useful and necessary, but also it gives satisfactory direction to the agency in most of its areas of jurisdiction.

However, the Council detected a lack of commitment to the primacy of preservation in the 1964 National Parks Policy. The present draft policy places too much emphasis on use rather than preservation.

The brief pointed out the Council's concern for the Policy's lack of attention to "wilderness". The only direct reference to the term is with regard to National Wilderness Parks in the Territories, which suggests that wilderness south of 60 is no longer to be considered important. The council strongly disagreed with those statements implying that Parks Canada will not even concede the existence of natural areas in which man has not lived.

The brief suggested that "wilderness" is indeed difficult to define but supported the following definition:

"...any substantial area of land and/or water where the forces of nature are permitted to function freely, where the impact of man is largely unnoticeable, where the only means of travel is by historic, non-mechanical means, and where there are opportunities for a wilderness experience of solitude, space, time, and a personal integration with nature."

The brief also quoted an extract from the IUCN definitions of National Parks and equivalent reserves.

The only protection offered in the Policy document seems to be a zoning system and we asked for assurance that a "protection zone" will be given some legislative strength.

The Council pointed out in the brief that the aim of protecting natural resources within national parks should not be compromised by the provision of opportunities for the public to enjoy and appreciate these special places. Moreover, it strongly objected to the assumption that access to all areas is to be guaranteed;

rather access to certain parts of National Parks should not be aided in any way.

Respecting public participation, the Council expressed concern for the excessive attention paid to local priority. The primary responsibility of the National Parks Service must be to the interest of all Canadians, and the special interests of local minorities must be balanced against this. Access to information is essential, as are opportunities for Canada wide public participation in devising both interim and final management plans.

The brief then went on to make specific comments on such topics as National Historic Site designation, visitor use and needs, introduction of plants and animals, hunting, fishing and gathering, and effects of research.

Copies of the full text of the brief are available from the council office, 45 Charles St. W., Toronto, Ont., upon request.

MOTORBOATS IN QUETICO

The controversial ban on motorboats in Quetico Provincial Park has raised its head again, and again we need your help to press for a strong stand by the Minister of Natural Resources. The original motorboat ban was to take place in 1974, but a five year extension was granted. The recently approved Master Plan promises a ban on April 1, 1979.

However, local outfitters have been pressing for another extension. The Provincial Parks Advisory Council, which advises the Minister on parks matters, has also bowed to local pressure and suggested a five-year extension. So far, the Minister has gone only part way. He has agreed that members of a local Indian band will be permitted to use outboards on Lac La Croix, which is at the edge of the Park. We feel that this is a reasonable compromise, and that the Minister should go no further.

Please write to the Hon. James Auld, Minister of Natural Resources, Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario, to urge him to carry on with the ban on all non-Indian outboards.

SAVE OUR STREAMS

Ontario is criss-crossed with a network of rivers and streams. For the naturalist, angler, photographer and vacationer, these streams are the focus of many quiet hours. But for wild things, the beaver, the muskrat and trout, streams are home — the focus of life.

Yet misuse of our streams means many draw close to death — death to pleasant hours and death to wild creatures. The choice is ours. We are responsible to Save Our Streams.

Save Our Streams is an action programme designed to help you take on this responsibility to improve and protect a stream in your area. Community groups, schools, and individuals are adopting a stream. They take on the work of cleaning it up, restoring and maintaining a healthy clean, and productive waterway. It could mean planting trees or building fences, but it does mean getting your feet wet and working together to Save Our Streams.

It doesn't take much. Some tools and a few willing hands can clean up and improve the quality of a stream tremendously. Landowners and other concerned individuals can adopt a stream themselves. Groups will support stream adopters and government agencies will provide further assistance.

Save Our Streams is co-sponsored by the Canadian National Sportsmen's Show, Toronto Anglers' and Hunters Association and the Federation of Ontario Naturalists. Any members interested in becoming involved in the Save Our Streams' programme are asked to contact the Conservation Committee.

KILLARNEY PARK'S WILDERNESS STATUS SHOULD NOT BE FORGOTTEN

The Conservation Council of Ontario is opposed to the proposal to build a road from the village of Killarney, through Killarney Provincial Park, to Whitefish Falls on the grounds that Killarney's unique wilderness qualities must be preserved and the abolishment of the Park's wilderness designation to allow such a road to be built is unjustified.

Killarney Provincial Park is one of only three wilderness parks in Ontario and the one most accessible to residents of southern Ontario. A road such as the one proposed cannot be built without abandoning this wilderness designation.

The Road Benefit Analysis Study now being conducted will address the very real problems Killarney residents face, particularly long travelling distances to schools and hospitals, but the Council urged in its letter to Transportation and Communications Minister Snow that all possible options to a new road through the park be explored thoroughly.

The Conservation Council is composed of representatives of 37 provincial organizations including the W.C.A. having concern for Ontario's environmental quality.

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WILDERNESS CANOE ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I enclose a cheque for \$10 — student under 18
\$15 — adult
\$20 — family

for membership in the
WILDERNESS CANOE ASSOCIATION. I understand that this entitles me/us to
receive The Wilderness Canoeist, to one vote at meetings of the
Association, and gives me/us the opportunity to participate in W.C.A.
outings and activities.

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.

recipe corner

SHRIMP CREOLE

Bring to boil 1 C water with 2 T dried onions and two pkg. tomato cup-of-soup. Add 1 C instant rice. Let sit five minutes. Return to heat and stir in one tin or equivalent of frozen shrimp. Serves two.

CASHEW RICE CURRY

Bring to boil 1 C water with 1/4 C dry milk, 1/2 t salt, and 1-2 t curry powder. Add 1 C instant rice. Let sit five minutes. Stir in 1/4 C chopped cashews and 2 oz. grated cheese. Serves two.

MOUNTAIN BARS

Melt 6 oz. pkg. butterscotch chips. Stir in 1/4 C honey. Add 1/4 C @ flaked coconut, chopped nuts, raisins and 1/2 C @ wheat germ and oatmeal.

Spread on to well-greased pan. Cool. Cut, wrap in wax paper, and store in refrigerator.

products and services

Coleman Craft Canoes:

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 in 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.

Mad River Canoes:

Mad River Canoes will be available again this year from Rockwood Outfitters, 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 fiberglass and Kevlar canoes such as Bluewater, Nova Craft and Woodstream. Come up and see us in Guelph. ROCKWOOD OUTFITTERS, 15 Speedvale Ave. E., Guelph, Ontario, N1H 1J2. Telephone (519) 824-1415.

Spray Covers:

Custom made for any canoe from waterproof nylon. Contact ROCKWOOD OUTFITTERS, 15 Speedvale Ave. E., Guelph, Ontario, N1H 1J2. Telephone (519) 824-1415.

Grumman Canoe For Sale:

Seventeen-foot whitewater model with anti-glare decks and neoprene padded seats. Excellent condition. Contact Don Bent at (705) 799-5673.

Canoe Arctic:

Fly-in canoe trips into tundra and taiga of the N.W.T. Last year we saw over 200,000 caribou, 44 wolves, 42 muskox, 32 moose, 3 grizzlies and rich birdlife. Six person parties assembled and guided by Alex Hall, wildlife biologist and veteran arctic canoeist. All food and equipment provided. Canoeing experience an asset, but not essential for all. For details write: Canoe Arctic Ltd., 9 John Beck Cr. W., Brampton, Ontario, L6W 2T2.

Canoe for sale:

A 16' Pinetree Abitibi; asking \$475. Would consider free delivery. Contact Dennis Begora, St. Catharines, Ontario: (416) 688-2131 days or (416) 688-2378 evenings.

Canoe for sale:

A used 17' Old Town royalex canoe in excellent condition. If interested contact Pat Lewtas at 64 Linean St., Cambridge, Mass., 02138, (617) 498-7006 before May, or at 4 High Point Rd., Don Mills, Ontario, M3B 2A4, (416) 447-3858, after May.

Marconi Portable Radio For Rent:

Lightweight and compact (14 pounds, 4" by 9" by 13"). Using a Bell Telephone crystal you can contact anyone from the most isolated of locations. Ideal for families, camps, organized canoe trips, or anyone wishing the safety feature of being able to contact outside help should an emergency occur. For information contact Dennis Begora, St. Catharines, Ont., (416) 688-2131 days or (416) 688-2378 evenings.

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 two dollars for each new subscription and one dollar for each renewal.)

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

Discounts on Camping Supplies:

WCA members who present a membership card will receive ten percent discounts on many non-sale items at:

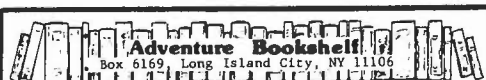
Margesson's, 17 Adelaide St. E., Toronto

Don Bell Sports, 164 Front St., Trenton

A.B.C. Sports, 552 Young St., Toronto

Rockwood Outfitters, 15 Speedvale Ave. E., Guelph.

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



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