nastawgan

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from reindeer to selwyn

Dave Berthelet

This 1985 canoe trip through northeastern Saskatchewan was made up of two parts. First, my partner Bob Knapp and I would paddle and portage my aluminum Grumman canoe from Kinoosao on the eastern shore of Reindeer Lake to Morberg's Camp on Black Lake, which belongs to the Fond du Lac River system. Then I would continue the expedition on my own, soloing from Black Lake in a northerly direction and hoping to reach Lynx Lake which lies just north of the treeline in the Northwest Territories.

We left the native village of Kinoosao on 2 July, and needed one and one-half day for the largely uneventful crossing of Reindeer Lake to the mouth of the Swan River. The weather was good, sometimes overcast, but generally sunny with little wind. Manhandling the Grumman up the Swan River was not a difficult task. The Swan is barely more than a wide creek, having a slight gradient and gentle rapids separated by flat stretches through marshy terrain. These physical features allow for easy passage. However, it does not offer many campsites, and we were pleased to come to an esker where we could camp.

This campsite was conveniently located about a half day's travel from Reindeer Lake. It also was used by the 1981 Luste party. It was as fully appreciated in 1985 as it had been four years earlier. The fireplace stones we had collected and carried up the esker under the direction of George Luste were still about, and they were again assembled for the purpose of supporting cookware, protecting the fire from any wind that might develop, and reflecting heat.

The following day we crossed Swan Lake and entered the Blondeau River. The Blondeau is much like the Swan River, little more than a large creek that flows through marshy country, with few camping places along its banks. There is only one established campsite on the Blondeau before the portage to Wollaston Lake. It is located less than a full day's effort from the esker site on the Swan.

The Blondeau River meanders and map reading was an exercise requiring constant attention. It was important to follow our progress on the topographicals for there was a possibility that we might have difficulty finding the portage trail to Wollaston Lake. Even though I had been there four years earlier, I was not entirely certain that we could find the portage. The alternative was to bushwack our way through to the first lake (the carryover to Wollaston Lake is through a series of lakes) should the ancient pathway prove elusive.

IN THIS ISSUE

A rusting tin can on the sand bank of the Blondeau at a marshy widening of the stream helped us find the portage trail. This was the place, according to George Luste, that Eric Morse spent a night in a trapper's cabin several decades earlier. Though the cabin had long since fallen down and a forest fire had passed through the area, the remains of the cabin are clearly visible.

Wollaston Lake was reached on the sixth day of the trip. Our pace could be described as being somewhat leisurely. On the 1981 Luste excursion, we traversed the same distance in five days.

No sooner had we arrived at Wollaston Lake, a little behind schedule, than we found ourselves windbound. Being weather-bound is not an entirely relaxing diversion, especially when attempts are being contemplated to increase the tempo of the trip to make up for lost time.

We watched the whitecaps on Wollaston Lake for most of the afternoon of 7 July, and decided to paddle during the evening should conditions permit. By 1:30 a.m. the wind became calm, and we immediately broke camp and set out on the tranquil early morning waters of Wollaston Lake. Paddling in the dimness of early morning to a yellow-orange westerly skyline on serene waters at six km/hr was akin to a pleasant dream. The sunrise that morning was gorgeous.

By mid-morning, we found ourselves weather-bound on Hungry Island. Lying beyond the island is a large expanse of water. It was important not to attempt the crossing until the weather became settled because at one point we would be an hour's paddle from the nearest shore.

We were already one day behind schedule and were in the process of losing another. Circumstances seemed to conspire against us, preventing us from maintaining a reasonably swift pace. It was not until evening that the winds abated, and we decided to attempt the remaining section of Wollaston Lake. The stress and frustration of being behind schedule, not knowing when the trip could be continued, and the altered day-to-night routine (i.e., lying around all day and paddling most of the night) proved tiring. Though we successfully navigated the remaining section of the lake (Hungry Island to Fond du Lac River), it exhausted us. The tent was hastily erected on a mound of glacial drift not far from the Fond du Lac River.

In mid-July, the Fond du Lac is a gentle river and most of the rapids are of the Class II variety. Though the sedimentary rock found on a large part of the river between Wollaston and Black Lakes formed many ledges, ferrying back and forth across the river in search of an opening for the canoe was great fun.

Manitou Falls is by far the most beautiful spot on the river. Here the river is confined to a narrow channel which divides around a rock island in spectacular form. We wondered if a swimmer could survive a trip through the chute. My guess was that if he was wearing a flotation device and did not get pinned against the island, he might get washed through, no worse for the experience. It would be hard to imagine how a canoe venturing into those turbulent waters could survive.

Early on the 12th day, a few minutes after decamping and just out of sight of our camping place on the Fond du Lac, we came upon a lean bear digging for roots. He ignored the warning cry of a sandpiper as we silently glided to within 10 metres of him. The clicking of our cameras finally got the beast's attention. He seemed perplexed, and hesitated before determining that flight was his best alternative. Had we been Cree hunters, he surely would have been deprived of more than just a few roots. Later on, at Black Lake, we were told 1985 was a poor year for bears. There was little for them to eat.

Our arrival at Black Lake coincided with a heavy wind, some rain, and overcast skies. Morberg's Camp, a commercial fishing camp which caters to Americans, was still 35 km away across the lake. We were eager to reach it and complete the first leg of the trip. However, the wind was so strong we could not venture out. About 2 a.m. the following morning, the storm showed signs of moving on. We took the tent down and left.

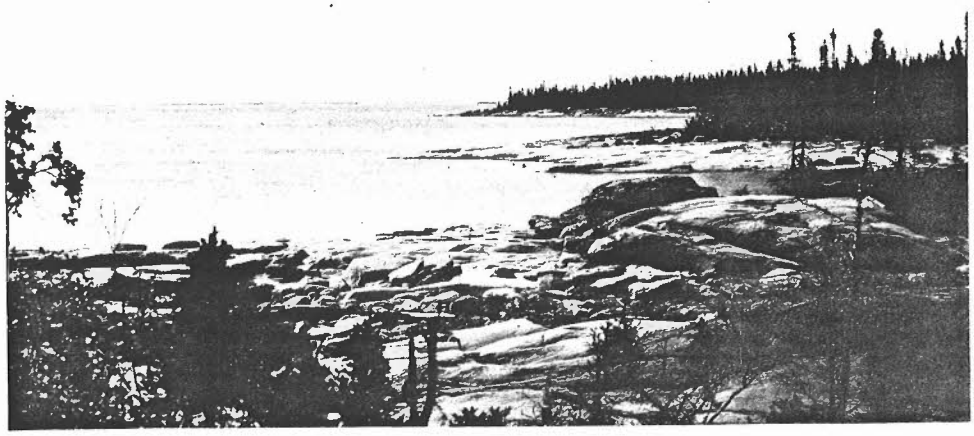
At Morberg's Camp I made preparations for my solo trip to Lynx Lake. A Grumman is an excellent wilderness tandem tripping canoe. Its strength-to-weight ratio is nearly unbeatable. However, it is a heavy brute for an individual to paddle, even with an efficient means of propulsion such as a kayak paddle.

With the help of John Mucha, one of the capable staff at Morberg's Camp, a kayak paddle was constructed from two Mohawk canoe paddles and a broomstick. The shaft was secured to the paddles with the aid of silicone seal and screws to form a kayak paddle of about 2.9 metres long. An unusually long kayak paddle is needed when paddling a canoe because the canoeist has a higher profile than a kayaker (i.e., a higher seat). A shorter kayak paddle for propelling a canoe would require that one blade be lifted high out of the water with each stroke. This creates an awkward paddling stroke and water is dripped onto the hands and into the canoe. The longer paddle remedies these technical problems.

The change from tandem to solo paddling also meant I had to change the use of the spray skirt that is designed for two paddlers. It is not designed for use by a soloist sitting in the front seat facing the stern. Some modifications were possible. The stern cockpit was sealed off with elastics. By placing the kettle on the rear seat under the closed-off opening, the skirt was propped up. This prevented the opening from sagging and collecting water which would seep through into the canoe.

Upon leaving Morberg's Camp, a favorable wind was blowing for the first time in 16 days. Soloing down Black Lake with the kayak blade was a joy. The 25-km journey to the Chipman River was made in smart time, less than five hours. It was a shock to find no sign of a portage trail at the location indicated on the topographicals. Even after searching the vicinity and closely examing the shoreline, the remains of the portage trail that J.B. Tyrrell spoke of in his 1893 writings could not be found! There was no alternative but to bushwack to Chipman Lake.

Heading out with map, compass, and a heavy pack, I found the terrain difficult. The young spruce regrowth was thick; hills and marshy bogs were encountered; there was a scarcity of reference points to navigate from; and my perspiration flowed profusely. It would be physically challenging to traverse this route with the lightest pack; how was it going to be done with my obscenely heavy food pack, let alone the canoe which obscured vision and became entangled in the trees? It became increasingly evident that the completion of the carryover would be a feat of great physical endurance.



As the shadows grew long and fatigue settled in, it became clear it would be impossible to complete two of the tree carryovers to the first lake on the Chipman Portage before nightfall. There was no question about going back for the second load, the food pack, before finding a landmark that I was not sure I would be able to find when I returned. The first load, which included the tent and sleeping bag, would be impossible to find in the complex terrain if it was left anywhere other than at a distinct spot.

As the shadows grew longer, I realized I would have to make a choice. If the night was spent at the first lake, I would have shelter. If I returned to Black Lake for the second load, I would have food. I would not have time to return to the first lake before the onset of darkenss. I could have food or shelter, but not both.

These thoughts were wandering through my mind as I struggled through the thick black spruce undergrowth (jungle) when a wide, well-used trail appeared. This was clearly the lost Chipman Portage, but how could this distinct "highway" have been missed? On the return journey, it was noticed the trail veered to the west and followed the Chipman River more closely than was indicated on the topographical. Upon my return to Black Lake, I found the portage's beginning was more than 2 km west of where it had been indicated on the map.

It was getting very late in the day and the canoe had to be retrieved and brought down to the start of the portage trail. Reuniting myself with the canoe was not a simple task of just following the shoreline. The shore of Black Lake near the Chipman Portage is composed of boulders and thick vegetation. There were two deep, swampy bays to be negotiated and a vertical rock face on the shoreline which made following the water quite out of the question. Striking a cross-country course was the most direct way of reaching the canoe. There were complications: the canoe was 100 metres inland and the lighting had changed, (i.e., I wasn't sure if I would be able to recognize the place where I left the Grumman). After a little concern and effort I found it and hastily brought it to the unseemly location of the Chipman Portage.

It was evident why the portage could prove difficult to find since there are few signs on the shoreline indicating its existence. The shallow bay in which the trail is found discourages close inspection of the shoreline by travellers who might have difficulty identifying the not too obvious opening in the shore brush as being the trail's beginning. The topographicals ensured that my search for the Chipman Portage was conducted in a place where it could not be found.

The carryover to the first lake on the Chipman Portage is on a long uphill carry of about five kilometres. The final crossing of the portage was laboriously completed during the last moments of twilight on the evening of 18 July. The woods were utterly still. There was not a breath of wind, and sound carried great distances. A clear, melodious music sprang from the depths of the young spruce forest. It must have been an oriole. It was magical, and I cannot recall ever hearing more pleasant music. It was full reward for the effort of having gone there.

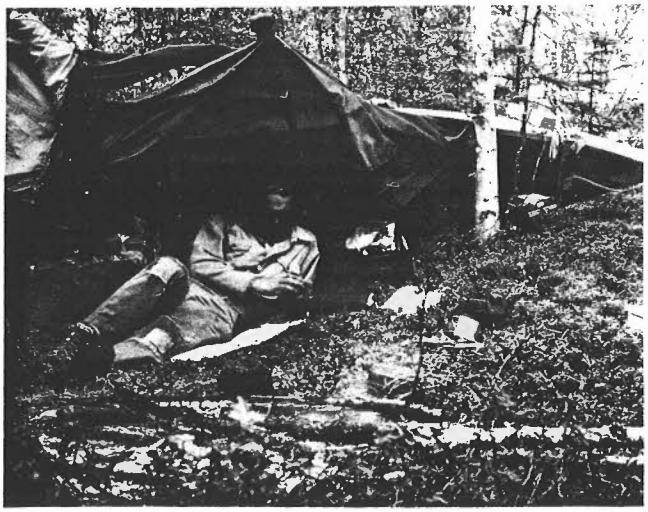
Finally, in the midnight semi-darkness when both packsacks and tripper were finally united, the treasured kettle was nested up to the fire in preparation for the all-important toddy, and the tent was erected on a damp spot. I found the vinyl-coated nylon spray deck could be employed for another use. By placing it under the mattress, it provided an additional layer of insulation from the damp moss.

The following morning it took me nearly an hour to return to the shore of Black Lake to collect the canoe. The ascent with the Grumman, even after a night's rest, was burdensome. Just going down to Black Lake to get the canoe and return with it seemed to take nearly half a day.

Working through the remaining section of the Chipman Portage was less arduous because the distances between the lakes in the series of lakes which forms the remaining section of the portage were shorter. The brief respite on the lakes provided relief from the carryovers. The crossing of the Chipman Portage was completed at day's end and camp was made on the shore of Chipman Lake under overcast skies.

The paddle up the Chipman River in the direction of Selwyn Lake did not require much effort except for one long carryover on a well-defined portage trail (the Black Lake Chipewyans still use this area). Becoming weather-bound was a constant concern. I arrived at Bompas Lake in the late afternoon as the winds were becoming calm. Rather than make camp at the normal hour in the late afternoon, I decided to complete the crossing of the lake and did so by 11 p.m., concluding a 16-hour paddling day at a seductively attractive sandy beach not far from the portage to Selwyn Lake.

Thirty-five km/day for a soloist in a Grumman is a demanding pace, and attempts to maintain the schedule while fighting a continual headwind proved difficult. On Selwyn Lake, in addition to being windy under overcast skies, conditions became rainy and cold. The synthetic garden gloves I wore to protect my hands from wear and tear proved inadequate insulation from the cold paddle. A backup pair of woven nylon gloves were a great relief.



Early on 23 July, the 22nd day of the trip, I found myself running behind schedule and weather-bound on Selwyn Lake, with a broad expanse of water to cross. From there I would have to bushwack into Fleet Lake. After spending the whole day weather-bound watching the whitecaps and listening to the howling wind, I decided to attempt the crossing despite the conditions. If the far shore could be reached that evening, I would be in a position to search out a land route to Fleet Lake no matter the weather conditions that prevailed the following day. This way, I could minimize time losses.

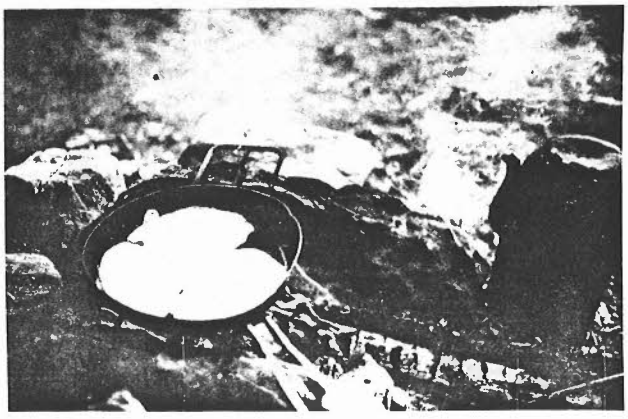
No sooner had I left my protected bay and become exposed to the full force of the wind and waves than it became necessary to make a massive correction sweep with the paddle. Doing this, I broke my kayak paddle in the middle where the two canoe paddles had been joined. At that moment, the nature of the trip was altered as I was reduced to using the less effective canoe paddle. This was unsettling. I was running behind schedule, had a heavy load to paddle, and faced the prospects of continued poor weather in addition to being physically rundown. The sensible thing to do was to turn back.

Retracing my steps would not be easy. I was in a bay in the shelter of a small island. To leave this bay, it was necessary to paddle directly into the wind. This could not be done solo with a canoe paddle. I was trapped.

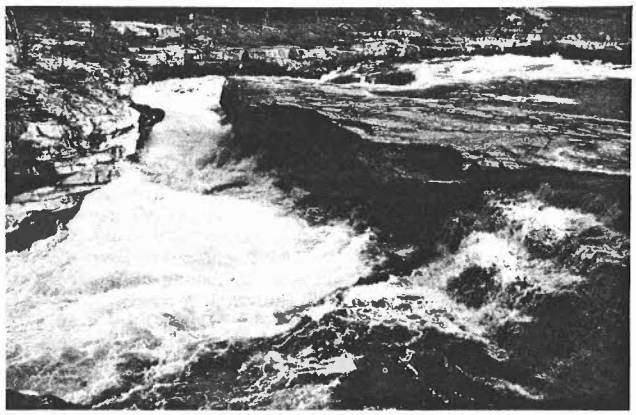
At 3 a.m. the following morning I got up, dressed, and walked to a point of land a couple of hundred metres from the campsite where I could look out onto the water and assess the weather. Things were not good, and I returned to the comfort of my down sleeping bag. The wind did not abate, and four or five hours later when I got up for the day it was still blowing. This was going to be my second windbound day on this forsaken island in Selwyn Lake. I knew that if I could get to the southern end of the island, the wind that trapped me would propel me down Selwyn Lake, and I decided to do this. After three hours of bushwacking and seven hours of paddling with a favorable wind under rainy, cold skies, I covered about 35 km before making camp on an island near the southern end of Selwyn Lake.

Since I was dashing back to Black Lake, I could reduce the number of loads to be carried over the portages from three to two by abandoning some food. Triple portaging involved five trips over the portage trails, whereas double portaging entailed three trips, a significant reduction in time and effort to make the transverses.

The most interesting meals were kept and the remainder (much of it rice, pasta, and bread mix) was left in an abandoned fishing cabin along with the broken kayak paddle. Perhaps a Chipewyan hunter would put this cache to good use during the following fall and winter.



At 2:15 a.m. the following morning, 25 July, I awoke to thunderous silence. There was no wind! Within a few minutes, the canoe was loaded and I was energetically paddling towards the southern extremity of Selwyn Lake. In the warmth of a bright morning sun I had breakfast at the portage to Bompas Lake. After a sustained effort, without lunch, the Chipman Portage was reached after a 55 km effort.



Even though the carryover had been reduced to two loads -- one for the baggage and one for the canoe -- it still required a full day's effort to cross the Chipman Portage. A stiff easterly blew during the entire day of 26 July as I worked my way down to Black Lake on the Chipman Portage. This was a favorable wind. I hurried along in the hope I could get to the lake and paddle to Morberg's Camp before the storm that was developing blew in and rendered me weather-bound.

Strangely, the storm that was brewing all day did not arrive. The easterly abated and Black Lake, though choppy, looked inviting. Although I had not stopped to eat during the day, with the aid of a pocket full of chocolates the paddle to Morberg's Camp was completed by 10:00 p.m., Friday, 26 July 1985. The return journey to Morberg's Camp on Black Lake from the north end of Selwyn Lake took three days, about one-half the time it took to get up there. The concern now was to make arrangmeents to have the canoe stored safely for the continuation of the voyage at another time, and to find a means of reaching my vehicle at Kinoosao. The only practical way of doing this was to charter a Cessna, and for a mere $675 in cash, I found myself united with my station wagon.

Over the course of the 25 canoe tripping days 12½ were on rivers, 2½ were spent portaging, 6½ paddling on lakes, 3 were windbound days, and ½ was devoted to getting resupplied. Nine and one-half days were spent on lakes of which three were weather-bound days. This meant that for every two days of active lake paddling there was one weather-bound day. Had we not paddled at night this ratio would have been worse. For example, had we paddled only during daylight hours we would, perhaps, have been weather-bound as much as one-half of the time.

Since the remaining portion of the trip to Lynx Lake was almost entirely across large lakes, the decision to cut the trip short was perhaps prudent. I have reflected over this decision these past months. At the moment the decision was made, I was run-down, running behind schedule, and facing the prospect of continuing difficult weather conditions. It seemed to be the sensible thing to do at the time. In any case, the canoe is in storage, ready for the future trip to the treeline.

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nastawgan is an Anishinabi word meaning 'the way or route'

EDITORIAL

The world's wilderness is under increasing attack. Each second, everywhere, and on a mind-boggling scale, forests are cut down, waters are polluted, air is poisoned, animals are massacred. The natural world is being sacrificed to find short-term, politically motivated solutions for the real or imagined economic needs of an exploding population.

A prime Canadian example of these environmental dramas is the one currently taking place in the Temagami area northeast of Sudbury, Ontario, focussing on the controversial extension of the Red Squirrel Road. This case is discussed in the following article which ends with a plea for a letter-writing action in support of keeping the local wilderness as untouched as possible. Writing the right letters to responsible authorities can indeed make a big difference, as explained in the second article, Game of Letters.

All readers of Nastawgan are therefore urged to write at least two, and preferably more letters to the persons and organizations mentioned. You may not enjoy writing such letters, few people do, but it is most important indeed that we as members of an environmental organization do all we can to keep the wilderness protected from abuse.

the red squirrel road case

Brian Back

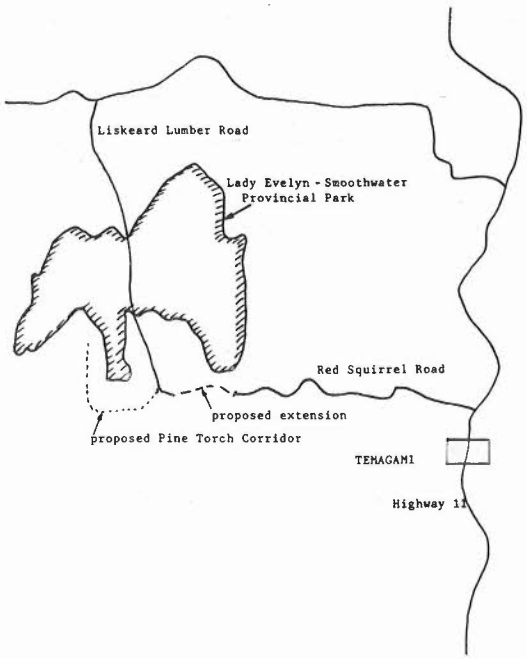
Temagami. It's not the place where you would expect the future of Ontario's wilderness to be decided. It's too far from Queen's Park. Nonetheless, events have conspired to place it at the crossroads and a wrong turn could spell the final journey to annihilation of our unprotected wilderness.

Temagami. The name conjures up many images and feelings. Ishpatina -- the highest elevation in Ontario. The Trout Streams -- the waterfall-dotted terraces on the Lady Evelyn River. Freedom -- no park restrictions or permit requirements. Northern Ontario. Remoteness and wilderness. Navigability and accessibility. Benjamin Chee Chee and Grey Owl.

It is the last just-a-hop-from-Toronto wildland region not fully captured within a park. Public transportation, a half-day's drive-time, a diversity of canoe-route navigability -- from light family canoeing to strenuous challenges. It is everyman's wilderness. True, accessible wilderness.

No, it is not unexpected that it is one of Canada's most popular wilderness canoeing regions.

Yes, it is unexpected that a strategic showdown is taking place there, ostensibly over a proposed forestry road (to be built with public funds), and, depending upon whom you speak to, a network of new roads.



And what follows a road like a dog on a leash? You name it: car campers, water access, motorboats, garbage, noise pollution, increased hunting and fishing pressure, land-use permits, property leases, cottages, and, the most ubiquitous of all, forestry.

A revolution is taking place within the forestry industry, changing the way it is performed and how Crown land is managed by the Ministry of Natural Resources. Myths are the residue of the revolution.

Myth: roads are abandoned and allowed to deteriorate when cutting is finished. Forestry isn't "cut and run" anymore -- at least, not if the MNR has its way. It now requires permanent access and maintained roads. The buzz words are now forest management and silviculture. Silviculture means to wood what agriculture means to food. By any other name, tree farming.

Myth: clear-cutting is practised in northwestern Ontario and selective cutting is the practice in northeastern Ontario, so forestry isn't such a concern. Clear-cutting has been adopted in the northeast in the name of good silviculture. Clear-cut wastelands mark recently cutover areas of Temagami.

That puts Temagami at the same point in its history as the prairies were when the CPR, newly constructed, brought the immigrants, who ploughed-under the prairie grasses and transformed the quiet wildland into a permanent patchwork of fields and concession roads.

Locally, the road is simply another chapter in the reality that dominates life in the north: paycheque politics. Nothing takes greater precedence, including the environment. They see the road and the timber it will access as vital to the survival of two mills. One mill supports the village of Elk Lake and the other is the second largest business in the town of Temagami. It will be paved with paycheques.

At the provincial level, the Ministry of Natural Resources has been slowly waking up form the deep coma it fell into during the Middle Ages of forestry and has discovered that the forests and, therefore, the forestry industry are in genuine trouble. So it is slowly moving from forest management in name to forest management in fact. That requires a long-term, year-round commitment to tree farming: scarifying, prescribed burning, planting, thinning, protecting, spraying, fertilizing, and harvesting. To do the job, MNR policy demands permanent access roads.

So the Temagami district MNR planned to extend the Red Squirrel Road across the Diamond-Wakimika portages, and, after 1990, to add the Pine Torch Road, which would cross Yorston and Ames Creeks, skirt the southern edge of the Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater Wilderness Park and turn north past Florence Lake.

New public-access-road plans, in accordance with the Environmental Assessment Act, must be publicly assessed for their environmental and social impact. The MNR district office performed the review in the spring of 1983. They issued public notices announcing the opportunity for public input, as required, and awarded the construction contract.

But someone noticed a problem, the kind that increases sales of Pepto-Bismol at the Whitney Block canteen. Had the public been adequately notified of the road plan? The answer set off alarms in the bowels of the Ministry. The MNR halted construction in the fall of 1984 and froze cutting in the area of the road. The right-of-way had already been cut -- a neat surgical slash past Diamond Lake -- and part of the road extended. In the haste to back away, slash was left obstructing the portage.

In the spring of 1985, they repeated their public review and renotified the public. This time the message was received loud and clear.

The Alliance for Responsible Forest Management, a local group formed around this issue, outraged at what had taken place, requested an individual environmental assessment (EA). Under pressure, the Liberal Minister of Natural Resources volunteered to do the EA. To the Liberals' credit, experienced environmentalists generally agree that the EA would never have been permitted under the Conservatives.

A new chapter is being written in the history of the environment. Today, the MNR is conducting its first full-scale individual EA, and the first EA in which the Ministry has brought in independent consultants. It is being watched closely by all ministries and the forest industry.

Until now, the MNR has always performed the other type of EA, the class EA, in-house. Is it because they felt they had the expertise? Insular? Afraid of the outcome?

Well, canoeists are watching closely too. DeLCan, the consultant, presented in late June the background material that shall be used to produce the draft report and final recommendation. Unfortunately, the Act is open to interpretation. For starters, the independent consultants do not have independence. The MNR has restricted the scope of the study so that it does not look at forest management, which concerns the need for the road and its impact on the environment. Did someone call this an environmental impact study?

The study is considering only local impacts. There is only a cursory look at the broader value of the area to the owners of the land, the people of Ontario.

Short-term impact has taken precedence.

There is no consideration of renewable resources (timber) versus nonrenewable resources (wilderness). They are drawing economic lines and putting dollar values on everything. How do you determine the replacement cost of irreplacable wilderness?

The alternatives were glossed over to arrive at the MNR's objective: a road with a gate. Surprisingly, with few supporting facts, they ruled out water access, which is operating successfully on Lake Temagami and was once used over much of the area under study. And what of winter roads? These methods would be a compromise to banning forestry, would be less environmentally damaging, and would prevent the uncontrollable access problems presented by permanent roads and the unenforceability of gates.

If this is to be a precedent, then the future looks bleak. The public shall be forced to call for public hearings. Imagine the expense and strain of a public hearing for every new road and forest-management plan.

The gospel is as potent an obstacle to the protection of wilderness as the assessment process. The gospel to the MNR is the principle of multiple use. Depending upon your perspective, it may be more accurately called "multiple abuse." Simply, it is the concept of all uses, everywhere. On the surface it appears to reflect perfect democracy. But it also denies minority rights, the very foundation of Confederation. Consider that it does permit the right to hunt, but hunting practised everywhere denies the right to wilderness -- where nature rules, not man.

Many activities are not compatible. That is the diversity and reality of life. Would they ask the Blue Jays to play in Maple Leaf Gardens?

Federalism works when minorities have there own place. We too need our place and that should give us the right to low-impact use in Temagami. Forestry has access to virtually all of Crown land (not to mention private lands). That's over 80 percent of the land. Is it asking so much to leave a small percentage of the woodlands for the right to wilderness? Consider that this is only five to six percent (which includes parks) of the land.

The Association of Youth Camps on the Temagami Lakes (AYCTL), with members like Wanapitei and Keewaydin, has proposed a Wildlands Reserve. The AYCTL attitude is that if you can't protect all values of land, then the high-impact uses (forestry, mining, dams) should be prohibited in the least costly manner: the absence of roads.

Low-impact use would include hunting, fishing, trapping, and back-country recreation, access then being limited to fly-in and nonwheeled means. No new land-use permits would be issued or land sold.

We can't slight the ministry for having to make productive use of the land and increase forest yields, but bureaucracy cannot cope with exception, and wilderness canoeing becomes the nail too easily hammered into extinction.

Clearly, they don't want the opinion of urbanites and canoeists, having limited public notice to local media, and moved with undue haste to perform the study.

The case is a benchmark in the MNR's remaking of the North. We can and must alter their plans. We ask for only a small portion of the province to set aside. THEREFORE, BE HEARD!

Write to Vincent Kerrio, the Minister of Natural Resources, and to Jim Bradley, the Minister of the Environment, at: Legislative Building, Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario M7A 1A1. Request that the study be expanded to include forest management, and that the entire Temagami region, a special case of land use of value to future generations, be considered as a roadless area as proposed by the AYCTL. Emphasize in your letter that managing the forest means that the road is needed, which would lead to a far-reaching impact on the environment.

If they are going to remake the North, let it not be in their own image, but in the images of all citizens.

THEREFORE, BE HEARD! Write your letters and do it now, before it's too late!

game of letters

If environmental abuses make you see red and feel blue, take heart! You can brighten up your life and the world with a letter. Here's how to do it. By Ron Reid

So you're upset with the government's record on protecting wilderness areas. Maybe they've just caved in again to yet another corporate pollutor. And they will insist on building roads through our most scenic recreation areas. You want to do something to help change their ways, but the enormity of the task makes success look hopeless.

What can you do?

One of the most effective weapons, readily available and proven by the test of time, is simply a letter to the various Ministers responsible for protecting the environment. Such letter-writing can become a fine art, but most of us are a little uncertain just how to begin.

Do letters really count for anything? You bet they do! A senior Ontario Cabinet minister told a group of us last year, "I look to letters to tell me how much people care about an issue." The implication is clear -- if a Minister receives dozens of letters on one side of a subject, he has a measure of his constituents' feelings and a basis for action.

But why write a Minister, when he probably doesn't know anything about your particular gripe anyway? Well, for several reasons, depending on the circumstances. You may be unsure just who within the bureaucracy deals with your problem, and writing to the Minister is the best way to get it channeled properly the first time round. You might want to shake up some civil servants who have been unsympathetic or downright unhelpful in earlier dealings. Even though these same people may write the response for the Minister, his involvement can have a wondrous effect in changing their viewpoint. Often you may want to write a politician as part of an organized campaign, to demonstrate the strength of numbers holding your view. And finally, you can write because it's fun! Creative hell-raising by correspondence should rank right up there with birding and photography as an invigorating sport -- a stimulating way to exercise your creative flair, often with environmentally beneficial results as a bonus!

But what if you're uncertain of all the technical complexities surrounding an issue? Not to worry. You probably know as much about it as the Minister, and anyway those thousands of civil servants are spposed to be paid to help you understand the technical details. One of the biggest hurdles to effective letter writing is the groundless fear that you have to be an expert to discuss an issue, a fear all too often cultivated by civil servants.

Cast out such thoughts, and banish them forever! We live in a democracy where everyone has the right to set goals and to urge action towards these goals. The experts should be telling us how to get were we want to go, but they have no special claim on naming the destination. If you feel strongly that wildlife should be preserved, or the waters of Lake Erie made clean again, or whatever, feel free to speak up. The most important role of politicians is to set these goals, and decide their priority, and then to instruct, cajole, harangue, and bully the bureaucracy into accomplishing them. To do that they need your help, often for direction and moral support, but seldom for technical expertise.

What then should your letters contain? The contents vary according to their purpose, but in general they should be relatively short, forceful and to the point. Be as specific as possible without being tedious, and if you have the talent to be witty, a little humour never hurts. (Among other things, you can then fantasize how some anonymous, grey civil servant will be sweating out how to respond without looking silly.)

If you can praise the Minister's record, even by suggesting that this particular action is out of character, do so. If you can link the subject of your letter to other government actions, policy stances or statements by other Ministers, be sure to suggest these links. Local examples are especially effective, because they convey the usefulness of your suggestions. ("If we'd only had this legislation when poor old Uncle Walt's well got poisoned back in '68...")

If you're uncertain of your technical basis, ask leading questions instead of making statements. In any case, be sure to formulate questions so that the Minister has to respond.

Most important, be specific about what you want him to do. The most common weakness of letters to politicians is their failure to identify a specific request, to which he must react. Even if you are unsure of exactly what action is needed to correct your concern, try to force a specific response. (For example, you could ask what options the Ministry has examined to deal with this problem, and the advantage and disadvantages that they see in each option.)

How spiteful and vindictive should you be? On the first letter, especially if you are opening a new subject, I'd suggest that you give the Minister the benefit of the doubt. Be forceful but positive (I'm sure you agree that this kind of protective measure will benefit us all ... etc., etc.).

If your first response is particularly asinine, or if some nitwit Minister has a consistently bad record, a colourful hatchet job may be the only recourse. Creatively pouring all your venom into a political letter can be therapeutic, even though it's seldom especially effective. And you have to be prepared for the occasional backlash--one particularly vicious letter-writer got a fast response from the Minister inviting her to telephone and say those things in person!

What can you expect in response to a first letter? Undoubtedly, a long wait. Ministers are notoriously slow in answering mail. At the federal level, they now even acknowledge the receipt of your letter by an assistant so that you don't give up hope as the weeks roll by. If you hit a sore spot in the government's thick hide, expect either an unusually long wait, while they sort it all out, or a surprisingly short one, to try to fob you off quickly.

Minister's responses are usually of three varieties--affirmative, agreeing with your stance (seldom); zero, ignoring all your questions and saying absolutely nothing (tried fairly frequently); and bafflegab, when they swamp you with technical details and excuses (would probably be tried more often but too much work). The overwhelming odds are that your first response just won't be satisfactory.

Minister's live in the fond hope that you'll just go away. But don't give up, the fun is just beginning. Go back to your original letter, and pull out all the questions the Minister didn't answer. Point out inconsistencies between his response and others you have received on the subject. If you're lucky, there will be inconsistencies in the Minister's letter itself--point those out too. Refute his arguments--there are always weak spots--and re-emphasize the desirability of your goals. If you're concerned about winning an issue, it's the second letter, and the third, that really count because it makes the Minister and his advisers really look at what you're saying, rather than just fobbing you off. If you're writing mostly for entertainment, these subsequent letters give your creative genius a chance to really shine, responding to some of the incredibly silly things that politicians are wont to say when they're not paying close attention. Letter-writing is like a slow game of ping-pong--always try to keep lobbying it back to your opponents in their weakest spot.

One easy way to increase the effectiveness of all your letters is to copy them to other interested parties. After all, you don't want to waste all that creative genius on only one Minister. Send copies to the leaders or critics of both Opposition parties--it keeps them informed, and sometimes they go after the Minister for you in the Legislature. If you are dealing with a split jurisdiction or you are quoting another Minister, send him a copy as well--nobody likes to be embarrassed in front of his colleagues. If you are having trouble with a particular Minister, send a copy to the Premier, to keep him on his toes. If you're dealing with an issue of local interest, your newspaper editor will usually willingly print a copy of the letter. And if you're dealing with an issue of interest to a conservation group , send them a copy as well. It keeps their spirits up, and you might even get some free help.

If you are deadly serious about accomplishing results with your letters, the three R's apply: be right, reasonable and repetitive. But don't forget to have fun along the way.

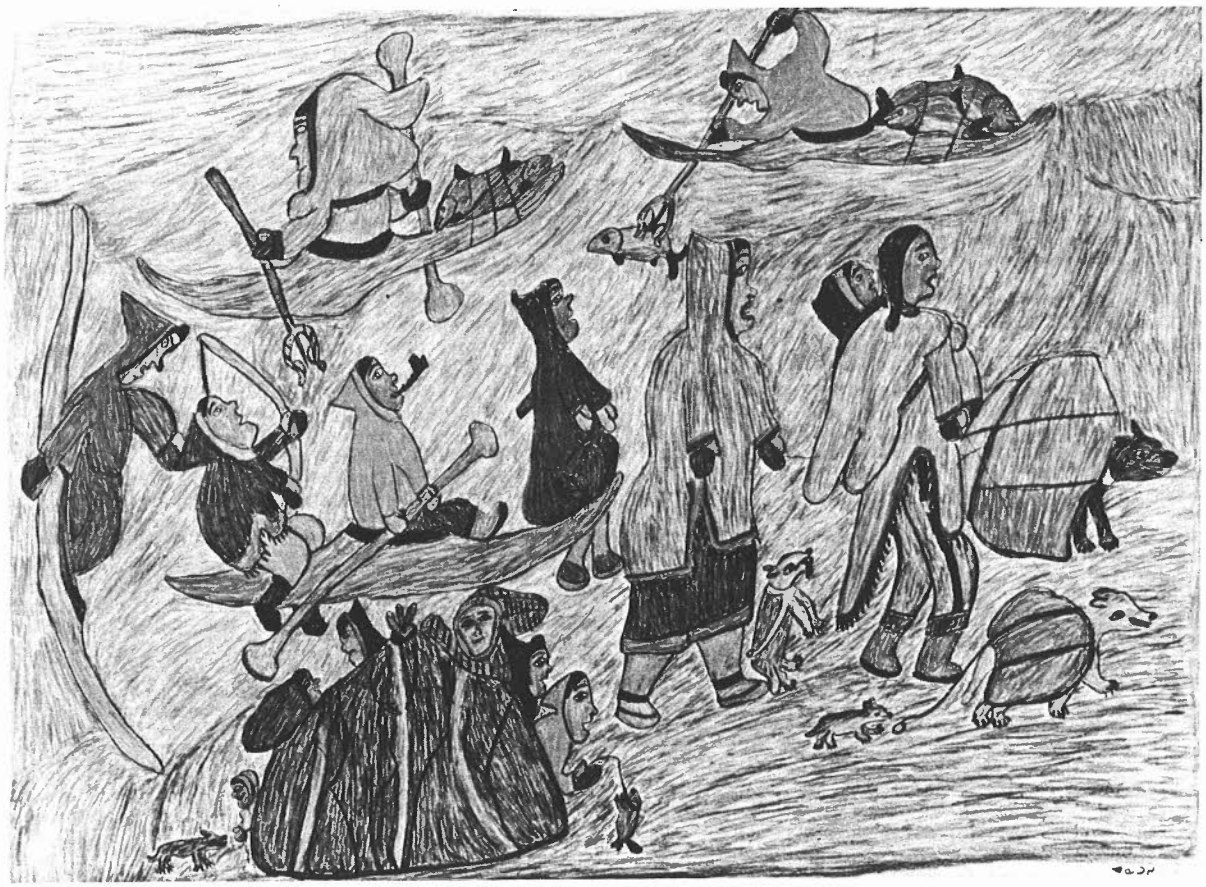
Some budding authors sponsor letter-writing parties, to stimulate creative sparks and see who can come up with the wittiest letter. Others prefer the Lone Ranger appraoch, rising restlessly in the middle of the night to dash off a letter, or holing up in a favourite armchair with a writing pad and a bottle of gin.

But whatever the technique, an enthusiastic approach to letterwriting can create a new art form, and increase the effectiveness of us all in championing conservation causes. The pen is still mightier than the sword, and its cut and thrusts can be almost as painful if aimed in the right direction. (Anyway, it's tough to find good swords these days.) So dust off your favourite cause, pull up a chair, and make that paper sing--there are politicians by the dozens just waiting to hear from you!

Reprinted from Seasons, Winter 1980, courtesy Federation of Ontario Naturalists.

by David F. Pelly

qikaaluktut



Long before we white men appeared on the barrens with our ABS high-tech specials, there was another watercraft skimming over the lakes and rivers which dot the tundra. The kayak of the inland Inuit was made of two materials: caribou and wood. The wood came mostly from the upper reaches of the Thelon and Kazan Rivers; indeed the pursuit of that wood goes a long way to explaining why the coastal people ventured inland in the first place. The caribou of the barrens provided the hide to be stretched over the wood and bone frame.

Over two years of working on QIKAALUKTUT: Images of Inuit Life with the people of Baker Lake, I learned--it will not surprise you to know--a great deal. The elders taught me about how they had lived on the land, how they hunted, how they ate, how the women gave birth, how they buried the dead, and how they starved. But one theme reappeard time and again: how they travelled. Mobility was essential for survival. One followed one's source of food, the caribou.

For seven or eight months of the year, travel was straight-forward. A dog-team and sled could take you anywhere. During freeze-up and break-up travel was awkward. But for two or three months every summer, the main method of travel was the kayak. The following excerpts from the stories in QIKAALUKTUT, accompanied by Ruth Annaqtuusi Tulurialik's drawings, illustrate the former place of the kayak in the life cycle of the inland Inuit.

Ruth Annaqtuusi Tulurialik's drawings are reproduced here with the artist's permission, from photographs supplied by the Department of Indian & Northern Affairs. (The original drawings are in color.) The stories are excerpted from QIKAALUKTUT: Images of Inuit Life by Ruth Annaqtuusi Tulurialik and W.C.A. member David F. Pelly, published by Oxford University Press (Canada) Ltd., 1986.

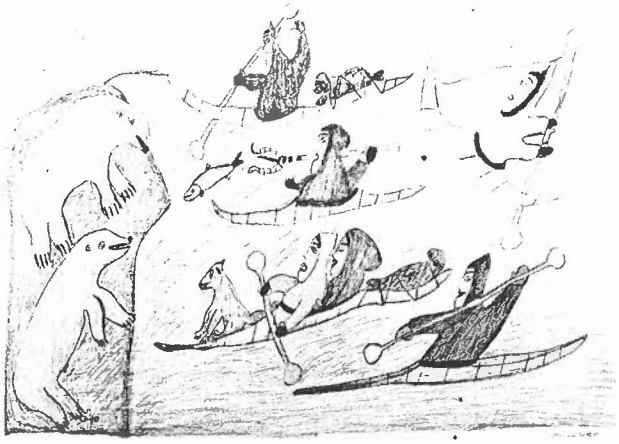
FAMILY TRAVELS

This family left their winter camp, a long way away, because there was no food. It is a happy time, when the ice is gone, maybe in June or July, because they are moving to where there are more animals and more fish.

All the food they had to bring with them was two seals, tied onto the kayaks. In this time they did not eat any qablunat food, only fish and seal and caribou. They travel in five kayaks made of caribou skin. The parents are in one together, with their dog, and four sons are in the others, the eldest leading, so that the younger sons can watch their older brothers and learn from them.

After travelling for three days they are arriving at the mouth of a dangerous river where they will camp for the summer, because the fast water means good fishing. Already as they approach, the second son is using his kakivak. But the mother is holding onto her husband; she is scared a bit by the current. The youngest son, maybe 23, is having trouble with the current because it is his first year to be in his own kayak. Last year he rode with one of his older brothers.

In three months, after a summer of fishing, the family will return to their winter camp, with the kayak full of dried fish. Then next spring the search will begin again for a good fishing place to spend the summer.

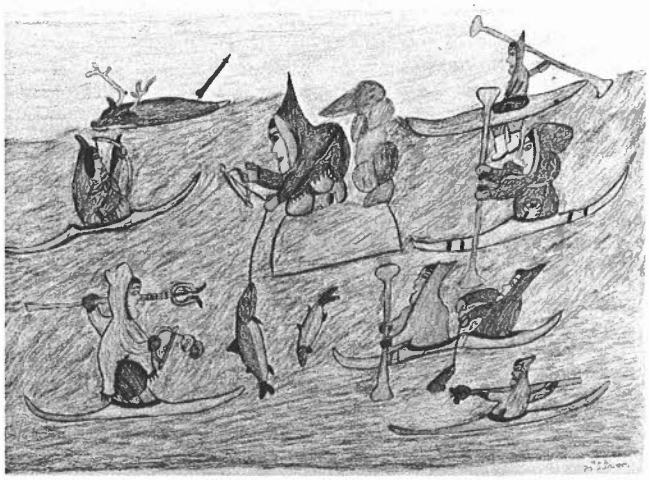


TUKIPQUTAQ

The tukipqutaq is a rock that marks a place where the fishing is very good. It is placed on top of an inuksuk and its special shape points out over the water. If you look along the top of the stone you can see where the fish are. A man from a camp near this inuksuk is out hunting a caribou that was trying to cross the river, while his son fishes from the point.

Another family is travelling with the strong spring current down the river. They know about this fishing place from years past so have planned to stop before continuing the journey. The oldest son, in the lead, has already reached the spot indicated by the tukipqutaq and is readying his kakivak and auladjut. The rest of the family are not far behind in their kayaks, the father accompanied by the youngest son, the mother keeping an eye on the next son. This is his first time travelling in his own kayak and he is having some trouble with the current. So he is walking his kayak through the shallow water. He will soon rest on shore.

The family will be on its way in a few hours, thankful the tukipqutaq has once again provided them with a good supply of fish for the journey ahead.



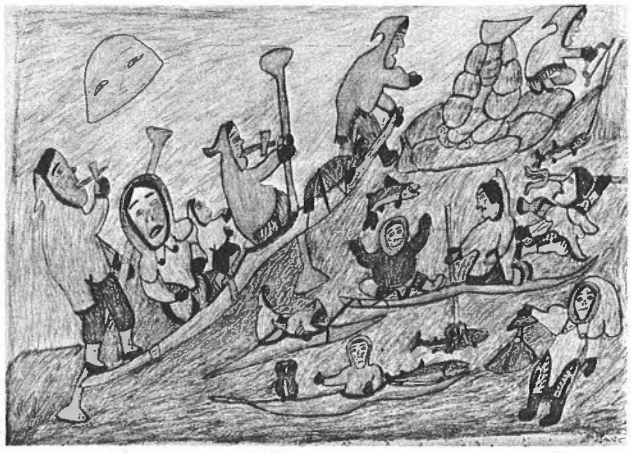
SUNSET

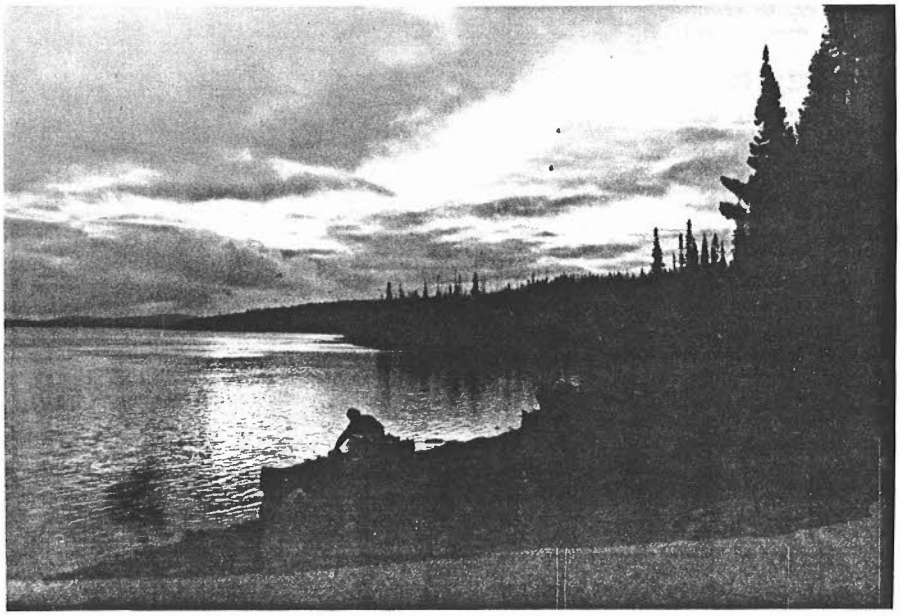
These three families left their winter camp to travel to a new camp. As evening fell and the sun began to set they came across an old inuksuk. They had never been this way before, so they were excited when they saw the tukipqutaq, pointing to a good fishing place.

Already they have lots of fish. One family is just landing on the beach. Their youngest son has run ahead to start fishing beside the inuksuk, using a bone auladjut for jigging. His father must explain to him the meaning of the tukipqutaq. The second son waded ashore to help bring the kayak in. Wearing kamiik made of caribou skin with all the fur scraped off, he will never get his feet wet. The older brother is guiding the kayak in, while his father stands at the back to help. Both of them are smoking old pipes, a wooden stem with a hollowed-out stone for a bowl. They smoke small green leaves picked from the ground.

Two other families are out in the kayaks fishing. A mother and father are using the kakivak to catch so many fish their son is joyful. They are towing another kayak because there wasn't enough wood to make another paddle. In this smaller kayak are two of three sons belonging to a widow. She is the woman with the big ulu, watching over her sons.

They will stay here to fish. It is a good time while the sun goes down. Then their journey will continue, with lots of fish tied to the kayaks. That will surely be food enough to take them to the next tukipqutaq.





ENDLESS SOLITUDE

George J Luste

By canoe and paddle
on the shores
of the Eastmain waters,
deep within
the northern wilds,
with tump and weary pack,
in a clearing
on an ancient trail
we came upon
a solitary cross.

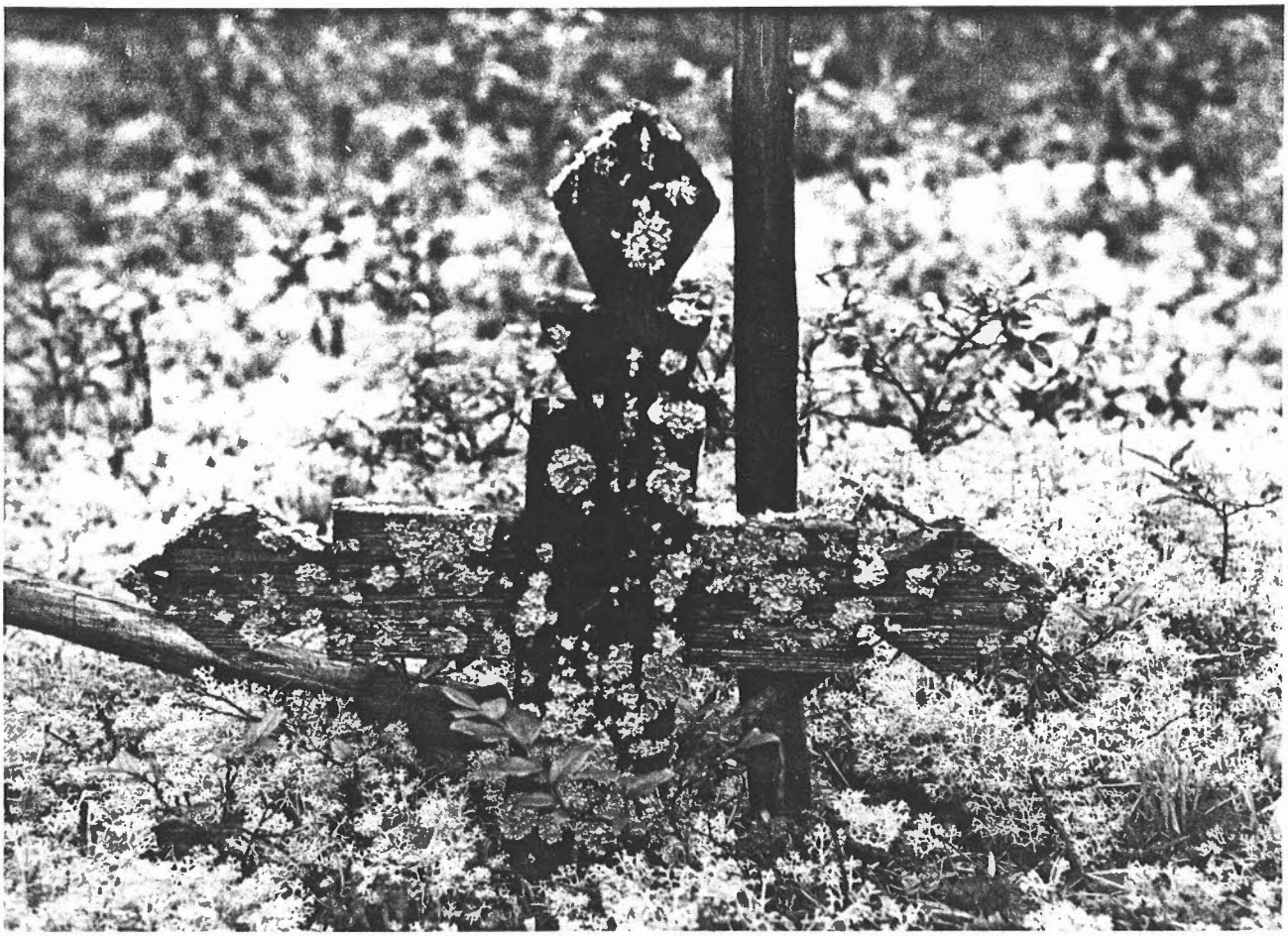
A vision
from the past,
decaying,
overgrown,
a marker
for someone,
who was and lived,
now sleeps
beneath the moss.
Questions of
why and when,
how did they die,
who dug the grave and
cut the wooden cross,
flood the senses.

In the fading light
and damp mist,
this mute and
melancholy crucifix
envelopes my soul.

It awakens the void,
the endless solitude.

Alone in the darkness,
alone within,
alone next to a cross ...
whispering softly
to me;
"I was
but now
winter is coming,
your life is passing,
soon it too
will be a marker
for someone
following
your trail
next
spring."

On the Eastmain
that was.



In 1972 I was part of a six-member canoe trip from Lake Mistassini to the Eastmain settlement on James Bay, via the Rupert and Eastmain rivers. It was a sad and emotional experience. At that time the massive James Bay hydro project proposal threatened the land we were passing through. Particularly poignant was the encounter with signs left by previous travellers and inhabitants.

In my overcrowded filing cabinet I recently came across this picture-poem, which I had first composed in 1972 after our trip and which I now share with you.

Today a renewed sadness (mixed with anger) stirs me when I think of the current plans in Quebec to dam and flood even more of our diminishing wilderness.

GJL

coppermine river, 1986

Joanne Culley and Michael McMurtry

The Coppermine River combines several features that make it appealing to the adventurous canoeist: historical intrigue, exciting whitewater, and great scenic beauty. The first European to explore this river was Samuel Hearne, who followed its final stretches to the polar sea in 1771. At a set of rapids near the ocean he was witness to the brutal slaughter of a party of Inuit by the Indians who accompanied him as guides. He named the site "Bloody Fall" (see map) and described the horrifying spectacle in his journal. Fifty years later (1821), John Franklin surveyed the Coppermine from Obstruction Rapids, at the southern end of Point Lake, to the Arctic Ocean. He then charted the coastline east to Bathurst Inlet. On the return journey overland, many of his men died of cold and hunger. Others who travelled on the Coppermine in later years include John Richardson (1827), John Rae (1851), David Hanbury (1902), and George Douglas (1911 - 1912). Recreational canoe-tripping probably started in 1966 with a trip led by Eric Morse.

It was with a sense of this history that we set out on a two-week trip on the Coppermine River from Rocknest Lake to the Arctic Ocean, 12-25 July 1986. Our party consisted of eight: Pat Bowles and Geoff Hodgins who led the trip for Wanapitei Wilderness Centre, Glenn Brown, Beth Gervais, Paul Hubber, Larry Turner, and ourselves.

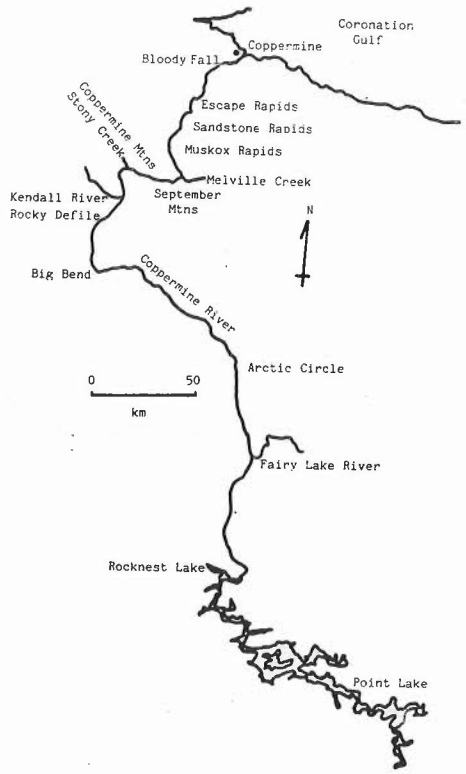
The crew at Rocknest Lake.

We flew from Yellowknife in a Twin Otter and a Cessna 180 for two hours over the magnificent Barren Lands before touching down at Rocknest Lake. The pilots taxied up to a smooth sand beach to unload the gear. We were expecting a momentary twinge of panic when the planes took off but, instead, we felt relief that the canoeing could finally begin, after weeks of anticipation. We made camp and spent the afternoon organizing our gear and fixing spray covers to the canoes.

The next morning, a following wind carried us past one of Franklin's campsites and we tried to imagine the conditions under which his party travelled, i.e., no mosquito netting or waterproof packs and inadequate rain gear. Beyond this was the huge rock plateau for which Rocknest Lake was named. Soon the channel narrowed and we came to a substantial RII, a couple of hundred metres long. It had very large standing waves which we backferried around with empty canoes. Carrying the packs over the portage, we had our first encounter with really thick clouds of mosquitoes.

After running some swifts, we came to a long, violent set of rapids. We carried our gear to the base of this set and made camp. In the morning we portaged the canoes around the most difficult section and ran the rest. At this set, Glenn scooped a handful of water from a pool between the rocks and realized after he had drunk it that there was a decaying caribou carcass in the bottom of the pool.

Thin black spruce trees and dwarf willow lined the river banks. As we travelled north, the black spruce grew more spindly and were spaced further apart. In spite of this, we had no difficulty finding firewood up until the last two days of the trip. The colorful wildflowers more than compensated for the diminishing forest. Altogether, we counted sixteen species and there were more we couldn't



identify. One of the most beautiful was dwarfed fireweed, or broadleafed willow herb. It grew in clumps at many of our campsites. Blue lupine was also abundant and was blooming at its peak. In some open areas, we saw moss campion, with its tiny purple star-shaped flowers, spreading like a carpet over the rocks.

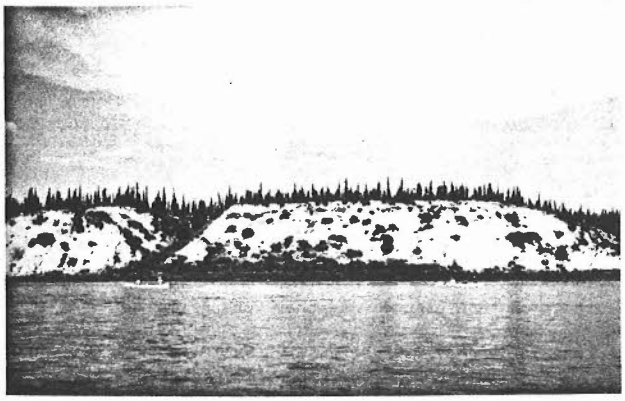
We passed through numerous swifts and wide, shallow rapids that were not difficult technically, but demanded concentration for long periods of time. That night we camped in the midst of a cluster of frost polygons and had our first supper of grayling.

For us, the most enjoyable rapids were those just above the confluence of the Fairy Lake River and the Coppermine. There were two sets of rapids, each several kilometres long, and many swifts. As the rapids progressed, the boulders kept getting closer and closer, forming an increasingly challenging slalom course. There is a large glacier at the Fairy Lake River mouth and we stopped here, and elatedly toasted each other with Drambuie on ice, compliments of Larry.

We encountered no rapids for the next three days, but were at times daunted by headwinds. The first day we crossed the Arctic Circle and celebrated with party whistles brought by Pat and Geoff. Larry annointed us all with river water and accepted us into the fellowship of Arctic Adventurers.

Larry anointing Paul at the Arctic Circle.

The weather up to this point had been for the most part sunny and hot, and we were becoming very sunburnt. That night it rained and we woke to an air temperature of 7°C. In the afternoon we passed a broken-down cabin where previous trippers had carved or written their names. By 8:00 p.m. the air temperature had fallen to 4°C.



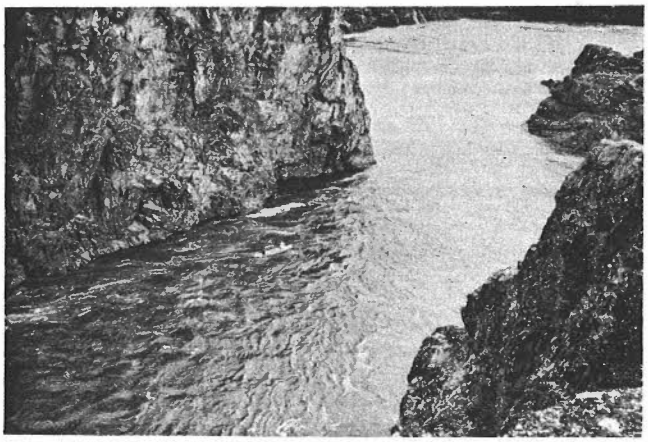
Bluffs near the Arctic Circle.

Wildlife was plentiful in this section of the river. Among the species we saw were red-breasted mergansers, common and white-winged scoters, lesser yellowlegs, Bonaparte's gulls, willow ptarmigan, whistling swans, bald and golden eagles, arctic ground squirrels or 'sik-siks," moose, and the ever-present arctic terns.

The current picks up quickly at Big Bend and there are swifts and short rapids most of the way to the gorge called Rocky Defile. the power of the river becomes apparent; everywhere there are surges of current and small boils. We saw our first caribou after the second set of rapids below Big Bend and some of the group were able to get within about 20 m of it.

The approach to Rocky Defile is very ominous: large green waves disappear between two immense shoulders of reddish rock. The rapids are described graphically by Franklin as follows:

> "The river here descends for three quarters of a mile, in a deep, but narrow and crooked, channel, which it has cut through the foot of a hill of five hundred or six hundred feet high. It is confined between perpendicular cliffs resembling stone walls, varying in height from eighty to one hundred and fifty feet, on which lies a mass of fine sand. The body of the river, pent within this narrow chasm, dashed furiously round the projecting rocky columns, and discharged itself at the northern extremity in a sheet of foam. The canoes, after discharging part of their cargoes, ran through this defile without sustaining any injury."



Rocky Defile.

Some of our party ran these rapids witout gear after scouting carefully from above. We chose to portage along the top of the gorge, passing a cairn erected in memory of two canoeists who drowned there in 1972. Gyrfalcons were nesting in the cliffs and we could just make out a downy chick huddled in the nest. Two more scrawny caribou were resting on a rocky island just below the canyon and were so well camouflaged that we didn't notice them until after we had eaten supper.

We paddled through swifts and shallow gravel rapids to the junction of the Kendall River and the Coppermine, a photograph of which appears in George Douglas' book, Lands Forlorn. Opposite to where Douglas camped to repair his canoe after descending the Kendall River, we came upon a camp of fishing guides with whom we had coffee and a chat. Char fishing is good here and though we didn't catch any, the guides offered us two 3½ - 4 kg char to have for lunch. These char would likely be permanent freshwater dwellers as sea-run char don't generally ascend this far upstream.

As we were finishing lunch, a caribou swam across the river towards the bank opposite us, and stopped on a shoal three-quarters of the way across. In a few minutes we realized why, for there was a huge, white, shaggy tundra wolf following it along the bank at a distance of about 100 m. The wolf kept stopping and regarding us warily and eventually retreated back to the hills. When we paddled away, the caribou was still standing on the shoal, belly-deep in ice-cold water.

That night we camped near Stony Creek between the Coppermine and September Mountains: barren, low, rolling mountains, mostly green but with terraces of purplish-brown rock. There were patches of snow in the higher depressions.

The following day was cold and drizzly. We were fighting the depression and irritation that fatigue and physical discomfort bring. Then, below Melville Creek, we came upon another fishing camp where we met a white guide and an Inuit guide with his family. We warmed up in their cookhouse and had a very friendly chat with them. They had just seen three large grizzlies moving north along the river.

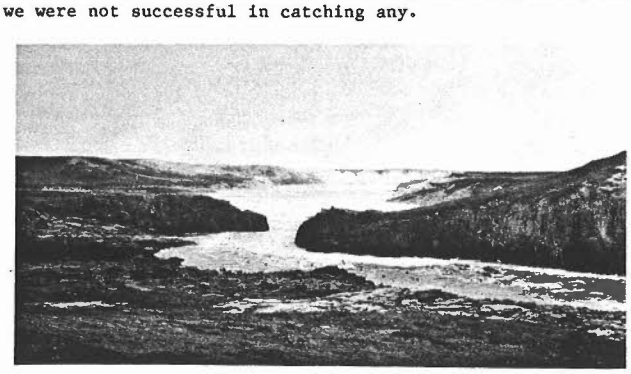
Below this camp the river is very wide, perhaps ½ km across. We camped a short way above Muskox Rapids. The temperature at 8:30 the next morning was 0°C. More swifts and unmarked rapids were encountered before arriving at Muskox Rapids. This set has two sections, though it is difficult to determine where the unnamed rapids end and the named rapids begin. We ran the first section and stopped on the left bank to examine the next one. This section is about 150 m long and would be rated as an RIII in southern Ontario. It is fairly straightforward until near the end where there are some very large diagonally curling waves. The authors opted for the portage trail, while some others ran the set without mishap. The combination of cold air and water temperatures and swiftly-moving water below the set made the run unappealing from our point of view.

The Coppermine River from Muskox Rapids to about 10 km past Escape Rapids is almost continues grade II and III whitewater with dramatic sandstone cliffs on either side, and flat, treeless terrain above. Very large standing waves pile up on the outside where the river makes a turn.

Sandstone Rapids begins about six kilometres below Muskox Rapids. Several hundred metres above the "basalt dyke" of Sandstone Rapids (shown in Douglas' Lands Forlorn), we misjudged the power of the current and got swept into some huge standing waves on the outside of the canyon. Though we didn't dump we had a very bad scare. We stopped on the left-hand shore, bailed out, and collected ourselves before running the chute on the right hand side of the dyke. We carried around another difficult section of Sandstone Rapids and ran the rest, scouting from the water.

The next named set is called Escape Rapids, presumably because a very strong ferry is required to escape the large standing waves and souse holes in the main part of the channel. The entire group ran this set.

Finally, we arrived at the infamous Bloody Fall. We portaged on the left, over a hill covered with wildflowers and camped with some trepidation at the site where we believed the Inuit had been murdered 215 years before. These rapids are very dangerous and almost never run. Local legend has it that an Inuit man ran it once and was dared to run it again. The second time he didn't survive. In the autumn, arctic char move up the Coppermine to Bloody Fall to spawn in enough numbers that they can be speared, but we were not successful in catching any.



Looking downstream at Bloody Fall.

Some swifts and shallow gravel rapids were encountered downstream of Bloody Fall and we passed several cabins with wooden racks outside for drying fish and meat. Soon, with the help of a light tailwind, we caught sight of the open ocean beyond the islands at the river mouth.

Our first glimpse of the hamlet of Coppermine belied our belief that it was a remote community. As we turned the corner from the river to Coronation Gulf, a woman came out of her Scandinavian-style house and recorded our arrival on video! In other respects, however, Coppermine is less "high-tech." Water is delivered, not piped, to most homes, and bagged sewage is picked up daily. Two stores, The Bay and the Co-Op, and one snack bar serve this community of 877 people, 90% of whom are Inuit. We camped on the windy beach by the ocean for three days.

We were struck by the generosity and friendliness of the Inuit. The two daughters of the Inuit fishing guide we met along the river showed us around town, invited us to watch color TV, and to come over for supper. From them we learned a lot about daily life in a northern settlement.

One of the highlights of our stay was a motorboat trip out into Coronation Gulf. Our guide, a young Inuit man, knew exactly where to go to catch arctic char. Mike and Geoff caught four char altogether, ranging in size from 3 - 4 kg. Seals surfaced every now and then, but were successful in evading our cameras. The guide took us to see an "inukshuk", a rock formation made by Inuit for navigation and to herd caribou into a confined area where they could be killed. Then we stopped at a nearby island where the guide's family were camped for the summer. They offered us tea and dried caribou meat, which is very chewy and has a gamey flavor. A seal skin was being stretched out with pegs on the ground and char were drying on a wooden rack.

Inuit women at summer campsite near Coppermine.

As we flew out of Coppermine we retraced part of our route on the river below. The river looked placid and inviting from that distance and its surface gleamed orange in the sunlight. It was hard to believe that this was the same river we had just travelled on for 14 days, sometimes floating peacefully downstream, but more often being challenged to our limit in whitewater. It was with some regret that we said farewell to the Barrens.

BUTTERMILK FALLS CONSERVATION AREA

The following letter was sent by the WCA to a landowner who understands and appreciates the needs of responsible canoeists:

Allan C. Richmond
General Delivery
Selby, Ontario
K0K 2Z0

Dear Mr. Richmond:

Every spring the Wilderness Canoe Association has run club trips down the Salmon River, stopping at your property to have lunch and enjoy the tranquil beauty of Buttermilk Falls Conservation Area.
We would like to thank you for your gracious hospitality and your selflessness in welcoming the public to join you in the appreciation of this magic spot.
On behalf of the Board and members of the Wilderness Canoe Association, I hope that you will accept our gratitude and our donation of $50.00 to help pay for the maintenance of your park.
Your public-spiritedness and generosity has made us all richer.

Sincerely:

William Ness
Director

MOOSE GALORE

During an eight-day trip in early July this year, Rob Butler and Jim Greenacre made a loop in the Nipissing/Petawawa Rivers area in northwestern Algonquin Park. While paddling and doing the 51 portages, they saw a total of 32 moose, sometimes from only a few metres away.

OH, WILDERNESS!

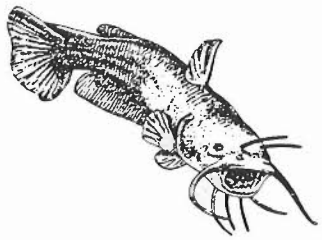
On Labor Day weekend (30-31 August and 1 September), the following canoe party was reportedly encountered on the York River which flows south out of the "panhandle" forming the southern part of Algonquin Park: two boys (about 18 years old), one decrepit wood-fibreglass 14-footer, two crummy wooden paddles, one huge canvas dome tent, miscellaneous food and gear, 80 cans and bottles of beer, one litre of whisky, no park-entry permit. For a three-day trip.

THANK YOU The Third Aurora Venturer Company and the South Lake Simcoe Water Safety Committee wish to express their appreciation to those members of the WCA who have shared their skills and knowledge with us and given of their time to Scouting. They accompanied us on a backpacking trip into Algonquin Park last November; assisted Scouters with the water part of the Charge Certificate requirements in June; and ran a canoe workshop for Venturers in May. Special thanks are due to: Mike and Diane Wills, Jim Morris, Bill Ness, Jim Greenacre, Howard Sagerman, and Rob Cepella.

Gail Vickars

Moira River, 13 April 1986, photo by Mary-Ellen Knight.

Elora Gorge, 18 May 1986, photo by Glenn Spence.



a different point of smell

We humans have a natural, probably inescapable, tendency to assume that all creatures perceive the world the way we do. For us, seeing and hearing are so overwhelmingly important among the possible ways of detecting what is happening around us that it is very difficult to imagine any other way of operating.

Nevertheless, it is a fact that many animals use their eyes and ears very little -- or even not at all -- and instead rely on what we consider to be the "minor" senses of touch, taste, and smell.

Given our human limitations, we can never completely successfully get inside the skin of such animals to gain a convincing feel for how they monitor the world around them, but perhaps we can make a good try.

One creature that we could choose -- although it might seem a surprising choice to some -- is Algonquin's common brown bullhead or "catfish." We say surprising because, even if bullheads look a trifle strange with their big "whiskers," wide mouths, and smooth, scaleless skin, they do have eyes, they are still quite evidently fish, and there is no obvious feature about their appearance which would compel us to think they might operate in radically different ways from us.

Still, when you stop and consider their behavior, bullheads must possess some special abilities. They are chiefly active at night, they often inhabit quite muddy water (hence another common name -- mudpout), and much of their food is somehow detected hidden in the ooze of lake and creek bottoms. Neither sight nor hearing can be of much use in these circumstances and, indeed, some local populations of bullheads are actually blind and still do very well.

The only really visible features about these fish that even hint at an ability to operate in dark, murky waters are the eight robust whiskers, more properly called "barbels," located under the chin, at the corners of the mouth, and beside the eyes. Most of the barbels are directed downwards and it does not require a great leap of imagination to think that they could be very useful in detecting by touch any prey animals buried in oozy bottom sediments. That is, in fact, the purpose of the barbels and when they make contact with suitable food the bullhead instantly engulfs the victim with its cavernous maw and swallows it, all in one incredibly rapid, convulsive movement.

Bullheads detect and approach food that is far beyond the reach of their barbels, however, and something other than the sense of touch must be involved. That something else is the bullhead's sense of taste operating in several hundred thousand (!) tastebuds all over the skin. It is almost as if each bullhead were a big swimming "tongue" capable of tasting all the subtle flavors diffusing through the water and even determining the direction of each flavor's source.

This is impressive enough but there is far more to bullhead life than feeling and tasting a path through dark water to the next meal. These fish have a complex social behavior which, depending on poorly understood circumstances, may range from possession and recognition of stable territories by individual neighboring fish to the opposite extreme of many fish living together in crowded but peaceful clans. Either way it is obvious that bullheads must have the ability to remember and recognize each other as individuals.

Theoretically, their sensitive tastebuds might permit bullheads to do this but, in fact, it is all done through their sense of smell. The exclusive function of a bullhead's nose is the identification of other fish and the reading of their moods and intentions. This has been dramatically shown by experiments involving two fish that have shared the same tank, fought with each other, and then have been separated and housed in different tanks. Even months later, if a bit of water is transferred from one of the tanks to the other, the bullhead in the receiving tank will "go crazy" in its attempt to attack, or flee from, the old enemy it apparently believes has invaded its tank. No comparable reaction is observed if water is transferred from a total stranger's tank, so it is apparent that bullheads have the ability to detect the presence of another bullhead from some chemical in the water and also to recognize the particular individual fish that gave off the offending "eau de bullhead."

We humans might be able to remember and recognize the scent of a rival after many months but we would never take any kind of action unless we could see the other person as well. With bullheads it's the other way round. In their world, vision is such a subtle and undependable sense that failure to actually see a nearby rival is of no consequence if that rival can be clearly and unequivocally smelled in the same tank. That is all the proof any reasonable bullhead could ever need! By the same token, a bullhead with a damaged, non-functioning nose is a social misfit, quite incapable of distinguishing one individual bullhead from another, and constantly geting into trouble.

We said at the outset that it is very hard to get inside another creature's skin. If we were inside that of a bullhead we would see and hear very dimly or not at all. Instead, we would taste faraway food with our skin, pinpoint it with our whiskers, and determine the identities and moods of our neighbors with our nose. This may not seem like a very appealing existence but that impression is just another reflection of how imprisoned we are by our own particular range of senses.

Or, to put it another way, beauty lies in the barbels of the beholder.

Reprinted from The Raven, courtesy of Ministry of Natural Resources.

white river

The White River surely is one of the more scenic rivers in Ontario. We know, because my five friends and I paddled this river from White Lake to Hattie's Cove. We thoroughly enjoyed spectacular waterfalls, canyons, exciting white-water, great fishing, various wildlife, and finally Lake Superior which was rough enough to make our sojourn "swell(s), aye!" We didn't see another human being from the start of the trip till the last day. This greatly added to the wilderness solitude. My friend summed up this river trip very well when at the end he said, "I wish we were just starting!

Special thanks to Sandy Richardson and the WCA for all the help we received to turn our dream into reality.

Larry Flesch

news briefs

SPECIAL EVENT IN JANUARY Plans are under way to present in Toronto a special slide fest and symposium, organized by the WCA, on the history of and canoeing in southeastern Keewatin, NWT. Friday evening, 30 January, an introductory lecture and/or slide show will be presented, followed by a social hour. Throughout Saturday, 31 January, a continuous presentation of slide shows and lectures by numerous individuals will feature recent and historical travels on the Thelon River and rivers southeast from there, including the Dubawnt, Kazan, Maguse, Ferguson, Thlewiaza, Taltson, Snowdrift, and other rivers. Details regarding agenda, time, and location will be given in the winter issue of Nastawgan.

1987 CANDIDATES FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS Three positions on the Board of Directors will become available this spring, with elections for a two-year term to be held at the A.G.M. The office is open to all paid-up members who have reached the age of majority, or will do so within ten days of election. Candidates should notify the Secretary of their intention to run. Although nominations may be made up to the time of election, candidates are requested to declare themselves prior to the deadline for the winter issue of Nastawgan, so that they can publish a brief platform.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1987 Next year's A.G.M. will take place on 27 and 28 February and 1 March at the Frost Centre south of Dorset.

WCA MEMBERSHIP LISTS Membership lists are available to any members who wish one for personal, non-commercial use. Send a $1.00 bill (no cheques, please!) to: Cash Belden, 77 Huntley Street, Apt. 1116, Toronto, M4Y 2P3.

NASTAWGAN MATERIAL AND DEADLINE Articles, trip reports, book reviews, photographs, sketches, technical tips, or anything else that you think would be of interest to other readers, are needed for future issues. Contributor's Guidelines are available upon request. The deadline dates for the next two issues are:

issue	deadline date
Winter 1986	16 November 1986
Spring 1987	31 January 1987

NASTAWGAN CRYPTIC The overwhelming response to Sandy Richardson's "Nastawgan Cryptic," printed on page 17 of the last issue, compels us to extend the test deadline to 15 November 1986. Come on, you thinkers! Send the editor your solution and you may win one of three $20.00 gift certificates made available by Trail Head in Toronto.
[By the way, 15 down should read (4,3) and not (5,4).]

WCA PHOTO AND SNAPSHOT CONTEST 1987 There still are a few months for you to work on your entries for this friendly and instructive February 1987 competition. The four permanent categories are: 1) wilderness, 2) wilderness and man, 3) flora, 4) fauna. The extra category for this competition is: child(ren) and wilderness canoeing.

FESTIVAL OF INUIT CULTURE IN COBOURG This fall, a major cultural event will take place in Cobourg, Ontario, as a Festival of Inuit Culture will be held there from 12 October to 5 November. The Festival will showcase Inuit art, music, dance, literature, crafts, and history through a series of displays, performances films, talks, demonstrations, lectures, and readings. Among the expositions scheduled throughout the Festival is a collection of photographs called "Baker Lake Images," made by Donna Barnett. For further information call: Mark Finnan at 416-372-4301 or Peter Tulumello at 416-372-0333.

GULL RIVER OPEN CANOE RACES 6-7 SEPTEMBER Several WCA-members again booked some outstanding results at these fascinating races held recently at the Minden Wild Water Preserve:

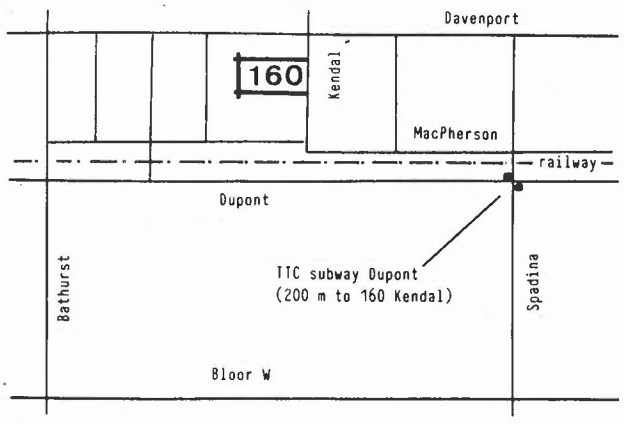
C.2 mixed	1.	Caroline Tennent and Mark Riddell
	3.	Paul Barsevskis and Connie Nehr
	(15 canoes were entered in this class!)	
C.2 men	3.	Mark Riddell and Simon Rivers Moore
C.1 men	1.	Howard Sagerman

CHURCHILL RIVER SLIDE SHOW For those interested in Saskatchewan's Churchill River, Bill King will be showing slides of his 1983 trip to the Bruce Trail Association at 8 p.m. on Thursday, 13 November, at the Hydro Building Auditorium in Toronto, 700 College Street at the University subway station. Admission $1.00.

BARRENLANDS CANOEING The Keewatin Region of the Northwest Territories recently produced a small booklet about canoeing in the barrenlands, called, "Canoe the Keewatin Wilderness." The 24-page, color brochure, designed by Betelgeuse, features the work of several people, including WCA-members George Luste, Michael Peake, Ria Harting, and David Pelly. It is filled with recent and historical information on these lands and its rivers, and presents a few maps as well as excellent photographs and drawings. Copies of this booklet can be obtained free of charge by writing to either: Travel Keewatin, 272 Park Avenue, Thunder Bay, Ontario, P7B 1C5, or Keewatin Chamber of Commerce, P.O. Box 190, rankin Inlet, N.W.T., X0C 0G0.

SLIDES FOR THE WCA FALL PARTY At the Fall Party, announced below, the introductory slide show will consist of a very special presentation of slides made by WCA members on their trips, such as the organized outings. We're looking for all kinds of photographs, but we're particularly interested in those funny, crazy, different, outrageous, experimental, never-before-shown shots you bring back from your trips. Lend us your slides, be part of this extra-special show! Contact: Toni Harting. 7 Walmer Road, Apt. 902, Toronto, M5R 2W8; 416-964-2495.

fall party



There are several parking lots in the area. Do not park on the streets.

Want to meet old canoeing friends? Want to hear some tall paddling stories and see interesting photographs? Want to find out what the WCA is all about, who its members are, and what inside information they can give you?

Then come to the WCA Fall Party (also called Slide Show Night or Wine-and-Cheese Party) on Friday evening, November 28, in the Staff Lounge of the Casa Loma Campus of George Brown College, 160 Kendal Avenue, Toronto. Non-WCA-members are also welcome.

Admission, to be paid at the door, is $6.00 per person.

Program

7:00 - 7:30	Registration and Welcome.
7:30 - 7:45	Introductory show of slides made by members at WCA-outings.
7:45 - 8:45	Meet the people; enjoy the wine and cheese.
8:45 - 9:00	Film about the Spanish River, made and presented by Bob Haskett.
9:00 - 9:30	Slide/talk show by Michael Peake about this year's canoe trip down the Leaf River in northern Québec.
9:30 - ...	Coffee and gab.

For more information, contact Joan King in Toronto, 416-223-7995.

LOON MAGIC

Author: Tom Klein
Publisher: Paper Birch Press, Inc., Ashland, WI, 1985. ($49.95)
Reviewed by: Toni Harting

This excellent, most informative book on the world of the common loon provides answers to each canoeist's many questions that always come up when paddling loon country and hearing the haunting call of this magnificent bird. The writer discusses in great detail the life cycle of the loon through the seasons, its various behavior patterns, the problems of chick rearing, the bird's past, present, and future, etc. Dozens of often superb color and black-and-white photograpns form one of the finest collections of loon photography ever published. Some information is also presented on the other three species of loon: arctic, red-throated, and yellow-billed.

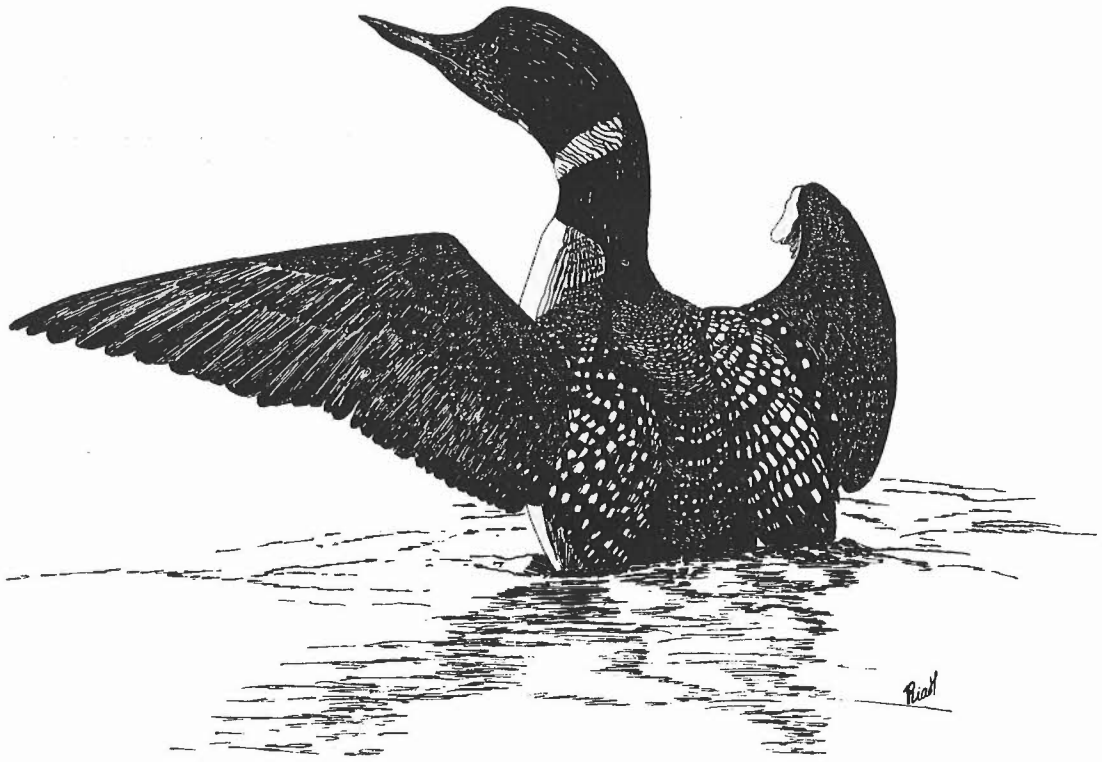
A particularly interesting chapter is the one dedicated to loon language, where much attention is paid to the four basic calls: tremolo, wail, yodel, and hoot. The study of loon distribution is unfortunately limited mainly to the USA. Canada is hardly mentioned, and the existence of the "great northern diver" in other parts of the world is ignored.

This well-written, -illustrated, and -produced book is indeed a must for every lover of the outdoors who is enchanted by the magic of the loon.

THE LOON - VOICE OF THE WILDERNESS

Author: Joan Dunning
Publisher: Yankee Publishing Inc., Dublin, NH, 1985. ($20.95)
Reviewed by: Toni Harting

A considerably smaller book than the one reviewed at left, this publication consequently does not offer as much information. The excellent text, written in a very personal style, is supported and enlivened by numerous black-and-white drawings as well as several watercolors, all done by the author herself. Although some of the drawings are of rather mediocre quality, the artwork helps the reader in getting good insight into typical loon behavior such as diving, nest building, and courtship display. Welcome attention is also given to the environment in which the loon lives. Sketches and descriptions of the loon's neighbors (birds, fish, insects, animals, plants, etc.) are spread throughout this charming and informative book.



WILDERNESS VISIONARIES

Author: Jim dale Vickery
Publisher: ICS Books, Inc., Merrillville, IN, 1986. (US $19.95)
Reviewed by: Toni Harting

To love and appreciate the wilderness, one must try to understand it, visit the wild places personally as often as possible, and truly respect the fragile beauty of our natural enviroment. The six naturalists profiled in this book (Henry David Thoreau, John Muir, Robert W. Service, Bob Marshall, Calvin Rutstrum, and Sigurd F. Olson) have done that and much more. They dedicated their lives to the study of nature, opening many doors to a better understanding and appreciation of the North American wilderness and therefore ourselves.

The author, who is an experienced woodsman, canoeist, and writer, provides us with much thought-provoking insight into the lives and philosophies of these visionary men. He explains not only what they did in their adventurous lives, but also why they acted the way they did. A tremendous amount of research has gone into the making of this quite comprehensive publication. An impressive bibliography as well as extensive source notes are given, making the book also a most useful reference guide to find further information about the movement to protect and preserve the wilderness.

It would have been nice to see more drawings than just the one of the howling wolf. But this minor criticism aside, this intelligently written book makes compelling reading for everyone carrying the love of wilderness in her or his heart.

wildlife weekend

Gerry Yellowlees

SPLASH! SPLASH! It was midnight and we were in the middle of a swamp. A dozen of us, led by Ron Jasiuk and Ann Moum, had stolen down a soggy trail in the darkness. Suddenly, an unsuspecting, croaking frog was transfixed in the blaze of our flashlights. Ron immediately threw off his footware and leapt in. The kidnap victim was identified, examined, and released. The group was impressed by Ron's speed and courage (would you walk in a swamp in the dark, in bare feet?). It demonstrated the enthusiasm that our leaders displayed and the involvement in nature that we experienced on our trip to Rondeau Provincial Park on the north shore of Lake Erie on 30 and 31 May and 1 June this year.

My friend Bob and I had been the first to arrive on Friday night. As we were setting up the tent we spotted a racoon disappearing into the car, no doubt with the intention of helping us to unload. Having removed the masked bandit, we observed no less than five other pairs of eyes at the edge of the surrounding forest. We shut the car doors.

When we returned to our tentsite, Bob noticed little conical earthworks in the area. Curiousity aroused, he gently poked a twig down the hole in the centre of one of them. Half a second later he was leaping backwards, two metres at a time, as a bee emerged. Feeling that it was a prudent procedure, I followed but at a more leisurely pace.

The excitement of the evening didn't stop there. A white-tailed deer was spotted. At first we were thrilled to see a deer so close to the campsite. Then we were puzzled as to why it remained in the area. Ron suggested that it had a fawn hidden nearby. As the campsite was quite remote, this seemed an interesting possibility. After supper we were enthusiastic about seeing the marsh, hence the aforementioned "frog frolics."

Saturday saw us emerge into a bright and breezy day at 5:30 a.m. The group was on its way by 7:00, crashing through oncoming waves in the lagoon adjacent to the marsh. On route, we spied a spotted turtle, black with orange spots. It was in trouble. Being a marsh dweller, it must have been blown out of the marsh and into the open water by the wind. It was given a ride back to the marsh. The fare for the ride was posing for photographs, which it seemed to enjoy.

In the marsh, we noticed a large black water snake. It was cruising up to a bullfrog sitting on some floating sticks. Before we could debate whether destiny had decreed that we should intervene, the frog blew himself up to twice its normal size and rolled sideways, exposing a bloated belly to the snake. The latter, being overwhelmed by what must have appeared to be a huge frog, quickly moved on its way. The frog stayed.

We zigzagged across a few marshy sloughs, poking about until we saw the eagles' nest. It was a moment that many of us had been waiting for. We were disappointed that we didn't see the bald eagles themselves but we were impressed by the enormous nest that they had built. It was suspended in a tree, about 10 m above the ground, overlooking the marsh. On our way to the lunch rendezvous at the sand"bar," we photographed huge frogs, pretty water-lillies, examined the skull of a muskrat, and dodged large carp which were mating in the shallows. We also had to dodge Gail who was soloing valiantly against the wind.

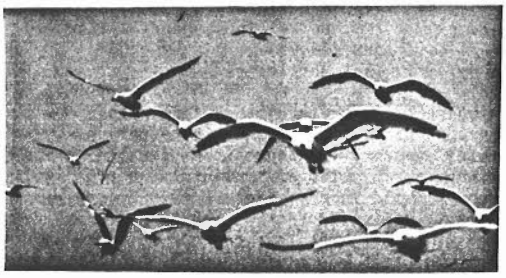
We all made it to the sandbar and had a well-earned rest. It felt great to stretch out on the warm sand, sunbathing in the lee of the beached canoes and listening to the crashing of the waves.

We photographed the surf on the way to a colony of nesting seabirds. At times we leapt higher than the irate seabirds as we hopped about upon encountering hot patches of sand. Thousands of birds were there, wheeling and diving, nesting and bobbing, and all screaming, all the time! The volume and intensity was incredible. As we approached the crudely made nests of twigs and down feathers, the owners would soar into the air. Whereupon we would quickly photograph the brown, speckled, henlike eggs. Bob provided an interesting interlude (again). Unknown to him, one nesting bird that he approached was an individualist. Instead of soaring into the air, it launches itself like a torpedo - straight at Bob. I was unable to follow his retreat as I was brought to my knees with laughter. He was doing his two-metres backward leaps again but this time crouching and wearing his camera as a helmet. The way that the telephoto lense projected skyward, it reminded me of the song "Me And My Arrow..."

A gull had misjudged its landing and had been speared by the broken stem of a shrub, bleached and hardened by the sun, turning it into a 50 cm spear. The shaft had been driven through, about half way along the wing. It had separated but not cut the ligaments and tendons. The bird was anchored about one metre from its nest. I dashed in, hoping to be quick enough to avoid being attacked by hundreds of angry birds. The stick was snapped off just above the wing. Then came the tricky bit. Two hands were needed to carefully lift the wing off the stump which meant that I was unprotected from attack either from the injured bird or from the many above me. Everything went smoothly and the wing slipped off the stump. The bird fluttered away to safety and I too scuttled away to safety. I moved fast and low, keeping my head down. Later, Bob observed that a couple of gulls almost got me. Pointing out that a more active role might have been useful was useless, because I'm sure that watching me get out of the situation was more interesting than intervening in it.

It was a fitting climax to an interesting day. We surfed back to camp, using a shirt for a sail. A leisurely supper was followed by socializing around the campfire. Most of us went to bed early as it had been a full day.

The next day we arose early again to similar weather condition. We went our own ways, hiking through the forest trails. Some people were photographing, some were sketching, and some were just admiring the environment. All were enjoying themselves and were grateful to Ron and Ann for organizing the trip.



5 October ELORA GORGE
Organizer: Mike Graham-Smith 416-877-7829
Book before 2 October.
This will be a leisurely trip through the Elora Gorge on the Grand River. Participants will get plenty of opportunity to play in the rapids. Suitable for beginning whitewater paddlers with some experience. Limit six canoes.

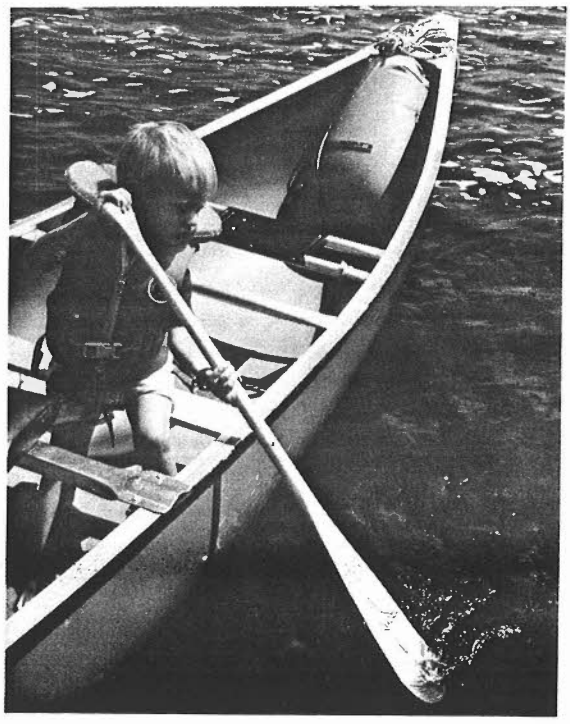
11-13 October SOUTH GEORGIAN BAY LAKES
Organizer: Jim Greenacre 416- 759-9956
Book after 22 September.
A leisurely, bug-free flatwater loop through the beautiful lakes southwest of Parry Sound. Suitable for canoeists capable of paddling up to 16-18 km per day with a few short portages. Limit four canoes.

11-13 October FRENCH RIVER - GEORGIAN BAY
Organizer: Herb Pohl 416-637-7632
Book before 10 October.
Starting at Highway 637 the intended route follows the Wanapitei River to the confluence with the French River; from there to Georgian Bay via the Voyageur Channel, thence west to Collins Inlet and upstream on the Mahzenazing River to end at Highway 637, just a few kilometres west of the starting point.
The organzier is only familiar with the first part of the journey, but suspects that the 100 km distance (mostly flatwater) may be a bit taxing, particularly if we experience headwinds on Georgian Bay. This should be compensated for by the varied and colorful scenery. Limit four boats.

18-19 October MOON RIVER AND HEALY LAKE LOOP
Organizer: Howard Sayles 416-921-5321
Book between 1 and 14 October.
A pleasant, scenic flatwater fall trip in the South Georgian Bay area, south of Oastler Lake Provincial Park. Limit three canoes.

19 October BLACK AND HEAD RIVERS
Organizer: Bill Ness 416-499-6389
Book between 28 September and 12 October.
Join us on a leisurely day trip through the glorious countryside of southern Ontario. Starting on the Head near Sebright, we will paddle to its confluence with the Black, and thence to Washago. There are several short, easy rapids which can be fun if the water is high. A good introduction to river canoeing. Limit seven boats.

25 October FIVE WINDS TRAIL HIKE
Organizer: Tony Bird 416-466-0172
Book before 22 October.
A day hike in the Gibson River area, generally following the Five Winds ski trails. Some time will be available for photography and admiring the views. However, the overall intent will be to cover a good distance, enjoying the cooler temperatures of late October.



26 October COON LAKE TO LONG LAKE
Organizer: Bill Ness 416-499-6389
Book between 5 and 19 October.
This is a 28 km paddle through a chain of small, rock-clad lakes in the Burleigh Falls / Apsley area. By now the leaves have fallen and the rugged countryside is starkly beautiful. There are 3.5 km of portages, but none is difficult, and the late autumn vistas more than compensate for the effort. Suitable for paddlers with good portaging skills. Limit five canoes.

1-2 November ALGONQUIN PARK
Organizer: Herb Pohl 416-637-7632
Book before 15 October.
Starting at the Pog Lake campground, a circle route through a string of small lakes includes just under 8 km of portages. The pace will be leisurely since one of the objectives of the trip is to explore the winter camping potential of the area, and possibly to get a few pictures of ice flowers and hoar frost landscapes in the marshy sections. Suitable for anyone able to portage without grumbling and willing to show up even if the weather is bad. Limit four canoes.

9 November HIKING ON THE FIVE WINDS TRAIL
Organizer: Paul Barsevskis 416-239-2830
Book before 5 November.
A day hike on the Five Winds ski trails in the Gibson River area near Highway 69. This area consists of attractive Canadian shield country which should be ideal for a late fall hike.

23 November NORTH PICKERING HIKING TRAIL
Organizer: Bill Ness 416-499-6389
Book between 2 and 16 November.
This will be a leisurely 12-km jaunt through the rolling countryside just east of Toronto. The hike is easy, so why not bring the whole family. Limit 20 people.

1-4 January WINTER CAMPING
Organizer: David Berthelet 819-771-4170
Book between 15 and 21 December.
Pontiac County, Quebec, just north of Fort Coulonge, Quebec, is Shield country that was formerly occupied by the Algonquins and was used by the logger. An ancient trail system still connects many of the lakes. The objective of the trip would be to explore these old trails. The plan calls for us to work our way into the woods on snowshoes pulling equipment-loaded toboggans and setting up a heated ridge-pole tent as a base camp. Two days would be devoted to exploring the woods and lakes on skis, and the remaining day would be spent breaking camp and returning home. Limit five trippers.

10-11 January ALGONQUIN PARK
Organizer: Herb Pohl 416-637-7632
Book before 31 December.
We will set up camp a few kilometres from Highway 60 (the exact location will depend on conditions), and spend the weekend exploring, on skis or snowshoes, the surrounding area. Limit five people.

products and services

UNION CREEK CANOES We build, re-canvas, and repair 16-foot cedar-canvas canoes. Re-canvasing kits are also available. Contact Union Creek Canoes, Box 207, Kinmount, Ontario, K0M 2A0

WILDERNESS GEAR FOR SALE Canondale tent, various packs, sleeping bag (down); all practically new and in mint condition. Call Glenn or Chris in Orangeville at 519-941-5527, or Chris at work at 416-222-8022.

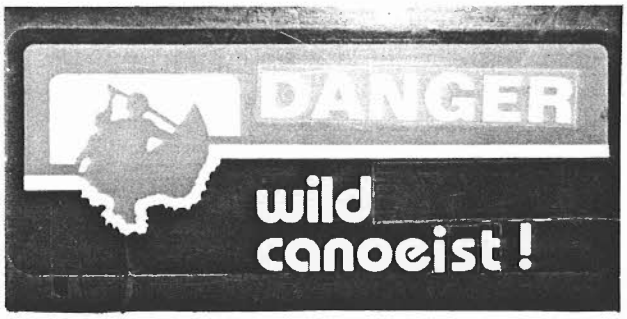
CANOETOONS Paul Mason's "Canoetoons,"the canoeing cartoons that are frequently published in Nastawgan, are available as greeting cards from Trail Head at both their Ottawa and Toronto stores.

DISCOUNTS ON CAMPING SUPPLIES WCA members who present a membership card will receive a ten percent discount on many non-sale items at:
A.B.C. Sports, 552 Yonge Street, Toronto,
Rockwood Outfitters, 699 Speedvale Ave. West, Guelph, Ontario,
The Sportsman's Shop, 2476 Yonge Street, Toronto.
Members should check at each store to find out what items are discounted.

CROSS-COUNTRY RACING SKIS FOR SALE Benner fibreglass 210 cm, waxable, Rottefella binding; Tyrolle racing boots, size 8½-9; everything rarely used; best offer; contact Howard Sayles in Toronto at 416-921-5321 (H), or 416-363-1865 (W).

BLUEWATER AND JENSEN CANOES. A wide variety of traditional and modern designs in sophisticated layups. Take a look at our new airex composites, lighter and stronger and available in the S-glass-kevlar and nylon-kevlar layups. All the models are available for try-out and rental. Contact: Rockwood Outfitters, 699 Speedvale Ave. W., Guelph, Ontario, N1K 1E6, phone 519-824-1415.

This PRODUCTS AND SERVICES section is available, free of charge and on a first come / first serve basis, to members as well as non-members for their announcements regarding items for sale, special products, discounts, services, courses, etc. Contact the editor if more information is needed.



Variations on a theme. Discovered on a canoe at the recent Gull River Open Canoe Races.

TRIPPING PARTNERS WANTED

Who would like to join us for a canoe trip on the Petawawa River in Algonquin Park during the last two weeks of October 1986? Exact time and duration of the trip may be determined by the participants. Contact Mike Jones in Mississauga, 416-270-3256.

where it is

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

Reindeer to Selwyn	1
Temagami area	5
Eastmain River	10
Coppermine River	12
Algonquin Park	15
Rondeau Provincial Park	18

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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 Nastawgan, to vote at meetings of the Association, and gives me/us the opportunity to participate in W.C.A. outings and activities.

NAME_____ ADDRESS_____

_____

_____phone_____

Please check one of the following: [ ] new 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.