

Unnamed creek from Pebonishe Lake to Resound Lake

west of gogama

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I had never canoed in the James Bay watershed before. In fact, I had never yet even been in Ontario north of the height of land. The route I had been planning for a year and a half begins with but goes west of a canoe route described in Ministry of Natural Resources literature as the 4M or the Mesomikenda-Dividing Lake Loop, or also simply the Gogama Circle Loop. It was to be my first canoe trip alone anywhere lasting more than a week.

Thursday, 6 August

As I drove Highway 69 past the extruding granite, mixed forest, and lake-and-river country between the Muskokas and the French River, I wondered again what sense it made to be abandoning this beloved area for what might be a more monotonous landscape of the beginning boreal bush. But I had decided to see what it would be like canoeing in a part of the province that was new to me.

I was again impressed by the fact that as soon as one crosses the French River one begins to meet the French language. Northeastern Ontario is definitely bilingual Canada.

The watershed divide at 395 metres elevation is marked on Highway 144 with an appropriate monument. One side reads: "From here all waters flow north to the Arctic," the other side reads, "From here all waters flow south to the Atlantic." The landscape now was flat with sandy soil. Logging trucks converging at the only service facility for miles around were loaded with what appeared to be large jack pine.

I stopped to check out the unmaintained access road to Weeduck Lake, my intended starting point. A huge mining truck was stuck in 0.6' m of sand on a steep incline. I started going downhill but backed up when I saw the worst. If he didn't make it, neither would I. Anyway, before starting I wanted to check out a couple of things in the village of Gogama. I drove into town and took a campsite next to the local float plane base.

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Friday, 7 August

First thing today I asked some questions at the local Ministry of Natural Resources office. The staff man who used to know the canoe situation in all the district townships had been moved on. The new CO was polite and friendly but had to apologize for not being as yet better acquainted with these details first-hand. I registered my intended route with the Ontario Provincial Police. Soon I was putting in at an M.N.R. access point near the south end of Mesomikenda Lake. Starting here instead of at Weeduck Lake was to cost me two full days at the beginning of the journey.

The forest canopy was more interesting and lush than I had expected. A lively mixture of jack pine, black spruce, poplar, red and white pine, and birch. The low, melancholy stands of almost exclusively black spruce and tamarack of which I'd seen pictures probably belong to the boglike forests further north and west. Around here the only dreary trees were the balsams and some spruce afflicted a few years ago by a budworm infestation.

The long portage from Southcamp Bay over to Dividing Lake is shown as an alternate route on the 4M Circle trip. This trail through waist-high thick brush must be rarely used and certainly not maintained. Any lapse in my attention to the skimpy indications of a path and I was losing the trail amidst the thickets. This whole ordeal turned out to be unnecessary as well, since I discovered that Dividing Lake now has its own access road. It also brought home to me how much gear I had brought; or more pertinent: how little gear I can comfortably carry on one trip. The portage took me the better part of the afternoon and my knees were really hurting. Should I begin to give up canoe tripping, right at the age that some men have just started to make it a serious hobby?



However, I had made up my mind to try this trip, whatever happened, not to give in to the spirit of cursing -- the extremes of fear and desperation on the one hand or the teeth-gnashing of schedule slavery and savage pushing on the other. This would be to let myself be ruled by the "double," which is something every man has. Certain spiritual teachers among our native peoples are among those who describe this. The "double" embodies many negative aspects and apparently it is especially strong on this continent, having a relation it is said to the North Magnetic pole. Northern canoe trippers can easily encounter him in the raw.

The sun was setting over Dividing Lake when I found a campsite on the backbone of a skinny island of pines. As a glorious pink faded over the scrawny spruce tops in the west, the full moon was just rising in the east.

Saturday, 8 August

In spite of fine weather, I deliberately took a good part of the day just to putter around, write, go over the instructions for a new camera, and improve my pack organization. It had taken a couple of days now to finally become really familiar with my own housekeeping system in a melange of packs and stuff sacks. I found it mentally important to know where any particular thing was, which was not easy for me who by nature is absent-minded. Virtually everything in the packs was rainproofed and the food items were in Ziploc or freezer bags.

I was paddling a 40-lb (18-kg) kevlar solo canoe, 28 inches (71 cm) wide, 14 1/2 feet (4.42 m) long, and 11 1/2 inches (29 cm) deep. The purpose of the several smaller packs was that together they stashed neatly down into the hull of this little boat. One reason I was taking this particular journey was to give my baby canoe a performance test on a more serious trip. I didn't have a spraycover because I wouldn't be running whitewater, nor would I be on any really big, windy lakes.

The weather was warm. I drank copiously, right out of any body of water where I could draw reasonably far from shore. So far no ill effects.

Today I was passed by two gents in a motorboat. I was surprised to catch up with them later taking the portage on the canoe route. They must have figured that the more remote lakes on the canoe route are good fishing grounds, and they'd rather lug that motor over the carries than spend the still longer time paddling. I wondered how their motor would like the shallow water and rocks of which I think there'll be a lot ahead of us.

It was nearly eight before I found a campsite on Middle Duck Lake. At this site, a few metres back in from the rock I was on, can be seen the last remnants of a trapper's cabin.

Sunday, 9 August

For some people, camping in near-wilderness conditions is the aim and end, and canoe tripping is the means to achieve this. For others, in which I include myself, exploring river courses or mazes of interconnecting lakes by canoe is the goal, and camping and portaging are inevitably the necessary concomitant price that must be paid for it. But by travelling alone I had actually added to the amount of camping and portaging chores and lessened the amount of canoeing left possible in a day. If it takes two people an hour and a half from waking up until leaving camp, it takes me alone nearly three hours. If it takes two people 1 1/2 or two trips on a portage, it takes me three trips, and on ones with really uncertain footing even four. I'm carrying everything that would be needed for two people except a second pad and sleeping bag and their extra clothes.

Bagsverd Lake is not shown as having any road access. I met two boats of fishermen and asked how they got in. "Drove in." Apparently somewhere around here there is a road after all. Nevertheless, this is still a tranquil, lonely, and beautiful lake, with several possible campsites. At 5 o'clock, I decided to stay on a really nice island on the west end of Bagsverd. Some "signs of man's presence" were there, but I'm not one of those people who let their day get ruined by those things; just sorry that this time I was too loaded to pack out their litter. It's ironic that this far from Ontario's major population areas the campsites tend to be more littered than they are in North Kawartha, Haliburton, or Georgian Bay, where I've found them usually immaculate.

Monday, 10 August

I took Bagsverd Creek this morning over to Schist Lake. At one point I had to wade the canoe up and over a beaver dam. I was barefoot and in two minutes seven bloodsuckers had attached themselves to my feet. Some people get hyper from snakes, others from mice; for my daughter it's spiders, for my wife it's bees. For me it's leeches. Mentally I know they don't hurt and I can easily get rid of them, but the way they are gives me the creeps.

Soon after, I crossed under a well-maintained gravel road, the one by which the fishermen yesterday must have come. I was then reminded that the area south of Bagsverd and Schist lakes is slated for timber extraction from 1980 to 2000 according to the Gogama M.N.R. District Land Use Plan of 1984. These two lakes are also designated as having "future cottaging potential." Schist Lake is beautiful with clear water, a gravel bottom, and many islands. Two cottages already exist there and indeed, this lake would be a pleasant place to spend a few weeks. By definition, it is not "the wilderness," although it is seldom visited even now. On the other hand, many "wilderness" places are not nearly as beautiful as this lake. Although one sometimes can get both, I think it's often a choice between one or the other.



With a short portage over to Schou Lake, one enters a new mini-watershed and a very different water quality. The lakes and streams now have muck bottoms, and the first lake you enter is the worst, with the wind churning green slimy material up from the bottom and soap-sud-like stuff chasing across the lake surface to end at the far shore in foam accumulations. Here was the first lake I declined to take a taste of.

The north half of Schou Lake is not as bad and offered a suitable campsite at 5:30, but I continued down the Little Somme River. If you now stayed on the 4M Circle, the connecting streams would all be flowing in the direction of your travel. Elevation here is some 383 m. This river is indicated as being shallow and mucky, so I was wondering why it was relatively nice and deep. Then I came to the beaver dam. After sliding down at least a metre I was in for the reverse consequences. The dry-out effect of this one dam extends well into Wolf Lake, where I made camp.

Meanwhile I seemed to be getting in better shape. No more knee pains for instance. The last year had been very busy for me, and this was actually the first time I'd been canoeing since the spring run-off.

But I found I had brought much more food than I needed. In spite of being on the go and feeling fine, my appetite was less than it would be at home. Why? Maybe because it had been so warm and I was thirstier these days than hungry. It could also be that the abundance of air and light was itself nourishment and to some extent supplanted the need for food. Actually, I think that eating with other people stimulates one's appetite, just like paddling and portaging with others stimulates one's own effort. Alone, I find it easy to start slowing down to low gear. Companionship is a boon to the metabolism.

Tuesday, 11 August

It was cooler last night and I slept a lot better. And a lot longer. Another day of sunshine; what luck! Probably just like bringing an umbrella to a picnic guarantees it won't rain, here I was lugging a full rain tarp assembly and enjoying nothing but sunshine.

Wolf Lake was where I could choose to either stay on the 4M Loop or depart north and west into the unknown. Topographically, my specific goal for this trip was to get to an apparently remote headwater called Resound Lake. Coming as I was up from the south, there were two ways of getting there. I could have bushwhacked from Schist Lake to Yeo Lake and gotten onto the Little Rush River system and then bushwhacked north from Opeepeesway Lake into Rice Lake and up the Northpoint River. That route looked more interesting but was also longer and I'd already lost some of my available time. Going via Pebonishewi Lake as I was doing involved some creekbeds with hardly any water in them. Today my whole paddling day was used up in rockwalking the frequently dry bed of the upper Somme River.

I only made it to Rat Lake. There is nothing here you could call a campsite, but I found a place on an island just big and level enough between a stump and a balsam tree, and chose to fix dinner on a trio of small, exposed rocks across the lake. Signs of human visitation were totally missing on this lake. It had an empty feeling. The ducks seemed shocked even to see a human being.



But I was still uneasy about the water. All of it since Schou Lake was more or less brownish-green, shallow and warm. At one point today I dipped for water at a widening of the river and it tasted pretty bad. I decided to hastily add a glass of iodine-purified water to my stomach. For dinner I boiled and drank lots of water but I still felt thirsty after a day of intense sun. I noticed that when I shook the boiled water in a bottle, it foamed. The foaming must be due to the presence of something, such as organic nutrients, in the water which even boiling doesn't eliminate. The scientists will have to explain this to me. On canoe trips when I've seen foam on the waterways I've usually assumed it was due to man-made effluents or other human contamination. But now I'm inclined to think it's due to the topical water quality as such. Some rivers and lakes in Central Ontario still seem to have beautiful water in spite of decades of cottages and nearby villages.

Paddling back to the island after dinner, I heard a heavy beast crashing about in the woods. To the north and west is a "moose concentration area," but I didn't expect to see one until the shoreline had those lush green plants they like to feed on.

Wednesday, 12 August

Keeping this journal began to mean more and more to me with each passing day. The need to share something with someone, I guess. I was the only human being on Rat Lake. But even here I could still make out the droning of heavy-duty work trucks from somewhere in the southeast. Resource extraction is obviously the big priority in northern Ontario.

Today the children would be arriving at our church's annual two-week camp in Haliburton County. I started this camp seven years ago and have directed it in alternate years ever since. The children's camp became in fact the start of my real love of canoeing.

I was mentally prepared for today to be a difficult one, and it lived up to my expectations. It took me the whole day to make three kilometres up the Somme River to its source at Owawetnes Lake. There are about ten or twelve rapids which now are only rock gardens. I've always been fairly adept at rock hopping, but I still had to take light carry loads because of the footing. One cow moose taking a drink saw me and bolted into the bush. As I finally entered Owawetnes Lake at 7 p.m., I was thankful for that big rock outcropping on the left, providing a fine campsite in an otherwise contourless horizon.



Thursday, 13 August

I was wearing a handwound spring wrist watch on this trip. Although I was not "pushed for time" (or at least refused to let myself feel like I was), I found that, as my route drew me into ever-greater isolation, I was continually noting the time and winding the watch. It was as if "clock time" was one of my last remaining connections to the world out there which I was scared of losing. I used the excuse that, were the watch to stop, I wouldn't know any more, except approximately, when I was getting up, how long it took me from then until launching out, when midday was, and how long I had in the late afternoon with its golden light and lengthening shadows to still find the new campsite and prepare dinner. With the good weather so far, I could have just used sun language. But what if it became overcast and rainy for a few days?

Today a light drizzle made the rocks slippery in the dry rapids leading up into Pebonishevi Lake. This lake is large enough to even show on the official Province of Ontario map. It was nice for a change to breathe space and horizon. Yet in general the water still seems to be quite shallow with a thick muck bottom and lots of green specks swimming in it. I had lunch at an exposed site under red pines at the framework remains of a one-time spring fishermen's camphouse. This lake also has on its west side a fly-in fishermen's outpost. For a long time I thought the lake was void of visitors; then I heard their typical voices and a slow-motor troller. They came within 500 metres but I didn't bother to call over a hello and they didn't seem interested in me either. It was almost four o'clock and having achieved little as yet today, I decided to carry on up the unnamed marshy creek that led to my destination, Resound Lake.

The water flow at first was better than I had anticipated, but the continuous fallen timbers necessitated frequent wading and lift-overs. The canoe took a lot of abuse. Along the banks I saw not only moose tracks but also large paw prints with claws. I was lucky to find a campsite near the shore that was reasonably level and dry. It needed some hacking with the hatchet to remove and redistribute grass clumps and to get rid of roots and wet deadwood. I rarely need a hatchet, but when one needs it, it's worth having dragged it along. I was smack on a moose trail to a watering place, so I blocked the path with a dead balsam and hoped I'd have an uneventful night.



Friday, 14 August

I awoke in a good mood. Sunshine drenched the surroundings; I was sure I'd make it to Resound Lake. But things only got worse. The meanderings of the creekbed were so extensive that I figured I was covering four times the ground distance shown on the topo map. The banks were a jungle at this stage and there was no sense trying to portage. Fallen timbers gave way to tag alders stretching clear across the two-metre mucky water channel in which I waded sometimes up to my hips. A beaver dam provided a short period of relief after I lifted over it, but then it was the same thing again. Then a long boulder garden. The weather turned drizzly and at 6 p.m. I knew I'd have to spend another night in the marsh grass. I hardly had the energy left to hack away the clumps and smoothe a place. I was using a four-man Timberline which takes a lot of space, but the room I have inside for all my stuff, also for writing and for emergency cooking, is worth it for keeping my sanity.

Sometimes today I wondered if I had gone up the wrong creek as there are a couple of false streams one could err into. Twice I had to climb tall, spiny spruce trees to survey the course as best I could with map and compass readings. I could no longer use my old wading sneakers for this terrain because my bare ankles took too much of a beating; one had been bleeding for over an hour. I was presently quite fatigued in mind and will, particularly as I contemplated what might well be in store for me after Resound Lake. The only way out from up there is to cross Alike Lake and go down the "Alike River," which I was now quite afraid would be more of the same as what I was on now. I was learning a very different appreciation of what a pretty blue line on a topo map can mean in reality.

Saturday, 15 August

Before breakfast I reconnoitered upstream through marsh grass and scrub forest far enough to be sure I was still on the right course. The creek today was no longer suitable for wading, in spite of going mostly through marshy areas. The streambed was clogged every few metres with skeletons of old cedars. I could only surmise that the spring floodtide ripped these trees off years ago and swept them along to finally deposit them in the marshbed.

The variety of my day was in the form of three different types of four-trip portages: (1) moose trails in the woods, mostly through dead balsam; (2) moose trails in the marsh grass and shrubs, either next to the stream or shortcutting the meanders; (3) boulder-hopping in the dry rapids. A miserable enough day in itself, but made worse whenever my mind had to contemplate how I was likely to get out from Alike Lake. I wouldn't go back the way I'd come, no matter what. Moreover, there were only five days before I had to be back home.

But I could at least be thankful I was here at this particular time of summer, when the bugs were already so few and yet the weather was still so warm. Also that the water in this creek had been drinkable again, flowing with a steady, gentle current. I finally reached a splitoff pond below Resound Lake. Here one begins to see some beautiful big white pines never reached by the loggers. But the lake absolutely lacks any suitable place to make camp, so I smoothed out a place in the forest partway up a hill. In this landscape I missed the frequent, imposing, granite outcroppings that make such good shoreline campsites in much of central Ontario lake country or in Temagami.

Sunday, 16 August

Enjoyed breakfast this morning in deep woods outside the tent; I was just amazed there weren't more mosquitos. It was humid and warm, which is what they like. The theory that by August the cold nights have killed them or the hot sun has burnt them off doesn't satisfy me. I wonder if their plentifulness in late spring and early summer doesn't have more to do with breeding season than with the weather. The same of course for black flies who have a still earlier season. But then -- this had apparently been one of the driest and least buggy years ever in Ontario.

Travelling by myself had in some ways been trying and lonely. But how could it have been otherwise on this particular trip? My pace would have been far too slow for the seasoned, gung-ho connoisseurs of headwater exploring and bushwhacking. And for the vast majority of others, to have persuaded them to join me over this tortuous terrain would have been cause for much ill feeling, if not disaster.

It was a pleasure today to finally lift over into Resound Lake itself. It had a top-of-the-world feeling all its own; shorelines ascended steeply on either side. The forest canopy was the most varied and beautiful I'd seen yet on this trip, with one side rising into tall poplars and birches, another dominated by noble red and white pines, another with low black spruce and tamarack, and still another a gentle mixture of everything. An old fire tower stood atop the highest hill, and on the shoreline below it was a pleasant cabin, unoccupied but tidy, now apparently a fly-in fishing outpost.



My first concern was to check out my options as to continuing this trip from the next lake onwards. I left my gear behind and took canoe and paddle along a well-used trail connecting Resound to Alike lakes. Alike Lake was deserted. I thoroughly checked out where one of my maps indicated that an unmaintained dirt track should be, hoping I could at least walk myself out on it. Well, all that was left there of whatever road there once was, was at least twenty years of overgrowth. Not so much as a footpath remained through a jungle of shrubs and saplings. I wouldn't have believed they ever drove logging trucks back in here, but on the shore where the lake narrows there were still the last, rotting remains of a low bridge foundation where they used to cross over to the other side. Wilderness preservationists, take heart! Here is living proof that "once a road, always a road" does not have to be.

I was now getting distressed. But my worst apprehensions were confirmed when I checked out the beginning of the "Alike River." There is no river there at all. A patch of marsh-grass meets a trapper's cabin and then just disappears into thick cedars. The stretch of the Alike



River I would have to take before reaching the next navigable lake would be just as long as what I had from Pebonishewi to Resound Lake. On rivers like these, even high water levels wouldn't help much because of the deadfall.

I made the decision to go back and wait it out for help on Resound Lake. I had enough food to last me more than another week, and by that time hopefully the O.P.P. and my wife and churchpeople would have a search going for me. The alternative of just pushing on with the originally-intended route would still take me seven to ten days to get back to the car. I hoped I'd be found well before then. To help somebody spot me, I stretched out my orange 2.4 x 3 m rain tarp on the dock in front of the outpost cabin and made a big SOS on it with silver duct tape. Meanwhile I had been checking all around the lakeshore for a campsite. There was nothing suitable. So I had no option but to settle in that outpost cabin, private property or not. Fortunately, the front door was unlocked. As I began to spread myself out, I felt entitled to a Sunday afternoon break after what I'd been through. My thoughts went to my family, starting their second week at Geneva Park YMCA Centre on Lake Couchiching where my wife was staff nurse for two weeks. Also to our church's children's camp in Haliburton County, where they would be having the traditional first Sunday afternoon celebration, with a big outdoor play put on by the staff.

There were enough chores that needed attending to immediately to keep me busy till dark. The wet swamp clothes as well as my own person were stinking. It was time to do some washing and drying. I kept expecting a float plane to arrive with a new week's crew of fishermen, but all was quiet. Except for a few mice in the cupboards.

Monday, 17 August

I'm often reminded in certain life situations of an old Chinese proverb, "Be careful what you wish for, because your wish may come true." I wanted to reach a remote lake and I did. It is like no man's land here, isolated, forgotten. From a map perspective it might sound amusing: just nine kilometres east of here is the big Kasasway River system leading into Mesomikenda Lake. And 25 km south of here is the Three Ducks Lake area, where a few days ago I used to see two or three patrolling helicopters a day I could have waved down. Now, with each passing hour I felt increasingly removed from any chance of making contact with civilization. I couldn't tell really if people were last in this cabin a week or three months ago. With all the heavy wool blankets and firewood around it was probably more like the spring. A note on the wall attested to having enjoyed the ice fishing in 1985. I found an old radio and was able to activate it with my four lantern batteries. No atomic war had started, the world still existed. But hearing that only underlined the discrepancy between all the talk out there and the actual fact of my being stranded off the beaten track.

Outside I found what must have once been the path up the hill to the fire tower. Obviously nobody was interested in walking up there any more; it was totally overgrown and choked with deadfall that no one cared to clear. What the guys who come here really care about was indicated by the cases upon cases of empty beer cans in the shed next to the cabin. Yet all around the house and along the beginnings of that path up the hill were the remains of a once well-tended rock garden. The fire wardens who used to share this cabin in bygone days probably spent some of their spare time tending the garden, perhaps even placing many of the stones themselves. A few signs of special flowers and ground cover between the rocks indicated that the property once must have received considerable care and attention.

This illustrated to me a point where I take strong issue with many who say, "Just let nature take over and things will develop for the best." I wonder if they had ever spent a few days in "nature" like I've been through the last few days. In principle these people are against tending

gardens in the wilderness, just like they're against having groomed portage trails. As if those spaces of tending and grooming would spoil the experience of nature and of what is wild right beside and all around them! I agree with that Ontario camp director who said that children's camps should be like "little Switzerlands." You need both side by side, culture and nature.

In taking a short paddle this afternoon, I noticed that the wind was blowing from the south but the waves were rolling from the north. I had seen this phenomenon before but have never been able to understand it.

Yesterday afternoon and still this morning I was keyed up, always sort of expecting that someone would land and I could be lifted out of here. Like the parable in the gospels, "Be watchful, for the master of the house may arrive at any moment." But there had been no sign all day of any kind of patrol helicopter or float plane. My intended schedule was that I actually had to be back at my car by tomorrow afternoon. Yet I began more and more to have an eerie feeling that maybe I was settling in here for a lengthy spell.

Tuesday, 18 August

Yesterday was the real day of rest and recuperation that I needed. Today I would actually be keen to move on, even down the "Alike River," if only I had the time. I jumped out of bed at a quarter to seven this morning hearing a slow, low-flying plane. But it was flying a path probably about three kilometres east of here, I figured going between Gogama and Scraggy Lake, where they fly in for commercial fishing.

I brought along five books on this trip. When did I think I was going to read them? Well, these cabin days were giving me a chance, so I suppose I should be thankful for it, because this was important reading that I needed to do. Yet I found it hard to concentrate on any book because of the anxiety about what was going to happen to me. It was also hard to sit still; my body was used to movement. From several days of ultra-physical exertions I was forced into a sedentary state. I dared not wander or paddle far away from this cabin or my chances of hailing a plane and loading my stuff were greatly lessened.

So this cabin paradise was in effect my prison. I had to think of that yesterday as the radio announced the death of Rudolf Hess, "the loneliest man in the world," as one book had called him. After having been an intense and active man, he was suddenly fated to live in prisons for over 45 years, ~~much of it alone in Spandau.~~

Listening to the radio here brought home to me what a strong regional self-identification northern Ontarians have. After the debate between the three provincial party leaders as contenders for the premiership, the comments that followed were entirely along the lines, "What will he and his government do for us northerners?"

"Nessmuk," in his woodcraft book from 1920, tells of travelling in the North Woods with only 12 kg of gear. I probably had something closer to 45 kg of gear with me, including all the original food, but not the canoe. Since so much of this trip had turned out to be on foot, I sat wondering what I could have dispensed with, and began writing a list of non-essential items. But I must say that the canoe I brought had stood every test. It had squeaked through narrow passages and turned corners in the brush that most other canoes wouldn't. I could always carry it no matter how tired I was how precarious the footing. And it was tough enough to stand a lot of rocks, branches, and deadfall.

Resound Lake is in three sort-of sections, with the cabin on the west side of the middle section. Today I paddled out to various parts of this section to try making echoes. I tried different direction, with and without a birchbark moosehorn from the cabin. There was always an





echo, often only once, but sometimes twice and even three times. But no matter where I cruised around this lake, I never found any place where one could set up a tent. Perhaps the whole landscape from here going north becomes void of what makes for suitable campsites. There is probably after all a fair bit of experience behind what the various Ontario District Ministries of Natural Resources have decided to call "canoe routes" and what they haven't.

Another day was ending, with my having done what was otherwise post-trip cleanup, as well as being a housekeeper and student. I was reading a good book for children about the twelve disciples and another, more for philosophers, about St. Paul. I'd gotten rid of five mice, but not without feelings of moral disgust. Yet doesn't God's order of the planet include that each species defends its nesting rights against the others? Because the bunk beds were too short for me with their metal or box ends, I had to put mattress and blankets down on the floor, and I don't fancy little feeties across my face during the night. But I know that animals feel pain and I don't want to cause them to suffer. Some people also say that, along with everything else that comes back onto us after we die, so does all the pain we've ever inflicted on animals.

Wednesday, 19 August

This morning I couldn't resist the temptation to finally make my way to the top of the hill and climb the firetower. About half-way up I heard a helicopter or plane passing right over the lake. I was buried in thickets and bush and could not signal him. I hoped maybe he had seen the SOS.

I reached the fire tower and climbed the rungs, slowly and nervously, right up into the box at the top. I could see Pebonisewi Lake and also the landscape depression through which I had meandered and struggled up to this lake. But visibility of water features was limited to a few kilometres. What a life it must have been in those days to spend hours and hours up here alone!

Then I heard float-plane noises again. This time two. I gesticulated wildly from the tower box, but anyway it was clear that one was cruising down for a landing. I scurried down the tower and streaked down the hill and met the son of the owner of the house, who is also the owner of the Gogama Air Services. They did see the SOS. Yes, they could send somebody to fly me out today, but not my canoe. Maybe from Foley they could do the canoe. And no, they didn't take credit cards. With that he left me to have things packed and cleaned up for when somebody would come later.

Nobody came. These are the kinds of frustrations one hears stories about with regard to air services in the North. For fear of missing my chance of getting out of here, I was on ready alert all day, hardly daring to take out the things needed to make a meal. Outside was an almost unceasing drizzle that matched my own mood.

Thursday, 20 August

I awoke before sunrise and enjoyed a beautiful long mist burnoff over the lake, also took some pictures. The day was clear and sunny. The Gogama-Derry Air owner arrived around 10 a.m., accompanied by an O.P.P. constable. Apparently they weren't sure what to expect, perhaps a madman who tried to call at planes with a moosehorn, or a poacher who would attack the owner. The constable was very courteous and we got things straightened out, though the owner was still suspicious. But he was able to carry the little canoe after all, so we flew back to Gogama. Then the constable even drove me to my car parked 20 km of town. (He happened to be a canoeist himself.) He told me not to give up on northern Ontario just because I had had a little hard luck this time.

Well, in retrospect, there's a whole lot of better trips I could have taken north of the height of land than this trip. The whole reason for driving this far north would be to run rivers which carry sufficient water all summer long, like the Chapleau, the Woman/Wakami, the Groundhog, or the Tatachikapika. But having chosen flatwater exploration, there are still a lot of assumptions I made about the distances I would cover which I could have checked out beforehand.

Oddly enough, the most intense part of the trip was these last three days, at least inwardly, as many painful insights closed in on me. And I found that dealing with apprehensions can be even more of a struggle than dealing with physical terrain.



Phillip Nusbaum is Minister of The Church of the Christian Community on Avenue Road in North Toronto. Since coming to Canada ten years ago from the USA, he has developed a great love for canoeing in Ontario.

EDITORIAL

Putting together a quarterly publication of the size and quality of Nastawgan is a most satisfying but time-consuming endeavor; it demands quite a commitment from the Editor who is of course a volunteer, just like everybody else in the WCA. Also, the workload is steadily increasing because, with the growing success of the newsletter, more and more submissions of article manuscripts are being received which all have to be properly processed (which means, unfortunately, that more rejections are being issued).

The Editor, together with the Board of Directors, is trying to solve this overload problem by thinking in terms of setting up an "Editorial Committee" that should assist him in his work to make the submitted material ready for paste-up and printing. However, the Editor, being a non-professional volunteer, has no experience in working with such a committee and is therefore looking for an effective way of doing so. The main problem for which one day a solution will have to be found is the fact that the Editor does his work not in a central office where everybody could be present at the same time, but in his home and at irregular hours, often deep into the night and on weekends, which makes direct co-operation with others quite difficult.

However, in order to guarantee the continuing existence of our unique publication, some problems must be solved without too much delay. The first step in the process of setting up a committee has already been taken by the Board through the creation of the position of Assistant Editor. For the time being, this position will be filled by Ria Harting whose close, live-in relationship with the Editor will give him the opportunity to acquire experience in developing ways of delegating responsibility for parts of Nastawgan to others.

Ria's appointment is an interim measure and should be followed in the not-too-distant future by the installation of an efficient and dedicated Editorial Committee. Anyone with realistic ideas that could help the continuing well-being of Nastawgan, please contact the Editor.



CALYPSO BULBOSA - Ron Jasiuk
(Honorable Mention, Flora; WCA 1988 Photo Contest)

PARTNERS AND INFORMATION WANTED

YUKON - ALASKA Anyone interested in accompanying me on a July trip in the Yukon and Alaska? (Bell, Porcupine, Yukon rivers.) We'll start at McDougall Pass or at Fort McPherson, NWT. Contact: Joe Epley, P.O. Box 11526, Charlotte, N.C. 28220-1526, phone 704-372-8775.

ANY CANOE TRIP I am interested in either organizing or participating in a wilderness canoe trip this summer; I'm having difficulty finding trip partners. Contact: Raymond Casell, 3249 Judith Lane, Lafayette, California, 94549, phone 415-285-4774.

news briefs

WCA AT THE SPORTSMEN'S SHOW The 1988 Sportsmen's Show will be taking place in Toronto from Friday, 11 March, to Sunday, 20 March. As usual, the WCA will be there with an interesting and educational presentation. Help will be needed to staff the booth as well as set it up and take it down. This is an excellent opportunity for members to take part in an important WCA function. All those willing to assist are asked to call Ann Moun in Toronto at 416-239-1380.

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:

<u>issue</u>	Summer 1988	<u>deadline date</u>	1 May 1988
	Autumn 1988		14 August 1988

WCA MEMBERSHIP LISTS are available to any members who wish one for personal, non-commercial use. Send two dollars in bills (no cheques, please!) to: Cash Belden, 77 Huntley Street, Apt. 1116, Toronto, M4Y 2P3.

GREAT HUMBER RIVER CANOE RACE This much-loved season opener will take place on Saturday, the 9th of April, as always on the Humber River in Metro Toronto. It is a race for many different classes of canoes and kayaks and is run over a 13-km stretch of easy grade-1 water. Entry deadline is 1 April. For information and/or registration form, contact: J. Wyld, 908 Byron Str. N, Whitby, Ontario, L1N 4P1.

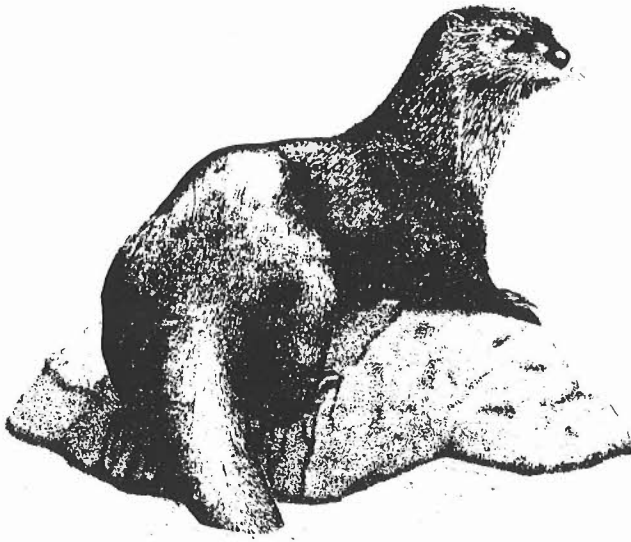
THE EIGHTH ANNUAL CANOE RENDEZVOUS will be held on Friday the 18th and Saturday the 19th of March, 1988, in Battle Creek, Michigan, USA. The presentations will feature people such as: Harry Roberst, Cliff Jacobson, and Brian Gnauck. For more information, contact: Mark Stewart, 2624 Graham St. Battle Creek, Michigan 49017, USA, phone (day) 616-781-3928, (ev.) 616-979-2560.

WCA BROCHURE A new and excellent brochure has been created presenting information on what kind of organization the WCA is, what its goals are, and what activities the members are engaged in. A membership application form is also included. The text was written by Sandy Richardson, the drawings were made by Ria Harting, and the design and overall responsibility for the project was in the hands of Stewart McIlwraith.

THE GREAT TEMAGAMI WILDERNESS EVENT will take place on either 20 or 21 April in the Convocation Hall of the University of Toronto. Timothy Findley will be the keynote speaker and a slide/talk show will be presented by Robert Bateman. You'll enjoy multi-media entertainment by outstanding musicians and theatre people who are among Canada's top entertainers. Hap Wilson will sign copies of his book Temagami Canoe Routes. It will be an event packed with information, inspiration, and entertainment. For \$3.00 you'll enjoy the best show of the year and help save Temagami.

WCA FALL MEETING 1988 will be held on the weekend of 24 and 25 September at the Minden Wild Water Preserve. More information will be presented in the next issue.

NO MORE SMOKING Congratulations to the Smerdons, Claire and Richard, who both stopped smoking in May 1987 and have not touched the poison since! Who's next?



the perfect match

It won't come as a surprise to any Algonquin visitor when we say that Park animals must be adapted to their environment. After all, if they weren't, they just couldn't survive.

Still, when you stop and think about it, many creature make it through the year only because they are able to "cop out," one way or another, when the going gets rough. Most Algonquin birds, for example, simply pick up and leave before winter arrives and, even among the animals which do stay here all year round, the majority only survive because they hibernate or spend the winter as eggs or pupae.

The few Park animals that function all year long, therefore, are in a class by themselves when it comes to being truly adapted to the Algonquin environment. And, of these select few, our personal nomination for the most perfectly adapted of all is the otter. Not only do otters breeze through frozen Algonquin winters as easily as they do through the summers, but also they can move at will between two entirely different worlds--the aquatic environment of rivers, lakes, and beaver ponds, and the terrestrial environment of our forests and meadows. So few animals even approach this fantastic adaptability that, for this reason alone, we think the otter merits special attention.

It is well known, of course, that otters are masterfully at home in the water and their long list of subtle adaptations begins here. Some, such as the streamlined shape, powerful tapering tail, and webbed feet are fairly obvious. Indeed, otters are such fast and effortless underwater swimmers that they can actually outrace fish and they can do this while swimming rightside up or upside down--it doesn't matter.

They can stay underwater for three or four minutes, during which time they are quite able to swim 400 m. One of the adaptations permitting them to do this is the ability (shared with seals) to slow down their blood circulation and thus to conserve their oxygen supply.

This becomes especially important in winter when our rivers and lakes are sealed off from the air above by thick layers of ice and snow. Nevertheless, the capacity to extract the utmost out of two lungfuls of air doesn't completely explain how otters can keep on patrolling the Park's frozen waterways as if nothing had happened. Imagine yourself, for example, striking out across Lake Opeongo under the ice and knowing that you would have to take a breath in three or four minutes. Even if you were able, as otters apparently are, to find and use pockets of air trapped under the ice, you would still have the problems of knowing where you were going and detecting fish in the under-ice darkness. In fact, no-one knows how otters get around these difficulties although some authorities have suggested that the otter's prominent whiskers may be sensitive to underwater vibrations caused by nearby prey and enable the otter to zero in to their source. This would be especially handy at night or when otters are grubbing for hibernating frogs in the bottom of beaver ponds (and stirring up murky sediments in the process).

Obviously, otters are superbly adapted for life in the water, summer or winter, but they are surprisingly good on

land as well. In spite of their short legs, they can run as fast as a man and they do, in fact, cover a lot of ground. In late winter, for example, when we are flying over the park to conduct moose or wolf surveys, we very commonly see the tracks left by otters that have travelled incredible distances through forests and hills, often kilometres away from the nearest water. Apparently their big webbed feet, acting as snow shoes, and their characteristic gait of two or three bounds followed by a slide on the snow's surface, make for very efficient progress.

The reason otters travel so much at this time of year is that males are ranging widely in search of females who have just had young and are ready to conceive again. This brings up a whole new area (reproduction and the raising of young) where otters have other remarkable adaptations for success in the Park environment. In order for young otters to go through the critical early stages of development during the relatively easy summer season, it is necessary that they be born in late winter. But, as we have just seen, this is also the time of year when mating occurs (because travel conditions are then at their best). Normally, a late winter mating would mean that the next litter would be born in late spring or early summer since the young require only two months to develop. Otters manage to have the best of both worlds, however, because the fertilized eggs do not implant in the wall of the otter's womb and start to develop until the following winter, ten months after mating. Through this amazing physiological trick, both mating and giving birth can occur at the best time of year. It also means, incidentally, that female otters are almost always pregnant.

The two to four young are born in a den which may or may not be close to water. Their mother protects them from the cold by wrapping her body into a doughnut shape and then putting her head over the hole in the middle to keep the warmth in. This high-quality care continues even beyond the age of five months (in the fall) when the young are finally weaned. By then, the mother has taught her young how to swim (by enticing them into the water with food), how and where to hunt, and what dangers to avoid. She is aided in this by a large repertoire of vocalizations, including growls, whines, snorts, and surprisingly bird-like chirps and whistles.

All of these subtleties of otter rearing are, of course, just more examples from a long list of adaptations that permit otters to function in Algonquin and to pass on their abilities to their young. And anyone who has ever watched a family of otters playing tag out in a lake in August or, with obvious relish, sliding again and again down a snow bank in January, will have no doubt that otters are completely at home here, whatever the season.

Why, one might even go so far as to say that these animals are an otterly perfect match for the Algonquin environment.

Reprinted from The Ravens, courtesy of Ministry of Natural Resources,

river water level information

[This is an update of the article by Lucie Larose on page 13 of the winter 1987 issue of Nastawgan.]

It's Saturday morning. You've gotten up at some unbelievably early hour of the morning to drive several hours to the meeting place, near or at the put-in. You get out of the car and survey the river which you are supposed to be paddling on. Oh, oh! So much for paddling whitewater. It looks like it could be one long portage since the stream has almost no water in it. Or, perhaps the opposing conditions exist; the river is in flood and it's unsafe to take paddlers (especially inexperienced ones) on the river at this level. Usually, in Ontario, we would wish to be forewarned of a scarcity of water for our whitewater outings; flood conditions and unsafe rivers are not as much of a problem here as compared with some other areas. But wouldn't it be nice to know the exact conditions which hold on a river, before you set out for a trip?

Former Wilderness Canoe Association member, John Cross, thought so and he proceeded to compile information on the various dams and gauges located on our favorite rivers. He listed this information in Nastawgan Vol. 9, No. 1 (Spring 1982), giving the various conservation areas and river authorities (along with their phone numbers) who controlled dams and gauges on the rivers. I was very interested in getting this river level information updated and, if possible, making it easier to access the information. After making a few inquiries I found out that there was a central authority in the Ministry of Natural Resources called 'Water Management Branch.' The key man who helped us out here was Mr. Peter Gryniewski, Supervisor of the Water Forecast centre in the Whitney Block at Queen's Park in Toronto. He informed me that many of our paddling rivers in the province were set up with a 'Telemark' gauge system whereby a particular river gauge could be read through a phone linkup. If one knew the correct phone number, one could call the gauge, interpret the beeps and clicks by translating them into figures and decimal points, and thereby obtain the level of the river at the gauging station.



ARCTIC COTTON GRASS - Neil McKay
(Honorable Mention, Flora; WCA 1988 Photo Contest)

Not all of the rivers which we were interested in were included in the Telemark system. Some had gauges which could only be read by a man going to the site, while others were on the 'Datscan' system. The ones which were on this system were linked by phone line to a central computer, and these could only be read through access on the computer terminal. It was thought that these could be of no use to us. South of the border, many U.S. rivers are serviced by a Telemark-type system whereby paddlers who know the number of a river gauge are able to phone directly to them to obtain river levels. They have had problems with this, though, because when too many paddlers know a gauge number, the overuse of the phone has worn down the batteries needed to run these remote stations. Hence, certain phone numbers for stations have been changed and the new numbers kept confidential. Mr. Gryniewski felt that even if we did get permission to call these gauges, that we might run into similar problems with over-use. He told me that he would check into the situation with the 'powers that be.'

Several months lapsed and a new twist was added to the situation. As a general policy, the province was going to be turning Telemark stations into Datscan computer-linked

stations; i.e., almost all of our paddling rivers (if they were M.N.R.-gauged) would soon be linked to a central computer terminal. Mr. Gryniewski suggested that if we were to phone his office on a weekly basis, that he could provide us with the gauge readings for the rivers as monitored through his central computer terminal.

The next problem was how to make this information accessible to paddlers. The easiest way was by use of a telephone message machine. And so each week, on Wednesday, someone at the Canoe Ontario office in Willowdale would make three phone calls. The first to the M.N.R., Whitney Block, the second call to the Trent Canal Authority, and the third call to the Shand Dam on the Grand River. The latter two calls were necessary since these sources gave us river levels which were not accessible on the Datscan system. The figures for the gauge levels would then be put on a tape-recorded message to be listened to by anyone calling the Canoe Ontario office, after regular business hours.

But what do the gauge figures mean? Since the figures represent water level on a particular gauge and not flow rate, we need to have first-hand, paddling experience of the river on a given occasion. Even if we listed cubic flow rate, the paddler would still not have a good idea of what this meant in paddling terms on a given river, unless they had experienced paddling it at the flow rate. For example, on 11 April 1987, we paddled the Moira River and it was extremely high (actually, in flood). Looking back over the year's weekly water levels sheets (which have been kept on file at Canoe Ontario), we know that the gauge reading for the Moira on the Wednesday of that week was 8.982. We now have an extremely high-level gauge reading for this river. Flow rate (in cubic metres) will not really give us any clearer picture of the river level. What is needed is a variety of experienced water levels linked to the gauge levels for those days.

For instance, if we only had this one high-level gauge reading for the Moira, we wouldn't know what figure we would interpret as a medium level; it would be less than 8.982, but just how much less? The more 'paddled levels' we have to connect with gauge levels, the more accurate our water level system will be. Since starting this project, we only have one or two dates and observed levels for these rivers. Ultimately we will have enough information on each river to set limits for paddling. It would look something like this: Crashinbyrne River 6.5-7.5, low; 7.5-8.0, medium; 8.5 plus, high.

For the 1988 season, if a river has only one level figure given, then you will only know that the river on that week will be higher or lower for your outing, not how much higher or lower. Therefore, it would be well worthwhile for the paddler to keep a log of the levels encountered on the rivers which he or she paddled during the season, as well as a record of the gauge levels from the Canoe Ontario River Level Service. In this manner, a paddler will have a clearer picture of what the gauge numbers mean and also, when it comes time to poll people after this year's paddling season (through their clubs), we will have that much more information to draw on. Especially interesting will be those levels recorded for days which were not scheduled club outings.

Many paddlers in the province will be benefiting from this river level information and the following people deserve our thanks. Firstly, Mr. Peter Gryniewski at the Water Management Branch of the M.N.R. Without his patience and kind help this project would not have been able to get off the ground. Also, thanks must go to Mr. Bruce Kitchen of the Trent River Authority, and to Mr. Casey Deboer, Supervisor at the Shand Dam. These people gave us weekly water levels in their locales as well as additional information on predictable changes coming up on their rivers. Finally, you should know that Christine Cybulski is the 'voice' of the Canoe Ontario river information service.

Below is given the 1987 river levels list. On it are the observed levels available to us at this point. Those rivers which have 'N.A.' beside them were rivers for which we collected gauge readings but for which we do not have any observed conditions and dates. Some rivers are to have new gauges installed and last year's levels will not be of any use for future paddling. This year's information service will begin in March. You can call the Canoe Ontario office after hours only, from Wednesday evening through Sunday evening, for the week's paddling conditions. The number is 416-495-4180.

1987 RIVER LEVELS

-- Oakville Creek	1.390 medium	-- Black River (Actinolite)	12.967 (lower Black) high
-- French River (Dry Pine Bay)	N.A.		12.305 (lower Black) med. low
-- North Magnetawan River (Burk's Falls)	3.022 medium 0.464 very low		13.189 (upper Black) high
-- Oxtongue River (Dwight)	3.618 medium		12.536 (upper Black) medium
-- Black River (Washago)	N.A.	-- Skootamatta River (Actinolite)	N.A.
-- Beaver River (Clarksburg)	N.A.	-- Petawawa River (Petawawa)	N.A.
-- Maitland River (below Wingham)	new gauge at Ben- miller	-- Madawaska River (Palmer Rapids)	1.14 low, mini- mum running level 1.043 absolute min.
-- Bronte Creek (Progreston)	new gauge to be installed	-- Mississagua River	12.59 very low 11.83 not runnable
-- Credit River (Erindale)	5.771 medium low	-- Eels Creek	12.08 very low 11.05 min. running level
-- Humber River (at Weston)	N.A.	-- Elora Gorge	1.581 medium 1.499 medium
-- Crowe River (Marmora)	N.A.		
-- Beaver River	new gauge		
-- Moira River (Foxboro)	8.727 very high 8.982 very high 8.192 medium		

wca photo contest

A total of 84 photographs (76 slides and 8 prints) were entered in the 1988 competition by 14 members. Because of the small number of entries in the Novice class, the Novice and Experienced categories were combined. The judges were Roger Harris, Toni Harting, and Sandy Richardson; the organization was in the hands of Dee Simpson.

The prizewinners are:

wilderness

1. Iceberg, Greenland	Heather McCulloch
2. Advancing storm	Bill King
HM Canal Rapids	Paul Barsevskis
HM Trees in ice	Marcia Farquhar
HM Heavenly patterns	Bill King

wilderness and man

1. Labrador	Simon Rivers-Moore
2. -no title-	Heather McCulloch
HM Homeward bound	Bill King
HM Reading	Karyn Mikoliew
HM Notakwanon River	Simon Rivers-Moore

flora

1. Alpine meadow	Ron Jasiuk
2. Fungi	Marcia Farquhar
HM Calypso Bulbosa	Ron Jasiuk
HM Arctic cotton grass	Neil McKay

fauna

1. -no title-	Jim Rawlings
2. Lone survivor	Ron Jasiuk
HM Morning visitor	Bill King
HM Dancing loons	Karyn Mikoliew

The prizes (enlargements of the winning photographs for numbers one and two, and Certificates of Merit for all placed entries) were presented at the WCA Annual General Meeting in February. The eight photographs selected as one and two are published in black and white on pages 14 and 15 of this issue of Nastawgan; a selection from the Honorable Mentions and the remaining entries are/will be presented in this and future issues.

SPECIAL ONTARIO MAPS

For the canoeist interested in tripping the waters of Ontario, an excellent map system is available that provides a very useful supplement to the existing and widely-used 1:50,000 topo maps. This is the Ontario Basic Mapping Program, established by the Provincial Ministry of Natural Resources to make available topographic maps at scales 1:10,000 and 1:20,000 eventually covering the whole of Ontario. The 1:10,000 scale maps (with five-metre contours) will be provided for all of Southern Ontario, and the 1:20,000 scale maps (with ten-metre contours) will cover all of Northern Ontario. Much mapping work remains to be done, especially in the northern part of the province, but the many OBM maps already available contain a wealth of detailed information (even beaver dams are included) that lightens the heart of the curious paddler.

The OBM maps are uncolored and measure 50 cm x 50 cm. They can be bought (for \$2.00 plus tax) directly at the counter in the Map Room, Whitney Block, Queen's Park, Toronto, or they can be ordered by mail from: Ministry of Natural Resources, Public Service Centre, Parliament Buildings, Toronto, M7A 1W3. An information leaflet and Index Maps are available free of charge.

Another useful map system is provided by the Ontario Fishing Maps, prepared by the MNR and presenting all kinds of information that should be of interest to both fishing and non-fishing canoeists. The maps include details such as: origin of name, physical data, historical information, lake characteristics, depth contour lines, fish species, angling opportunities, access, facilities. Hundreds of Ontario lakes have already been surveyed and the information presented in the fishing maps, which cost from \$0.50 to \$2.00 each. For more information and a listing of available maps, contact the MNR at the above address.

Toni Harting



HEAVENLY PATTERNS - Bill King
(Honorable Mention, Wilderness; WCA 1988 Photo Contest)



A DREAM LIKE MINE

Author: M. T. KeFly
Publisher: Stoddart, Toronto, 1987. (\$19.95)
Reviewed by: Toni Harting

This is the first time a review of a literary, fiction book is published in Nastawgan. Not surprisingly, because few are the novels dealing with subjects directly of interest to wilderness canoeists.

However, A Dream Like Mine, although not about canoeing as such, deals with something every active canoeist should be very much aware of, i.e. our relationship with the natural environment and its original inhabitants and paddlers, the Native Indians. It is about the country we canoe in, the lands and waters we love.

This novel, which recently won Kelly the Governor-General's Literary Award for fiction, tells the story of a journalist going north to collect material for an article on sacred Indian rites in a Reserve near Kenora in north-western Ontario. He gets entangled in a confrontation between the greed of modern industrialized society and the desperate efforts of the Indians to save their way of life and their feeling of self. This confrontation results in an orgy of irrational revenge and destruction that in the end doesn't lead anywhere: nobody wins, there is no right or wrong.

Kelly, who is a dedicated canoeist and a member of the WCA, has given us a gripping, haunting story of passion, violence, and madness, written in a stark, direct style that grabs the reader by the throat and just doesn't let go. The very last sentence of the book is horrifying in its implications, a masterful piece of writing that pulls it all together.



WILLOW PTARMIGAN - Neil McKay

The book is a daily journal written during the trip showing the "laid-backness" of the Shepardsons. For instance, injuries incurred during the trip are mentioned but do not seem to prevent the Shepardsons from just carrying on, noting the progression of the healing process. On 29 June 1980 Margie injured her knees when falling on a slick rock while carrying Randy, still in his sleeping bag, down to the boat to give him another couple of hours sleep before breakfast, while the parents paddled the canoe. The writers just note that Margie could not walk very well and that it was also hard for her to bend her knees or paddle. Despite this the family just carried on somehow.

Another example of their "laid-backness" is how the parents observed the behavior of the children during the strenuous trip. There is a funny description contained in the second part of the book, where the parents introduce the fifth and sixth members of the expedition, Turtle and Elly. Turtle was Randy's alter-ego, while Elly fulfilled this function for Tina. The Shepardsons just explain that since they did not bring extra children along for the kids to play with, they compensated by overlooking a little schizophrenia. Actually the writers observe that Turtle, who seemed to be more evident on the trip than Elly, was "fundamentally a far more fascinating and imaginative character than either of us." Descriptions by the Shepardsons as to how others camp and canoe are also quite revealing of good observational skills. The Shepardsons found themselves wind-bound together with a group of three native Indians who had gone out for an evening of moose hunting and who found themselves caught without food and shelter. An Indian moose-hunting scene in the Shepardson's canoe is written up in descriptive detail.

Although the writers are realistic about the scope of their travels, they never see themselves as extra-ordinary persons, driven by a vision to conquer the North-American continent by canoe. One gets the impression that the Shepardsons do not think their journey should be regarded as anything more than just what some people chose to do in their summer holidays.

I really like the philosophy behind the trip; the fact that the children were part of it, not as children who should listen, but as partners, insofar possible; the fact that the parents were willing to portage the 21-kilometre long Methye portage carrying rocks the children had collected; the fact that on their last two trips they carried schoolwork for the children which needed to be sent to school whenever they hit a village.

While reading this book there was more than one instance in which I found myself in total agreement with the philosophy of the writers. I especially liked the observations about lining canoes which, in the Shepardsons' estimation "...may very well be the most deceptively difficult and most seldomly mastered canoeing technique there is. Everybody likes to practice shooting rapids but no one wants to go out and practice lining for an afternoon."

The part of the book describing the first part of the journey is full of information, obviously from experiences gained by dealing with all aspects of canoeing, portaging, and wilderness camping. The Shepardsons did not have sponsors for their trip, consequently the book is not extolling the virtues of some overpriced product. They are remarkably vocal in their criticism of Timberline tents and have some disparaging things to tell about the quality of the zippers in these tents.

Some minor points of criticism: the editing could have been done more carefully; most of page 174 has been printed twice; I do not think that the illustrations are doing justice to this book; I sorely missed a useful index.

In short, a marvellous, warm, funny, human book that will delight anybody who has a love for family, canoeing, and the outdoors.



FAIRY POINT - Diane Wills

THE FAMILY CANOE TRIP

A Unique Approach to Family Canoeing

Authors: The Shepardsons, Carl, Margie, Tina and Randy
Publisher: ISC Books, Inc. Merrillville, Indiana, 1985. (\$20.50)
Reviewed by: Ria Harting

The Shepardsons are a special family of canoeists. The adults, Carl and Margie, started canoeing in the middle 1960s. The children, Tina and Randy, were introduced to canoeing and wilderness travel while still in their diapers. "The Family Canoe Trip" is a description of an approximately 9,600 kilometre canoe trip undertaken during the summer months of 1980, 1981, and 1982. In 1980 the family canoed from Marlborough, New Hampshire, to Kenora, Ontario. There they stored their 20-foot, home-built canoe till 1981 when they travelled from Kenora to Fort Smith, Northwest Territories. Again they stored the canoe till May of 1982 when they travelled from Fort Smith to Homebrew, Alaska. Tina and Randy were, at the start of the trip, respectively eight and five years old.

grass river

Bill King



This article represents something of a departure for me -- I usually write about rivers only to enthuse. The Grass River doesn't rate enthusiasm although as a trip for the less-adventurous it would be excellent but for the length of the drive to get there.

Having enjoyed the Voyageur country of northern Saskatchewan (see "The Lonely Land Revisited," Nastawgan Winter 1983), Joan and I have, since 1983, had an appetite for more of the same. The Grass has minor importance in the history of the fur trade (see "Fur Trade Routes of Canada/Then and Now" by Eric Morse). In the era before Cumberland House was established in 1774, "The Upper Track" consisting of the Sturgeon Weir River, the Goose River, and the lower Nelson River, in addition to the Grass, formed a connecting route between the Saskatchewan River and York Factory. It was later abandoned in favor of the easier route utilizing the Hayes River and Lake Winnipeg.

But truthfully, it was not historical considerations which led to a choice of the Grass River but a rapid perusal of the map of Northern Manitoba. "Wouldn't it be nice," I had thought, "to leave the car at home and leave all the transport to Via Rail." The Grass is well-situated in this respect, running from west to east between the two spurs of the railroad which end respectively at Lynn Lake and Churchill. The timing, the connections, everything fits; and then we got the price! All of a sudden the merits of driving reasserted themselves.

In actual fact, the Grass River is equally suitable for access by car. Starting from the village of Cranberry Portage (the headwaters of the river), multiple-road access permits a short, medium, or long canoe trip as desired. (We chose to stop at Sasagiu Rapids, a trip which took us 16 days at a very leisurely pace.) The downside of this road access is, as usual, that several of the lakes have cottages and motor boats. The Thompson-to-FlinFlon bus makes a car shuttle relatively easy.

The trip provides many pleasures. The lakes are expansive and scenic with numerous islands, attractive rock formations, and good fishing. At the north end of Tramping Lake are the best rock pictographs I have ever seen. The river is, in general, sluggish, its gentle gradient being mostly used up in waterfalls. This, of course, means a profusion of bird life of many species, the eagles (of both varieties), cormorants, and white pelicans being our personal superstars. We saw no large animals, but beaver and otter were abundant. There is virtually no runnable whitewater but the waterfalls are usually scenic and in the case of two, Wekusko Falls and Whitewood Falls, spectacular. We camped at the lip of Whitewood Falls, situated in the most remote part of the river, for a day and a half drinking in the beauty of the scene.

So, in summary, I would rate this trip at 6 out of 10 due to the distance and lack of whitewater excitement. It does, however, have many admirable features. Anyone who would like further details would be welcome to contact me.



an african challenge

It was while I was browsing through a book of general information on Lesotho that I came across these words:

"No one has yet canoed the whole length of the Senqu River from Mokhotlong to the point where it leaves Lesotho at the confluence with the Makhaleng River."

Proud Canadian that I am, and you are, you can imagine what my first thought was: we could do it! So I checked into it a little more.



David F. Pelly

The Senqu River rises in the highest part of Lesotho, only kilometres from the eastern border with South Africa. From there it drops more than 650 m in about 320 km before it crosses the border to the south. In the spring (October) it can be a raging torrent. This year, one of its tributaries, the Quthing River, flooded so badly and so quickly that it drowned two men; destroyed 125 houses, 95 fields, and 17 km of road; and killed 262 cows, 643 sheep, 251 goats, 40 horses, and 8 donkeys -- all in the space of two days.

One party tried to descend the Senqu in 1952, but a flash flood in a tributary raised the waterlevel by two metres in a few seconds, and their boats were irreparably damaged so that they had to abandon the descent. Several others have successfully descended parts of the river since then, but no one has yet canoed the entire length. The catch is that in any season but the spring flood, there probably won't be enough water to float a canoe.

Canoes and camping gear could be rented in neighboring South Africa. The countryside surrounding the Senqu River is beautiful semi-wilderness. The people of Lesotho are very friendly. And it's never been done. A river-bagger's dream!

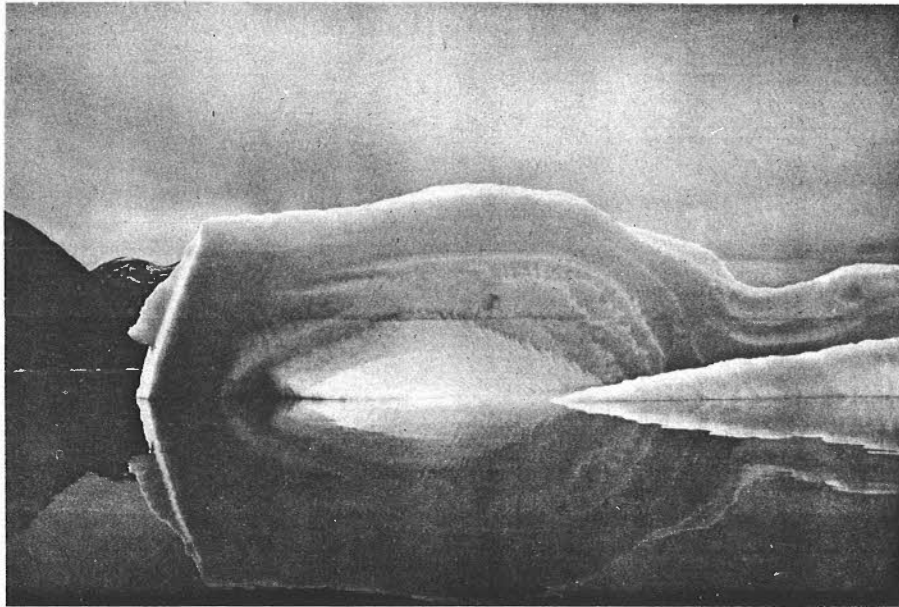
There it is -- the challenge is out.

WCA-member David Pelly is a freelance writer who was in Africa on assignment for Villagers Magazine for six weeks last fall.



LONE SURVIVOR - Ron Jasiuk
(Second prize, Fauna)

wca photo cor



ICEBERG, GREENLAND - Heather McCulloch
(First prize, Wilderness)



-no title- Jim Rawlings
(first prize, Fauna)



ADVANCING STORM - Bill King
(Second prize, Wilderness)

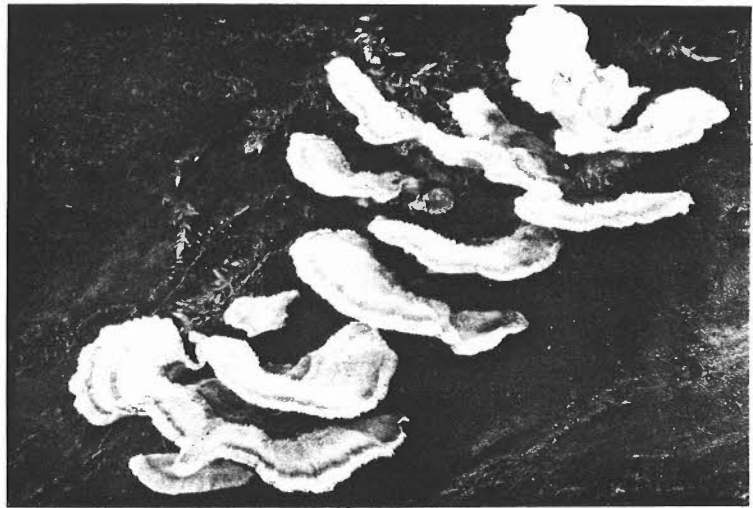
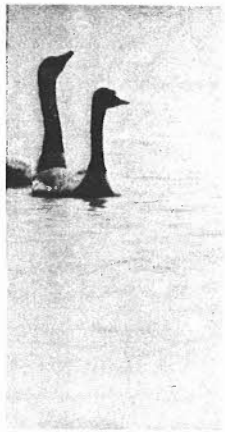


-no title- Heather McCulloch
(Second prize, Wilderness and Man)

Contest



LABRADOR - Simon Rivers-Moore
(First prize, Wilderness and Man)



FUNGI - Marcia Farquhar
(Second prize, Flora)



ALPINE MEADOW - Ron Jasiuk
(First prize, Flora)

labrador plateau — romaine river

Karl Hartwick

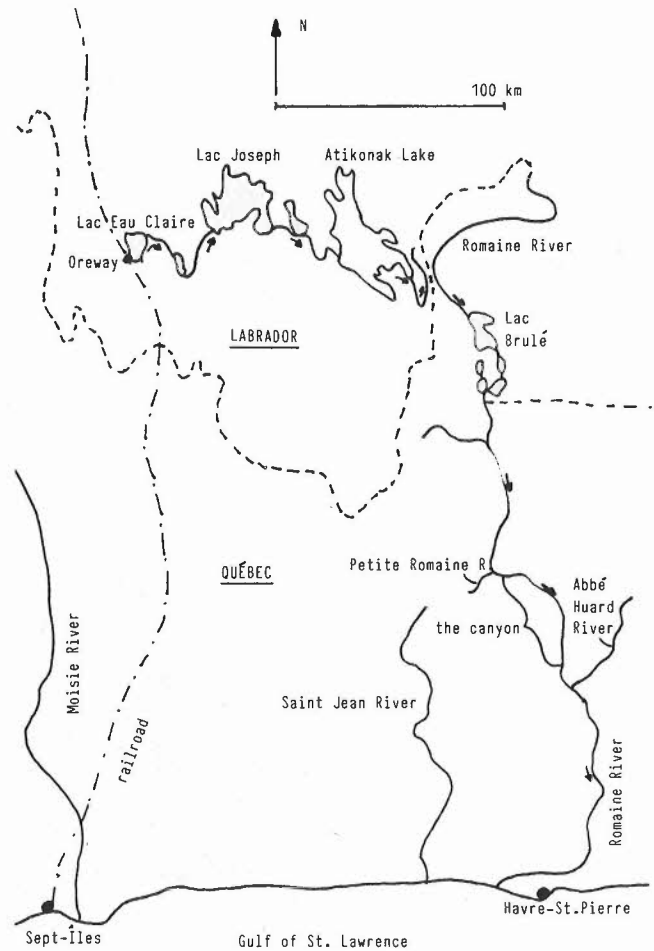


Summer 1894: An expedition led by A.P. Low of the Geological Survey of Canada travelled southeast down Atikonak Lake. Lying in the southwest corner of the Labrador plateau, Atikonak is a large lake filled with islands of all sizes and sinuous bays leading off in every direction. Guided by local Indian guides, Low's party entered a bay in the lake's southeast end and ascended a small stream. After ten kilometres of travel they arrived at a portage trail heading more or less east. This carry of slightly more than three kilometres passed through recently-burned country: low, barren, rocky hills with swamp lands interspersed. At the end, they reached a small stream flowing north; 400 m later they entered the Romaine River. Low had easily solved the always difficult problem of "discovering" the most expedient route from one major watershed to another: he relied on the knowledge of his native companions who knew the traditional trails and camps. Without them, he might easily have spent many days trying to find his way out of Atikonak.

Summer 1987: My partner Bob Davis and I paddled southeast through Atikonak Lake and ascended the same small unnamed stream. The height of land route was easy to see on our 1:50,000 maps but the start of the portage trail could not be found. The old burn had grown up in the intervening 93 years. The Montagnais Cree had left the country, and the very few canoe parties that had passed this way in modern times left no portage trail. We got out the axes and our compass. After a long and exhausting day blazing and cutting a new trail, we made an exciting discovery: here in the caribou moss overgrown with spruce trees was a definite trail. Tracing it for 200 or 300 m we came to an old Montagnais camp situated in a lovely open spruce grove on a low bluff. Fifty metres away was the small tributary leading north to the Romaine. This had to be Low's route or rather the native route that they shared with the explorer. That evening, as I gazed at the old lichen-covered stove supports and greying tent pickets, I was transported back to that era when this trail and this camp were well-used links in their highway to the interior. It was a bitter-sweet reflection. I was filled with admiration for them: this is remote, rugged country with no abundance of game -- yet they lived in the land for long stretches hunting, fishing, and trapping. Their comings and goings were the routines of everyday life, not a once-in-a-lifetime expedition tied more or less to modern technology. But there was sadness too. That era was over. No one had camped here for 30 or 40 years -- perhaps more -- and the Montagnais will not likely return.

Bob had often remarked to me in a different context how native people over thousands of years have had such gentle impact on the land, despite so-called traditional camping practices, whereas our culture has so often scarred the country irrevocably. Thinking about the Romaine downstream with its hydro survey clearings and what they portend for this land, one is drawn to reflect on the sharp contrast with this ancient clearing and its weathered bits of wood.

The spectacular vistas of the canyon country of the Romaine lay ahead but the subtle aesthetics of this old portage trail and campsite would be with us for the rest of the trip and long after. Here was a place inhabited by the



spirits of a people whose relationship with the natural world we struggle to understand.

We had come a long way to reach that place and the story really starts like many Labrador canoe trips in the city of Sept-Îles on the St. Lawrence north shore.

Starting a canoe trip by train has always been my favorite means of travel. You feel you are finally on the trip. The car is gone, your gear is aboard, and you are moving into the woods. The train is a link with the past-- the white man's first real intrusion into the wilderness. The Québec North Shore and Labrador Railway as it leaves Sept-Îles passes through some of the most beautiful country in eastern Canada, particularly the lower Moisie and Nipissis river valleys.

On this particular evening (17 August) the valley was shrouded in the mist of a coastal weather system. We were on



an evening train and once past the big drops of the Moisie canyon we were soon in darkness. The night train had a cozy, romantic air to it and the car was filled with pleasant conversation with our fellow travellers. This was rudely interrupted by our planned stop at Oreway (mile 186 from Sept-Îles). Bob and I unloaded at this railway work centre at 1:15 a.m. It was cool, dark, raining lightly, and there was absolutely no place we could see to pitch our tent, a delightfully-roomy egyptian cotton shelter but requiring poles. The problem was solved by grabbing four or five hours sleep in the bunkhouse recreation room complete with color TV and nogahyde chairs -- so much for our retreat to a simpler era.

We were away from there before first light and carried the 1000-metre trail east from the tracks to Eau Claire Lake. Our outfit consisted of Bob's 18-foot cedar canvas prospector, a duluth pack, two duffles, one containing most of our estimated 21-day food supply, and a 10-15 kg box of fresh food for the first four or five days where we expected few carries. Eau Claire is a big, open lake with a few small islands. The sky was clearing and the wind following on our quarter. It was wonderful to be paddling again; the sort of day you dream about in March -- long lake vistas, big rolling hills set well back from the ragged black spruce shores, a sky filled with fast moving clouds, promising fair weather but containing just enough dark menace to invite frequent study and discussion with your partner. By lunch, we were off the lake via its northeast corner and descending the Eau Claire River at this point, a small stream shallow in places requiring some wading. Lunch over an open fire was taken at an old Indian campsite -- the first of many we stopped or camped at. Invariably, Bob would spot them; his experienced eyes would catch a subtle weathered blaze or, studying the shore for a suitable place for a tent site, he was drawn to the same terrain the Indians had been. This one, as most, was a late-season spot with four stove supports surrounded by tent poles -- two long vertical uprights to hold the ridge pole and shorter "pickets" to hold the canvas wall out.



By late afternoon, we reached Lac Pas d'Eau, well-named as it averages less than a metre in depth and nowhere reaches even two. At the far end of the lake, a shower struck with considerable winds. Here the lake was so shallow we were able to step out of the canoe in the middle of the lake and put on our raingear. Re-entering the river, we stopped 1.6 km south of the lake and made a snug camp and watched the storms move all around us the rest of the evening. This was a camp Bob had used in 1984 on the way to the headwaters of the Petit Mecatina. Split firewood from that summer was still dry, sound, and usable. A small flock of Canada geese honked nearby. We had seen a few small flocks earlier. With the evening chill and the dark swirling clouds, it all added up to a feeling of October.

Our departure the next day was delayed by the baking of bread, usually an evening event, and the repair of one cracked rib. The canoe had spent most of the summer onshore in the heat and was dry and brittle. Within a few days, however, it soaked up water and the wood became supple and alive again. We had no further problems.

The day was cloudy and cool as we paddled north to northeast on the river. Several rapids between our camp and Lac Joseph were negotiated in moderately low water by running, lining, and wading. The last rapid contained a drop which we portaged and camped below. A memorable evening. Our camp faced west and the clouds lifted just enough to create a spectacular sunset. Fish chowder was scheduled and the river provided a suitable candidate for the pot. We lightened our fresh food box by baking squash in the reflector oven.

The following morning we entered Lac Joseph under steadily improving skies. Joseph is a huge lake filled with



islands which belie its size. Our course across only its southern aspect was slightly more than 40 km long. Another exhilarating day of travel - virtually windless; we made excellent progress amongst the many islands. There was one short portage over a neck of land in the middle of the lake to cut off a long paddle to the north. At lunch we watched a big storm build from the northwest. Hastily, we put on our rain gear and tarped our loads only to stand foolishly in the bright sunshine and watch the storm lash the opposite shore less than two kilometres away.

Below the lake the next day, we re-entered the Eau Claire River, now much enlarged. Apparently, the reservoir effect of the big upstream lake held the runoff from earlier rains longer. The higher water made it possible to paddle all the rapids to Kepimits Lake where a fishing camp was located. Here we met the only people we would see in our 23 days out. Below Kepimits, we ran another strong rapid and lined the bottom where the river was really jumping. At the foot of this rapid we met another guide from the camp who hailed from Port aux Basques on the "Island." He treated us to an exciting ascent of this big rapid in his large aluminum boat powered by a 25-hp outboard. Surprisingly, he said they provisioned their camp by boat, the guides coming in from the rail lines 130 km to the west in late May lowering their boats by lines down the big drops.

By late afternoon, we had reached Atikonak Lake, after negotiating some moderate rapids and one 400-metre carry. Upon entering the lake, I glimpsed a large bird of prey take off. Losing sight of it briefly behind a forested knoll, it reappeared climbing the warm updrafts in graceful arcs. Identified now as a bald eagle, it continued to rise until a mere speck moving in and out of the lower clouds.

Reaching the main body of Atikonak Lake the next morning, we joined A.P. Low's route. We were paddling into a steadily increasing headwind and made frequent stops on the beaches of the many islands to stretch and to check the map for the most sheltered route. Caribou tracks on almost every beach suggested a good population here not noted further west. The islands probably afford good calving grounds safer from predators than the mainland. We had seen two woodland caribou, a cow and calf, in the first narrows of the lake. Far to the southeast our course was marked by a large sand dune 20 or 30 m high which stood out like a navigational beacon from the black spruce horizon. By early afternoon, we reached it. Climbing to the top, a wild scene lay before us. The wind was steadily increasing from the southeast, a dark cold sky was building, and every open passage was filled with whitecaps. Rather than stop for lunch we ate some gorp, tarped our outfit, and worked into the wind reaching the





second narrows as the rain started. Past the second narrows we turned southeast into the full blast of the storm. Rather than struggle miserably on for the rest of the day to gain a few kilometres, we opted to turn and camp on a sheltered sand beach a few hundred metres back. Level tent sites were at a premium here, but with some axe work and the kitchen tarp up, we managed to make a comfortable camp. The weather remained cold and wet and by 8:30 we retired to the tent with the tea pail and some chocolate.

A cold raw morning greeted us when we awoke, but the weather quickly improved and, best of all, the wind had swung out of the north and was now blowing more or less on our backs. By late morning, we reached the bottom of the bay where the unnamed stream enters Atikonak. The little river tumbles into the lake over a one-metre fall and a faint portage trail of 50 m was found. We made three other short carries as we slowly ascended this waterway first as it ran south, then meandered east, and finally north. Here in a long lake-like expansion, it arcs northeast to come within four kilometres of the Romaine River. At the end of the last carry were the remains of a very old Montagnais camp, grey stumps with lichen growing from their tops. Perhaps they dated back to the early 1950s when the new railway north from Sept-Îles made access to the plateau much easier. The Indians stopped coming this far east at this time.

Our problem now was to find the route over to the Romaine. Stew Coffin and Dick Irwin, on their 1980 journey, found two clearings on the east shore where surveyors had come in by helicopter. They had made the carry from the second clearing. We planned to do the same although our subsequent discovery of the old trail suggested the Indians left this stream further north. In any case, finding the start of this traditional trail would have been difficult as the shoreline was mostly brushy with alders and labrador tea. We located the clearings easily and decided to camp at the second. It was not an attractive spot but we found a reasonable site on slightly higher ground above the slash and debris of the survey camp. The survey lines are clearly cut out but they do not head in a useful direction. We did walk in far enough to find an open ridge from which we could see a long expanse of low string bog that we must either cross or skirt. It didn't look inviting. This was typical headwaters country. Small streams, acres of bog, and low relief with only black spruce and tamarack. As usual, there was lots of action in the sky to watch that evening. Two brief showers passed, followed by a perfect rainbow. As I finished baking the bread, I thought of the string bog and hoped the rainbow was an omen of good travel.

We left camp at first light the next morning without breakfast and walked a bearing of 108° magnetic, deviating from it to find the best ground. I blazed the trail with axe and compass and Bob cleared the route with his axe to allow the 18-foot canoe to pass. It was a good trail about 1200 m long through mostly semi-open boreal forest. We stopped at a low, rocky knoll at the edge of a small pond. We were pleased with our work and returned to camp, breakfasted, broke camp, and carried our loads over. Crossing this small pond by canoe we then walked through boggy land a few hundred metres north until we reached a small stream. Well, actually a ditch. Although barely a metre wide, it was

flowing toward the Romaine. Bienvenu à Québec! We paddled down this stream for more than an hour making slow progress through its meanders and leftovers until finally it entered a hopeless tangle of alders. In retrospect, we should not have bothered with it but it was a break from trail work.

We blazed the next trail (about 1500 m) at 92° magnetic. The terrain was not so hospitable as at our morning walk. Rocky, low ground at the start and three other alder-choked runoffs were crossed. Late in the afternoon, while blazing the trail, I came on the old route crossing our portage from the north. At first, I thought it might be a game trail but soon old axe cuts were found and then the route ended in that splendid Indian campsite mentioned earlier. It was a big clearing absolutely level on a low bluff. Fifty metres away, through an alder thicket, we came to the tributary at the point Low described, 400 m south of its junction with the Romaine. It was almost 5:00 p.m. and our outfit was back at the start of the carry. But we both agreed we wanted to spend the night here in this place filled with the romance of past travels. Returning to our gearing, we began the carry. Over this poorer trail, it was exhausting work. We finally reached camp just after 7 p.m. Bob had gone ahead with his tent duffel and was already getting the tent up. I had no doubts about my first task. We had had nothing to drink since breakfast, being loathe to drink the swamp water and not taking any time for a fire. A gin pole and the tea kettle were soon in operation over a fire. Tea never tasted better. We polished off one full kettle in the failing light and then collapsed into the tent with another full kettle of hot lemon drink and our lunch which we had skipped in favor of a short pemmican break. We had put in a 13 1/2-hour day with only 1 1/2 hours off for breakfast. Sleep came immediately but not before a deep feeling of satisfaction. We both felt that the remainder of this old route lies to the north of our new trail. However, our blazed and cleared portage is now in, and using it a party would save considerable time crossing the height of land.

Over the next three days, we made our way down the upper Romaine through the Burnt (Brulé) Lakes area. The upper Romaine, above Brulé, is mostly placid and brushy along its banks. This area is so named presumably as it was extensively burned in A.P. Low's time. Today, there are still large areas of burned forest at the south end of these lakes and down the Romaine as well. We entered a southeast bay of Brulé which leads to Petit Lac Louzeau. Camping on this bay, we found an Indian site, perhaps the most interesting one of the trip. In the bush behind us were the remains of an old canoe handmade in the Cree fashion, probably with a crooked knife. There was a drying pyramid for fish and game as well. After an unsettled, windy day, the weather cleared here. It was cool enough that when the evening chores were over, we lay close to the fire like well-fed cats on the hearth. That evening was highlighted by the most impressive display of northern lights I have witnessed. From the apex of the sky pin wheels of light swept in curtains mostly green-white but at times trimmed in purple, not just in the north but in every quadrant. A fitting end to our journey on the big lakes.



After crossing the other lakes in the Brulé chain, we re-entered the Romaine, now a much larger river with a well-defined sloping valley. The river begins again with a flourish in a long sweeping powerful rapid. Right at its head, we saw a green plastic canoe wrapped around a rock with a cairn of stones piled on shore. For over a week, we had seen no evidence of recent canoe travel and now we encountered the scene of a disaster with this ominous cairn beside it. Happily, on closer inspection, the cairn revealed itself to be a causeway of rocks constructed to try and reach the canoe. Back in the woods, the party had camped and cut large poles in a futile effort to pry the boat off. We ran the top of this rapid and then waded down the rest. Walking with the bow painter, I slipped two or three times with the result that by the time we paddled out into the pool below, I was wet from the chest down. The stricken canoe at the top of the rapid and my wet carcass at the bottom left me feeling much less exhilarated than under the northern lights less than twenty-four hours before. Six hundred metres away was another big drop. A steep 50-m carry on the west shore brought us onto a level, semi-open terrace with a wide-angle view upriver and the hills beyond. Dry clothes, a fire, a hot meal, and soon all was right with the world again.

Four days and 160 km after crossing the height of land to the Romaine, Bob and I were camped at the beginning of the descent into the Romaine River canyon. Our tent was pitched back on a soft bed of caribou moss in an old burn. It was one of those idyllic mornings on a camping trip. The rising sun was burning off the dew, glistening on the moss and labrador tea. The river made a 90° turn here and from our breakfast campfire we could look upstream at rising clouds of mist rolling over the river as the wind began. Upriver, the current was tranquil but to our right, toward the canyon, the river shoaled and broke into small swifts. You sensed, without looking at a map, that they would build into bigger rapids.

The previous day, three kilometres upriver, we had passed the mouth of the Little Romaine. Here we left the traditional Indian route to the coast followed by A.P. Low in 1894. The Cree bypassed the canyon by ascending the Little Romaine, and by a series of lakes and streams reached the St. John River which they paddled to the coast. Low summed up the options in his report to the Geological Survey: "Nothing is known of the river for over 50 miles below this point, except that it is quite impassable for canoes, probably on account of long rapids with perpendicular rocky walls where portages are impossible. Nothing but the absolute impossibility of passing up and down this part of the river would induce the Indians to make use of the present portage route between the Romaine and the St. John rivers, which is the longest and worst of those known to the writer anywhere in northeastern Canada. Careful inquiries from a score of Indians met coming inland afforded no information concerning this part of the river, which has never been descended by anyone so far as known." A.P. Low's experience notwithstanding, it would seem probable that, in the past, some native people had ventured into and probably through the canyon if only to satisfy themselves that the

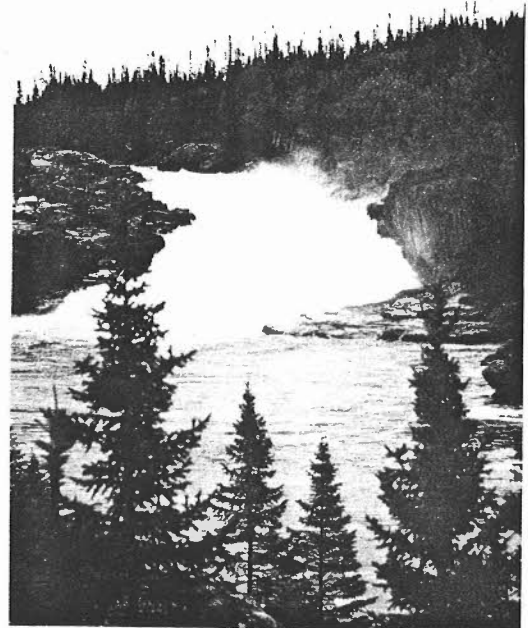
arduous St. John portage route was the preferable way. For the native people, any route would not only be used upstream as well as downstream, but should also supply accessible game for their subsistence. Faint trails over to the St. John still probably exist as the first trail on the Little Romaine was found by Stew Coffin and Dick Irwin's party on a sidetrip off the Romaine in 1980.

I had mixed feelings of anticipation. On the one hand, I was drawn by the reports of the spectacular scenery of the canyon. In 80 km the river descends from 427 m to 183 m. Yet the camps and trails of the Montagnais had become old friends. We expected to take a week to cover the 80 km of the canyon. But Low's route to the St. Jean River involved 30 portages totalling 31 km of carrying. To re-open these trails would take much longer than a week. It was not a practical alternative.

Our first day in the canyon we made surprisingly good progress covering over 20 km. Many of the rapids were runnable and the lining was relatively easy. The hills of the river valley were closing in as we progressed through the afternoon, and the views up- and downriver more inspiring as this "pre-canyon" area became steeper and steeper.

By the afternoon of the second day, the river lay in a steep canyon. Lunch had been taken at the downstream end of a large, sloping ledge beside a picturesque five-metre falls and gorge. But another waterfall immediately after this involved a difficult carry over huge boulders and terrible footing. Below this we lined, made short difficult carries, and ran some sections. Thus began our descent of the real canyon. Except for 20 km of placid water in the middle which divides the turbulence roughly in half, the character of the river was set now. The terrain up in the forest was often just as rugged with the added difficulty of brush and no trail.

With each set of drops, the problem resolved itself around the question what side of the river we should be working from. Choosing one side often commits you to that side until a calm pool is reached. In such steep terrain, your route along the shore could suddenly end on the cliff of a side canyon with no way down to the water. To avoid this, we would scout our carries often right to the put-in point. Then there was always the question of run, line, or carry. Fortunately, long before this trip, Bob and I had evolved a compatible philosophy about these obstacles. We always tried to choose what was most efficient and safe. The possibility of rescue from this canyon was not good. In our adherence to this approach, we did get carried away one afternoon. After a seemingly endless series of liftovers around ledges we paddled a short pool and came to another. Without even looking at it, we unloaded and made one carry. On the way back for the second load, Bob asked, "Mind if I ask you a question? Why are we portaging this?" He was right! This rapid was narrow but quite runnable. We threw the remaining gear in the canoe and shot down it. But on the serious side of this debate, we did reach the coast without an upset and without swamping. The only minor mishap took place on this second afternoon. While lining down, I took a paddle and waded into the current to fend the canoe off a



rock as Bob lowered it on the line. I should have stayed on the shore since the canoe came right at me. I was butted aside and lost my grip on the paddle. We never saw it again. Fortunately, we had brought four.

That second day in the canyon, we only covered seven kilometres, but the next day was probably the most discouraging one. It started off in fine fashion. I caught three excellent speckled trout for our breakfast, but matters gradually deteriorated from there. We were camped above a staircase series of falls. The route around this was difficult going; bad footing over rocks made worse by a light rain and short brushy carries through the woods. The rest of the day was much the same. By early afternoon we were looking downstream over a continuous series of unrunnable ledges and rapids. At the end of this, no more than a kilometre away, was a huge boulder the size of a small house. This boulder also marked the end of the first half of the canyon. For over three hours, that boulder was in view as we slugged along in the rain and bad footing. In a few places there was no footing at all as we came to a small cliff. Here we would laboriously two-man-lift our gear down the precipice and up over huge boulders until one man could resume carrying his load. The only bright spot (literally) was the observation that the rock in this area was speckled with an iridescent blue mineral called labradorite. Past this section, we reached a sharp bend turning north through a series of powerful but runnable rapids. At the bottom of these, we camped. We had covered barely five kilometres for the day.

The next day, we paddled the placid middle section of the canyon. The weather was again distinctly unfriendly, cold rain and a head wind. The scenery, however, was magnificent -- high rocky cliffs rising two or three hundred metres from a steeply forested slope. After this, the weather cleared and the next two days we worked down the second half of the canyon. In a linear fashion, our progress was no greater than in the upper half but we began to think of distance in terms of descent; 50 m of drop was a good day, no matter how far we went. We also found some old trails. One in particular cut off a very treacherous corner in the river. The blazes were old and healed-over and the trail was growing-in. By freshening the blazes and cutting out trees here and there, we had a good route except for a mountain goats' descent at the end. At this point the walls of the canyon were nearly vertical, often right out of the river. From our lunch spot on the other side of the river we had a more charitable view of the portage. The original trailmaker had made the descent in the only possible place.

Those final days in the canyon involved slow, steady progress around rugged falls and ledges bounded by mountainous topography. By now, we had shifted our psyche to this pace and although just as tired at the end of the day, we felt in tune with the country again. On the sixth day, we made camp below a rapid where two tributaries enter the Romaine almost directly opposite each other. Below this point, the gradient of drop lessened considerably. I doubt I will ever forget this campsite. We were on a large flat ledge of rock which jutted out from the east shore forcing the run-out of the rapid to sweep west around it. In effect, it was like a front row balcony seat. To the north rose several mountainous hills of sheer rock which seemed to

guard the land we had just left. In the immediate foreground were several hundred metres of whitewater. The energy and turbulence of whitewater set against the massive implacability of mountains. It was late and by the time we ate supper the moon was rising behind us. We never saw it from our place deep in the canyon, but its soft light played on the rocky cliffs rising in front of us and the rapids upstream.

Our progress the next day made us think we had been loaded on a spring in the canyon. We travelled over 50 km with almost no effort. The current was strong, the rapids were all runnable, we even had a tailwind. The scenery was still spectacular with lovely mountain vistas in every direction. Tributaries entering the canyon did so by pouring over the walls in vertical cascades. Past the mouth of a major tributary, the Abbé Huard River, which had its own side canyon or valley, the relief gradually lowered and by later afternoon we were no longer in a constricted vertical valley. The forest had been changing more gradually since the height of land. Formerly only black spruce and tamarack, there had been increasing amounts of birch and now, in the lower river, white spruce and balsam. The latter were of good size which is a feature of the north shore. Many of the birch had begun to turn and the hillsides were spattered with yellow. At our camp that night (4 September), we could not hear the roar of rushing water for the first time in a week. A still, peaceful evening; chatting, baking bread, watching the fire and the night sky. The peaceful travel of that day didn't last as the next morning we entered a series of heavier but still runnable rapids. These led to the "Les Murailles" section of the Romaine. The translation means a "high defensive wall." This is an area of narrow faults creating gorges but not the high relief of a canyon. It begins as the river pours through a fault in a series of ledges ending in a falls, themselves split in two by an island of granite. Again the portaging was rough over slippery rocks. A cold rain had started and the footing was precarious. I had slipped on wet rocks a few times in the canyon with painful but not serious results. By now I was becoming more expert in carrying loads in this terrain. I could usually tell which boulders were going to move as I stepped on them and which ones were "slippery when wet."

By early afternoon, we reached another big fault with a steep waterfall. We found a potential portage route blocked by a side canyon. Ferrying across the rapid above the falls, cutting a trail through to an open, burned hillside, and getting the outfit over used up the rest of the afternoon. The pool below this carry was not a classic campsite but as day was fading, the sky was still pouring rain, and another ledge lay just ahead, there was no incentive to push on. A lot of alder cutting was necessary to squeeze the tent in. The spray from the falls must have created a moist environment, as there was not a bit of sound, standing deadwood for a fire. After a cold supper in the tent out of the rain, we headed straight into our warm sleeping bags. A comfortable end to an uncomfortable day.

By the following morning, the weather was clearing, warmer with some sun breaking through. We made several short liftovers around ledges until we reached the start of a long, steep section of rapids leading to a lake-like expansion in the river called Bassin des Murailles. We knew



from the Coffin-Irwin party that in 1980 they found this a very rough, treacherous section. After reaching the basin, Stew Coffin had found a trail which led down into the basin from a small lake. Bob and I spent almost an hour looking for the start of such a route, without success. However, we knew we were in the right spot to start this portage. Taking a bearing to the small lake, we cut in a route. Once clear of the Labrador tea and brush near the shore, we found very steep but fairly open going to a plateau to the right of the lake mentioned. We moved our entire outfit to this spot and made a fire for lunch. This was a true blueberry paradise with handfuls of the fruit at their peak. It would have been wrong not to have made a blueberry bannock. (The recipe we had was normally for four but with lots of butter we managed to stretch it out to feed the two of us.) The balance of the day, we spent getting over the rest of this portage. From our lunch stop the forest was open but brushy with Labrador tea which was like wading through snow as it grabbed your legs. In a few hundred metres we found some old blazes and a faint trail. This saved time but there were still some trees to cut out. The trail made an extremely steep descent to the Bassin. In one place it was safer to lower the canoe over the soft underbrush on a tracking line.

The Bassin des Murailles is a scenic pool, 1.5 km long; the Romaine thundering into its northwest corner in a steep falls, and a small river, the South East Romaine, entering its northeast corner. Surrounded to the north by high rock and sandcliffs, we found a good campsite behind a broad sand beach on the southern shore. The western end was filled with driftwood high up the sand shores. It must be a wild place in spring breakup.

The following day turned out to be an unplanned afternoon off. By noon we had reached the head of a small gorge. But the warm, humid, sunny weather of the previous afternoon had been pushed out by a cold front. Temperatures near 0°C, an east wind, and a cold rain numbed us. We were both starting to shiver as we unloaded to start the portage. Even the exertion of starting the portage didn't seem to be warming us. Time to make camp and sit this storm out. By the time we had the tent up, dry clothes on, and were in our sleeping bags eating lunch, the storm was worse. We spent most of the afternoon sleeping.

The storm was settling the next day as we finished the carry. Much of it was through an old burn laden with blueberries. We ate our fill going back for the second loads. As it was over 1000 m long, that was a lot of blueberries. Two other short carries around falls in the next seven kilometres and then we came to Grand Chute, a very impressive drop of over 25 metres. A steep, ramp-like rapid precedes a two-tier falls. We found an old trail on the right and lunched at the end looking back at Grande Chute. Just a few hundred metres downstream is another steep, powerful rapid. The trail climbs up through rocky, open forest and there were several good places to look back at Grande Chute and the rocky cliffs around it. Below this, our pace quickened as a steady unobstructed current took over. We saw several cormorants, presumably resting inland from yesterday's storm. The Romaine turns west here and although there was 60 km of paddling to the mouth, as the cormorant flies we were less than 12 km from the sea.

We spent our last night on the river at an Indian

campsite just 300 or 400 m below a pretty falls with an inelegant name -- Chutes à Charlie. This was not an old campsite and it had been used within the decade. It came with a fully-stocked blueberry patch out back and plans were made for another blueberry bannock for breakfast. Nature seemed to share our need for some celebration. The morning began with a soft, rose-colored sunrise over the falls upstream. There was no fiery redness but muted tones that seemed to round out the contours of the rocky gorge and tumbling water. Our final day (9 September) went quickly. Propelled by a moderate current, we passed through low, almost pastoral scenery. South of the canyon, the hills had gradually lowered to a point where the river was in a boggy coastal plain with many sand bluffs and sand bars and occasional rock outcrops. Several small flocks of Canada geese were seen -- one group on the water. They too were making their way out of the country. It was the end of the season. By early afternoon, we reached the north shore highway bridge. We would paddle to the coast two kilometres away, then return to this bridge to hitchhike back to our vehicle in Havre Ste. Pierre for the long drive home.

The river can't resist flicking its tail at the end. As it enters the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the Romaine, quite in character, drops over one final ledge before yielding to the flat vistas of the open sea.

POST SCRIPT

In the 1970s, Québec Hydro showed considerable interest in the Romaine canyon as a potential damsite for hydroelectric power. Indeed, in their 1980 expedition, Stew Coffin's party saw several clearings in the canyon area. They even met a Québec Hydro man who came in by helicopter. Information from that individual suggested that dam construction might start as early as 1982 or '83.

We saw the same clearings and survey lines but they all looked old and there was no evidence of any activity since 1980, except for a small, unmanned weather data station in the upper canyon which is visited approximately every two months by helicopter. Evidently, the economic situation of the early 1980s and the current stalemate in negotiations between Newfoundland and Québec over the Churchill Falls agreement is sparing the Romaine watershed. To my knowledge, no river in Labrador-Québec is protected from development. Saving the Romaine would be an excellent start.

I would like to thank my friend and partner, Bob Davis, whose wealth of northern experience, woodsmanship, and unflinching good humor made all the difference. Many of my reflections on wilderness have been influenced over the years by Bob whose thoughtful approach has been shared around many a campsite.

Karl Hartwick lives in the Haliburton Highlands with his wife Terry and their two children. By vocation he is family physician, but by avocation a traveller in the outdoors.



The Federation of Ontario Naturalists

FON Conservation Centre, Moatfield Park
355 Lesmill Road, Don Mills, Ontario, M3B 2W8 Phone: (416) 444-8419



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September 4, 1987

January 4, 1988

Mr. Toni Harting
7 Walmer Road
Apt. 902
Toronto, Ontario
M5R 2W8

Dear Mr. Harting:

Congratulations on the fine looking issue of NASTAWGAN (Winter 1987). Your publication is read by many of the F.O.N. staff people the first day it arrives.

I would however like to comment on the article "Park Controversy Rages". The F.O.N. believes that there is a larger issue at stake than just James Auld Waterway Provincial Park which your author has not addressed.

That being the provincial government's reluctance to complete its promised parks system and changing terms of reference as a committee sat. Your organization and members worked long and hard in the campaign of the early 1980's which culminated in Minister Pope (MNR) promising 155 new parks. To date we have only seen 104 established. We must continue to press for parks system completion.

If you would be so kind as to reprint the attached letter sent to Premier Peterson (September 4, 1987) regarding James Auld Waterway Park, I believe this letter summarizes our concern.

I have also appended several other documents which may be of interest.

Yours sincerely,

Don Huff
Environmental Conservation Director

Honourable David Peterson
Room 281, Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1A1

Dear Premier Peterson:

The Federation of Ontario Naturalists, with its 69 federated clubs across Ontario, is a strong proponent of a provincial system of parks. However, the Federation of Ontario Naturalists' representative, Lawrence McCurdy, has resigned from the James Auld Waterway Provincial Park Advisory Council effective immediately.

The specific action which caused Mr. McCurdy to resign was a ministerial approved change in the Committee's terms of reference. The original terms of reference dealt with the fair implementation of a specific park. However, in mid-July as a result of a request from Committee members, Minister Kerrio's office approved a change which broadens the Committee's mandate to the extent where the question of "whether there is to be a park or not" is now on the table.

The implications of this change is what encouraged Mr. McCurdy's resignation, one which is supported by our Toronto office. Because Minister Kerrio has allowed this loophole, the establishment of this park is definitely in jeopardy as is the establishment of the remaining 51 parks of the promised 155. Parks proponents believe that the elimination of 90 of 245 legitimate park's candidates in 1983 was a serious compromise and we must ensure that no more are eliminated.

Your "undecided" response to the parks question in the Project for Environmental Priorities (1987) was defended by the statement that the issue was before Cabinet. Our view is that if this statement is defensible then one of your Minister's should not be allowed to potentially eliminate one of the parks involved in the issue which is before Cabinet.

While the decision may have been useful to the Minister in this instance, it has established an extremely disturbing precedent which is totally unacceptable to this organization.

We would also remind you that the F.O.N. and specifically the Kingston Field Naturalists (of which Mr. McCurdy is an executive member) owns 500 acres adjacent to the proposed park which it has managed as a nature reserve since 1963.

The F.O.N. requests that Mr. Kerrio's decision be reversed, and that the membership of the Advisory Council be rationalized to achieve a more equitable balance of interests.

The Federation of Ontario Naturalists would be pleased to resume our cooperation if these changes could be made. However, as a matter of conscience it is impossible for us to continue as members of the James Auld Park Advisory Council under the present circumstances. The F.O.N. will not have a representative at the meeting of the committee scheduled for September 9th, 1987 if this cannot be resolved.

Yours sincerely,

Don Huff
Environmental Conservation Director

187 Mill Street
Richmond Hill, Ontario
L4C 4B1

February 1, 1988

The Honourable Vincent Kerrio
Minister of Natural Resources
Whitney Block
99 Wellesley Street West
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1W3

Dear Minister,

I am writing to encourage revisions to the Game and Fish Act which would provide clear prohibition to the practice of pole trapping as well as definitive enforcement. Since the Act is currently under revision, this would be an opportune time to take steps to ensure that pole trapping is discontinued in this province.

From both a conservation and a humane perspective, the use of the pole trap cannot be justified. Non-selective in the prey that is caught, the steel jaws snap shut on the delicate legs of the bird. When the bird tries to fly away, the chain pulls it back, leaving the victim hanging upside down.

A number of years ago, a Great Horned Owl was observed caught in one of the many pole traps at the Kortright Waterfowl Park in the Guelph area. Although not an intended victim, the owl's legs were so badly injured, the bird had to be destroyed. This is just not acceptable.

Surely your Ministry through legislation, enforcement, and education can promote the use of existing alternative methods to discourage birds of prey from areas they are not welcome.

Yours truly,

Marcia Farquhar, Ph.D.

TEMAGAMI UPDATE

As you may know, a Temagami Area Working Group was set up by the Minister of Natural Resources, the Hon. Vincent Kerrio. It took him longer to choose this committee than the time allotted for the Group to sit and come up with Recommendations. (They have three months and the Recommendations must be finished by 18 March.) Representatives of each faction (cottagers, loggers, the Temagami Wilderness Society, etc.) have been meeting in North Bay, New Liskeard, etc. With so many people living in Southern Ontario who have a vested interest in Temagami, requests were made for one of the meetings to be held in Toronto. Dr. Daniels (Chairman of the T.A.W.G.) would not budge. Phones began ringing in Premier David Peterson's office in late January, urging that at least one of these meetings be held in Toronto. We'll see. Meanwhile the meetings go on.

The Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society boycotted the T.A.W.G. at the last meeting, because they think the whole thing such a sham, just another Government delay tactic. At the same time, a cutting permit was issued in November for timber behind Kokoko Bay and the pressure will be put on the Government to issue more permits in April for spring cutting. Public agitation is mounting against this, because Temagami is being chewed away before our eyes - the very thing we need stopped. As at South Moresby in British Columbia, public ire will no doubt rise in direct proportion to timber cut. We cannot let the cutting go on like this, and will soon have to confront it. Indeed, probably the sooner the better.

Remember, clear-cutting destroys 10,000 years of Nature's logical forest growth. The trees and bushes and flowering plants compete. The best-adapted fills its niche with its own optimum performance. Some like the ridges (white pine), some adapt to the thinner soil (red pine), some prefer swamp (black spruce and tamarack). Balsam fir contributes to the understory, yellow and paper birch and poplar mix well with the conifers as "Deciduous Representatives." Trailing arbutus, lady's slippers, and interrupted fern "know their places," and flourish in specific locations. Club mosses trail across the forest

floor, labrador tea and bog cotton festoon the sphagnum moss. Cedar and speckled alder hug and rim the shorelines and low wet ground. Each plant belongs where it grows, in a logical mix. To clear-cut is to create a wasteland. Plant one or two species of conifer in a clear-cut, and you get a tree farm. Wild animals and other plants will shun this. It is not a process of natural selection. We cannot permit this to happen. Our Temagami wilderness will be gone for another 10,000 years, if not forever.

You probably noted from the newspapers that the local hunters and anglers in the Temagami district demanded access to their hunting grounds, and support logging. They don't stop to consider the facts:

1) If you clear-cut and replant conifers, then the conifers are sprayed, and this spray kills deciduous trees which are a staple browse for moose. No browse, no moose.

2) All creatures need camouflage. Moose will not venture out into the middle of a clear-cut, but skirt the edges, so vast tracts of land remain devoid of anything bigger than a mouse or a vole.

3) Clear-cutting creates erosion and changes streams - too much runoff, too much silting and/or turbidity - which affects habitat and reproduction of fish, resulting in a poorer harvest for the angler.

4) Roads encourage anglers to drive in and launch motor boats on remote lakes, discouraging the canoeing tourism which has been growing by leaps and bounds. Canoeing is compatible with wilderness; motor boats are not.

Temagami is the concern of every canoeist everywhere who cares about wilderness preservation. Temagami can be the greatest wilderness reserve in Ontario. Promote it. Protect it. Remember, a piece of a tree died to make it possible to manufacture your cheque book. We are in debt to trees. Let's honor the dead by protecting the living. Support the Temagami Wilderness Society, attend the GREAT TEMAGAMI WILDERNESS EVENT, announced in the News Briefs.

Claire Muller

montreal river

On a very hot 23rd of July, some members of the Third Aurora Venturer Company and I, their advisor, piled in my car for the long drive north. By the time we arrived at Edith Lake, just past the town of Gowganda, we were all ready for a swim; the water was great. We then provided supper for the undernourished mosquitoes which forced us to retreat to my car for a game of euchre.

The other vehicle with our assistant advisor and his nephew arrived next day just after sunrise. While they slept, we proceeded with breakfast in the rain, even managing a pan of flaming bacon. Then it was back to playing cards in my car until the others arose. After car shuttle and lunch, we set off on the water in our three canoes at about 2:30 p.m. In Obushkong Lake we were forced off the water by thunder, lightning, heavy rain, and strong wind. Even a group of fish ducks were taking refuge in a cove near us. Eventually conditions settled down enough for us to return to the water.

We paddled peacefully through a marsh until it was time to stop for the night. Campsites marked on the map we either couldn't find or they didn't look suitable. Finally we camped at the beginning of the portage into Crotch Lake at about bug time. Seemed as if the mosquitoes here hadn't seen humans for awhile. Their welcome was so overwhelming, most of us opted for bed instead of supper and had to be reminded to emerge long enough to hang up the food.

Next day, Saturday, we carried our gear to the other end of the portage, then continued paddling on this beautiful, sunny day. We had a few portages and some fast, shallow water. During the day we didn't see or hear any other people, something I really appreciated but one of the Venturers didn't look so happy. We camped on an island in Sisseney Lake where the solitude was so complete that even the mosquitoes didn't discover us. The wind did, though; during the night it was wild. By morning it had calmed down somewhat but not enough for us to leave. A couple of us were up early so went for a swim and wash; the water was nice and warm but the air was cold.

GOWGANDA TO ELK LAKE

Gail Vickers

Rapids on the river now; we were able to either line or run them. Everything was peaceful until, emerging from a marshy area, we heard the drone of motor boats. The town of Matachewan was just around the bend where our designated campsite turned out to be a public campground. I wasn't ready for civilization yet. In rebellion, my partner and I paddled ahead to find a quieter spot, but there were none. We returned to the group, took out, and set up in the local trailer park.

Monday we continued downriver, running Fox rapids. There was the odd motor boat along this stretch. During the afternoon the wind was going our way so we rafted the canoes and sailed for awhile until the next rapids which, due to high water levels, didn't exist. We pulled out before Indian Chutes dam; according to the map there was a campsite below the dam. After supper we moved our gear to set up on a sandy area beside the river.

Next day was a leisure day; most of the group slept in till about lunch time. Perhaps just as well as the air was cold. When we finally warmed up, we swam around in the rapids and later played cards in someone's tent. During the night there was an impressive display of white northern lights. However, I couldn't convince anyone to leave their warm sleeping bags to watch the sky with me.

On our last water day, we were off to an early start. In drizzle, rain, and a little fog we paddled the last lap of our journey; here the river runs close to Highway 65. We took out at the Makobe River in the town of Elk Lake. After car shuttling, loading the gear, and buying junk food, we went on our way, back to home. It had been a good trip with good weather and good company.



27 March OAKVILLE CREEK
 Organizer: Howard Sagermann 416-438-6090
 Book before 22 March.

Another run on Oakville Creek for those who want to try it again or who missed an earlier trip. Water levels should be lower by this time, but if we have a lot of rain we could have a challenging run. Suitable for intermediate whitewater paddlers. Limit six canoes.

27 March UPPER CREDIT RIVER
 Organizer: Mike Graham-Smith 416-877-7829
 Book before 21 March.

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

1-3 April ALGONQUIN PARK
 Organizer: Glenn Davy 519-941-5527
 Book immediately.

With the exact route yet to be determined, we will explore a region of the Park just as spring is breaking. We will ski, hike, or even canoe, depending on snow and water conditions at the time.

2 April UPPER CREDIT RIVER
 Organizer: Jim Morris 416-793-2088
 Book before 28 March.

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

3 April LOWER CREDIT RIVER
 Organizer: Jim Morris 416-793-2088
 Book before 29 March.

If your appetite is whetted by Saturday's trip, or if you're ready for bigger water, leave your canoe on the car overnight and run the more challenging lower Credit from Streetsville. This trip is suitable for intermediates and whitewater-trained novices. Limit six canoes.

2-3 April MOIRA AND BLACK RIVERS
 Organizer: Roger Harris 416-762-8571
 Book before 28 March.

On Saturday we'll warm up on the Moira which, at this time of the year, is a wide, big-water river with substantial waves, long boulder fields, and a few ledges thrown in for good measure. The next day we will put in at Queensborough to run the lower Black which descends to Highway 7 in a series of steep, tricky ledges. These trips are for experienced paddlers with advanced whitewater skills. Limit six canoes.



photo: Ron Jasiuk

9-10 April UPPER BLACK RIVER - BEAVER CREEK
 Organizer: Tony Bird 416-466-0172
 Book before 5 April.

On Saturday we will paddle the upper section of the Black, taking out at Queensborough. The river has short sets of rapids, many with steep drops. On Sunday we will paddle Beaver Creek from Shanick to the bridge before Fidler Rapids. There are numerous challenging rapids in this stretch, especially at high water. Suitable for good intermediates. Limit five canoes.

9-10 April MAITLAND RIVER
 Organizer: Herb Pohl 416-637-7632
 Book before 3 April.

On Saturday we will have a leisurely float from a point below Wingham to the campground of the Maitland Conservation Authority below the Benmiller bridge, where we'll camp. On Sunday we'll run the remainder of the Maitland to Goderich. For Saturday, novices are welcome. Sunday paddlers have to have intermediate level paddling skills. Limit six canoes.

10 April WILLOW BROOK / GRAND RIVER
 Organizer: Jeff Lane 519-837-3815
 Book before 5 April.

If the indicators on the topographic map are anything to go by, this should prove to be a good ride, with more or less continuous rapids from where the rivers meet on to Lake Belwood. As this is an exploratory trip, a strict limit of eight boats will be adhered to. Experienced paddlers only.

10 April GRAND RIVER
 Organizer: Dave Sharp 519-621-5599
 Book before 4 April.

We will start at Cambridge and, depending on the water level, take out in either Paris or Brantford. This is a flatwater trip for novice moving water paddlers. Limit six canoes.

16 April ERAMOSA RIVER
 Organizer: Jeff Lane 519-837-3815
 Book before 12 April.

A leisurely paddle down this scenic river begins at Rockwood and continues into Guelph. Suitable for beginners. Limit eight boats.

17 April LOWER BLACK RIVER
 Organizer: Bill King 416-223-4646
 Book before 12 April.

A gentle trip through pretty countryside near Washago. At high water there will be at least one portage and some areas of moderate-sized waves. Suitable for families and beginners with some sense of adventure. Limit six canoes.

16-17-18 April SALMON AND MOIRA RIVERS - BEAVER CREEK
 Organizer: Karl Schimek 416-222-3720
 Book before 9 April.

On Saturday we will paddle the Salmon which is a good river for advanced novices at low and intermediate water levels. On Sunday we start at Lost Channel on the Moira and go as far as Lada. This day trip requires intermediate-level skills. Monday we'll paddle Beaver Creek where the rapids are more demanding. Only good intermediate paddlers should consider this trip. Participants may join any one or all of these day trips but preference will be given to those who join for the whole venture. Limit six canoes.

23 April EELS CREEK
 Organizer: Dianne Wills 416-586-8255 (bus.)
 Book before 16 April.

Eels Creek requires precise manoeuvring and control to safely negotiate its tight turns as it twists and tumbles its way between Apsley and Haultain in a series of ledges and boulder rapids with a few falls which to be portaged. Suitable for intermediate whitewater paddlers. Limit five canoes.

23-24 April SALMON AND MOIRA RIVERS
 Organizer: Glenn Spence 416-355-3506
 Book between 9 and 14 April.

For this, the premier event of the season, WCA members have the opportunity to paddle with the great guru himself. These two rivers are a nice introduction to whitewater for paddlers who are budding intermediates. And Glenn, who has paddled these rivers since he stepped off the ark, will be there to enhance the experience with instructive comments. Limit six canoes.

24 April HEAD CREEK LOOP
 Organizer: Rob Butler 416-487-2282
 Book before 20 April.

From Moore Falls on Highway 35 we will head west to Victoria Lake, then south down Head Creek to Head Lake, and end with a short car shuttle. This is a rugged, untravelled route with several portages. Limit three canoes with fit crews.

24 April BLACK AND HEAD RIVERS
 Organizer: Bob Haskett 416-251-9203
 Book before 19 April.

We will start on the Head River, northeast of Sebright, and at the Head's confluence with the Black continue downstream to just east of Washago. These rivers feature some short rapids with moderate waves, separated by enough flatwater to give you time to relax and enjoy the scenery. Suitable for novice paddlers with some whitewater experience. Limit six canoes.

30 April BIGHEAD RIVER
 Organizer: Dale Miner 416-229-4322
 Book before 22 April.

The Bighead River just south of Meaford is very picturesque with many sharp turns around clay banks. There is three to four kilometres of fast water and rapids as the river drops into Georgian Bay. This section can be run more than once in one day. Suitable for intermediates. Limit five canoes.

30 April - 1 May AMABLE DU FOND RIVER
Organizer: Herb Pohl 416-637-7632
Book before 25 April.

This river, flowing north from Algonquin Park, has a very impressive gorge and long sets of rapids, some of which end in or near quite spectacular falls. This makes for a very scenic trip but also, in high water, a very challenging one. Suitable for experienced whitewater paddlers. Limit four canoes.

30 April - 1 May SKOOTAMATTA RIVER
Organizer: Glenn Davy 519-941-5527
Book before 26 April.

This will be an overnight trip on a beautiful river in Eastern Ontario. The river has long flat sections which are occasionally broken by falls and steep, narrow shoots with large standing waves at the bottom. Suitable for intermediate canoeists. Solo canoeists welcome, open boats only. Limit five canoes.

30 April - 1 May MISSISSAGUA RIVER AND EELS CREEK
Organizer: Bob Haskett 416-251-9203
Book before 18 April.

On Saturday we will run the Mississauga as it tumbles from its source in Mississauga Lake down to Buckhorn Lake in a series of scenic falls and short rapids, separated by sections of quiet water. For intermediates it makes a challenging six-hour trip.

On Sunday we will run Eels Creek, a narrow, twisting little stream with a number of highly technical rapids that require precise manoeuvring skills to navigate. As several of the rapids involve blind bends and terminate in waterfalls, good judgement and the ability to get off the river fast are definite assets. This creek is suitable for good intermediates with lots of moxie.

Participants can sign up for a day or the weekend. We will try to arrange overnight accommodation in housekeeping cabins.

1 May NOTTAWASAGA RIVER
Organizers: Steve Lukasko 416-532-0898
Mike Jones 416-270-3256
Book before 24 April.

This is a flatwater trip suitable for novice paddlers. We will begin in Angus and finish at the Edenvale Conservation Area. A section of the river passes by the Minesing Swamp which may give us an opportunity to view migrating birds. Limit six canoes.

7 May FLORA GORGE
Organizer: Jeff Lane 519-837-3815
Book before 2 May.

The water in the Gorge at this time of year is cold and could be fairly high. Its numerous technical rapids should provide a good workout for experienced intermediate paddlers.

7-8 May FARM CREEK - ISLAND LAKE
Organizer: John Winters 705-382-2293
Book before 2 May.

Another exploratory trip into the region north of Lake Wawashkash and the Magnetawan River. My first exploratory trip last October showed that this very attractive area has a lot to offer. Participants can camp Friday night in my lower forty to allow for an early start on Saturday. Limit three canoes.

7-8 May GIBSON - MACDONALD ROUTE
Organizer: Glenn Davy 519-941-5527
Book before 3 May.

A weekend loop in Muskoka, travelling through attractive Canadian Shield country. Suitable for novice paddlers, solo canoeists welcome. Limit five canoes.

7-8 May OPEONGO AND UPPER MADAWASKA RIVERS
Organizer: Doug Fairbanks 416-622-5711
Book before 30 April.

On Saturday we will paddle the Opeongo which offers long, runnable sets of rapids. In high water there are sections with continuous waves and three difficult ledges which should be scouted. The more technically challenging upper Madawaska will be run on Sunday. Suitable for good intermediate whitewater paddlers. Limit four canoes.

Monday 9 May: evening class BASIC FLATWATER CANOEING
Sat./Sun. 14-15 May

Instructors: Lisa and Doug Ashton 416-291-5416
Rob Cepella, Jeff Lane, Howard Sagermann
Bill Ness 416-499-6389

Book before 9 April.

The introduction of this course last year was such a success that it will once again be offered this year. The course is designed to offer new members the basic flatwater canoeing skills needed to participate in organized flatwater outings. It will allow the new canoeists to grade themselves and to feel confident on their first outings.

The course will start with a Monday evening class indoors where the participants will be given classroom instruction and shown a movie on flatwater canoeing. On Saturday we will spend the day on a local pond practicing paddling strokes, portaging skills, and canoe safety. Finally, the Sunday will involve a full-day trip in the Haliburton area where the group will have a chance to try out the new-found skills.

Participants will be required to supply a suitable canoe, lifevest, and paddles. (Rental locations will be suggested.) Registration will be limited to 20 persons who must be current members. Please contact Doug Ashton or Bill Ness to register.

14-15 May ALGONQUIN PARK
Organizer: George Luste 416-534-9313
Book before 9 May.

Early May in Algonquin: spring is in the air and the water levels in the creeks are high; the bugs and the human hordes have yet to come. It's a great time for a laid-back, poke-about trip. We'll be going in on the west side of the Park on an as yet to be determined route. Call me for details.

14-15 May PALMER RAPIDS - LOWER MADAWASKA RIVER
Organizer: Roger Harris 416-762-8571
Book before 10 May.

High water levels and cold water add to the challenge of this whitewater weekend. On Saturday we will run the lower Madawaska from Aumond's Bay to Buck Bay and ride the waves at Jessop's. On Sunday we will play at Palmer Rapids. Suitable for experienced whitewater paddlers. Limit five boats.

21-23 May NIPISSING AND TIM RIVERS
Organizer: Howard Sayles 416-927-5321
Book between 2 and 11 May.

This will be a flatwater trip on the Nipissing and Tim rivers, travelling via Rosebary Lake in this very scenic part of Algonquin Park. At high water levels there should be fewer portages than are shown on the Park map. In the event that water levels are too low to do this trip, I will organize a trip to Killarney Park instead. Suitable for experienced flatwater canoe trippers. Limit three canoes.

21-23 May LOWER MAGNETAWAN RIVER
Organizer: Duncan Taylor 416-368-7874
Book before 13 May.

We will start at Harris Lake, paddle up the South Magnetawan, then down the North Magnetawan through Mountain Chute and Thirty Dollar Rapids. Suitable for intermediates or better. Limit four canoes.

21-23 May BONNECHERE RIVER
Organizer: Karl Schimek 416-222-3720
Book between 5 and 12 May.

Starting at Aylen Lake, our route will take us upstream on the Aylen River and thence by a portage into McCaskill Lake. From there we will travel downstream on the Bonnechere to the confluence with Robitaille Creek. We will follow Robitaille Creek via a steep trail-less portage to Robitaille Lake and from there back to the starting point. In total there will be 12 to 15 portages, some of the bushwhacking variety. Only fit individuals of intermediate skill level should consider this outing. The wild scenery along this seldom-travelled route is of varying character, from spruce bog to rocky gorges. Limit four canoes.



READING - Karyn Mikoliew
(Honorable Mention, Wilderness and Man; WCA 1988 Photo Contest)

21-23 May PETAWAWA RIVER
Organizer: Bob Knapp 519-371-1255
Book before 12 May.

On Saturday we'll meet at 9:00 a.m. at McManus Lake. Following the car shuttle we can look forward to a great three days running the many challenging rapids of the Petawawa, such as Rollway and The Hatch. The possibility of high water and relatively cold weather makes this a trip for experienced whitewater paddlers only. Limit five canoes and/or kayaks.

21-23 May MAGNETAWAN LAKE TO RAIN LAKE
Organizer: Paul Siwy 416-423-1698
Book before 1 May.

Paddle through scenic Algonquin Park on small lakes and rivers. We will not be crossing large lakes, so we won't have to worry about getting wind-bound. This is a trip for those who love camping as much as paddling. There are portages to bear, but the two longest ones are only 800 metres. Water levels will probably still be high, so some fastwater experience might be helpful although this area is normally very placid. We will meet Friday night at the put-in point and return home Monday evening. Suitable for hardy novices. Limit four canoes.

28-29 May LOWER EELS CREEK

Organizers: Howard Sayles 416-921-5321
Marcia Farquhar 416-884-0208

Book between 9 and 20 May.

We will start at Haultain on Highway 28 and finish at Petroglyphs Provincial Park on Stony Lake. This one-day flatwater trip has been extended to two days to allow plenty of time for photography, nature observation, and generally enjoying the outdoors. Suitable for novices. Limit four canoes.

29 May ELORA GORGE

Organizer: Dave Sharp 519-621-5599

Book before 23 May.

The Elora Gorge on the Grand River provides an excellent location for budding whitewater enthusiasts to practice their manoeuvres. This outing is ideal for novices who need an opportunity to work on their skills.

June BASIC WHITEWATER CANOEING COURSE

Instructors: Bill Ness 416-499-6389
Jim Greenacre, Jeff Lane
Rob Cepella, Howard Sagermann

Book before 15 April.

This course is progressively structured to build the skills, knowledge, and experience necessary to run moderate whitewater for canoeists who already possess basic paddling skills. It begins with an evening of introductory classroom instruction and a one-day flatwater workout. This is followed by a day trip on an easy river, and finishes with a whitewater weekend on a major river in Central Ontario. Participants must have suitable canoes, PFDs, and paddles for whitewater, and must sign up for the entire course. Registration is limited to 20 persons to permit individualized instruction. Members only, please! To register, contact Bill Ness by phone, before 9:00 p.m.

4-5 June WILDLIFE WEEKEND

Organizers: Ron Jasiuk and Ann Mowm 416-239-1380

Book before 27 May.

The habitats of Rondeau Provincial Park on the north shore of Lake Erie range from wind-swept sand dunes to Carolinian forest to a luxuriant marsh. We intend to spend Saturday canoeing through the marsh and exploring the isolated south beach. We should be able to view and possibly photograph Bald Eagles, White-tailed Deer, and nesting turtles. Sunday's activities will be determined by the participants. We will camp in the Park. Suitable for anyone willing to "explore" (paddle/hike/muck about) all day long. Limited to 12 persons.

4-5 June OPEONGO AND UPPER MADAWASKA RIVERS

Organizer: Karl Schimek 416-222-3720

Book between 15 and 20 May.

The Opeongo has long sets of rapids which are all negotiable if the water-level is right. The Madawaska river between Whitney and the village of Madawaska is a technically more demanding run and requires at least two portages. Suitable for good intermediates. Limit four canoes.

4-5 June LOWER MADAWASKA RIVER

Organizer: Dave Miner 416-229-4322

Book before 20 May.

We plan to camp at Palmer Rapids for the weekend. On Saturday, we will run the beautiful Snake Rapids section from Aumond's Bay to Buck Bay. Sunday will be spent playing at Palmer Rapids, to make it easier for those who want to leave early. There will be ample time Saturday for playing each rapid. Suitable for whitewater paddlers and experienced novices who would like to try more difficult rapids. Limit seven canoes.

11-12 June ALGONQUIN PARK

Organizer: Glenn Davy 519-941-5527

Book before 7 June.

This will be a leisurely loop in the Rain Lake area on the west side of the Park. Suitable for novice paddlers; solo canoeists are welcome. Limit five canoes.

18-19 June WHITEWATER WEEKEND AT PALMER RAPIDS

Organizer: Jim Morris 416-793-2088

Book before 7 June.

We will have a preliminary session to meet each other and to review basic paddling strokes. At Palmer Rapids on the Madawaska River we will learn whitewater techniques with emphasis on backpaddling, upstream and downstream ferries, eddy turns, reading the rapids, and canoe safety. Open to beginning and intermediate whitewater paddlers. Limit eight canoes.

18-19 June GEORGIAN BAY - BRUCE PENINSULA

Organizer: Bob Knapp 519-371-1255

Book before 16 June.

Canoe from High Dump (19 km south of Tobermory) along the shore and view some of the most beautiful limestone cliffs in Ontario. Participants must exercise caution because of cold water and the possibility of rough water. If we are wind-bound Sunday, we can carry out at Cypress Lake Park. Limit four canoes.

25-26 June MACDONALD - GIBSON RIVERS

Organizer: Howard Sayles 416-921-5321

Book between 7 and 16 June.

This trip offers pleasant flatwater paddling in a scenic area north of Six Mile Lake Provincial Park on Highway 69. Suitable for novices. Limit four canoes.

1-3 July FRENCH RIVER

Organizer: Roger Harris 416-762-8571

Book before 24 June.

The precise itinerary is as yet undecided but will be either a play weekend at Blue Chute rapids or a trip from Wolseley Bay to Highway 69. Suitable for intermediate paddlers. Limit six canoes.

1-3 July WHITEWATER WORKSHOP ON THE FRENCH RIVER

Organizer: Jim Morris 416-793-2088

Book before 21 June.

We will set up a base camp on Comanda Island from where we can easily reach a number of rapids which we can run repeatedly. An excellent opportunity to practice whitewater canoeing in more challenging rapids. Suitable for novices with some experience who are looking to improve their paddling skills. Limit eight canoes.

1-3 July KILLARNEY PARK

Organizer: Howard Sayles 416-921-5321

Book between 7 and 16 June.

The exact route has still to be determined, but we will travel at a leisurely pace giving ourselves enough time to appreciate this very scenic park. Suitable for novices. Limit four canoes.

1-3 July WOLF AND PICKEREL RIVERS ROUTE

Organizer: Paul Siwy 416-423-1698

Book before 1 June.

This trip will take us through typical Canadian Shield rivers and narrow lakes. Total distance is 51 km with only two portages, the longest of which is 320 m. Although this is flatwater paddling, it may be taxing on those who are weak in their basic paddling skills. If time permits, we will explore adjoining lakes or rivers. The put-in is about 45 minutes driving north of Grundy Lake Provincial Park where we will spend Thursday night. The scenery should be well worth the long drive. Limit three canoes.

L'ODEUR

Tu sens quelque chose, non? Sens l'air. Il y a quelque chose dans l'air, une odeur! Une odeur que le vent transporte. Il n'est pas égoïste le vent, n'est-ce pas? Il y a toujours une odeur qui se promène dans l'air: bonne, moins bonne, ou franchement mauvaise l'odeur. Et le vent nous permet de la sentir.

Sens, sens d'où vient le vent. Il vient toujours de quelque part. Il s'infiltré partout. Il y a toujours une odeur. Sens, lève le nez, ou la tête si tu veux. Avance la tête ou le nez qui tire la tête et sens. Sens cette odeur qui vient du vent. Tourne la tête à gauche, à droite. . . et sens. Fais comme les animaux, par exemple! Regarde le chat ou le chien. Deux bêtes que l'on connaît bien. Regarde les bien quand ils sentent. Fais comme eux, regarde leurs narines bouger.

Regarde autour de toi, la neige fond, l'eau coule, les rues s'écoulent, les trottoirs s'assèchent. Ils sont plus hauts, les trottoirs, tu sens? Tu remarques maintenant?

Tu sais le nez est un sens qui oublie comme la mémoire. Ou peut-être est-ce la mémoire qu'on laisse de coté?

Ça y est, voilà, cette odeur tu la reconnais, tu te souviens, elle était là l'an dernier.

Cette senteur qui remplit nos narines et qui vient de la terre, vous vous rappelez maintenant!

Oui, c'est ça le printemps!

Luc

Reprinted from La Résine Déchainée, courtesy of Le Club des Amis d'Eau de Varennes.

guidelines for wca trips

- It is the function of the Outings Committee to arrange and publish in Nastawgan a schedule of trips and related events, organized by members of the WCA.
- All trips should have a minimum impact on the environment. Trip organizers may:
 - limit the number of canoes (or participants) permitted on a trip,
 - advise on the type of equipment and camping techniques used.
- Participants should:
 - follow the booking dates established by the organizer,
 - inform the organizer promptly if they cannot make the trip.
- Food, transportation, canoes, camping equipment, partners, etc., are the responsibility of each participant. Organizers may assist in these areas, particularly in the pairing of partners.
- Participants are responsible for their own safety at all times, and must sign a waiver form. Organizers should return completed waiver forms to the Outings Committee.
- Organizers receive the right to:
 - exclude participants who do not have sufficient experience for the trip,
 - exclude any canoe deemed unsafe,
 - make any arrangements necessary to ensure safety of the group.
- In the event that on a trip organized by the WCA an accident occurs, or any potentially dangerous situation arises, the Outings Committee must be informed.
- Solo canoeists and/or kayakers are permitted on trips at the discretion of the organizer.
- Non-members are permitted to participate in no more than two trips. Educational trips are for members only.
- Organizers should give a brief description of the trip to the Outings Committee and, where possible, write a short article on the trip (or arrange to have it done) for publication in Nastawgan.

canoe safety rules

The need for these safety rules will vary with the time of year and the type of trip. They are to be applied at the discretion of the trip organizer.

- Paddlers will not be allowed on a trip without:
 - a flotation jacket that can be worn while paddling,
 - a canoe suitable for the trip.
- Paddlers should bring:
 - spare clothing, well waterproofed,
 - extra food,
 - matches in a waterproof container,
 - spare paddles, bailer, and a whistle,
 - material to repair the canoe.
- On trips when the air and water temperatures are cold, a wetsuit is recommended.
- The signals on WCA river trips should be known by all participants.
- When running a section of river with rapids:
 - canoes may be asked to maintain a definite order,
 - each canoe is responsible for the canoe behind,
 - signals should be given after finishing a rapid (when appropriate), and canoes positioned below the rapid to assist in case of trouble,
 - canoes should keep well spaced,
 - each canoe should be equipped with ropes which can be used for lining and rescue.
- The organizers' decisions on all trips are final.



difficult - use own judgment

SIGNALS



danger - do not run



all clear - with caution

trip ratings

The trip ratings presented below are intended as a general guide. For a detailed description of a WCA trip, the trip organizer should be contacted.

WHITewater TRIPS

The rating of whitewater trips will be determined generally by the difficulty of the rapids; however, water temperature, time of year, length and remoteness of the trip could also influence the overall rating.

SKILL LEVEL	RIVER CLASS	RIVER CHARACTERISTICS
<p><u>Beginner</u></p> <p>Feels comfortable in canoe and is proficient in forward and steering strokes.</p>	<p>0 (Very Easy)</p>	<p>Moving water with no rapids. Some small riffles. Wide passages.</p>
<p><u>Novice</u></p> <p>Can perform draw, pry, and sweep strokes; and is able to side-slip and to backpaddle in a straight line. Can enter and exit from a mild current. Recognizes basic river features and hazards.</p>	<p>I (Easy)</p>	<p>Some small rapids with small waves and few obstacles. Course easy to recognize. River speed is less than backpaddling speed.</p>
<p><u>Intermediate</u></p> <p>Is proficient at all basic whitewater strokes. Can execute front and back ferries and eddy turns in a moderate current. Understands leaning and bracing techniques. Is able to select and follow a route in Class II water. Knowledgeable of river hazards, safety, and rescue procedures.</p>	<p>II (Medium)</p>	<p>Generally unobstructed rapids with moderate eddies and bends. Course usually easy to recognize, but scouting from shore may be necessary. River speed occasionally exceeds hard backpaddling speed. Waves up to 60 cm high. Some manoeuvring necessary.</p>
<p><u>Advanced</u></p> <p>Is able to ferry and eddy turn in strong currents, and has effective bracing strokes. Can select and negotiate a course through continuous rapids. Can paddle solo or tandem. Is able to self-rescue, aid in rescuing others, and knows safety procedures thoroughly.</p>	<p>III (Difficult)</p>	<p>Numerous rapids with high, irregular waves often capable of swamping an open canoe. Route often requires complex manoeuvring. Current usually less than fast forward paddling speed. Course might not be easily recognizable. Scouting required.</p>
<p><u>Expert</u></p> <p>Has complete mastery of all strokes and manoeuvres, and can apply them with power and precision in turbulent water. Recovers quickly in unexpected and dangerous situations. Can read complex water patterns and knows how they will affect his/her boat. Exhibits good judgment and has full competency in safety and rescue techniques.</p>	<p>IV (Very Difficult)</p>	<p>Long, difficult rapids that often require precise manoeuvring. Turbulent crosscurrents, powerful eddies, and abrupt bends. High, irregular waves with boulders directly in current. Course difficult to recognize. Scouting mandatory. Rescue difficult. Generally not possible for open canoes.</p>

FLATwater TRIPS

Flatwater trip ratings will be determined by remoteness, length, and pace of trip; and the length, number, and ruggedness of portages. It is important to remember that cold water and strong winds on large lakes can create conditions dangerous for any canoeist, no matter how skilled or experienced.

products and services

TEMAGAMI WILDERNESS SOCIETY Stop all road extensions and all logging in Temagami. Help create a Temagami Wilderness Reserve. Join the Temagami Wilderness Society, membership fee \$15.00 per year. Donations above this, most gratefully received. Write: The Temagami Wilderness Society, 204 Wedgewood Drive, Willowdale, Ontario, M2N 2H9.

WHITE SQUALL Georgian Bay's Kayak and Canoe Centre. We offer a quiet waterfront for test paddling of a large selection of sea kayaks and canoes from eight different manufacturers. Our shop stocks a wide range of paddling, camping, and rescue gear at competitive prices. Ask about our 1988 sea kayak and canoe instruction and tour program. Contact: Tim and Kathy Dyer, White Squall Wilderness Shop, Nobel, Ontario (near Parry Sound), POG 1G0, phone 705-342-5324

SOLO CANOE FOR SALE Fourteen foot stripper, glass cloth, 2½ layers outside and 1½ layers inside, with epoxy resin; Western Red Cedar strips. A bit tippy. Weighs 22 kilograms. Definitely a canoeist's canoe. \$350.00. Contact: Jim Greenacre in Scarborough, Ontario at 416-759-9956.

CANADIAN RECREATIONAL CANOEING ASSOCIATION has available upon request the new, free Product Resource Brochure listing books, manuals, canoe route information, videos, etc. on canoeing. Contact: CRCA, P.O. Box 500, Hyde Park, Ontario, NOM 1Z0, phone 519-473-2109.

EMERGENCY CARE TRAINING CONSULTANTS is a small group of skilled first aid instructors and experienced outdoor enthusiasts. We offer a broad range of first aid training: seminars, modified Standard First Aid courses, and the Canadian Red Cross Society's new certificate course--Wilderness First Aid, Rescue, and Evacuation--which is a course designed for the recreational traveller and group leaders. Contact: Emergency Care Training Consultants, 288 Robert Street, Toronto, M5S 2K8, phone 416-921-3677.

ALGONQUIN OUTFITTERS Largest selection of canoes in Canada, including Sawyer, Mad River, Bluewater, Jensen, Blue Hole, Old Town, Nova Craft, Scott, and Grumman. Although we specialize in Kevlar tandem tripping canoes, we have more than ten different solo models as well as ten Royalex models. All models are available for free test paddling and rental usage. Free, comprehensive 16-page canoe catalogue available. Contact: Algonquin Outfitters, RR#1, Oxtongue Lake, Dwight, Ontario, POH 1H0, phone 705 635-1167.

FRESHWATER SAGA In his lifetime, Eric W. Morse paddled Canada's rivers and lakes from Hudson Bay to the Yukon, from Winnipeg to the Arctic Ocean. This vivid account of his travels, subtitled 'Memoirs of a Lifetime of Wilderness Canoeing,' reflects the spirit of adventure with which he undertook them. Cost \$9.95. Published by University of Toronto Press, 63A St. George Str. Toronto, M5S 1A6.

NORTHERN WILDERNESS OUTFITTERS Our small, independent canoe outfitter company can provide a base camp and departure point for your trips, and we can outfit any group who do not have their complete equipment. WCA members are offered a 10% discount. Contact: NWO, Box 89, South River, Ontario, POA 1X0, phone 705-474-3272.

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,
- Algonquin Outfitters, RR#1, Oxtongue Lake, Dwight, Ontario,
- 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.

VALLEY VENTURES CANOE TRIPS Specializing in canoe trips and workshops on the Petawawa and Dumoine rivers. Weekend trips or custom trips near and far available. All equipment can be supplied. Canoe rental and shuttle service available. Connecting flights daily from Toronto makes weekend trips easy. Also organizes non-profit, non-commercial, co-op, extended canoe trips to Nahanni, Burnside, Thelon/Hanbury, Back, Hood, Mountain, or others. Contact: Don Smith, Box 1115, Deep River, Ontario, K0J 1P0, phone 613-584-3973 (machine).

WILDERNESS BOUND offers an excellent canoeing program of both whitewater courses and exciting river trips. All our courses are accredited by the Ontario Recreational Canoeing Association. For your 1988 brochure, write: Wilderness Bound, 43 Brodick Str., Hamilton, Ontario, L8S 3E3; phone 416-528-0059.

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where it is

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

West of Gogama	1	Grass River	13
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Algonquin Park	9	Montreal River	23

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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 1988.

Notes: -This membership will expire January 31, 1989.
-Please send completed form and cheque (payable to the Wilderness Canoe Association) to the membership committee chairman.