

the wilderness canoeist

volume 6 number 4

winter 1979



The Way It Was In Winter

The bush plane skipped in across the winter snows towards the lakeshore and the cluster of log buildings backgrounded by the northern Ontario woods. Wood smoke rose straight as an arrow, in the cold air, from the chimney of the largest lodge. This was the operational base for Headwaters, the highly-regarded outdoor specialists and outfitters who teach all-season living and travel in Canada's northern wilderness. The base camp is located about eighty kilometres by air from the town of Temagami which is, in turn, ninety kilometres by rail or road north of North Bay, Ontario.

A knot of about a dozen parka-clad "inhabitants", wearing snowshoes and backpacks came forward as the swirl of snow, blown up by the aircraft's propeller, settled down. This wasn't a reception committee. They were instructors with students on a seven-day course, who were about to set out on a twenty-five kilometre hike through the rugged forest and lake country of the Precambrian Shield.

I was quickly fitted with snowshoes by Camp Director, Hugh Stewart and joined the pack as they trekked off over the snow-covered ice of Lake Anamanipissing. Anamanipissing is an Indian word meaning headwaters.

The easy, loping stride of the guides and the rhythmic sway of the well-conditioned students set a steady pace. After about an hour on the trail, we paused for a 'mug up' (individual's choice of a hot drink carried in a thermos). At this point, the new recruit, who was already blowing steam, doubted if he could maintain the pace for the whole twenty-five kilometre circuit. While the others continued on as planned, I backtracked to camp and spent the rest of the day exploring the area's trail circuit on skis.

Many exponents of cross-country skiing believe that skis will eventually replace the more traditional snowshoe in Canada's north for non-motorized travel. The Headwaters' experience does not bear this out.

Skis are swift and easy with only a backpack on a lake surface or good trail, but for bushwacking in thick bush, deep snow or steep terrain, the snowshoe is still king. Towing a toboggan, on extended overnight trips, requires the steady pull of the snowshoer. The added drag interferes with the skier's normal glide and reduces the pace to an ungainly walk.

Early winter darkness was setting in when the last stragglers rounded the point out on the lake and came within sight of the camp. The cheery glow from the cabin windows meant good things to the trail-weary and hungry travellers. A few moments' relaxation in a warm, comfortable chair were followed by a veritable mound of superb food.

The inherent hardships and risks associated with winter travel on foot in the Canadian wilderness are hypothermia and fatigue, whiteouts, breaking through ice, hunger, a disabling injury and a rarely reported case of snow blindness.

The code of the trail prevails at the Headwaters' dining table...this is no place for the tardy. The main reasons for such unrestrained voraciousness are the high sustenance needs of winter travellers and the undeniable talents of camp "cuisinière" Cheryl Harding.

Notable performances were chalked up by all, but guides Kirk Smith, Hoss Haiblen and Dan Gibson, lean and hungry lads, bordered on the incredible. The prodigious quantity of food they stowed away would have raised a glint of envy in the eye of a wolverine.



Following our feast, we repaired to the library where the instructors gave lectures on birds, animals, trees and the geological structures of the area. There were readings on the nomadic life of the Indians before the coming of the white man, and how lumbering and mining replaced trapping and hunting as their primary livelihood activities.

Next day, we were given a choice of either snowshoeing across the lake and climbing Lookout Mountain or donning skis and doing a twenty kilometre loop of trails and abandoned logging roads adjacent to the camp.

It was on the winding, sometimes steep trail through heavy woods on the mountainside, that the snowshoes proved their worth. To have attempted the same climb and descent on skis would have been out of the question.

The afternoon was spent preparing equipment and checking out gear for a three-day and two-night camping expedition planned for the morrow. The afternoon session ended with everyone participating in a demonstration on how to erect a four-man expedition tent. The lecture included how to select, cut and tie tent and ridge poles and the assembly and installation of the camp stove inside the tent.

A visit to the equipment cabin followed where I was issued special gear suitable for winter wilderness travel. Felt-lined buckle boots, anorak, parka, heavy wool trousers, mitts, duffel bag and a specially insulated sleeping bag with ground pad are only some of the items that take the sting out of the cold winter wind.

Food, duffel bags, stoves, tents were all wrapped in waterproof tarpaulins and carefully lashed to toboggans to be pulled along by the snowshoers.

It was somehow a stirring sight to see a line of men, women and loaded toboggans trekking down a wilderness lake in northern Ontario. Heavy snow started falling, blotting out the tree-lined lakeshore. The only sound was the soft swish of the webs and the hiss of the laden toboggans.

On the second lake, a man roared up riding a snowmobile and pulled up to ask a few questions as to who we were and if such a strange assemblage belonged in his time. He seemed usually vary as if he expected us to fade into the snow-filled air and confirm his suspicions that we were actually ghosts from a bygone age.

Lunch consisted of pre-packed sandwiches and a big pot of hot tea brewed over a hasty fire. We were sheltered among evergreen trees at the end of a scenic portage trail and the snow was at least a metre deep.

We arrived at our planned campsite on Whitewater Lake at mid-afternoon and proceeded to set up camp. Tasks assigned to one or more wintertime nomads were digging out tent sites, cutting tent poles and firewood, digging out a cooking area and finally setting up the tents, assembling the stoves and storing firewood for the night and at the cooking area. All work had to be done on snowshoes as the deep snow made moving around on ordinary footwear almost impossible. Later, when the packed snow had a chance to crystallize, the camp trails would bear the weight of a walker in boots.

The fine efforts of the novice bush cook were duly appreciated and after conveying our compliments to the chef, we turned in early...you sleep deeply after a long day on the trail.

The agenda for the next two days called for exploratory trips to nearby lakes while studying tracks and other signs of wildlife that reveal the presence and activities of a boreal ecology in wintertime. At least four such outings were planned for the next three days before breaking camp and heading back to base.

My participation in the outing ended when a Lakeland Services bush plane from Temagami dropped down early the following morning to pick me up. A few hasty handshakes and we were winging our way back to civilization over snow-blanketed lakes and forest.

The Headwaters' winter program is a rugged but thoroughly enjoyable experience.

Tony Sloan



While Headwaters' winter courses gain in popularity, it is their long established summer canoe-tripping program that is the better known. Their base location on Anamanipissing Lake is truly the geographical headwaters of some of the finest wilderness canoeing rivers in eastern Canada. The basic wilderness study program (15 days) for thirteen to sixteen-year-olds in conjunction with the advanced (18 days) sessions offer a complete introduction to wilderness canoe travel. Trips on such famed white-water rivers as the Dumoine and Missinaibi require twenty-four to twenty-eight days and are regarded as the complete wilderness experience.

For complete details on this unique all-season camp and outfitting service for wilderness-oriented interests and activities, contact Headwaters, P.O. Box 288P, Temagami, Ontario, POH 2H0.

Two Lop-Sided Trippers

Eric McHenry

I have often thought that I should put on record the adventures of two above-the-knee amputees of World War I who went on a canoe trip together in the long-ago twenties. It occurred to me that the tale might be an inspiration, or a warning, whichever way you look at it, to others who are similarly handicapped.

It all began shortly after the war when a group of seven good friends, some of whom were ex-servicemen, lunched together each Saturday and shared many pleasures such as weekly sessions of penny-ante. It seemed inevitable that someone should dream up the idea of going on a canoe trip together which we did for two successive years, Algonquin Park the first year and Temagami the next. These were so successful that we set our sights on wilder terrain and had visions of travelling the French River, the Magnetawan and the Nipigon. However, it became increasingly difficult to arrange our holidays for the same time with the result that the following year only two of the group could go together, these being the two amputees referred to above. They are the only survivors of the original "Group of Seven" which proves, if anything, that old soldiers never die, they just fade away.

Not being able to round up any of our able-bodied friends to accompany us we decided, in the enthusiasm of youth and with inherent faith in our own capabilities, to go it alone and plans were set in motion. The next step up the ladder was to be the French River. We would drive to Sturgeon Falls with our supplies and equipment, spend the night under canvas, rent a canoe and board the steamer for Lake Nipissing in the morning.

The drive from Toronto to Sturgeon Falls in the writer's car was uneventful. We pitched our pup tent, cooked our evening meal and settled in for a good night's rest prior to the big adventure. Alas, there was one mishap which didn't augur well for the success of the trip. In the middle of the night a mosquito found its way into the writer's inner ear. This was most painful, with no relief available until the morning when the intruder was flushed out with warm oil at a doctor's office.

The canoe and all our belongings were put aboard the steamer which called at various ports on Lake Nipissing. There being no port near the head of the French River, we asked the Captain if he would put us down in the lake as close to shore as possible. This he did, and we arranged for him to pick us up at the same spot two weeks later. Lake Nipissing can be treacherous at times but fortune favoured us on both occasions. Mission safely accomplished.

For two supposedly experienced canoeists and campers, we were pretty naive in that our sole guide for the adventure ahead of us was a C.P.R. timetable with a small map of the French and Pickereel Rivers thereon. After paddling some distance through the many beautiful islands at the head of the French the river narrowed considerably and we came to a spot marked "portage" on the map. Ahead of us could be seen turbulent white water coursing through a chasm that appeared to be no more than twenty-five feet in width.

At this point perhaps I should say that we were both wearing our artificial legs but had brought along crutches to be on the safe side - more impedimenta to be lugged around. Jimmie, the senior member of the duo, is taller and of heavier build than the writer, a natural for the stern position in the canoe. Furthermore, he was more adept then, as he is today, in handling his artificial leg.

We guided the canoe into shore and disembarked to see what the portage involved and to investigate the rapids ahead of us. It immediately became apparent that it would be impossible for us to navigate the portage with our canoe and equipment - we were entirely alone with no person around to give us a hand over the rough spots - and Jimmie said, "Well, I guess there is only one thing to do. Are you game to shoot the rapids?" "Sure," I replied, and we returned to the canoe.

Then followed an experience I shall never forget. The rapids, between two high banks with the portage atop of one, were not long but the water was very turbulent and we had no way of knowing if there were any hidden rocks. We navigated the course in what seemed to be four or five leaps, shipping water with each, and were relieved to find ourselves in calm water where

the river widened, with a convenient island directly ahead of us. We beached the canoe, removed our sodden belongings, drained the canoe and after a brief rest went blithely on our way, none the worse for our experience. The episode became doubly memorable when we read the following year that two people were drowned at the very same rapids.

The rest of the trip was enjoyable but more or less uneventful. At our first portage we tried the unorthodox method of carrying the canoe between us, each taking an end, but that simply did not work. Big Jimmie, 5'11", came to the rescue. He carried the canoe in the conventional manner while the writer discarded his leg and, on crutches, was able to do his bit by carrying a packsack with tumpline and shoulder straps. It was necessary to make two trips over each portage as our equipment now included one spare leg and a pair of crutches. There was at least one occasion when we had to do it the hard way. This portage, over solid rock and very uneven, made it necessary for us to revert to the original method, each taking an end of the canoe, and setting it down every few feet.

It had been our intention to travel the full length of the French River to where it enters Georgian Bay but we abandoned this plan when warned of dangerous rapids and a difficult portage. Instead, we swung over to the Pickerel River and made the return trip via the latter. En route we camped at suitable spots, fished, swam, and enjoyed campfire meals cooked by Jimmie who is a real outdoorsman and an expert. I particularly recall his hot biscuits which were delicious. On paddling up the Pickerel there was a brisk tail wind and we took advantage of this by using a rubber ground sheet as a sail, much to the amusement of a party of Indians who passed us in three canoes.

All, of course, was not beer and skittles. There were a few days when it rained continuously. We pitched our tent on a rocky slope just below Pickerel River Station, the only available spot, and clambered up to the post office which was nearby. There we met good Samaritans in the persons of a divinity student and his wife who received us warmly. A lasting and rewarding friendship resulted from this chance encounter. On learning where we had pitched our tent they suggested that we move into the railway station until the rain was over, which we did. At this point Jimmie's leg badly needed repairs due to the extremely rough usage it had so we decided to take the train to Sudbury and hunt up a blacksmith shop. This served the dual purpose of whiling away a rainy day.

There is little more to tell about the trip. Eventually we re-entered the French River by a route that involved numerous portages, over which we were helped by friendly campers we met on the way, including a troop of Boy Scouts. We must have presented quite a picture and I can still see the surprised look on the faces of some of those we met. In due course we arrived at our starting point and were picked up, as arranged, by the lake steamer bound for Sturgeon Falls.

It didn't occur to us at the time that our experience was in any way unusual and it was soon relegated to the back of our minds as we progressed through the Roaring Twenties. In retrospect, more than half a century later, we look on it as being quite an achievement.

The partners in this adventure were Jimmie Sheen, Eighth Battalion C.E.F. and the writer, Eric McHenry, Canadian Corps Cyclist Battalion, who have been friends since first meeting in hospital at Kirkdale, Liverpool, and returning to Canada on the same hospital ship. Both are Life Members of the War Amputations of Canada, Toronto Branch, and served on the Board of Directors at different times. Despite having some of the frailties associated with the aging process, they are still going strong, more or less, and still have their marbles.

If anyone should wonder why this account is being written at this late date, it should be remembered that Rome wasn't built in a day, and Grandma Moses was no chicken when she took up painting. (E.M.)

Winisk River

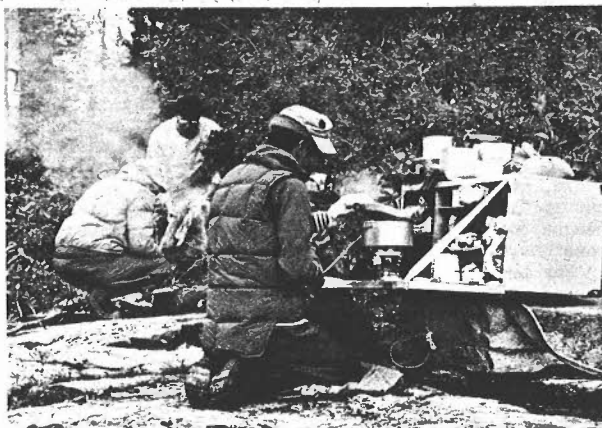


Story and Photographs by:

Reg McGuire
Dan McGuire
Henry Pasila

The Otter droned north out of Nakina for over two hours, completing the complex logistics required for any trip into the north. We glided down onto the Winisk just below the town of Webique, unstrapped the canoe from the right pontoon, loaded the grub box and two Woods packs into it and watched the plane take off and swing around to the south. Then we waited for it to happen. The "it" that every wilderness traveller learns to recognize and savour; the realization that he is on his own and that the sights and sounds are natural, not the result of man's activities; the slowly-developing awareness of the world around him as he becomes attuned to each shift in wind direction and speed, each island, point, creek or rapid.

The first night, as has become our tradition, was devoted to an early camp, steaks, and unwinding, while discussing again, but with greater intensity, the trip ahead.

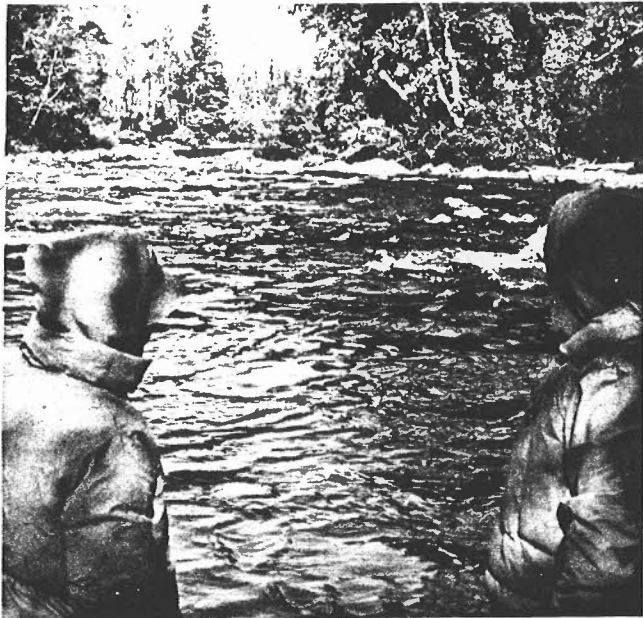


The excellent set of 1:250,000 topographic maps showed that the first one hundred and ten kilometres consisted of white water separated by relatively flat stretches and some lakes. Then followed two hundred and fifty kilometres of flat water, ten kilometres of rapids and another eight kilometres of flatwater as the river broadens out entering the Hudson Bay Lowlands. It appeared that the fun would be on the upstream end and the work on the downstream end.

We had an eighteen-foot Tremblay cedar canoe and were using a spray cover for the first time. The three of us battened down under the cover for the whole trip, finding it warmer in the wind, drier in the rain and safer in the rapids.

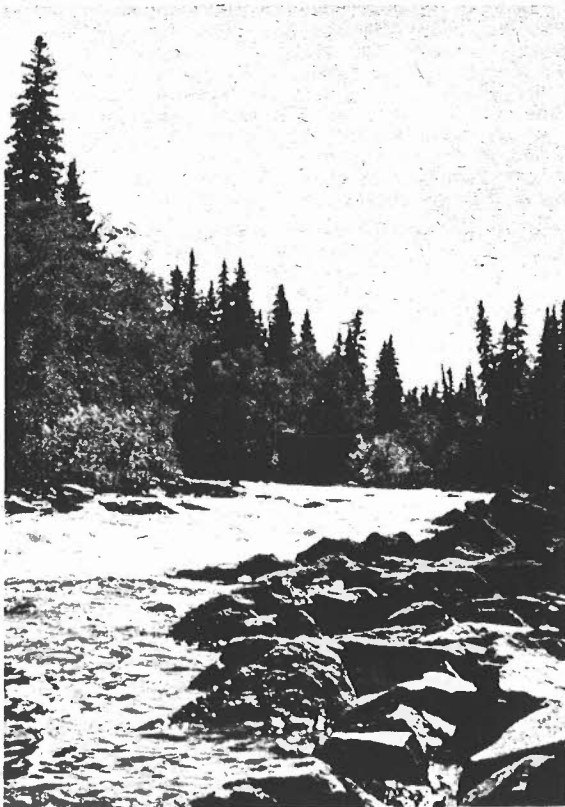
The first portage was fifteen minutes out of the first camp, and the first swift water just below that so that our rusty skills were quickly honed again. The water rushed over boulders, visible and otherwise, with numerous granite ledges anchored to shore, the free end always seeming to extend well into the channel we had chosen.





We ran downstream three days before arriving at the Winisk River Fish Camp cabins at Tashka Rapids on one of those infrequent glorious, sunny, warm days that stay so short a time in late summer, but so long in memory. The river at the door dropped over a one-metre ledge and then turned the corner to the right as it roared through a narrow opening in another ledge. The pools and rushing water above and below the falls provided us with dinner for the two days we spent there - speckled trout, between thirty and sixty centimetres, deep-bodied and delicious.

The days passed. A succession of sun and rain, wind and calm, rapids and flat water. We portaged six times, running another three that were indicated on the maps including one appropriately named "Portage Rapids".



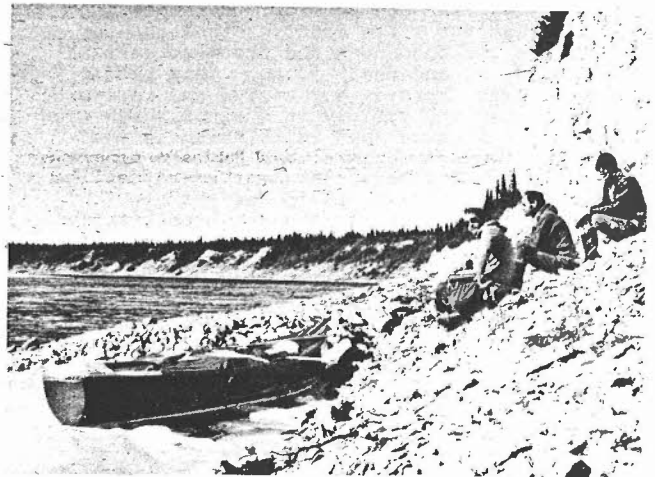
The standing wave at the bottom of the chute hit the bow man in the face, cold water washing back the length of the canoe but a quick rocking from side to side dispelled the water contained in the low spots of the cover.

Regardless of the compass bearing the river chose to follow, the wind always managed to stay directly in our face, which appears to be the fate of every canoeist. As the trip progressed into the last days of August, the wind became a major factor, ever present, cold and penetrating, entering every opening in clothing and chilling the bottom unglued hand on the paddle.

Late August is anything but the ideal time to travel a river this far north. It was between zero and five degrees each morning when we crawled out of our down bags and it seldom managed to get above fifteen during the day, the temperature steadily slipping lower as the Bay approached and summer became autumn.

This is the summer home to countless Canada geese. They vastly outnumber the ducks, appearing behind every island in flocks from five to fifty, gabbling incessantly as they protested this intrusion on their river. We had a young marten visit us in one camp and a curious porcupine in another, but the highlight of the wildlife experience was watching a caribou swim across the river in front of us, his long antlers thrown back as he plowed through the swift current.

Each river along James and Hudson's Bay appears to have its own set of "Limestone Rapids" and the Winisk is no exception. We had heard of this stretch of ten kilometres and had looked forward with that peculiar combination of fear and anticipation that heavy water engenders. In this case, reality did not match reputation as there appear to be a couple of heavy bumps followed by ten kilometres of enjoyable swift water.



Eighty kilometres later we entered the village of Winisk, home to one-hundred and fifty Swampy Cree still engaged in wresting a living from the land. We spent three days in town, in a house thoughtfully provided for trippers arriving early and waiting for the once-a-week flights. This year this amounted to thirty-three souls in five or six groups, which explains why no sign of man is visible most times when you step from your canoe, and explains, partially at least, the good feelings this river leaves upon its' visitors.

The people of Winisk were open, warm and friendly, walking in to join us in a cup of tea and leaving behind a wealth of information about their lives and their pursuit of a living through traditional hunting and trapping activities married to more modern methods - the snow-mobile and outboard motor are heard constantly on land and water since the former is used year-round. When it comes to a "get away from it all" experience, the Winisk more than fills the bill.



EDITORIAL

In a club with a widely scattered membership such as ours, the newsletter is a vital communication link among the members, and in many ways keeps the club going. Putting it together and getting it out to the members regularly is not a one-man job but a team effort.

Many people give freely and generously of their time and effort to keep the paper going. First there are the many members who care enough to submit articles of all sorts, without which there could be no newsletter. Second there are the members of the Communications Committee who work unseen on every issue to put the paper together. They are: Lenny Winn and Cam and France Salsbury who handle the bulk of the typing chores; Barry Brown, Rick Paleske, Cam Salsbury and Paul Skinner who work on the lay-up of the paper; and Debbie Davy and Ken Ellison who

look after mailing copies to members. Finally there is the Board of Directors who provide unfailing support and encouragement for our work.

Without the hard work of all these people the newsletter would certainly not exist in the form that it does. And being the kinds of people that they are, they keep the job of putting the paper together one of fun and excitement. I am sure that without all their help I would long ago have resigned as newsletter editor.

At the end of another successful year, to all these people who help with the production of this paper, my most sincere thanks.

Sandy Richardson
Editor

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Fellow members:

Another year has gone by, the canoe is stashed away for a few short months, and for many of us the snowshoes and cross-country skis are dusted off and ready to go. This past season has once again been a very active one in terms of the number and variety of outings which were offered. I am sure that in relation to the number of members we have, our outings programme is unequalled anywhere. A great amount of the credit for this has to go to the outings committee and I want to take this opportunity to thank them on your behalf for a competent job. I am also very gratified at the large number of individuals who offered to serve as trip organizers, this past year. Without them the association could not function and our continued vitality depends to a large extent on our ability to convince even more of our members to become involved in this way. The past season has seen a continuation of a pattern observed previously, namely that demand exceeds the supply of available places during spring. This is particularly true for novice trips, so if some of you have been agonizing about whether or not you should get involved, here is a genuine need. On the other hand we have seen a surprising lack of interest in Fall outings, with only a few hardliners continuing into the frosty season.

Our Fall meeting at Wildwood Lodge was a very low-key affair with business kept at a minimum and social contact time emphasized. I thought it had the flavour of a gathering of the clan, complete with verbal and pictorial stories about last summer's trips. Your board of directors has met several times since the spring meeting and I'll mention only the major topics which were discussed on these occasions: There was general agreement that it would be desirable to increase our commitment to participate at the Sportsmen's Show. To this end, we have requested additional space from the organizers which would allow us to present a more meaningful exhibit. At the time of writing this letter the request is still under consideration. Bill King has agreed to look after the overall organization with Barry Brown providing the expertise for the design of the exhibit. If we want to be successful, the project will need considerable support from the membership, particularly with respect to the manning of the booth. If you are able to help, please contact Bill or myself. In this connection I would like to hear from anyone who

has undertaken a "longer" canoe trip during the summer. We may want to include this information as part of our story of what members of the WCA have done during the past year. If possible this information could be augmented by pictures which could be shown at the exhibition. I don't want to close this topic without saying thanks to Jim Greenacre who has looked after this show for several years and who has put in an extraordinary amount of time on our behalf.

Our annual meeting will take place at the Boyne River School near Shelbourne on February 16th and 17th; John Cross is the Chairman of the organizing committee and has included all the necessary information with this newsletter. We are hopeful that this meeting will be well attended since the cost is more than reasonable and the travel distance for most members short. Part of the meeting will be devoted to the election of three directors; if you want to stand for election please let the Vice-Chairman of the WCA know about your intention.

After listening to a sobering account of the status quo given by our treasurer, and some soul-searching, we have decided to leave our membership fees unchanged for next year. With very careful management we hope to break even for the coming fiscal year or at worst draw to a small extent on the surplus of other years. Our cost increases have been very substantial, in particular costs associated with mailing. You can help a little by sending in your renewals at the earliest possible time.

With regard to our attempts at incorporation - the issue is still not resolved, we are working on it, and I am just beginning to understand how litigation can drag on for years.

Roger Smith, who has served the WCA in a number of capacities ever since the association got off the ground, is moving away to take up a new position in Pennsylvania and consequently has relinquished his executive position. I am sure I speak on behalf of all of you when I wish Roger good luck in his new enterprise.

As a last note let me get away from what has been a business report and take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year on behalf of the executive of the WCA.

Herk Pohl

Dear Sandy,

As the only other living (?) editor of the Wilderness Canoeist, I would like to take this opportunity to look back over the first four years of our efforts. You will surely recall the snowy day in December, 1975, when several of us met in a newspaper office in Orillia, and less than a day later, emerged with the very first issue of the newsletter.

True, there have been design improvements along the way, and expanded coverage of such topics as conservation, equipment, and other events. I hear that it doesn't take quite as long nowadays to produce the "flats" that we send to our original publishers, Bayweb Ltd., in Elmvalle (who do such a fantastic job for us considering the price).

However, I think that we can share a certain amount of pride in the fact that we have remained true to our original principles, and this would include various executive members and many club members as well as the various hard-working people on the committee. When you pick up a recent issue of the combined Backpacker - Wilderness Camping, you discover that you have in your hands what is

basically an advertising catalogue with a few stories to separate the ads. We could have gone that route as well, I suppose, in keeping with various sentiments that I have heard over the years about "glossy mags" and "advertising revenues". I for one am glad that we didn't.

At the same time, though, I think you'll agree that the members of the Association are not contributing quite as much as they did in the past, perhaps because we've explored a lot of ground together over four years, or perhaps because of growing complacency - there will always be "something" in the Wilderness Canoeist. I know that you have appealed to people to send in more trip reports, book reports, photographs, and news items. I would like to repeat your requests, and emphasize in the strongest terms that the newsletter is the heart and soul of the Association; every active member (not just active on our trips, but active anywhere) should try to make at least one contribution a year, if not more. Members who sometimes say "the newsletter is great, I don't know what we can do to thank you" should realize that their contributions would be the best offering!

Yours sincerely
Roger Smith

news briefs

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIPS NOW!

Members are reminded that their 1979 memberships expire in January. It is time to renew for 1980 now. Early renewals help keep the costs of mailing down, so act as soon as possible. A membership renewal form appears elsewhere in the newsletter.

(New members who joined after October 1 do not need to renew; their memberships have automatically been carried over for 1980.)

CANOE ROUTE BROCHURES

The Ministry of Natural Resources, Owen Sound District, has recently updated its brochures outlining canoe routes on the Beaver, Rankin and Saugeen Rivers. Each brochure combines a map with a historical sketch of the river and a present-day canoe route description. Copies of the brochures may be obtained from: District Manager, Ministry of Natural Resources, 611 Ninth Ave., East, Owen Sound, Ontario. N4K 3E4.

ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

Enclosed with this issue of the newsletter is a flyer describing the publications of the Canadian Environmental Law Research Foundation. Both publications may be of interest to members concerned about the protection and preservation of our environment.

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE

The response to the plea for material that appeared in the last issue was most appreciated. However, we still need your articles, photographs, trip reports, book reviews, equipment reports etc. for future issues. Please send material to the editor by February 1 for inclusion in the next issue.

YOUTH ENCOURAGEMENT FUND

This fund was created to assist 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, this fund has been successfully assisting our younger members for the past three years. The YEF Committee hopes to continue this work again this year, and invites interested members to send their contributions to the treasurer (payable to the Wilderness Canoe Association, and indicating that the money is for the Youth Encouragement Fund.)

NOMINATIONS FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

At the Annual General Meeting on February 16 at the Boyne River School, an election will be held for 3 positions on the Board of Directors. To date the following people have indicated to the nominating committee that they will allow their names to stand for election to the Board of Directors for 1980-1982. They are, alphabetically:

Roger Bailey
John Cross
Bill King
Glenn Spence

Other members interested in running for the Board of Directors are encouraged to contact Dave Auger at 705-324-9359. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor at the meeting.

(Members who will be unable to attend the Annual General Meeting are reminded that the new constitution allows for mail-in voting for these positions. Further information may be found in the Notice of Meeting enclosed with this copy of the newsletter.)

wca fall general meeting

The Wilderness Canoe Association held its Fall Meeting October 13 and 14 at Wildwood Lodge on the shore of Red Bay on the Bruce Peninsula. For the approximately forty people who attended, it was both a time to review the business of the club and to get together with fellow members and share tales of last summer's trips or make plans for future expeditions.



Saturday morning was devoted to the business meeting where reports were heard from the directors and committees. Chairperson Herb Pohl noted the continuing problem of a few active members carrying the work load of the club and encouraged more members to get involved in the various committees or to help with the many jobs that must be done to keep the W.C.A. functioning.

Roger Smith reported that incorporation is in the final stages and should be completed by the Annual Meeting. Treasurer Rob Butler reported that rising costs make the club's financial situation less rosy than reported just six months ago. The Board of Directors will be looking into ways of trimming expenses and possibly raising membership fees in order to maintain the high level of services and activities that members desire.

Membership chairperson Paula Schimek reported a paid-up membership of three-hundred and eleven. Roger Smith, head of the Conservation Committee amplified on the Conservation Report published in the newsletter and outlined the direction the committee would be taking in the future. Outings Committee chairperson Cam Salsbury reported on the number and location of club trips, and indicated that trips are a very important and popular part of the clubs' activities. Following the report, a discussion was held centering around the desire to have more informal instructional outings similar to last spring's whitewater workshop. Some concern over the size of trips and the resulting environmental impact was also voiced.

After lunch the Outings Committee held a meeting with trip organizers to discuss safety, environmental impact and W.C.A. trip policies, and to emphasize the

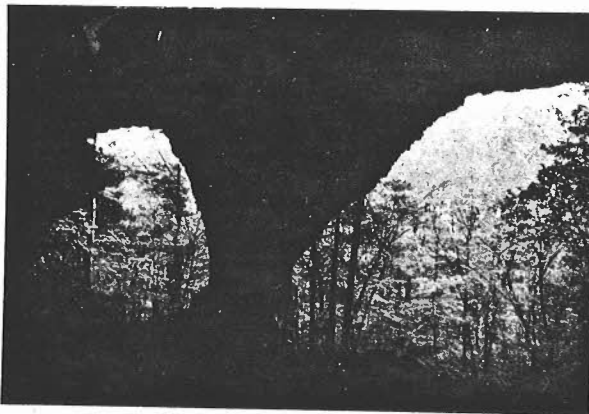
necessity of reporting back to the committee after each trip.

While the directors held a Board meeting, other members took informal hikes along the shore and through the surrounding forest, or simply relaxed and conversed with fellow members.

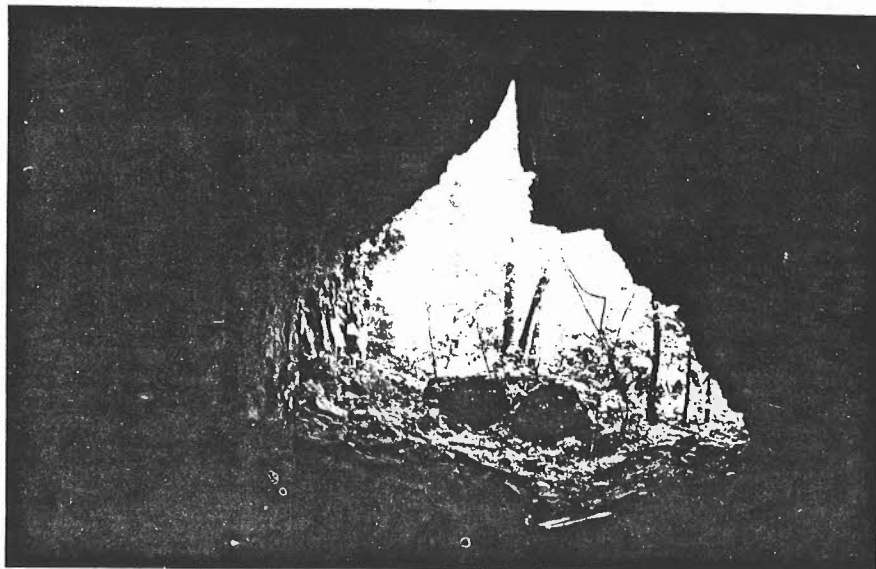
In the evening, members were able to share in a number of trips via a variety of slide shows: a canoe trip on the South Nahanni River presented by Roger Smith, the W.C.A. Spanish River trip presented by Joe Keleher, the Grand Canyon trip presented by Herb Pohl, and a canoe trip on the Ivanhoe and Groundhog rivers presented by Geoff Freeman.

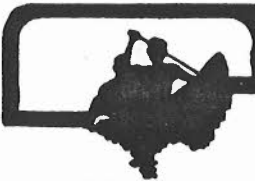
On Sunday, while intermittent showers fell over the peninsula, those members who did not have to rush back home took part in one of three trips; a hike along a part of the Bruce Trail with Karl Schimek, a canoe trip on the Rankin River with Roger Bailey, or a photographic trip to Bruce's Caves with Sandy Richardson.

It was an enjoyable weekend for those in attendance, but also one that raised a few disquieting notes about the lack of active involvement of many members, a fact that was underlined by the rather small turn out.



Photos: Glenn Spence and Sandy Richardson





THE SURVIVAL OF THE BARK CANOE

Author: John McPhee
Publisher: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, Toronto, 1975.
Reviewed by: David Pelly

John McPhee is a craftsman. Author of at least a dozen books on subjects as diverse as the Loch Ness monster, a Conneticut prep-school headmaster, or the centre court at Wimbledon, Staff writer for the New Yorker. His description is vitalizing. That he saw fit to favour our fraternity with a book about its very heart, the canoe, is simply our good fortune.

The Survival of the Bark Canoe tells the story of Henri Vaillancourt, a youth who wanted to ride in a canoe, like the Indians.

"He wanted to feel — if only approximately — what that had been like. His desire to do so became a pre-occupation. He has said that he would have settled gladly for a ride in a wood-and-canvas canoe, or even an aluminum or a fiberglass canoe — any canoe at all. But no one he knew had one. His town, Greenville, in southern New Hampshire, was small and had suffered from closing mills and regional depression. Greenville had ponds but no canoes. So far as he could see, there was only one way to achieve his wish. If he wanted to ride in a canoe, he would have to make one, and from materials at hand. White birches were all through the woods around the town..."

So Henri started building...and learning. By now he's an expert, having built over thirty birch-bark canoes. It's his living.

McPhee visits the young canoe maker, describes the process through his penetrating, literary yet scientific eye, then joins Vaillancourt for a trip through the lakes and rivers of the New England woods.

Henri is a builder of canoes, not a woodsman or skilled canoeist. The seasoned tripper amongst you will have to chuckle at his oft inept struggles with the wilderness. But his craftsmanship with birch bark, cedar, and the split root of white pine, plus his sense of purity in re-creating the Indian techniques, and an undying love for his canoes, have to receive your greatest respect.

McPhee offers us not only a compelling story, with a timeless quality, but adds a sensitive view of the lore of the birch-bark canoe. You will learn. You will be amused. You will be warmed. The style is effortless, like a canoe gliding over glassy waters.

The Survival of the Bark Canoe is must reading, and pleasurable so, for any canoeist with an iota of regard for the heritage of his medium.

WILDERNESS MEDICINE

Author: William W. Forgey, M.D.
Publisher: Indiana Camp Supply Books
(Available through Nick Nickels, Box 479,
Lakefield, Ont., KOL 2H0)
Reviewed by: Bill and Joan King

William Forgey is almost uniquely qualified to write a manual of wilderness medicine. His twin specialties of emergency medicine and clinical pharmacy are a perfect background for writing about the treatment of medical emergencies in the absence of regular medical facilities and for advising on the best drugs and equipment to take along. In addition, Dr. Forgey has a broad experience of, and a scientific interest in, the problems of wilderness living. Add to this a better-than-average ability to explain complicated subjects in a clear and concise manner and the result is a highly compact, lucid and interesting book which manages to cover in less than one-hundred and twenty pages most, if not all, of the health problems likely to arise on a wilderness trip. These are discussed, problem by problem, in a very readable manner understandable to anyone.

The reason for a joint review of this manual was to provide both a medical and a non-medical assessment.

It is interesting, therefore, that while we both found the work equally interesting and understandable, we both came up with the same two criticisms.

Between page one-hundred and ten and one-hundred and eleven are four specially-waterproofed pages designed to be cut out and packed along as a rapid-reference summary of the book. The whole book is, in a sense, a summary and is simply too meaty to be condensed further. We both felt that a tripper without medical background and without a photographic memory would be better advised to have the whole book along — it is neither large nor heavy.

Our second criticism was the inclusion of "prescription" and "non-prescription" drug kits which are presented as if they were virtually equivalent. The latter is decidedly inferior — the lack of systemic antibiotics alone leaving a big hole in its effectiveness. Dr. Forgey might better have encouraged the wilderness traveller who will truly be on his own resources to make the extra effort to secure a physician's co-operation and get the prescription items.

Two points made by Dr. Forgey perhaps deserve re-emphasis here. In one important aspect every tripper is responsible for his own health care whoever may have been designated the "trip doctor". It is important to leave on the trip in good health, or, at least, to be well aware of, and equipped for, any health problems. It is unfair and imprudent to expect the "doctor" to have divined that you are diabetic or epileptic and should have special drugs. Equally, some health problems such as bad heart disease should make the prospective wilderness tripper consider carefully the rigors of what he is undertaking. A pre-trip checkup as Dr. Forgey recommends is good insurance and would also provide an opportunity to tell your doctor about the proposed trip and secure any medications which you might require.

The second point is for those who take medical responsibility for others (even if only on family trips). You will perform much better if your first opportunity to practise splinting a fractured limb, artificial respiration or even cardiopulmonary resuscitation is not in the panic of a true wilderness emergency. First aid and CPR courses are no longer the exclusive concern of ambulance attendants and Boy Scouts. If you're the one that is there and it's needed — you're it! Also it is well to remember that it could be the "trip doctor" who has the accident.

If the above hasn't frightened you out of wilderness tripping we would heartily recommend buying Wilderness Medicine, reading it carefully and taking it along.

THE STARSHIP AND THE CANOE

Author: Kenneth Brower
Publisher: Bantam Books, New York (\$2.95)
Reviewed by: Jerry Hodge

Kenneth Brower is one of the editors of Sierra Club books. His father, David Brower, is a well-known naturalist. I found the book to be rather unique and reminiscent of another rather unique book called Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance. Both books are about father and son and their different perceptions of the world.

The Starship and the Canoe follows the lives of Freeman Dyson, a physicist working on the design of deep space craft, and his son George who is looking at the inner space of the natural world. George is involved in the design and building of "baidarkas", large sea-going kayaks which were used by the natives of the Pacific coast for travel and hunting of seals, sea lions and whales.

The two themes of the book follow the adventures of both men and their work, against strong backgrounds of conservation, the magnificence of the Pacific coast from Vancouver Island to Alaska and the intricacies of kayak design and building. From his background, Brower is constantly looking at the philosophies of his two main characters and at the end of the book brings the father and son together for a close encounter of the philosophical kind. A nice book.

Too Bad About Kluane

John Theberge

Is Parks Canada again selling out a public trust that it is able to protect wilderness? That is how it seems at Kluane National Park in the southwest Yukon Territory. The park represents the pinnacle of Canada, including much of our highest mountain range, largest sub-polar icefield in the world, and a richer and more diverse assortment of plants and animals than found anywhere in the Canadian north - a magnificent wilderness on the verge of considerable development that will mar its character. There is still time, however, to challenge the developers.

Some baffling ironies surround Parks Canada's proposed developments for Kluane. The management (master) plan was released for public comment in May 1979. One irony is that in such a huge park, 22,015 square kilometers, wilderness can be threatened. More than one-half of the park, however, is covered by icecap punctuated by perpetually snow-clad mountain tops of the Icefield Ranges. Additional land consists of precipitous rock of the rugged Kluane Ranges which front along the park's eastern boundary at the Alaska and Haines highways. Less than 6,500 square kilometers of vegetated land remain that is useable by wildlife or people other than glacier-climbers. Just that relatively small amount to represent the expansive tundras where mountain caribou graze in the sedge meadows, the lowland forests dotted by bogs and fens, the prairie openings with their sharp-tailed grouse and abundant arctic ground squirrels, the grassland mountain slopes where bands of all-white Dall sheep lie in the sun, the sub-alpine shrublands important for grizzly denning and moose summer ranges. Sheep, caribou, grizzlies, wolves, they all range widely to find their ecological requirements in this exacting northern environment. And they find them mostly along the valleys.

Five major valleys cut through the Kluane Ranges from the Icefield Ranges to the highways. Parks Canada intends to build or upgrade roads in three of them. At the end of one, plans are to build a railway up a mountainside to a viewpoint, and at the end of another will be a shuttle-boat service across two wilderness lakes. In a fourth valley, the largest lake in the park will cater to a tour boat, private motor boats, and snowmobiling. Aircraft overview flights are planned up some (all?) valleys and horse trails in others. Lots of fun for everyone at Kluane! But what of the limited vegetated land, the importance of the valleys, the character of roadless wilderness?



The irony that Kluane's wilderness can indeed be marred is heightened because this park has been planned with extensive ecological information: studies on soils, geology, climate, mammals, birds, fish, and a biophysical land classification conducted by scientist-consultants to Parks Canada as well as park employees. All this information was compiled descriptively in a resource information package made available to the public, and analyzed in an "environmental screening" for the developments proposed in the management plan. The latter candidly points out some, but not all, of the constraints to development identified by the scientist-consultants. "D. Blood and others recommend against the use of motor boats on Bates Lake because of possible disturbance to nesting loons and gulls", (yet a motorized shuttle-boat will operate here). And "G. Hunter states that development of the Slims/Kaskawulsh corridor carries a substantial penalty in the opening up of and man's intrusion into a pristine and spectacular wilderness setting at present little disturbed by man", (a twenty-two kilometer road and the railway are planned here). The author of the environmental screening, J. Mathers, adds his own observations: "construction of the road and lift will create a visual scar in the valley", and "the three main lakes in Kluane National Park...will all be subject to motorized boating where the aesthetic impacts will be greater than physical and chemical effects". The conclusions of the environmental screening reveal the irony that scientific studies themselves can do little to determine the extent of permissible development; the interpretation of the significance of any predicted disturbance is inevitably subjective. I, and some of the other scientists involved in the park inventories, interpret the disturbances that will be caused by the construction, upgrading and use of the three roads as unacceptably severe in their risk of disturbing or altering wildlife use-patterns and their destruction of the wilderness character of the land. But based on the same information, Parks Canada has proposed the developments, believing that further study will show how their impacts may be minimized. Parks Canada hopes that by controlling access on these roads, the problems associated with them will be reduced, whereas a more skeptical viewpoint is that once the roads are there, the problems have just begun.

Ironical too, are Parks Canada's development proposals when one considers how and why the park was established. Thirty years passed, as did the tenure of three ministers (A. Hamilton, W. Dinsdale, J. Chretien) each with a resolve to create the park before success in 1972. Despite years of strong opposition by the British Columbia and Yukon Chamber of Mines, Mr. Chretien finally succeeded partly





because of his resolve to create new parks, but largely because of a pro-park lobby mounted by Canadian conservation organizations and Yukon residents. The supporters believed that the land, if placed in a national park, would be protected. Yet Parks Canada has rejected the desire for a park roadless in its interior, expressed by organizations whose support was crucial, most notably the National and Provincial Parks Association of Canada and the Canadian Nature Federation.

Even worse, Parks Canada has rejected the majority of viewpoints expressed at its own public meetings. Its management planning team conducted an open public hearing process consisting of two phases, first to provide a forum for discussion, and second to allow a public response to four alternative plans ranging from roadless to progressively more development-oriented alternatives. The latter was similar in most respects to the one chosen and now proposed by Parks Canada. The public was given a chance to respond verbally at meetings held in the southwest Yukon, Whitehorse, Edmonton, Vancouver, and Winnipeg, and by letter and questionnaire. The overwhelmingly predominate viewpoint was for considerably less development than that now proposed. Among the 138 questionnaires and letters returned to Parks Canada, 58% called for no development and another 19% for limited development short of the second least development-oriented proposal. Only 13% supported either the full second alternative, or the two most development-oriented ones. An additional nine out of twelve briefs from organizations supported a roadless park.

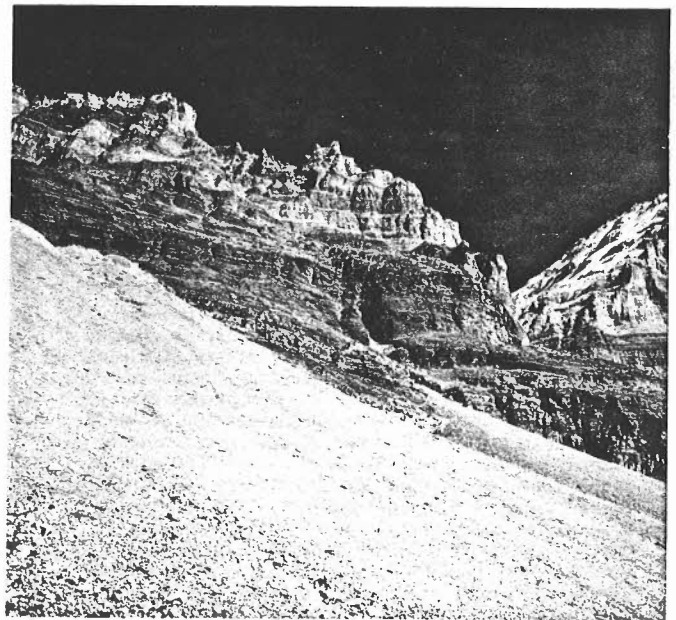
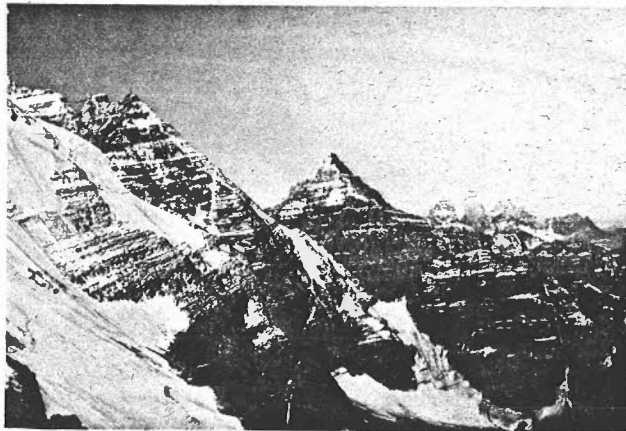
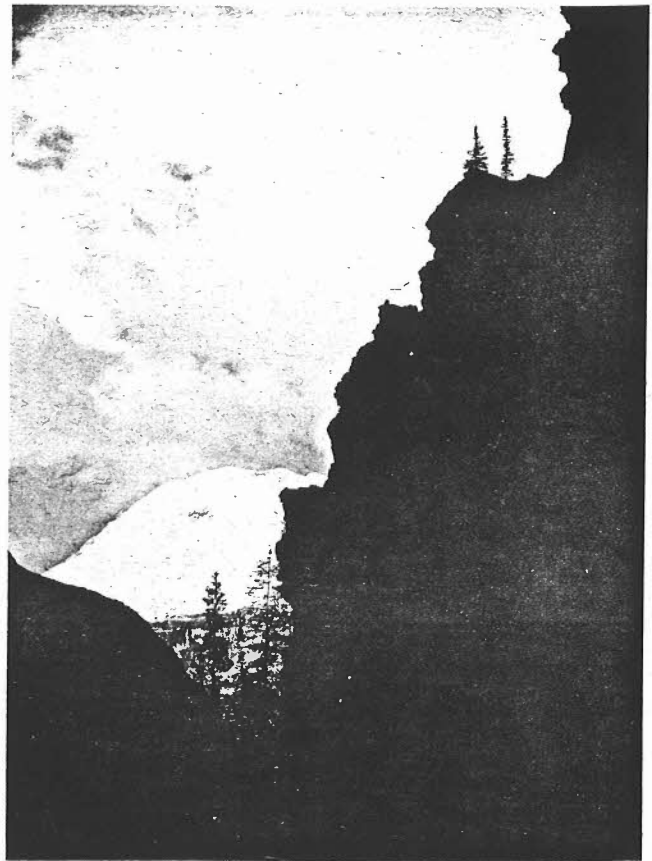
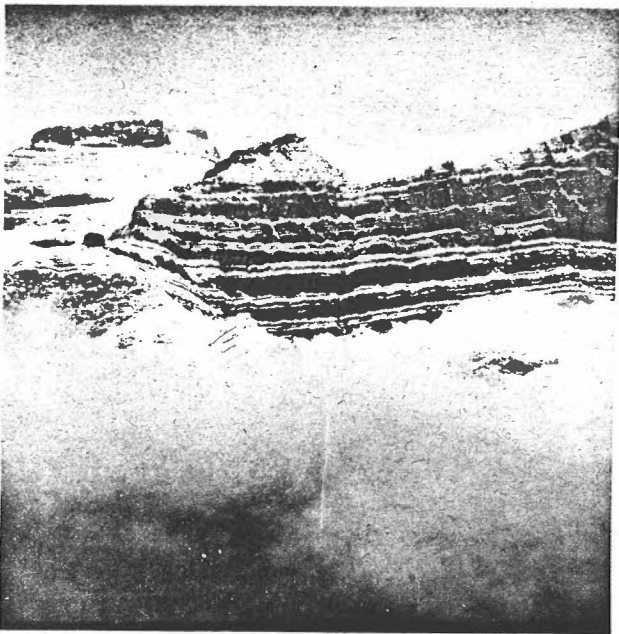
Ironically Parks Canada states in its proposed management plan that preservation has been emphasized, and that "The wilderness character of Kluane National Park is its most important attribute. It must be maintained." Parks Canada's perpetual dilemma is the extent of development permissible to leave the land "unimpaired for future generations" but at the same time provide for public enjoyment. Despite the principle objective for national parks being "To protect for all time...", some politicians, segments of the public, and even parks officials interpret protection as encompassing the construction of Sunshine Village and "Village" Lake Louise in Banff National Park, damming a lake and constructing a large marina in Prince Albert National Park, permitting expansion of Mt. Agassiz ski development in Riding Mountain National park.

The new national parks policy released in May 1979 may help put the brakes on developments in national parks. Now, park zoning (including wilderness) cannot be altered without public review and ministerial signature. No new downhill ski facilities or golf courses will be permitted, and boundaries will be legislated to curb the growth of existing ones. All developments, plans, and management activities will be subject to environmental assessment and public review. These, and other new policies will better assure that our national parks become what the public of Canada, rather than vested developmental or political interests want.

But the question remains, what do we want? Minister J.H. Faulkner, in his preface to the new national parks policy, placed the onus clearly on the public: "No matter how enlightened policies are, and how wisely they are employed, constant and enthusiastic public support will always be critical to the protection of Canada's natural and cultural heritage...".

Let's start protecting with Kluane. There are one-hundred kilometers of spectacular scenic road abutting the park to cater to those who cannot experience the park with the wind in their face. Two large lakes abut the park for motor-boating and snowmobiling. A chance still exists to really protect for all time the beauty of Kluane, to take no risk of impairing its wildlife populations, to assure that at least this part of a fast-developing Yukon stays forever completely wild. The Kluane wilderness may gracefully accept planned trails, primitive campgrounds, interpretive facilities at park headquarters, expanded naturalist-guided hiking trips, and perhaps carefully controlled overview flights of the icefields. No more than this. A roadless park in its interior. A true wilderness.

Dr. John Theberge is a long time Federation of Ontario Naturalist Board and Executive member who has as professor of environmental studies at the University of Waterloo spent years researching national parks and potential park areas in the Yukon. This article was provided by the FON.



This stillness, solitude, wildness of nature is . . . what I go out to seek. It is places some grand, serene, immortal, infinitely encouraging, though invisible to him. (THOREAU)



high country

Photographs: Barry Brown

As the sun draws near the horizon, the great drama of the day begins . . . stronger and sharper becomes the relief . . . a thousand forms . . . stand forth in strength and animation. All things seem to grow in beauty, power, and dimensions. What was grand before becomes majestic, the majestic becomes sublime, and . . . the sublime . . . transcendent. (DUTTON)



*as if I always met in those
panion, and walked with*

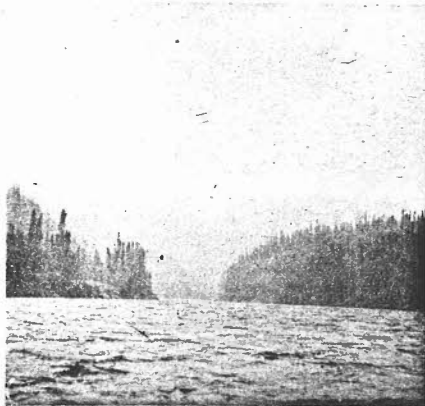


*The morning wind forever blows,
the poem of creation is uninterrupted;
but few are the ears that hear it. (THOREAU)*

Northern Quebec

two impressions of a wilderness canoe trip

Photos: Gord Fenwick & Jim Greenacre



Story: Gord Fenwick

Although I had researched this trip for about two years it was not until about mid-June that Jim Greenacre and I decided to undertake it. Our gear was to consist of a 16½ foot, 25 kg Kevlar S-cloth canoe, 22 kg of food, three packs of 22, 20, and 17 kg, three paddles and two life jackets giving a total weight of about 95 kg. This was to be portaged in one carry. One of us would carry the canoe, paddles, and the lightest pack, while the other carried the two heavier packs and a waterproof ammunition box containing camera equipment, knife, matches, etc. The food we carried was just adequate for the three week trip, and we were counting on catching fish and collecting edible plants along the way to supplement our freeze dried dinners.

After obtaining our Parc Mistassini Travel Permits, we set off on Saturday July 21 with the early morning sun glittering off the sparkling waters and the wind gusting at our backs. Despite the following wind, it took two full days of hard paddling against the current to travel the 58 km and reach the portage to Lac Coursay. Along the way we had gathered, cleaned and cooked yellow water lily roots and found this supposedly edible plant unpalatable and bitter, even after an hour of vigorous boiling!

Monday saw us across Lac Temiscamie and Tuesday we started up the Riviere Temiscamie towards Lac Petite Temiscamie. This section involved a lot of lining and wading as we worked upstream for most of the long hard day. We rushed a little too much, slipping and falling a lot as a result. In one fall I cut the palm of my hand causing some concern. We found only one little-used portage trail along our whole ascent.

It was great to reach the top, and we camped at the north end of Lac Petite Temiscamie where we bedded down with full stomachs as strong south winds marched the dark clouds up the lake, whipped up white caps and lashed our two-man tent. Then all was engulfed in a driving rain that changed to a steady drizzle lasting through the night.

Next day, paddling 14 km south over the calm rain dimpled waters, we reached the portage to a chain of lakes which would take us east across the watershed. For the next few days we used aerial photos in addition to our 1:250 000 topo maps, to give us more details as to our exact location.

It was a surprise to come to stare at the point picked months earlier from the maps and aerial photos as the best way across the watershed and find a small campsite and a portage trail leading up to the chain of small lakes. Of course one soon realizes that over countless years, without detailed maps, the Cree, traveling and living off the land came to know intimately the many and best routes from

one area to another. These trails have, in fact, existed for hundreds of years.

Before attempting to cross the lake chain to the east we scouted the south end of Lac Temiscamie for another possible route up from Lac Temiscamie. We found a trail that led west between eskers for 3 km to a campsite on a 3 m wide meandering creek. The creek appeared navigable and I suspect it was the preferred route of the Indians.

Late in the afternoon we headed uphill 75 m east to the chain of small lakes, following and sometimes loosing the faint trail leading from one lake to the next, as it petered out in the mosses and small shrubs. By noon the next day we had completed crossing the lake chain and camped at the south end of a long narrow lake in the late afternoon.

The next day we would cross to the watershed of the Mistissibi Nord-Est. After supper we scouted out the initial part of our route. Twenty-five minutes later, after moving along and crossing over a hill, we unexpectedly ended up in a swampy grassland completely disoriented, but with map and compass returned more or less along the same route to camp.

Morning dawned cold with the rising sun burning the mists off the water. There were no more trails, so we orienteered east for about 2 km through sparse Jack Pine forest, over grassy wetlands, across a hill, over a long-dry glacial stream bed, and over a deep cold creek arriving at beautiful "Fenwick" marsh. The sun sparkled off the rippled narrow channel amidst the waving grass. We paddled the narrow winding course for about 1 km across the marsh and made a number of short portages taking up the "Greenacre" lake chain to the waters of the Mistissibi Nord-Est. It was a beautiful day and gorgeous country but the seven portages totally close to 5 km had taken their toll on us. Camping at 7:15, we were so tired it was a great effort to set up camp and cook supper. Eventually, after prolonged effort at starting a fire we had *une bonne repas* of spaghetti and sauce with chili con carne, chicken rice soup and freshly gathered hemlock tea.

It was 11:30 before we finally broke camp the next morning, and a day later, after traversing Lac Machique, we entered at last la Riviere Mistissibi Nord-Est. This river drops 480 m over 315 km, and has a profile similar to the Moisie River, dropping steadily with many rapids which were for the most part runnable.

Our first ten days of rations had lasted well, augmented by three large pike and some rock tripe. However, edible plants in the area were almost absent, and even the abundant blueberry bushes were barely beginning to develop their berries.

By Tuesday morning we had tested and improved our skills in running countless rapids, but now faced over 15 km of almost continuous rapids. The river dropped over 60 m as it tumbled down into a deep river valley. To our surprise, by lunch we had run rapid sections up to a kilometer in length with only three portages totalling about a kilometer. After our pumpernickle and cheese sandwiches, we paddled away from the base of a small falls dampened by a steady drizzle of rain which cut down the visibility. We ran the inside edge of a long rapid, stopped, waded 50 m, then ran 50 m across the river in a wide medium rapid. The rapids persisted, varying in intensity, but by staying out of the main current as we snaked around the bends we were able to continue our swift descent.

The valley deepened, looking breathtakingly beautiful but ominous as shrouds of white mist rose slowly in front of and over us on the near vertical hills. As the rain intensified we paddled through the quiet serenity of the valley observed with curiosity by a beaver and a pair of otter.

Wednesday was a beautiful morning with the sun slowly cutting the mist on the west bank as it rose above the steep shadowed hills where a rivulet of water plunged straight down over 30 m to the river's edge. All felt well with the world, and even the cut on my hand had healed. After eleven days and 250 km we had reached the valley we had come so far to see. Its beauty, warmth, and tranquility were indescribable. Awed by the scene unfolding before our eyes we were completely at ease as our canoe moved quietly and smoothly across the mirrored surface between the rugged hills.

The distance slipped by, and slowly, imperceptibly at first, the current picked up, and with growing uneasiness we began running moderate rapids.

It is hard to describe the feelings of apprehension and fear that I felt as we approached long sections of dangerous rapids. Always there was the awareness of the disastrous and possibly fatal consequences of just one small mistake, one wrong decision. The feeling of isolation was immense! We had seen no-one since we had started our trip, and the few trails we found showed no clear evidence that they had been used for many years. The rapids were so long and tricky that even with a second canoe there would have been little chance of rescue or retrieval of equipment. Even if we got to shore safely but lost our canoe and equipment it would probably be at least three weeks before we would be found, and I hesitated to think of what shape we would have been in by then! We felt the responsibility for each other's safety and above all the concern for returning safely home to our families.



In southern Ontario there is the fun and joy of running rapids; out here it was a dangerous task, requiring total concentration, always with a feeling of relief when each long section had been safely passed. As we would enter each long rapid section I was aware of my apprehension growing, my heart pounding faster; but once into it the mind focused on the rapid with its rushing waters, waves, rocks, boulders, shelves, on split second decisions, team work, and on the performance of our canoeing skills to the peak of our ability.

We backpaddled the inside edges of many difficult rapids and finally ran a wide boulder filled rapid down the left, then crossed to the right to an almost overgrown portage trail.

On coming to the end of the portage I was astounded! We were gazing downstream at a turbulent river with its powerful waters surging across large ledges spanning its width. Whoever made this trail was certainly gutsy or knew something I did not! I studied the river for over ten minutes with binoculars before finding what I thought was a safe route through. We would have to cross the entire width of the river before reaching the ledges 100 m downstream. We worked hard to power across the choppy but boulder free route, then lined up to pass through a narrow "V" between two ledges. We crossed through high and dry with dangerous turbulence on either side. Then we went with the swift current to the next portage. More portages and then an hour run down a moderately steep, wide gravel run taxed our alertness, but eventually brought us to the calm waters we had seen far ahead and below.

What a feeling of relief! Again the enjoyment, peace and serenity of the beautiful valley returned as we paddled lazily along for about 15 km before camping.

Thursday morning we left the most spectacular sections of the valley, running a rapid dropping 30 m in an hour and a half.

Sunday brought a return to civilization. Running the first rapid I lost my hat, and with this bad omen we decided to portage the remaining five rapids along 5 km of gravel road. We were warned by three farmers of the deadly rapids ahead when we started to return to the river. One chap took us through the fields hooked to his tractor, then led us through the bush to the river. He watched with concern as we paddled out from the edge of the last rapid; we waved goodbye when we reached the safe waters near the next corner.

On Monday we were hugging the coast of a windy, white-capped Lac St. John, expecting no problems. When we tried to take a slight shortcut of about a kilometre across a bay, we suddenly found ourselves in large waves cresting near the shore and threatening to blow us out to disaster in the larger waves farther out. After fifteen minutes of hectic paddling, quartering the waves, we reached the safety of calmer water and then the shore.

It seems that it is often when you least expect problems that you are less alert and careful and as a result are most prone to mishap.

Several hours later our trip ended at St. Felician.

Our expedition had safely covered 530 km in seventeen days. The nine day challenge to reach the Mistissibi followed by our eight day descent of the river were both interesting, varied and satisfying adventures in themselves. The trip was all we had hoped for; the experiment of going light on a long trip worked out admirably and saved us up to a week's travel in portaging, and without many freeze-dried dinners we had great fun cooking up a variety of meals. We were very healthy at the end, both of us having lost weight. My only regret is that we did not spend a few days climbing the beautiful hills.

We were somewhat humbled in our feelings of accomplishment on meeting two canoeists who had arrived in St. Felician just ahead of us. They were close to completing a two-and-a-half-year trip from Victoria, B.C. to Tadoussac, P.Q., by backpack, snowshoe, dog-team and canoe.



Story: Jim Greenacre

1979 was to be the year for my first real wilderness canoe trip, and in January I began contacting charter air lines, railways, bus companies and road transport companies to find the best way into and out of the Attawapiskat River. Nothing materialized from my plans because I was unable to find three other interested and compatible canoeists who were able to get a common vacation period. So, in mid June when Gord Fenwick asked me if I was interested in going with him on a twenty day wilderness canoe trip in Quebec, I immediately accepted before even hearing what region the trip was going to be in. Having been on several of Gord's week-end trips I knew this one would be a demanding, rugged, strenuous, wilderness trip - just what I wanted.

The trip started at 2:00 pm Friday afternoon when Gord's van, with my new, bright yellow canoe strapped onto the top, pulled out of my driveway. Twenty hours later, by changing drivers between gasoline fill-ups, we had completed 1430 km of highway driving and were on the water. The following are my log entries for the trip:

Saturday, July 21

10:00 The sun was bright and a strong wind from dead astern helped us against the current. We had extreme difficulty keeping the canoe on a straight course. The new canoe seemed to over-react to steering strokes. We were unable to locate our exact position on the map until after lunch.

17:30 We set up camp on a sandy, rocky shore with just one flat space large enough for our two-man tent and fly extension. It started to rain just as we got the tent up. Supper was instant noodles with a handful of rice thrown in. We had covered approximately 40 km.

Sunday, July 22

07:30 We got up to heavy rain and cooked breakfast on the stove under the fly canopy. The fly canopy, a last minute idea of mine was already proving to be of great benefit. By the time we were ready to go, the rain had stopped although the sky was dull and overcast.

10:00 We broke camp and were on the water.

16:00 Having seen some bright orange markers on the right bank, my curiosity took me ashore to investigate, where I found a good campsite at the top of the bank. We also found a portage leading to the lake which we wanted, though the river outlet from the lake was at least 1.5 km farther upstream. We decided to use this trail rather than continue upstream to the river outlet. The carry took 45 minutes.

17:30 Camp was set up at the end of the portage at a good site used by the Indians. Gord wanted to try some fishing and though we trolled the lake for an hour and a half the only thing we got were some snags.

Monday, July 23

06:00 Although Gord complained of cold during the night I was O.K. While attempting to sponge the dew off the tent fly I found it was frozen. No wonder Gord felt cold. The weather was bright sunlight with few clouds but too cold for mosquitos or blackflies

09:00 Gord trolled for three more hours resulting in only a few more snags. There was no sign of the portage at the next rapid and while crossing the pool at the base to explore the other side Gord made a few more casts, snagging the line again! But this was no snag; it was a fish! I paddled the canoe to shore while Gord played the fish. A quick snatch of the net and I had our first fish, a 68 cm pike. After making the portage we stopped for lunch - freshly caught pike (with lots left over for supper).

18:45 We set up camp having covered a distance of approximately 34 km under hazy skies.

Tuesday, July 24

06:50 It had rained all night and was still raining when we got up to cook breakfast under the canopy.

09:15 The day began with a short 8 to 10 minute portage, then a short paddle to more rapids. We walked, pushed, pulled and tracked the canoe up river for the rest of the day, often up to our crotches in water, slithering and stumbling on slime covered rocks. We both missed our footing several times and were submerged up to the waist - and this is fun? Thank goodness it was warm. It took over three hours to travel 4 km. We seized every opportunity to paddle - even small eddies 10 m across. We sighted a large hawk at lunch time.

16:00 We saw blaze marks on two trees but could find no obvious portage. Investigation turned up more blaze marks on the other side of a dried up river bed. The portage took fifteen minutes and bypassed a vicious section of rapids.

18:30 We set up camp and just around the point found an Indian winter camp and some moose tracks. With the wind gusting straight down Lake Temiscamie we had to use the canoe as a wind break to prevent the tent from taking off. Halfway through supper it started to rain so we retired to the tent for coffee. The distance covered was 20 km.

Wednesday, July 25

05:45 We rose to find low clouds but no rain and decided to start early delaying breakfast until we reached the other end of the lake, a distance of 20 km. Gord trolled but caught no fish. We looked for the stream that should have lead us into the next lake but could not find it and so turned and paddled back close to the shore line.

10:30 I noticed an old blaze mark on a tree. This was it... a portage! During breakfast I remarked, "The blaze mark is on the south side of the point so the Indians must come into Little Temagami Lake from the south not the north as we did".

12:00 Breakfast was over and we were ready to go when Gord suggested we explore and look for the south entrance to the lake. We paddled to the end of the lake, went ashore and walked along the top of the esker. After a fifteen minute walk we found a good trail. Gord wanted to see where it led. Forty-five minutes later we found an Indian campsite on the edge of a narrow creek only 10m wide. After returning to the breakfast site we portaged up the hill on a good trail for thirty five minutes. There were six more portages, ranging from ten minutes up to fifty minutes. The trails got weaker and weaker before finally petering out except for the odd blaze mark on a tree.

19:00 We cut out a camp site in the bush. It had rained all day and we were soaked. After changing into dry clothes we cooked supper under the canopy. We travelled about 26 km today. The blackflies were bothersome.

Thursday, July 26

05:50 We shuddered at the thought of putting on our wet clothing but did it. The rain had stopped but the hilltops on the other side of the lake were shrouded in cloud. We decided to have a cold breakfast and a hot meal at midday when a better site might be found. The bread had got wet yesterday and was now in small pieces. Gord suggested bread soup with two OXO cubes plus half a cup of milk topped with parmesan cheese. It was so tasty and filling that we skipped lunch. There were many, many short portages and short paddles over little ponds today with only a few old blaze marks to tell us we were on the right track. We crossed the height of land into a new water system and camped early because the next section was the most difficult - across the height of land with no streams to guide us. We enjoyed a supper of fresh pike, rice and rock tripe and explored the surroundings after supper.

Friday, July 27

06:00 The night had been cold but the sun was now shining. Hurray! Hurray! Seeing myself for the first time in a week, I shaved.

10:30 After studying the aerial photos we started portaging through the bush heading due east, with Gord leading by compass. Two hours later we came out on the edge of a large marshy area, right beside an open water channel about a metre wide. This creek took us, after twisting and turning all over the place, to the other side of the marsh. Thank goodness it was not a bog. It was here while walking the canoe up a narrow shallow creek, that I lost my hat. It caught on a low overhanging branch and went floating down the stream. Fortunately it only drifted about 60 m before the chin cord snagged on



a submerged deadfall and I was able to recover it. That hat has character after four years of canoe tripping. The afternoon was spent with many short paddling sessions interspersed with portages varying from fifteen minutes to forty-five minutes, all of them through virgin bush.

18:30 Gord's navigation was dead on bringing us out onto a big lake. I nicknamed him "Pathfinder". Seeing some orange markers on the shore we investigated and found a cache of aviation fuel. Both utterly fatigued, we set up camp, almost too tired to put up the tent or cook supper. We had travelled about 14 km with perfect weather: bright sunshine but cool enough that we didn't sweat too much on the many portages.

Saturday, July 28

07:30 We were still feeling the effects of yesterday's exertions. A plane flying over the top end of the lake, just above the horizon, was the first indication since the beginning of the trip that there were other people out here besides ourselves. It was eleven o'clock before we got paddling, both of us feeling very lethargic. We had mostly lake travel today with short (400-500 m) portages through the bush. The last portage of the day was thirty minutes across a peninsula saving about 26 km of paddling. Gord fished a likely spot and on his first cast caught a fish which got off the barbless hook before he could be landed. In quick succession numbers two and three did the same thing. Number four didn't! We had pike for supper. We had also found some young hemlock trees today and had picked the new growth from the ends of the branches and had hemlock tea which was very pleasant tasting. We harvested enough to last for several days and supplement our tea ration of one bag per day for the two of us. After supper I shaved and had a full bath in the lake. The day had started off with weak sunshine which had changed to light rain after lunch and continued for the rest of the day.

Sunday, July 29

06:00 We were on the water by 8:45. A white object behind the trees on the right shore had us puzzled. We couldn't even identify it with the binoculars. Curiosity won so we paddled to shore and investigated. It was a trappers log cabin with a partial white canvas roof. The one room cabin was well built and had belonged to Henry Gunne whose name we found on an empty oil barrel. He must have brought his family with him because we found toys, baby's rubber pants and a youngster's note book written in English. Trapping must have been good because there were many beaver skin drying hoops lying around the cabin. By one o'clock we reached the headwaters of the Mistissibi River North East Branch. This had been our objective for the past eight days. The toast I had planned for this occasion with four ounces

of sherry fell flat. Gord is a total abstainer! The afternoon was spent running small rapids between quiet pools with a few portages and some lining. We bypassed one rapid by pushing the loaded canoe down a side channel - a canoe takes a beating on a trip like this. Camp was made high on an esker. The thick white moss which grows abundantly in all open areas made a most comfortable bed. This moss was also treacherous to walk on especially on slopes as it didn't seem to have roots and large chunks suddenly slid away underfoot. This made portaging difficult and several times the top pack dropped off. We saw our first wild animal of the trip: one lonely beaver.

Monday, July 30

06:20 The tent had a big sag in one side and a closer look from the outside revealed a gallon and a half of water caught in the fly. No wonder it sagged! We were on the water by 9:20 for a day of rapids. We ran most of these, two or three we walked or lined, and only one we portaged. At lunch time I washed my under-wear although it hardly seemed necessary considering I had been up to my crotch in water three or four times that morning. Body heat soon dried them out.

17:00 We set up camp early because the next section on the map showed a long section of rapids. The tent was pitched high up on an esker again. Gord tried fishing again without success. The landscape here was very flat.

Tuesday, July 31

06:00 Wonders! There was no rain during the night! Since the trip was half over Gord opened up the second half of the food supply and redistributed the loads. There were some small surpluses from the first half: egg powder, flour, margarine, rice.

09:15 After three or four minutes of paddling we reached our first rapid of the day. There were many rapids, some of them three to five kilometres long and five bushwhacking portages from twenty to thirty minutes long. The river got narrower and narrower as the banks got steeper and higher.

15:30 We finally ran out of rapids and into a deep narrow gorge. The scenery would have been truly magnificent if it were not for the incessant rain which had been coming down in torrents since noon. At 4 o'clock we started to look for a campsite but it was after 5 before we found a spot flat enough to pitch the tent. This site had been used before but a long time ago and we had to trim some leaves from the lower branches of the big trees to make room for the tent. The open spots were covered with wet, green moss of an entirely different variety to that found higher up river on the eskers. We had seen a pair of otter who kept standing up in the water to observe us in the late afternoon. We also saw a beaver.



Wednesday, August 1

06:00 It was not raining again. One of my toes was sore to the touch and I didn't remember banging it on anything. We put off as long as possible the repulsive action of dressing in wet clothes. Gord cheered as the sun appeared over the top of the 300 m cliff on the other side of the river. The fauna changed - we now had green moss, some ferns, and the trees were much bigger though still almost exclusively black spruce with a few hemlock and the occasional tamarack. We were still enjoying hemlock tea. The travelling was much the same as yesterday - rapids, rapids, and more rapids with a few portages. On one portage we were separated and I over-shot Gord by 150 m. I sat tight and blew my whistle until he found me. While portaging through the bush we sometimes saw old blaze marks on the trees which told us we were at least on the right side of the river.

17:00 We started looking for a campsite and saw the remains of a hunter's camp: a collapsed framework with shreds of clear plastic still clinging to some poles. It was too messy with garbage so we pressed on. An hour and a half later we found a small open area and set up camp. Beaver had been very busy in this region having felled many large birch trees. I had time for a hot water shave after supper. For the first time in many days my clothing, except for my shoes and socks, was dry at the end of the day. The weather had been near perfect. After a strenuous day both of us were utterly exhausted when we set up camp at 6:30. Gord retired immediately after supper while I enjoyed the warmth and glow from our cooking fire.

Thursday, August 2

06:00 The night had been cold but we were warm and snug in our down sleeping bags, and the tent and fly were completely dry. There were no black flies - they seemed not to like the cold either.

10:00 We ran one continuous rapid for an hour and a half during which we were only once out of the canoe to lift over a dangerous shelf. Gord was in complete control as we ran the rapids, giving rapid fire instructions, "Back paddle, back paddle, draw, draw, draw, back paddle, forward, back paddle, forward." The instructions came so fast that I sometimes had to skip one or two, but not once did we make the slightest error while zig-zagging our eddy hopping way down the rapids, crossing from side to side. Shortly after lunch we ran out of rapids and the river now meandered through a wide valley. There were high sand cliffs with many sand martins nesting high up on them. Just before lunch we saw a hawk leave a tree and fly downstream around the bend. After lunch we sighted the hawk again. For three hours that hawk kept us under observation hopping from tree to tree down the river ahead of us. The bird had a white breast and underbelly, reddish wings and a tail which was open wide when flying. It started raining in

mid-afternoon, a mild drizzle, not unpleasant, but it gradually intensified until by 5:30 it was a heavy downpour. We started looking for a campsite but the sandy beaches we had anticipated did not materialize. The river banks looked miserably wet and depressing. As we rounded a bend in the river we could not believe what we saw: a cabin with white paint, glass windows and a blue shingle roof. We scrambled ashore, walked up to the door, tried the latch and the door opened! There was a square steel stove, table, sink, log stools, cook ware, four bunk beds with foam mattresses; ah! just heavenly for a night like this. Unfortunately there was no woodpile, nor could we find a saw or an axe. No matter, a half hour's work and we had a good supply of fire wood. Gord only took moments to get a good fire going and was soon cooking a belly-filling meal of spaghetti with sauce and a freeze-dried dinner of chili thrown in to make it even spicier. It was absolutely delicious. The stove gave off tremendous heat as I wrote up my log and laughed at the rain and the clouds which were shrouding the hill-tops across the river. Thank you Bellevue Air Services, owners of this log cabin! Gord claimed we had travelled 75 km today, but I could not believe it so I measured off the distance myself and came up with 68 km, still a very respectable day's paddling. Today we moved into another area of vegetation as the open areas on the river banks had a coarse grass growing in them. It was the first grass we had seen since the start of the trip.

Friday, August 3

05:30 Gord prepared breakfast and since there was no tent to take down I luxuriated on the mattress for another 45 minutes. Twice during the night I had been awakened by the sound of torrential rain on the cabin roof.

09:00 The sky was overcast with promising blue patches and the wind was from the south. The next rapids shown on the map were about 17 km downstream. We were there just before eleven o'clock, as planned. It was a falls which we decided to portage on the left. This was the wrong choice as it took 25 minutes to travel 100 m. We crossed to the other side below the falls as there were more falls just ahead and looked for a trail with no luck. More bushwhacking! We ate lunch by the falls as the sun had found a hole in the clouds. Gord found a grease covered washer on the rocks and we concluded that someone must have been here with an outboard motor. At the first rapid after lunch we could see a blaze mark from 50 m upstream which marked a well worn trail with garbage scattered along it. Fishermen must come here to get to the falls. By mid-afternoon the west branch of the Mistissibi joined in on the right. A short time later we saw a bright yellow camp site sign and another about an hour later. The sky clouded over and by four o'clock it had started raining. We

paddled on for just over an hour in the rain before stopping for the night at a messy site with lots of garbage strewn all over the place.

Saturday, August 4

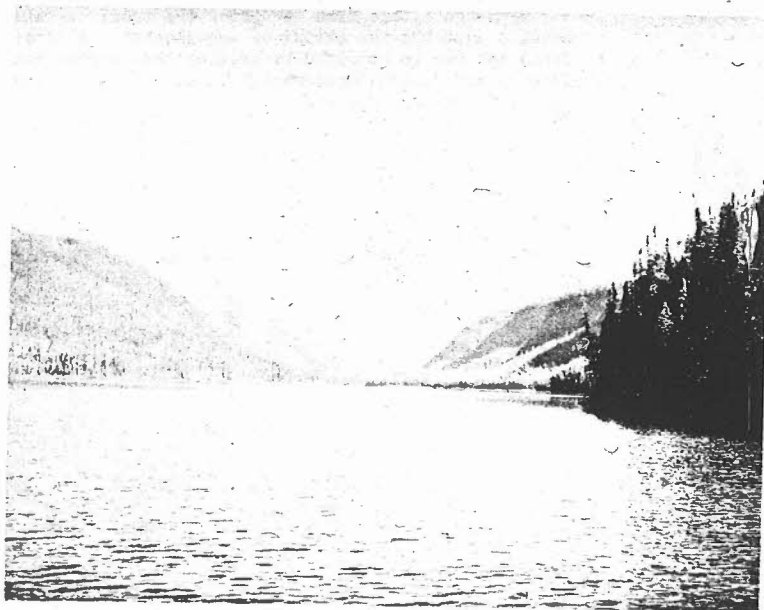
05:45 It rained during the night so we cooked on the stove. About 7:30 the sun came out and helped our body heat to dry out our wet clothing. By 8:30 we were on the water. During the morning we saw a red sign shaped like an arrow with the word "danger" painted on it nailed to a tree and pointing straight across the river. We stopped and looked around, but saw nothing to alarm us so continued on. Twenty-five metres downstream we saw a lumber road right down to the river's edge so we went ashore to inspect. There was total destruction with nothing but dead birch left standing. There were several portages today but all were well marked and well used. One chute which we portaged had the biggest standing waves I have ever seen: three to four metres high. The vegetation changed to many young aspen and a few very small maple. There were no black flies today. We used another government campsite but this one had not been used this year as the cleared area was overgrown with small shrubs and plants. The shoreline trees showed much damage from ice as high as 3 m up the trunk. Gord cooked another tremendous spaghetti and rice dinner.

Sunday, August 5

05:50 It rained during the night. Gord cooked a huge pot of rice pudding for lunch and we were on the water by 9:00. We soon heard an outboard motor and two fishermen came upstream in an aluminum boat. Gord exchanged greetings in his best French. This was our first contact with humans in sixteen days. Later we sighted a cottage with a power boat moored at the dock. We decided to bypass a section of river marked with six sets of double slash rapids. An hour and a half later we were still portaging, looking for the fork in the road which should have taken us back to the river. When we saw a farmhouse we decided to ask for directions. Gord asked the young farmer in French, "Which way to the river?" An hour later they were still talking and looking at the map. The farmer disappeared into his barn and reappeared driving a tractor with a flat cart hitched to it. We loaded the canoe and packs on the cart and he took us across a field, maybe a kilometre or two to the edge of a thick bush. He then led us, carrying one of our packs, into the bush. About two kilometres later we were back at the river. Gord said the farmer thought us crazy as there were many falls ahead. He was right, but the portages were well marked and well used. Gord helped pitch the tent, then "flaked out" while I brewed up a pot of tea. We were too exhausted to cook a supper so we finished the rice pudding by flashlight. Gord had the idea that we should get up at 2:00 am and paddle the last of the river down to Lac St. Jean in darkness. I did not like that and said so.

Monday, August 6

We woke up at midnight, much refreshed but it was raining and very windy so we went back to sleep. At two o'clock I woke Gord to see if he wanted to follow his original plan. No, it was much too windy, so we went back to sleep until 5:45 am. By 8:30 we were on the water with a strong tail wind. We took a narrow channel into a swampy area where we saw many duck blinds. While cutting across a deep bay on Lake St. Jean we encountered big, heavy waves and Gord wanted us to head for shore. I objected that that would put us broadside to the waves so we kept an angle to the waves and paddled hard, finally crossing the bay and putting ashore. Gord heaved a great sigh of relief. After lunch we had two choices: (a) paddle 13 km around the headland in big waves, or (b) portage 5 km on the highway across the headland. We portaged, though it was more than 5 km. The water was calm in the river estuary as we paddled upstream to St. Felician. The trip was over. Tomorrow we would bus back to Chibouhamau, retrieve Gord's van, and head for Scarborough.





north pickering hiking trail

Story and photographs by: Bill King

On the beautiful sunny morning of October twentieth, Claire Bridgen and I (with a few members of my family added for ballast) carried the banner of the WCA down the North Pickering Hiking Trail. Considering the perfect day, the leaves at that "just-right" stage, and the fact that the trail is less than half an hour's drive from the city, we were rather disappointed by the lack of turnout.

The North Pickering Trail is a product of Experience '75, a summer work project for high school and university students. It follows the Green River and Duffin Creek through the scenic West Duffin Valley. The total length is approximately twelve kilometres and the trail is divided into three sections with road access to both ends of each section. This means that an outing can be custom-tailored from leisurely day-hike to short stroll. The trail is easy to follow and well-maintained with little of the garbage often seen on more heavily used sections of the Bruce Trail.

The upper end of the trail is reached from Highway 7 about four kilometres east of the metropolis of Locust Hill (just after crossing the Green River). The road which one follows at the outset led originally to an abandoned shantytown which has been removed within the last two years leaving no trace. Either bank of the river can be followed although the east bank is encouraged by providing no formal means of crossing the river. The west bank route transverses hardwood forest and marshland where the power dam which used to run the grist mill fifty years ago backed up the river. The eastern route skirts an old quarry and then follows an artificial canal, also no longer in use.

This section of the trail ends at the very picturesque village of Whitevale. Here there is a working feed mill and dryer which can be heard for at least a kilometre before it can be seen and which fills the air with the smell of roasting corn.

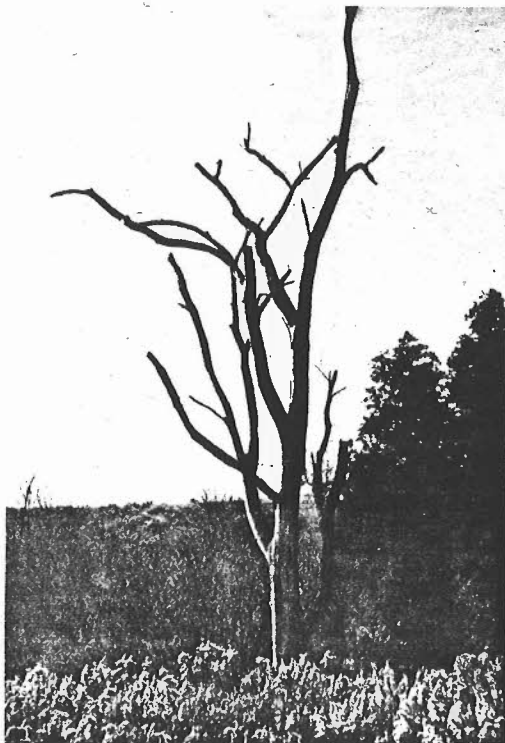


The second section of the trail, dubbed the "Wilderness Trail" is the longest, the most scenic and the most primitive.

In some sections the trail rises thirty metres or more above the river providing breathtaking views from the embankment.

Below Clarke's Hollow the final section of the trail alternates with stands of lofty cedar, meadows, hills, and riverbank areas. Birds are abundant and varied. Access to the lower end (named Camp Picada) is via Brock Road in Pickering.

Although little used in winter the trail should be equally suitable for skiing or snowshoeing. A detailed trail map may be obtained by writing the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, 5 Shoreham Drive, Downsview, M3N 1S4.



credit river day

Claire Brigden

Although the heavens scowled and wept and spit all day, twelve dauntless enthusiasts met Jim Greenacre at the Cheltenham bridge rendezvous on the Credit in the early half murk, to launch downstream in all manner of costumes and canoes.

It was a motley flotilla feeling and threading its way through intermittent shallow rapids and serpentine stretches of smooth water. The bad light thwarted the efforts of bow lookouts to spot rocks in time and only the telltale back curl of white water gave the big boulders away, if their backs were reared high enough. (A big "if".) Conversely, of course, that which you did not see did not concern you overmuch, so a mood of gay abandon permeated the atmosphere. King Baker partially solved the problem in flamboyant style by standing up most of his journey in order to increase his visibility against the refracting light, and Jim wove back and forth (when necessary) like a would-be kayaker, alone in his canoe. The rest of us swept past stands of cedar, mown banks, beached flotsam, arcing willows, scarlet bittersweet berries, trailer camps, old towns and new housing developments, fields and forest and under bridges of every vintage, content just to paddle, steer and keep from grounding.

Twice we portaged past dams, and once we paddled past (through?) one, long since caved in, a victim of the vagaries and whims of a still powerful river which had obviously outwitted some over-confident engineer, one historic spring (or was it Hurrican Hazel in '54?)

There were dead elms and live maples, and a great variety of tall grasses, some plumed majestically with mature seeds, standing one to two metres tall. A broad winged hawk cruised overhead on one occasion, and a great blue heron took umbrage at our intrusion and croaked away to a more secluded haunt. Two kingfishers and a pair of lesser yellowlegs defied the coming winter and lingered on the river, as did a flock of late swallows beside an abandoned mill.

Lunch stop was patch stop for the Fuller's canoe, wounded on some previous adventure and still bleeding internally. Treatment was only palliative at best, but this did not thwart the crew who stoked up with the rest of us, ~~changed into dryer footwear and pressed on.~~

At one dammed section, we were forced to cross a farmer's property (although I'm sure river banks are government owned) and he came running out in great indignation to call us a string of epithets, but some quick-witted member in our Advance Party engaged him in conversation of a sympathetic nature and elicited the information that the man was harnessing a bit of the river to generate his own electricity. Flattery and interest are great healing balms, and the whole party trooped up to his home to view first hand the wonders of his ingenuity, and hear his astonishing tales of his battles with Ontario Hydro and the Government to be allowed to persist in his creative efforts to conserve energy. (The altercation isn't over yet, by any manner of means.)

As the river widened (imperceptibly, of course) our touches with nature narrowed and we beached our canoes beside the town of Huttonville, nicely timing the trip's end to coincide with Jim's plan to beat the fading light (what light?). The cars looked mighty inviting after the damp exercise, and the lucky ones squeezed in to selected vehicles to complete the car shuttle. Those of us left behind raced around with the Fuller's dog to keep warm, and nibbled leftovers to stave off the growing pangs of hunger after the paddle until the others returned with the wheeled fleet to load the keeled fleet amid good natured repartee.

Thank you Mr. G. from all of us for an invigorating and successful outing. "Arrivederci," eh, Jim?



long lake

Story by: Glenn Spence
Photographs by: Glenn and Cameron Spence

We met bright and early at eight a.m. at the Long Lake Western Access Area. There were only three canoes in our party: Carol Thwaites and Jane Maxwell, Cameron Spence and Eric Casoli (a Rotary International exchange student from Belgium staying in Colborne for one year), Gerry and Glenn Spence. It is unfortunate that more club members do not participate in the summer and fall trips when the demand is less than in the spring. However, we had a nice, small, compatible group which made for a very pleasant weekend.

Fortunately, with apologies to Roger Smith, the weatherman was in error. The clouds gave way to a glorious weekend of sunny skies. This was a very pleasant time of the year to go canoeing because the weather was warm and only six mosquitoes and five black flies were seen.

Since I was unable to get up earlier in the year to scout a shorter route, I decided to go on a forty kilometre route that I had done before. Sometime during our trip of twelve portages, ten beaver dams, and four liftovers a participant was heard to say: "I thought Fenwick trips were bad. Now we have to watch out for Spence trips." But, actually it was not that bad. Our group worked very well on the trip.

Our female crew was quite pleased with themselves and what they could do without a male partner, whom they each relied upon in the past to bring the canoe and to portage it as well. Around the campfire Saturday night, the women decided it would be very desirable to organize an all female trip. Well men, is this discrimination or not? What is the world coming to? Why not write the editor and express your views, men? After all, he is always in need of copy.



I never get tired of watching the Great Blue Herons silently soaring above the serene wilderness. Some ducks and loons were also sighted during the weekend, while at camp the bullfrogs were not as vocal as on previous trips. I suppose they were getting ready for winter. Eric really enjoyed his first canoe trip. Of course, Belgium has nothing to compare with our wilderness, a reminder that we must protect our wild places at all costs.

We crossed portage trails with the Iroquois Canoe Club of Hamilton who were kind enough to carry a couple of our packs on their return trip to pick up the rest of their gear. It was a bit of a surprise to meet another party in which we knew a couple of people.

Yes, we certainly did have an excellent trip, all factors considered. Now for some skiing!



french river

Carol Thwaites

What better way to start September than by loading a canoe and paddling into history. That's just what nine WCA members did and in doing so created their own little bit of history as they encountered the French River.

The seventy-kilometre paddle around Eighteen Mile Island began and ended at Hass Marina on Dry Pine Bay with its motorized, modernistic 1979 atmosphere including the two dollar launching fee and two dollars per day parking fee. Twenty kilometres farther upriver, having portaged Michaud Falls and paddled past cottage after cottage, we finally began to hear the quiet that is synonymous with wilderness canoeing.

Unfortunately three of our party of twelve did not arrive and to further reduce our numbers Rob Butler's car turned temperamental at Grundy Lake Provincial Park. Rob, Cathy and Billy, dauntless trio they are, somehow not only got the car started but paddled furiously and caught up with the rest of us at lunch stop. Great welcoming cheers greeted their arrival and the now complete convoy set off.

Shortly after lunch a most wondrous sight was observed, recorded and discussed at great length. No, we did not see a bear but four bare female bodies sporting on sunny rocks oblivious to Jim Greenacre's eye-popping stares. As Jim's bow person I couldn't understand why all of a sudden I was paddling so hard until I turned around and saw him paralyzed by shock and delight with his paddle absolutely motionless. I would suggest this will be recorded as Jim's most stirring trip! Who knows, he might never canoe another river than the French in hopes of a re-run?

The sun continued to shine down on our four canoes as we paddled past cottage after cottage (would you believe two pink ones with lawn mower manicuring a lawn?) As well, we were rocked by the wakes of motor boats. Despair settled on me as I wondered if this was what the historic French River was all about. Gradually, however, all the man-made environment was left behind and we finally found a campsite which, with a fair bit of squeezing, was suitable for four tents. Quiet conversation around a Rob Butler campfire completed our first day.

Sunday began as "rain day" with lots of manoeuvring and portaging up and over rapids. The funny but not unpleasant feeling of having your boots and feet soaked when walking up a rapids, the just-as-wet-inside-as-outside feel of a rain suit, the good feel of muscles lifting a canoe pack, the sensation that rhythmic paddling produces - all these create the deep, physical satisfaction that canoeing produces. But over and above the physical was the emotional impact of mist-shrouded shoreline, the perspective of the river leading on toward points of land and islands, the silence where

lingering raindrops can be heard falling from leaf to leaf, the completeness of being alive and tuning into the real you. This was Sunday until mid Then, as if the mystery and quietness had reigned long enough, the sky cleared, a wind blew and we were caught in the swift, powerful down current of the voyager route.

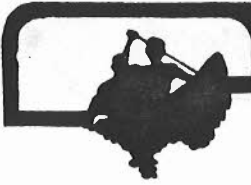
Time for fun and adventure, of unloading canoes and running Little Pine rapids. Then on to Big Pine rapids. Here was a challenge Jim couldn't resist and while Mary Anne Montgomery with Dave McMullen roddied a canoe for a possible rescue, Jim started down through the twisting, turbulent water. Marie Grainger, Janet Bigson and myself watched with horrified fascination as Jim gradually swamped and floated past our observation point. The rescue canoe was launched but our dauntless leader climbed out unscathed, glasses intact and a grin from ear to ear! The afternoon was in full swing by the time we reached Blue Chute. The power and force of the water boring down past the rocks forming the most perfect "V" and standing waves shocked us all into amazed silence, then into action. "Let's run it" echoed across the rocks and off we went. What an exciting experience it was for those of us who rode the current!

An active day of paddling twenty kilometres ended at Little Parisienne Rapids where we pitched our tents in sun and wind and settled in to enjoy observing and running these turbulent rapids.

Rain, sun and finally full moon light - a full day - satisfying physically and emotionally - new acquaintances forging into helping friendships, muscles stretched and used as they were meant to be, the call of the loon, the gleam of up-turned canoes at rest; this is what a canoe trip is all about.

The home stretch of thirty kilometres slid easily past with the expected head wind not materializing. In fact with the high water washing out the marked rapids, the trip became one of rhythmic paddling and desultory conversation. Delightful, except one tends to ignore the "top" map and soon seven horrified voices wailed "we're in a dead end." A fast map reconnaissance showed we'd paddled two kilometres off the route into Hammerhead Bay. Rather grim, stern voices suggests that in future their "top" maps would be consulted and followed. Oh well, perhaps our leader was still mentally transfixed by the memory of those Saturday sunbathers!

Gradually we re-entered the world of 1979 as we paddled back into Dry Pine Bay, unloaded canoes and put on our city clothes. Another page of history on the French was written by nine contented, renewed W.C.A. canoeists.



With regret, I must inform you that I will not be able to continue as chairman of the conservation committee. I have accepted a job in Pennsylvania, and will be living there for at least the next year, and possibly longer, before returning to Canada. My wife, Maureen Ryan, will look after the committee for the next few months, until the February general meeting, when I hope that another member will be available to handle this important task.

At the October general meeting, I outlined the progress of the committee to that time, and gave a few general priorities for the next six months. In this report, I would like to update these issues.

The Killarney Park controversy has reached a new level, with the publication of a tentative brief from the Committee opposed to the new access road. I have examined the brief, and sent a letter to the committee, expressing our general support, and re-iterating our concern that Killarney Park should remain as one of the finest examples of preserved wilderness in Ontario. The brief is available for inspection by any interested members, and I will have it on display at our annual general meeting in February, 1980.

The international conference on Acid Precipitation was held in Toronto on the first three days of November, and attracted a large crowd of interested participants, numbering almost one thousand. The general structure of the meeting was workshops and seminars. John Fraser, the federal minister of the environment, opened with a reasonable speech calling for an international treaty on curtailment of acid rain. Ontario's minister of the environment, Harry Parrott, acted true to form, when he spoke in favour of a cleanup at the conference, but then reversed himself a few days later in a public speech in which he declared that the costs of such a cleanup were far too great to allow Ontario to initiate unilateral action, particularly at Inco Sudbury, the continent's largest single point source.

While the conference was a valuable forum for the research and concerns involved, it did nothing to move governments any closer to a programme of action. The estimated cost of the sulphur-dioxide scrubbing systems at the fifty largest producers would be around five billion dollars.

As chairman of the conservation committee, I have written to the federal government, to urge them to deal with the problem as a high priority. I suggested that many North Americans

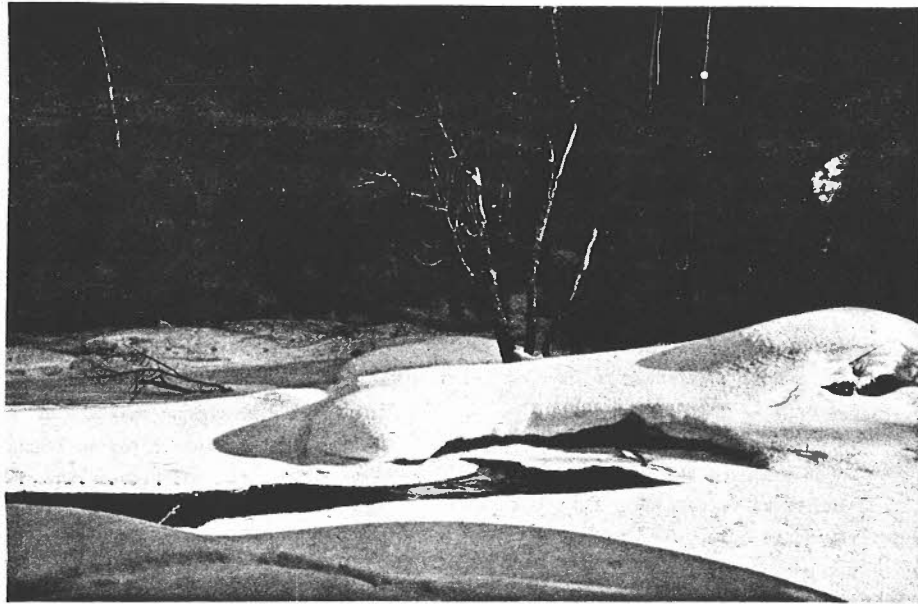
would be willing to accept higher gasoline prices if some part of the profits were diverted into a fund for immediate cleanup of the worst offenders in acid rain production. I suggested that a 2¢ per gallon surcharge would probably generate enough revenue. I know that there are those who feel that the industries and utilities concerned "must" pay, but the problem is already too serious to play petty politics with our lives and a healthy environment. Of course, the offending companies should be required to pay eventually through a long-term tax or fine, and should also contribute as much as possible in the first three years. My own view is that we can hardly expect to convince the rest of the population that it is better to throw hundreds of thousands of people out of work than to tolerate acid rainfall, even though that may be quite a defensible position in the abstract. We need a practical solution in the very near future, and my suggestion was an attempt to show that a practical solution, in fact, exists.

I also urged our leaders to bring these concerns to the attention of President Carter on his state visit, but of course, this was cancelled because of the situation in Iran.

I was also rather disappointed in the Joint Study on Acid Rainfall, mostly because of a poor research methodology that led to rather dubious conclusions. The study used a network of observations made in January, 1977, and August, 1977. These two months were not very representative of the climate of the region as both had a more north-to-south flow pattern than the average month. Also, I feel that most of the acid rainfall occurs in the weather situations normally encountered in spring and autumn, namely the 12-hour rainfalls that are produced by travelling low-pressure systems. In January, 1977, most of the precipitation was in the form of snow squalls, which have a very short cycle and may not represent other winter types of precipitation. My concern is that the findings downplay the actual net transfer of acid rainfall from the United States into Canada. I would like to caution other readers that the findings of the study, although generally acceptable, may be in doubt on the important details of the net transfer of pollution across the border. I wrote a summary of my concerns about the study, and addressed a copy to the federal minister of the environment.

Winter - crisp, clean, silent, beautiful. Come out with us and experience our wildlands in winter, on snowshoes or cross-country, for a day or a weekend. We have included in our winter trip schedule a wide variety of day trips and camping trips to appeal to everyone, from the novice to the experienced winter traveller.

We remind you that our trip organizers are just that - organizers - not outfitters, guides or instructors, but fellow members who have volunteered to put together a trip and share the experience with you. Participants are responsible for their own transportation, equipment, and safety while on the trip.



January 5-6 CYPRUS LAKE WINTER CAMPING

organizer: Glenn Davy 416-621-9037

book as soon as possible

This outing for novice winter campers will involve a 5 km ski or snowshoe to the base camp from which we will explore the surrounding area. Limit 6 campers.

January 12 CROSS COUNTRY SKIING IN THE GANARASKA FOREST (Peterborough-Newcastle area)

organizers: Dave & Anneke Auger 705-324-9359

book between Dec. 12 and Jan. 6

This will be a 15 km trip on groomed trails, suitable for people with some skiing experience. The scenic Pine Ridge area provides some interesting, yet challenging trails. Our intention is to ski the longest trail, with a short stop for lunch en route. Limit of 8 skiers.

January 19-20 KIMBALL LAKE WINTER CAMPING

organizer: Glenn Davy 416-621-9037

book between Dec. 22 and Jan. 5

This will be an exploratory trip for advanced winter campers near Dorset. Depending on the ice conditions we will travel in 6 km to our base camp and explore from there. Limit 4 campers.

January 20 CROSS COUNTRY SKI TRIP near COLBORNE

organizer: Glenn Spence 416-355-3506

book between Dec. 30 and Jan. 13

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 20 SKI THE BRUCE TRAIL

organizer: Karl Schimek 416-222-3720

book between Dec. 30 and Jan. 13

This will be a one day trip of about 15 km near Mono Centre north of Orangeville. Suitable for intermediates. Limit 10 skiers.

January 26-27 WINTER CAMPING - BEAUSOLEIL ISLAND

organizer: Rob Butler 416-487-2282

book between Jan. 2 and Jan. 14

We will travel from Honey Harbour to Beausoleil Island a distance of 3.5 km with snowshoes or skis, or both, for two days of touring. Suitable for advanced winter campers. Limit 6 campers.

January 26-27 WINTER CAMPING AT LONG LAKE

organizer: Gord Fenwick 416-431-3343

book as soon as possible

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 enjoy the experience of wilderness in winter. Limit 8 people.

FEBRUARY 9 WINTER PHOTOGRAPHY

organizers: Rick Paleske 416-691-9074

Sandy Richardson 416-429-3944

book any time in January

A day of off-trail skiing in the High Falls area of the Burley Game Preserve with the emphasis on photographing the wilderness in winter. Suitable for intermediate skiers. Limit of 6 people.

February 23-24 BURLFIGH - HARVEY WINTER CAMPING TRIP

organizers: Lenny Winn 416-782-4557
Sandra Whittall 416-425-8664

book between Jan. 26 and Feb. 9

This will be an overnight skiing trip in the area north of Peterborough, suitable for people with a little previous winter camping experience. Limit 6 campers.

February 23-24 BLACK LAKE LOOP WINTER CAMPING TRIP

organizer: Glenn Davy 416-621-9037

book between Jan. 26 and Feb. 9

We will ski or snowshoe around an 11 km loop in the Dorset area. Suitable for intermediate campers or better. Limit 6 people.

February 23 SKIING THE GANARASKA FOREST

organizer: Jim Greenacre 416-759-9956

book between Feb. 2 and Feb. 16

The Ganaraska Forest is located in the Peterborough - Newcastle area. There is a choice of three trails, 5, 7, and 13 km through delightful coniferous forest. Suitable for intermediate skiers. Snack bar available, or bring a lunch. No equipment rentals. Limit 10 skiers.

March 1-2 GUNN LAKE WINTER CAMPING TRIP

organizers: Glenn Davy 416-621-9037
Herb Pohl 416-637-7632

book between Feb. 2 and Feb. 16

This trip in the Dorset area will involve 9-10 km of skiing in from the road and is recommended for intermediate campers. Limit 6 people.

March 1-2 CROSS-COUNTRY SKI WEEKEND - MUSKOKA

organizer: Bob Morgan 416-649-3760

book between Feb. 2 and Feb. 16

A weekend of cross-country skiing using the facilities of Camp Tawingo near Huntsville. (The costs of meals and accomodation will be shared.) There will be two cross-country ski instructors along to help those who wish to improve their skills. Suitable for intermediate skiers. Limit 16 people.

March 29-30 SKIING IN ALGONQUIN

organizer: Karl Schimek 416-222-3720

book between March 1 and March 15

This weekend will consist of two one-day trips with overnight camping available at Mew Lake near the cars. The details of the course chosen will depend on conditions at the time. Recommended for advanced skiers. Limit 6 people.

WCA PHOTO CONTEST

The WCA is again holding a slide competition. Members are invited to submit their slides in any of the 5 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.)

FLORA: Photographs of Canadian wild plants in their natural settings.

FAUNA: Photographs of Canadian wild animals in their natural settings.

MAN IN THE WILDERNESS: Photographs depicting man in harmony with the natural environment, capturing the essence of the wilderness experience.

INTERPRETIVE STUDIES OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT:

Photographs of an expressive or interpretive nature, portraying the drama or impact of an element from the natural environment. Photographs may be abstract and may highlight line, form, texture, colour or mood in the chosen subject.

In selection of slides for entry, the following quote from the current issue of Nature Canada should be kept in mind:

"The successful nature photographer must bring a high degree of photographic skill to his work, but pure technique is not enough. The person behind the camera must clearly reveal the character of the subject and at the same time tell us something about his own response to what he catches on film."

- RULES:**
1. Entries will be accepted from WCA members only.
 2. Slides that received prizes or honourable mentions in last year's contest are not eligible for entry this year.
 3. Each entrant may submit a maximum of 3 slides per category.
 4. Each slide submitted should be clearly marked with the photographer's name, and numbered. Include with each entry a sheet of paper stating name, address, phone number and indicating clearly by number for each slide: a) the category entered, and b) the title of the slide.
 5. An entry fee of \$3 (regardless of the number of slides submitted) must be sent in with each entry.
 6. Entries should be sent to the contest chairman: Jim Greenacre, 34 Bergen Rd., Scarborough, Ont., MLP 1R9; and must be received no later than January 15, 1980.
 7. Winners will be announced at the WCA Annual Meeting, where all entries will be shown.
 8. Entrants may pick up their slides at the Annual Meeting. For those not present, 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 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 winning slide.

A grand prize will be awarded to the person whose photograph is judged Best Overall in the competition. This prize will be a \$50 gift certificate from the Wilderness Canoe Association.

products and services

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.

Mad River Canoes:

Mad River Canoes will be available again this year from Rockwood Outfitters, in particular the Kevlar and Royalox Explorers. We have some Royalox 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.

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.

Wilderness Medicine:

In this handbook by William W. Forgey, M.D., are diagnosed from an instant-reference clinical index, sicknesses and injuries encountered in the bush by the canoeist, backpacker, climber, and cross-country skier. Medical treatment from "A" (abdominal pains) to "Y" (yellow fever) using two different self-assembled, multifunctional medical kits, is explained. Previews of the handbook acclaimed by Calvin Rutstrum, Sigurd Olsen and other prestigious outdoor authorities/authors.

Published by Indiana Camp Supply Inc., June 1979. Format 5 1/2" X 8 1/2"; 124 pages; 20 line drawings; paperback; \$7.50. Order from the Canadian distributor: Nick Mickels, Box 479, Lakefield, Ont., K0L 2H0.

WANTED: Snowshoes. Anyone with a pair of used snowshoes for sale please contact Jim Greenacre, (416) 759-9956.


Leather Repairs: For leather repairs of all kinds to backpacks, binocular cases, snowshoe bindings, etc. contact Richvale Saddlery, 58 Edgar Ave., Thornhill, Ontario, (416) 889-2949.

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.

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_____ phone _____

Please check one of the following: () new member application
() renewal for 1980.

Notes: -This membership will expire January 31, 1981.
-Please send completed form and cheque (payable to the Wilderness
Canoe Association) to the membership committee chairman.