



sea kayaking

the conversion of a canoeist

The kayak, I believe, is making its way back to the sea where it was born and where it belongs.

John Dowd

When I first saw sea kayaks for sale in stores here in southern Ontario, I was skeptical. Yes, they were sleek and beautiful, and I knew they were popular on the West Coast; but B.C. is on the ocean, and this after all is Shield country. Surely trying to sell sea kayaks here was nothing more than an attempt to cash in on a fad, to find some new toy for the "equipment freaks" (who probably already own more canoeing gear than they know what to do with) to spend their money on. No one here in central Canada could take sea kayaks seriously.

Notwithstanding these thoughts, when Stewart McIlwraith suggested finding out what sea kayaking was all about, I agreed to give it a try. Georgian Bay seemed the obvious place to do this, so we headed north to Parry Sound and rented two sea kayaks from White Squall Wilderness Shop, where Kathy Dyer gave us enough helpful advice and instruction that we felt confident we could at least paddle away from shore and not immediately capsize. We then took our boats and drove the short distance to Kilbear Provincial Park on the shore of Georgian Bay.

Packing the gear for a weekend trip into the boats took a bit of time and ingenuity at first. As canoeists we were used to being sloppy: just fire all the gear into a big Woods pack and throw it into the canoe. With sea kayaks the

gear has to be packed into compartments item by item through small watertight hatches.

Eventually we fit it all in, and paddled away from the beach at Kilbear Park into the open waters of Georgian Bay. We were immediately impressed by the stability of these long, slender craft, and the ease with which they moved through the water. With little effort at all we literally flew along.

The wind and waves rose and we, still not familiar with our new craft and still thinking like canoeists, tried to avoid both by hopping from the lee of one island to the next. It very quickly became clear, however, that all this

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Article: Sandy Richardson

Photographs: Sandy Richardson
Stewart McIlwraith
Robert Aucoin

avoidance was unnecessary. Our kayaks seemed almost immune to the wind and waves. We could paddle in any direction we chose with relative ease; and when we stopped paddling we were not immediately blown back where we'd come from. Canoeing was never like this! Confidence soon replaced our initial caution, and after lunch we were looking for waves to play in rather than to avoid.

We put in a long day that first day out, but the boats were so comfortable and the paddling so effortless, that neither of us complained of any aches or pains. By this time I knew we were onto a good thing!

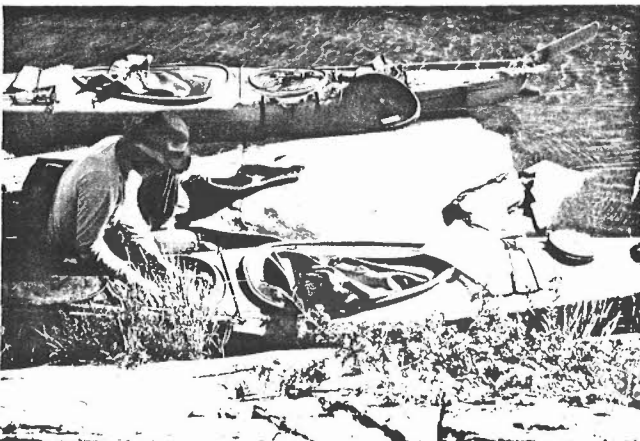
And the remainder of that initial trip did nothing to change this view. In fact, I became convinced that sea kayaks would be the ideal craft for a Lake Superior canoe trip planned for later in the summer.

One sea kayak trip on Georgian Bay had turned my initial skepticism to unabashed excitement and enthusiasm. And a number of subsequent trips of longer duration have served only to confirm and reinforce these feelings. I have become a sea kayaker; the final conformation coming, I suppose, when I gave up renting and purchased my own sea kayak.

The Eskimo hunting boat, the kayak, is a long, usually narrow, decked canoe and is commonly well finished.... The basic requirements in nearly all kayaks are the same; to paddle rapidly and easily, to work against strong wind and tide or heavy sea, to be manoeuvrable, and to be light enough to be readily lifted from the water and carried. The low freeboard required makes decking a necessity. In general, the kayak is designed to carry one paddler....

Howard Chappelle

Sea kayaks, unlike the river variety that we commonly see in Ontario, are long, sleek craft that look a great deal like the traditional Inuit skin boats from which they are descended. Most today are constructed of fiberglass or polyethylene (the main exception being folding boats, most



of which are doubles), are about 4.9 m (16 feet) long and 61 cm (24 inches) wide, and weigh about 23 to 27 kg (50 to 60 pounds).

The cockpit is generally snug and comfortable, with some sort of adjustable seat; it is fitted with a spray skirt for rough weather. Fore and aft are storage compartments sealed off from the cockpit with bulkheads; access to these is through watertight hatches on the deck. And they will hold a lot of gear, at least as much as would fit into two canoe packs. The difference, of course, from a canoeist's perspective, is the packing. Gear must be packed into many small stuff sacks which are fit through the hatches individually. Finally, deck rigging allows the paddler to carry maps, a spare paddle, and other gear, which one wants to be accessible, on the deck. (This rigging should also allow the use of a paddle as an outrigger for self-rescue in the event of a capsized.)

Sea kayaks have little rocker and track well, but can be turned sharply by heeling them over while turning. Most today have rudders which are controlled by foot pedals in the cockpit. While these aid manoeuvring, they are most useful in maintaining a course in cross winds.

The paddles used to propel sea kayaks, different from those used with river kayaks, are long with slender blades, and are kept relatively parallel to the water while paddling. It is this design that keeps paddling a sea kayak from being fatiguing. (Whether or not the paddle should be



feathered is a matter of some debate, the consensus probably preferring unfeathered paddles.) Like sea kayaks themselves, the paddles used to propel them represent a return to traditional Inuit designs.

Paddling a kayak is a very personal thing. Once secure inside the cockpit and snug on the molded bucket seat, it soon becomes obvious to the occupant that it is a boat that is worn rather than sat in. Every mood and movement of the sea is transmitted through the hull of the kayak to the paddler's nervous system. In this way a union is built up between the man and the sea.

Derek C. Hutchinson

A description of sea kayaks or the style of paddles does little to prepare one for the sheer joy to be found in

paddling one of these boats. Part of this is what Stewart and I discovered on that first day on Georgian Bay: the ease with which they glide through the water, the relatively small amount of effort needed to propel them, the lack of discomfort after a long day's paddle, the way they handle in winds and waves. These combine to make the physical activity of paddling a sea kayak fun—something I would not say often about paddling a canoe, especially in adverse conditions.

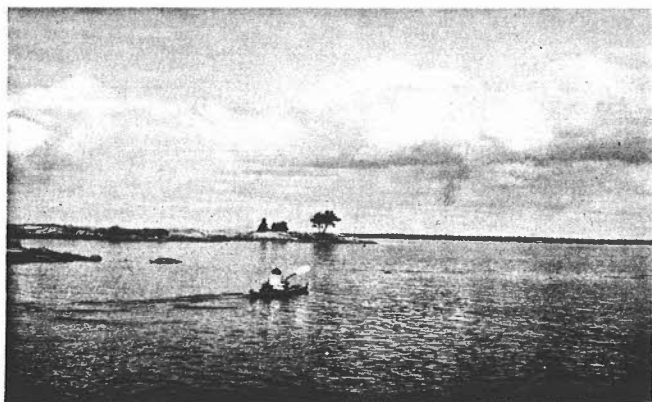
But there is more to the joy of sea kayaking than this. Sitting snugly in the cockpit, the kayak and paddler seem to become one. And because you ride so low, there is a tremendous feeling of moving through the water, not over it. While paddling a sea kayak I feel completely at one with the water—indeed, with the whole wilderness environment.

As conditions on the water grow wilder, the more this feeling of oneness with the environment is accentuated. On Superior we paddled in waves running two to three metres. The feeling was one of being totally enveloped in the wilderness: the only sounds were those of the wind and the waves. Waves would wash over the deck hitting us in the chest and face; and when in the troughs we could see only the water, the sky, and our own small boats. While we were paddling, only these immediate sensations mattered.

This feeling is unlike any I have experienced while canoeing the small lakes and rivers of the Shield, and surely is close to the essence of the wilderness experience. Sea kayaking has extended not only the physical range of my paddling, but also my mental horizons—my whole concept of wilderness.

By offering access to large bodies of water, sea kayaking opens up a fascinating new wilderness to be explored and enjoyed: the wilderness of the open sea. It is a beautiful and expansive wilderness where sky and earth merge, and where the powerful forces of wind and water have created sculptured shorelines of intriguing shapes and textures.

This is also a wilderness that most canoeists in Ontario miss, always looking inland, as they do, rather than out to our wonderful Great Lakes; much as I had done in dismissing sea kayaking as a West Coast activity. But with over 17,000 kilometres of coastline, the Great Lakes contain more shoreline than the East, West, and Gulf Coasts of North America combined. We live on the edge of a series of great



freshwater seas bordered by an incredible variety of landforms and wildlife habitats not found on smaller lakes. Sea kayaks offer us the opportunity to discover this vast and beautiful wilderness that is right at our doorstep.

My sea kayak does not replace my canoe, but rather compliments it. I still love the marshes and lakes, the rivers, the rapids and falls of the Precambrian Shield; and when I want to enjoy this familiar and cherished wilderness, my old and battered canoe will continue to be a faithful companion. But now I know, and am coming to cherish, another kind of wilderness as well, one of big seas and open water. And when I want to explore this new wilderness, my sea kayak will be a fresh but equally trusted companion.

There are many designs, but each is a sea kayak: a silent, responsible craft, with clean lines and one of the most basic forms of propulsion there is: a boat that impels the lone paddler into reverent harmony with the sea and enables the explorer to probe where no other vessel can reach, so silent the photographer or hunter can slip up to wild animals without ever disturbing them, and so rugged and indomitable it can ride out gales on the open sea.

John Dowd



TWO SEA KAYAKING MANUALS

SEA KAYAKING

Author: John Dowd
Publisher: Douglas and McIntyre, Vancouver

GUIDE TO SEA KAYAKING

Author: Derek Hutchinson
Publisher: Pacific Search Press, Seattle

Reviewed by: Sandy Richardson

These two sea kayaking manuals cover essentially the same material: equipment, technique, seamanship, self-rescue, navigation, weather, reading the sea, hazards, storm procedures, camping, first aid, survival, and expedition planning. Both assume a minimum level of experience on the part of the reader, and hence do not describe all the basic techniques and manoeuvres. (The level of experience assumed is quite basic; anyone familiar with basic canoeing strokes will feel quite at home.)

John Dowd and Derek Hutchinson are, however, very different people. Hutchinson is a pro-certification kayak instructor from Britain; Dowd is an anti-certification paddler, and the editor of Sea Kayaker magazine, from Vancouver. And their different approaches to sea kayaking are clearly evident in their books.

Hutchinson's Guide to Sea Kayaking is the standard how-to manual. It presents its information in the detailed and prescriptive, if somewhat dry, manner of a physical education instructor who views sea kayaking as essentially a physical activity. What makes this book particularly useful to newcomers to sea kayaking, is the excellent use made of line drawings. Nearly every technical manoeuvre is well illustrated with a series of step-by-step diagrams.

Hutchinson, however, describes a number of techniques which can most charitably be described as questionable. His "side drop" for launching from a ledge or jetty (where the kayaker enters his boat and drops 1.5 or 1.8 m to the water) and "seal landing" (where the kayaker lets a large swell deposit him on top of a rocky point, then quickly exits and carries away his boat before the next swell washes him away) are but two examples that stretch the credulity of even the novice reader.

Stranger still is his rescue procedure where a capsized kayaker "keeps calm and bangs hard and quickly on his upturned hull to attract attention." The paddler thus attracted comes over and positions his boat so that the

capsized paddler can grab the bow to help right himself. Having paddled a few times in large waves, I cannot imagine anyone even hearing the banging to begin with, let alone being able to bring his boat into position to help in time; especially in conditions wild enough to cause an upset in the first place.

The inclusion of techniques such as these in Guide to Sea Kayaking is unfortunate. They are so questionable that they tend to undermine Hutchinson's credibility in other places where his advice is probably quite sound.

Dowd's Sea Kayaking, on the other hand, is the classic guide to long-distance kayak touring, and deservedly so. (It is probably worth noting that a revised edition of this book is in the works and should be coming out soon.) It is practical and thorough in its treatment of the subject, and in its approach is clearly the work of an individualist who sees sea kayaking as essentially a wilderness pursuit.

Dowd is contemptuous of orthodoxy, and in place of Hutchinson's prescriptive instructions, this book offers the reader helpful suggestions and general principles for dealing with various paddling situations. His approach is one of common sense; he dismisses many of the questionable techniques of Hutchinson and others as "perfectly hopeless under real conditions." His own suggested techniques are much more realistic, and generally are ones he has personally tested on trips; where they are not, he tries to make it clear that he is guessing.

Sea Kayaking is also the more literal and readable book. Manuals, as a general rule it seems, tend to make rather dry reading. The author who can impart information in a style that is fun to read is rare; Colin Fletcher, Harry Roberts, James Davidson and John Ruge, and Bill Mason are among the few who have succeeded in the wilderness field. John Dowd should be added to this list. His Sea Kayaking is written with a style and sense of humor that makes reading fun.

We have then, in John Dowd's Sea Kayaking and Derek Hutchinson's Guide to Sea Kayaking, two quite different books on the same topic. Both contain a wealth of useful and interesting information that will be appreciated by novice and more experienced sea kayakers alike. Their different approaches probably both have merit; and different readers will no doubt prefer one or the other depending upon their own outlooks. If I were to select one of these manual it would be Dowd's; it not only contains much sound and practical advice, it is also fun to read. Others might prefer Hutchinson's more didactic approach. Or, one could do as I have ultimately done: purchase a copy of both.

cezanne's apples

Robert F. Perkins

Being a naturalist is not unlike being a painter: the goal is to bring alive for ourselves and others qualities from the various worlds we inhabit, be it everydayness or the more unusual. Georgia O'Keefe's flowers, Marsden Hartley's landscapes, Pisanello's animal drawings, Van Gogh's night skies, Goya's dreams, Picasso's portraits of women, Cezanne's apples (those humble fruits, seen through his eyes, which helped change the way we perceive the world). I have been greatly moved to stand in front of works of art as powerful and perceptive as these.

Observing the natural world is no less telling. To try to enter into the life of things and creatures, to be an eye, to be present not as a manipulator, but as an observer. To learn that the vacant space surrounding an object is as instructive as the object itself. Increasingly, instead of the facts of the world, which tend to be the concrete things we see and feel, I'm drawn to the influences we cannot as readily see -- the empire between the facts. Wind is a simple example. We see the wind only where it touches something. Currently in what I read, see, and hear concerning nature, and what we are told, I sense an eerie feeling, a presence not concrete, but no less there; a foreboding element underlying the impasse the human world and the natural world have reached.

For me, reading the work of the historian, Elizabeth Pool, brought together these strands through an aspect of her story about the Spanish arrival in South America. She says, the Spanish galleons first appeared off a peninsula named Tabasco. They were lying off shore days before they came on land. Not until the Spanish actually landed did the Native Americans take any notice of them. Even then, in the beginning, the natives acted kindly toward these strangers. What followed reads as very sad history.

In Pool's narration, what shocked me most is realizing that at first the native Americans didn't even see the galleons. Couldn't see them. There was nothing in their past, or present, to prepare them to see ships, or to know what absolute devastation the Spanish would wreak upon their highly developed civilization. Before reading her account, the only analogy I could make was to see in my mind's eye a cast of poorly paid Hollywood extras waving madly and joyously at Charles Laughton and his crew on the *Bounty* as they arrived "out of the blue" in Hawaii. By contrast, the unusual element in Pool's South American tragedy is that nothing happened. You can't perceive something (be it a galleon or a threat) you haven't ever thought existed.

Growing up in North America I was taught to believe we are the great civilization. Perhaps we are, but now, instead of patting myself on the back, I spend more time wondering what the "Spanish Galleon" of our undoing will be: will it be AIDS? An atomic holocaust? Acid rain? Deforestation of the Amazon forests? Our departure for outer space? Overpopulation? Any one of these, or combination, could as utterly change our world as the arrival of the Spanish ships did the South American world. A future generation will look back at us and say, "They had the manpower, the technology, the knowledge, the wealth, to change and solve their problems. Why didn't they?"

The painters George Braque and Henri Matisse loved to create works of art in the form of the cut out. This art form uses both positive and negative space. The object's absence from the cut-out paper being just as powerful as the object cut out. The threat I feel is of something less obvious, less dramatic, but equally as dangerous as any issue mentioned above. These issues are the cut outs; the

threat less readily seen is the negative space surrounding them. An alternative way to perceive this is to imagine the words you're reading without the paper they are printed on. One requires the other, but do you read the words or the paper?

By 1988, the majority of the world's population lives in a city or near one. This percentage grows larger with each passing year. Cities are made in our image. They are carved out of the land. They are the creation of our various sciences. You might say we live in a science fiction: we fly, we drive 110 km/hr, we talk to people next door or around the world without being there. We live in a world of endless light, fresh vegetables, and energy. In some of our laboratories we even fulfill Mary Shelly's vision of creating Frankenstein monsters. Our cities now dream us. Is it that, living in a world totally created and supported by science, we feel less and less a dependence on nature?

On the other hand, wilderness areas the world over are shrinking. The statement, "we need wilderness," cuts both ways: we need it for farmland, lumber, mineral resources, housing, recreation. We need it for itself, too. A wilderness is like our unconscious. By developing wilderness, by each of our sciences raking wilderness and its creatures over and over their coals, we poke it awake; uncover its mysteries, its mechanisms. We invent languages, theories, and systems to interpret and manage each aspect of its self. As we would disintegrate without our sleep, those areas left as wilderness are sleep for the planet. What will happen when they are all completely awake, made completely useful to mankind?

Worldwide, we are constantly told wilderness is doomed. Some of us give money, others devote their lives to preservation, but we all shake our heads and put the blame on other shoulders: Don't blame me, I don't own a sealskin coat, I never cut down a tree in the Amazon, I don't throw plastic in the ocean, I don't eat meat, I don't drive a car. We turn to the experts both to interpret the problem and to provide the solutions: to the politician, the scientist, the economist, the conservationist, the industrialist.

However, what is in jeopardy is not nature, but our attitude toward her. What's shrinking faster than our wilderness areas is our attitude about nature, along with the possibility of our seeking to have any kind of relationship with the natural world. Doesn't there remain an immense amount of the natural world in every country? Outside any window there is something, even if it's just a slice of sky. Nature is more resilient than we think, but have the majority of us isolated ourselves, not only physically in cities, but mentally inside the medias of print, television, and the movies? Do we now not believe our own eyes, ears, and tastes? Are we now so civilized? The "Spanish Galleon" of our day is invisible because we don't see it's so close to each and every one of us.

It's possible the answers to what threatens our wilderness do not lie in the sciences, but in the human heart.

What do I do?

I read and re-read men like John Muir.

I look at Cezanne's apples.

Lit.: Prologue to the Present by Elizabeth Pool
A Narrative World History in three volumes
published by Independent School Press, 1984

CANADIAN CANOE ROUTE CLEAN UP PLANNED

The Canadian Recreational Canoeing Association (CRCA) has approached Environment Canada officials to support the proposed "Canadian Canoe Route Environmental Clean Up Project" (CCREUCUP) for 1988 and beyond.

The CCREUCUP is a co-operative effort on behalf of all canoeists to do their part to ensure the preservation of Canada's canoeable wilderness areas. The project would designate canoe routes across Canada that are in need of environmental clean-up (ie: picking up cigarette butts, bottles, tin foil, general debris, etc.) based upon the input of provincial/territorial recreational canoeing associations and canoe clubs. Volunteer canoeists would then concentrate their efforts over the summer time period to bag garbage along the specified canoe route to restore it as an environmentally desirable area. Volunteers would be asked

to photograph the individuals or groups of canoeists who helped to clean up the area along with the garbage collected, so the environmental clean-up can be publicized in local and national newspapers, magazines, television and radio stations. This will help raise the awareness level of all Canadians of the importance of a clean environment and hopefully increase the number of environmentally active people across the country.

Any comments or suggestions with regard to the CCREUCUP would be appreciated. Please write to: CRCA, P.O. Box 500, Hyde Park, Ontario, NOM 120.

(Excerpted from the winter 1988 issue of Kanawa, the national newsmagazine of the CRCA.)



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

CHAIRPERSON'S LETTER



Harbourfront Canoe Fest, May 1988

For those of you who were unable to attend the Annual General Meeting and the elections on 27 February, take a look at the new Board of Directors listed on the last page of Nastawgan. Aside from wanting to mention that for the first time the WCA has an equal number of women and men on the Board, I would like to encourage WCA members to contact any of us with suggestions for the coming year.

The Board would like to enhance the WCA's traditional activities and its focus on the wilderness experience, while at the same time being open to new ideas for endeavors that would be of interest to the membership. For example, one "first" was for the WCA to have a booth at CanoeFest 7 and 8 May, at Harbourfront in Toronto. Using materials from the Sportsmen's Show display, the booth provided opportunity for the WCA to familiarize more people with who we are and what we do. Other projects being given consideration are a survey of the membership and development of a trip information guide. Starting with this issue of Nastawgan, a column will be provided called the "WCA Mailbox." So much mail is directed to the WCA, it seemed a shame to file most of it in the garbage. Highlights of informative and relevant mail received will therefore be reported, and I will welcome calls if anyone would like to have the original documents. Looking forward to hearing from you.

Marcia Farquhar

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

The following is a copy of a letter from me to Chief Martin Restoule, Dokis.

J.H.

Chief Martin Restoule
Dokis Indian Band
Dokis Reserve
via North Bay, Ontario

Mr. Joss Haiblen
21 Burn St.
Downer, A.C.T.
Australia 2602

February 5, 1988

Dear Chief Restoule,

I now live in Australia, but I grew up on Lake Temagami and learned to love the country of my birth, Canada, by canoeing over as much of it as I could. On several trips down the French, I called in at Dokis and met some of your people.

In the last edition (winter 1987, ed.) of the journal of the Wilderness Canoe Association, Nastawgan, I learn that Leonard Dokis and yourself, among others, have actively opposed the proposal for a 'Voyageur Waterway.'

The French River is of historical importance to all Canadians and is of special and continuing significance to your people. It is not to be tampered with for the supposed economic benefit of North Bay.

When I think of what it means to be a Canadian, I think of the North Country, and of places like the French River.

I urge you to do all in your power to stop this outrageous proposal -- for the sake of the River and everyone to whom it has meant, and will in the future mean, so much.

Best wishes to everyone at Dokis.

Yours sincerely,

(signed) Joss Haiblen



news briefs

WCA FALL MEETING Reserve the weekend of 23 - 25 September for this year's Fall Meeting at the Minden Wild Water Preserve. Arrive Friday evening to set up camp, chat with friends, and prepare for Saturday's events and Sunday's adventures. Details will be sent to all members by separate mail in August. For more information and/or to volunteer to help, contact Sandy Miller in Toronto at 416-323-3603.

WCA PHOTO CONTEST In February 1989, there will again be a competition for the many photographers in the WCA. The four categories are: 1) wilderness, 2) wilderness and man, 3) flora, 4) fauna. The official announcement will be published in the autumn issue of Nastawgan.

OPEN CANOE RACE Don't forget to attend, as participant or spectator, the Gull River Open Canoe Slalom on 10 and 11 September 1988 at the Minden Wild Water Preserve. A great opportunity to paddle, learn, see, and enjoy! For more information contact Wendy Grater at Trail Head in Toronto at 416-862-0881.

WCA FALL PARTY This popular, annual get-together, marked by happy banter, wine, cheese, other delicacies, and slide shows, will be held on Friday, 25 November 1988, again at the Casa Loma Campus of the George Brown College in Toronto. Mark this date on your calendar! Don't miss it! More details later.

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

issue	autumn 1988	deadline date	14 August 1988
	winter 1988		13 November 1988

WCA MEMBERSHIP LISTS Membership lists are available to any members who wish one for personal, non-commercial use. Send a \$2.00 bill (no cheques, please!) to Cash Belden, 77 Huntley Street, Apt. 1116, Toronto, M4Y 2P3.

CONCRETE, ANYONE? The first American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) National Concrete Canoe Race Finals will happen 17-19 June on Lake Lansing in Michigan, hosted by Michigan State University. The competitors will be teams of engineering students who won regional contests throughout the USA. Regional competitions with concrete canoes started in the 1970s; the engineering students design, build, and race the canoes. Concrete canoes evolved from barges made of concrete during World War II to conserve steel. The idea is to make the canoes as light as possible without making them too weak. One of the design requirements is that the canoes float when filled with water. To ease the strain, flotation material may be used near the bow and stern. Concrete may be made with polystyrene beads or hollow glass spheres instead of gravel to improve its floatability.

(From: Chemical and Engineering News, March 7, 1988)

POSTAGE METER FOR THE WCA The work of doing WCA mailings would be greatly simplified by the use of a postage meter. However, the cost of renting one by the year cannot be justified when it would only be used four or five times. Would any member who has access to a meter, through work, etc., which might be loaned to the WCA for four weekends per year, please contact Bill King in Toronto at 416-223-4646.

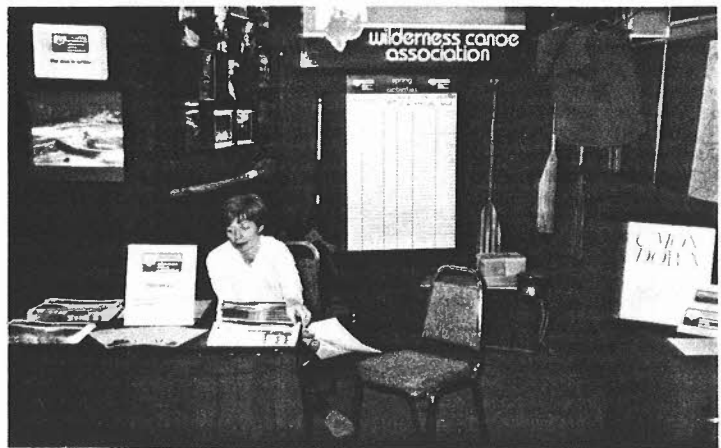
WCA TRIP INFORMATION GUIDE

The Board of Directors has initiated a plan to explore the pros and cons of a WCA Trip Information Guide. This book would contain an extensive collection of useful information on many canoe and (sea)kayak trips WCA members are familiar with, directly or indirectly. It could be produced along the lines of the existing Ontario Voyageurs guide which is mainly concerned with whitewater paddling, whereas the WCA guide would cover much more: lakes, rivers, flat-water, whitewater. The book would only be available to members/friends of the WCA; it would not be sold to the general public.

Anyone with constructive ideas, comments, and criticism about how to organize this ambitious project and produce the guide, please contact Dee Simpson, 36 Albemarle Ave., Toronto, M4K 1H7, phone 416-463-1821.



White-tailed deer



Sportsmen's Show, March 1988

PARTNERS AND INFORMATION WANTED

GEORGE RIVER Tom Elliott needs a partner for a trip down the George River in Québec, 12 July to 6 August 1988. This trip will be made by a total of six people in three canoes. Contact Tom in Brantford, Ontario, at 416-648-1560.

TEMAGAMI WILDERNESS Marcia Farquhar is organizing a canoe trip in the Temagami area for the beginning of August. Anyone interested, please contact Marcia in Richmond Hill at 416-884-0208.

A Word or Two Against Commercial Tour Operations in the Canadian Wilderness

Raymond Chipeniuk

Surely we were in it. By any reasonable definition, "wilderness" lay outward from our camp for hundreds of kilometres across the tundra, the mountains, and the ice-covered sea. For three weeks we had seen no other human beings and just about none of their works. That evening, gulping down a second cup of tea in a cold and rocky place, we had no trouble agreeing among ourselves that what we five Canadians were in was wilderness!

Conversation, though, was running to the topic of some well-known commercial canoe-trip operators from our city of origin, Ottawa. All four of my companions spoke of the operators as friends, people they had shared real-life experiences with, interesting doers and movers.

Mischievously, and with some irritation, I broke in to ask whether my fellows had no reservations at all about the role of commercial tour group operators in the Canadian wilderness. Everyone knows about the good things outfitters do, I said. They take people into the wilderness who do not have the experience or time to organize their own trips, they develop canoeing or other kinds of expertise, they bring together like-minded people, they create a constituency for wilderness. But have they no faults whatsoever?

I was not being malicious. In fact, my gambit did nothing more than rephrase the hard questions other people had put to me a few years before, when an Eskimo friend of mine and I had launched our own modest wilderness-tour operation. Yet it was as if I had uttered blasphemy. None of my climbing and hiking partners saw anything the least wrong with commercial touring in the wilderness.

In this short article I would like to draw attention to a few things about commercial tour operations in the wilderness which may be wrong or harmful. It seems important to do so because those operations are becoming a large factor in the Canadian wilderness and, in my view, threaten it. According to statisticians, over the past decade they have been growing at 10 or 20 percent per annum. Provincial and territorial governments are encouraging them. They have a way of hungrily sniffing out just about every fine valley and range economical to reach by float plane. And wherever they go, they change what they find.



Harm to the Client

We Canadians do not yet know what wilderness means to us, and the conventional wisdom is that we will not know until, as happened with the Americans, we have lost almost the whole of it. But we do have some fine storytellers who have conveyed to us something of what wilderness meant to them: Ernest Thompson Seton, Grey Owl, Raymond Patterson, Earle Birney, A. L. Karras, to name a few.

To all these authors, wilderness was a place which worked certain changes in the mind and character of persons who went into it. It taught the sojourner 'freedom,' 'self-reliance,' 'resourcefulness,' 'determination,' 'perseverance,' 'humor,' 'optimism,' 'patience,' 'calm,' 'discipline,' 'vigilance and watchfulness,' 'sublimity and majesty,' 'courage,' 'self-sacrifice.' Soberly, and in anguish, A. L. Karras reports that, "It was demonstrated quite clearly to me that in the deepest wilderness one could expect, at any time, a visit from the devil."

Touring in a commercial group, in my opinion, fails to teach the participant, the paying client, any of these things, and therefore it fails to change him or her. It fails because the tour leader takes complete responsibility for planning and organizing the trip, for safety and harmony in personal relations, and for seeing the damn thing through. The client takes responsibility for nothing except a rudimentary competence in the outdoors, and reaps commensurate rewards.

To draw an analogy, the touring client is in the position of being second on a rope of climbers. So long as one never leads on the rock, he is using someone else's techniques as a crutch. Always being second has a value; but any climber -- and especially any second who has done a stint of leading -- will tell you just how that value stands in comparison with the value of leading.

In short, the harm suffered by the client is the twofold harm of lost opportunities and delusion: delusion because he is under the mistaken impression that he has "done" the South Nahanni or "climbed" the Matterhorn; lost opportunities, because he can never return to challenge that river or mountain in a state of innocence, and for an indefinite postponement he will come no closer to resembling those admirable heroes of the wilderness described by Canadian writers who had experienced wilderness themselves.

Harm to the wilderness itself, and to other seekers of wilderness

By now it should be clear that as Canadians use the term "wilderness," it refers not so much to an objective reality as to a frame of mind. What is wilderness to one person may be mere landscape, or home, to another. Without someone who can recognize wilderness when he sees it, it does not exist.

One thing about wilderness as a Canadian frame of mind is that all it takes to spoil it is the presence of a very few other people. Such may not be so for the Japanese or Europeans, but for most Canadians it is. Unfortunately, tour operators bring people to remote places in ever-greater numbers.

American national park administrators have studied how many other parties a canoeist will tolerate meeting in a day before the quality of his experience suffers. In the United States it is about three. In Canada, to go by my own experience, it is much lower: zero, in fact. The people I canoed with down the Snowdrift River in 1984 or camped with on the shores of Eclipse Channel in 1985, wanted to encounter not even the memory of other travellers.

Is it elitism to say that only those who have the experience, self-reliance, and courage should be given the keys to the wilderness kingdom? Cries of "elitism" seem to be nothing more than name-calling by those who, aiming to



invade the wilderness with roads, engines, guns, or the determination to have a party, can find no other charge to hurl at those who enjoy solitude and natural beauty for their own sake. For travelling in the wilderness, all one needs is personal qualities, which anyone can acquire by taking the time and making the effort. (Two young New Englanders of my acquaintance regularly make expeditions to northern Labrador on an income barely above the poverty line.) The qualifications for joining a tour group, on the other hand, are nothing more than a high income, or at least money. If anything, the charge of elitism should round home to those who make it.

Some friends of mine recently conducted a ski-mountaineering expedition across the glaciated highlands of Bylot Island, in the Canadian Arctic. For five weeks they pulled heavy loads across a dream landscape of indescribable purity, serenity, and isolation. Their exaltation was like that of an artist creating a masterpiece. Would they have felt the same way if their route had been criss-crossed with the trails of tour groups? Not very likely!

Would they have gone at all if commercial outfits were bringing in people to the finest parts or the whole of that austere island? No; they would have sought out real wilderness elsewhere.

But when the tour operators have carved up the surface of the earth into coterminous fiefdoms of their own, where else will there be to go?

Harm to native people

Thanks to Justice Tom Berger, Canadians now appreciate that what is a northern wilderness to people living in Toronto or Calgary is a homeland to the Dene or Inuit people who live there. Still to be understood is the fact that when tour operators pipe clients into the north, they are treading on native toes in as colonialist a fashion as ever did the arctic oil and gas pipeline consortia.

Most northern native communities are upset about an influx of strangers into their traditional lands. Native people are unused to numbers of wealthy aliens, they are bitter about having to compete with them for scarce supplies at the stores, they resent the way they disturb the game. For many of them, southern tourists disturb the sacred relationship between Dene and Denendeh or Inuit and Nunavut -- man and land, or man, land, wildlife, and spirit world.

For the younger natives, tour-grouping is not intrinsically a bad thing. What is wrong with tour companies from their point of view is that they are owned and staffed by outsiders. For every group to canoe down the Thelon under the auspices of "Great Adventures" or "Mind-Boggling Expeditions," there is another which might have, in a different regulatory environment, gone down with a native guide, learning a little about the culture and history of the First Nations whose lands the river flows through.

What do the clients of tour parties descending the Coppermine learn about Inuit political needs or the Dene world view? How much reason do such vacationers have to feel they are uninvited guests of the original owners of Canada? Why should the tour-client regard native people who are hunters, trappers, or fishermen as anything but a threat to the pristine wilderness -- the pristine wilderness those same Inuit and Indians or their forefathers have lived in and nurtured since time out of mind?

A few suggestions

Nobody would suggest that all guided touring in the wilderness of Canada should come to an end. The positive

features of this institution are far too many for that. So what is the point of making strictures? What does the critic propose?

First, in my view, special-interest organizations such as the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society should endeavour to persuade each federal, provincial, or territorial jurisdiction in Canada that commercial group-touring kills wilderness. (Such persuasion will not come easily, because most provincial politicians and land managers have no idea of what wilderness as a concept or as an experience means, much less why it should matter if it were to die.) Following from recognition of the effect touring has on wilderness, some portions of remaining wilderness in each jurisdiction should be set aside for those who wish to experience a canoe or hiking trip in the mind-changing, ensorcelled north without help in doing it and without constantly running into the paying customers of back-country escort services.

Secondly, group-tour operations should be subject to restraints in each catchment territory they make use of. As in the American national parks, their exploitation of a public resource for private gain is legitimately subject to planning, control, and rationing. There ought to be limits, decided on through public discussion, on how many paying customers can be brought to a river or valley. In the case of some famous rivers, a portion of the open-water season should be reserved for the independent traveller.

Thirdly, like other businesses in the north, tour-group operators should be pressed, or obliged, to hire and train native people and to form joint enterprises with them. Native people have a legal and moral claim to the natural landscapes which are the drawing-cards for tour businesses in the north, they are virtually the only permanent inhabitants of those landscapes, and they feel a spiritual responsibility for these tracts of what southerners perceive as "wilderness." Reasonably, then, they may assert a right to participate in and benefit from any commercial guiding done on their traditional lands.

Although few Canadians realize it or care, we are living in the last days of wilderness in its older sense of lands beyond the frontier of settlement and economic activity. Within five or ten years, if present trends continue, nowhere in Canada will one be sure of being alone and of seeing wildlife unaccustomed to people. Even where the miners and drillers and road engineers have not yet arrived there will be tour operations, the hookers and their johns, in the final retreats of silence and that which owes nothing to mankind -- unless those who love wilderness for its own sake begin lobbying now, and lobbying hard.

The wilderness which my tea-drinking friends and I were in as recently as this past summer was a fool's paradise. About 100 kilometres away the tour operators had already been experimenting with landing wheeled Twin Otters on the tundra. When they returned to the city, members of our own group were pumped for information that could be converted into plane-loads of customers and at least a few dollars.

Next year the tundra and mountains and sea will still be in that distant spot. I am not at all sure about the wilderness.

Raymond Chipeniuk is an editor in the House of Commons Committee Reporting Service, Ottawa, and an amateur student of parks and wilderness. Now 41, he has camped in the Canadian bush alone or with companions since he was about 11, canoed Canadian rivers without guides since he was 18, and climbed Canadian mountains unassisted since he was 21.

Reprinted from the winter 1986-87
issue of Park News Magazine



polar prospects



Michael Whittier

The tenth of March dawned bright and promising for the start of the 1988 Spring Polar Expedition. Our party of three men and two Siberian Husky dogs piled out of my Nissan King Cab 4 x 4 at the Canoe Lake landing in Algonquin Park. The dogs sniffed and jerked at their leads excitedly as we loaded our 2.4-m ash toboggan with the bare essentials for survival in the ice-locked winter wilderness which lay ahead. We were bound for The Pole.

Many months of planning and exhausting hours of preparation had fine-tuned our gear for the rigors of the expedition. The budget, like all polar expeditions, was staggering, but with the generosity of our sponsors the dream was now becoming a reality. Graeme, Dave, and myself skied with laden backpacks, and with every stride our bodies ached under the bone-crushing burden of close to 14 kg of gear in each pack. The dogs strained with the load of bulky software: sleeping bags, a woven polyethylene tarp shelter, and an abundant supply of kibbles. The search for a suitable expedition dogsled had culminated in a windfall discovery in the winter sports department of Canadian Tire where we bought the 2.4-m "Torpedo brand" wooden toboggan and outfitted it with a custom low-density polyethylene underskin (two "Krazy Karpets" jointed end to end). The result was a handsome, graceful craft which glided over the frozen snow with frictionless effort. In order to lighten our load and speed our progress as much as possible, we made the unprecedented decision to take only three days supply of food with us. Dave made chili, I made stew, and Graeme brought the fixings for a hearty potato cheese soup. We had an emergency supply of frozen smelts.

And thus, we headed north to the top of Canoe Lake. The warm, early spring sun softened the crust of the snow-covered lake. The dazzling brightness of the polished landscape was tempered by a cool breeze which blew refreshingly out of the north. Skiing was fast and at times furious to keep up with the eager dog team which had broken into a trot. The unmanned toboggan in tow created not the slightest resistance to their efforts to reach the farthest point on the horizon. (This was a point of concern. During a pre-trip training outing the dogs had impaled a similar unmanned toboggan upon a tree while rounding a bend in the trail at breakneck speed. The predictable result supplied us with spare bits of hardwood for the Expedition sled repair kit.)

The first obstacle was open water at the head of Canoe Lake where the Oxtongue River enters. Because of steep banks and dense alder growth, we were forced to take a detour along some cottage roads. With this we found deep, wet snow rutted with tire tracks made by a "skidder" which had plowed the road prior to the last snowfall. The going was difficult as the toboggan kept trying to turn sideways in the ruts. Conditions were exacerbated as the dogs kept trying to turn sideways in the abundant moose droppings as they attempted to roll in each pile in passing.

During a lunch stop atop the old rail causeway crossing Joe Lake, we met a lone snowshoer--Jerry--who was very helpful in advising us of ice conditions further up the Oxtongue River. Jerry had spent the previous winter at Canoe Lake running a four-dog team up various circuits, and he was openly leary of our plans to reach The Pole with such little

training and experience. He suggested we should be able to make MacIntosh Lake or Grassy Bay before our food ran out, if we really pushed it.

We pushed on up the Western Gap in Joe Lake and into Teepee Lake. By now the afternoon sun was well past its zenith, and the surface crust quite soft. We began to break through with our skis, and the dogs were tiring from breaking through with every second paw plant. Fearing dog foot injuries and exhaustion (and even worse, becoming dog-tired ourselves), we elected to make camp below a section of open water separating Fawn Lake from the upper Oxtongue River. We quickly pitched camp, Dave served up the chili, and the dogs napped and romped in the freedom from their harnesses.

That night we celebrated our highly successful first day. We had covered more than 12 km. The 1988 Soviet-Canadian Transpolar Expedition had only covered 7 km on their first day, so we figured there was a lot more to serious polar travel than hype and snazzy gear. We stood out on the lake ice in awe of the heavens spread before us in the clear night sky. Graeme remarked that indeed we must be getting close to the Pole, as the North Star lay almost directly above our shelter. We bedded down in high spirits while dreams of Polar glory danced in our heads.

The next morning disaster struck. The dogs were gone. The temperature was -10°C, the sun was slowly climbing in a clear sky, and the snow glistened and crunched with the most idyllic sledding conditions imaginable. But the dogs had been absent from camp all night. I said: "They'll be sure to come around when we're serving up breakfast." Breakfast was finished, and still no dogs. "Let's pack up, they can't be far and they are bound to show up with the commotion of breaking camp." The loaded sled and packs sat idle on the ice in front of the empty campsite as we decided our next move. "Let's ski down the lake and look for them."

We backtracked amidst a maze of dog tracks going in all directions all over the lake. Obviously the pups had been busy exploring the new terrain while we slept. I had visions of finding two bushed and bleary-eyed pets too tired to pull a sled after a night of dog partying. No such luck. The tracks disappeared up a system of bush roads behind Camp Arowhon about three kilometres south of our camp. No amount of whistling, hollering, or howling produced any response from the white winter stillness.

We quickly decided not to let this setback dampen our enthusiasm for exploring some of our favorite canoe haunts on skis. We traversed bogs, ascended rocky creeks, and crossed large lakes, all with the greatest of ease on our day trip through Tom Thompson, Sunbeam, and return through Littledoe lakes.

On our arrival back in camp that evening we found all our gear packed up as we had left it, but no dogs and not even any fresh tracks to indicate they had dropped by during our absence. The Polar objective was now in serious jeopardy as we consumed our second to last meal of stew.

The following day was grey and threatened precipitation, with the temperature around zero. Another day trip loop out to Burnt Island Lake produced some challenging bushwhacking through alder-choked banks of open streams and some tricky portages with steep hills and sharp turns amidst

moose hoof craters. An icy crust on the snow made control difficult and backslip a problem.

That night I ate the potato cheese soup with a lump in my throat thinking that my dogs--long-time faithful travelling companions--had deserted me to join one of the famed Algonquin wolf packs. It would be a hard life of borderline starvation, struggles of dominance and subordination within the pack, and ruthless survival of the fittest. But if that was their choice, then so be it, I decided philosophically.

We skied back to the truck with heavy hearts the following day through 15 cm of wet, new snow. The toboggan was no longer a nimble, quick craft, but a heavy barge that listed badly to one side and caused us to curse as we attempted to keep it from turning over as we hauled it. I whistled more and more desperately as we approached the Canoe Lake landing. It seemed my dogs had been swallowed up by the vast wilderness, and now that their tracks were covered in snow, there was nothing left but memories, two stainless steel bowls, and four kilograms of Kibbles in the bottom of a pack.

I brushed the snow off the windshield of the truck and found a yellow folded paper under the wiper. "Great," I said, "just what I needed to brighten my day, a parking ticket." In fact it was no ticket at all. It was a note from Park Warden Barton. It said: "Your animals are at the Huntsville Animal Shelter; you may claim them there."

It seems that the dogs had wandered all the way back to the truck and just sat there, apparently having had enough of Polar Trekking. This was a dog's way of saying: "You guys go on ahead. We'll be okay." The Warden who happened to be driving by took pity on them, and Jerry who chanced by at



the same time had identified them as belonging to us. The Warden had generously transported them to the Huntsville Animal Shelter where they had spent the next three days.

We rejoiced in the reunion of the entire expedition, and quickly put aside any hard feelings toward the mutinous mutts who had left us pathetically stranded on the gateway to Polar triumph.

Next year we hope to continue the expedition, beginning anew at Teepee Lake. We will carry five days supply of food and some strong aircraft cable to moor the dogs to the campsite each night.

high tech yuppie paddling

(With apologies to Tom Sebring and Canoesport Journal)

Tom Daytona

We were three hours into bureaucratic Boondoggle Park when we spied a lone tent on the shore of Tactless Lake. My Yuppie sweetheart in the bow pointed and sniggered, "That guy looks like something out of an old movie. Look at that tent!"

It was unique, a canvas type that I didn't even know they still made. He was dressed in wool pants and a red and black wool shirt. Surely this was a reincarnated lumberjack. His canvas-covered canoe must have weighed 50 kilograms. My wife is the friendly sort and wasn't put off by his appearance so, without waiting for an invitation, we pulled into his camp. "Hi," said the love of my life.

"Hi," said he.

"We just came from Tinkerbell Lake only three hours ago. That's almost 27 kilometres and we weren't really pushing either," I told him, knowing he would be interested.

We were paddling an 18 and 1/2 foot Madsawnah Eclipse. Eighteen kilograms of lethal-looking Kevlar and aluminum that bore more than a passing resemblance to a marathon racer but was still capable of carrying 500 kilograms of dressed moose and withstanding the worst nature could dish out. There aren't many canoes like this around and even fewer people wealthy enough to own them. These canoes are not made for weekend canoeists. Only the truly enlightened to whom paddling is an art form are at home in these magnificent machines and then only in the waters of North America's premier canoe country where no ordinary canoeist would show his face.

When ashore I lifted the canoe to my shoulders with a single smooth motion using only one hand. "Bet you can't do that with your canoe."

"No, I can't," he answered.

I'm sure he thought it was a racing canoe from the translucent natural Kevlar hull and the large Madsawnah decal running from bow to stern. Certainly the contoured, molded seats with carbon fibre reinforcing helped the image as did our custom-made \$100 paddles autographed by a famous racer that weighed less than 100 grams. Some people think they are fragile but we have never damaged one and we really don't go out of our way to protect them. While my love showed our new friends our Patagonia foam-padded paddle case that we carry them in on portages, I unloaded some of our gear to show him. He seemed really eager to see how we could travel so efficiently.

"What'd you think of our paddling style? It's called American Touring Technique by the really "in" paddlers. We do 40 to 65 strokes per minute and can cover 50 kilometres a day easy. We invented it in the US of A, you know."

"Is that a fact?" the old man responded. He was

obviously bewildered by so much culture shock.

"You bet, and it's a lot better than those old-fashioned strokes. What about these fantastic lightweight packs? Bet you can't get those canvas ones in fuchsia. Whatcha eatin'?"

"Oh, just some bannock and a couple of trout."

"Yeh, we'd eat fish too but we prefer this freeze-dried stuff. Had Cream of Truffle soup, Poussins aux Vin Blanc, Pommes de Terre Espagnole, and Glace à la Framboise last night for dinner. Only weighed 120 grams before my wife rehydrated it. She's a real whiz around with our MSR very expensive stove."

He looked us up and down. "Those are pretty fancy clothes you're wearing."

That was just the right question! Nothing we like more than talking about clothes. We were wearing quick-dry cycling shorts with baby pink T-shirts emblazoned with the logo of a very trendy manufacturer. My sweetheart slapped a few blackflies as she pulled our other clothing out of the pack to show him. You could tell he was impressed by the Perception Paddling Jacket and Eddie Bauer Gore-Tex rain gear. While I showed him those, Pumpkin modelled her Royal Robbins climbing pants and Patagonia windbreaker. I had to restrain my wife from stripping down to her LIFA undies and jogging bra. After all, we had no idea how long he had beer out there.

While my wife repacked everything, I showed him what a real tent was like. Ours sets up in only four seconds and was used in the last ascent of Mount Everest.

Time was running short and, as much as we liked helping out a fellow canoeist, we had to get on our way. We clipped the gear down to the tie-down straps molded into the hull (it's the little things that make a canoe "work"). We waded out a ways from shore and got in, exploding away in a burst of speed. Just off shore, Sweetie executed a perfect crisp port bow post as we did a full 270° turn and then cruised past his camp at 8 or 10 km/hr. We would cover another 24 kilometres before dinner.

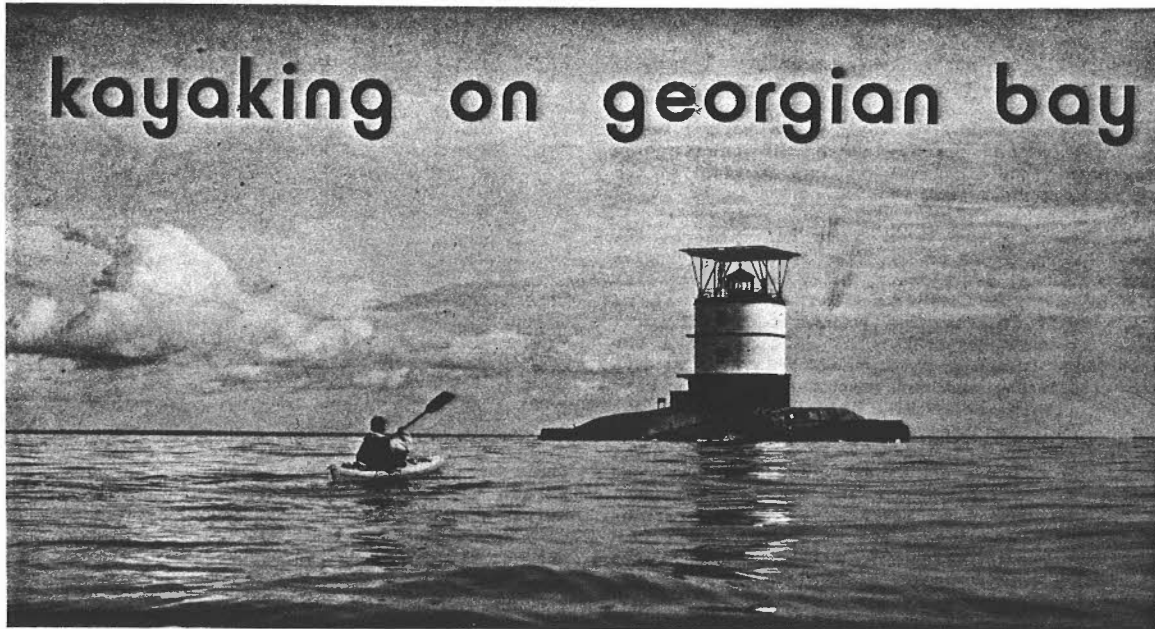
My wife turned and smiled. "Well, I guess we taught him a thing or two about canoeing and camping."

"Yeh, I feel sorry for guys like that who don't know how to camp properly. What did you say his name was?"

"Mason, I think. Yeh, it was Bill Mason."

(Who else but the sharp-witted John Winters could have produced this little gem?)

kayaking on georgian bay



Article: Stewart McIlwraith
Photographs: Sandy Richardson
Stewart McIlwraith

The beginning of a bright, sunny Thanksgiving weekend saw three canoeists setting out in sea kayaks from Snub Harbour on Georgian Bay. Rob, Sandy, and I were soon off paddling in the waves of the large bay using the near-shore islands to shelter us from the worst of the waves until we found ourselves in open water. The lake with its large fetch allowed the waves to develop to good heights; the kayaks handled beautifully stabbing through the waves.

The wind was strong as I battled against it. But I was stronger bashing through the big waves and swerving around the largest whitecaps. It was a challenge for me fighting mighty mother nature with only a paddle and a plastic boat. With all the activity to keep afloat in the open sea, I soon found myself separated from my friends who had slipped into a sheltered bay. As Rob had the lunch in his boat I had to make the difficult decision that I was going to have to give up my struggle with mother nature and turn from an upwind course to some ugly angle of 45° off the down wind. As the boat pitched and surfed its way into the bay, the dynamics of wave motion became immediately apparent, see John Winters' article in Nastawgan, winter 1987. My reward for reaching my companions was a bologna sandwich covered in honey.

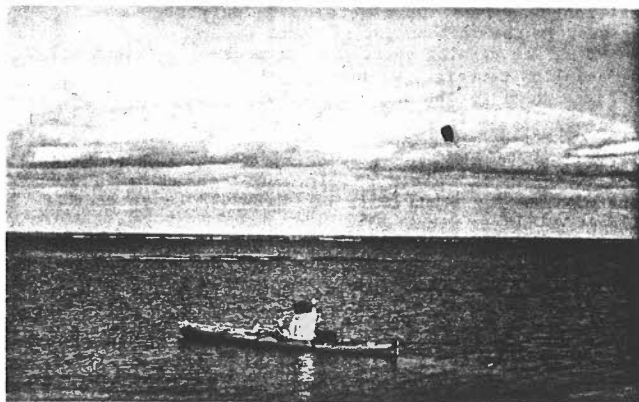
That afternoon we paddled in more sheltered areas, keeping an eye out for potential campsites amongst the rocky islands. We soon found one, but decided to keep paddling further north as the day was still young. Off in the distance another kayaker appeared from behind one of the islands. He was in a sporty two-seater model. One of those foldable Feathercraft boats that are shown paddling past everything from Greenland icebergs to African elephants. Our courses were very close. We had an emergency ad hoc meeting to determine the proper kayaking etiquette for greeting fellow kayakers: be cool, ignore him, and respect his right to solitude, or paddle over and say "hi." Both parties decided on the latter and engaged in the customary chatter exchanged by passing travellers.

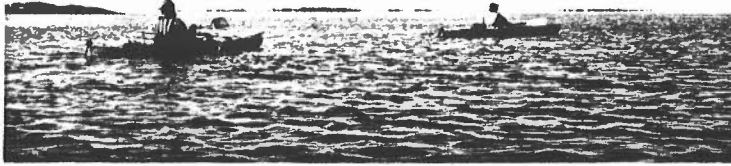
Paddling farther north we didn't discover any other campsites so turned to head downwind, back to our earlier spot. The wind had reduced to beautiful kite-flying weather. And lo and behold, one of the members had made kites for each of us out of garbage bags and doweling. We all had a go at it. The kitemaker was most successful at getting a kite up into the air and sailed a good distance past our campsite. I, on the other hand, found my kite to be a great sea anchor.

After some debate during breakfast the next morning on the stability of the weather, we decided to paddle straight out to the Mink Islands, a crossing of about eight kilometres. The islands appeared mystical on the horizon; only the highest ones were visible. Paddling the great expanse of water on the calm glassy surface took about two hours. Birds were diving for fish near our boats in the clear, deep waters. The horizon was vast, the sky exposed to its full size; an unusual feeling for a claustrophobic city dweller. The islands on the horizon danced with the effects of light aberrations making them appear tall and steep. The shadows of the clouds would make an island dark and foreboding whereas minutes before it had looked like white coral beaches.

Lunch consisted of bologna and the current political issues facing Canada. With the wind picking up I tried to launch my kite from the island, based on the idea that I might be able to get into the boat while holding on to the string. The mechanics proved difficult as the spray skirt required two hands to stretch it over the cockpit; and the wind would die just as you figured the kite was up to stay. This entertainment lasted a good hour before we were all able to leave the island. The kitemaker again proved his proficiency by keeping his kite in the air for the duration of the afternoon. Only upon threats of desertion by the less airborne members wanting to find a place to camp for the night did he reluctantly pull the flying spectacle in.

We found a nice, sheltered spot on very flat Big McCoy Island that protected us from the worst of the squall passing over at dusk. Now all damp, we settled down to our Thanksgiving dinner prepared by Rob - our budding chef. I'm sure all of us thought about the great Thanksgiving feast we were passing up back home. Those large slices of turkey and roast potatoes smothered in gravy from the juices of the





bird cooking in mom's great oven. Well, the macaroni was plentiful and we all had our fill.

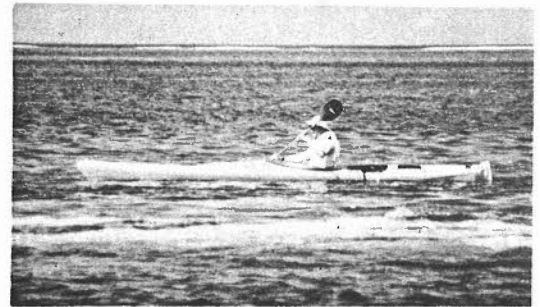
The next morning we were scattered about the rocky shore trying to get a clear view of how big that large storm centre to the south was and in what direction it was moving. Would it mess up our long 20-km paddle of open water back to our cars? Not being able to do anything about it we had our morning meal and packed (one doesn't load a kayak) the boats for the last time. We set off following the chain of islands that stretched 13 km to the south and once at the end turned east into Snug Harbour. The day was surprisingly calm with waves only 30 cm high. Heading south towards the storm with the sun above we saw fascinating colors and shapes in the cloud formations. However, the sky overhead and behind us was a beautiful clear blue. A sunbeam would occasionally light up the waters around us creating a Caribbean kind of feeling.

Paddling the seaward (or is it lakeward?) side of the islands, we had fun bouncing in the chop of the large lake

swells reflecting off the rocky island chain. Making good time, we reached the last island of the chain, dominated by a large lighthouse that captured our attention and activated our camera shutters. More lighthouses at the mouth of Snug Harbour made for easy navigation for the two-hour paddle across the open water. There was no wind and the water was glassy with the large lake swells making for a relaxing bob towards the harbor.

Just as we were reaching the mouth of the harbor the wind picked up, sending Rob scurrying to get his now stringless kite into the air with his long arms. Then out came mine and then Sandy's. I had my first successful flight; my modification of adding a longer tail proved its worth. So the last kilometre of the trip had me harnessing the wind to pull me into the dock, with Rob keeping up beside me with his now drifting, kiteless craft (his arms got tired).

Before zooming away in our cars, we watched the big red ball slide slowly behind the watery horizon; it was that Caribbean feeling all over again.



WCA mailbox

(A new column to provide highlights of the information sent to the WCA. For more details, contact Marcia Farquhar.)

- ORCA, the Ontario Recreational Canoeing Association, offers instructor courses in moving water, lakewater, and canoe tripping, as well as river rescue workshops. They also have a resource centre of publications, films, and VHS cassettes. Contact ORCA, 1220 Sheppard Ave. E., Willowdale, Ontario, M2K 2X1, phone 416-495-4180.

- A conference on "Ontario's Wetlands, Inertia or Momentum" will be held 21 and 22 October 1988 in Toronto. Contact Ontario Wetlands, Federation of Ontario Naturalists, 355 Lesmill Rd., Don Mills, Ontario, M3B 2W8.

- "Forests for Tomorrow," a coalition of five Ontario environmental groups, seeks to ensure that forestry companies will be required to adopt environmentally sound management practices. The group will be participating in hearings on forest management starting in May 1988. For information contact the Sierra Club, 303 - 229 College Street, Toronto, M5T 1R4; phone 416-596-7778.

- The Ontario Environment Network publishes an Environmental Resource Book of organizations along with their publications and audio-visual materials. The Network also holds meetings and workshops across Ontario. Contact P.O. Box 125, Station "P", Toronto, M5S 2S7; phone 416-588-3843.

- The government of Ontario has created "Environmental Youth Corps." Naturalist and related groups will be eligible to receive funds, primarily during the summer, to hire young people, 15-24, to work on projects related to conservation, environmental protection, and resource management. For more information contact any of the following Ministries: Ministry of Skills Development, Ministry of Natural Resources, Ministry of the Environment.

- The following organizations send the WCA their newsletters:

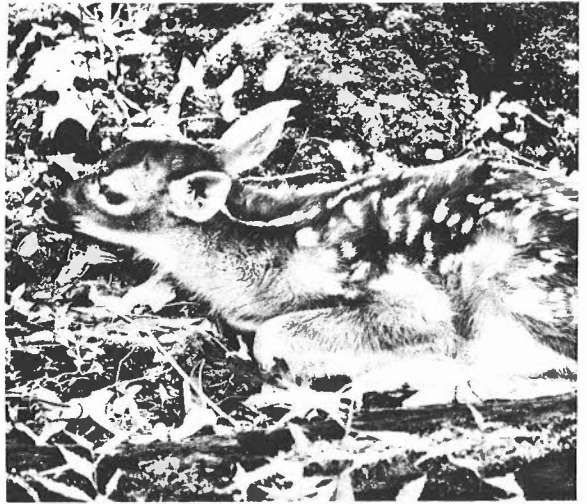
- Save the Rouge Valley System: "News of the Rouge,"
- Iroquois Canoe and Outing Club,
- Club Amis D'Eau (based in Québec),
- The Canadian Recreational Canoeing Association: "Kanawa,"
- The Ontario Recreational Canoeing Association: "Canews."

- The WCA is a member of the following organizations and receives their periodicals:

- The Federation of Ontario Naturalists: "Seasons,"
- The Canadian Nature Federation: "Nature Canada."

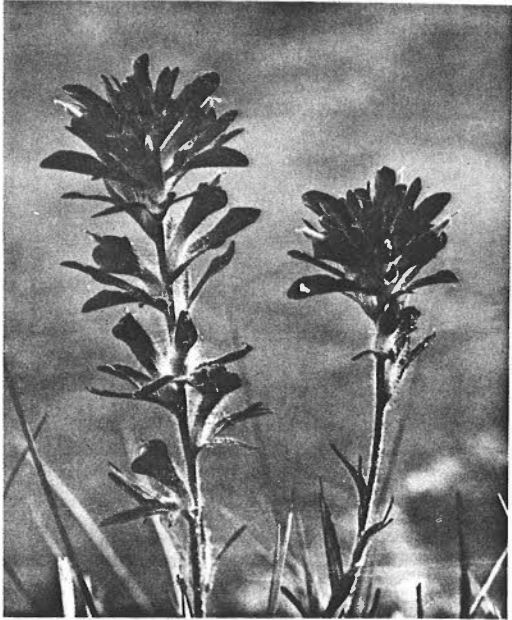


bearclaw marks

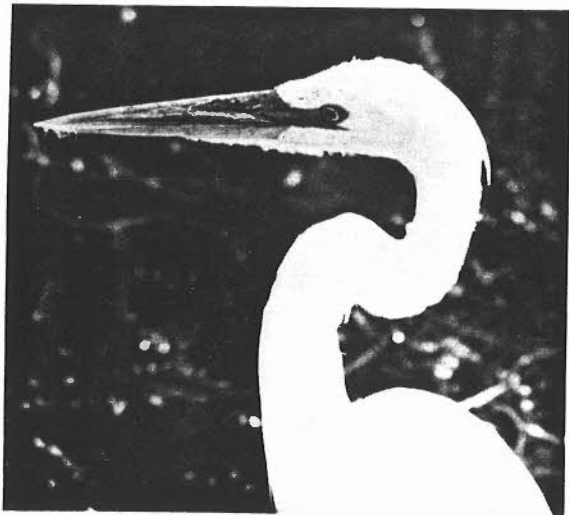


white-tailed deer, fawn

encou



indian paintbrush



great egret



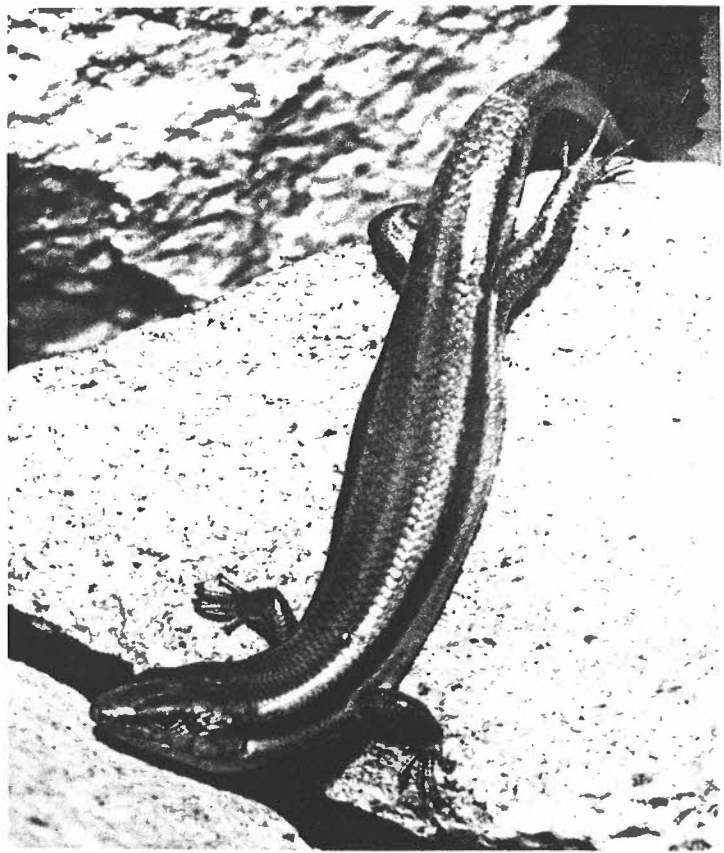
boreal owl



white-tailed deer, doe



Ron Jasiuk

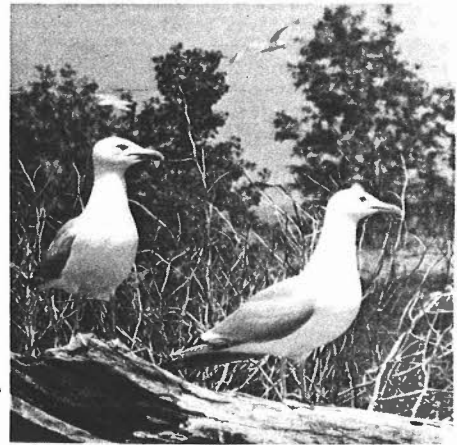


five-lined skink

Winters



black-eyed susan



herring gulls



lady slipper



raccoon

military flying activities in labrador and québec

introduction

On page 2 of the autumn 1987 issue of Nastawgan, Herb Pohl tells of a heartstopping encounter with low-level military training flights in eastern Québec and Labrador: "Early the following morning we reached Elson Lake where east and west branches of the George River combine. The event was highlighted by our first exposure to jets of the German airforce screaming past at treetop level. Because they travel at supersonic speed, there is no advance warning of their approach, and the sudden eardrum-shattering explosion of noise in this tranquil setting invariably scares the daylight out of one."

This was not the first time that the subject of low-level training flights was mentioned in our newsletter. In the summer 1987 issue Alex Hall discussed plans for similar military exercises in the Northwest Territories and Alberta.

The wide-open airspace of Canada's north country obviously provides ideal training opportunities, at least from the military point of view, for men and machines of the western world's highly sophisticated airforces. However, people and wildlife actually living in these vast regions have the right to lead an undisturbed, peaceful existence. It is first of all their homeland and they object as much to being disturbed by screaming jetplanes suddenly flying over at treetop level as city dwellers would undoubtedly do under similar circumstances. There obviously exists a difficult, even frightening situation characterized by conflicting priorities: environment vs. development.

Because the WCA is dedicated to the preservation of an unspoiled natural environment, in particular as it relates to wilderness canoeing, I gave one of our members, Barbara Kitowski, who lives in Labrador, the assignment to study this complex issue and collect information for a report to be presented in Nastawgan. Barbara came to Labrador three years ago as an outpost nurse; she presently operates her own business of outdoors adventure outfitting and guiding. Summer and winter she and her partner take paying customers out into the wild country she has learned to understand, respect, and love.

The information Barbara collected for this special report came from FEARO (Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office), the Commanding Officer of the airforce base in Goose Bay, and local folk who have worked and still work in conjunction with the base; it also includes some of her own observations.

I hope that this report will give some insight into a difficult conflict-of-interest problem that is by no means a new one and for which no satisfactory solution seems to be available.

Editor

low-level flying

Barbara Kitowski

Not so long ago, dogsleds, umiaks, and skin-covered kayaks carried Eskimos to their destinations along the Labrador coast. Canoes and foot power saw the Indians through their seasonal migrations between sea coast and inland nomadic camps. The chance white settler who made his home in Labrador would quickly adopt the ways of the indigenous population or perish.

In 1941, the federal government wanted to augment the airfield facilities of Newfoundland, in order to facilitate the ferrying of aircraft across the Atlantic. It was wartime, and the work was urgent. A surveyor by the name of Eric Fry was sent to Labrador to mark sites from North West River to Hebron. With the guiding assistance of a local settler, Robert Michelin, an ideal area was identified at Goose Bay.

Shortly, thousands of construction men and armed forces men descended upon the isolated people of Labrador. These outsiders were treated with hospitable acceptance, but they brought irreversible change.

After the war, the base served refuelling purposes and offered facilities for survival training. In 1954, the British Royal Air Force began low-level flying in Labrador. In the 1960s there was intense activity at the base with practice flights carrying live weapons and full fuel cargoes, inspired by the Cuban missile crisis and the Viet Nam conflict. A tanker supplied fuel to nuclear bombers. All this required strong security including guardhouses and checkgates.

Then in the 1980s, Canada took steps to assert sovereignty over its entire territory, which included the acceleration of national defense. Low-level flying had been done extensively in Europe in areas with over 63,000,000 people, masses of power lines, and with many gliders and small aircraft to avoid. The Germans approached External Affairs Canada about utilizing Canada for these flights. Goose Bay was suggested because there was an existing air base with all the operational equipment already in place. Also, Labrador had fewer people and unlimited visibility. In 1981, the Germans began low-level flying and in 1984 the Royal Air Force added Tornados to their force of Vulcans. In 1986, a multi-national agreement was formalized, allowing low-level flying, 60% over Labrador and 40% over Québec. Participating countries are Germany (flying Alphas, Tornados, and F4's), The Netherlands (flying F16's), England (flying Tornados), and Canada (flying F18's). The United States utilizes Goose Bay as a refuelling stop and for winter survival training, but is not involved with low-level tactics.

Why low-level flights anyway? The issue was forced by air defense technology. Air surveillance had improved to the point that weapons could be directed against airborne vehicles very accurately. With low-level flying, down to 15 m (50 ft) above ground, radar is ineffective because of ground clutter. Also, structures such as buildings and trees



Jet fighters at Muskrat Falls, Churchill River, June 1986.

"They were coming along one right after the other. The jets are usually not heard until directly overhead, and their loud noise causes a sudden panic reaction."



interrupt the display of the jet on a radar screen. This low-level capability allows for increased surprise attack.

Between 1985 and 1987, heightened public awareness brought out many questions concerning the increased military flying activities. Some saw tremendous economic growth as a positive factor, while others envisioned negative environmental impacts, and disruption of traditional lifestyles. In February 1986, the National Defence Office, responding to expressions of public concern, appealed to the Minister of the Environment for a formal review of activities proposed for Labrador and parts of Québec. The activities to be reviewed included flying of aircraft, use of tactical fighter weapon ranges, airport expansion, training facilities, and infrastructure improvements at Goose Bay itself. Meanwhile in 1987, 6,300 low-level jet sorties were flown in Labrador by the NATO allies.

The Innué (Nascaupe-Montagnais Indians) have figured heavily in the low-level flight issue. Many of these people go into the country, living in tents. They feel that the low-level flights with their attendant startling noise, and the practice weapon range, adversely affect their lifestyle. The Inuit are concerned about adverse effects on their subsistence living derived from fish, caribou, and seal.

The Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office, (FEARO) began a massive public review process with studies which included impacts on caribou, birds and small mammals, socio-economic impacts, noise impact, pollution, military policy, public health, and native claims in relation to native development. At present, the Environmental Impact Statement is being prepared for the Department of National Defense. The Statement will then be reviewed by the FEARO panel and the public. It is widely believed that when weighing the benefits of a healthy environment versus those of low-level flying, the government will cater to the larger economy of low-level flying.

Looming in the 1990s is tactical fighter training on either a bilateral or NATO-wide basis, or both. This would include: 1. approximately 25,000 square miles (64,000 sq. km) of airspace up to 50,000 vertical feet (15,000 m), to permit supersonic-speed flying; 2. ground radar or airborne warning systems; 3. weapon ranges of three categories: air to surface, sea range, and air to air.

Numerous visits to the communities have been made in the past two years by members of the Canadian military and by FEARO workers, in order to obtain opinions, to inform, and to collect data for studies. Most of the northern coastal communities have objected to the proposed sea weapons range, feeling that it would certainly affect their fishing grounds upon which they depend for a living. Some Labradorians fear a return of the militarism that they experienced in previous times when there were guarded gates, restricted areas, and identification cards which had to be shown. Most recently, the Department of Transport has come

under the Department of National Defense, and now the same may happen with Public Works. In view of these changes, people are concerned about the loss of civilian jobs and about selective hiring.

The Military Co-ordination Centre approves the flight plans for low-level jets. If you are planning a trip into the wilderness of Labrador, you can phone 1-800-563-2390 or 709-896-2981, giving a projected plan of travel, and the Centre will modify flight plans in order to avoid direct overflight of your route, according to Colonel John David, Commanding Officer of flight operations in Goose Bay. June, July, August, and early September are peak flying months, and if a request has come in, the jets will try to avoid the area concerned; if they cannot, then they will fly higher.

Few original Labradorians remain today who remember firsthand the time when there were no flyways in Labrador. But occasionally an old tale or two can be heard about those long dogsled trips, or about someone's brother who fell through the ice and was never seen again, or that cup of tea shared between white trapper and Indian in the absolute stillness of the country, or about the little homesteads scattered in many of the bays where a weary traveller could find shelter and families would visit each other to break up the long periods of isolation. Those times are gone, and Labrador, sometimes looking back longingly, enters a new age.

Suggested further sources of information:

History

1. ON THE GOOSE - The Story of Goose Bay (paperback). Available from: Them Days Magazine, Box 939, Station B, Happy Valley, Labrador, AOP 1E0.
2. CHECKMATE IN THE NORTH by W.G. Carr

Current

1. Cheryl Butler, Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office, 169 Hamilton River Road, Station C, Goose Bay, Labrador, AOP 1C0.
2. Base Commander, Canadian Forces, Station A, Goose Bay, Labrador, AOP 1S0.

Ilt's

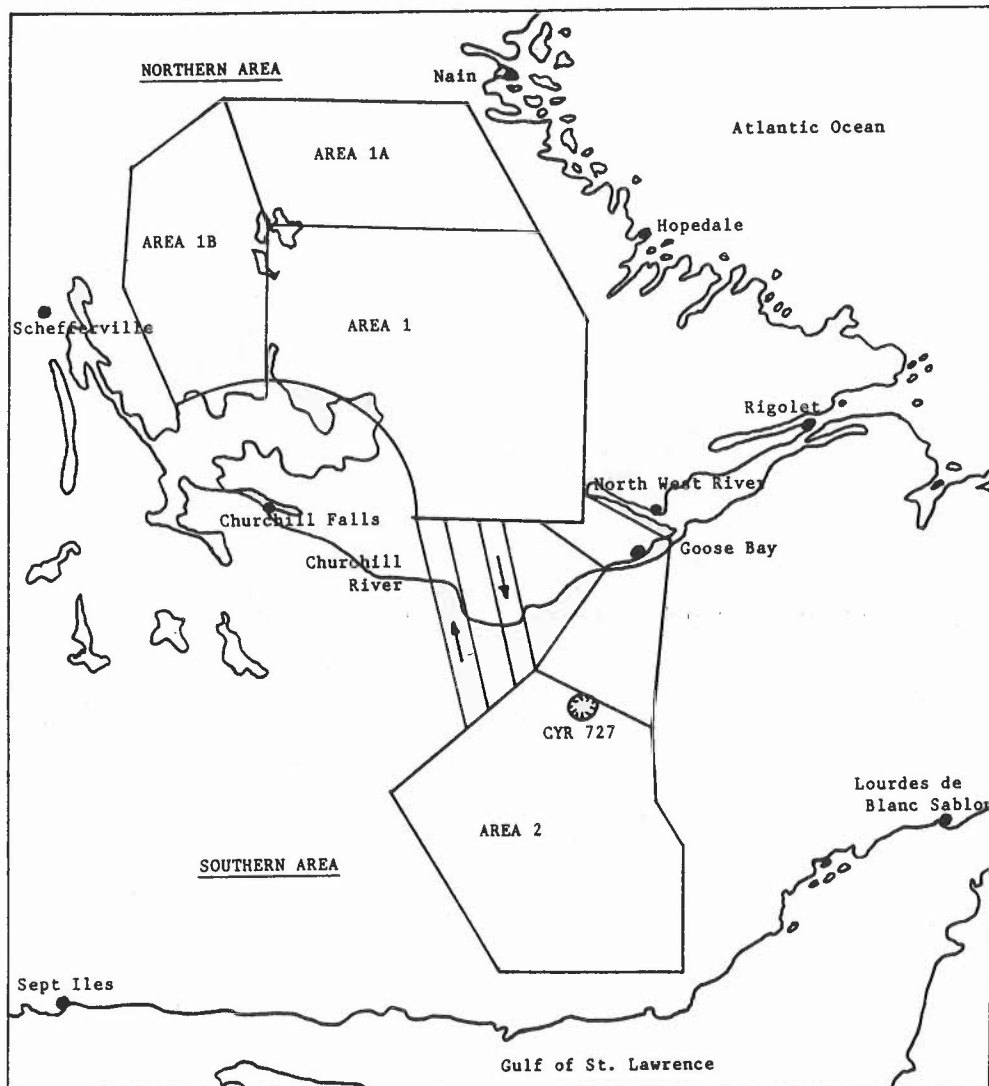
(GOOSE BAY MILITARY LOW-LEVEL TRAINING AREAS)

(The following was excerpted by the editor from information supplied by the Department of National Defense, presented in The Northern Reporter of 13 April 1988.)

The areas depicted in Goose Northern Areas and extensions and Goose Southern Areas contain military flying activity from 100 feet (30 metres) above the ground to 8000 feet (2400 metres) above sea level. Military fighter aircraft conduct low-level, high-speed navigation exercises in these areas under visual and instrument (cloudy) weather

conditions, both day and night up to seven days a week. The areas will be active from 18 April 1988 until 29 October 1988.

Practice Target Area South (CYR 727 on the diagram) is an air-to-ground range 15 kilometres in diameter operated by the Department of National Defense on land leased from the province. The boundary of the area is approximately nine kilometres from Minipi Lake and an equal distance north of the Little Mecatina River. The boundary is marked by a ten-foot (3-metre) wide slash line with warning placards every 150 metres. Trespassing is strictly prohibited.



closing words

(To round off this report, part of Barbara's covering letter, which accompanied the material she sent to Nastawgan, follows, underlining some of the problems and potential tragedy involved in this issue.)

Surprisingly, there has been a long (47 years) history of air base activity here, but only in the past three years has it been noticed so much; this is due to increased public awareness, a tremendous need for jobs, the possibility of a NATO base being built, etc. Although many people look forward to jobs being created, what we see happening is that each Force brings with it its own food specialty items, its own tobacco and liquor, and builds its own recreation complex right here in the area.

Furthermore, their own vehicles deliver them all over town, so that the taxis are having strife. By virtue of

volume, a Canadian Forces bakery put a private bakery out of business. The people in this area are not educated to take the kinds of jobs created by the military, and so the only jobs available are janitorial; how many of those can one create?

Meanwhile, the Forces on their days off go into the country by helicopter to fish at their own desire; it is well known that there is gross neglect of animals, birds, and fish. This is an extremely frustrating situation, because our Game Department has very little funding to go out and enforce the game laws which has to be done by air.

And to be realistic, how many girls in this part of Labrador will carry the children of these men who will never be seen again after their tour of duty here. The military could also bring in AIDS. We could be on the brink of a tremendous change.

what is the future of the thelon game sanctuary?

David F. Pelly

"... the federal and territorial governments will review resource utilization in the Thelon Game Sanctuary with the object of ensuring the widest range of activities compatible with the original goal of musk-ox protection."
Northern Mineral Policy (Dec. 1986)

With these words, the federal government rang the warning bell for the end of the Thelon Game Sanctuary. Although the paper cited above was published over a year ago, it only really "hit the streets" for consumption by the public in the fall of 1987. What it means is simply this: the governments are jointly considering opening the Sanctuary to mining exploration and (implicitly) development.

The Thelon Game Sanctuary is sixty years old. It was established by Order-in-Council on 15 June 1927, the only one of its kind in Canada -- no one, not even Dene or Inuit, was permitted to hunt inside the boundaries. Since then the size and boundaries have been changed slightly, so that it now encompasses 55,439 square kilometres, stretching from the Back River south to Dubawnt Lake. The original purpose -- some say it grew out of a proposal submitted by J.B. Tyrrell -- was to protect the mainland musk-oxen which had been hunted almost to extinction. Numbers of that animal have indeed increased, but how stable the population is, is unknown. The last survey of musk-oxen in the Sanctuary was several years ago (the mid-60s come to mind, though I cannot be certain).

Today the Thelon Game Sanctuary is still a haven for musk-oxen. But more than that, the Sanctuary is a breeding ground for tundra swans, peregrine falcons, gyrfalcons, arctic loons, and many more winged species. Great flocks of Canada geese use the river during their moult period when they cannot fly. Barren ground grizzly, arctic fox, wolves, and many more species make their homes in the area. Every spring and late summer the 300,000-strong Beverly herd of Barren Ground caribou migrates through the Sanctuary. In some years, as in 1987, their calving ground includes part of the Sanctuary near Pelly Lake on the Back River.

At present, all sub-surface and surface rights have been removed by the Order-in-Council. One outcome of the joint government review now underway, to consider the proposals of the Northern Mineral Policy, could be the removal of that Order-in-Council. If that happened, the Thelon Game Sanctuary would be open to exploration and development.

The Policy states clearly that "the federal government is committed to maximizing the land area available for mineral exploration and development while ensuring that unique and representative natural features of the land, cultural and wildlife resources are protected." One wonders if these are compatible aims.

For canoeists the Thelon is more than a game sanctuary. Encounters with wildlife are undeniably an important part of the Barrenland canoeist's experience on the river. But



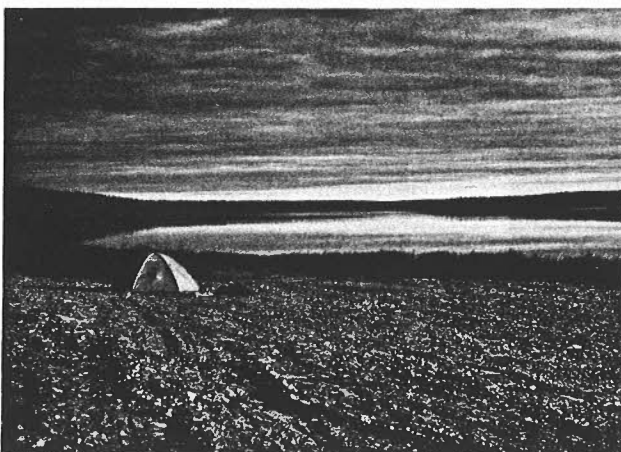
equally important is the total absence of encounters with technological interlopers.

I am reminded of an occasion on the Thelon in 1985 when, just days after leaving the Sanctuary, I was carrying a canoe across the tundra and suddenly heard a helicopter overhead. The ***! ***! pilot landed his machine right beside me, hopped out, and said: "We don't see many folks out here, so just thought we'd come down and say hello." We felt like telling we'd seen no one out here and thought that was just fine, thanks very much. We did find out we'd somehow lost a day in our count whilst in the Sanctuary removed from the rest of the world, and realized we didn't really care. Donna commented to me afterward how fortunate we had been throughout most of the trip not to have been bothered by such encounters. They are, or were, impossible within the Sanctuary, of course. That pilot was from a mining exploration camp just west of Baker Lake.

But if the Thelon Game Sanctuary is opened to mining exploration, as proposed, we may all enjoy the pleasure and convenience -- as we paddle down this wilderness river -- of having a helicopter pilot drop in to let us know what day it is... when we didn't really care.

It sets you to wondering, does it not, just how old Mr. Musk-ox is going to feel when our friendly pilot comes calling at his favorite willow thicket.

WCA-member David Pelly is a freelance writer whose articles on the North appear regularly in many Canadian magazines, including Canadian Geographic, The Beaver, Nature Canada, etc. For several years he wrote a regular column in Nastawgan entitled "Arctic Journal."



Photographs by Donna Barnett.

ESCAPE

Great canoe so sure of track
You take me to the lands I love and you bring me back
Through rolling waves and fast water flowing
You safely guide me through them always knowing
To eddies calm through haystacks swirling
Whitewater currents with wavetips curling
Take me to where only the strong ones dare
To the lands of the wolf and the polar bear
Of forests deep with tall trees growing
Ancient myths of legends knowing
Lands of the Indian, a race wise and strong
A place where I was meant to belong
Oh great canoe so sure of track
You take me to the lands I love and you guide me back

Michel Bouwhuis

running the raging rouge

John Mackie

This politician took the Wilderness Canoe Association spring run down the Rouge River in eastern Metro Toronto. Politicians are known to hedge their bets and they love publicity. Although only a small politician, Scarborough Alderman, I was being true to my profession when I accepted the challenge to run the "Raging Rouge River." I had inspected it days before and figured it was so low I could walk down the middle, if need be. A Scarborough kayak manufacturer pledged to match Scarborough Council's sponsorship of donations to "Save the Rouge," an environmental group, for every kilometre down the river any councillor survived. What could be simpler than to walk a kayak down a creek for 15 kilometres and claim fame and glory at Lake Ontario and journey's end, I thought.

Alas, my dream of a conquering hero's welcome was not to be. Instead, the T.V. cameras witnessed a wet, shivering, red-eyed, terrorized apparition, fit only for rear photography, paddling every which way into sanctuary on the beach.

It was Jim Greenacre's fault. I met him scouting the mouth of the Rouge on Thursday for the Wilderness Canoe Association River run on Saturday, 26 March. I admired his hand-made cedar strip canoe and when I admitted I was an inactive WCA member he chided me for letting others do the work. Explanations such as being too busy and only a five-strokes-each-side paddler had no effect on him and sounded lame even to me. When Rhema Recreational challenged Council to send a council member on the run it seemed like events were setting their own course and like a true political leader--I followed along.

Arriving at the starting point on Saturday, I looked over the bridge and was horrified. Instead of the babbling brook I had seen on Thursday there was a "Raging Rouge River." The ice had melted so I could not use ice as an excuse for a pedestrian short-cut. Worse still, it had rained and what normally was a 15-cm deep stream was now a 1.2-m deep raging torrent. It might even be deeper in some places, I thought. The boulders I had envisioned sunning myself upon were now submerged and obvious only by the curling-back wave they offered to anyone silly enough to go near.

When confronted with overwhelming odds I have a funny nervous reaction which I hope is uncommon--I smile. I smiled as I looked at the river. I smiled as I took the manufacturer's kayak off the roof of the car. I smiled as I met Peter Schimek, the WCA organizer of the trip, and I smiled as I met all the other kamikaze canoeists who were going to make the trip. What a nice bunch of people for a communal funeral, I thought. I smiled some more as I looked at the canoes neatly lined up like coffins on the bank, all pointing towards the water as though awaiting bodies for burial at sea. I just cannot remember when I smiled so much.

Fortunately I had some time to think between the 9:00 a.m. starting time and the return of the drivers from end point car drop off. The thought of sponsors' donations being refunded due to "Alderman's Cowardice" was no more appealing than was the muddy torrent. The weather had turned a sunny 10°C, so cancellation was improbable. I decided not to break my leg to avoid going, as it might hurt. Near-drowning by deliberately throwing myself into the river would not faze this web-footed group, I thought. The gods, it seemed, had willed my demise and there was nothing I could do about it.

Surrendering to one's fate has its advantages, for the answers to "if," "when," and "how" are all known, leaving one to contemplate higher things. I thought of the 750 people who attended Council and won a reprieve to the

urbanization of this wilderness area from sprawling housing estates. I thought of the impassioned pleas by environmentalists for the preservation of 26 species which will become extinct in Canada if development is allowed on this provincially owned land. I thought of Chief Lindbergh Loutht as he told Council of his nation's heritage on the river and how they consider it sacred. I smiled as I thought of the politicians and bureaucrats who relate how urbanization and this environment are compatible while at the same time watching massive erosion and pollution caused by urban road run-off and flash floods. A lot of people love this river and maybe a challenge is all part of the preservation process, I hoped.

Eventually, all participants were moving to their kayaks or canoes. Some skittled about in a pool immediately between the Steeles Avenue bridge and the first fast water. One volunteer held my kayak steady while another helped fasten my spray skirt. After making ready I reluctantly released my white-knuckle clutch on the bank. The organizer had said, "just do the same as the others," so I did. They manoeuvred across the river and back in elegant circles. I intended to cross the river but moved downstream broadside instead. My consternation on why I moved downriver while they moved across was short lived. Within a few seconds I had securely fastened myself to exactly balance the centre of my kayak with the centre of pressure of the moving water and the top of a half-submerged rock. Freezing water poured over the side of my kayak, down the space between my skin and the kayak spray skirt, down my trouser leg which made a convenient spout for water to fill the front of the craft. The kayak would move neither forward nor backward as the water pressure pinned it against the rock. Paddling was useless. No one but me seemed concerned. A Nastawgan cartoon came to mind demonstrating a lean out of a curve. If I leaned into the water I would surely go under so I leaned, against all my instincts, against the rock. My centre of gravity changed and I slid off the rock, backwards towards the first rapids. Paralyzing terror came to my rescue. In my paralysis the boat swirled into the ebb of the rock, pirouetted, and behold I was facing frontwards. A deep breath, a yell, and I was through the first rock maze still heading frontwards--a major achievement.

Between the first rocks and the next rocks was 10 seconds--maximum. It was not like the movies with intermittent rapids. To me it was continuous rapids for 13 kilometres. Granted, some of the kamikaze canoeists could stop and make their craft literally hover in the water like hummingbirds. They seemed to have all the time in the world. As for no-brakes-Mackie: "Looook - ooout!"

Inevitably I dunked. It happened as I braced on my paddle to avoid a horizontal tree branch sticking out seven metres, 45 cm above the water. To the uninitiated, bracing is leaning on the paddle with the paddle lying flat on the water. I forgot I was holding an off-set, double-ended kayak paddle and not my one-blade canoe paddle. I leaned on the paddle with the edge pointing down where I followed immediately thereafter. Calmly my companions caught my kayak which was happily heading downstream like a headstrong mustang. Others collected my paddle and ferried me down to be re-embalmed in my coffin craft.

Peter Schimek, a handsome and capable young man, responsibly suggested I might prefer sitting in the mid-section of some other canoe while someone more experienced rode my kayak. Herb Pohl, a man more of my own vintage, noted my disdain at this suggestion and volunteered to escort me at least until I fell in again. Both Peter and Herb seemed to accept my capsize as inevitable and suggested there was no point in my changing into dry clothes.



photo: Warren Toda / The Scarborough Mirror

I followed Herb Pohl. What an enlightenment that was. He played the river like Itzhak Perlman plays the violin. Instinctively crossing the river, Herb found exactly the right ebb and flow just as a violinist moves across the strings to the right note. Like a violinist's bow, Herb's paddle stroked the water, sometimes deep, sometimes fast, sometimes slow, all in harmony and with the same delicate precision of a virtuoso. To watch that man hover his solo kayak on a wave crest before sliding down the "V's" into a maelstrom was to watch a Wagnerian overture in motion. I followed entranced for the remaining 7 kilometres of rapids. When we were at the last kilometre where placid water began, Herb was gone. Miraculously he had taken me through the rapids.

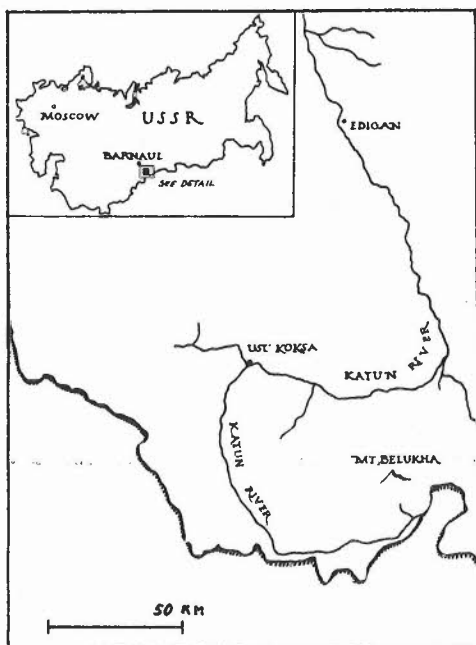
The official WCA report on this outing might mention a pleasant class-one rapids trip. Unreported would be a test of a Canadian-made kayak; promotion of a wilderness area within Metro Toronto; collection of funds for the environmentalists of the World Wildlife Foundation and the "Save the Rouge" activists; and promotion of the activities of the Wilderness Canoe Association.

Also unreported would be the fact that I had been personally enriched by witnessing what many search for and rarely find: that intricate ability that makes gifted athletes so thrilling. They have the ability to be at one with what they are doing. You cannot help but be inspired when you see it. It touches you. Sorry if I embarrass you, Herb, but you not only got me through the day--you made my day.

paddle siberia

An American on the Katun River in the U.S.S.R.

John W. Lentz



In 15 wilderness paddling trips over the last 25 years, I've picked up some unusual skills, but the last thing I'd have expected my adventurous avocation to lead to was writing advertising copy for the Soviet government.

The seed for this bizarre turn of events was sown in 1965. Returning from a canoeing expedition into Canada's Northwest Territories, I began to plot future travel. My mind wandered to that vast belt of taiga, lake and river over the North Pole--Siberia. That year and again in 1970, I mounted letter-writing campaigns, hopeful of gaining entry into the U.S.S.R. for a wilderness paddling trip. Nothing doing: Westerners were routinely refused visits to Russia's backwoods.

Then along came perestroika and its companion, glasnost. These twin concepts of economic restructuring and social openness, plus a thirst for hard currency, propelled the Soviets in a new direction.

But nothing happened in a hurry. It took a year of patient persuasion before muted approval came through in March 1987 and Sovintersport, a division of the Soviet State Committee For Sports and Physical Culture, offered a trip down the Katun River.

I flew to an atlas to find the Katun nestled in the heart of southern Siberia's Altai (Golden) Mountains, a major source of the mighty Ob River. A few miles away lay China and Mongolia. Pounding out of the snowcapped Altai, it looked a challenging stream.

It wasn't the far north of my dreams, but at least I would see something of the U.S.S.R., an immense blank on a Western paddler's map.

With help from the National Geographic Society, the expedition came off last summer as a fascinating cross-cultural experience. Our joy in paddling the cascading Katun and exhilaration on high country hikes were melded with the warm reception given by all Siberians. But it wasn't a canoe trip. Instead, by nonnegotiable Soviet dictum, we paddled four-person Russian catamarans.

This craft consists of two 17-foot inflated rubber pontoons connected by aluminum poles, with packs lashed on as backrests. These odd catamarans, surprisingly stable when up against heavy whitewater, are standard recreational river boats for Soviet sportsmen, and we found a number in use on the river.

The trip was memorable, and as it drew to a close I felt the urge to return. A similar sensation had drawn me back to northern Canada again and again. Lying in my tent, I hatched a plan.

We had been told Sovintersport hoped to attract many more Western paddlers to the Katun in 1988. The stunning landscape, the expertise of our guides and the hospitality of the Siberians were factors to be exploited.

But would this trip sell in the West? Not likely, on the strength of the skimpy, mimeographed river description we had received. I asked about printing facilities for a slick advertising brochure and learned that a single plant did all the work. Production could easily take a year and distribution was a problem. I could see dull leaflets scattered around Aeroflot offices, hardly a place whitewater paddlers congregate.

We were invited to Sovintersport's Moscow headquarters in late August for a post-mortem session. Since ours was an experimental venture, apparently the first Western party to paddle Russian catamarans, Sovintersport wanted a critique.

It was easy enough to slip in a proposal to produce and distribute a brochure for the 1988 Katun River catamaran trips in a clear but unstated trade for approval to paddle my canoe in northern Siberia. It was a gamble--the Soviets had never allowed a Western canoeing expedition to penetrate their wilderness. I even offered to foot the brochure bill.

Valeri Sungurov, vice president of Sovintersport, eyed me from across the table. A trim figure with dark-rimmed glasses and what looked like a Harris tweed jacket, he would have blended in nicely at a Harvard-Yale game.

Sungurov heard me out, then said, "Get your application for the north in early. It could take awhile to process."

Back home and a couple of yards of Telexes later, I realized they were serious. Not only would Sovintersport trust an American to produce and distribute their river ad brochure, I was even encouraged to put my name on it as a source of information. Perestroika in action.

I quickly beat a path to the door of Lynn Springer, whose Bethesda graphics firm, Design Lines, could provide professional assistance. By mid-February the job was done, with copies dispatched to paddling clubs, outdoor equipment suppliers and whitewater clinics throughout the United States.

Sovintersport has developed an engaging itinerary for the Katun. Some paddling skill is required, and the catamarans are stable yet exciting whitewater boats. Altai Mountain hikes are glorious, and talking with a sprightly octogenarian in her century-old Siberian log home is almost otherworldly.

Did I get my northern permission slip? The jury is still out, but I'm optimistic.

This article first appeared in the 20 March 1988 edition of The Washington Post. WCA-member John Lentz is a senior loan officer with the Export-Import Bank of the United States and a member of the Explorers Club of New York and the Royal Geographical Society, London.

northwest to fortune across mcdougall pass

Alan Cooke

My title comes, in part, from the name of Vilhjalmur Stefansson's fascinating book, Northwest to Fortune/The Search of Western Man for a Commercially Practical Route to the Far East, published in New York by Duell, Sloan and Pearce in 1958. Late in the summer of 1958, Larry Lyons and I pushed and pulled our red, 16-foot, double-V-stemmed, cedar-and-canvas, copper-keeled, Guide-Prospector's Model, Old Town canoe across enough beaver dams on McDougall Pass to make me sorry I had not thought of bringing some dynamite with me. During the following winter, 1958-59, when I was teaching all subjects to a schoolroom of some 25 Slavey Indian children, Grades 3-6, in Fort Simpson, Northwest Territories, I read Stef's book for the first time.

If I had read Stef's book before we crossed McDougall Pass, I should have had more to think about than the colossal boredom of following a tightly meandering stream sunk some 15 or 20 feet below the surface of the muskeg, our progress impeded by interlaced, overhanging alders that blocked the passage of anything larger than mosquitoes and black flies, of which large clouds attended us--and those wretched beaver dams, one after the other, all the way across McDougall's expletive-deleted Pass.

Now, for a little background. In 1954, while I was still an undergraduate at Dartmouth College, I had worked as deckhand on the riverboats of the Mackenzie River. During the winter of 1956-57, when I was a meteorological observer at the McGill Sub-Arctic Research Station in Schefferville, northern Québec, one of my colleagues, Ivan Hamilton, an Ulster Irishman, listened with interest to my account of a summer on the Mackenzie River. During the next winter, 1957-58, when we were both living in Montreal, he began to talk about canoeing down the Mackenzie River. Ivan did not know anything about canoes nor, indeed, did he know anything about the Northwest Territories. Before long, I had taken over his plans.

I sent Ivan by rail, with our canoe in his baggage, from Montreal to Edmonton, while I hitchhiked from Montreal to Edmonton to save the money my fare would have cost. Together, we took the train to Waterways, northern Alberta, and there we put our canoe in the water for the first time. We descended the Clearwater, Athabasca, and Slave rivers to Fort Smith, just inside the Northwest Territories. There we picked up mail for the first time, and Ivan learned of serious illness among his family at home. This news obliged him to return to Northern Ireland at once. He has never ceased to regret having to give up our expedition, and we still talk of resuming it.

I wrote at once to Trevor Lloyd, then professor of geography at Dartmouth, to ask if he could find me a replacement paddler. Lloyd was away, but his daughter, then about 18, was looking after his mail. Moving heaven and earth was nothing for this young lady. She soon found me a Dartmouth undergraduate who was willing to pay his own way to Fort Smith from his home in Minnesota, and Larry Lyons and I were soon continuing the journey Ivan Hamilton and I had begun.

I shall say nothing of canoeing down Mackenzie River except that we had wonderful weather, no trouble of any kind, and a month to waste in the settlements in and near the delta--Arctic Red River, Fort McPherson, Aklavik, and Inuvik--while we waited for low water on Rat River and for the first frosts to dampen somewhat the enthusiasm and number of mosquitoes and black flies. T.J. Wood, founder and headmaster of Sedburgh School, Montebello, Québec, had crossed McDougall Pass in 1936. He had told me just what we might expect and we could not have had better advice. Eric and Pamela Morse, I should add, had not yet made their crossing of McDougall Pass.

Nor shall I say anything about tracking our canoe up Rat River. This labour cost us about a week of cold, wet work, and we were looking forward to the supposed freedom of McDougall Pass as to our hope of the Promised Land. To our surprise and disappointment, we could see nothing at all from the meandering stream bed, sunk as it was deep into the

muskeg. We could see nothing but one corner after another--they all looked the same, exactly the same--interlaced alder branches, the blue sky directly overhead, and clouds of mosquitoes and black flies. And, for variety, one damn beaver dam after another.

During the next winter in Fort Simpson, I was astonished to learn from Stef's book how much more there is to say about McDougall Pass. The rest of my talk is taken mainly from his book. I shall skip what Stef had to say about the Greeks, about Columbus, and about early attempts at a Northwest Passage by sea, and I shall close in, at once, on the truly astonishing story of the fur traders' search for an inland Northwest Passage.

Samuel Hearne, a servant of the Hudson's Bay Company, in his third expedition to Coppermine River, 1770-72, had established that there is no ocean passage inland from the west coast of Hudson Bay. Alexander Mackenzie, a servant of the North West Company, explored the great river that now bears his name in 1789. He had hoped this river might carry him to the Pacific. On July 14th, a rising tide soaked his baggage, and he realized then that he had not reached the Pacific, he had reached Hearne's Arctic Ocean. He returned back up the river he now named The River of Disappointment. I now quote Stef.

Mackenzie did not realize, nor did anyone else for more than half a century, that the river he had discovered [in 1789], and another great river [the Yukon], to be discovered forty years later, have nearly or quite the strangest relationship possible to rivers, and one made to order as a passage through the [North American] continent. It is common with rivers that boat travelers can ascend one, pass over a divide, and descend another; but there appears to be only one pair of great rivers in the world so placed that the traveler can go downstream to one river's delta and then, through making a reasonable portage, continue, still downstream, a thousand miles to the delta of the second stream, without material change of course. The Mackenzie and the Yukon alone meet these requirements. From near the center of the North American continent they, taken as one, run in practically a great-circle course toward China; and a portage, commercially satisfactory to the fur trade as it was in the time before railways, leads from the delta of the Mackenzie to the headwaters of the Porcupine component of the Yukon system.

Eluded is the right word to apply to Mackenzie and this unrealized discovery. For had he wintered 1789-90 at the delta of the river he discovered, his interpreters would have learned, as interpreters of other fur traders were destined to learn, that a portage, of a kind routine to the fur trade, leads from the head of the Mackenzie Delta to waters that flow westward.

This discovery...would have been likewise the effective discovery of the Yukon, and would have led, as things then were, to the British occupation of Alaska nearly or quite down to Bering Sea... The United States in 1789 was not a country powerful enough to object to British expansion in northern North America, or in a temper to do so. The British failure to push to the Pacific by the Mackenzie-Yukon route is one of the striking geographical might-have-beens of history (pp. 131-32).

There are other might-have-beens associated with Mackenzie's discovery on 14 July 1789, the original Bastille Day. Mackenzie's narrative Voyages from Montreal...appeared in 1801. Napoleon is said to have ordered a translation of it, interested in the possibility of invading British North America by Mackenzie River to connect with French territory in Louisiana. On reading the book, he very sensibly gave up the idea.

Four years later, in 1793, Mackenzie became the first European to cross North America north of Mexico. In 1811, David Thompson explored the Columbia River to its mouth. In 1815, the North West Company, distracted by mounting competition from the Hudson's Bay Company, abandoned its trade in the Mackenzie District. In 1821, as every schoolchild knows, the two companies amalgamated under the Hudson's Bay Company's charter. In 1826, John Franklin's second overland expedition discovered Peel River. Finally, in 1839, John Bell surveyed the Peel River some 90 miles upstream. Then he returned to the Mackenzie delta and explored Rat River to McDougall Pass.

So there Bell was on the continental divide, the autumn of 1839, and camped at a swampy meadow where the waters seep in two directions, one trickle bound for the Yukon and the Pacific, another for the Mackenzie and thus...to the middle regions of North America, without realizing...that here was the key to the final link in [an overland] Northwest Passage (p. 175).

More than 30 years passed before the Hudson's Bay Company clearly realized the importance of Bell's discovery of McDougall Pass in 1839. Meantime, in 1840, Bell returned to Peel River with Alexander Kennedy Isbister to establish a trading post, now known as Fort McPherson. Isbister explored Peel River again and returned to McDougall Pass again. Neither Bell nor Isbister had realized that the westward drainage from McDougall Pass is the headwaters of the Bell River, a tributary of the Yukon, the Great River of Alaska.

In spring 1842, Isbister made a five-day march from Fort McPherson west across the Richardson Mountains to the Bell River, which he named and which he descended for five days, perhaps as far as the Porcupine. In 1843, another man led a second attempt to find a practical route across the mountains and, in 1845, Bell made yet a third attempt, following his own route of 1842. This time, he built canoes and descended the Bell and Porcupine rivers to the Yukon River but, once again, he did not recognize the importance of his achievement. In 1847, Alexander Hunter Murray retraced Bell's route of 1842 and he established Fort Yukon where the Porcupine joins the Yukon.

For 30 years, the Hudson's Bay Company used dogs and sleds on a 90-mile winter road, up hill and down dale, to supply Fort Yukon from Fort McPherson. In 1867, the Russians, who had tolerated the existence of Fort Yukon within Russian America, sold Alaska to the United States for \$7.2 million. In 1869, the Americans invited the Hudson's Bay Company to leave Alaska. The company moved to a location on the Porcupine River they called Rampart House. In 1890, the Americans told them they were still in Alaska, so they had to move upriver once again.

It was in the pages of Stef's book that I first met Perry McDonough Collins, "a man," Stef says, "of immense vitality and charm, whose eyes saw everything and whose personality and credentials...attracted everybody, most especially everybody of diplomatic and commercial influence and consequence" (p. 248). Collins had conceived the notion of connecting the cities of the New World with the cities of the Old by a telegraph line that would run some 4,300 miles overland, at least 3,500 of these miles through unexplored territory--from New York, westward through Hudson's Bay Company territory, up Rat River, across Russian America, and then across Siberia to Europe, an enterprise breathtaking in its scope and implications.

In eight years, between 1856 and 1864, Perry McDonough Collins, almost singlehanded, and acting during at least the last four years solely as a private individual, had completed almost to the smallest material detail the prospectus of a telegraph that would link all the cities of the northern hemisphere.... He had purchased, with charm, civility, enthusiasm, generosity of spirit, and unremitting, cheerful labor, generous guarantees of cooperation and royal concessions in property from two of the great powers of the world [the United States and Russia] (pp. 252-53).

In 1864, Collins offered the Western Union Telegraph Company the right to build the Collins Overland Telegraph between San Francisco and Siberia. Between 1864 and 1866, news of the progress of this line was constantly in the pages of the

world's press. In July 1866, the American Telegraph Company, after three failures, finally succeeded in laying a trans-Atlantic cable between Newfoundland and Ireland. The Western Union Telegraph Expedition abandoned its overland line forthwith.

Only in 1872, did the Hudson's Bay Company, three years after leaving Fort Yukon and 33 years after Bell's discovery in 1839 of what we now call McDougall Pass, try to find, between Fort McPherson and the Bell-Porcupine drainage, a better means of communication than the 90-mile hill-and-dale winter route they had been using all that time to carry supplies and furs between Fort McPherson and LaPierre's House, the depot on Bell River for Fort Yukon. John McDougall's rediscovery, if we can call it that, of the pass that bears his name came too late to serve the fur trade, but it came in plenty of time to serve the Klondike gold rush of 1897-99.

Stef quotes some wonderful passages from narratives of the gold rush that used McDougall Pass, after having camped at Destruction City, near the mouth of Rat River, to burn the boats that had carried them down Mackenzie River. They burned their boats to recover the nails, then they carried the nails across the pass to build new boats on the other side.

The overland-telegraph scheme and the Klondike gold rush both had their influence on many ideas current during the late-19th century for a railway connection between New York and Paris. In 1898, E.H. Harriman, the railway baron, visited the Smithsonian Institution to invite some scientists to join him in a cruise along the Alaskan coast to Bering Strait. The scientific results of this informal expedition appeared in 14 volumes, 1901-14. We do not know exactly what Harriman's plans for a railroad were because he held his cards close to his chest, he died in 1909, and his papers were destroyed in a fire in 1913. Stef has pieced out this fascinating story from many sources.

In another chapter, Stef offers persuasive reasons that I do not have time to summarize now why the Alaska Highway and the Canol Pipeline should have been routed down Mackenzie River and across the Rocky Mountains, perhaps by McDougall Pass, to Fairbanks. I shall return instead to recollections of my own thoughts after reading Northwest to Fortune thirty years ago in Fort Simpson. Only then did I realize fully what my partner and I had accomplished.

While camped at Summit Lake, Larry and I devoted a day (28 August) to sightseeing. High on a mountain side above the pass, we looked down upon the mosquito-infested, alder-laced, beaver-dammed ditch that, during the past two days, had given new meaning to boredom. During a long silence, we watched ever-shifting bursts of sunlight, blinding in their sudden intensity, move across the subdued autumnal colours of the valley far below us. During seven days, we had tracked our canoe more than a thousand feet up a rough staircase of cold, rushing water to see this view spread out for us alone.

There lay McDougall Pass, dreaming in the moving sunlight, lonely and wild, its usefulness unused, its promises unfulfilled. The afternoon passed too quickly. Recollection of that vista moves me even now to tears. On every page of my journal, I complained of mosquitoes, beaver dams, cold water, and wet work. Yet I knew then--and I confirm it now--I would gladly have repeated the longest, coldest, wettest day we ever had if, at the end of the day, I could climb once more into my sleeping bag and, with a big enamel bowl full of hot, buttered, overproof rum balanced on my knee, joke with my partner about the tribulations of the day we had just come through together and speculate about what tomorrow might bring. Our troubles vanished, and I could hear the goodness of life itself singing to me in the darkness.

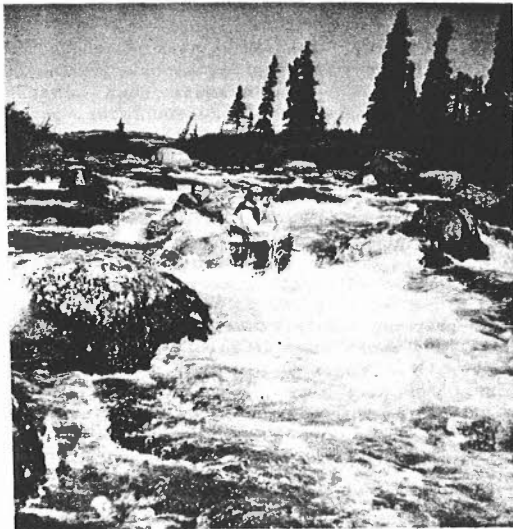
Paper read at the Far Northwest Symposium of the Wilderness Canoe Association, Toronto, 30 January 1988.

RIVIÈRE DUMOINE

Author: Hap Wilson
 Publisher: Northern Concepts, Temagami, 1987
 Reviewed by: Toni Harting

Hap really has done it again! This rare and precious combination of gifted paddler, guide, outfitter, illustrator, writer, and environmentalist, has produced a terrific little gem filled to the brim with delectable goodies on canoetripping the Dumoine River in southwestern Québec. (Some advice on the Kipawa River is also included.) His irresistible collection of maps (who does it better than Hap?), information (so much, so good, so helpful), and photographs (many of them featuring the WCA's very own Smerdons) truly brings the Dumoine to life. If you have already been on this marvellous but demanding river, the book will make you want to do the trip again, and again, and maybe again. And if the Dumoine is on your list of trips-to-do, studying this 32-page booklet will surely compel you to immediately pick up the phone to book a bushplane flight to your starting point. If all the river guides Hap is working on are as good as this one, we can look forward to a most interesting and useful collection.

The book costs about \$10.00 and can be obtained from many sportstores and outfitters catering to the canoetripping public, and from the publisher: Northern Concepts, P.O. Box 100, Temagami, Ontario, POH 2H0.



HOTAKWANON RIVER - Simon Rivers-Moore
 (Honorable Mention, Wilderness and Man; WCA 1988 Photo Contest)

CHALLENGE THE WILDERNESS

Author: Clayton Klein
 Publisher: Wilderness Adventure Books, Fowlerville, Michigan, 1988

The story of George Elson, who guided the 1903 and 1905 Hubbard expeditions into the unknown interior of Labrador, is presented in the form of a historical novel. The 440-page book contains five maps and dozens of authentic photographs.

COPPERMINE RIVER, JULY - AUGUST 1986

This is an extensive report, written by Blair Richardson, of a 27-day canoe trip down the Coppermine River in the Northwest Territories by six paddlers. It contains much useful information on trip planning, schedules, equipment, food, first aid, expenses, clothing and personal gear, etc., and also a daily account of the trip itself. A 44-item list of reading materials is included. Copies of this private publication can be obtained for \$12.75 (postage is included) from: P.O. Box 490, Hawkesbury, Ontario, K6A 2Y2.

THE CANADIAN CANOEING COMPANION

Author: Alex Narvey
 Publisher: Thunder Enlightening Press, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1988. (\$19.85 in Canada; \$14.95 in USA)
 Reviewed by: Toni Harting

This large softcover book, subtitled "An Illustrated Resource Guide to Paddling in Canada's Wilderness," certainly is a most useful piece of work. It presents a well-produced collection of information covering a good variety of subjects dedicated to safe recreational canoeing--safety for the environment as well as for the paddler. It grew out of the author's attempt to create an outtripping manual for the wilderness program of a summer camp, and is intended to provide a stepping stone to the many aspects of canoeing and canoe tripping.

Although primarily aimed at the leaders and organizers of the kind of lake canoe trips (no whitewater techniques in this book!) that camps and outdoors education programs conduct, it also presents much information that can be used to great advantage by the novice as well as the more experienced individual canoeist. The many illustrations, especially the diagrams, are clear, simple, and effective (with the exception of the rather amateurish painting on the front cover). The writing style is to the point and relaxed, but proofreading and punctuation might have been a bit more accurate. The contents of the book are well organized and the Index makes finding a particular subject very easy.

An impressive amount of up-to-date information is presented in four sections: The Environment (controlled impact camping), The Skills (paddling, travelling, portaging, planning, rescues), The Equipment (care and maintenance, home-made gear), The Resources (bibliography, organizations and schools, sources). The last section, Resources, is truly amazing: about 35 pages filled with names, addresses, titles, and other useful information. The best collection of resource material published anywhere.

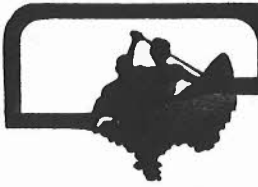
This book is an important addition to the canoeing literature and deserves to be studied closely by all recreational paddlers, especially instructors and trip leaders, active in the world of canoe tripping.



COME FRY WITH ME, COME FRY AND FRY AWAY

Harvest Foodworks has come up with an interesting and most useful new item: powdered shortening, consisting of hydrogenated vegetable oil. It is packaged in a small, reclosable plastic bag, and does away with messy oil, margarine, or butter containers on a camping trip. It works like magic: once the frying pan is warm, the white crystals melt into an oily film and you're ready to fry. This clever product will surely find a place in my kitchen box this summer. It is available at camping supply stores for approx. \$2.50 per 50 g package.

Ria Harting



TEMAGAMI--A FUNDRAISING EVENT

QUETICO S.O.S.

The Temagami Wilderness Society was formed as a non-profit citizen's coalition dedicated to research, conservation, and public understanding of the wild lands and waters of the Temagami area. One goal of the Society is to challenge the Environmental Assessment on the Primary Access Roads in the Latchford Crown Forest Management Unit (Red Squirrel Road/Pine Torch Corridor). This assessment recommends the building of these roads. A hearing has been requested by many groups on this Environmental Assessment. It is felt that the long-term indirect effects of these roads, such as the impact of logging, and the impact of secondary roads upon the wildlife in the proposed Temagami Wildlands Reserve, have not been addressed. To undertake this necessary challenge a fund of \$150,000 is required for expenses and legal and environmental advice.

The first fundraising event was held on 21 April 1988 in the Convocation Hall of the University of Toronto. Guests making appearances included actress Dinah Christie, singer Aaron Davis, writer and artist Hap Wilson, writer Timothy Findley, and Brian Back, Executive Director of the TWS. Slide presentations were prepared by artist Robert Bateman and photographer Henry Kock. The audience, over 1000 in attendance, were primarily canoeists, of whom about half have canoed in the Temagami area. Many canoeing organizations were represented. Several booths were set up promoting wilderness causes, selling T-shirts, buttons, art, and literature, with proceeds going to the fund.

The evening concluded with a draw of various door prizes and prize draws for donors. The donations collected amounted to \$25,000, a fine start to raising the required \$150,000. Continued support is necessary to prevent logging in the proposed Temagami Wildlands Reserve. Write to your local MPP, David Peterson, Vince Kerrio, and Jim Bradley, expressing your concerns. Support a successful outcome of the assessment hearing through donations to the Temagami Wilderness Society's Assessment Fund.

Reginald S. Ross

TEMAGAMI UPDATE

Since the above item was written, a most unfortunate development has taken place. On 17 May, Ontario's Minister of the Environment, James Bradley, announced the government's preliminary decision not to hold a public hearing on the Red Squirrel Road Environmental Assessment. Approval, which will be made immediately after 8 June, means:

- immediate construction of Red Squirrel Road extension,
- immediate issue of logging licence for old-growth forest off the extension,
- approval of Pinetorch Road,
- approval of logging off Pinetorch Road and around Florence Lake.

What we must do now is to show the government that the issue is not going to die. If private citizens and citizens' groups stop applying pressure in the weeks following a political announcement, Cabinet knows its decision will survive. However, if the phone calls and letters to MPPs and the premier continue and they are from a broadening segment of society, then Cabinet will be compelled to reconsider its decision.

(From information supplied by the Temagami Wilderness Society.)

JAMES AULD PROVINCIAL WATERWAY PARK PROPOSAL

The proposal to link up Frontenac Provincial Park with Charleston Lake Provincial Park has fallen through. The root of the trouble seems to be that the proposal comes years too late. The lakes and rivers connecting the two are simply too built up with both cottages and commercial interests. What the public advisory committee is trying to do now, is to set up a "James Auld Waterway" to ensure that campers/canoists are recognized and respected on this waterway system, so that it will be possible to travel between Frontenac and Charleston without being run down, run out, or otherwise abused. It will take time, and never be ideal, which is very sad because canoeists, hikers, and campers in the Kingston area have little enough wild space as it is.

Claire Muller

I have recently received an emergency letter from Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness (1313 Fifth St. SE, Suite 329, Minneapolis, MN 55414) informing us that the Province of Ontario is currently conducting a policy review of Quetico Provincial Park, because apparently there is a co-ordinated effort afoot to develop and commercialize Quetico. Outfitters and pro-development officials want, among other things, the following:

- 1) permission to fly more airplanes over the Park to land at several locations to drop off canoeists;
- 2) to reverse the closing of the Beaverhouse Lake plane landing site (recommended in the 1982 Park Policy) in order to give the Lac La Croix Indians easy air access to day-use motorboat fishing;
- 3) reintroduction of motor boats on the upper lakes and the construction of two mechanized portages to accommodate said boats;
- 4) continuation of two very long traplines within Quetico, which were to be phased out; new trappers cabins have just been built there;
- 5) reduction of the size of Quetico; this would weaken buffer zones.

What can we do about this? It is the old story: for starters we all need to write to Premier Peterson, Queen's Park, Toronto, M7A 1A1, and to Hon. James Bradley, Minister of the Environment, 135 St. Clair Ave., W., Toronto, M4V 1P5. It does no good just to read this; we need your 300 plus letters to be effective. PLEASE WRITE. The Chairman of the Provincial Parks Council was inviting input originally, but the deadline was 30 April and I didn't receive the FBBW letter until 2 May.

Claire Muller

The following items have been excerpted from the March 1988 issue of Canews, the newsmagazine of the Ontario Recreation Canoeing Association, 1220 Sheppard Ave. E, Willowdale, Ontario, M2K 2X1, phone 416-495-4180.

CREDIT RIVER (west of Toronto)

There was some possibility of settling the thorny problem of paddling rights on this small river out of court, but this now does not seem possible. We must begin to prepare in earnest for the trial of this action which will be coming up soon. We are asking that you do two things:

1. send in your donations to cover the expenses and build up our defence fund,
2. tell us if you have actually canoed the Credit River at any time. We would like trip logs, trip notes, and photographs along with specific dates travelled, names of canoeists, etc. We need your support now! We are trying for a precedent which will safeguard canoeists' access to navigable waterways. This whole court case is one of the ways ORCA is seeking to ensure that the rights of canoeists and their concerns on specific issues are addressed.

SPANISH RIVER (northwest of Sudbury, Ontario)

The most recent proposal by the Ministry of Natural Resources regarding the future of the Spanish River is far worse than any of the ideas being discussed back in 1985-1986. There will be two bridge sites to facilitate lumber cutting by E. B. Eddy, dam sites will be preserved for any future hydro-electric projects by Inco, and there are mineral extraction sites. There will be no sight line preserves on timber cutting. Originally the proposal was that the forest would not be cut in such a way that it was visible from the river but this idea has now been dropped and it is possible that the cutting will go right to the bank of the river. The area has been rejected as a park and it is now being proposed that there will be a special management area. If you want to protest these developments, write immediately to: Premier David Peterson, Ontario Government, Queen's Park, Toronto, M7A 1A1.



CANAL RAPIDS - Paul Barsevskis
(Honorable Mention, Wilderness; WCA 1988 Photo Contest)

1-3 July ADIRONDACKS HIKING
Organizers: Trudy and Howard Sagermann 416-438-6090
Book immediately.

We will drive to Keene Valley in New York State to begin our hike. Our loop will include the peaks of Hedgehog, Upper and Lower Wolfjaw, the Gothics, Saddleback, Haystack, and Mount Marcy. We will be travelling over a very rugged route; only experienced hikers should therefore consider this outing. Limit six hikers.

9-10 July MINDEN WILDWATER WEEKEND
Organizer: Bill Ness 416-321-3005
Book before 3 July.

The rapids on this man-made whitewater course are technically challenging and provide a great way for aggressive intermediates to get some experience in difficult rapids. The run-out can be used to advantage by novices for perfecting their ferries and eddy turns. Limit six canoes.

9-10 July UPPER MADAWASKA RIVER
Organizer: Dale Miner 416-730-8187
Book before 30 June.

We will paddle from Whitney to just above the village of Madawaska, camping out on the river on Saturday night. This section of the Madawaska offers excellent whitewater and attractive campsites. If water levels are too low to run this section, we will go to the Lower Madawaska and run from Aumond's Bay to Griffith. Suitable for intermediate paddlers. Limit six canoes.

16-17 July LOWER MADAWASKA RIVER
Organizers: Bill Ness 416-321-3005
Doug Ashton 519-654-0336
Book immediately.

The Madawaska makes for a delightful summer weekend river trip, being one of the few rivers in southern Ontario to have good whitewater paddling all season long. Come along with us to soak up the sun and play in the rapids as we canoe our way from Latchford Bridge down to Griffith. Limit five canoes.

24 July BURNT RIVER
Organizer: Bill Ness 416-321-3005
Book before 17 July.

On this leisurely-paced day trip we will follow the Burnt River from Kinmount down to the village of Burnt River. The Burnt placidly winds its way through attractive mixed forest, here and there spilling over ledges to add a little whitewater excitement to our day. Limit six canoes.

24-30 July ALGONQUIN PARK
Organizer: Paul Siwy 416-423-1698
Book immediately.

A week of paddling through the scenic lakes and rivers of Algonquin Park. We will start at Magnetawan Lake, travel through Big Trout Lake, and finish at Canoe Lake. This trip will be all flat water and comfortably paced so as to appeal to most skill-levels. As we will be in the heart of the park we will have excellent opportunities to view moose and other wildlife not normally seen near heavily used areas. Limit three canoes.

30-31 July, 1 August KILLARNEY PARK
Organizer: Howard Sayles 416-921-5321
Book before 14 July.

This will be a leisurely paced canoe trip through the magnificent scenery of Killarney Park. We will canoe a loop to the east of Silver Peak allowing plenty of time for photography, hiking, or just enjoying the scenery. Limit four canoes.

30-31 July, 1 August OTTAWA RIVER
Organizers: Sandy Miller 416-323-3603
Roger Harris 416-762-8571
Book before 22 July.

The Ottawa River offers the experienced paddler the opportunity to paddle the most exciting whitewater available at this time of the year. Depending on water levels, we plan to do the middle channel Saturday, the main channel Sunday, while Monday will be spent on either the middle or main channel. Limit six canoes.

30-31 July, 1 August FRENCH RIVER
Organizer: Garry Walters 416-783-0240
Book before 15 July.

On Saturday we will travel upstream from Wolseley Bay on this wide, lake-like section of the river and camp on one of the many islands. Sunday we reverse direction and paddle down to the Blue Chute via Little Pine and Big Pine rapids where we can, if we so desire, hone our whitewater skills. Monday we play the Blue Chute until lunch and then paddle back to our cars. Limit five canoes.

August TEMAGAMI REGION
Organizer: Garry Walters 416-783-0240
Book immediately.

The organizer is planning a 7-9 day canoe trip in the region of Lady Evelyn Provincial Park, Maple Mountain. The dates are flexible and can be adjusted to suit interested parties. Suitable for experienced canoe trippers.

13-14 August PALMER RAPIDS WHITewater WEEKEND
Organizer: Bill Ness 416-321-3005
Book before 7 August.

Just a lazy August weekend at Palmer Rapids on the Madawaska River. Whitewater paddlers from novice to experienced will find interesting spots to play in. Bring along the family. Non-paddlers will enjoy swimming and sunbathing on the beach. Limit eight canoes.

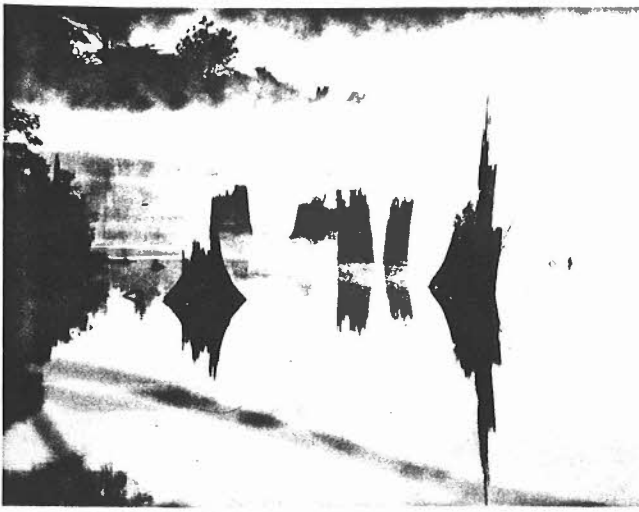
13-14 August LOWER MADAWASKA RIVER
Organizer: Dale Miner 416-730-8187
Book before 3 August.

The lower Madawaska offers a scenic trip and a mixture of rapids guaranteed to please enthusiastic paddlers. Saturday's put-in will be at Aumond's Bay, Sunday's take-out at Griffith. Camping will be on the river, so participants should be prepared to paddle with all their gear. Suitable for paddlers who have taken a whitewater course. Limit six canoes.

20 August BON ECHO PROVINCIAL PARK
Organizer: Paul Siwy 416-423-1698
Book before 1 August.

A family oriented day outing combined with a weekend of camping in this largest provincial park in eastern Ontario. We will embark on a leisurely six-hour trip which will include Indian pictographs over 250 years old and a landmark called Mazinaw Rock which is sometimes referred to as the "Canadian Rock of Gibraltar." A great trip on which to bring family and friends you must normally leave behind because they don't share your enthusiasm for beating through mosquito-infested portages. If interest is shown, a trip will also take place on Sunday. Limit seven canoes.





EARLY MORNING - Gail Vickers

27-28 August ALGONQUIN PARK
 Organizer: Howard Sayles 416-921-5321
 Book before 17 August.

An easy-paced trip in Algonquin Park, suitable for paddlers who are just starting to discover the joys of canoe tripping. I am prepared to be flexible on the exact route so that participants can express their own preferences. Limit four canoes.

27-28 August SOUTHERN GEORGIAN BAY
 Organizers: Trudy and Howard Sagermann 416-438-6090
 Book between 7 and 21 August.

This route takes us through a variety of Georgian Bay scenery from the Thirty Thousand Islands to placid inland lakes. Suitable for flatwater paddlers capable of paddling 25 km per day with the possibility of headwinds and including two or three portages. Limit five canoes.

27-28 August MINDEN WILD WATER PRESERVE
 Organizers: Sandy Miller 416-323-3603
 Roger Harris 417-762-8571

Book before 19 August.
 The Gull River at the MWWP offers tight, technical rapids. The less experienced can practise in the lower rapids while the more experienced paddlers can work the rapids from the falls to the outflow at the end. Otterslide Chute will give surfers the chance to test their skills. Car camping is available at the preserve. Limit six canoes.

3-5 September OTTAWA RIVER
 Organizer: Dale Miner 416-730-8187
 Book before 23 August.

The Ottawa River is known for its big rapids and offers exciting and challenging runs for experienced paddlers. Flotation and spray covers are recommended. Limit six canoes.

3-4-5 September SOUTH GEORGIAN BAY LAKES
 Organizer: Jim Greenacre 416-759-9956
 Book before 26 August.

A leisurely, bug-free trip through the beautiful lakes southwest of Parry Sound. Suitable for canoeists capable of paddling 16-18 km per day with a few short portages. Limit four canoes.

11 September ELORA GORGE
 Organizer: Dave Sharp 519-621-5599
 Book between 21 Aug. and 4 Sep.

A leisurely day trip through the scenic Elora Gorge, water levels permitting. Suitable for novices with some whitewater experience who would like the opportunity to improve their skills plying in the rapids. Limit six canoes.



LUNCH BREAK - Neil McKay

17-18 September ALGONQUIN PARK
 Organizer: John Winters 705-382-2293
 Book before 9 September.

On Saturday we will paddle down the Tim River to Rosebary Lake and return on Sunday. We will be travelling through a very attractive part of the park. Suitable for beginning canoe trippers and experienced paddlers who are looking for a leisurely trip. Participants can camp Friday night in my lower forty to allow for an early start Saturday morning. Limit four canoes.

18 September MISSISSAGUA RIVER
 Organizer: Bill Ness 416-321-3005
 Book before 11 September.

This trip will follow the Mississauga River from its source in Mississauga Lake south to Buckhorn Lake. The autumn colors and the river's scenic chutes and falls should make this a memorable outing. Bring your camera. Limit six canoes.

1-2 October ISLAND LAKE EXPLORATION
 Organizer: John Winters 705-382-2293
 Book before 23 September.

Another trip exploring the region north of Lake Wawashkesh. On this trip I want to explore the area to the northwest of Island Lake. Suitable for canoe trippers who relish the thought of bushwhacking portages. Limit three canoes.



DON'T LET MISHAP BECOME TRAGEDY

IF YOU EXPERIENCE AN ACCIDENT OR HEALTH PROBLEM ON YOUR NEXT OUTING - ARE YOU PREPARED?

In the outdoors, help is not a phone call away. The hospital is not around the corner. You, and everyone over age 16 who participates in your outdoor activities, should know First Aid.

Outdoor First Aid will help you avoid many of the risks associated with outdoor recreation and prepare you to deal with emergency situations you might encounter away from home.

A pamphlet providing course descriptions and prices is available on request from the Ontario Recreational Canoeing Association (416) 495-4180.

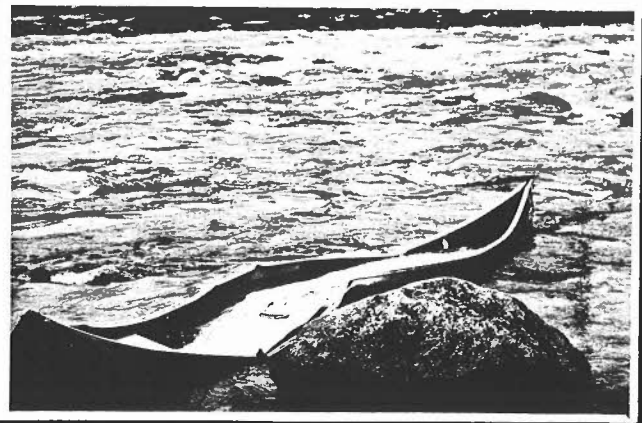
1988 SUMMER SCHEDULE

BASIC (8 Hours)	Sat., May 28, June 25, July 23	9:00am - 6:00pm
	Tues./Wed., June 7/8, July 19/20	6:30pm - 10:30pm
INTERMEDIATE (16 Hours)	Sat./Sun. May 28/29, July 23/24	9:00am - 6:00pm
HYPOTHERMIA (4 Hours)	Sat. June 4	9:00am - 1:00pm
	Wed. June 8	6:30pm - 10:30pm
HEART SAVER/CPR (4 Hours)	Sat. June 4	2:00pm - 6:00pm
	Wed. July 27	6:30pm - 10:30pm



The more you know,
the better it gets!

Outdoor First Aid is an ORCA sponsored public educational program in co-operation with the Humber College Health Sciences Division.



products and services

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

PHOTOGRAPHY INSTRUCTION CANOE TRIPS Three special, fully-outfitted, slow-paced canoe trips are being organized which combine the joys of canoeing and camping in Ontario's magnificent wilderness with the unique opportunity to learn directly from an expert how best to photograph the beauty and excitement of canoe tripping. Wilderness canoeing photographer Toni Harting will provide on-the-spot, around-the-clock instruction in his special kind of nature photography.

1. Barron River canyon / Grand Lake area in eastern Algonquin Park; 28 July - 1 Aug.; organized by Magnetic North;
2. North Tea Lake area in northwestern Algonquin Park; 7-13 August; organized by Northern Wilderness Outfitters;
3. Lady Evelyn River in the heart of the Temagami wilderness; 20-28 Aug.; organized by Wanapitai.

For more information contact Toni Harting in Toronto at 416-964-2495.

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), P0G 1G0, phone 705-342-5324

THE "TOUR" KAYAK From one basic mold come three different fibreglass models, each adapted for a specific function: entry level, normal use, and heavy duty. Many kayaking accessories are also available. Contact: Camp Lake Kayak and Canoe Co., 88 Princess Margaret Blvd., Islington, Ontario, M9B 2Y9, phone 416-237-1334.

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, P0H 1H0, phone 705 635-1167.

WILDERNESS AND ADVENTURE FOODS Harvest Foodworks provides innovative Canadian food products for those with a taste for adventure. The features include large portions, good taste and texture, high in calories, good nutritional balance, individual spice packs, visible natural ingredients, quick and easy preparation. These products were developed by wilderness professionals and are ideal for the seasoned canoeist and backcountry traveller. They are available at leading outdoor stores and outfitters throughout Canada. For more information, contact Chris, Doug, or Bill, the wilderness food specialists at Harvest Foodworks, 40 Hillcrest Drive, Toronto, M6G 2E3, phone 416-533-7479.

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.

Nastawgan is wordprocessed by COMPUFLOW, Toronto

where it is



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

French River	6	Thelon River	19
Algonquin Park	10	Rouge River	20
Georgian Bay	12	McDougall Pass	22
Labrador	16		

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WILDERNESS CANOE ASSOCIATION membership application

I enclose a cheque for \$15 — student under 18
\$20 — 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 U.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.