

a winter's trip in labrador

(part 1 of 2)

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How mistaken are those who dismiss the north country in winter as an empty and desolate wasteland. Bleakness, as with any matter of taste, is merely an impression. The land itself just is. To regard the northern winter as a sort of death is to make the same error that left so many explorers with no choice but to be miserable on their journeys. They refused to open their eyes to what was around them, living instead in fear and hatred of a land where their native guides found both beauty and everything needed for life.

True, the pulse of the natural world slows in winter, but it never stops, and it never merely waits for the return of the warmer seasons. Besides, the plants and animals that inhabit a place do not alone establish its character. Swells in the open sea, breakers along a rocky coast, shifting sand in a desert, glaciers crawling down from jagged peaks—all these evoke feelings of life just as powerful as those inspired by a lush forest or a herd of animals. And so it is with any of the more difficult places on the planet. The challenge in the end is not to learn to tolerate an austere land, but to love it without believing it to be more than it is.

This is all very much so of the northern wilderness. One is driven to return to it again and again once one has succumbed to its allure. The more curious, adventurous, or

easily bored reach out restlessly, trip after trip, eager to see other northern lands and to savor more fully their various moods.

And so last year George Luste and I decided to visit in winter the country along Labrador's treeline. Both of us had come to know the north on summer canoe trips, and now we wanted to be there during the other season. We also wanted to travel on the tundra. I had never really pushed beyond the trees, and George had journeyed across the barrens only in summer.

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We chose the northern part of Labrador for a number of reasons. It is an interesting part of the country which neither of us had been to before. It is also one of the more accessible places where one can find the barrens. And yet it is not severely cold.

Our trip began 1 March on Mistinibi Lake, just short of the Québec-Labrador border, some 220 kilometres by air northeast of what is left of Schefferville. The route followed northeast along a string of small lakes nestled among sparsely wooded hills, then broke out onto the tundra and headed due east towards the sea. Partway there it dropped into the valley of the Kogaluk River, which served as our highway to the coast. The last part of our route took us north across the sea to the town of Nain where we arrived 17 March. We jokingly told people beforehand that we were going to traverse Labrador in winter. What we did not mention is that Labrador is very narrow that far north. Our trip was not longer than 240 kilometres.

Our route loosely followed that of William Brooks Cabot, an explorer of sorts who spent several summers in the early years of the century getting to know the country around the Kogaluk River inland to Indian House Lake on the George River. The land was still peopled when he made his journeys. Indian House Lake was the winter home of several bands of Nascopie Indians. Apparently they used a route similar to ours on their summer journeys to the coast. But we saw very few signs of them. In 1916 the caribou failed and the Indians moved to Davis Inlet, south of Nain. They now head inland on another river and rarely venture north to the Kogaluk.

Most wilderness trips begin with a lot of very "unwildernessy" transportation, and ours was no exception. Luckily enough we did have several interesting moments before our plane left us on Mistinibi Lake. We broke a rather breathless drive from Toronto to Sept-Îles by visiting Jerry Kobalenko in Montreal. Jerry had walked by himself from Churchill Falls to Nain the winter before. The last part of his trip lay just to the north of ours and he had helped us with our plans. When we stopped in Montreal he gave us a present which we were to open on our seventh night out. The seventh evening was an uncomfortable one as it turned out, and Jerry's present was a maple syrup mix. We added apple flakes and a generous portion of Drambuie to it, making a cocktail dessert more appreciated than we could have imagined.

The train from Sept-Îles to Schefferville is much less boisterous than it once was. And it still rolls in six hours late, even though it no longer has to pull over to make room for ore trains. But the ride can still be fun, and we were fortunate enough to meet two other parties heading into the bush. Canoeing groups too often greet each other with something close to suspicion and dislike, an odd mixture of unstated competitiveness and jealous territoriality. But winter parties seem to take great delight in each other. Perhaps this is because so few people make these trips, perhaps only because equipment and technique are so important and information about them so hard to come by. Whatever the reason, we had a wonderful time with a group of Americans who had done two other trips in Labrador, and a menagerie of Newfoundlanders making their yearly pilgrimage to hunt caribou. One of the Newfoundlanders came into our car and asked if we Ontarians were so god-damned superior or if we would be willing to have a drink with a bunch of dumb Newfies! We allowed as how we were indeed superior, but added that we would be pleased anyway to share some drink. As the day wore on, the Newfoundlanders became drunker and drunker. They finally staggered off the train in the dark at minus 27°C below with no buildings anywhere nearby. Sixteen kilometres later we discovered that one had forgotten his boots. The conductor just laughed. He said they do this trip every year and often leave behind more than a hangover.

The next morning we got ready to head out to the air base. Just before we left the station a crusty old Indian sidled up to George and asked him if he would like to see a half dead caribou. George grabbed a camera and ran after him. He was shown the frozen front half of a carcass!

We were very fortunate to fly out that day. The weather was bad and getting worse, with a storm moving in from the west. But a short-lived break in the clouds gave us our opportunity, and soon we were on our way into the bush. Our pilot was especially concerned to put us down on the right lake: the land around Mistinibi is only sparsely wooded and we were flying in near white-out conditions. We, for our part, were a little worried about the pilot. He would have to fly back into the storm. He told us that he could land and pitch his tent if worse came to worse. I asked him how often he had done this. He said never.

Before long the plane had taken off and left us standing on the lake amidst our gear. We felt a little silly and out of place, as one always does after such an abrupt entry into the wilderness. That afternoon the toboggans felt heavy, the snowshoes awkward, and our camping outfit unwieldy. But the northland welcomed us with a glorious evening. The sky cleared just after the sun set, the blanched grey of overcast giving way to momentary shades of red and violet. Stars appeared, and a full moon with a magnificent halo climbed into the sky. We slept well that night, better than either of us had in days.

The morning was clear and crisp. The low hills across the lake and the sky beyond had merged into one band of dull orange in a coldly blue world. No discernible horizon destroyed the illusion of vast and empty space until the rising sun tore the distance into land and sky. It was cold and we moved hurriedly. We collapsed the tent and bundled our outfit onto the toboggans. Soon we were out on the lake, hauling eastwards into the deliciously warming sun. Everything still seemed a little strange, but slowly, unnoticed, we began to feel at home. Looking back on it, I think that by sometime after lunch I had returned to the north country.

Our first three days took us from Mistinibi northeast to the edge of the barrens. We travelled from lake to small lake, the land between appearing well wooded. We even called our short overland pulls "portages." But we were really further from the forest than we imagined. The bald hills around us made up a broken and barren plateau, while our trees were just outliners groping north along valleys and shoelines.

Travel was pleasant, although the snow was not firm enough to allow us to walk without snowshoes. The weather was cold, but not too windy, and there was always a sheltered spot for lunch. Early on the third day we crossed a low saddle into Labrador.

In the late afternoon we would choose a grove of trees in which to make camp. We had a large canvas wall-tent and a small, airtight wood stove for heat. We would first flatten out a tent platform, then sling the tent between two trees. This meant that I had to begin and end each day by scampering up two spruce like a monkey. But two people just have neither the time nor the inclination to play Paul Bunyan and rig a proper tent frame. Our system never failed us, even though we were at times exposed to some very strong winds.



We covered the back half of the area inside the tent with a tarp to make our living quarters. The front half contained our evening's supply of wood, the doorway, and the stove. We sat the stove on a piece of plywood which we called the stove snowshoe. This kept the stove from sinking out of sight and did away with the need to dig a pit for it. A recessed stove throws less heat into the back of the tent and tends to melt and undercut the front part of the living quarters. We finally covered any remaining exposed snow with spruce boughs. It was George who thought to do this, just to give our home a more pleasant fragrance. But the boughs were useful too, for they insulated the snow floor from the warmth in the tent. They also acted as snowshoes, lessening the chance of breaking through.





Life inside the tent was often very comfortable. Unless there was a strong wind, we could heat it to whatever temperature we wanted. Candles provided light, and three lines along the roof allowed us to dry our clothes. The ability to remove moisture gives the winter camper a renewable outfit, enabling him to dispense with costly, cumbersome, and uncomfortable equipment like bag liners and vapor barriers. We were able to rely almost entirely on wool, synthetic underwear, and wind shells. We did take along some down garments for extreme conditions, but rarely had occasion to use them.

It is difficult to imagine the hominess of a winter camp. The small nylon tents used by canoeists are really just beds. Life at a summer camp happens around a fire and at the water's edge, with the tents scattered about irrelevantly behind. But a winter camp is much more intensely focused. As almost everything happens indoors, the tent becomes much more than a shelter. There is a break between indoors and outdoors, day and night, which is so much sharper in winter. All the gear left outside is carefully stowed and secured next to the tent. The toboggans are tied shut and placed beside it. The snowshoes are thrust into the snow not far from the door, to stand like sentinels throughout the night. And once the sun has set, the tent sheds a warm light over the campsite and out towards the surrounding trees. What a feeling of security as one stands at the edge of the site, where light fades and packed snow ends. One looks across at the inviting hues of the tent, then outwards towards the swallowing darkness beyond.

By the end of the third day we were travelling through the last large wooded area. Earlier in the day the east wind had changed to a vigorous westerly. As we searched for a suitable campsite the wind gained force and it began to snow. The forest was continuous but very thin, and it was some time before we found a clump that afforded any real protection. We set up camp with difficulty, the weather worsening all the while. Once indoors we found that heating the tent was next to impossible.



The wind forced enough air through the canvas to push all the warmth out the front. Cooking dinner was not simple either. The stove sometimes shook so violently that the pipes separated. This called for instant and frantic action. We ate dinner uneasily, often sitting tense and still. We expected a collapse each time especially severe gust hurled itself against the canvas. After dinner I went back outside and built a protective wall around the tent. The wind blew me over twice.

The blizzard raged all next day, leaving us no choice but to remain where we were. We needed to sight hills to navigate on the tundra, and yet in that wind we could not see trees thirty metres away. The flying snow even made gathering wood a hazard. The snow on the ground had become too hard to take footprints and it was only too easy to lose sight of in the blow.

Throughout the night the wind had done its work. In places it had blasted my wall away. Elsewhere it had built up huge drifts, from which tongues of snow reached out onto the tent's roof. Our toboggans and snowshoes were nowhere to be seen, all completely buried. And the front of the tent was almost totally blocked. We had to shovel a pathway out.

The tent had sagged under the weight of the snow on the roof and the thick layer of frozen rime on the inside ceiling. We had to dig a pit to lower the stove so that it would continue to draw. We also had to prop out one side of the tent with poles to insure that it would not blow against the stovepipe and catch fire.

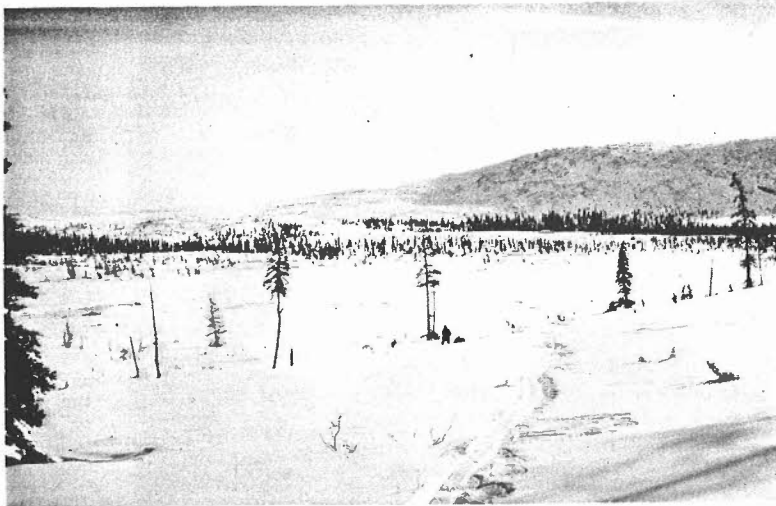
Although the temperature had plummeted we were able to maintain the tent at about freezing, which was comfortable enough, clothed as we were. Unfortunately the wind was so strong that it drove snow through the back wall. Everytime the walls flapped more violently than usual a sprinkling of dislodged rime would float down on us. We soon gave up trying to keep anything free of snow.

The severe wind chill made it impossible to empty our bowels outdoors. Both of us tried, but without success. It was just too painful and dangerous. We instead devised a way to do it indoors and carry the mess out without fouling anything. Everything worked well enough, but each of us suffered an enormous loss of privacy. The other had to avoid looking while appearing to be making no special efforts to avoid looking.

This sort of attitude was required in less extreme form throughout the trip. Both of us wanted and needed a little privacy, and in the tent that had to be created artificially. During the day we could spread apart, each manning his own toboggan. Often we allowed the person in the lead to pull ahead. Sometimes we would not even close the gap during rest stops and food breaks. This may seem unfriendly, but in fact it was the opposite. There can be companionship across distance and without words, an awareness of a shared undertaking. By maintaining a certain remoteness we were able to preserve enough of the independence we both desired without irritating the other.

The second day of the blizzard played a trick on us. We were both anxious to move and delighted when the wind died to nothing shortly after we awoke. Outside it was intensely cold. But it was clear, except for a hazy ring around the horizon made of tiny snow crystals not yet settled out. We both laughed at the sight of the tent.





What little protruded above the snow was caked with an icy crust. We called it the bunker. George had to spend a lot of time chipping it out from the hard, windblown snow, and scraping and beating away as much rime and ice as he could. He then had to fit the tent on his toboggan, although it had become at least twice as big and twice as heavy. Then, just as we were strapping down our loads, the wind returned. At first it was a mere whisper, but it soon became a full-blooded blow.

Disappointed and a little worried, we still chose to push on, at least for a while. With everything already packed and ourselves uncomfortably cold, there was no good reason to stop short of the edge of the forest several kilometres ahead.

Thus began one of the most exhilarating days I have ever spent in the wilderness. All the while it remained savagely cold. The wind howled unrelentingly, now obscuring everything in a wash of wind-blown snow, now allowing a brief glimpse of the surrounding hills. And yet we could almost always see blue sky directly overhead. Never before had I been outdoors in such severe conditions. For the first time I came to understand why so many northern native peoples have been accused of living for the moment. Here comfort and well-being could only be in the present. Warm hands and warm feet and all was well. A view of a hill and one was not lost. But a moment later one could be dangerously cold, completely turned around. Stop to relieve oneself, remove a mitten to adjust a strap on the toboggan, and an hour of carefully built-up heat was squandered. It seemed ludicrous to worry about where we would camp that night. The evening was just one small part of an extremely remote future. Cruel weather can fill every second with the import of a year.

And yet what a delight to be comfortable in such conditions! That was the biggest surprise of all. Outside my wall of clothes the world raged, and yet underneath them I was content. One's garments become a shelter, a walking tent, and one's body its heater, a mere machine. It all seemed proper, even inevitable. But the illusion could be very shortlived. After a miserable lunch we came out onto a small lake and marched quickly down it to regain lost warmth. About 800 metres later I discovered that the spare snowshoes had fallen off my toboggan. The wind had so far been at our backs. Now I had to turn and walk into it. It was merciless. I did my best to shield my face, but a map case, goggles, two balaclavas, and my hands were not enough. It was clear that our outfit would have been inadequate for extended travel into such a wind.

Sometime after lunch we left the forests behind. We were at last able to remove our snowshoes and wear only our mukluks. What a sensation! It was as though we were walking across the frozen tundra in bedroom slippers. We could feel the snow in a way that is impossible with harder-soled footwear. This gave us another sense to work with, one especially helpful when frosted goggles or blowing snow dimmed our vision.

On this day we were introduced to the remarkable things wind can do with snow. In a thick woods it merely drapes the ground, covering it with a featureless and more or less unchanging blanket. But out on the tundra the wind whips it about, piling it here, eroding it there. Snow crystals become both the chisel and the stone, and the artist boasts a limitless gallery of sculptures, corrugations, flutings, and drifts. One must often plot one's route with care, even on the supposedly flat surface of a lake. Sometimes there is no choice but to work hard and crash over the thicket of obstacles. And all the time the formations are changing.

One can see the drifts march ever so slowly downwind. A close look reveals catapulted crystals whittling others off of elevated pans. One feels movement and life in the tundra snow. It may seem harsh, but never asleep.

We spent most of the next day taking a side hike north to the Kogaluk canyon. It was too far away from our route for us to bring along our toboggans, and yet we felt uneasy about leaving them behind. So we tied them to a lone tree and noted its position against several prominent hills. We then put a gas stove, a small pot, some food, some water and a snow saw into a packsack and headed off. The sight, as it turned out, was hardly worth the effort. And on the way back we had some anxious moments when the wind came up and blotted out our hills. But we did find the toboggans, and without great difficulty. Once back to them we felt almost overwhelmingly secure. Not being hunters and unable to live off the land, we necessarily journeyed through the country like spacemen. Only the toboggans with all their gadgets saved us from feeling naked and exposed. George affectionately called his, "his trusty steed." We laughed at that. The toboggans were really the riders.

It was not until midafternoon that we were again on the trail. This mattered only because neither our maps nor our aerial photos showed any trees short of a lake some sixteen kilometres distant. We had planned our trip so that we could hop from oasis to oasis across the barrens. We intended to camp each night in a tiny grove of trees, just large enough to support the tent and feed the stove. We had no other means of pitching the tent, although our gas stove would still have given us a meal and some water.

As the afternoon shaded into early evening we were trekking east across a sizeable lake covered with long rolling drifts. Only when we were on their crests were our heads above enough of the blowing snow to allow a clear view of the surroundings, rocky hills. The sun was sinking low behind us and it was obvious we would soon have to camp. We both strained our eyes searching for trees, but saw nothing but a handful of pathetic and isolated spruce, none more than a metre high. Each of us began preparing himself for an unpleasant night.

We finally pulled over next to a stick about 1.2 metres high. We briefly debated whether to use it to rig a lean-to, or to build an igloo with the snow saw, completing it with the tent if necessary. As much to avoid an argument as anything we decided, instead, to push on over a low ridge and into a valley about eight hundred metres away. We hoped to discover trees there, but agreed we would make do with whatever we found.





The haul up to the ridge proved harder than expected. The snow was heavily fluted and slippery, the work slow and exhausting. The sun had already dipped below the horizon and the wind was stronger above the surface of the lake. Although both of us doubted the wisdom of waiting any longer to make camp, we continued the climb because neither wanted a cold and possibly unprotected night.

Then we cleared the ridge and pulled our toboggans into a little heaven. There at the top, overlooking the lake we had come from and the valley we were heading for, was a single stand of desperate but magnificent spruce. Each one was a masterpiece of tortured defiance. Two were sturdy, tall, and close enough to support out tent, and enough were dead to assure us of some warmth and comfort. Our hearts surged with relief.

And the beauty of the place! To our east, on the far side of the valley, climbed a hill, the top half of which was bathed in the last brilliant pink of the sunset. To the south hung a swollen moon, a sandy yellow, almost pregnant in appearance. In the valley below browsed a small herd of caribou. Behind us to the west stretched a boulder field, covered with intricate patterns of black and white where snow and rock competed. Around the tent site stood those last trees, braving the edge of the void, each one with a sculpture of snow in its twisted branches. And out to the north lay the void itself, the deep blue vastness of the tundra, and low rocky hills losing themselves in the sombre purples of the spreading night sky.

The powerful yet delicate magic of the north country cried out from this place. And yet it seemed merely to silhouette us as intruders and destroyers. We brutally hacked away a tree standing in the way of the tent, and reduced several splendid and ghostly skeletons to logs for the stove. We were efficient. It was late, we were cold, and the site was exposed. Discomfort and the gathering windy darkness created an urgency which, with the force of necessity, made everything but swift practicality irrelevant.

We pitched the tent as hastily as possible. Once inside we huddled around the stove for the scant heat it threw. Unfortunately there was too much wind for the tent itself to warm comfortably. Here, exposed to whatever the night might bring, we felt so clearly the precariousness of life beyond the forest. And it was here that we opened and consumed Jerry's gift.

The next morning had a special beauty of its own. Shortly after sunrise the eerie night wind faded, allowing much of the airborne snow to settle out. For the first time in days we could see great distances. In every direction sprawled the rolling land, open and immense, with both its

mantle of snow and the sky above a harsh, almost surgical, blue.

After leaving our camp on the ridge we moved quickly and unceremoniously across the tundra towards the place where we planned to drop down to the Kogaluk. One afternoon we startled a herd of about a dozen caribou. They streamed up a hill in flight with no apparent effort. George shook his head and muttered something about wasted horsepower. Another afternoon we crossed two small lakes blown clear of snow and discovered that pulling on glare ice is a joy. Once I crept up behind George and fastened my toboggan to his. He never noticed that his load had doubled. And when the wind was strong we could follow along behind our toboggans, working them as if they were leashed but eager dogs. What a change from our usual, leaden travel!

Then late one evening we cleared a saddle and saw before us the edge of the plateau, with the dusky outlines of the canyon beyond. We worked our way down the first pitch and camped on a level thirty metres or so below. I was elated and relieved, even though we were still about four hundred metres above the valley floor. To be off the plateau was for me the triumph. My concern all along had been the risk of blowing or falling snow pinning us down, either at or away from an oasis. Now we were at last off the tundra and travel would be possible in almost any weather.

George, however, was still apprehensive. He was worried about the drop, which in places was very steep. I favored heading down, improvising a way as we went, but George was adamant that we scout first. This, as we learned, was sound judgment. Unfortunately it did not in the end help us much. Although we did spend considerable time the next morning searching out the best route down, neither of us was persevering, thorough, or thoughtful enough to make our efforts worthwhile. As it was we should have paid a little more attention to our maps instead of playing at Daniel Boone. Had we done so we would have discovered that our chosen route descended the steepest slope in the area just below the part we had scouted.

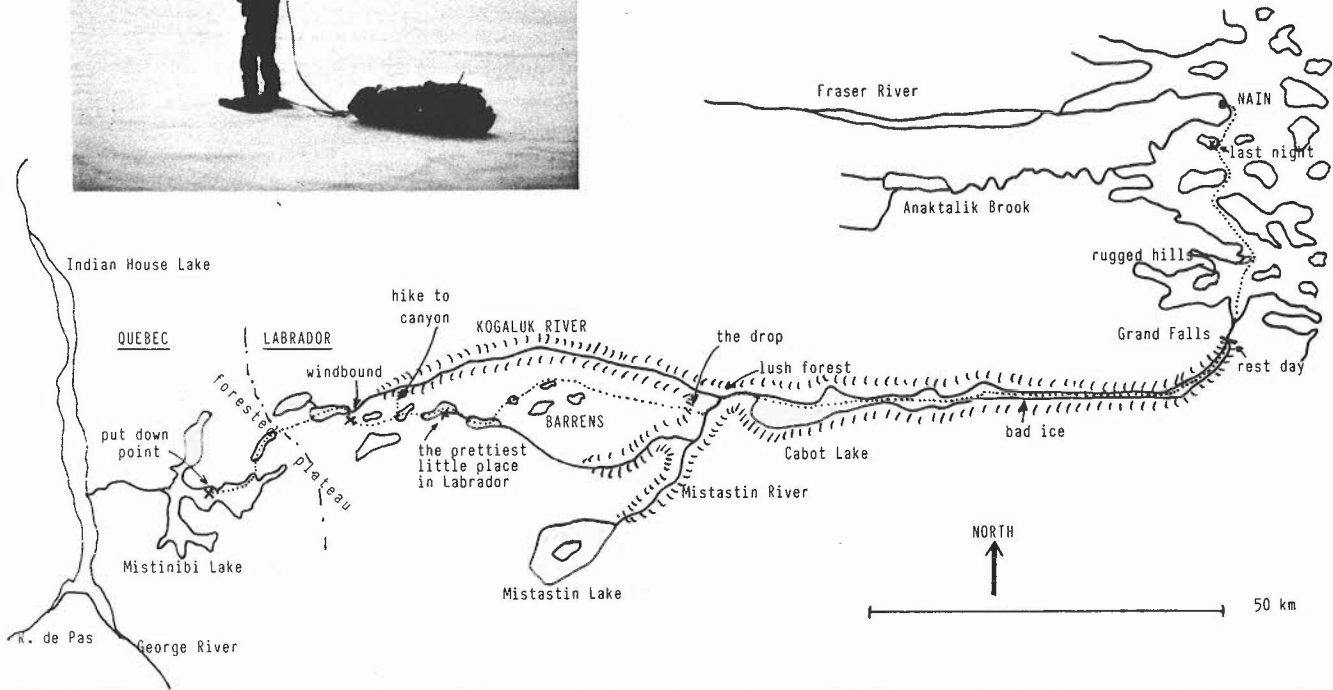
All went well until our scouted trail ended. Almost immediately afterwards we found ourselves at the top of a thinly wooded face covered with smooth, hard snow. We decided to go down it tree by tree: George would lower each toboggan to me and I would attach it to the trunk I was leaning against.

That at least was our plan. George carefully began to play out the line holding the first toboggan. Then I sensed something was wrong. I opened my mouth to tell him he was letting it down too quickly, but before I could form the



words I heard him yell it was free. It is hard to imagine how readily that toboggan gained speed. I grasped at it as it flew past. But I only managed to grab an elastic shock cord and had to let go. It slithered downhill, bouncing here and there, then rocketed over an edge and vanished. George and I craned our necks listening for a crash. We heard nothing. Then we bounded after it, torn between wanting to laugh at what we had seen and wanting to cry at what we knew we must find.

But what a surprise! The toboggan had left an intermittent trail. It had only been on the ground about five metres in every fifteen. It had snaked its way unscathed through about eighty metres of thick woods below the open face. It had not rolled over, although only too happy to do so when pulled. It had finally wedged itself to a stop under the snow-held lower branches of a spruce, finding the only way to arrest itself without being destroyed. George and I just laughed. A knot had come undone, but that just saved us a lot of very hard work.



THE C.R.C.A. INTERNATIONAL CANOE FESTIVAL TOUR

On 11 August 1985 Temagami was quiet. There were no pushing and shoving crowds anxious to get a clear view of the thousands of canoeists heading for the wilderness. There were no clusters of intense paddlers loosening muscles for the dash to isolation. It was wet, calm and as I said before, quiet.

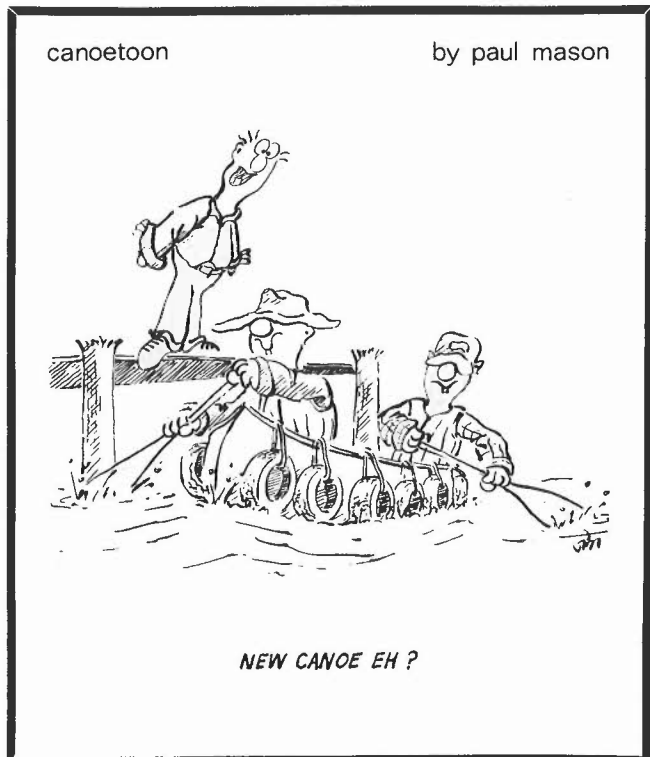
There was an old boat house/storage shed down by the water carrying festival signs; it had a display of canoes inside. It was rather dark and not very inviting so I did not go in.

I was told that there were two students employed in Temagami to look after participants. When five canoeists from Poland arrived, anxious to get on with the wilderness experience, the only wilderness they found was in the organization, as the students couldn't be found.

There was a marathon in which thirty teams took part. This was apparently a success. It is, however, a yearly event, previously established, and not strictly the work of the Festival. In fairness, there were probably other events that took place. I can only report that their total effect on the district was similar to adding a billycan of water to Niagara Falls. We tripped for nineteen days through the interior parts of the district, finishing up with a run down the Makobe, and saw ne'er a paddling soul. Impact on the environment was no greater than a gull defecating from a great height.

In closing this chapter of over-estimation, over-confidence, over-selling, and incompetence I should, perhaps, congratulate the committee that created additional awareness of the proposed misuse of canoe country. I think we are justified in being pleased that our ability to get a concerted effort together played a part in a satisfactory deflation. I have the press releases and the organizational proposals of the C.R.C.A. to back up my statement that their performance of the proposed and advertised event was dismal.

Richard Smerdon





EDITORIAL

Over the years, Nastawgan has evolved into a widely read (relatively speaking) and highly respected publication, dedicated to the appreciation and understanding of our natural environment. Its importance and impact go far beyond that of a normal club newsletter, and the WCA is understandably very proud of that achievement. Nastawgan's format and style are by now well established; the recent introduction of a few minor additions (such as the list of contents and some maps, if available) should make it an even more useful publication. Of course, everything Nastawgan has achieved in the past and hopes to achieve in the future depends upon contributions by you, the reader. The editor only juggles that material around, performs a few magic tricks with it, and then pours it all out in the form of a readable publication. Therefore, keep submitting your trips reports, articles, book reviews, news briefs, etc., so that Nastawgan may continue to be a source of pride for us all.

An important part of any editor's responsibility lies in assuring the correct use of the written word. To say the least, this can be a path full of pitfalls because of the continuing evolution and change inherent in all living languages. This is, of course, also very much the case in Canada where the fight between British and American spellings is still being fought on several fronts (whether it's color or colour, program or programme, organize or organise really depends upon whom one talks to). To give me, as Nastawgan's editor, some much needed authoritative support in producing correct "Canadian" English, I'll rely to a large degree on the following two very Canadian books: Gage Canadian Dictionary (Gage Publishing Ltd.) and The Canadian Writer's Handbook (W.E. Messenger and J. de Bruyn, Prentice-Hall of Canada, Ltd.).

What does Nastawgan really try to achieve? What does it stand for in this world of "bigger-more-faster-higher-is-better?"

What the WCA wants to accomplish, partly through its publishing of Nastawgan, is an increased understanding of and respect for not only the infinite beauty, but above all the extreme fragility of our natural world. It is a frightening but undeniably true fact that the abhorrent rape of Mother Nature is going on at an ever-increasing rate all over the world. And not only in the faraway rain forests and deserts is precious wilderness habitat being destroyed by man in his blind instinct to survive, also in our own backyard, the Canadian wilderness, are immense areas of irreplaceable wild lands and waters being killed by man the master. The motivation behind all this may be noble (if it is) and for the good of mankind, providing a place to live as well as jobs for the surging sea of humanity that is engulfing our planet, but the price being paid is very, very high: the irreversible destruction of the earth's unique and irreplaceable natural environment.

This may all sound very black and pessimistic, but that's what we're heading for, everywhere, in the not so distant future. The world as a wild, unspoiled, and unpolluted place is on its way to destruction. I foresee a future of isolated pieces of carefully managed wilderness parks surrounded by a horde of humans, longing for the past, bountiful beauty of Mother Nature, but unable to find it anywhere.

It is imperative that man tries to lessen the impact of this process of destruction by increasing the awareness of what we still have, the beauty and silence that is still around us, the lands and waters of our wild regions, the animals living there, the sky, the clouds. Only through a thorough understanding of what we still have will we be able to appreciate what the future generations will never see for themselves.

We, the WCA, through its publication Nastawgan, can have some positive impact in this respect by documenting and reporting what we've seen and experienced and learned to love on our trips in the outdoors, be it one day on the Credit River or two months in the Barren Lands. In this small way we may contribute to more understanding of what nature is all about, thus slowing down the process of its blindly stupid destruction. We'll have to fight for what we believe in, otherwise there will soon be no more marshes for the browsing moose, no more lakes for the singing loon, no more fish for the blue heron to catch and feed his young.

Toni Harting

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

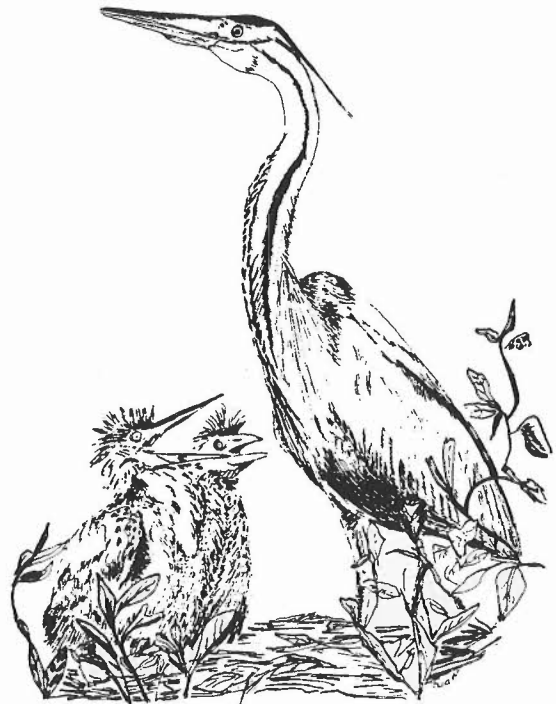
Very early in its formative years, the Wilderness Canoe Association established itself as a voice of reasoned concern for the preservation of our natural heritage. As always, this didn't come about by accident, but was the consequence of the work of a nucleus of members committed to present the viewpoint of the conservationist. Contrary to the impression often publicized that Government agencies are disinterested in, or even antagonistic to, input from groups such as the WCA, we found that not only was this input acknowledged, but in many instances actively thought.

Sadly, our voice over the last few years has become faint. Some of the individuals originally involved have moved elsewhere, others found that with changes in their lives they simply didn't have the time to carry on. While we still receive invitations to express opinions and submit briefs, we are often unable to act because of a lack of manpower. This letter is intended to bring the situation to your attention with the hope that we can reverse this trend.

What we urgently require are several people who collectively work on selected topics of particular concern to the WCA. It is of course quite impossible to do justice to all issues, but by prudent choice we can maximize our effectiveness. In most instances the best way to proceed may be to establish stronger ties with like-minded organizations such as the FON or the Sierra Club with the intention of proceeding in a collective manner towards a common stand on some environmental problems. Furthermore, we have to transmit to the membership at large what some of these problems and recommended solutions are by way of a regular column in the newsletter.

Many decisions on the creation of parks, hydroelectric development, mining, and logging will be made in the near future. We must not miss the opportunity to influence the outcome. I'm sure there is enough expertise and commitment among members to take up the challenge to work on these issues. Let's hear from you!

Herb Pohl



CANDIDATES FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The following are the platforms of candidates for the 1986 Board of Directors, received before our publication date. Any other members who wish to run for the Board may do so by letting the Board of Directors know, or by placing their name in nomination from the floor of the AGM in February.

BILL KING

I am offering myself as a candidate for the Board of Directors because I feel it is important that those who feel a strong commitment to the WCA should be prepared to participate in the work of running the organization. I have been a member of the WCA since 1976 and served on the Board previously from 1980 to 1984.

I do not feel that there are any burning issues at the present time and am essentially in favor of the status quo. I feel it of central importance that the Association continue a strong and varied outings program which provides outlets not only for those with well-developed whitewater skills, but also encourages those with lesser skills to participate and provides opportunities for members not interested in whitewater canoeing.

I would like to see a continued strong presence at the Sportsmen's Show as this has been the source of many of our most active members as well as being an ongoing source of revenue. I would like to see the WCA have a stronger voice in conservation concerns but I do not feel we are well-structured to do this other than on the initiative of individual members. To strengthen our contribution in this important area may involve a greater commitment of time and/or money than we have made up until now. Nastawgan is, or should be, a source of pride to every member of the WCA and requires little direction from the Board.

If you elect me, I will be happy to serve the WCA as a Director for the next two years.

STEWART McILWRAITH

Well, fellow WCA members, the time has finally arrived for my to stand for election to the Board of Directors. Looking over my records, I've been in the WCA for a period of not less than ten years. It is amazing how time passes. I joined the club when I was sixteen years old; at that time our now famous and well-praised newsletter was printed by a blue ink ditto machine on 8x11 inch paper and was named the Beaver Dam. The club has come a long way since then and I have been able to watch it evolve to what it is today. Over the years I've gotten a lot of enjoyment out of the club and, being an active member during my adult life, it has no doubt influenced the way I appreciate the wilderness environment. I now feel the time is right for me to assume a role as director of the club. I hope I can count on your support.

Some of my opinions about the club are as follows:

1) I view the club as a platform from which people with like interests, namely enjoying the wilderness environment, have a vehicle of association. It brings all of us together through the newsletter, various meetings and social events, and most important of all the outings which are a product of its members' involvement.

2) I don't feel that the club membership should be under any obligation to provide formal educational courses for teaching canoeing skills, etc. I believe there are enough businesses to cater to that need. The club's responsibility and capacity lies no further than its members offering a helping hand.

3) As an association and as elected officials of that association I feel the directorship, as they have been doing, should provide a voice for the WCA in representing the club on matters in the public forum concerning the interests of canoeists and other outdoor enthusiasts as they arise.

I joined the WCA in March 1982 and have become an active member, participating in the outings program, attending meetings and social occasions. Over the past two years I have increasingly volunteered my services to help with club activities. These activities include: the Sportsmen's Show, Fiscal 1984 Audit, preparation and co-ordination of the 1985 Fall Meeting in conjunction with Jan Tissot, and participation in developing WCA position papers submitted to the MNR for the French and Madawaska River Provincial Park Proposals. My involvement in these activities has broadened my views, helped establish friendships, improved my paddling skills, and given me great personal satisfaction.

I believe the strength of the WCA is in its members. Communication, interaction, and participation are the keys which can continue to strengthen our association. If elected to the Board, I will do my best to increase the percentage of active members, not only within the outings program but through all activities, poling the membership for new and innovative ways of adding to a very sound yearly format. Each member has established objectives which they feel the association plays a role in helping to achieve. We as an organization bound by common interests should explore all potential avenues to help grow as individuals and strengthen the association. This can only be achieved through active participation.

I have noted in the past years that there is a very firm nucleus of members who continue to give their time and energy to ensure sound management of the association. I believe I can assist these individuals through active participation and sharing of the workload. Therefore, I have concluded that, demonstrating this willingness by proclaiming my candidacy, I will continue to participate in all aspects of this association.

PAUL BARSEVSKIS

Belonging to the WCA has been a rewarding experience for me. I would like to serve on the Board of Directors so that we can all continue to share this sentiment.

The WCA outings are the heart of the organization. They provide a framework for like-minded individuals to enjoy these outdoor pursuits together. Offering instruction and running a comprehensive trip program should be fundamental objectives.

Nastawgan is the vital thread that ties everything together. It is a unique publication that we can be proud of. I believe in doing everything to maintain its quality and to improve its usefulness to members.

The WCA could become a more powerful lobbying force for the canoeing community. There are a number of environmental and legal issues where our voice needs to be heard. A growing membership would provide the economies of scale and the resources necessary for these tasks.

This is what the WCA means to me and these are the goals that I would work towards.

JOHN WINTERS

The WCA serves a diverse and eclectic membership whose activities range from quiet flatwater floats to ambitious northern expeditions. There are members who are whitewater enthusiasts and those who think whitewater only good for photographs. Many do their tripping in groups yet there are others, like myself, who are of more solitary nature.

I believe the continuing success of the WCA is due to the recognition of this diversity and the resistance to "over-organize" the organization and thereby omit, offend, or overburden some of its membership. Specifically, we have resisted the temptation to become a school for paddlers, nor have we become a strictly whitewater club, nor have we become a champion of environmental issues except where they represented a clear and present threat to our activities. While these are important areas of interest and concern, they are well served by organizations such as The Sierra Club, FON, ORCA, and many others far better suited to such special interests. The WCA has prospered by not getting sidetracked by divisive and burdensome issues. I believe we should continue on that course.

It is also my belief that more and bigger is not necessarily better and that the quality of our programs will assure our continued success rather than expansion to suit some undefined goal of membership. As a director, it would be my intention to pursue a course of improvement tempered by stability.

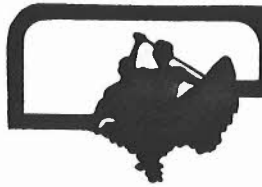


Photo: Donna Barnett

There is one aspect of barren lands travel which is often ignored--hiking. Time and again as I reviewed my journals I come upon entries exclaiming the magnificence of a view enjoyed by walking a short distance inland, thereby gaining the slight elevation required to look out over miles of tundra. It is entirely possible--and alarmingly common--to spend a month on the Barrens where, if you're not paddling or sleeping, you are engaged in the necessary chores of surviving. But with an organized approach to the routine tasks, and a schedule which does not push you to the limit, the unique pleasures of hiking on the barren lands are yours for the taking.

I offer these quotes, from the collected journals of my arctic travels, to support my claim.

"July 2, 1982--Ennadai Lake, Kazan River

"I am sitting atop an old esker, now covered in the early stages of growth, which extends into the lake just below 61°N. From this elevation of about 100 metres above the lake, one can turn in any direction and feel awe at the expansive spectacle. Our campsite below looks so small and insignificant. Our canoes are tiny red specks on the beach.

"Walking up onto this hill this evening we passed at least a dozen different wildflowers, tiny jewels nearly hidden in the tundra grasses, treasures you must stoop and search to find. They are apparently at their peak.

"The view from here is unique. To the south and southwest, from whence we have paddled, the hills are dotted and valleys covered with trees, principally spruce with some tamarac. Though the trees' heights have diminished somewhat over our week of paddling, there are still several in sight standing four to five metres tall. To the North the spectacle is dramatically different. Only occasional stands of spruce can be found in the sheltered, moist valleys by the lake's edge. The vast majority of the hundreds of square kilometres visible from here are barren of trees. This is the tree-line."

"August 4, 1982--Thirty Mile Lake, Kazan River

"After supper some of us walked up the 30-metre hill behind camp, with much cajoling about an assault on the summit. A snowy owl flew over. Sandhill cranes cackled across the plains all around. And the sun set with a golden glow over the myriad lakes to the northwest. On top we found literally thousands of cracked, bleached caribou leg-bones, clearly the remains of a most successful hunt some years ago."

"April 18, 1983--Kamaaqyuk, Kazan River

"In defiance of the storm raging outside, Tuluiarik decreed that we should leave the confines of our igloo for a walk, 'to get some fresh air.' It did not seem to me that the air in here was inadequately fresh, but I nevertheless complied, pulling on my caribou-skin parka. Outside, the winds blasted hard snow against our bodies. In the swirling confusion I could not see more than five metres. Tuluiarik's objective, he declared, was to find a good fishing spot, 'for when the storm stops.' We headed upriver on the frozen Kazan, on a hike like none I have ever

experienced before. Walking as if on a Sunday afternoon stroll in the park, kicking at drifts and ice formations, Tuluiarik found his fishing spot, though its precise definition still escapes me. I did not lose sight of him. This was a Barrens hike with a difference!"

"July 2, 1985--Hanbury River

"Walking on the tundra is rarely easy-going. Our way followed the river's course, sometimes along caribou trails, sometimes hopping from clump to clump in the wet lowlands, often through dense willow thickets, sometimes stepping over huge rounded boulders. We accomplished about 10 km, but I'm sure we actually walked 15 or more. We are each carrying moderate loads on our backs, which adds to the strain of this awkward terrain. I think of Hearne, and marvel. To be detached like this from one's canoe, in a position where our only way to proceed is on foot, gives me a new perspective on barren lands travel."

"July 11, 1985--Thelon River

"This morning the weather still prevented our continuing on the water, but it was perfect for hiking: enough wind to keep the bugs at bay, but not too much for comfort. Walking on tundra like this is almost magical; you feel like an alien visiting another world. The constant stimuli of sight, sound, and smell keep you turning your head this way and that. As we advanced we stood on one knoll after another, gazing out over the endless terrain. We came across a discarded, lichen-covered musk-ox horn, and a handful of musk-ox hair left on an isolated spruce 'scratching post'--confirmation of our expectation that the great beasts are about.

"Seeing, indeed feeling, so much land devoid of Man is the essence of a barren lands experience."

With those final words I unwittingly summed up my message. If you go in search of the feeling which only the barren lands wilderness can offer, you must enter it as a sanctuary, leaving all the clutter of mankind behind, and walk away from your canoe, from your tent, and your companions. Then you will experience, in my view, the magnificence of the Barrens.

Arctic Journal, by WCA member David F. Pelly, is a regular column featuring articles on various aspects of barren lands canoeing. David is a freelance writer whose work has appeared in Canadian Geographic, Outdoor Canada, and North/Nord amongst others, and is author of the book EXPEDITION, An Arctic Journey Through History on George Back's River.

news briefs

WCA AT THE SPORTSMEN'S SHOW

The 1986 Sportsmen's Show will be taking place from Friday, 14 March, to Sunday, 23 March. As usual, the WCA will be there with an interesting and educational presentation. Help will be needed to staff the booth as well as set it up and take it down. This is an opportunity for members to take part in an important WCA function; all those willing to assist are asked to call Bill Ness at 416-499-6389 or Gerry Lannan at 416-244-0238.

MADAWASKA RIVER PROVINCIAL PARK

A newsrelease from the Ministry of Natural Resources, dated November 1985, brings us the welcome information that a resolution has been passed stating that: "camping will be permitted on designated sites in the Snake rapids area."

MOUNTAIN EQUIPMENT CO-OP

The new Toronto store of this outdoor equipment supplier is now located at 777 Yonge Street, on block north of Bloor Street. Their phone number remains the same: 416-964-7509.

INSURE YOUR CANOE

WCA members can obtain all-perils coverage against loss or damage to their boats at the very economical rate of \$1.00 per \$100.00 of insurance under our Canoe Ontario group policy. If you are interested in taking advantage of this attractive offer, please send a stamped, self addressed envelope to Bill Ness for an application. Bill's address is given on the back page of this newsletter.

FALL MEETING

Our organization held its Fall Meeting on 28 and 29 September at Haliburton Hockey Haven with an attendance of some sixty members. All speakers added to our experience and contributed a great deal to the success of Saturday's program. The weather participated and offered a beautiful day for a fall paddle/hike on Sunday.

Mike Willis

FALL PARTY

Our 1985 Fall Party, which was held on 29 November, was very successful. Much thanks goes to Cash Belden who arranged for us to use the excellent facilities of George Brown College, and to Claire Brigden who did much of the organizing. Approximately 120 people attended.

Toni Harting's potpourri of river and nature slides set the mood for all canoeing enthusiasts who then spent an hour socializing and enjoying wine and cheese. The main event was Herb Pohl's show of the slides from his summer 1985 canoe trip in Labrador. Herb's wit and excellent pictures made this a memorable evening for all. Hopefully the Fall Party will continue to be an annual event.

Joan King

WCA CRESTS AND DECALS

Attractive crests and decals, showing the WCA logo in two shades of blue and white, are available to members. The crests measure 51 x 102 mm and cost \$3.00 each. The decals are 76 x 152 mm and sell for \$1.00 each.

Both crests and decals will be on sale at WCA meetings and events. Members wishing to order by mail should send a cheque or money order payable to the Wilderness Canoe Association to: Bill King, 45 Himount Dr., Willowdale, Ontario, M2K 1X3. Please include a stamped, self addressed envelope, or add 35c for postage.

WCA MEMBERSHIP LISTS

Membership lists are available to any members who wish one for personal, non-commercial use. Please send \$1.00 to: Cash Belden, 77 Huntley St., Apt. 1116, Toronto, M4Y 2P3.

CANOETOONS

Paul Mason's "Canoetoons," the canoeing cartoons that you have seen in Nastawgan, are available as greeting cards from Trail Head, at both their Ottawa and Toronto stores.

NEWSLETTER MATERIAL AND DEADLINE

Articles, trip reports, book reviews, photographs, sketches, technical tips, or anything else that you think would be of interest to other members, are needed for future issues. The material should be clearly legible, preferably typewritten, and should be presented double spaced with large borders and margins, otherwise it runs the risk of being returned for a rewrite, if time permits. The deadlines for the next three issues of Nastawgan are:

<u>Issue</u>		<u>Deadline</u>
Spring 1986	--	26 January 1986
Summer 1986	--	4 May 1986
Autumn 1986	--	17 August 1986

In principle, no material received after the deadline date will be considered for that issue, but will be held for use in a later issue, if appropriate. In some very rare cases, such as time-related news briefs, can acceptance beyond the deadline date be discussed with the editor.

NASTAWGAN: THE BOOK

Deadlines have indeed been met, and this fascinating book is now available to the public. A thorough review by Sandy Richardson is presented in this issue of our newsletter, and the book can be ordered directly from the publisher by means of the inserted order form.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

This yearly ritual is of course central to the survival of our organization. A renewal form is enclosed with this issue of the newsletter; please note the new membership fees. Also note that we have a new Membership Secretary: Paula Schimek. Her address and phone number are given on the back page of Nastawgan.

WCA PHOTO/SHOT CONTEST

In spite of all the good intentions and promises, there will be no photo competition in February 1986. Not only is the organizer very busy with other WCA work, but there would not be any opportunity to present the entries (and some useful comments) at the February AGM. We'll definitely try to do it again next year. So keep on making those prize-winners!

WILDERNESS CANOEING PHOTOGRAPHY

Two WCA members, both experienced photographers, will present lectures with slides on the subject of photography in the wild:

- 6 March 1986 Photography under adverse conditions: journey across the Barren Lands; by Mike Peake; to be presented at the Toronto Camera Club; entry fee \$2.50.
- 19 March 1986 Wilderness canoeing photography; by Toni Harting; to be presented at the Toronto Guild for Colour Photography; by invitation, no fee.

If you'd like to attend these lectures and need more information, please call: Mike (416-463-4240) and Toni (416-964-2495).

military grid system

Henning F. Harmuth

When we want to define a location in a city we give a street name and a house number, or we say, "It's on First Avenue between A-Street and B-Street." In effect we use place names to define a location.

This procedure does not work in unsettled country. A look at a topographic map 1:250,000 for any section of northern Canada shows that there are precious few place names. Large rivers and lakes as well as the more dramatic falls and rapids have names. But there are plenty of nameless dangerous rapids, lakes, and portages that the canoeist wants to locate. What can we do to identify a location in the absence of place names so that someone else can follow a trip description on the map?

Mariners specify a location on the high seas by latitude and longitude, which they can easily observe. But latitude and longitude are less suitable in other fields of human endeavor. Artillery gunners found during World War I that they could shoot at each other more efficiently if they used a square grid system instead of meridians and parallels. Hence the name "military grid system."

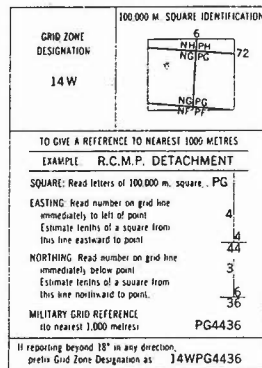
The Canadian topographic map 1:250,000 shows the military grid overprinted in blue lines, while latitude and longitude are only indicated along the margin. We will discuss this particular grid, which uses a combination of letters and numbers to specify a location. Other grid systems may use fewer or no letters (The topographic map 1:250,000 indicates such a system on the margin by blue numbers followed by the letters m.E or m.N.). Often the grid is not overprinted on the map but indicated by ticks and numbers along the margin. Some maps use a metric grid, some are based on the yard or the foot, and some use combinations. The topographic map 1:250,000 uses a metric grid but adds variety by showing altitudes in feet.

Besides improved long-distance shooting, the grid system provides us with other benefits. If the Earth were a sphere, a difference of one degree in latitude would represent the same distance anywhere. However, the Earth is flattened at its poles and bulges at the equator due to its rotation. One degree difference of latitude - measured by astronomical observation - represents thus a shorter distance near the equator than near the poles. The difference is only about 1%, but a good map is more accurate

practice their craft. The word "UNIVERSAL" indicates that these national grids are now replaced by a worldwide grid, bringing efficient gunning to the most backward countries. In the upper left of Fig. 1 we read, "GRID ZONE DESIGNATION 14W." The number 14 and the letter W designate a larger area of which the map is a part. To the right is another note, "100,000 M. SQUARE IDENTIFICATION," with a small sketch showing usually 4 pairs of letters, but the map Schultz Lake shows 6 pairs NH, PH, NG, PG, NF, and PF. One pair of letters designates a square whose edges are in principle 100,000 m = 100 km long (Some squares are truncated at their eastern or western edge). If an airplane radios its position as "square 14WPG" before a forced landing - perhaps due to efficient gunnery - the search for it can concentrate on a square of 100x100 km² size.

The lettered squares are subdivided into 10x10 squares with an edge length of 10 km as shown in Fig. 2. The grid lines are numbered 0 to 9 from left to right and from bottom to top. The edge length of a square can be subdivided further by a marked ruler into 10 intervals with a length of 1 km each.

Fig.1. Insert from the topographic map 1:250,000, Schultz Lake (66A), explaining the use of the military grid system.



TEN THOUSAND METRE
UNIVERSAL TRANSVERSE MERCATOR GRID
ZONE 14

than that. The distance between two meridians has, of course, its largest value at the equator and decreases to zero at the poles. All this makes it difficult to calculate the distance between two points when longitudes and latitudes are known. The mariner is served well by latitude and longitude, but on land when we hike, canoe, build a road, dispute a property line, or use artillery to prove a point, we want distances.

The lines of a military grid divide the map into squares of equal size; the length of the edges of these squares is 10,000 m on the topographic map 1:250,000. Occasionally, part of the squares is cut off, but this happens typically at the eastern and western edge of the map where it is not noticed. Exceptions are maps of the far north, e.g., of Ellesmere Island.

Let this be enough theory. The practical use of the grid system is quite simple. Take any Canadian topographic map 1:250,000. In the right lower corner you will find an insert printed in blue with the caption, "TEN THOUSAND METRES UNIVERSAL TRANSVERSE MERCATOR GRID," as shown in Fig. 1 for the map "Schultz Lake (66A)." Originally, the more advanced countries provided their artillery gunners with a national military grid on maps that included the adjacent areas of neighboring countries in which they might want to

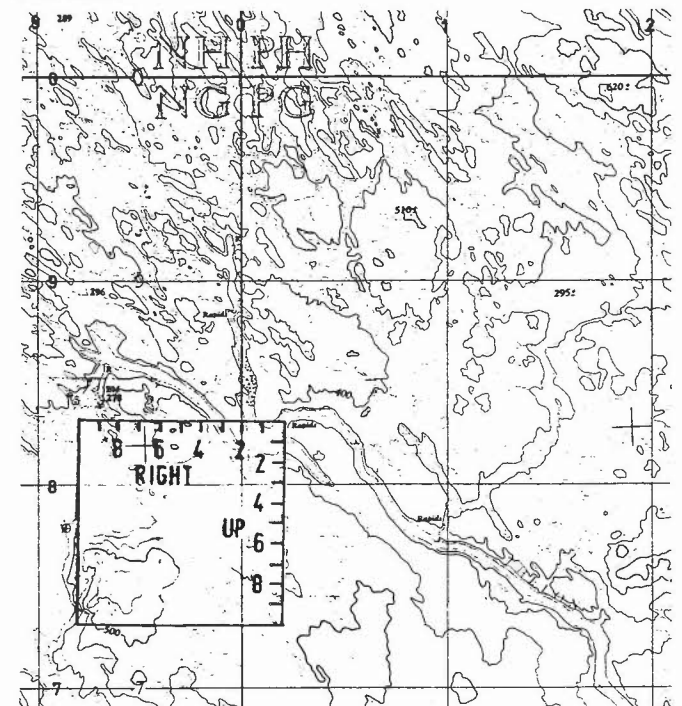


Fig.2. Section of the map Schultz Lake with an overlay of distance markings showing 2 kilometres "right" from grid line 0, and 3 kilometres "up" from grid line 8 for the location of rapids.

Consider the rapids of the Thelon River on the section of the map Schultz Lake in Fig. 2. A square piece of plastic marked in kilometres for the directions "right" and "up" is shown pointing at the rapids (For the map 1:250,000 the kilometre markings are 4 mm apart. Ten marks cover the distance of 10 km between two grid lines). The rapids are located in the square 14WPG, they are 2 km right from the grid line 0 and 3 km up from the grid line 8. The location of the rapids is thus described by 14WPG0283 (These are the last rapids on the Thelon River requiring scouting by everybody and portaging by most).

Figure 1 gives the location of the R.C.M.P. Detachment at Baker Lake settlement as 14WPG4436. The designation 14WPG is the same as for the rapids in Fig. 2. We infer that the R.C.M.P. Detachment is 44-02=42 km east and 83-36=47 km south of the rapids in Fig. 2. The distance between the two points as the crow flies is thus $(42^2+47^2)^{1/2}=63$ km. The angle between the grid lines and the direction between the two points follows easily from the inverse tangens of the ratio 42/47. Try to calculate the distance between the rapid in Fig. 2 and the R.C.M.P. Detachment from their latitude and longitude, and you will appreciate the military grid system. We marvel how benefits from progress in the military sciences trickle down to the wilderness canoeist.

A similar system of grid reference points is used on the 1:50,000 topographic maps, making it possible to pinpoint a location to an accuracy of 100 meters. (Editor)

great slave lake to baker lake

Henning F. Harmuth

In 1899 David T. Hanbury made the first recorded trip from Chesterfield Inlet in the northwest corner of Hudson Bay via Baker Lake to the eastern end of Great Slave Lake. A report with a map may be found in *The Geographical Journal* (London), vol. XVI (1900), 63-77. He reached Artillery Lake without much trouble, but lost his equipment in the turbulent section of the Lockhart River between Artillery Lake and Great Slave Lake. This for all practical purposes non-navigable stretch can be avoided by taking Pikes Portage Route.

My partner Robert Schaefer of Washington, D.C., and I flew on 6 July 1970 from Yellowknife to Ft. Reliance at the eastern end of Great Slave Lake. The starting date appears rather late, since the ice at Ft. Reliance breaks up about two weeks earlier. However, at the other end of the route we had to cross Beverly, Aberdeen, and Schultz Lakes, which are often ice blocked till the end of July, and this determined the starting date.

The trading post as well as the RCMP post at Ft. Reliance had been abandoned. Only a weather station, a fly-in fish camp, and a few Indian families living in the general area were left. The ruins of historic Ft. Reliance built in 1833 during Captain George Back's expedition are 15 km northeast at the mouth of the Lockhart River.

The following morning we paddled the 8 km across the lake to the mouth of Glacier Creek (12VXE0253). (Locations are given with the military grid reference shown on the topographic maps 1:250,000). The name of this creek is due to the accumulation of ice produced by its overflows during winter, which provides a conspicuous landmark for the canoeist. The mouth of Glacier Creek is the start of Pikes Portage Route to Artillery Lake. The name Pikes Portage Route is still shown on the map 1:506,880, Artillery Lake, 1951 edition, but not on the newer topographic map 1:250,000, Ft. Reliance, 1964 edition. However, the portages are shown by black dashed lines on the newer map.

Pikes Portage Route starts out with a 6 km long portage, ascending somewhat more than 100 m. It is well beaten at its beginning, but becomes occasionally quite unrecognizable in swampy areas. For some distance we had to walk on a snow field that, of course, showed no marks whatsoever. The heat generated by the heavy portaging made it impossible to wear a mosquito net, and the insect repellent was quickly rinsed off by sweat. We did not enjoy the portage, but the mosquitos did. Twenty-two hours after leaving Ft. Reliance we had all our gear at the south end of Harry Lake, where one finds a good campsite.



Fig.1. Parry Falls on the lower Lockhart River.

The following day we paddled to the north end of Harry Lake, made the short portage to French Lake and from there to Acres Lake. The creek between Acres and Kipling Lakes could be paddled.

On 8 July we reached the portage at the north end of Kipling Lake to Burr Lake. It is about 2 km long. Another, equally long portage leads from the north end of Burr Lake to Toura Lake. At the north end of Toura Lake a portage of about 1 km leads to an unnamed lake (12VXE2571), which provides an excellent jump-off point for a day hike to Parry Falls, only 8 km away as the crow flies, but somewhat farther as man walks due to the many lakes and ponds. Parry Falls is one of the sights of northern Canada, tumbling 40 m over a ledge (Fig. 1). The last stretch of the route follows the Lockhart River above the falls, where powerful rapids are a sight in their own right.

The portage between this unnamed lake and the southern end of Artillery Lake is hard to find. A well-beaten trail at the north end of the lake turns east and seems to peter out in a narrow gorge. One must squeeze through between the boulders in this gorge to find the trail again, which leads to a small pond and then on to Artillery Lake. The distance is about 2 km. If one does not force one's way through this gorge, one must take a much longer and steeper route over the mountain to the north of the gorge. Artillery Lake is 203 m above Great Slave Lake according to the topographic map.

We paddled about 15 km north on Artillery Lake and pitched camp on the east shore across from Timber Bay. The time taken from Ft. Reliance to here was four days, plus one day for the visit to Parry Falls.

On the following day we paddled about 50 km north on Artillery Lake in perfect weather. The trees come to an end around Crystal Island. Two log cabins could be seen on the island. Many sandy beaches along the shores of Artillery Lake provide excellent camping.

On 12 July we reached the mouth of the upper Lockhart River. It turned out that we could paddle upstream without much trouble. Only in the evening when approaching the first rapid (13VCA7543) did we have to resort to wading. This rapid drops about 3 m. The map 1:506,880 of 1951 shows a drop of 5 metres for this rapid and 3 metres for the following one, but this is too much since the altitude difference between Artillery Lake and Ptarmigan Lake above the rapids is only 6.4 m according to the topographic map 1:250,000 of 1965.



Fig.2. The cairn at Hanbury Portage.

The following day we portaged this rapid as well as a second one with a drop of some 2 m (13VCA7546), and camped at the end of the peninsula sticking into Ptarmigan Lake from the south. Three hours paddle bring one to a narrow spot of the lake (13VCA8765), and two more hours to the eastern end of the lake (13VCA9464). The topographic map shows a rapid here, but actually this is a boulder-strewn bed of a stream without water in it. A short portage leads to an unnamed lake, and about 1 km paddling along its north shore brings one to the height of land at Hanbury Portage (13VCA9563). A small cairn marks the spot (Fig. 2). The ascent from Great Slave Lake to here is about 215 m, the descent to Baker Lake about 365 m.

A portage straight east of about 500 m brings one to an unnamed lake in the Hudson Bay drainage. At its south end is again a boulder-filled stream bed shown as a rapid on the topographic map, and one portages into Deville Lake. A short distance further on we camped on 14 July.

The rapid at the outlet of Deville Lake (13VDA0556) required a portage, but this seems to depend very much on the water level. We had now reached the Hanbury River. A strong headwind impeded progress and we only made it to the southeast end of Sifton Lake in the evening, ten days out of Ft. Reliance. Sifton Lake is the usual starting place for parties going down the Hanbury River, requiring a flight of 450 km from Yellowknife.

A heavy wind made progress slow on the following day, and we barely got past Muskox Hill. From here on one enjoys a good stretch of peaceful paddling until a rapid (13VDA5458) is reached that requires a short portage on the left. At the entrance of Lac du Bois comes the next rapid (13VDA6058) with a short portage on the right. We combined the portage with our camp on 17 July.

Grove Rapids at the outlet of Lac du Bois requires a portage of about 2.5 km on the right. A short paddle across Hanbury Lake brings one to Caribou Rapids and another 2.5 km portage, this one on the left. True to its name, thousands of caribous were in the process of crossing the river here. The next portage is mercifully short (13VDA7548), and is followed by a rapid about 13 km further on that actually can be run (13VDA8752). We pitched camp below this rapid on 18 July.

The rapids above Hoare Lake (13VDA9352) can be run. Below Hoare Lake is sometimes fast water not shown as rapids on the map. Strong winds made us camp below the mouth of the Darell River.

Next morning we awoke to strange noises. Looking out of the tent we saw ourselves in the middle of a caribou herd that slowly moved through our camp. The caribous were quite curious about us and showed no fear, but they did not permit us to touch them.



Fig.3. Lower part of Dickson Canyon looking downriver.

A few hours of paddling in fast water brought us to McDonald Falls, which drop about 15 m. A portage of 500 m on the right gets one around. Some 2 km further on comes the high point of the Hanbury River, Dickson Canyon (Fig. 3). This is a spectacular canyon, every bit as good as the great gorge of the Dubawnt River above Grant Lake. A pretty bad portage of upwards of 4 km on the right is required. A very small caribou did not approve of our portaging and defended the narrow trail, rising on its rear legs and beating its little front hoofs against us. We had to use a paddle to shoe it off the trail, there was no other way of convincing it that we did not want to throw it into the pot. We camped at the end of the portage on 20 July.

Only an insignificant stretch of canoeable water separates Ford Falls from Dickson Canyon. The falls are about 18 m high, and require a portage of more than 1 km on the right. A stretch of fast water follows to Helen Falls (18 m high, Fig. 4) and Fischer Falls (3 m high). The portage on the left goes around both falls and is somewhat less than 2 km. We camped on the flat rock shelf above Fischer Falls, which seems to be a favorite spot for everyone coming down the Hanbury River. This is the place to celebrate, there is no more scouting or portaging until the rapid on the Thelon River Below Schultz Lake, some 12 days away.

The next morning, 21 July, we entered the Thelon River. A large herd of caribous was swimming across here. We clearly got more than our share of caribous on this trip.



Fig.4. Helen Falls on the Hanbury River.

After all the portaging of the previous 16 days we were looking forward to a peaceful and easy run at least as far as Beverly Lake, but nature decided otherwise. The following ten days we battled wind and rain almost continuously. It was the worst stretch of bad weather I experienced in 30 years of canoeing in northern Canada and Alaska. Progress was slow. The Thelon is quite featureless between the mouth of the Hanbury River and Beverly Lake, except for the famous growth of trees along its banks that is separated from the region of forests further south. There are some trees already between Dickson Canyon and the mouth of the Hanbury River, but they start in earnest some 20 km below the Hanbury River and go on to about the mouth of the Tamarvi River. A noteworthy place here is Hornby Point (13WEB5501) with the ruins of a cabin and three graves (Fig. 5). John Hornby, Harold Adlard, and Edgar Christian starved here to death in the spring of 1927. The story is told in George Whalley's book "The Legend of John Hornby" (1962).



Fig.5. The graves of Hornby, Adlard, and Christian on the Thelon River.

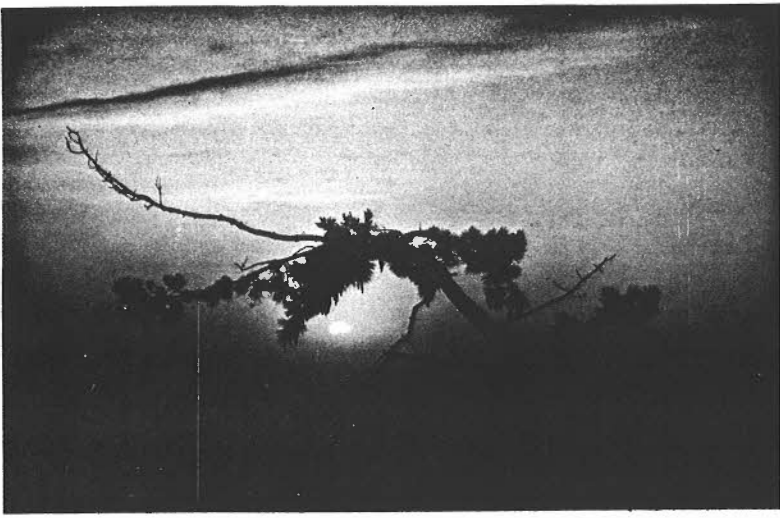
Near Lookout Point (13WFB1917) we came across three muskoxen grazing on the left bank. The Thelon River seems to be about the southern limit of their range, many more can be seen along the Back River.

Beverly Lake was reached on 28 July. Enormous piles of driftwood are found here. This is the last place on the Thelon River to stock up on firewood. J.W. Tyrrell in his book "Across the Sub-Artics of Canada" (1908) states that there are piles of driftwood at the mouth of the Dubawnt River at the east end of Beverly Lake, but this is clearly a mix-up between the two places. One will not find so much as a stick at the Dubawnt River, since there are no trees below Dubawnt Lake and no tree trunk could make it across the permanent ice of that lake. Wind and rain made the 20 km across Beverly Lake a whole day effort. The following morning we passed the mouth of the Dubawnt River, which can be identified from the map only; there is absolutely no distinguishing feature. In the evening we reached Aberdeen Lake.

In 1970 the University of Saskatchewan maintained an arctic hut at the left bank of the Thelon River where it enters Aberdeen Lake. A scientist studying arctic foxes was stationed there, supported by an Inuit family from Baker Lake. There was hardly anything dry left in our equipment and we greatly appreciated the luxury of sleeping in a hut rather than in a soaked tent. This hut had disappeared when we passed the place again in 1983.

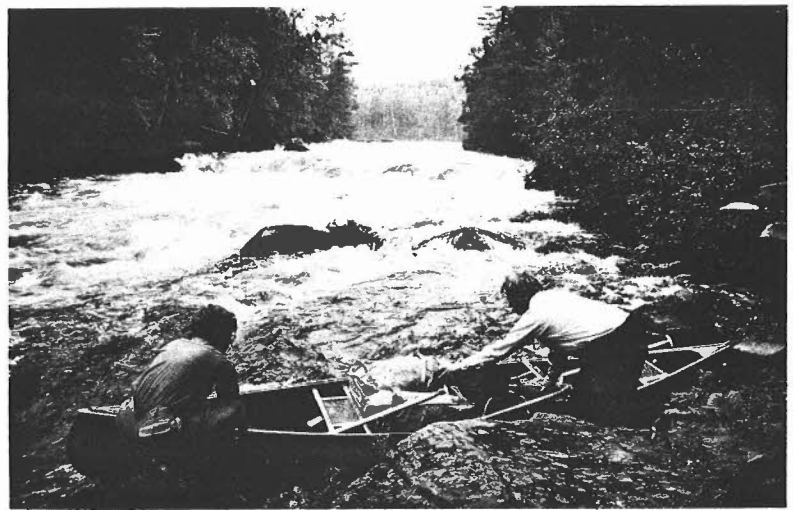
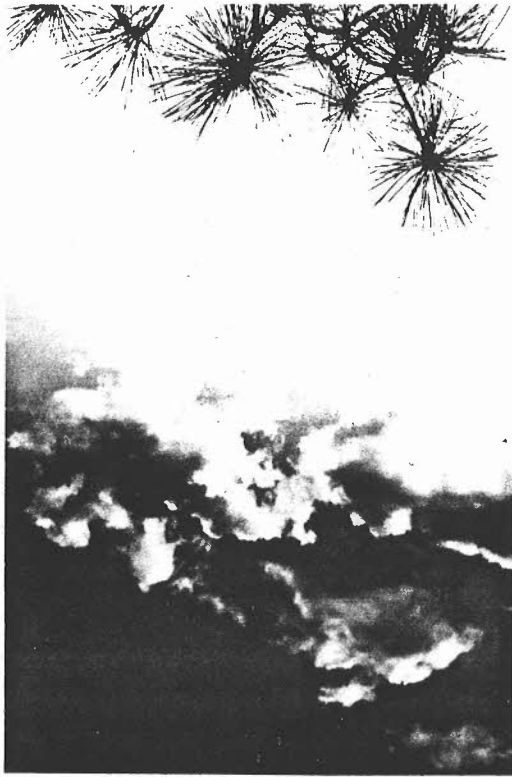
The route from the west end of Aberdeen Lake to Baker Lake settlement has been described repeatedly in Nastawgan. In good weather one needs two days to reach the east end of Aberdeen Lake, a third day from there to Schultz Lake, a fourth day to the rapids below Schultz Lake (14WPG0283), which are the only ones requiring scouting or portaging, and a fifth day to Baker Lake.

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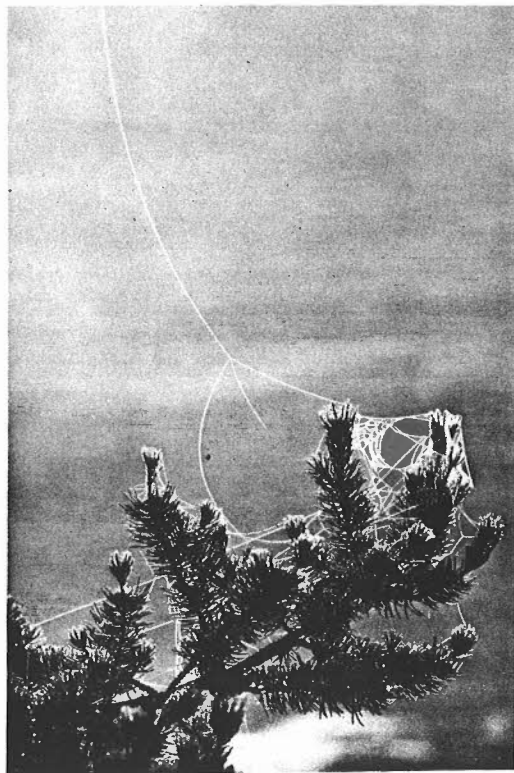
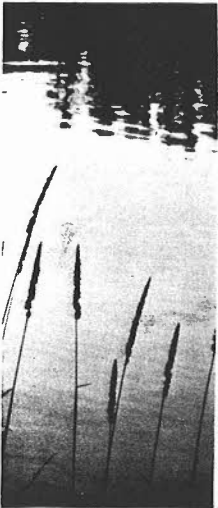


dumoine river



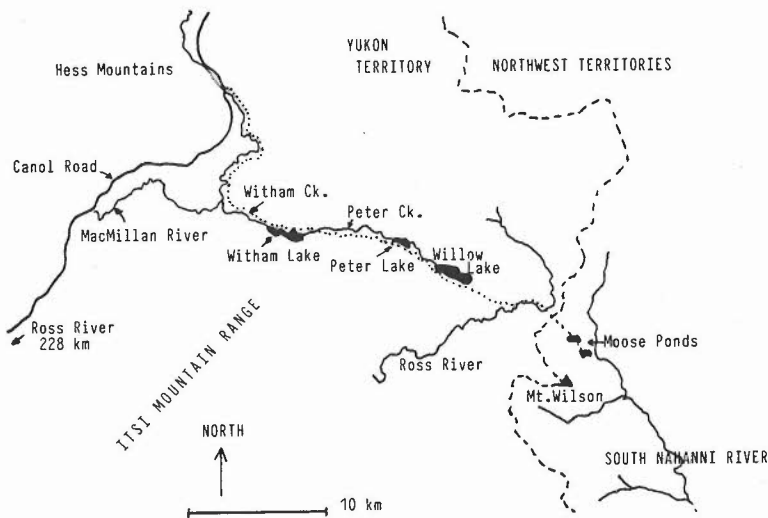


Toni Harting





Overlooking MacMillan Lake, Canol Road, and the Hess Mountains, 230 km north of Ross Lake, Y.T.



across the continental divide

Debbie Ladouceur and David Salayka

Our expedition evolved from a simple paddling trip in the Northwest Territories to an extended venture that would last more than four months. It would first of all take the two of us on a late winter's trip by sled and snowshoe from a point in Yukon Territory just west of the Continental Divide to the headwaters of the South Nahanni River in the Northwest Territories. This part of the trip took about two months and is described in this article. We would then load our possessions in the canoe we had hauled with us on the sled over the snow and ice of the Continental Divide, and paddle down the south Nahanni and Laird Rivers to Fort Simpson, which would take us more than two months. Our story of the second part of the expedition will be presented in a future issue of *Nastawgan*.

We wanted to gain access to the headwaters of the South Nahanni River other than the conventional fly-in method via float plane. Rather than using a team of dogs, the two of us would haul our 400 kg outfit via canoe sled over the Continental Divide. Covering a distance of 50 km, our route followed a series of small lakes and rivers through a narrow pass in the Ipsi Mountains in the Yukon Territory. Historic methods of winter travel have always held a fascination for us. In days gone by, the Slave Tribe of the Athapaskan Indians in the Nahanni region followed game to the headwaters of the South Nahanni with dogsleds. To complete the cycle, they returned to their summer homes in skinboats via the South Nahanni River. Further north, Arctic explorers made use of sledges to haul gear and umiaks (Eskimo open wood-and-skin boats) along the Arctic Coast.

On 1 April 1985 we began our journey 228 km northeast of the settlement of Ross River from a vacant trapper's cabin on the Canol Road in the Yukon Territory. We had received tremendous support and encouragement from people in Ross River, particularly Bill and Lee Carson, owners of the trapper's cabin mentioned above, and Rick Booker, Conservation Officer for the area. Bill and Lee are local trappers and each year spend six months in their northern cabin. Bill is a man who is intimately in tune with the natural world; his life is a reflection of the phenomenal rewards one can reap by having respect and concern for the wilds.

Lee is a Tlingit Indian from Teslin, Yukon Territory. She is the kindest and most generous of women we know, and she too has found great satisfaction in the wilderness. They took us under their wings and into their home and we were both enlightened by their stories and their lives. For good luck, Lee gave us the penis bone belonging to the blond grizzly bear lying on their living room floor. They warned us of the intelligence of the unpredictable grizzly.

We took a few days to regroup at the cabin and orient ourselves in this mysterious, isolated Ipsi Mountain Range. We were confronted with 1.5 m of snow, but the magnificence of these mountains overlooking our narrow pass is a memory that will forever be in our hearts. The weather in April consisted of snowstorms and a cold, incessantly blowing northeast wind. We watched the mountains from the cabin, knowing that soon we would be walking amongst them, no more significant than two spruce added to their forests.

It was an astounding revelation to learn that, when walking from Camp 1 to Camp 2 on the MacMillan River, we actually covered 13.5 km on snowshoes to relocate our entire

camp 1.5 km. Three kilometres were required to scout and break trail, plus three kilometres for each of the first three loads, and then the last quarter load one way, totaling 13.5 km.

The following day, Easter Sunday, found us confronting a three-day snowstorm that held us at Camp 2. So soon we began to question our purpose in those cold mountains. Expectations and anticipations were changing daily, and the flexibility required to accept some of these realizations was a tremendous lesson in patience. We would have to cover a total of 280 km on snowshoes to travel 50 km, because the snow conditions would, for a third of the distance, only permit quarter loads and half loads.

We had built our 3.75 m canoe sled, weighing 13 kg, ourselves, aided by plans from Craig Macdonald. We modified the sled to provide additional strength and durability as we would be hauling continuously in a variety of snow conditions. Portability was not a necessity, so we secured the crossmembers and runners more rigidly. Carriage bolts through the support blocks fixed the crossmembers to the spruce runners. The design was rigid enough, yet still sufficiently flexible for uneven terrain. In addition, we utilized a very durable plastic called Ultra High Molecular Weight for shoeing the runners. The sled performed well although the canoe hull suffered minor damage due to stress created by the resting blocks. Our thanks to Craig Macdonald for his valued support and expertise.

We designed simple harnesses for hauling made from nylon webbing, aerolite foam, and nylon. These attached to nylon webbing haul lines with Fastex fasteners. Leather tumplines would have been more pleasing aesthetically; however, cost, weight saving, and the vision of wet and frozen 6 m long tumplines made maintenance-free nylon webbing an obvious choice.

We exercised a relay hauling system whereby the canoe sled was converted to a trail sled (addition of two spruce poles) to accommodate the major part of our gear. The final haul of each relay (relays varied from 1.6 to 9 km in length) consisted of the canoe and miscellaneous gear.



Single hauling on the MacMillan River with Ipsi Mountains in the background.

With ever-changing snow conditions, tandem hauling a 100 kg sled re-educated every muscle in the art of walking, pulling, and bending. We suffered the consequences in different ways: old sports injuries and wide bearpaw snowshoes altered our normal walking gait enough to cause serious groin and ankle problems.

During the three-month preparation we were confronted with the challenge of maintaining that fine balance between technology and simplicity. We had built our 18 foot kevlar Prospector canoe in the spring of 1984 and learned of the great value of homebuilt boats whereby the layup is as strong as the builder's efforts. We were to put the boat to a phenomenal test and would evermore praise the tensile strength of kevlar. We chose to construct or sew as much of our equipment as possible, thereby realizing the rewards and benefits of our own labor. Wool shirts, wool pants, waterproof raingear and mitten covers, stuff sacks, ground sheets, fleece pants, sweat pants, and harnesses were all sewn by ourselves. Homemade garments are the best. We used 12 ounce coated cordura for the spraycover and included a 60 cm expansion unit to accommodate our high load and facilitate access to gear while the cover was attached.

A vicious, cold northeast wind was blowing while we set up Camp 3 in the waning daylight. Each chore was hampered by the draining effect of the bone-chilling wind, compounded by a long and tiring day. In spite of the raging wind, we experienced one of the few clear black nights while the brightest stars blinked constantly and the aurora borealis arose from the horizon in the north to fan out across the sky in great arms of blue-green light. The evening was painted with silhouettes of mountains and trees while a bright candle-lit tent glowed as our beacon of warmth.



Gaining 60 m elevation up Peter Creek.

Initially snow conditions were less than ideal. An above-average snowfall and late spring delayed consolidation of the snowpack. Hauling light quarter loads required that we break trail through a 30 cm thick layer of relatively fresh snow. We welcomed windblown snow in these conditions; it would fill in our trail and on this disturbed snow hauling was facilitated. As the days lengthened and grew warmer, hauling conditions improved as the snowpack began to settle. We encountered hazards typical of spring travel in the north. Narrow, swift creeks presented us with open water as well as steep rises and hollows resulting from the creek gradient. We tested snow conditions with a 2.5 m pole. At times, however, snow and light conditions prevented us from detecting danger spots. In one instance a drift of powder concealed a break in the river ice. Debbie disappeared to her waist, her five foot snowshoes dangling in the flowing MacMillan River, with 1.2 m of collapsed snow holding her there. Any movement caused the hole to enlarge, thereby adding to the weight of the snowshoes. It required that the harnesses be undone under water and then Debbie and the snowshoes were pulled out of the hole. A fire had to be built quickly to dry out and change footwear which consisted of cotton socks, wool socks, moosehide mukluks, and moccasin rubbers. In that situation our closest companion was fire.

Setting up camp was very peaceful and calm for a change. Travel between the trees to get wood was nearly impossible; however, we eventually settled in the warm tent. We had turned over the canoe and tarped the gear down, and as we sat in the tent we looked at each other when we heard a tremendous roar approaching through the pass. Conditioned to wind over the past week we whispered, listened, and marvelled at the depth of the roar. Realizing the danger, we simultaneously lunged for the stove to prevent it from upsetting. There was little weight on the floor to the rear of the tent so that the wind easily lifted the tent and the stove pipe, while the waterbowl warming on the stove rocked and splashed. For an hour we held



Camp 11 at Willow Lake.

that position while the wind reached hurricane proportions. It swirled in circles, blowing at us with tremendous force from every direction. Eventually, a cold light peered through an open seam in the clouds, but it disappeared quickly as the sky closed again. That night, frustrated, we arose from a disturbed sleep and decided to heave the stove into the snow and batten down the hatches so that we could finally sleep snug in our down bags without having to worry about the wind and the stove. Other than this single accident, the 4 kg stove was worth its weight in gold.

Five to ten cm of overflow occurred at the confluence of the MacMillan River and Witham Creek, extending for one km downstream. Witham Creek is a tortuous, meandering little affair with frequent stretches of open water. It appeared to have overflowed several times. Manoeuvring around deep holes was difficult and dangerous. Having an eye for shortcuts at confluences and meanders was an important asset, as saving one km on the map meant saving six to ten km hauling quarter loads. Shortcuts across land were difficult where snow was not consolidated because of vegetation. Often one of us would haul and the other push to manoeuvre the sled as the deep snow and uneven terrain made tandem hauling very difficult.

Wet snow conditions would prove to be very trying because of the adverse effect on snowshoes. The babiche suffered as we travelled beyond the early hours. The shoes would become sodden and stretched; coarse ice crystals abraded the babiche so that repairs had to be made on a daily basis. Our 42 inch bearpaw snowshoes were reduced to frames as the poor quality babiche was continually cut.

Temperatures ranged from -26°C to $+7^{\circ}\text{C}$; we continually had fresh snowfall to further delay consolidation of the snowpack. Being tentbound for two to three days at a time was a regular occurrence. Without the woodstove we would have had a very difficult time, but the comforts of a heated, large tent to read, play chess, and write while waiting out the weather saved our sanity. We built the efficient, airtight wood burning stove ourselves from sheet metal, and remodelled our five-men 5.7 kg dome tent to accommodate the stove. Taking scissors to the floor of an \$800 tent was no easy task, but we had to put in a 2.2 m zipper that would allow the stove to rest on the ground. With flameproof material we fashioned a hole in the back door of the tent for the 7.5 cm downpipe used as a stovepipe.

Some people questioned the feasibility of a wood burning stove inside a nylon tent. However, we protected the floor of the tent in front of the stove with a mantle of flameproof cloth. And using caution and common sense led



Tandem hauling up the Ross River towards Mount Wilson.



Tandem hauling on the Moose Ponds at the base of Mount Wilson.

us to comfort and security with the stove inside the tent which was made from flame-retardant material.

Animal activity was rarely observed except for their many tracks as evidence of their comings and goings. Wolverine tracks were sighted daily. At one point a wolverine investigated our campsite, digging up footprints, etc., yet did not go near our food cache. Their appetites were not aroused by dried foods, spices, or sweets. Food was carefully packed in 14 L olive barrels which were airtight and waterproof, three of them fitting into a #1 Special Duluth Pack.

In our one-bedroom apartment we had constructed a dehydrator and had dried 270 kg of fruits and vegetables for the trip. The planning was a difficult chore. With 380 kg of food, based on research indicating one kg per person per day, we decided to prearrange a food-drop of 190 kg for the remaining months of the journey. We did find, however, that even when exerting tremendous amounts of energy, it was difficult to consume that amount of food each day. Brown rice, lentils, wholewheat flour, home-made granola, wholewheat pasta, dried fruits and vegetables, rolled oats, whole powdered milk, and eggs were our staples. We included spices, nuts, raisins, and carob to provide us with energy. Our fat supply consisted of forty-eight cans of butter weighing 0.45 kg each. A great deal of research was required to satisfy our philosophies of good health and natural foods.

When battling cold winds and snowstorms, one can get ravenous indeed. We always found our meals very satisfying and delicious. A breakfast of rolled oats, wheat germ, bran, raisins, a tablespoon or two of butter, everything richly covered with demerara style sugar (brown sugar with molasses), was a meal fit to meet any challenge that Mother Nature could throw at us.

Wolves as well left their tracks, often using our trails as highways. One night on the MacMillan River a lone wolf explored our camp while we slept. He circled within a few metres of our tent and, with his curiosity satisfied, went off on his nightly prowls. At another time we confronted and scared a wolf as we met him coming towards us. As we rounded a bend he bounded off the trail and floundered through 1.5 m of snow trying to escape our presence. It was with sympathy that we watched him try frantically to increase the distance between us.

We felt an intimate relationship grow between ourselves and the Itsi Mountains as we hauled back and forth below their peaks, marvelling at the contrast between their grandeur and their harshness. On 24 April we experienced an exhilarating day when we were able to cover nine km



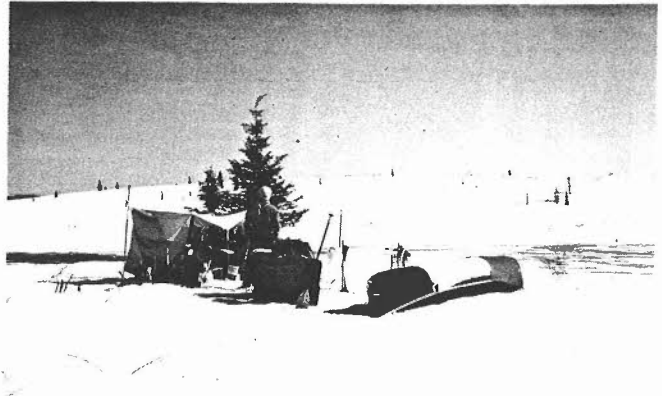
Flooded out at Camp 16.

hauling a half load. A clear, bright day of sunshine with eagles soaring high over the forested slopes did much to bolster our spirits. Each day sunrise was heralded by flocks of ptarmigan, hysterically chuckling and gurgling. With the onset of the mating season we were rewarded with their displays of courtship as loud, aggressive males lorded over their harems.

The intensity of the sun reflected by the snow, as well as a cold northeast wind, proved too much for our faces. After suffering swollen cheeks and blistered lips, we resorted to wearing bandanas, allowing as little skin as possible to be exposed to the harshness of the wind and sun. A few hours without our sunglasses proved painful to the eyes, making the glasses a very valuable part of our equipment. Our clothing consisted of three or four layers of light to heavy wool with anoraks of Klimax for wind protection. As we were continually changing from hard physical labor to inactivity, we had to provide ourselves with the option to bundle up or strip down quickly and easily. We soon learned when to ventilate in order to preserve energy.

Over the first 37 km we gained an elevation of 200 m. In a 400 metre stretch of Peter Creek we gained 60 m. It proved quite a challenge on snowshoes as we blinked through the haze of fresh snowfall. Wolverine tracks paralleled ours as we hauled quarter loads up the steepest portion of our climb. Doubled over against the late afternoon wind, our day was turned into an exhausting gruel.

We averaged three km per hour hauling quarter loads, and our return trips with an empty thirteen kg sled were only slightly faster. Living on snowshoes for two months was a challenge in itself, while travelling without them meant thrashing around waist-deep in bottomless snow. However, we longed to walk unrestricted, without the imprisonment of five foot snowshoes.



Widening South Nahanni 18 km downstream of the Moose Ponds.

Peter Lake, although only one km long, seemed endless. At 9:30 a.m. we attempted to haul a quarter load, but were forced to take refuge in the tent. The wind had nearly blown us off our feet at the mouth of Peter Creek. It was bone-chilling, though the temperature at 8: a.m. was only -3°C . That afternoon, feeling restless, we attempted the haul. The wind buffeted us with strong gusts. The lighting in the snowstorm was terrible. We could see no contour to speak of, and we kept stumbling into drifts, at times the sled running up on our heels. The sun was barely a cold light in a blustery grey sky. That evening the winds hurled down the valley. We could hear their distant approach, then the heightened scream of the winds howling through the stunted alpine firs past our camp and finally receding down the valley. It was only toward daybreak that they finally calmed.

We came upon a simple realization as to why the canoe load did not track as well as the pack loads. Just as wind has a tremendous influence on steering a canoe while paddling, even more intense is the effect of wind on the entire exposed hull while hauling.

We designated 27 April a bath and rest day, as it had been twelve days since we savored the luxury of our last sponge bath. After our treacherous haul up Peter Creek we wandered southwest over a small ridge towards the craggy peaks to spy on a pair of golden eagles soaring about the cliffs. At times the pair mated for a few seconds, then danced off into the clouds as we watched from a small glacial lake.

After 37 km we reached Willow Lake, the highest elevation point on our route (1240 m). With daytime temperatures of 0 to $+1^{\circ}\text{C}$, snow on Willow Lake consisted of soft as well as windpacked patches; the weight of the wet snow caused the lake to overflow thirty cm. The snowshoes and sled runners broke through a five cm crust sinking fifteen cm below the surface. We pushed the trail up a steep grade at the east end of the lake and set up Camp 12 in large tim-

ber. From there we headed east to scout the trail down a small tributary to the Ross River.

Descending from the height of our climb we lost 200 m elevation in 2.5 km, most of that in one kilometre. The route to the Ross was incredible, down a narrow, heavily treed gully. Mount Wilson loomed in the distance, our destination at its feet, the Moose Ponds, a mere ten km away. We moved two loads down to the Ross, questioning our means of travel on this day, and occasionally our sanity. We utilized a 1.5 m fir pole as a lever-type brake attached to the rear crossmember of the sled. One person was on the brake and the other held back to provide steerage by manipulating a rope attached to the rear crossmember. Sections of the gully were nearly vertical and filled with heavy spruce; we followed a creekbed that cut between the trees buried in 1.5 m of snow. We needed more lean and dig than snowshoes could provide us with. However, at times breaking through to our hips was very risky, often bruising a leg on buried limbs. The return climb with the empty sled and daypack was arduous indeed. A round trip of four hours once a day, floundering in heavy slush, was all that our energy levels and temper could deal with.

The last day of our descent to the Ross River began sunny and warm. The same treacherous snow conditions existed and we resorted to wearing snowshoes for the third haul. The trail had become unmanageable as a result of the deepening layer of slush. The last trip of the day consisted of our canoe load with tent, sleeping gear, and miscellaneous items. While breaking camp it began to rain, which would continue for the remainder of the day. We were committed to haul as most of our provisions were already at the Ross. We great humor and vigor we hauled our final load down that insane gully. Cold and wet we slid, stumbled, and crawled down the slope for the last time, laughing hysterically. Although shipping a fair bit of water, we had not had the opportunity to dip our paddles yet. It was a wet camp that night, but the warm tent, as always, was our refuge.



We felt tremendously pressured by the unknown. When would spring put a stop to our progress? Flocks of sandhill cranes and white-fronted geese circling the Moose Ponds and finding no open water would turn southwest down the Ross to seek more hospitable locations. We longed for spring after such a long and arduous journey, but we feared we would receive the same welcome at the Moose Ponds.

Our arrival at the Moose Ponds was triumphant yet bleak. On 10 May there was one metre of snow on the ground and at least sixty cm of ice on the ponds. We exercised much patience over the next ten days awaiting the most alive and welcome of seasons. It seemed that talk of paddling and the anxiousness to finally meet the mighty Nahanni had kept us going throughout the hauling, and now we feared to be stopped in our tracks by a late spring. Finally we could wait no longer. Although the ponds darkened, it was only the upper fifteen cm of overflow that tempted us to believe that soon there would be open water. We decided to haul another fifteen km downstream to where we knew the fast flowing Nahanni would hasten ice breakup. The previous two weeks we had been unable to travel, with or without snowshoes, as the mild evenings prevented a freeze in the snowpack. But then a few clear nights put in a good freeze and the snow hardened. We revelled in our freedom, while walking shoeless on the snowpack for kilometres on end. In four

days we relocated our entire outfit fifteen km, as compared to 1.6 km per day previous to our arrival at the Moose Ponds.

The last two weeks of May were intensely hot. The sun beat down out of a clear blue sky for fifteen consecutive days. Our travels via sled were coming to an end. Ice bridges that once supported our weight were non-existent on return trips. Everywhere, growing rivulets pushed through and over the snowpack as these tributaries sought their way to the Nahanni, adding volume to the open river and effectively closing off our hauling routes. The South Nahanni was coming to life. In the late afternoon lighting, the waking river rushed like liquid silver between banks of river ice laid down the previous autumn. Toward the end of that period we observed hourly changes in the snowpack, as clumps of willow and birch, finally released from their winter shackles, would spring up out of the sublimating snow.

Approaching Camp 17, our last snow camp, our senses were sharpened to the increasing animal activity. We came to an open meadow with a mad, meandering little creek and searched for a crossing, when we spotted an unusual bird, a long-tailed jaeger. It was out of its range and is rarely seen during migration. David volunteered to run the three km back to our last load for the 400 mm lens. I approached the jaeger as it sat perched on the snow on the near side of the creek. Viewing through the lens, I was unaware of any activity around me. Then I heard David whispering from behind and as I turned he was frantically pointing at a gully opposite us on the far side of the creek. My heart left to my throat as we watched a small grizzly running down the gully fifty metres away heading directly towards us. We knew that the shotgun was three km away, and as I envisioned fending him off with my snowshoes, David was considering the flares. The bear was light blond in color and small, but we were aware of the stunted growth of grizzlies at this northern latitude.

It appeared that the animal was running toward us, but it seemed unaware of our presence. It approached the stream edge and veered east, apparently looking for a crossing. Then, upon seeing its profile, we realized we were watching the largest wolverine we had ever imagined, the long tail, the broad yellow stripe along its side, and the huge head on the massive shoulders. The wolverine squatted to mark his territory while he ran. We both marvelled at this phenomenal creature, estimating its weight to be approximately 45 kg. Suddenly he became aware of us. He turned and ran away at high speed, covering an uphill distance of one km in an astonishingly short time. At the top of the hill he turned towards us as we watched through binoculars. He took on a low, wide-legged stance with his tail in the air to see what the hell he was running away from. The wolverine's mystery and power are to be truly admired.

Snow conditions at Camp 17, two hundred metres from the South Nahanni River, were deteriorating rapidly. It was very peaceful there. We were accustomed to a wild northeast wind and had to repeatedly remind ourselves that the roar we heard was the Nahanni rather than the wind of our memories. Fifteen kilometres downstream from the Moose Ponds, the river was twenty to thirty metres wide and choked with boulders; the raging whitewater and the hairpin turns indicated that this river liked to cover a lot of country. The banks of the South Nahanni were still lined with ice ledges and snow. We would have to wait for some semblance of clear banks and fewer blocks of ice on its surface to safely paddle down this magnificent and very powerful river.

Guiding a canoe loaded with 320 kg of gear, our caution would have to be at a peak at all times. The river loses 450 m elevation over the first 80 km, which indicates a six metres per kilometre gradient (thirty feet per mile). With boulder gardens shore to shore, a late spring, and a very high snowmelt putting her into a fantastic spring flood, we would experience a phenomenal twenty-six days trying to reach Island Lakes. Twenty-three consecutive days of rain in June, a heavily loaded boat, two life-risking mishaps, and a raging river would challenge our skills and common sense much more than a canoe sled haul over the Continental Divide.

On 3 June we shed our snowshoes for the final time and strapped them on top of our loaded canoe. We had less than one month to meet our 1 July food drop at Island Lakes, where our winter gear would be taken out. We looked forward to a leisurely paddle down the South Nahanni River, thinking that most of the hard work was behind us.

However, we were soon to learn that the real hard work on our expedition had only just begun.

Debbie Ladouceur of Stratford, Ontario, and David Salayka of Edmonton, Alberta, have paddled numerous rivers in Alberta. For the past few years Debbie worked in wildlife research with Syncrude Canada Ltd. in Fort McMurray, Alberta. David is a University of Alberta Forestry graduate and was employed with Syncrude in reclamation research.

NASTAWGAN: THE CANADIAN NORTH BY CANOE AND SNOWSHOE

Editors: Bruce W. Hodgins and Margaret Hobbs
Publisher: Betelgeuse Books Toronto, 1985 (\$29.95)
Reviewed by: Sandy Richardson

Nastawgan: The Canadian North by Canoe and Snowshoe is not a book that fits neatly in any conventional niche of canoeing or wilderness literature. It describes itself as "a collection of hystorical essays"; however, the subject matter of many of the essays contained in this volume is not what the reader might at first expect from the book's title. What do "the Quest Pattern and the Canoe Trip", "Kawartha Lakes Regattas", "The Written Word on Canoeing and Canoe Tripping Before 1960", or "The Heritage of Peterborough Canoes", to list a few of the titles that comprise this volume, have to do with "the Canadian North by Canoe and Snowshoe?"

The title is not a misnomer, however, for the "North" of Nastawgan is not so much a geographical concept as it is a state of mind, as editors Bruce Hodgins and Margaret Hobbs explain in their introduction: "In this volume, we define North in its broadest sense, ... we consider the North as a territorially shifting entity and an imaginative construct." Their purpose in putting together this collection of essays is much more than a simple historical recounting of wilderness journeys; it is also a philosophical search for meaning in the wilderness experience. "The canoe, the snowshoe, the wilderness, and the North are inextricably entwined with each other and with our Canadian heritage. This volume of essays explores this historic matrix."

With the context and the purpose of the book made clear in the introduction, the titles that at first may seem incongruous in a book on "the Canadian North by Canoe and Snowshoe" fit easily into the overall framework. There is indeed a philosophical link between what prompted some people to participate in Kawartha Lakes canoe regattas and others to explore Barren Lands rivers; and the demise of the Peterborough Canoe Company in 1961 certainly has more cultural significance than just another business failure.

Fourteen quite disparate essays make up Nastawgan. "The Quest pattern and the Canoe Trip" sets the philosophical tone for the book, and introduces the quest theme which is integral to many of the essays that follow. In this essay, which is one of the most interesting and thought-provoking in the collection, William James sheds new light on the meaning of the wilderness canoeing experience by analysing it in the context of the heroic quest pattern of classical mythology. He thus reveals the canoe trip as "a voyage of personal, as well as territorial discovery; the canoe becomes a vehicle for exploring the landscape of the mind."

Six historical essays look at specific travellers and their journeys, mainly in the Barrens, but also including David Thompson's explorations of the Muskoka and Madawaska Rivers, and a number of voyages made by women in Québec and the eastern Arctic. These essays are significant in their attempts to go beyond the usual route-tracing to the search for motives: why did these people make their trips?

Craig Macdonald focuses on a different historical aspect of wilderness travel. He explores the role of native people in establishing winter and summer trails and portages - nastawgan - in the Temagami area.

Five essays discuss varied aspects of recreational canoeing, including: recreational canoeing between the two World Wars, Kawartha Lakes canoe regattas, the heritage of Peterborough canoes, the role of Temagami in sustaining a tradition of wilderness canoe tripping, and what older canoeing manuals teach us about the philosophic rationale underlying adult-run canoe trips for children.

In the closing essay, "Wilderness and Culture," John Wadland ties together many of the themes and issues raised by the other authors, and addresses the broader, more philosophic aspects of the wilderness tradition in this country. While noting the general tendency to consider wilderness and culture to be antithetical notions, he argues persuasively that wilderness is central to our cultural uniqueness.

Nastawgan is clearly not ordinary canoeing or wilderness fare. No, it is far superior to that. The authors of this diverse and wide-ranging collection of essays make many new connections, raise many ideas and more questions which, like a canoe gliding across a lake, send ripples through the mind that last long after one has finished reading. It is a unique and stimulating book that will be greatly appreciated by serious wilderness travellers.

It is also a book that will have a special appeal for members of the Wilderness Canoe Association. Many of the authors are members or friends of our association, and sometimes contributors to this journal, including: Bruce Hodgins, Jamie Benedickson, Ned Franks, George Luste, Craig Macdonald, John Marsh, and Eric Morse, whose forward to the book is taken from the address he gave to our 1984 Annual General Meeting. The many delightful sketches that illustrate the book and give it much of its visual appeal are the work of another talented WCA member, Ria Harting.

Nastawgan is not without its faults, however. For a book with such a high calibre of writing (not to mention a substantial price tag), one wishes that it had been better served by its typesetters. There are too many glaring and annoying typographical errors. Better editing at some stage of the production was clearly in order: spellings of words ("Anishinabai" and "kilometre" are just two examples) are inconsistent; essays are referred to in endnotes and footnotes by titles different from those used in the final form of the book; and at least one glaring error appears in the text on page 27 - this reviewer for one, finds it hard to believe that "[David Thompson's] 1837 survey of the Muskoka and Madawaska Rivers ... added another 30,000 miles to his travels..."

More substantially perhaps, the geographical references in Nastawgan are simply too narrow for a book that claims to examine the role of wilderness travel in Canadian history and culture. Fully five of the twelve essays that have any geographical context deal with the Temagami and Peterborough areas, both areas with which editor Bruce Hodgins has close ties, while two others deal with the Muskoka and Algonquin areas. This book does claim, after all, to be about "the Canadian North by Canoe and Snowshoe", and no matter how interesting these essays may be, or how broadly the editors choose to define "the North", central Ontario is not Canada. Surely a more complete understanding of the role of wilderness travel in our cultural heritage would be achieved if the editors had chosen a less parochial outlook, and included essays exploring their theme in a wider variety of the geographic regions making up this country.

Be this as it may, Nastawgan's successes far outweigh its faults. Amid the plethora of mundane "how-to" books, route descriptions, and ego-boosting personal journals that seem to pass for canoeing and wilderness "literature" today, it is a welcome pleasure to find a thoughtful book written "for the wilderness paddler with a reflective bent". The eclectic and wide ranging nature of the essays, and the philosophic and thought-provoking treatment given to the wilderness experience and its significance to our cultural identity, make Nastawgan an unexpected pleasure to read, and an important addition to wilderness literature.

BEAR ATTACKS: THEIR CAUSES AND AVOIDANCE

Author: Stephen Herrero
Publisher: Nick Lyons Books, Winchester Press, 1985
(\$12.95)
Reviewed by: Gerry Lannan

This book is a "must read" for anyone considering hiking or camping in bear country. Stephen Herrero is a professor of Environmental Science and Biology at the University of Alberta and is recognized as a leading authority on bear behaviour.

While conceding the power and occasional aggressiveness of grizzly bears, he makes several important points:

- 1) Proper planning, food storage, garbage control, and noise-making can almost eliminate the probability of bear encounters.
- 2) Most bear/people encounters do not result in bear attacks.
- 3) Most bear attacks do not result in serious injury or death.
- 4) Bear-inflicted fatalities in U.S. and Canadian Parks are well down the list below drownings, falls, automobile accidents, lightning, insect stings, and hypothermia.

The knowledge gained from this book, which is written in an easily readable style, will give the reader a healthy respect for bears while at the same time set to rest many of our abnormal fears of travelling in bear country.

algonquin ski trip

Article: Mike Wills
Photos: Dave Myles and Mike Wills



In early March 1985, five of us (Dave Myles, Peter Thompson, Martyn Hiley, Bob Jones, and myself) set off on a very enjoyable adventure, a ski tour through Algonquin Park from Kiosk to Canoe Lake. The following is a daily summary of this tour.

March 2: After leaving my Jeep in the ploughed parking area on the road to the Portage Store on Canoe Lake, we completed the time-consuming drive to Kiosk. We arrived in mid-afternoon and, following our final preparations, we were abandoned by Peter's wife, Karen, to make our way south by ski to Highway 60. Because of the lateness of our departure, we skied only approximately six kilometres and set up camp on Mink Lake near an outlet of a creek which supplied open water. The travel across the lakes was quick due to the minimal snow cover, although once into the bush, caution was required on downhills. The icy packed snowmass, which was created by the previous week's warm weather and rain, limited our edging ability.

We retired early in anticipation of a full day of skiing under bright, clear skies. The extra effort of controlling our 20 to 23 kilogram packs through several portages would require adjusting our techniques from the racing form we had worked all year to develop.

March 3: We were awake around 7:30 a.m. and enjoyed a luxury of winter camping, breakfast in bed. The skies were clear much of the day, but as the afternoon progressed the 'mare's tails' became heavier. We began to wish for snow. The icy trails would have offered some excellent downhill runs if we had had five or six centimetres of powdery snow. We skied at a leisurely pace with several gorp breaks and hot tea and soup for lunch. We arrived at Erables Lake at around 3:30 p.m. and spent a relaxing evening in a very comfortable camp with lively humor and good camaraderie.

March 4: We woke up at 7:00 a.m. and were on the trail just before 9:00 a.m. Snow began to fall early the evening before and was quite heavy by noon. This made the portages much more enjoyable as we could actually ski downhill on extended runs. The timing of the snow was near perfect. In the afternoon we began to descend into the Nipissing River Valley, making for some excellent descents through new powder.

We arrived at the Nipissing River around 3:15 p.m., where we would stay for the night. The fears earlier in the trip of the potential of this river being open because of the previous week's weather (and noting on our drive into Kiosk that the Amable du Fond River was open) were unfounded. The river was still frozen and covered by the newly fallen snow. The snow continued all evening and for approximately one hour turned to frozen ice pellets. This made us thankful for the minus 14°C temperature. If it had been warmer this might have become an uncomfortable freezing rain. We retired early due to the persistent snowfall.

March 5: Again we slept to just before 7:00 a.m., enjoyed a leisurely breakfast and contemplated the more than 20 cm snowfall of the day before. The skiing along the Nipissing was great. Dave and Bob had left camp 15 minutes before the rest of us and broke trail for its full length. The sunny sky, snow-covered trees and a route which offered excellent

glide allowed us to view and absorb the beautiful, picturesque landscape of a river valley in the midst of winter. Although sunny, the temperatures remained cool and the powder was enjoyable to ski throughout the day.

We arrived at Burntroot Lake before 3:00 p.m. and decided this would be a nice camp. The early camp allowed us to leave our sleeping bags and gear in the sun to help evaporate the accumulating condensation build-up. We enjoyed a long lazy evening around the fire with good humor and conversation. The clear skies displayed a beautiful array of stars and the moon's bright glow allowed Peter and I to walk much of the perimeter in the secluded bay. We located the trail of the two moose that had posed for the early arrivals at camp and the trail of the otter which earlier in the evening had inspected our sleeping bags before weaving its way along the shore line.

March 6: We were awake before 7:00 a.m. and off by 8:30 a.m. to complete the long lake section which had few portages or other distractions for excitement. The day became progressively warmer and the snow wet and heavy. Trail breaking required greater effort, slowing our progress. We soon fell into a ten minute rotation for breaking trail. This rotation would continue for the rest of the trip. We enjoyed a long lunch and stopped for several gorp breaks throughout the day, arriving at Big Trout Lake just before 3:00 p.m. Again, we enjoyed a leisurely camp and presented Dave with fruit cake and candle to celebrate his birthday during our evening campfire conversation.

March 7: We were up by 6:30 a.m. and off just before 8:00 a.m. Approximately 5 cm of wet snow fell throughout the day and the warmer temperature created heavy, wet snow. We still made good progress and completed the day at Burnt Island Lake, establishing camp just southeast of Caroline Island. More wet snow began to fall during the evening and the night remained warm and damp.

March 8: We were again awake before 6:30 a.m. and off just before 8:00 a.m. We had finally fallen into a routine for breaking camp with partners that had not shared tents and packing prior to this trip.

We noted our first sign of man, other than the permanent markers, just after the portage from Little Joe Lake while we were bushwacking to avoid open water. It was a loose plastic grocery bag laying in the snow. A little further along, stuck under a portage sign, we located a note, not dated, but with a time stamp from an orienteering party that stated they were lost and would be returning to a rendezvous location.



We arrived at our destination before 2:00 p.m., packed the awaiting Jeep, and headed for Huntsville for a glorious feast. On the trip, I found I was always hungry one or two hours after breakfast, lunch, and dinner, and required an abundant supply of chocolate, granola bars, and nuts to reduce my hunger pangs. Even with the additional supplements and hearty meals of good proportion, I lost three kilograms off my, how can I put this, slender physique.

Algonquin Park in the winter, with its greatly reduced usage, is extremely peaceful and beautiful. The interior beyond the Highway 60 Corridor is an ideal location for the skier/camper to explore for weeks on end with a minimal chance of having contact with anyone outside of your party. The solitude and peacefulness of this environment increases the experience immensely. Over the next several years, I intend to explore this park further in the winter and hope that fellow WCA members will join me on these journeys.

a canoe trip with a jinx

Jim Greenacre

Sketches by Ria Harting

The day registration closed I had ten participants, plus myself. Five tandem canoes, and I paddle solo. This was the way I wanted it, an odd number, so that I could try out my new solo tripper with a load of gear in it. It had already proved itself in mild whitewater on two, one-day trips down the Elora Gorge.

On the Monday before the trip one of the participants had to drop out on doctor's orders. Now we were ten.

Tuesday evening another phone call, another drop-out. Now we were nine. I spent the rest of the evening reorganizing partners, canoes, pick-ups. I was back to solo.



Wednesday evening Bill phoned. The long-range weather forecast was not very promising. "Is the trip still on?" he asked. I enlightened him as to the WCA policy regarding trips. An hour later I got a distress call from Doreen who had been paired with Bill. He had phoned her and indicated he might not go and would let her know before seven thirty on Thursday. Doreen is not the type to be discouraged by gloomy weather forecasts so I reassured her she would have a partner, me, in the event that Bill didn't go.

Later that evening I drafted a menu for nine persons and went shopping at the twenty-four hour supermarket. A major item was not available so I had to drive over to a second all-night store for the Skillet Strips.

Thursday morning Lilly phoned to say her boyfriend's plans for the weekend had changed and he would like to come canoeing with us. I mulled this over in my mind for an hour or two and decided to contact Bill and give him the opportunity to cancel out. He did so. Now I got back to Lilly to tell her to bring her boyfriend, Nelson, along. We were still nine.

Friday morning, about ten o'clock, the phone rang. One of the participants, a young woman from New York State, was sick and could not come. Her boyfriend, coming from Montreal, would also be absent. Now we were seven.

About an hour later I got a message relayed to me via the club "hot line" that Harry and his girlfriend were not coming. The weather forecast was poor and as Harry's girlfriend was new to canoe-camping, a wet outing could put her off the great outdoors forever. Now we were five.

Food for nine had all been carefully measured, mixed and double, sometimes triple, waterproofed, ready to go. Friday afternoon was spent remeasuring and rewaterproofing meals for five.

Early Saturday morning five of us met in the Smoke Lake parking lot. Tom had spent the night in his car which was parked in the lot. He had set up camp in Tea Lake campground Friday night, but had been asked to leave by park rangers as Tea Lake was officially closed. New Lake camp, they advised, was open all year round. Doreen and I had camped at Tea Lake Friday night but it was after ten o'clock when we got there, long after Tom had been asked to move. Lilly and Nelson had camped at Lake of Two Rivers. WCA chairman Herb Pohl dropped by to wish us a pleasant weekend. He was meeting the participants of his trip (one other canoe) in the Canoe Lake parking lot.

While preparing for our departure down Smoke Lake, an attractive young woman, dressed for the outdoors, approached us and asked if she could "hitch" a ride in one of our craft. She had a cottage at the end of one of the deep bays on Smoke Lake but no means of getting there, except to walk in on a very rough trail. Tom had his big seventeen footer and as soon as he and Doreen were loaded, they started out with the young lady aboard, arranging to meet us at Molly

Island about halfway down the lake. As Lilly, Nelson, and myself pushed off from the docks, three or four other groups were getting ready to embark. Only one group, two canoes, had left before us by about thirty minutes. We caught up with them at the end of the lake and beat them across the portage. We were making two-trip portages though not everyone had to go back for a second load. The portage into Ragged Lake is short.

It was beautiful fall weather; cool and crisp with bright sunshine and just a whisper of a breeze out of the east. Very few leaves had fallen from the trees and the colors were magnificent. It was quite a contrast when we came out on Monday, as many of the trees had been stripped of their leaves over the weekend. We made the portage into Big Porcupine and had a leisurely lunch at the end of the trail. As we were getting ready to launch our craft, a group came huffing and puffing over the portage. Greetings were exchanged and my fifteen foot solo stripper was much admired.

There are many good campsites on Big Porcupine but I was only interested in one. It is big. You could put up six or seven tents without being crowded, set amidst tall mature pines with a good landing on a clean rock which slopes steeply up to the level ground above. It is well protected on three sides by thick bush, only the shoreline being open. We rounded the point of an island and I looked eagerly over the open water in the direction of the campsite. Hurrah! The site was unoccupied. It was about three o'clock when we landed.

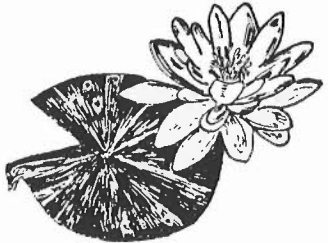
Tents were quickly erected on a carpet of dry pine needles, and bedrolls unpacked. The large tarpaulin which I take on group trips was strung between the trees and over the fire pit. The wind, which had been freshening all day, came from the east, and east winds generally bring rain. The sky was already slightly overcast with grey clouds.

For the next hour or so the five of us gathered a good supply of firewood as we intended to stay here until Monday. At the more popular campsites in Algonquin Park firewood is not readily available and each year you have to range deeper and deeper into the bush to find it. Taking a canoe and collecting firewood away from the campsite is a good alternative.

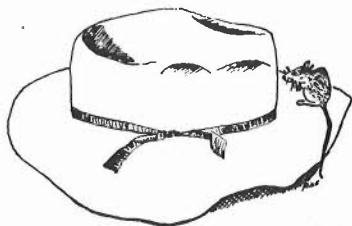
Halfway through cooking supper, the expected rain arrived. First a gentle drizzle which gradually increased to a steady downpour. We were dry and comfortable under the tarp. Lilly, who has a problem with cold feet in her sleeping bag, collected the hot water drained from the spaghetti into a plastic bottle and popped the bottle into her sleeping bag. Smart thinking. Dishes and pots were washed by flashlight and rinsed under the plentyfull run-off from the tarp.

One by one members of the group drifted from the shelter of the tarp to the shelter of their tents, and by eight o'clock all were in bed. I was the last to leave the glow of the fire as the last log burnt to coal. As I made my way over to the tent the beam from my flashlight caught several mice scampering away from our kitchen. Cute little creatures, so harmless.

It rained off and on most of the night and my slumber was disturbed on numerous occasions by really heavy torrential downpours. However, by dawn (6:45) the rain had stopped, though the sky was still overcast. Both Tom and I were warm and dry in my twenty-two dollar, nine year old, much travelled tent with its nine dollar fly.



Not so with the other two tents. Both tent floors had leaked. Doreen's sleeping bag was damp. Nelson's bag was wet at the feet, and Lilly's bag was completely soaked throughout. Why is it that these more expensive tents with their lightweight fabric floors fail in many cases to keep the water out? What didn't help in this incident was that both tents had first put down plastic ground sheets to protect the tent floor (as per manufacturer's instructions). Both groundsheets had extended out beyond the tent floor and fly, so consequently the rainwater had collected between the groundsheet and the floor. I fail to understand why manufacturers of expensive, high tech tents use flimsy material for their tent floors and then tell you to protect it with a groundsheet. Why not use a good woven polyethylene material in the first place and leave the groundsheet at home? And why is it that every tent I have seen, no matter how small, had a two-piece floor with a neat double row of stitches at the seam?



As I left the tent I grabbed my bright yellow hat which I invariably leave outside under the fly canopy. What in the blankety-blank-blank had happened to it?! There was a large, two inch diameter hole in it. Those blasted, blank, blank mice I saw last night had eaten, yes eaten the fabric! Later, when I went into my Woods canoe pack, I found they (the mice) had also eaten a hole in the waterproof material that protects my emergency clothing. The inner plastic garbage bags were untouched.

After a leisurely breakfast of Skillet Strips, fresh scrambled eggs, and toast washed down with hot tea or coffee, we had a pow-wow about the wet sleeping bags. "We can build up the fire and dry them out," was my suggestion. But Lilly had had two bad nights: Friday with the cold and a noisy campground, and last night with a wet bag. She had had enough for this weekend and so she and Nelson broke camp and paddled off for home. Now we were three.

It was almost noon when Lilly and Nelson took off so we, the three survivors, grabbed our lunches and with only day packs portaged over to Bonnechere Lake. Halfway up the lake we overtook two canoes whose occupants were consulting their park route map. They wondered if they had overshot the portage. We assured them they still had a long way to go and that we were headed for the same portage.

By about two o'clock we had reached Lawrence Lake and I said we would paddle a little further, have lunch, and then retrace our route back to camp. Tom expressed disappointment at this as he had expected something more vigorous. I looked at the park route map and, based on our progress so far, figured that we could make the complete loop, but warned that it would be almost dark before we got back to camp. This didn't bother Tom or Doreen, so I decided to press on.

We had a quick lunchbreak on a small rock island in Rod and Gun Lake. We overtook a group of three canoes on the portage into Lake Louisa. The landing was one of those one-canoe-at-a-time places and we were held up while their third canoe fussed around tying map cases, life jackets, fishing rods, etc., to the canoe before pulling it from the water.

The portage out of Lake Louisa is in a deep bay and I overshot it by about 400 metres. Some valuable time was lost retracking. This was the longest portage on the loop, 1540 metres.

It was too dark to read the map by the time we got to Little Coon Lake, the last lake in the loop, so I used my cigarette lighter to take a quick glance at the route. The portage is at the far end of the lake on the left hand side, only 300 metres into Big Porcupine and back to camp. We closely followed the left shoreline and soon saw in the gloom of near darkness the friendly yellow triangular sign indicating the portage.

I was the first to land and set off down the trail with Tom and Doreen following close behind. My night vision was almost zero so I had to go slow.

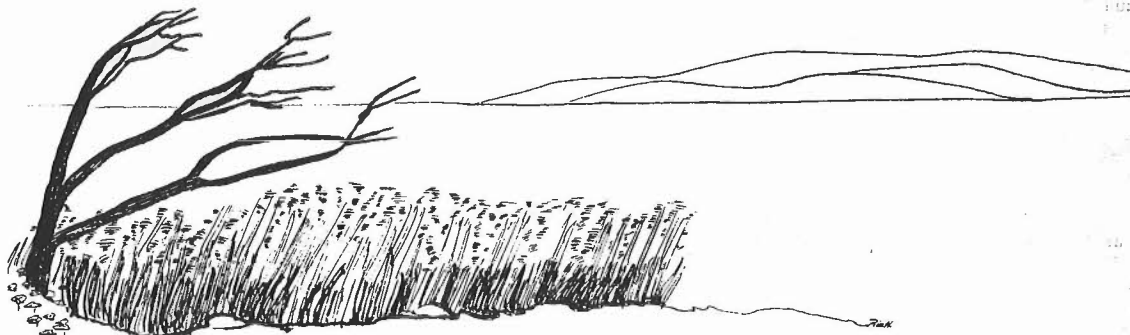
A three hundred metre Algonquin Park portage in daylight shouldn't take more than ten minutes and in darkness maybe fifteen, twenty at the very most, but I felt we had been going a lot longer than that. I put the canoe down and with the aid of two lighters took a closer look at the map. J.... Ch....! We were on the wrong portage! This one was 2640 metres long and went to Dividing Lake. I had goofed because right where this portage was shown on the map I had run a strong, thick, black pencil line across the map indicating the route of a winter showshoeing/camping trip back in 1979. We about-faced but in the now total darkness it was impossible to see the trail and it could be dangerous, so we resigned ourselves to spending the night in the bush.

Everyone had some food left over from lunch and I had a few mouthfuls of Tang left, so we replenished the inner person before settling down in Tom's canoe for the night. Doreen and I sat side by side with our backs against the bow seat and Tom stretched out his lanky frame in the rear half of the canoe. Tom and Doreen were dry except for their feet but I was wet, having tripped in the darkness and fallen backwards into a puddle. My dry clothes were back in camp.

It wasn't long before I began to feel uncomfortable and experience the odd shiver. I was losing body heat to my wet clothing. I took one of the three plastic garbage bags I used to waterproof the contents of my daypack, made three slits in it for my head and arms, and put it on like a vest under my wet clothing. A dry sweater which Doreen gave me was also very helpful. No more body heat loss to damp clothes. Doreen and Tom had removed their wet footwear, put their feet together wrapped in a towel, and covered it all with a plastic bag.

The night passed remarkably fast. The first time we looked at a watch it was one thirty, half the night already gone. The next time four thirty. Obviously I had dozed and slept most of the night. Six thirty and I could just discern Tom's body in the bottom of the canoe. Six forty-five saw us back on the trail returning to Little Coon Lake. Seven forty-five saw us back in camp, fire burning and chicken-noodle soup coming to the boil. We were just under twelve hours late and none the worse for the nonscheduled night in the bush. The rest of the trip was uneventful.

(To protect the privacy of some persons, all names have been changed except for the three survivors: Doreen Vella, Tom Elliot, and Jim Greenacre.)



FRENCH RIVER - WHITEWATER PLAY WEEKEND

This 29 June to 1 July 1985 weekend did not see your typical WCA outing. The trip notice did specify a maximum of eight canoes but this somehow mushroomed into a flotilla of seventeen. The plan was to set up a static camp, and then spend as much time as possible playing in the rapids.

To ensure accommodation for everyone, some people were able to come up on Friday and occupy two spacious campsites near the Blue Chute. After a rendezvous at the Hungry Bear restaurant, the rest of us arrived around noon on Saturday. This area of the river regularly sees large groups of campers and supports them without any noticeable environmental impact.

After lunch, the group scattered in different directions to explore. Within a thirty minute paddle one can access a number of rapids: Big Pine, the Ladder, Blue Chute, Little Parisienne. None of them are very difficult but they all provide an ideal place to practise ferries, eddy turns, and surfing.

At dinner time, the culinary expertise of the group became evident as people feasted on steak, shishkabob, pork chops, chocolate cake, and other delightful victuals. One suspects that there was a net gain in caloric intake for the day.

Sunday again brought sunny skies and perfect summer weather. Jim Morris reviewed some basic whitewater techniques for the novice paddlers. His patient and constructive teaching style was greatly appreciated by all. Most of the group spent several hours playing at Big Pine Rapids, which provided an endless variety of technical runs. At the end of the day, tired but happy paddlers straggled back to their campsites. Later, to complement the cuisine of the evening, some individuals donned more appropriate attire. One classy lady was seen in a spotless white pant suit as she and her companion sipped wine from silver goblets.

On Monday, we got in a few last strokes on the rapids, and then prepared for the journey home. True, this may not have been a typical WCA trip, but over the weekend old friendships were renewed and new acquaintances made; and that is really what matters a great deal.

Paul Barsevskis

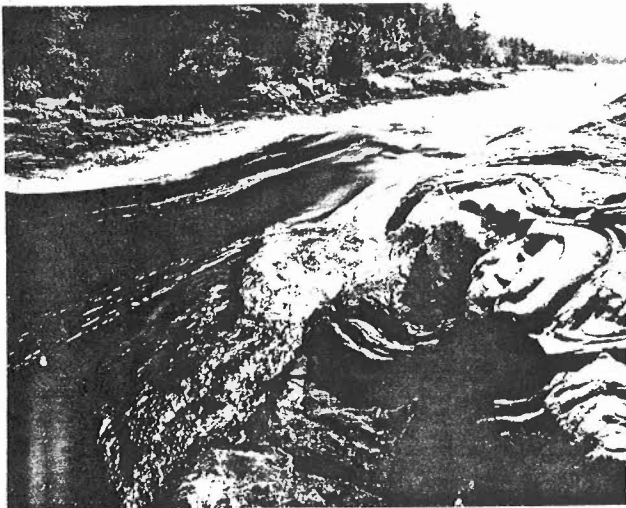
MAGNETAWAN LOOP

We put in at the government dock on Harris Lake after meeting at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, 31 August 1985. The flatwater trip across Harris Lake and up the South Magnetawan to the North Magnetawan was uneventful with one portage. The river level was much higher than on the same trip two years ago. About 3:30 p.m. we passed the campsite we had used at the junction, and went on upstream. There were a few canoes and kayaks coming downriver, and we had some difficulty finding a vacant campsite. We found a good one about 4:30 p.m. on Trout Lake at grid reference point 666661.

On Sunday morning we left camp about nine o'clock, heading upriver. We portaged Grave Rapids with two empty canoes, using the trail on the north side. We scouted Canal Rapids but didn't run it because of the sizeable waves. We then ran Grave Rapids, collected the gear, and paddled on downstream. Eventually we crossed Island Lake. It started to rain, so we found a campsite about 4:30 p.m. on South Island Lake at grid reference point 556661, just off the usual route.

We had an early start on Monday morning and were on the water at 8:00 a.m. We had hoped to run part of Thirty Dollar Rapids, but the water level was very high, so we only paddled the flatwater sections and carried the rest - a little disappointing. Lunch was enjoyed at the end of the rapids and we then paddled on to the portage back towards Harris Lake. Our group moved quite quickly, both on the portage and on the lake, and we were back at the put-in point at 4:40 p.m. - quite a reasonable day compared with my last loop trip which took twelve hours on the final day.

Mike Graham-Smith





MISSISSAGUA RIVER

On 22 September 1985, nine canoes set out on a day trip down the Mississagua River, from Mississagua Lake to Buckhorn Lake, under the fatherly guidance of Bill Ness.

It was a summer-like autumn day with warm temperatures and clear skies--excellent paddling weather. The day started with a skilled car shuttle leaving the majority of our vehicles at the take-out point on Hwy 36 near Buckhorn.

The day gave ample opportunity to hone the whitewater skills, as the river offered numerous short, safe rapids. However, for those with less enthusiasm for whitewater, the portage trails were well marked and easy to follow.

Lunch was enjoyed along a portage trail which overlooked a picturesque but unrunnable chute. After our lengthy lunch and some sunbathing, the afternoon gave way to some leisurely paddling to end the day without anyone going for an unexpected swim in the rapids.

The colors of the early autumn leaves contributed to the beautiful scenery of the Mississagua River. All in all it was a memorable trip.

Doug and Lisa Ashton



POKER LAKE LOOP

Doug wanted to try out his new canoe before the end of the season. I was intrigued by the prospect of a wild cranberry marsh.

So, early in the morning of 11 November 1985 we hiked from the cottage out to the road, scraped fresh snow off the canoe and car, and crawled along behind the salt truck to West Guilford. We pulled up in front of the local restaurant and casually strolled in. "Have you seen any other cars with canoes this morning?"

Stupified stares and gaping mouths.
"Could we have a coffee please?"

A few minutes later a few guffaws and pointing fingers alerted us to the arrival of our fellow canoeists.

Rob, who had masterminded this escapade, cheerfully bounded in, recounting how this time last year he had spent a day with a tow truck after sliding down an embankment on a similar excursion. Sensibly, he had a new plan to canoe a nice half-day loop which was accessible from a main highway. So he was less loony than I had originally assessed him.

An obvious old canoe hand, Jim stayed in the car and drank his coffee from his thermos to avoid ridicule.

The Poker Lake Loop was all I had dreamed of except cranberries. Icebreakers might have been helpful. You had to be careful not to set a canoe on a slope or it would slide away. And keeping your knapsack on to paddle across a short lake keeps your back warm and saves time portaging. Have I got that right, Jim?

Back on the highway Rob remarked, "So Doug, you really ought to try this in the summer sometime."

"You're kidding; do people really DO that?"

Heather McCulloch



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January 17 ARMCHAIR OUTING

Organizers: Marlene and Gerry Lannan 416-244-0238
Book after January 15.

This will be an evening of happy remembrances of previous trips, and eager anticipation of the trips we will take in 1986. Participants are asked to bring movies, slides, and prints of their summer activities to share with the group. Attendance limited to 25.

January 18-19 BRUCE PENINSULA

Organizer: Bob Knapp 519-371-1255
Book before January 12.

Accommodation will be in a heated log cabin nestled in the woods one half kilometre from a plowed road, nineteen kilometres northeast of Wiarton. During the weekend, participants will be able to cross-country ski or snowshoe in the surrounding woods or take longer excursions along the Bruce Trail. Suitable for anyone who likes to experience winter wilderness, but with the convenience of a cabin. Saturday there will be a potluck supper. Limited to 8 participants.

January 19 SNOWSHOE HIKE

Organizer: Bill King 416-223-4646
Book before January 15.

This will be a snowshoe outing in a scenic area, weather permitting. The location will be determined by the participants.

January 25 HORSESHOE VALLEY OFF-TRAIL SKIING

Organizer: Rob Butler 416-487-2282
Book before January 22.

A day of cross-country skiing near Horseshoe Valley on untracked varied terrain. Participants should be able to maintain a steady pace. Limit 6 skiers.

January 25 THE WCA INVADES THE BRACEBRIDGE LANGLAUF

Organizer: Peter Thompson 416-884-0044
Book before January 16.

Take advantage of this excellent opportunity to experience the pleasant atmosphere of this community's Langlauf (Lop-pet). The choice of 5, 12, and 20 km distances makes this event popular for both the novice and the more experienced skier. If you're interested in joining our party, contact the organizer for further details. There is an \$8 entry fee.

January 25-26 LIGHTWEIGHT CAMPING IN BUCKHORN AREA

Organizers: Sandy Richardson 416-429-3944
Cam Salisbury 416-498-8660
Book before January 15.

Come on an exploratory ski-backpacking trip with us into a scenic wilderness area of numerous small lakes, rocky ridges, and open bush, the winter home of many deer. Traveling with light-weight equipment, we will bushwack in and set up a campsite, leaving ample time to explore and photograph the area and simply enjoy the clean, quiet beauty of the bush in winter. Limited to 6 participants.

February 1 INTRODUCTION TO BACKCOUNTRY SKIING

Organizer: Bill Ness 416-499-6389
Book between January 12 and 26.

This outing will take us into the area west of Gravenhurst for a day on the scenic Five Winds Ski Trails. Our trip will be especially oriented towards novice skiers who are interested in learning off-trail skiing. We will move along at a moderate pace over an easy section of trail to provide participants with ample opportunity to learn and practise those techniques that are necessary for travelling through the bush on skis. Suitable for novices in reasonable physical condition. Limited to 10 participants.

February 1-2 ALGONQUIN PARK WEEKEND

Organizer: Herb Pohl 416-637-7632
Book before January 29.

With a basecamp set up at Mew Lake, the organizer plans to ski the groomed trails in the neighborhood. If the participants prefer some off-trail skiing on one of the two days, we will travel upstream on the North Madawaska on a circle route on Sunday. Participants are welcome to show up on a one-day basis if they are too fragile to spend a night in a tent. Number of participants: 6, reasonably fit.

February 8-9 ALGONQUIN PARK SKIING

Organizers: Diane and Mike Wills 416-293-9067
Book between January 20 and 31.

There will be a static camp at Mew Lake campground where we will be able to take two separate day trips. One along the "Old Track Ski Trail," and the other around Provoking Lake using the "Highland Trail." Both trips require some experience in backcountry skiing. Limited to 6 participants.

February 9 SNOWSHOE HIKE

Organizer: Bill King 416-223-4646
Book before February 5.

Another snowshoe outing in a scenic area, weather permitting. Again, the location will be determined by the participants.



February 15 - March 2 WABAKINI WILDERNESS PARK

Organizer: Craig Macdonald 705-766-2885
Book immediately.

Starting on the CNR west of Collins, we will attempt to traverse this newly created wilderness park on snowshoes, using heated wall tents, in search of the elusive woodland caribou. Our route will take us north through the pristine wilderness of the Ogoki headwaters and east to Armstrong via Smoothrock and Caribou Lakes. As usual, food, transportation, and equipment will be shared. A definite jewel of a trip. Limit 6 persons.

March 1 ROUGE RIVER

Organizers: George Haeh 416-465-2292
Bill Ness 416-499-6389
Book between February 9 and 23.

The Rouge, west of Toronto, at high water has almost continuous whitewater from Steeles Ave. to Hwy 2. Our trip will be timed to catch it during the early spring run-off. Icy water and rapids which require precise manoeuvring make this a challenging trip for good intermediate paddlers. Limit 6 canoes.

March 1-2

ALGONQUIN PARK WEEKEND

Organizer: Herb Pohl 416-637-7632
Book before February 26.

The organizer intends to use snowshoes and togoggan as the mode of travel to reach Chit Lake, which is located a few miles north of Hwy 60. After setting up camp, there will be ample opportunity to explore the varied neighborhood in search of the gremlins encountered there a couple of years ago. Limit, 6 reasonably fit participants.

March 1-2 SKI TOURING IN ALGONQUIN PARK

Organizer: Karl Schimek 416-439-6788 (B)
Book before February 14.

We will start at Rock Lake and follow the South Madawaska River to Madawaska Lake, returning via the Galipo Lakes and Louisa Lake. This will be a moderately strenuous trip for maximum 6 skiers.

March 1-6 SIX DAY SKI TOUR

Organizers: Diane and Mike Wills 416-293-9067
Book before February 24.

We would like to do a six day ski tour at the beginning of March. The destination has yet to be decided. If you're interested, please give us a call and we will see what can be arranged.

March 8-9 OFF-TRAIL SKI TOURING IN ALGONQUIN PARK

Organizer: Karl Schimek 416-439-6788 (B)
Book before February 21.

We will start at the Wildlife Resource Centre on Sasajewan Lake near Hwy 60. We will follow the North Madawaska River into Red Fox Creek and through a series of small lakes via Nosa Creek to Hailstorm Creek. After crossing to Opeongo Lake we return via Graham Creek and may follow the Sunday Lake Ski Trail. For expert skiers only in good physical condition. Limit 4 skiers.

March 16

OAKVILLE CREEK

Organizer: Howard Sagermann 416-282-9570
Book before March 13.

Depending on the water level, this could be a fairly challenging run. The cold water at this time of year will make this a trip for experienced paddlers only. Limit 5 canoes.

March 22

OAKVILLE CREEK

Organizer: Paul Barsevskis 416-239-2830
Book before March 22.

This river offers fast water, turbulence, a few ledge rapids, and the possibility of obstructed channels. Limited to experienced whitewater paddlers in 5 canoes.

March 23

BRONTE CREEK

Organizer: Herb Pohl 416-637-7632
Book before March 20.

At high water levels, Bronte Creek can be tricky because of the possibility of obstructed channels as well as substantial turbulence. Consequently only experienced paddlers should consider it. Limit 5 canoes.

March 28

UPPER CREDIT

Organizer: Gary Walters 416-743-4628
Book before March 25.

At this time of year the upper Credit River offers fast currents, tight bends, riffles, small waves, and cold water. Suitable for teams where at least one partner has intermediate whitewater skills, and for those who have taken a basic whitewater training course. Limit 6 canoes.

March 29

BRONTE CREEK

Organizer: Norm Coombe 416-293-8036 (B)
416-751-2812 (B)

Book before March 14.

A smaller, very fast-moving river that can provide a challenging run if water levels are right. Suitable for intermediates and novices who have taken whitewater training. Limit 6 canoes; solos or kayaks welcome.

March 30

CREDIT AND HUMBER RIVERS

Organizer: Duncan Taylor 416-368-9748
Book after March 15

Constant rapids from Streetsville on down the lower Credit provides an exciting early whitewater run. This will be followed, conditions permitting, by a trip on the scenic Humber from Hwy 401 to Dundas Street which may include some challenging stretches if the water is high. Suitable for intermediates and novices with some experience. Limit 5 canoes.

April 5-6

CREDIT RIVER

Organizer: Jim Morris 416-793-2088
Book before March 28.

Saturday: upper Credit River. A leisurely trip on fast water will give us a chance to review and practise our basic whitewater techniques before taking our chances on bigger water. Some coaching will be given but, because of cold temperatures, this trip is not really suitable for absolute beginners.

Sunday: lower Credit River. If your appetite is whetted by Saturday's excursion or you are ready for bigger water, leave your canoes on the car overnight and with newly discovered confidence run the much more challenging lower Credit from Streetsville. Sunday's trip is suitable for intermediates and whitewater-trained novices, preferably with intermediate partners. Not a beginners' trip! Limit 6 canoes.

April 6

UPPER CREDIT RIVER

Organizer: Mike Graham-Smith 416-877-7829
Book before April 3.

The upper Credit with its many swifts, gentle rapids, and rocks is a pleasant, challenging spring run. Location will depend on conditions. Suitable for novice whitewater paddlers with some whitewater experience. Limit 6 canoes.

April 12-13

BEAVER - BIG HEAD RIVERS

Organizer: Bob Knapp 519-371-1255
Book before March 25.

Canoe the Beaver and Big Head Rivers during the day and warm up Saturday night. In the spring there is some fast water and hopefully it will be high enough to cover many of the rocks. Each river has about 3 to 4 km of fast water as it drops to Georgian Bay. Saturday night, participants are welcome to stay at my house. Please bring slides to view and stories to swap, along with sleeping bags. Meet in Thornbury, Saturday at 10 a.m. Suitable for intermediates and good novices. Limit 6 canoes or 12 kayaks.

April 13

GRAND RIVER

Organizer: Dave Sharp 519-621-5599
Book before April 8.

We will start at Cambridge and, depending on the water level, will take out either at Paris or Brantford. This is a flat-water trip with fast current and a few riffles. It is an ideal river trip for a novice-movingwater paddler. Limit 6 canoes.

April 13

BLACK RIVER

Organizer: Gary Walters 416-743-4628
Book before April 9.

The Black River near Washago offers a relaxing river trip. There are a few easy rapids, with good portages, and if water levels are high there could be some moderate waves. Suitable for novice movingwater paddlers. Limit 6 canoes.

products and services

ALGONQUIN NORDIC SKI WEEKEND 7-9 FEBRUARY: In southern tip of Algonquin Park near Maynooth; dormitory accommodation in lodge; hot tub and sauna; \$89 plus 7% tax for seven meals, including Friday night snack on arrival. Unfortunately, hut-to-hut skiing has been eliminated this year due to high costs, so you'll just have to be warm and comfortable on Saturday night in the lodge. Book before January 8, the earlier the better due to limited space. Organizer: Joan Etheridge in Oakville, Marine Drive; ask Directory Assistance for new telephone number.

REPAIRS?: I don't know about you, but every time I come back from a major trip, some of my gear needs repair. One time a friend put his knife through my tent floor - yes, he's still my friend. I seem to go through zippers on my tents faster than anything else. And another time I decided a new tent, back from its first test in the field, needed a new door for extra ventilation.

All these tasks, and more, were performed by a lady - at very reasonable expense - who manages whatever miracle I request of her. She specializes in sewing repairs of sports gear and clothing made of nylon. So, if you're readying your gear for something like a barrens canoe trip, I can recommend Bev Varcøe's Sport Sewing service very highly. For information or an appointment, call 486-9666 in Toronto.

David Pelly

FOUL WEATHER CLOTHING: When you buy a rainsuit, you want it to keep you out of the rain. Right? And not just for a few hours, but for a few days, or weeks if necessary. One of the toughest, truly waterproof makes of foul weather clothing available in the world comes from Great Britain, called Henri-Lloyd. It is available in a wide range of styles, sizes, and colors. It is not cheap, but it is good. At this year's Boat Show (Exhibition Place, Toronto, 11-19 January 1986) there will be a special offering of Henri-Lloyd clothing in the Mariner's Marketplace. Discounts up to 50% off - savings you will not see again.

DISCOUNTS ON CAMPING SUPPLIES: WCA members who present a membership card will receive a ten per cent discount on many nonsale items at:

A.B.C. Sports, 552 Yonge St., Toronto,
Rockwood Outfitters, 699 Speedvale Ave. West, Guelph,
The Sportsman's Shop, 2476 Yonge St., Toronto.

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

CLIPPER CANOES: Clipper canoes from Western Canoeing Inc. are now available to Ontario canoeists. There are 22 models to choose from including solo, touring, racing, and whitewater models. A variety of fibreglass and kevlar lay-ups with wood or aluminum trim make for an excellent selection.

For more information, as well as a copy of *Canoe Magazine's* 'water test' on the 17½ ft Tripper model, write: Canoeing Canadian Waters, Box 608, 5651 Gordon St., Osgoode, Ontario K0A 2W0. Or phone Jim or Pam Bal-daro at 613-826-3094.

MASTER CANOE BUILDER: Nick Nickels' new book MASTER CANOE BUILDER, about canoe builder Walter Walker and the glorious history of wooden canoe building in the Kawarthas, is available by ordering directly from the author. The cost is \$10 postage paid. Send to: Nick Nickels, Canoe Canada, Lakefield, Ontario, K0L 2H0.

where it is



The approximate location of some of the places mentioned in this issue are shown by page number:

1	Kogaluk River
9-11-12	Thelon River, Barren Lands
14	Dumoine River
16	South Nahanni River
21-22	Algonquin Park

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WILDERNESS CANOE ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I enclose a cheque for \$15 ___ student under 18
\$25 ___ adult
\$35 ___ family

for membership in the Wilderness Canoe Association.
I understand that this entitles me/us to receive Mustawun, to vote at meetings of the Association, and gives me/us the opportunity to participate in U.C.A. outings and activities.

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____

phone _____

Please check one of the following: new membership application
 renewal for 1986.

Notes: -This membership will expire January 31, 1987.
-Please send completed form and cheque (payable to the Wilderness Canoe Association) to the membership committee chairman.