

ENJOYMENT—Glenn Spence
(First Prize, Wilderness and Man; WCA 1989 Photo Contest)

SEAL RIVER

Article: Bob Elliott (with help from Glenn Spence, Bob Haskett, Peter Haskett, John Winters, and Jim Greenacre)
Photos: Glenn Spence

Travel a subarctic river; have a peek at tundra; drive to the start; arrange for someone to shuttle your car; return to the car by train; enjoy a mix of different-sized lakes, rivers with currents, rapids up to grade two with the occasional grade three—all these ideas mentioned at one of the January WCA symposia aroused our interest, and plans for a summer trip were started. There must be a famous principle somewhere stating: "Logistics that appear simple and easy are due for adjustment." This definitely applied to our three-week trip down the Seal River in northern Manitoba in July and August 1988.

After 36 hours of driving from Belleville, Ontario, the trip started at Southern Indian Lake where 120 km of open water needed to be traversed. We took advantage of the free ferry which the government runs out to the native settlement of South Indian Lake, a distance of 12 km in our direction. If you don't like paddling on a lake that doesn't resemble its map, if you don't like looking for campsites under three metres of water, or making do with campsites in dense bush, you might consider hiring a local with a boat to transport you for some or all of the 120 km of this lake.

The lake has been raised three to five metres as part of the Churchill River diversion project (curse Manitoba Hydro). I had not used 1:250,000 scale maps for twenty years, and the map sent from Energy, Mines, and Resources was prepared before the lake level was raised. Therefore, for our first two days we paddled while guessing, imagining, estimating, and debating as to what our actual position was. Thereafter the trip started to run smoothly; the second map was more accurate. We had the first of many days of tailwinds, and happiness reigned.

The "scenery" was much as I expected—low wooded ground with a thick blanket of moss and lichen. There wasn't much relief to the topography. Because we were tired we decided to camp at a native cabin site as soon as we left the big lake. With difficulty, we found three level tent sites amid the debris of many moons of winter camping. Snowmobile halves in the lake, caribou skulls and legs rotting, shotgun shells, tin cans, pieces of plastic—you name it, we saw it strewn everywhere. In retrospect, we should have stopped earlier at the sand beach on the left where the Kame Hills run into the last bay of the lake.

Our first major challenge of the trip was the Little Sand River. It involved a lot of upstream wading, lifts over log jams, and one carry around a big jam. We took 7 1/2 hours to do the river. The map showed the main fork to be 2/3 of the way up, but it took 4 1/2 hours to cover that last third. Meander distances are not easily estimated on this scale map. Along the way, we saw two osprey nests and several osprey. Exhausted, we finally reached Little Sand Lake around 8 p.m. where we again camped in the midst of garbage at a hunting cabin located on a point across from the river.

The next morning, after a late start, we paddled to the end of the lake. Our efforts to find the creek to the head pond dead-ended in a weed-choked bog. We then went east to a nearby cabin site where we were greeted by four dogs, two of which swam out to meet our canoes. Two huskies and two lab-retriever types were very anxious for human company. From a note on the door we presumed that the dogs were abandoned there 8 June and had apparently been fending for themselves for over six weeks. We found a bulldozed "winter road" portage to the head pond (800 m), then discovered a canoe at the beginning of the next portage in a small bay on the left. The actual height-of-land portage, over an esker into the first pond of the Seal watershed, was about 200 m in length. We

IN THIS ISSUE

- | | | | |
|----|-----------------------|----|-----------------------|
| 1 | Seal River | 11 | Pipstone River |
| 5 | Looking at Light | 12 | WCA Photo Contest |
| 5 | The Great Outdoors | 14 | Ice-out! |
| 6 | Editorial | 16 | Life's Ups and Downs |
| 6 | Letter to the Editor | 17 | Hypothermia |
| 6 | Partners Wanted | 17 | Coulonge River |
| 7 | News Briefs | 18 | Camping License |
| 7 | WCA Mailbox | 18 | Canoe/ton |
| 7 | Fifteen years Ago ... | 19 | WCA Trips |
| 8 | Future of the WCA | 22 | Products and Services |
| 8 | No. Ontario Symposium | 23 | WCA Guidelines |
| 9 | Book Reviews | 24 | Products and Services |
| 10 | The Terrible Tyrrell | 24 | Where It Is |
| | | 24 | WCA Contacts |



Little Sand River

had another 400-m portage into another pond and then, instead of going down a creek to Trout Lake, we followed the Manitoba guide and paddled north to a long, narrow extension bay. At its western end, we carried for 500 m on a good portage into Trout Lake. All this time three, then two of the dogs followed us around the shore and swam the bays. They certainly wanted company! Facing a strong westerly wind we headed out into Trout Lake, turned, and said good-bye to our tag-along companions. They howled disappointment as we paddled away.

At a point halfway up the west side of the lake, we found a cozy campsite complete with relic cabin, sand beach, a fireplace, and even a table. Everyone pitched in, supper was eaten, and rainbows—three of them—were seen in the passing showers. Just as we were having supper, in walked—guess what?—one soaking wet, shivering husky! It must have smelled our cooking fire and had swam at least one kilometre across the lake against a strong west wind to find us. It curled up in our midst, happy to have our companionship. Talk about persistence—it was 22 or 23 km from its home! We tried to feed it margarine and banana-nut cake, but it wasn't interested. Peter thought of the fish guts from the pike we had eaten. Sure enough, the dog devoured the entrails, then crunched up and swallowed the backbone, tail, and even the head! Later, after another catch, he ate again. There was some consideration of taking the dog with us, but the idea just wasn't practical. The dog was a perfect guest as it lay curled up quietly at the edge of all our activity. As far as we know, it just peacefully slept through the night near our tents. When we paddled away in the morning to a rising crescendo of howls and barks, there were six heavy hearts. Will the dog find its way back to its home? Is it doomed to be supper for a wolf? We will never know.

The Trout Creek downriver paddle had several shallows that we scraped over and waded through. We also skidded over one beaver dam, before paddling out onto Loon Lake. From this point on in the trip, there was plenty of water. The generally flat countryside was broken by numerous eskers. The first one we saw was impressive, cut in two by the river. It was such a pleasant change from the low bush that we stopped, climbed, took pictures, and celebrated with a gorp break.

The next day, battling a head wind, we hunted for the settlement of Tadoule Lake. It was not located in the place indicated on the Manitoba trip sheet but we finally spotted a flashing light on a high hill where the modern airstrip was located. We learned that the village had been moved twice since the government pamphlet had been printed. About 800 Chipewyan people have resettled on this esker site to get away from the evils of drink and drugs that were too easily available in Churchill. We spent a few minutes in the bare-shelved store and a couple of hours walking the townsite. The young and old were very friendly but the adolescents were withdrawn. A couple of phone calls were made using the satellite telephone links, then we paddled a few kilometres from town and camped. The visit added 10 or 12 km to the trip, but it was worth it. However, we would later regret not calling our pick-up man in Churchill.



Beach on Tadoule Lake

At the northern end of Tadoule Lake, we ran the rapids to Negassa Lake on the left side of the island. Another strong tailwind came up and we paddled and surfed in waves of one metre and more, using our compass to aim for an outlet we couldn't see. Fortunately the course was correct—it would have been tricky to turn in those large waves. The first half of the set was simple, then it looked fierce. We couldn't get to shore easily to scout, but spotted a quiet, shallow side channel behind an island to the right. We took it and scraped, bumped, and waded our way down to avoid the dangers of the main channel.

We paddled and surfed out onto Shethane Lake with yet another strong

tailwind. By 5:45 p.m. we had covered 55 km and agreed to take the next campsite. At the southern-most part of the lake we camped at a beautiful sand beach next to an esker—an obvious campsite with a pretty pond in behind. While scouting around, we discovered several shallow rectangular or square pits and wondered if an archaeological dig had taken place there. We later found out that Samuel Hearne camped there for two or three weeks on one of his trips with the



One of the famous eskers

Chipewyan, circa 1770. He had been travelling overland to find the source of copper he had seen used by the Indians.

Early the next morning we encountered our first really strong headwinds. We spent two hours battling one-metre waves, then entered a river section where the headwinds eased and eventually changed to tailwinds.

At this point we had completed all the lake crossing and long mileage; the risks of being wind-bound on a lake were over. From here on our days were fairly short, since scouting rapids was rarely necessary and we had few problems.

The next campsite we chose was table flat, had much caribou moss, and a very open bush. It is here that a very large tributary enters the Seal River. After supper, while chatting at the fireside over a baking spice cake, we heard a terrific splash near the canoes. Someone diving in for a swim? From behind a small shrub we saw a seal diving out to deeper water. It seemed quite inquisitive as it swam and dove slowly by us, heading upstream. We tried to snap pictures but didn't get many before it swam up the tributary and away from us. All this occurred 190 km from Hudson Bay.

The next day we ran many sets of rapids filled with standing waves, some very large. Later next morning we hiked on some eskers parallel to the river. Atop their flat expanse, it was easy to see why the Chipewyan travelled more on eskers than on rivers. They followed the caribou, and their camps were often on top of, or just beside, eskers.

We ran some rapids beside cliffs and through a canyon—then at a turn in some narrows we portaged on the right-hand side from a one-canoe landing spot in a bay behind an island. After climbing the cliff and portaging we realized that we could have sneaked through on the right-hand side. What had worried me when scouting from the left side was a very wide (20 m) ledge-keeper about 30 m downstream. A miscue would have been costly.

After six kilometres of flat current we came to "Five Bar" Rapids. We dodged a few holes, then moved on to swifts and another set which looked easy but got tougher because of hidden ledges. Jim and I followed Bob and Peter and we back-ferried right of centre avoiding holes. We worked even further right when we saw John and Glenn disappear. Then, the next time I glanced, I saw them still upright but swamped with half a kilometre of rapids left to go. We made it through the worst and then headed over. Bob and Peter chased the packs as John and Glenn released them. Jim and I did a canoe-over-canoe and we got them back into their boat to finish the set without further ado. This was the first time we had ever participated in a canoe-over-canoe rescue in actual rapids, albeit grade one rapids at this point. We had to do this because the river was so wide and the current so strong that they would have been in the river for quite some time had we not picked them up.



South channel around Great Island

For our campsite we selected a sand beach cove between two esker points. It was located in an unattractive recent burn, but at least we had a chance to dry out before the sun's power diminished.

All the packed clothes remained dry throughout the mishap, but a check of the food packs showed we had lost some flour. The canoe was scraped and banged a bit but John expertly applied several duct tape "racing stripes" to temporarily repair the damage. No gear was lost; no one was hurt; we were thankful.



The next day we started in a headwind and drizzle and then ran a lot of marked rapids that were only swifts. Our only decent map (1:250,000 metric) was now finished. At our pit stops, we often saw fresh wolf tracks on sandy beaches. The current picked up again and campsites seemed scarce. The rapids were now so wide and long that there were many options for routes. After a 3-km set, the river turned north and we crossed the 59th parallel. Seals were seen occasionally, playing in the rapids, but they weren't numerous. We observed the first pockets of tundra vegetation.

After doing two six-bar sets and another long set or two, we camped two kilometres past a rapid on a large island with a pond on it. It was a geology station in ruins, complete with tons of core samples and swarms of black flies. According to our 1:250,000 maps we were finished with rapids. However, locals had warned us that there was an unmarked set which was very dangerous, near the mouth. As it turned out, Jim had a photocopy of a 1:50,000 map which showed problems, and the Manitoba canoe route map indicated rapids. How did the cartographer miss four or five kilometres of rapids, some of which were quite major?

We worked down gradually, set by set. When the river turned left, we didn't see a problem. We proceeded cautiously, one canoe at a time, to have a look around. The first canoe went around the bend, out of sight. The second canoe did likewise. Then it was our turn. As we rounded the bend, we heard a different tone. It sounded a bit much to run. We saw the occupants of the first canoe on shore, swinging their life jackets in the air. Were the bugs that bad or was this some famous signal? Had they paddled through, and walked back up to feature us in their slide show? The fast approaching rapids did appear too white, too noisy, and too rough. I glanced to my left for a route to shore and saw their canoe beached behind us. We tried to back-ferry over but didn't make it. We ducked into an eddy behind a large rock and pondered our position. There were too many shallow rocks close together to ferry across to shore. The channels separating us from shore were too deep and fast to wade.

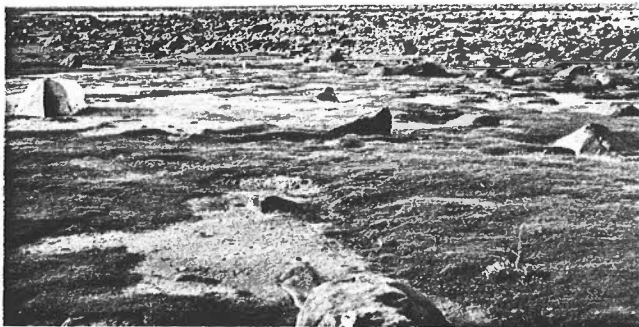
After considering all our alternatives, we decided that wading directly upstream through a shallow section to the ridge where the water became fast was our best route. I hopped in and paddled like hell and Jim fed the canoe upstream. He jumped back in at the correct point and we both paddled an upstream ferry to the safety of the shore. The rapids were quite spectacular, all foam, with standing waves two metres or more, and we couldn't have paddled them at such a high water level.

We camped with a view of "Rapids of the Deaf" (so named on the Manitoba map) and enjoyed a pizza dinner to celebrate our "last" night on the Seal. Tomorrow, on our pick-up day, we would cover the last two kilometres after breakfast. There were showers around, but it cleared and was cold. With the aid of binoculars focussed on the bay, we estimated high tide at 10-11 p.m. and therefore 9-10 a.m. tomorrow.



Delta wading

Everyone rose early the next morning, excitedly hoping to finally reach Hudson Bay and then Churchill. At 10:30 a.m. we arrived at a vegetation-covered island at the mouth of the Seal to await pickup. At high tide and no sign of our boat taxi, we decided to search for a spot to camp. We paddled one kilometre to the north shore of the delta and found a rather low-lying but flat, grassy, mossy point with a large rock and numerous snow geese. As we landed, a small passenger plane came down river and circled us three times. Was he looking for someone else or checking our progress? By 5:00 p.m. (still no pick-up) we put up the tents. We watched beluga whales play back and forth all day in the deep channel of the river mouth. We had about three days of food left. All of us were guessing as to why Jack Batstone had not picked us up. Maybe high waves had made crossing the bay risky. There had been a steady, if not strong, offshore wind all day.



Hudson Bay shoals with the tide out

By Tuesday evening we knew that we had missed the Churchill to Thompson train which runs Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. Glenn was very disappointed as he was moving 14 August and was hoping to get home to help pack. We could see the Seal River goose camp eight kilometres to the north where we could go if we ran out of food or had bad weather.

The next morning, while scanning the surrounding area for polar bears with binoculars from our lookout rock, I spotted a tent among the boulders of the tidal flats a few kilometres to the north. This became the focus of much observation, discussion, and speculation. Eventually, the tide started to come in and we watched as the campers took down the tent and headed our way. They stopped for a short visit and we learned that these five Americans had been out six weeks from Reindeer Lake via Thlewiazia River to Hudson Bay and hoped to be in Churchill in a day and a half. They had six days food left should they be windbound and, yes, they would take a message to the RCMP noting our position, the limited amount of food we had left, our tentative plans, and a question concerning the whereabouts of Jack Batstone. They had another message from a group further up the coast that had already been waiting three days for a boat pick-up by another person. "Does anyone use a calendar up here?" we thought. If we were lucky with weather we could paddle to Churchill in two days, but should we risk it with our diminishing food supply? We voted and decided to stay. We ate light rations to conserve food.



Has anyone seen Jack?

While I watched south from our rock, Peter came back from a walk and noticed something white and furry climbing out of the water to the north beyond the tent in which Bob Haskett was reading a book. With the alarm raised—polar bear!—everyone came out of the tents. We made a lot of noise by shouting and banging pots and canoes with paddles. The bear was upwind and could not scent us. It returned to the water and swam to get downwind while Glenn was threading the 2X extender on his telephoto. When it was 90 m away from us it stood up in the shallows and sniffed again. There was a strong wind. It then continued to swim downwind, turning every 10 m to sniff. When it was finally downwind it sniffed again, then turned out to Hudson Bay and swam away, to the northeast. Our campsite didn't seem quite so safe any more. "What if we get visited at night? Maybe we should move to the goose camp."



A meeting was held and we discussed our situation. We had about two days of light rations remaining. Should we paddle to Churchill or stay? Most seemed to favor the paddle. The first couple of hours we would still be near to the path of our hypothetical pick-up boat and should be able to flag it down. If the weather seemed good, we could try for more than a four-hour paddle each high tide by staying outside the foreshore, as the Americans had been doing. That afternoon, we saw two canoes come out of the delta south of us and head south.

We turned in after a beautiful sunset. It was calm, with a crystal-clear sky. Then, at 2:30 a.m., a storm hit with heavy winds and a cold rain. Some water got in one tent. The storm lasted about twelve hours; breakfast was one candy and half a granola bar. The bad weather spoiled our chances of leaving on this high tide and so we were stuck using up one more meal and waiting till the next high tide. The sky cleared and the occupants of the "wet tent" managed to dry their belongings fairly well.

We had another meeting and took inventory; there were about four very light meals left. We decided there was not enough food to paddle out as there was a good possibility that we might be wind-bound a lot. Therefore, we decided to get up at 4 a.m. for the early morning high tide and, weather permitting, head north eight kilometres to the goose camp. We would leave a triangle of logs and a note in case anyone looked for us here.

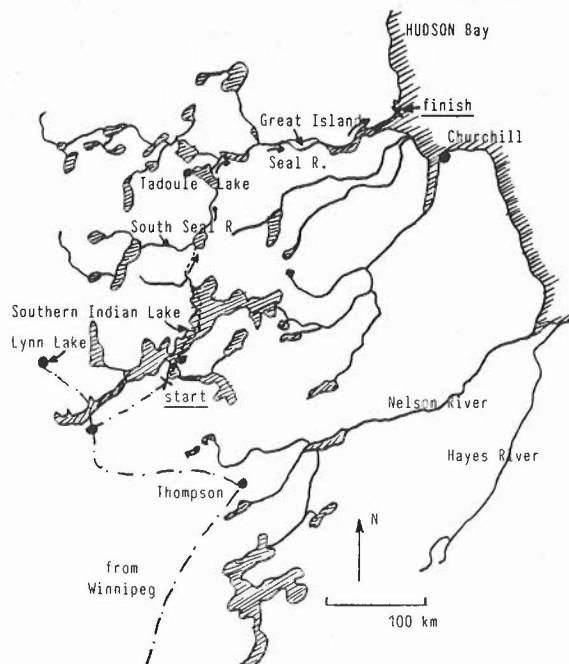
When we got up at 4 a.m., the scene was calm, clear, and cold, with a pre-dawn glow on the eastern horizon. Therefore we packed and canoed north to the goose camp where we found a large building and a fenced compound which may have been used for tent camping. We removed a few shutters, set three canoes up on end against the high frost fence to act as a distress signal, and prepared three fires to signal any passing plane or boat. We had a meal of Red River cereal which we had found in a cupboard and made ourselves comfortable. Somebody watched from the roof and others hauled fresh water from ponds inland. At low tide, John and I walked one kilometre on a man-made dike towards the Bay to see whether we could reach a landing usable at low tide. When surveying this "moonscape" of the exposed tidal flats, John asked, "Is that white spot moving?" The binoculars confirmed another polar bear heading directly towards us. After a breathless half-kilometre run over sand and boulders, yelling at the others

to alert them, we arrived at the cabin and continued to watch. The bear turned and just rambled on down to the water and didn't come any closer. We waited and waited and watched and watched, our frustration level growing.

About 2:15 p.m. on Monday, 8 August, I heard an engine. I couldn't see a plane but eventually spotted a boat. Everyone cheered up even though it appeared to be a very small boat. Bob and Peter paddled out to intercept it in case it didn't turn in towards us. We set the three smudge fires off. It indeed was the no-longer-mythical Jack Batstone, four days late. We packed furiously and threw everything in his seven-metre freighter canoe. He tied one of our canoes on top and towed the other two on bridles. Jack was somewhat apologetic and hurried us out before the tide started down. "I wonder how this will work, I've never tried this before," he said as he fastened a 30-HP motor beside the 35-HP one on the wooden transom of his canoe. As we sped across Hudson Bay, Jack watched the darkening sky, bailed occasionally, and commented, "I hope the weather holds; I don't like the look of it." Meanwhile, I cowered under the tied-on canoe, seeing that we were soon out of sight of land, and watched growing black clouds, Jack's concerned look, and his bailing. I thought, "This is probably the most dangerous part of the entire trip." Jack tried to encourage us with conversation shouted sporadically above the whine of the two outboards. We were very relieved when the port of Churchill came into view a couple of hours later.

Apparently our predicament had been caused by a communication problem. Jack thought he had told us to meet at the goose camp where he waited for us on the agreed pick-up day. We had confirmed in our letter that he would be picking us up at the Seal River mouth. We suspect he may not have been able to read our letter. It was his first summer at doing this sort of thing and he hadn't removed all the wrinkles. He received a forceful lecture from us on the inconvenience caused and the potential danger to us. He also received some clearly stated suggestions about how to operate his business properly. We never figured out why he didn't check the river mouth when he didn't find us at the goose camp since it would have been such a short distance out of his way. It would not be an easy check though, as the tidal flats are seven kilometres wide there.

Our trip was over. We spent a day sight-seeing in Churchill while waiting for the Tuesday train, then rode thirteen hours on the train to Thompson followed by a 38-hour non-stop drive to our homes in Ontario. Other than the frustrating uncertainty and potential risk of the four-day wait at the mouth of the Seal, we all felt that it had been an interesting and enjoyable trip with varied scenery, some good whitewater, few portages, a variety of wildlife, and experienced, compatible companions.



Jack has finally arrived

LOOKING AT LIGHT

Toni Harting

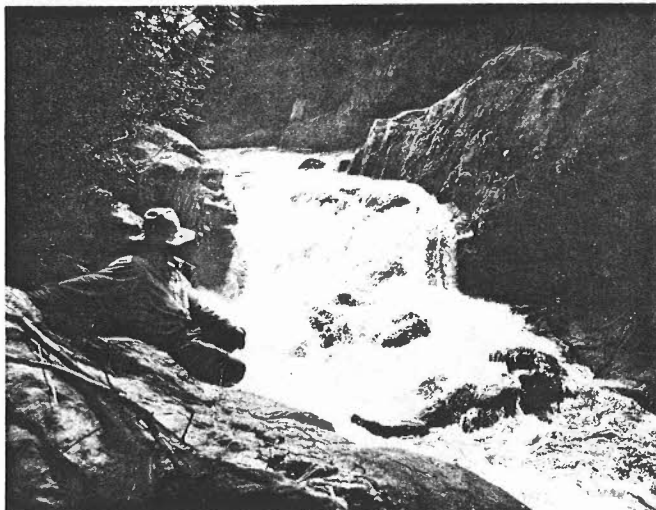
As it says in the dictionary, photography means drawing or painting with light. So, a most important factor when engaging in the art or craft of photography is a proper understanding of light, that elusive natural miracle that forms the very foundation of the best-developed one of our five senses: the ability to see.

The properties of light that directly concern the photographer are governed by the variations of only three basic elements: intensity, color, and direction. These three elements can influence the quality of light in a practically infinite variety of ways, giving us the marvellous opportunity to photograph our subject matter under many different lighting conditions. And this may result in often strikingly different portrayals of the same subject.

In nature photography, the kind many paddlers are most interested in, the principal source of light is, of course, the sun. A broad enough knowledge of the relevant properties of sunlight, how it changes during the course of the day and in varying weather conditions, is therefore of prime importance to the photographer who wants to preserve on film the precious images found in the outdoors.

Fog, for instance, can dramatically change the quality of direct sunlight and make it into something completely different. It transforms the hard rays from the sun into a soft, diffuse, caressing light that seems to come from all directions, thus avoiding the black shadows that characterize so many pictures taken in the open sun. Few images bring back fonder memories of a canoe trip than the quiet, simple photograph of that well-loved campsite, still wet with dew, and illuminated by the gentle light of the low early-morning sun faintly visible through the fogbank covering the lake. When photographing such a scene, you should support your camera on a tripod or rest it against a tree or so. To get a sharp photograph in this rather weak light, you'll need longer exposure times (in the order of 1/15 sec.) than most people are able to achieve with a hand-held camera.

How different this fog-diffused light is from the harsh, contrasty light coming directly from the midday sun. To photograph somebody's face at noon with the sun high in the sky is asking for trouble because black shadows will partially cover the face such as the eyes and beneath the chin. And if the person is wearing a wide-brimmed hat, the whole face will be a dark, undetailed shadow. In such a situation, it is much better to avoid direct sunlight in the middle of the day and wait for a better opportunity. So, if you want to make a great shot of your friend's eight-day stubble crowned by his dirty, floppy, but inseparable hat, look for a somewhat overcast sky with fluffy clouds tempering the strong sunlight. And remember too, that in many cases the best time to make photographs in the outdoors is before 10 a.m. and after 3 p.m. when the sun is a bit closer to the horizon and the light not that harsh.



The above photograph, made at Split Rock Falls of the Missinaibi River in northern Ontario, is a good example of what can be achieved by "looking at light." I had admired and photographed this famous waterfall and some of its surrounding area from the usual, west side of the river where the portage trail and the campsites are situated. However, while the sun was slowly changing its position in the sky during the course of the day, I had observed that the sunlight shining down the upstream river valley would, at one point, illuminate the frothing whitewater at a rather low angle. I expected this would make very interesting lighting for pictures of the water gushing through the gap and over the half-submerged rocks.

Ria and I quickly paddled across the small lake below the falls to the river's east side which is hardly ever visited by hurried canoeists. We climbed to a spot on the bare rocks from where we had a perfect upstream view of the now beautifully backlit falls. What particularly caught my eye was the way the strong sunlight reflected off the foaming water straight into the camera, bathing everything in glaring backlight that emphasized the turbulence of the water. How different and considerably less interesting this would have looked under the diffuse light of an overcast sky.

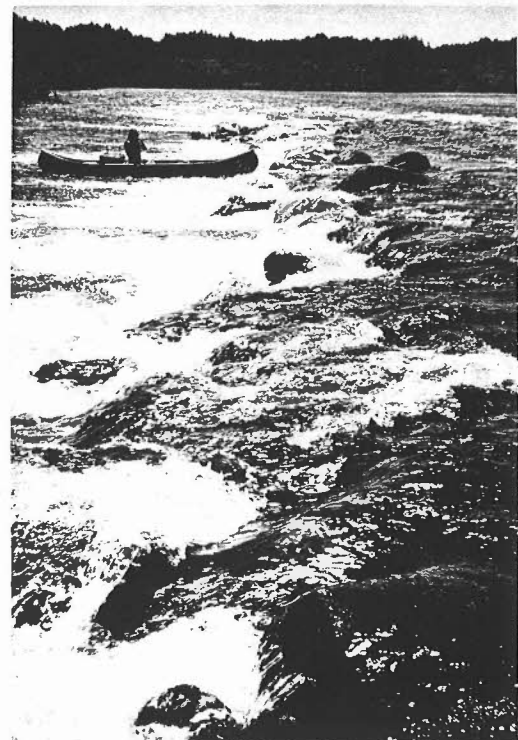
I photographed the impressive scene from various places, using different exposure settings on my camera because of the notorious problem of getting the "correct" exposure for this difficult, high-contrast subject. The sun was slowly moving on, and gradually its light was leaving this part of the river, again changing the way the falls looked. The many hours I had trained myself to consciously look at light had again been worthwhile, enabling me to photograph this beautiful small section of the Missinaibi River in a rather special way. And only because I had some understanding of the ever-changing and inspiring qualities of light.



THE GREAT OUTDOORS

The following description of what happens when a black fly pays you a visit is excerpted from Craig and Faust's Clinical Parasitology (Seventh Edition, 1964, Lea & Febiger):

"First the mandibles, with saw-toothed distalends, function as a pair of scissors in snipping the skin. The slightly shorter maxillae, provided with marginal reversed hooklets having toothed terminations, tear open the wound until it is large enough to allow the labrumepipharynx to reach the level of peripheral capillaries. Thus, in the removal of microfilariae of *Onchocera* from the host, the maxillae are believed to liberate from the infused skin the embryos which are then trapped by the terminal spines of the labrumepipharynx and hypopharynx." (Gibbins, 1938)





nastawgan published by the wca editor: toni harting printed by bayweb

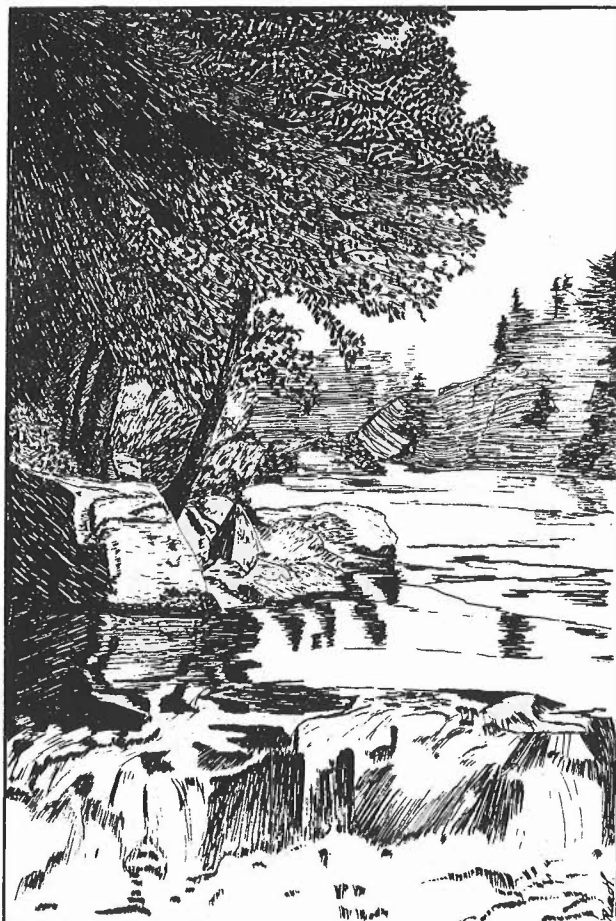
ISSN 0828-1327

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

EDITORIAL

Step by step, *Nastawgan's* new look and improved production system are taking shape. Three assistant editors (Joan Etheridge, Dale Miner, Duncan Taylor) are being trained and will gradually take over some of the editor's responsibilities. The Board of Directors has approved the change-over to the new 8-1/2 x 11 in. magazine format, to take place in the course of this year. Most text in this issue has been prepared using word processing techniques; the next issue should have all text done that way. Because I'm increasingly using my computer in the production of *Nastawgan*, we are now capable of accepting submissions directly on floppy disks. Preferred disk format is 5-1/4 in. IBM-compatible disk and preferred file format is WordPerfect software; otherwise please provide standard ASCII file (flat file). Other disk and file formats are also accepted but they require a rather costly and bothersome conversion process to make them compatible with my equipment. If you submit material on a floppy disk, please include one hard copy, i.e. a double-spaced print-out on paper.

An important consequence of these changes is that the deadline dates for submissions will be strictly adhered to. No material will be accepted that is submitted later than the dates mentioned in the News Briefs of each issue of *Nastawgan*. Send your material in early, especially the longer articles!



PARTNERS WANTED

HANBURY — THELON RIVERS CANOE TRIP Fourth person needed for this mid-July to mid-August trip. Call Peter Gould at 416-893-1854.

NAHANNI RIVER We are looking for two to four enthusiastic and experienced whitewater canoeists to plan and join a Nahanni River trip of about two weeks in July 1989. Please contact Krister and Monna Torrsell at 416-440-1168.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I would like to answer Raymond Chipeniuk's "Letter to the Editor" in the following statement:

Thank you Raymond for responding to my previous "Letter to the Editor" with regards to your published article condemning tour operators. I still stand by my comments—you have said nothing to precipitate an apology or a shift in my criticisms. Pertaining to "harm" to the wilderness and to the native people by the tour operator I think you should qualify your accusations. Albeit, despoliation of the natural world comes in many tainted forms, but in my book, waste and the exploitation of the northland is predominantly the fault of resource extractors. Intrusive roads bring all the phlegm of the earth to descend upon our pristine waters in the form of "mechanized" man.

All tourist groups, wilderness travellers, be they a member of an organized party or not, I say *all* of us are guilty of leaving our mark in some way or form.

To isolate one user group over another as the perpetrator of wilderness sabotage along sacred waters only exemplifies your ignorance of the associated problems. I'm certainly not saying that all tour operators who outfit canoe expeditions, etc. are good operators; companies who do not abide by the "unwritten" wilderness codes usually succumb to the appropriate fate. I consider myself a good operator but I don't go around condemning those who want to travel on their own and who are as guilty of monopolizing campsites and portages as we are. As well, many native people themselves *are* tour operators, so let's get our priorities on line with reality.

Hap Wilson



SHIFTING SHADOWS—Herb Pohl
(Honorable Mention, Wilderness and Man; WCA 1989 Photo Contest)

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This year, the WCA Annual General Meeting was held on 11 February at the Frost Centre near Dorset, Ontario. About 60 members, many of them new, attended.

The business meeting, held Saturday morning, moved along quickly, due in no small part to our now-past chairman Marcia Farquhar. We finished before lunch, a WCA first! The differing philosophical viewpoints of WCA members give the club its unique flavor, and always make for interesting discussions at the AGM.

For the first time, the Frost Centre encouraged us to participate in their interpretive programs. Three were selected, one led by WCA member and Frost Centre staff member Craig Macdonald. Because of the excellent skiing conditions, these programs had a lot of competition for members' time. Saturday evening was spent in the traditional AGM fashion: WCA Photo Contest, followed by a guest speaker. The contest, organized and presented by Dee Simpson and Toni Harting, was magnificent, as usual. The club is fortunate to have so many talented amateur photographers. The evening was topped off with a presentation by Paul Mason (son of the late Bill Mason) on the Nahanni and Mountain rivers in the Northwest Territories. Paul gave an interesting and informative talk-and-slide show, stimulating much discussion.

Sunday was a wonderful winter's day, perfect for skiing and snowshoeing on and off the trail.

Overall it was a productive and fun weekend.

Diane Wills

NEWS BRIEFS

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

issue	summer 1989	deadline date	7 May 1989
	autumn 1989		13 August 1989

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

GOLD, FOR THE THIRD TIME! The Canadian Ski Marathon, a tough 160-km two-day competition between Montreal and Ottawa, again was a triumph for Karl Schimek who earned his third gold in this cross-country skiing event. Karl, who is 61, also was the oldest finisher.

OPEN CANOE SLALOM On the weekend of 10 and 11 June, Algonquin Outfitters will be sponsoring an annual whitewater open canoe slalom race on the Gull River near Minden, Ontario. The race has an informal atmosphere and is open to paddlers of all skill levels. The gates will be set up Friday afternoon and canoeists will have all day Saturday to practise for Sunday's race. Race classes include men's, women's, mixed, solo long, and solo short. Camping is available on Friday and Saturday nights at the Minden Wild Water Preserve. For more information call Algonquin Outfitters at 705-635-1167.

CHANGES Please report eventual changes in name, address, or phone number as soon as possible to our membership secretary Paula Schimek in Toronto at 416-222-3720.

OBITUARY Dave Gilbert, founder of Rockwood Outfitters, and considered by many to be Eastern Canada's finest builder of fibreglass and kevlar canoes, died in his home on Monday, 20 February. He had been battling with cancer for several years. Dave was a member of the WCA and will be long remembered by those of us who paddle one of his canoes and also for his impeccable business ethics. Our sympathy goes to his wife, Diane, and other members of his family.

NASTAWGAN TRIP INFORMATION INDEX This alphabetical list of rivers, lakes, and areas written up in the newsletters published over the last 15 years by the WCA has now been updated to include data from the past two years. It is available to members and can be obtained by sending two dollars (bills, please; no cheques!) to: Paul Barsevskis, 21 Avonhurst Road, Islington, Ontario, M9A 2G7; phone 416-239-2830.

WCA MAILBOX

Seneca College has courses this spring on Wilderness First Aid and Wilderness Survival. Starting in March and April, the sessions are held on weekends and weekday evenings at the King Campus north of Toronto. For information call 416-833-3333 or 1-800-263-2060.

The Federation of Ontario Naturalists will be holding their Annual Meeting and Conference on 26-28 May in Kingston. The theme this year is "Interpreting Nature." Contact FON Conference 89, 204 Barleson Avenue, Kingston, Ontario K7M 4H1.

The Fourth World Congress on the Conservation of Built and Natural Environments will be held at the University of Toronto, 23-27 May. Sponsored by the Heritage Trust, the theme of this year's meeting is Industry and Conservation. Contact Heritage Trust, 79 Cambridge St., London SWIV 4PS, England.

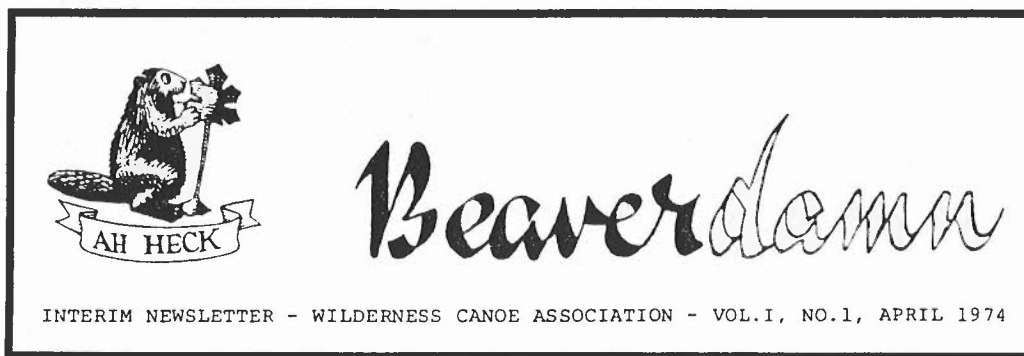
The Thunder Bay Canoe and Kayak Club are planning "July Thunder Bay Canoe Races" to be held 29 & 30 July with cash prizes of approximately \$1,500. Contact Dave Mutrie, P.O. Box 2524, Thunder Bay, Ontario P7B 5G1, 807-683-6164.



PERIWINKLE—Marcia Farquhar
(Honorable Mention, Flora; WCA 1989 Photo Contest)

FIFTEEN YEARS AGO...

This is what the masthead looked like on the first page of the first newsletter put out by the young WCA in April 1974, now almost 15 years ago:



Towards the end of 1973, a small group of enthusiastic and concerned paddlers, meeting in Orillia, Ontario, had formed the Wilderness Canoe Association. The first year in the life of the new club was not very productive; the club's activities remained limited to the publication of this one issue of *Beaverdam*, its newsletter.

Then, in March 1975, a few members organized a meeting to discuss the association's problems, a new Board of Directors was elected, and a revitalized WCA emerged, which would eventually grow into the present healthy organization with more than 500 members.

An important factor in the success of the WCA has always been its newsletter, at times called *Beaverdam*, *Beaverdam*, *The Wilderness Canoeist*, and finally, in 1982, *Nastawgan*. Over the years, the many trip reports and other articles published in its pages have grown into a unique collection of information on numerous wild rivers, lakes, and areas explored by adventurous canoeists and winter travellers, information that was, and is, hard and often impossible to find anywhere else.

Until the winter 1984 issue, the newsletter was printed on newsprint, the same kind of paper used for our daily newspapers, that after a short time turns yellow and becomes brittle with age, eventually falling apart physically. In order to try to save the threatened storehouse of information, all issues from the winter

1984 one on have been printed on bookstock, a heavier grade of paper that holds out much better over time than newsprint.

Recently, the Board of Directors initiated a plan to also save the material printed in the earlier (newsprint) issues by having two sets of photocopies made on good quality paper. One set is to be filed in the WCA archives supervised by the Board, the second set is for the use of the newsletter editor.

To overcome another problem that occasionally has been brought forward, i.e. the inconvenient 11 x 17 in. tabloid size of the newsletter, the plan now is to have all issues, including the ones printed on 11 x 17 bookstock, photocopied to the reduced size of 8-1/2 x 11 in. (a 30% linear reduction), which is the standard magazine size *Nastawgan* will be printed in, in the near future. (See the Editorial in this issue.) This means that all past, present, and future WCA newsletters will be collected in the much more convenient standard 8-1/2 x 11 in. format.

If the membership expresses sufficient interest, additional sets will be made available at cost. The possibility of also having all newsletters recorded on virtually indestructible microfilm is being considered. More information on these plans will be made available as soon as details have been worked out.

ON THE FUTURE OF THE WCA

John Winters

I cannot forebear but to respond to Sandy Harris's commentary in the previous issue of *Nastawgan* on the future of the WCA. Growth may be one of our society's sacred cows but it is neither inherently good nor a valid measure of an organization's success. In fact, nowhere in the WCA's Constitution is growth mentioned as being essential or desirable and, if the rhapsodic sighs of wilderness canoeists who find themselves alone miles from civilization are any indication, one would assume that fewer is better and the last thing we should do is encourage more wilderness travellers. Given this paradoxical behavior on our part, another look at our Aims and Objectives is in order. They are:

1. to promote and advance the interests of wilderness canoeists,
2. to aid in educating the public to an awareness of, and a concern for, the natural forces and the delicate balance inherent in the wilderness environment,
3. to provide a flow of information pertaining to canoeing and wilderness matters to members of the association and the public,
4. to encourage closer communication among canoeists and related organizations,
5. to further explore new canoe routes, and ensure and preserve the right of way on those routes now established, while stressing the careful and considerate use of all such routes,
6. to encourage individual responsibility in canoeing by providing a program of practical canoeing experience.

Compare the above with these statistics from the WCA questionnaire in answer to the question, "What is/are your principal reason(s) for being a WCA member?"

1. Only 12 responses listed any aspect of "wilderness" as being a reason for belonging to the WCA.
2. Only five members stated conservation issues and the organization's involvement in those issues as being a reason for belonging to the organization.
3. Only two members indicated an interest in communications with other canoeing organizations.
4. Only one member voiced an interest in exploring new canoe routes.
5. Eight members belong only to participate in canoeing courses.
6. Over 50% belong primarily for the social aspects of the organization.

It is obvious that the aims and principles of the WCA are *not* prime reasons for membership. Even if we assume (a dangerous practice) that "wilderness" lies somewhere beneath the surface as a reason for membership, the inescapable fact is that concern for and appreciation of the wilderness is a secondary reason for being a WCA member!

The "undercurrent of unrest" noted by Sandy Harris is not new. Only a year after joining the WCA I noticed a trend towards pre-digesting, packaging, and instant dispersal of canoeing and tripping knowledge. In fact, John Cross, in his platform as a candidate for the board of directors, voiced that very concern. The responses to the WCA questionnaire confirm these observations.

There is no sin in wanting to be taught how to canoe or having your trip guided by a written descriptive of every tree, flower, rapid, and portage along the way. There are some to whom these aids are essential, but such aids are not compatible with WCA Aims and Objectives #5 & #6 which encourage individual responsibility and the exploring of new routes as a philosophy of canoeing life. Nor is there anything wrong with the social aspect of canoeing. We are social animals and meeting people is a natural adjunct to canoeing. What is wrong is that the social aspects of canoeing are *not* part of the WCA mandate and cannot become a focus of the organization without changing the WCA's character.

If our advertising is misleading and we have presented ourselves as something other than what we espouse to be (here I believe Sandy is 100% correct in suggesting that to be the case) we should correct the impression. Some overlap with other canoeing organizations must be expected but the areas of overlap be minimal and primarily constrained to the "communications" aspect of our objectives. If sticking to our mandate and not supplying these services slows growth or even reverses it, then, so be it. The WCA is not, nor was it ever meant to be, all things to all people. We are not elitist, we are simply "wilderness canoeists" as opposed to "canoeists."

The philosophical argument that takes precedence is that members "join" the organization and not vice versa. The burden is upon the membership to fit the WCA mould rather than for the WCA to contort itself to fit the members. Well-meant but ill-advised attempts by members to restructure and redefine the WCA can have no other effect than to drive away older members and discourage new members who agree with the WCA's original philosophy.

One reply to the questionnaire strikes me as particularly relevant: "... I am aware that the WCA was organized by, and for, the *wilderness* canoeist; I am a *recreational* canoeist but I hope that the present and future members will be urged to respect and maintain the wilderness characteristics of the organization." (Emphasis the writer's.) This is an extremely perceptive observation and a role model worth following for members who do not see themselves as *wilderness* canoeists and would increase the peripheral activities of the club at the expense of wilderness canoeing.

I have been told that many members have left the WCA because they did not get the training or social fulfillment they desired. There is no great tragedy in this for there are many canoeing organizations whose sole purpose is to fulfill those needs where these people will find a warm reception. If there is a tragedy, it will occur when "wilderness" becomes nothing more than a part of our name and the WCA nothing more than another outings club, albeit with a fancy newsletter.

NORTHERN ONTARIO SYMPOSIUM

This meeting, again organized by George Luste and sponsored by the WCA, was held on 27 and 28 January at Toronto's York University with about 550 people in attendance. The following presentations were made:

- Old and new canoe routes
- Wendell Beckwith's wilderness
- Recollections of Bill Mason
- Pipestone River (movie)
- Fort Severn Express (movie)
- Albany River solo
- Ogoki-Albany overview
- Northern Ontario experiences
- Canoeing with your parents
- Wilderness contradictions & ironies
- Grey Owl's wilderness
- Travel routes of NE Ontario
- Our wilderness...a native perspective
- Historical canoe routes to the Bay
- Wakewayowkastic River
- James Bay winter trek
- Temagami, land of Deep Water people
- Lake Superior wilderness
- Poetry of canoeing

Tom Terry
Moon Joyce
Paul Mason
Brian Gnauck
Jean Marc & Louis Lacasse
Bob Davis
Nancy Scott
Jonathan Berger
Tija Luste
Hugh Stewart
Philip Chester
Craig Macdonald
Fred Wheatley
Bruce Hodgins
George Drought
Fred Loosemore
Hap Wilson
Mike O'Connor
Janet Grand and Ron Reid

Time and enthusiasm willing, we hope to keep this annual WCA event going in the future. Next year, the geographical focus will be on Labrador. If you have suggestions for speakers, please contact George Luste in Toronto at 416-534-9313.



Ogoki River below Eby Falls: sketch by Jonathan Berger



BOREALIS

The Magazine for Canadian Parks and Wilderness

Published quarterly by the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, 160 Bloor Street East, Suite 1150, Toronto, M4W 1B9.

Reviewed by: Sandy Harris

A membership in the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society includes a subscription to *Borealis*, a glossy, four-color magazine that grew out of the Society's *Park News*. To quote Ted Mosquin, president of the CPAWS, "... this magazine aspires to become a leading Canadian light in the global effort to seek better protection for the vanishing natural world." It was created because the "CPAWS needs an educational publication of this type in a popular format..."

In keeping with the Society's broad mandate to encourage public awareness for the protection, enjoyment, and conservation of Canada's wilderness areas, this premiere issue's cover story focuses on the boreal forest in a lavishly illustrated article, "Taiga, Earth's Evergreen Mantle." Two other articles identify specific issues in Canada's boreal forest: logging in the Madawaska, Ontario, area, and the expansion of Newfoundland's Bay du Nord Wilderness Reserve. Kayaking in South Moresby and the fate of the Porcupine caribou on the Yukon/Alaska border are also discussed.

The results are presented of a survey asking prominent environmentalists to catalogue their favorite conservation books. Aldo Leopold's *A Sand County Almanac* heads the list of fifty with an overwhelming majority. The essay "Wilderness" from this book is reprinted in this first issue of *Borealis*.

The back pages are filled with short articles and press releases on various issues from Point Pelee, Temagami, the Oldman River, and acid rain to the whale watch and the fate of the giant panda.

GREAT HEART

Authors: James West Davidson and John Rugge
Publisher: Viking Penguin Inc., 1988 (\$24.95)
Reviewed by: Herb Pohl

Great Heart is at once a story of high adventure and scholarly investigation. It centres on the expedition of Leonidas Hubbard Jr. in 1903 whose objective it was to travel from Northwest River in Labrador to Lake Michikamau and thence to the George River and Ungava Bay. Through misadventure and plain bad luck the party fell short of their goal. Forced back by lack of food and the lateness of the season, their retreat became a harrowing ordeal which ended in the death by starvation of Hubbard and the narrowest of escapes by Dillon Wallace and George Elson, his two travelling companions.

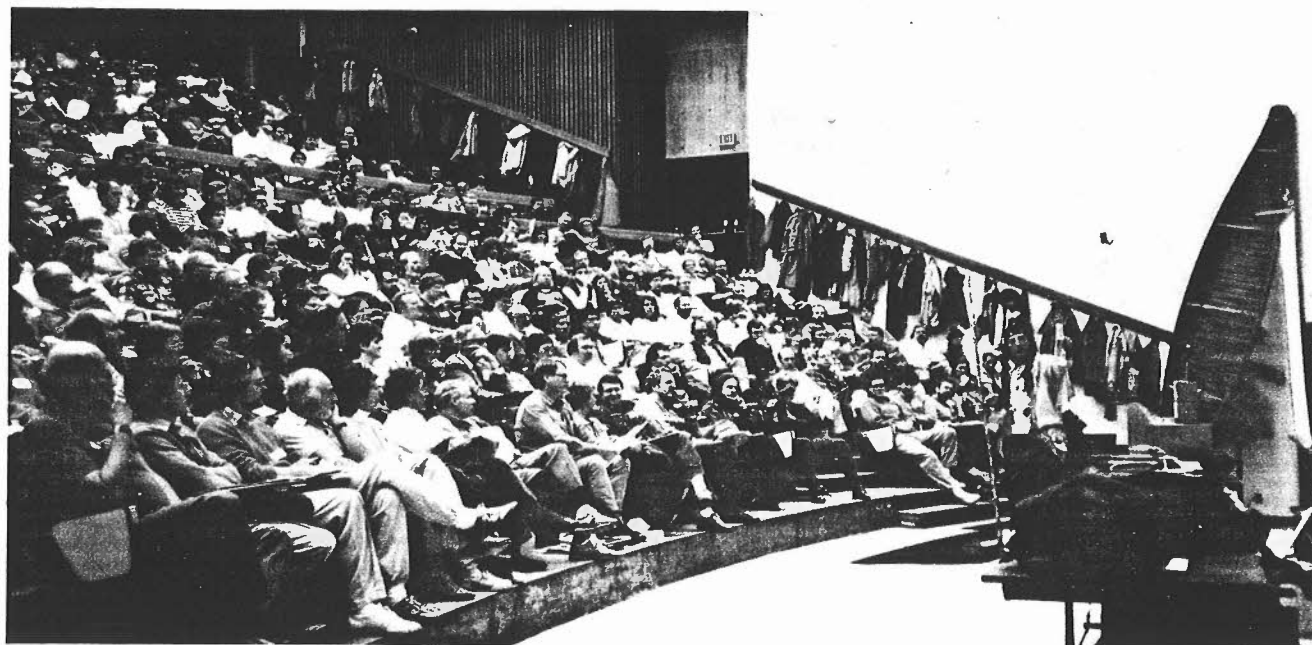
Upon his return to New York, Wallace wrote an account of the journey—*The Lure of The Labrador Wild*—which became an enduring bestseller. Within a year Wallace's efforts to return to Labrador and make another attempt to carry through Hubbard's plan were well on their way. In the meantime Hubbard's wife, Mina, was quietly making plans of her own. She felt her husband's judgement and leadership qualities were impugned by Wallace's portrayal. To vindicate his reputation she was determined to finish what he had started.

By coincidence both Dillon Wallace's and Mina Hubbard's party booked passage on the same ship to take them from Newfoundland to Labrador, and the race to Michikamau and Ungava Bay was on. Their respective journeys are described in *The Long Labrador Trail* and *A Woman's Way Through Unknown Labrador*.

And this is where the plot begins to thicken. In neither of the above accounts is there any mention of the other party's existence. Perhaps even more intriguing, included in Mina's book is her husband's diary and a narrative by George Elson of the 1903 expedition, and these accounts seem to be at variance with Wallace's story.

Enter Davidson and Rugge. In *Great Heart* the authors present the picture which emerged from years of painstaking detective work. By tracking down all surviving diaries and old accounts in the media, the writers have managed to put together an authoritative story which reconciles or explains differences in the various accounts and adds detail. And, they haven't just spent time in the library, but have gone out and paddled and portaged over some of the terrain. Best of all, the authors of *The Complete Wilderness Paddler* bring from their own wilderness travels the empathy which colors their account of the hard work, the doubt and uncertainty, as well as the joy and exultation which attend travel through unknown country.

No one with the feeblest desire to travel in Canada's hinterland, or interest in the history of exploration of the North, should miss reading this very readable book.



THE TERRIBLE TYRELL

Robert McCoubrie

Labor Day weekend, 1978. I had had a fine trip down to York Factory, but en route home to Vermont my car's transmission had departed this life. Needing to be home immediately, I left the vehicle in Thunder Bay and boarded CPR. On the train I killed time by looking over an Ontario road map for a place to canoe to in '79.

I soon had it: Makoop Lake, southwest of Big Trout Lake in north-west Ontario. I liked its appearance and location. How to get there? It was obvious: down the Pipestone River, find a way to North Caribou Lake, portage to the headwaters of the Schade River and, some kilometres north of that, cut a portage across to the Nekikamog River and follow that to Makoop. That "portage" over to the Nekikamog would be the key link—and a long one. I wondered if it would be all swamp.

I couldn't wait for 1979 when five boys and I pointed bows down the Pipestone—my first time on that river. Some distance down we left the Pipestone and travelled up the Pasemino River, finding bits of old unused portages. The big question involved a route from the Pasemino to Opapimiskan Lake. Yes, there were very old, totally unused portages there, too, and we spent time recutting them both. From Opapimiskan we found very faint traces of an unused ancient route to North Caribou. (I learned later that there is another route occasionally used.) A day of recutting the miller and a lick and we were ready to portage over to North Caribou. We became impressed with its beauty—and its winds.

We found an old route into Schade Lake, and then paddled and cut our way downstream. There were no signs of anyone ever having been along there. (The reason was that there was a better access to the Schade from Eyapamikama than the way I had chosen.) We eventually "turned the corner" and headed north down the Schade—still with no signs of anyone's having used that route and so having to cut our own portages. On reaching Nikitowa I had to face the fact that our time was running out; it was a long way back. With a wistful look down the outlet of the lake, we turned around—fortunately. Our return journey held two three-day rains for us, and on 13 August the precip was in the white solid form. We had upriver wades that memorable day.

With another group in 1980 I tried again, but chose to come in from the north. Ten days out a decision was made not to pursue that course further. We finished with a good trip, including cutting a new route "out" from North Caribou, but no progress was made toward Makoop. I began plans for "Attempt 1981," still wondering about that jump across the Schade to the Nekikamog. It all hung on that. Was it possible?

In the winter of '80-'81 I read Alex Inglis' biography of J.B. Tyrrell. All very interesting, but my eyebrows really raised when I read a certain paragraph toward the end. In 1912 Tyrrell had been guided from Fort Severn to Sioux Lookout via Big Trout Lake and Cat Lake! I dove for the maps. Doubtless he had passed through Round Lake. Now how did he get there? Two possible ways: the longer way would have been west from Big Trout to Severn Lake and up the Severn River while the more direct route would have been up the Mishwamakan River, through Makoop Lake, up to the Nekikamog, ACROSS THAT KEY PORTAGE, and up the Schade to Round Lake. That *had* to be it. I phoned the author. How to get more information on Tyrrell's 1912 trip? The answer: Tyrrell's field notebooks were in the Fisher Rare Book Library in Toronto. I immediately concocted a family visit to Toronto, and while my wife and daughter busied themselves in some historic building, I sat in the library excitedly reading Tyrrell's notebooks—complete with squashed black fly carcasses highlighted in circles of someone's dried blood. Yes! Not only was my guess right about that "key" portage and the route in general, but Tyrrell had described all the portages as to length, and usually as to location and condition. What a find! (As a bonus I learned why I had had to cut original portages on the upper reaches of the Schade: from Nikotowa south, the Native route to Round Lake didn't go "my" way.) (Another bonus was Tyrrell's spelling of the Native words for many of the lakes and streams. Fascinating!)



By the end of the 1980 trip the route to Nikitowa was all found and "clear", and my 1981 group moved along well. The day we left Nikitowa and headed north down the Schade in "new country" I felt great excitement. I could locate spots along the way visited by Tyrrell thanks to his geological comments, but I was most excited because we approached the crucial link in the route: *that* key portage. As we approached the portage area, a cold front approached us, and by the time we were at the spot where I figured the portage must begin (where the route to the Nekikamog would be the shortest possible) a cold wind-whipped, drenching rain began.

The banks of the river were muck with solid alders behind—and then the thick forest of evergreens. No sign of a portage. I squished ashore and pushed through the soaked bushes. Inland, back and forth, inland, and back and forth. Nothing but thick vegetation, drench, and cold. I was miserable, hands pulled up into the sleeves of my rain parka and shivering, but the boys out on the river were in worse shape. The search would have to be called off until the next day. As I turned to wade back through the brush the corner of my eye caught something unnatural against the base of a large tree. I *had* to investigate. The remains of an old Indian toboggan! That had to be it! The portage . . . yes . . . there was a faint trace. I followed it a ways. Yes, it headed for the Nekikamog and was *not* an animal trail. Found! It was found! We retreated upriver some distance, made a hasty camp, and I slept with a smile on my face that night.

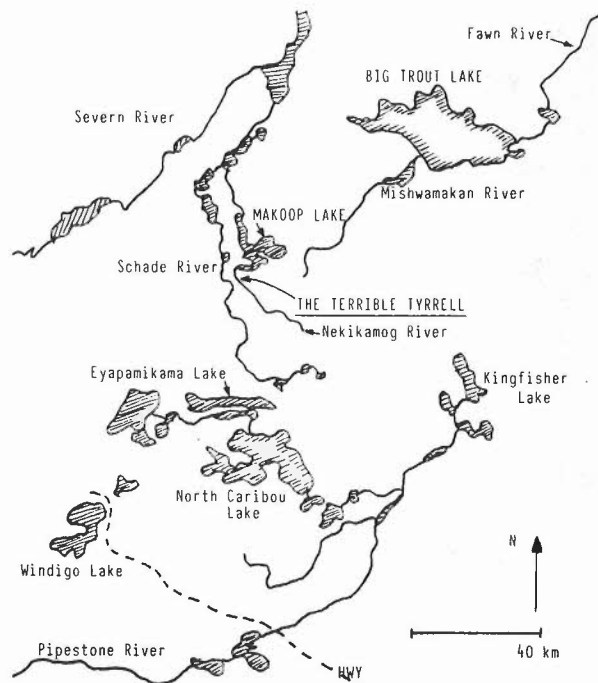
The weather improved the next day, and we packed up and paddled back to what I had found—such as it was to be. It hadn't been used for many years. We sniffed out the faint trail and began cutting our way along. We soon hit a burn. The whole remainder of the portage was burned, and the burn must have occurred the previous year. Numerous trees were down and the old trail was impossible to find and there was 1,600 m yet to go. Stopping to collect strength, my eyes gazed out over the devastation, my mind numbed by the thought of what lay ahead of us. Then I saw one and, further on, another . . . *fresh* blazes! No sign of anyone, but someone who must have known the old way had recently blazed and reblazed on the burnt trees. (But who? And why? I have never since seen sign of anyone on that portage or within miles of it.) With the way found, all we had to do was cut and cut and cut and then carry. Tyrrell had described the portage as wet. That was understatement for one spot where Mike became immersed to his hips in the swamp with canoe high and dry on his head.

By 6 p.m. I found myself with loads over, gazing on the Nekikamog (5–15 cm of water over muskeg), and realizing that we had not eaten since breakfast. I dragged out to "midriver," got water, returned, and made a quick meal. It was ready as the boys arrived with final loads. They all but fell onto a soggy log where they sat dazedly, clothing and faces smeared with soot, soaked to the hips with water and above that with sweat, black-fly-drawn blood oozing from multiple bites. Two of them managed a very weak smile as I clicked a never-to-be-forgotten picture. We had done it! The meal was sort of poured down our throats, and then, with fruit drink made with muskeg-tasting water, we named and toasted our portage: "The Terrible Tyrrell."

As daylight began to fade we tiredly and laboriously paddled very slowly over the muskeg and down the swampy-shored river. Gawd, how we needed a campsite. In three kilometres the nature of the river banks changed abruptly, and at the first tiny rip we found a cozy camping spot complete with deep water for swimming. Balm! The next day we proceeded down-river and triumphantly entered Makoop Lake.

I think there is more of interest to the story of THE TERRIBLE TYRRELL. On our way back to the Pickle Lake road we again used my new route out south of North Caribou. The last two portages were appropriately named: "The Terrible Tyrrell's Teacher" and "The Terrible Tyrrell's Creator." That sort of thing was catching. In 1982 we journeyed through Makoop and beyond to Big





Trout, using Tyrrell's notes and naming two beastly portages: "The T.T.'s Tutor" and "The T.T.'s Brother." Again, a picture of the boys as they completed their third trip across the T.T. showed the type of facial expressions rarely captured on film. And then more: in 1983 we journeyed west from Big Trout over to Severn Lake—an old and unused Native Route. The six portages just had to be named: "The T.T.'s Dog, Sister, Beast, Cat, Witch, and Father." The Witch was the third most wretched portage I've ever done. No wonder the Natives fly.

The Terrible Tyrrell had us again in 1986 when we once more journeyed to Big Trout. Some friends of mine had travelled it in '83, but no one had been over since then—at least, not without a helicopter. In '86 the route was again virtually unfindable with much, much worse thick, crisscrossed burn blowdown piled high over our heads. The old blazes were down or invisible from weathering. One of my boys was laid up with an ax wound, one boy was always at the campsite to keep him company, and that left one boy and myself to find and cut the T.T. This we did in two never-to-be-forgotten days. I was age 57, but when we finished felt more like 97. So what? The T.T. was open again, and we portaged through.



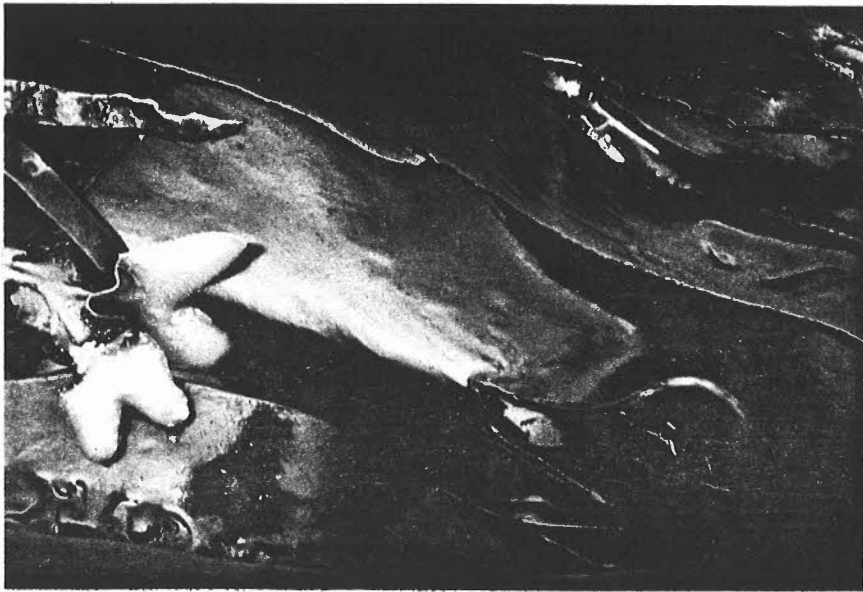
In 1987 as Paul and I were travelling up the Schade River we came upon the Schade end of the T.T. Paul had been with me in '86, and he knew that this was my last Ontario trip and my last time at a portage that had great meaning to me. We landed and walked over as far as Mike's swamphole—my head full of powerful memories. The spot was ugly—a piece of swamp amidst the burn . . . but it was spiritual for me. I had carried over a little water, and we mixed it with apple crystals. With our last cookie in one hand and cup in the other we toasted: the men of the bush of yesteryear, the voyageurs, David Thompson, J.B. Tyrrell, Mike, and other boys who had come this way, the remaining American boys who dared to do similar things; we toasted campsites, lakes, and the various T.T.'s . . . especially the "Teacher" and "Creator" that were yet ahead of us. We toasted the one we were on . . . the original . . . and that piece of toboggan. It was late; our cups were empty. It was time for our farewell to the portage that had been a character-builder for us and others, that had been the gateway to my goal of Makoop and Big Trout . . . the portage remembered whenever I look up at that old piece of Indian toboggan hanging above my desk . . . THE TERRIBLE TYRRELL.

PIPESTONE RIVER

Last year the four of us made a ten-day canoe trip down the Pipestone River in northwest Ontario, from the bridge where the highway crosses the river to Kingfisher Lake Indian Reserve. Weather, wind, and river were on our side. No bugs. Fishing was great; if you like fishing, the Pipestone is hard to beat. This river offers a nice blend of lake and river paddling, some exciting whitewater, and several beautiful waterfalls. Campsites range from passable to excellent. Water levels were low, giving us several campsites which normally would have been under water. We didn't see another person until we got near Kingfisher Lake, our pre-arranged take-out point. On the whole, the Pipestone turned out to be an excellent choice for a wilderness trip.

Larry Flesch



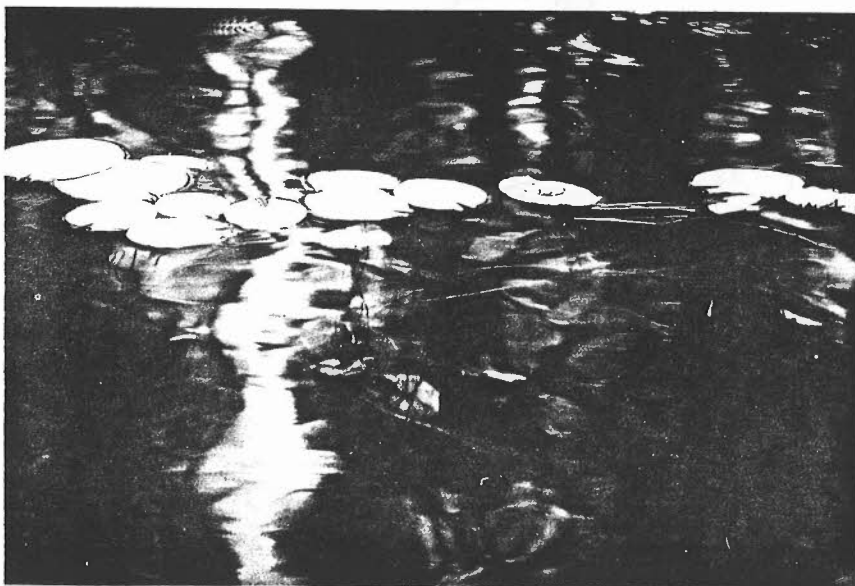


no title—Chris Motherwell
(First Prize, Flora)

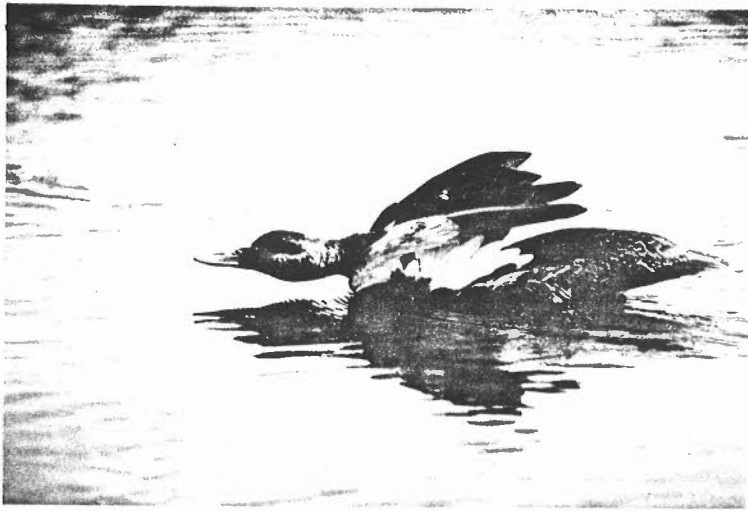
wca photo contest



DAWN AT BARREN RAPIDS—Dave Buckley
(Second Prize, Wilderness and Man)



FLOATING—Karyn Mikoliew
(Second Prize, Flora)



FEMALE MALLARD—Karyn Mikoliew
(Second Prize, Fauna)

A total of 139 photographs (122 slides and 17 prints) were entered in the 1989 competition by 15 members. The judges were Roger Harris, Toni Harting, and Sandy Richardson; the organization was in the hands of Dee Simpson.

THE WINNERS ARE:

flora

- | | |
|---------------|------------------|
| 1. -no title- | Chris Motherwell |
| 2. Floating | Karyn Mikoliew |
| HM -no title- | Chris Motherwell |
| HM Periwinkle | Marcia Farquhar |

fauna

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| 1. -no title- | Chris Motherwell |
| 2. Female mallard | Karyn Mikoliew |
| HM Early cardinal | Dale Miner |
| HM -no title- | Chris Motherwell |
| HM Mountain sheep | Marcia Farquhar |

wilderness

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Fogbound below Grande Chute | Dale Miner |
| 2. Yosemite sunset | Marcia Farquhar |
| HM Solitude | Isabel Boardman |
| HM Morning mist | Isabel Boardman |
| HM Island fog | Karyn Mikoliew |
| HM Morning woodlight | Dave Buckley |

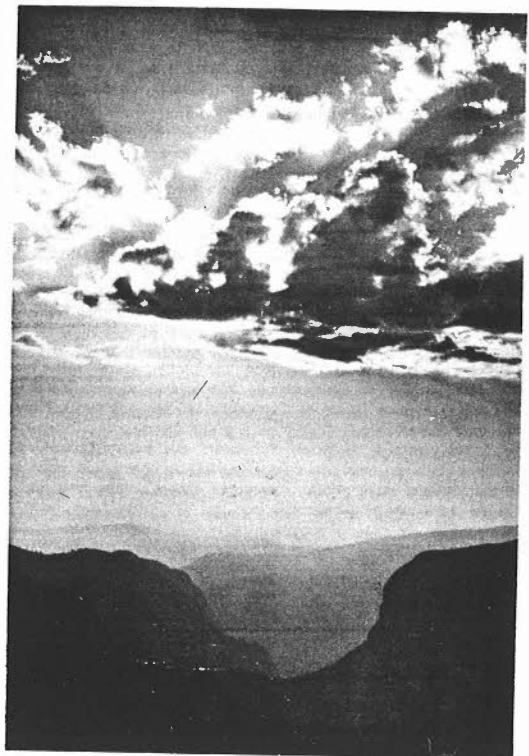
wilderness and man

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| 1. Enjoyment | Glenn Spence |
| 2. Dawn at Barren Rapids | Dave Buckley |
| HM Summer camp | Dave Buckley |
| HM Shifting shadows | Herb Pohl |

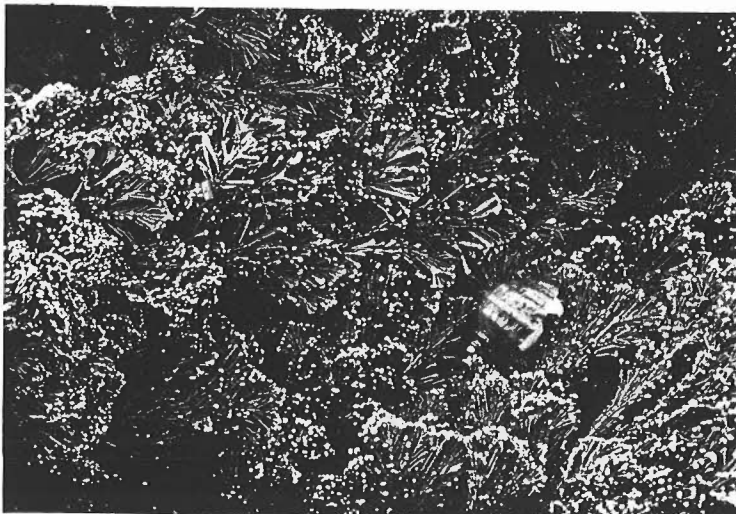
The prizes (enlargements of the winning photographs for numbers one and two, and Certificates of Merit for all placed entries) were presented at the WCA Annual General Meeting weekend in February. The eight photographs selected as one and two are published in black and white on these pages and also on page 1 of this issue of *Nastawgan*; a selection from the Honorable Mentions and the remaining entries are/will be presented in this and future issues.



FOGBOUND BELOW GRANDE CHUTE—Dale Miner
(First Prize, Wilderness)



YOSEMITE SUNSET—Marcia Farquhar
(Second Prize, Wilderness)



-no title—Chris Motherwell.
(First Prize, Fauna)

ENJOYMENT—Glenn Spence
(First Prize, Wilderness and Man) See page 1

ICE-OUT!

WELL, ALMOST OUT...

David A. Buckley

"Rites of Spring" in Canada are always enthusiastic, marking as they do the passing of another long, northern winter. The ice-out fishing trip is one such ritual and its purest form is paddle powered. Impatient canoeists push back the very edge of receding ice, revelling in the year's first opportunity to paddle, to camp, and to catch the "odd fish."

As the ice melts, fish become more active, particularly where the water of incoming streams or rivers is a few degrees warmer than adjacent lake water. This warming attracts forage fish and the trout feed aggressively on these concentrations of small fish.

Ice-out seems to light the same fire under the same people every year. Maybe there are some who try an early spring trip just once, and then summarily discard the practice for later, warmer settings. But many of the same hard-case angler/canoecists wish aside the ice year after year, to catch that first speckle or lake trout. These trips are indeed the stuff of personal tradition.

My wife, Beth, and I have encountered an amazing variety of weather conditions over several years of ice-out tripping. For example, the spring of 1987 came early and we enjoyed a full regimen of whitewater workouts around our western New York home before turning northward for the opening of Algonquin Provincial Park's trout season. We were confident that the ice would be gone and it was. Winter, however, wasn't quite finished and a 10-cm snowfall surprised us midway through the trip...a good test of camping technique and equipment. We managed to stay warm and reasonably dry. And the fishing was the way it's supposed to be.

The next year, 1988, was quite different. Although an early thaw got us on moving water around home about the same time, spring stalled and dragged its feet through a very chilly April.

We contacted Algonquin Park as trout season approached and were told that some lakes were open and others were breaking up. However, a few larger lakes were still socked-in solid with ice. No matter, we were heading north.

I placed a call to the Opeongo Store to check ice conditions on Opeongo Lake and to set up a water taxi to the first portage. This would save a long paddle on this big, often windy body of ice water.

"Is the ice out on Opeongo?" I queried.

A vaguely familiar voice answered, "The lake's open here, but the North and East Arms are still ice-covered. When are you planning to start out?"

"The day before trout season," I answered.

"Is this Dave Buckley from the States? This is Jim Northcott."

"Jim! Nice talking to you again. I'm surprised you recognized my voice," I said incredulously.

"Who could forget 'the Green's' and their Scotty dog?" Jim replied, referring to our green boat, green gear, and canine navigator.

So with this warm welcome and Jim's hopeful guess that one more windy day would complete the breakup, we began to pack with a will.

Opeongo was wind-tossed and choppy as usual. The taxi was only able to take us as far as the narrows at the base of the North Arm. A field of broken ice was being stuffed into the narrows by a northeast wind. It was cold and rainy, almost sleet. Jim offered to return us to the put-in base. We declined. The ice was moving and open water was visible beyond the pack, out in the North Arm. We figured we'd paddle the rest of the way to the portage as soon as the ice passed.

We put ashore and the taxi buzzed off, leaving us in cold silence. The ice slid past slowly with a squishy tinkle.

A narrow lead of water opened. We quickly left our shoreline vantage point and paddled to an island further into the white expanse. The lead closed behind us as we reached the island. The wind freshened and the pack continued to grind on by, slowly piling up a large, white mound of shaved ice at the windward edge of our refuge. Just a few hundred metres now to open water.

The lead back to the shore opened up again and four young men joined us at the island. One pair, paddling a Grumman Standard, continued on past us into the ice pack. Hacking through the ice with their paddles, they advanced to the tune of ice thumping their aluminum drum.

Progress was illusory, since the pack was moving them back almost as fast as they were crunching ahead. But gradually, the distance to open water was reeled in. Then the noisy clunking ceased as their hull slid into open water. Now they had to deal with wind-driven chop.

The other pair left the island and started out across the last edge of the pack. We followed them closely and soon, ourselves, bolted into open water. We headed for the portage, staying just a couple of canoe lengths from the shoreline. An upset in ice water can be a killer.



Rainfly on Crow River camp

Our 18-1/2-foot Kevlar "Madsawnah" quickly overhauled the two canoes ahead of us and we were soon at the portage. It looked as though we were the first to tread the Proulx Lake portage since it was locked by the ice the previous fall.

The waves at the next put-in were higher, prompting us to take particular caution in launching and to follow even closer along the shoreline. The wind and waves made for harrowing progress and we were glad to gain the relative calm of the Crow River outlet several kilometres ahead.

We crossed Little Crow Lake, went through a narrows and into a windy bay of Big Crow Lake. Although no ice was in sight, the wave crests were crowding the limit. We put our heads down against wind-driven rain and hammered our way out onto the rolling, open water. On gaining the far shore, we turned in for a hot lunch to restore spent strength and spirits.

Then we headed down the Crow River for a favorite campsite. We finished the last few kilometres, reaching the campsite on a high sandbank, just as the rain stopped and the wind began to drop. Up went our tent and rainily and we were soon devouring home-dried hamburger stew with dumplings. No fish—the season wouldn't open till tomorrow.

The morning was bright, clear...and cold. As we loaded the canoe, two of the young men we'd seen on Opeongo appeared from up river. They had crossed Big Crow Lake after us and camped on the lee shore, near our lunch site. As we recalled the rolling ice water on Crow Lake, they modestly related an amazing tale.

A father and son in a small aluminum motorboat had started across Big Crow early in the evening. The motorboat foundered in the chop not far from Shore. The occupants then waded back to shore, emptied out the water, and set out again. Their second attempt was worse. The boat overturned and they were dumped into the icy water with all their gear. To the profound good fortune of the two in the water, the young men on shore had been watching. They put in immediately and rescued the father and son before they could drift further out into the frigid expanse of the lake. The pair's boat and gear were saved and, I'm certain, their lives as well. More good fortune...a ripping good campfire was crackling at the young men's camp.

We paddled along with these two heroes down the Crow toward Lake Lavielle, running a couple of easy rapids and portaging around another. We came to the head of what appeared to be a Class I rapid tumbling straight away for 200 metres. We could barely see a fallen tree down in the water just at the end of the run. We back-paddled right into the head of the rapid for a better look. Hovering at the edge of the drop, we thought we could see an opening around the tree, but couldn't be sure. It was tempting. Nonetheless, we ferried back up to the portage and shouldered the packs and boat. Reloading at the end of the portage, we could plainly see that the tree completely blocked the river. Really a very nice run, but just no way to avoid the tree. No way indeed, we were to learn later.



The Crow in spring

Further downriver, we were confident that the last rapid above Crow Bay would be runnable at this high water level. There was however, a bend near the end that wasn't quite visible from the top. We started down as slowly as possible, back-paddling and side-slipping to avoid the clutches of sharp rocks. Around the bend, I spotted a small clear channel to the right, spilling around a fair-sized boulder. Beth, in the bow, spotted an equally small chute at the left side of the same boulder. Momentary passionate discussion! Then, finally to the left! We managed to get more than half the boat through the chute before leaving an embarrassing stripe of green gelcoat on the granite.

Crow Bay looked promising as usual. We caught a couple of speckled trout along a favorite shoreline, just to be sure they were biting. These were released, since we had already taken two "specs" for lunch at a pool in the river. We passed by the two rescuers, who had chosen a campsite in Crow Bay. Some distance on, the river pinched down again and we could see a small opening, leading out onto Lake Lavielle.

Something wasn't right. Beyond the opening, it looked like wind and waves. But there was no wind. And the "waves" weren't moving.

Ice!

We got out right at the Crow's narrow outflow and climbed over a rocky peninsula that squeezed the river as it entered the lake. Lavielle stretched away silent, covered with ice as far as we could see.

We turned back into the widening bay and chose a protected campsite. We'd have to wait till the ice moved or retrace our steps and strokes back up the Crow. In the meantime, fishing was fine. After dining on our two river-caught specs at lunch, we caught a couple more just off the campsite for dinner.

That evening we heard the faint put-put-put of a small outboard motor somewhere out on Lavielle across the ice field. The sound would stop for a time and then resume without detectable change in direction. Later, the motor sound was replaced by strange muffled crunchings and crackings that could only be marking someone's determined effort to reach the open water of the Crow outlet where we were camped. Time passed and the crunching and grinding gradually grew more distinct. Very close to full darkness, a white canoe forced its way through the ice into the narrows and pulled up at a campsite just inside. The two paddlers exulted on reaching their goal. To our surprise, they did not immediately turn to settling camp for the night. Instead, both began pitching lures into the dark water off the campsite, certain that they were alone at their spring-fishing mecca. We were to



Lavieille frozen over

learn later that crossing the ice field had been very long and rigorous.

We set out early the next morning, figuring we could gradually work our way through the ice as the two others had. Our effort was short-lived. The northeast wind was again pushing the pack solidly across the opening, effectively blocking our way. It was also likely that we might become trapped in the broken mass. Many of the flows were still several inches thick and we didn't want to tempt disaster. This was no place to swim. So, we fished.

Our efforts to leave had roused the pair of ice bashers and they left breakfast to talk with us from the shoreline as we fished nearby.

"You from the States?" one man called out.

"Yup," I replied.

"You a bear hunter?" asked the same voice.

"Why yes, we used to hunt bears," I answered, suddenly getting a glimmer of where this line of questions was leading.

"I've met you folks here before—two, three years back. I know I recognize that green canoe and your Scotty dog," the man said.

"Is your name Mike?" I asked. "Were you here with a fellow named Alf?"

The man on shore almost pranced with excitement as he answered, "That's me!"

We paddled over to share our experiences over the intervening years. After catching up, we told them of our plans to go on down the Crow and then on a long series of rivers and lakes beyond. We asked them if they thought we could get through the ice to the Crow outlet on the other side of Lavieille.

Mike and his partner said there was no way we could cross to the open water on the other side of the lake. They had been camped with other fishermen at the south end of Lavieille and had jumped in to follow a narrow lead through the ice the previous afternoon. Others tried to follow, but were turned back when the lead closed. Mike and his friend were forced to continue on, breaking the ice ahead of them with a camp axe and their paddles. Occasionally, a short opening would permit use of their tiny outboard. Their paddles were literally shredded by this abuse.

Now, looking from the vantage of their elevated campsite, there was no open water as far as we could see. So we returned to our campsite of the previous night and settled in for another day. The fishing was still good and more speckles were on the menu that afternoon and evening.

We took the opportunity to smoke-cook one especially nice trout for dinner. We used green speckled alder for the smoke. The fish was split and set in the smoke over a slow fire. It was good enough to merit repeating the recipe whenever we have a half day or so to do the job.

Late in the afternoon, a small brown canoe slid into sight from upriver. The paddlers pulled right over to our campsite.

"How long do you plan to stay?" the senior paddler asked without preamble.

I replied, "We're pulling out tomorrow morning to cross Lavieille if the ice moves out. Otherwise, we'll go back up the Crow. So the campsite's yours, tomorrow."

The man in the stern said he'd camped on this site for many years and that he would've been here earlier, but for a tree blocking the bottom of a rapid up on the Crow.

So...they had run the one that had tempted us. The result was close to tragedy. They hit the tree. The canoe dumped upstream and was swept deep under the tree. They were lucky not to have been pinned themselves. It took them more than an hour, standing in rushing ice water, to cut away the tree and free the boat; then more hours to retrieve lost gear and to repair the seriously damaged canoe. . .all of this while tending a large fire that was their only means of dealing with the numbing ice water.

This was a small canoe, with three paddlers and more than the usual amount of gear. Freeboard, even on a lake, was much too close for comfort or safety. They were all lucky to have made it this far.



Lavieille refrozen with large-crystal, clear ice

We were away early the next morning. The wind had dropped overnight and the pack ice was now scattered in the north end of Lavieille. To the south, it was still packed solid. The temperature had dropped below freezing under clear skies and new, large crystal-ice had formed across most of the openings. Although we knew it would melt later as the sun rose, we didn't want to risk the wind's return which could rejam the area with ice or make crossing the large lake more dangerous.

So we set out. Nudging into the edge of the new ice, Beth said, "Stop! We must have a picture of this!"

The ice had formed into huge, ostrich-feather crystals, like an over-sized frost painting on a windowpane. We had only seen ice like this once before, several years ago in this same lake. We'd been kicking ourselves ever since for not taking photos. That year there had been no pack ice left. But, a still, frigid night had frozen the whole of Lake Lavieille into giant, clear crystals of new ice.

Waving so long to Mike and his partner, we worked our way through about 1.6 km of new and old ice, then jogged back and forth among irregular open leads until finally we were able to cross the last half of the lake on smooth water.

We rejoined the Crow River at Lavieille outlet before noon and spent the afternoon paddling and portaging the nine carries around rapids on the lower Crow. We were able to run a couple, but the high river level made many of these rapids dangerous. We were reminded of that old Canadian proverb, "No one ever drowned on a portage."

We ended the day at Lavaque Lake, one of our favorite spots for speckled trout. The weather had been clear for a couple of days now and the building high pressure had turned off the fish. So dinner in Trout City was without its intended entree. Try as we might the trout sat sullenly on the bottom.

The next day, because we had been delayed so long by the ice, we decided to discontinue our planned route. Instead, we retraced our path back up the Crow to Lavieille and spent the afternoon fishing for lake trout. Only a few areas of ice now remained in the lake and we encountered more fishermen gaining access from the previously ice-bound south end.

We chose a campsite at the far north end of the lake, away from the beaten path of better-known fishing grounds and again were totally enveloped in wonderful solitude. The high pressure was still with us. We were fishless.

Eureka! Just as Beth called that dinner was ready, a lake trout slammed the Panther Martin I'd been tossing off the point of the campsite. A nice two-kilogram "grey" signalled a welcome change in our evening menu. Generous portions of fresh lake trout relegated most of Beth's casserole to storage for tomorrow's lunch.

The next morning we headed south, along the ragged granite shoreline toward the portage into Dickson Lake. Then we crossed Dickson and began the long portage back over to Opeongo. The seven-kilometre walk, broken by lunch and a couple of short paddles, brought us to the East Arm of Opeongo. We paddled out to the narrows and camped for the night.

As we left our camp on Lavieille that morning, the last vestiges of ice had been bobbing nearby. This evening, on Opeongo, we were surprised to hear the rising hum of mosquitoes.

Winter was over. The ice was out. The bugs were back!



Rest stop on the long Dickson-Opeongo portage

CONSIDERING AN ICE-OUT TRIP?

Weather during an early season canoe trip on the Canadian shield can be delightful. More often though, there will be at least a few days that will sorely try your equipment and technique. Getting wet in April can mean staying wet till next month. So select your equipment carefully and plan set-up and de-camping procedures to keep the critical items dry at all times. First up and last to come down should be your rainfly.

Campsites with a view may be great in a summer breeze, but the best early season camps are selected with an eye to lots of wind-breaking bush and trees. Bugs, happily, don't quite have their act together...yet.

Shield-country trout lakes are relatively modest fish producers. Because lake trout and speckles are fairly easy to catch in the early spring, overfishing can really cut into the year's fish crop. Responsible anglers take only what they need for meals. Either let the others go or better yet, leave 'em alone till you're ready for another fish dinner.

Above all, resist the temptation to show the folks at home how many you caught by lugging your limit back over the portages. We've seen insulated chests packed with accumulated limits of slow-growth, wild trout painfully dragged overland from lake to lake. A really fresh trout from frigid water is the very essence of fine campfire fare. The same poor, faded bugger resurrected from months in the freezer is a sad shadow of its fresh counterpart.

Finally, before you undertake an ice-out trip, test yourself and your gear close to home. Then take every precaution to stay out of the water.

See you there....

LIFE'S UPS AND DOWNS

We humans have a long list of things to be thankful for but many of them we take for granted. One good example of this—in the developed world at least—is the extraordinary stability of our populations. Most of us just fail to realize how truly exceptional this steadiness really is.

Most wildlife species, by contrast, have violent and often unpredictable fluctuations from one year or season to the next. In human terms, it might be as if half the people in your home town were going to die this winter, only to be replaced by a number of babies three times as great next summer, followed by another big die-off soon thereafter. Such a scenario, while shocking to us, is quite commonplace among wildlife, and trying to explain the fluctuations is a central preoccupation of wildlife biologists.

Here in Algonquin Park we have had many studies of wildlife populations but one of the most interesting is an ongoing investigation, now (1984, ed.) in its 32nd year, being conducted by Dr. Bruce Falls of the University of Toronto, and his wife Ann. The subject of the more than three decades of attention is none other than Algonquin's most important species of wildlife—the Deer Mouse.

We shouldn't have to justify our statement about the importance of Deer Mice but people have an unfortunate tendency to think that big animals are the important ones and that small creatures are somehow insignificant. Please remember that there are literally millions of mice in Algonquin Park, far outnumbering all the big animals put together and, of our seven native species, the Deer Mouse is the most common—especially in the hardwood forests of Sugar Maple that dominate the Park's west side. Every night the huge, unseen army of Deer Mice endlessly harvests seeds and berries, clips buds and tender shoots, devours insects and other invertebrates, burrows in the leaf litter and fertilizes it with droppings. These activities, though small in themselves, add up to a considerable ecological impact.

But that's not all. A host of bigger, supposedly more important animals, including owls, foxes, martens, weasels, and hawks, would quickly starve without mice. Mice, on the other hand, would fare quite nicely in life without the list of "free-loaders" we have just recited. Sorry, moose-lovers, the decision of the judges is final—Deer Mice are the most important animals in Algonquin!

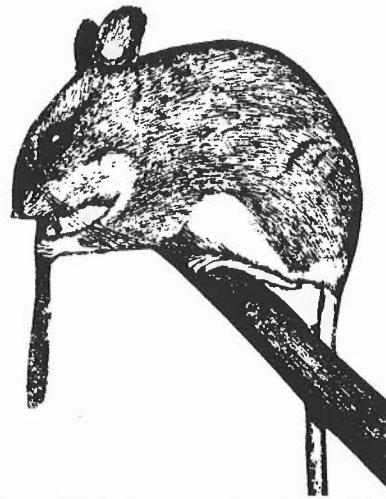
The basic technique of aforementioned study has been to trap Deer Mice on trap lines near the Wildlife Research Station and along Highway 60. Most of the mice are trapped alive, marked with a numbered ear tag, weighed, and then released.

The main finding to emerge from the work is that a year of high Deer Mouse numbers is usually followed by a year of low numbers—and vice versa. The differences are far from trifling; the numbers in good years may be fully four times as high as in the intervening low years. The obvious question, of course, is why? Could disease or some sort of social stress be afflicting the Deer Mice when they are crowded? Could predator numbers be building up when mice are plentiful and then causing the annihilation of their prey?

It is one thing to think of the possibilities but quite another to find evidence after the fact either for or against them. This is especially true in a case like this when no one knew what the pattern was (or even if there was one) until the Falls finally made the time to sit down and start analyzing their data in 1979. Fortunately, they had also recorded the weights and breeding condition of their mice. It may not be immediately obvious why this sort of information would shed light on Deer Mouse fluctuations but it turned out to be very useful indeed.

It was quite striking, for example, that in peak mouse years most females stopped breeding towards the end of July whereas, in low years, they kept raising litters on into September. It was also apparent that the mice were heavier and in much better condition in low years than in peak years.

These observations suggested corresponding differences in the food supply and, indeed, one major food item in Deer Mouse habitat is well known for its



year-to-year variations. This is the sugar maple seed crop which ripens in August and September. There can be literally tons of seed one year and almost none the next. The Falls have good reason to suspect that seed crops are the major control over mouse numbers. It is when seeds are plentiful that the mice continue to breed on into fall and are in excellent condition. Winter survival is understandably good and the next spring's population is high. Breeding gets off to a good start and soon mouse numbers have reached peak levels. By midsummer, however, the seeds from the previous year's bumper crop are all gone and, since maples rarely produce good crops two years in a row, the mice will be short of food. They will be forced to stop breeding by the end of July, they will begin to lose weight, and will reach fall in relatively poor condition. Winter survival is low and, when spring arrives, the mouse population has fallen back to a low level. The chances are fairly good, nevertheless, that in the following summer (two years after the original bumper crop) the sugar maples will again produce tons of seed and the cycle will start over again.

It sounds and probably is very reasonable but, as the Falls point out, that really isn't enough. We need to know much more about what foods Algonquin Deer Mice are actually eating and how the supplies vary from year to year and season to season.

Rest assured that the Falls are not about to quit now (not after 32 years of work!) and before long we should have an even clearer picture of the forces controlling the fortunes of at least this particular species of wildlife. This is important because, even if the fluctuations of Deer Mice are more dramatic and ecologically significant than for many animals, they certainly aren't unique. Indeed, wildlife numbers are almost always changing because of the complex influences of predators competition, weather, disease, and—most definitely—the food supply.

By comparison, we humans lead extraordinarily sheltered lives. Perhaps we should feel a little foolish, in fact, ever to talk about "life's ups and downs." The fact is we hardly know what the expression really means.

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

HYPOTHERMIA

Reginald Ross

Hypothermia is characterized by a lower-than-normal core body temperature. This physical condition can gradually and easily turn from being a minor inconvenience to a life-threatening situation. Often the symptoms are not noticed until the condition becomes serious. The following scenario was inspired by an accident which occurred in Killarney Provincial Park on a Thanksgiving weekend.

A group of ten boys, aged 10 to 14, were being led by two adults. As the group was to leave David Lake, they found that their cooking pots were left at the previous campsite. Two boys were sent back in one canoe to the campsite to retrieve the gear, about a three-hour assignment. The remainder of the group left David Lake and portaged to Silver Lake.

The two boys were dressed in blue denim jeans and jacket, did not have rain gear, head gear, dry clothes, other protective equipment, or a supply of food. The map they were using was a photocopy of a topographical map, not waterproofed. The day temperature was 10°C and night temperature 2°C. The weather was threatening in the morning, turning to rain around noon with high winds.

The boys picked up the cooking gear at the campsite as the wind and rain increased. On their return trip they became lost and beached their canoe. By this time the boys were drenched and started shivering. They began to argue and did not seek shelter but stood in the wind looking for help. Their shivering became uncontrollable, co-ordination decreased, shivering then stopped, and loss of vision occurred as they slipped into a coma.

They suffered from hypothermia, caused by the gradual cooling off of the core body temperature. Several serious errors were made that led to this situation.

First of all, the leader of the group should not have allowed the boys to travel back to the campsite on their own. The boys lacked experience in wilderness travelling, judgement in determining possible crises, and ability to correctly determine their route. The result of this action led to their being lost, and when the map became wet their last hope of finding the portage disappeared. This in turn led to the pair being exposed longer to the elements.

The second serious error occurred when proper clothing was not worn or taken. The coolish weather and threat of rain made denim a very poor choice of clothing. When clothing becomes wet the insulating value decreases to a fraction of the original value. The tighter the weave of the material, such as denim, the more the insulating value decreases. Wool is one of the best materials as it

contains innumerable small air pockets, therefore retaining 80% of the dry insulating value. No rain gear was taken which would have kept their clothes dry and would have provided protection from the wind. The combination of the rain and wind caused a severe decrease in the insulating value of the clothing. This led to a situation where the cooling of the core body was greater than the heat produced by their bodies.

The third serious error occurred by not providing equipment which could be used to make a shelter. Once the boys were in the life-threatening situation, they were unable to reduce the effects of the deteriorating weather.

The fourth error was not supplying the boys with food. As hypothermia begins to occur, the body begins to generate more heat through shivering. This depletes the body of energy reserves and food intake is required to support the increased necessary production of heat.

Mild hypothermia began to occur when their clothing became wet and the wind picked up. Their bodies were compensating for this situation through heat produced by paddling and shivering. When they stopped and beached their canoe, the body heat production decreased and the rate of body cooling increased. Blood circulation to the body extremities decreased, causing lower muscular ability, thus making exercise difficult. The cooling affected the brain, causing personalities to become apathetic and disagreeable. As hypothermia progressed, confusion and disorientation set in and erroneous decision-making occurred. The desire and ability to obtain protection from the cold was lost. At this stage the boys did not seek shelter and stood in the wind, increasing the seriousness of the situation, and then went into coma.

The saying "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" is no more true than in the case of hypothermia. What the boys should have done to avoid hypothermia is described in the following sequence of events. When they beached the canoe they started a fire and used the canoe as shelter against the wind. By reducing the impact of the wind and through the warmth of the fire they stopped the progression of hypothermia. Knowing they could not survive the night in this manner, they set out again and found a group of campers. Dry clothes, hot food, and a warming fire in a sheltered campsite were provided to reverse the effects of the mild hypothermia they were experiencing. The boys were provided sleeping shelter for the night and were reunited with their group the following day.

Recognizing hypothermia is difficult and a hypothermic condition often occurs without the victims being aware of what is happening. Readers are encouraged to further their knowledge in this area through courses such as ORCA's first aid course on hypothermia, or studying books such as "Hypothermia, Frost-bite, and other Cold Injuries" by Wilkerson, Bangs, Hayward.

COULONGE RIVER

Article: Graham McCallum
Photographs: Dave Robinson, Don Johnson

The poor old Coulonge. There it runs, just east of the Dumoine in Québec. Its rapids do not echo to the whoops and hollers of paddlers, its campsites spare not a crumb for the chipmunks. Why this neglect when you have to take a number on the Dumoine? The reason must be the bad press this sweetheart of a river has been getting. After all, who wants to paddle a logging river where you stand a chance of being swept under a log jam which stretches from bank to bank for eight kilometres?

Now for the good news. The use of the Coulonge as a highway for logs is a thing of the past. This activity ceased five years ago, according to the Superintendent at the E. B. Eddy mill in Fort Coulonge. He said, you will see some logs high up on the bank and still piled up at some cascades but these will not interfere with the use of the river. This was, in fact, the case. We were not particularly aware of the major logging use of the river. The job of sweeping has been done fairly well.

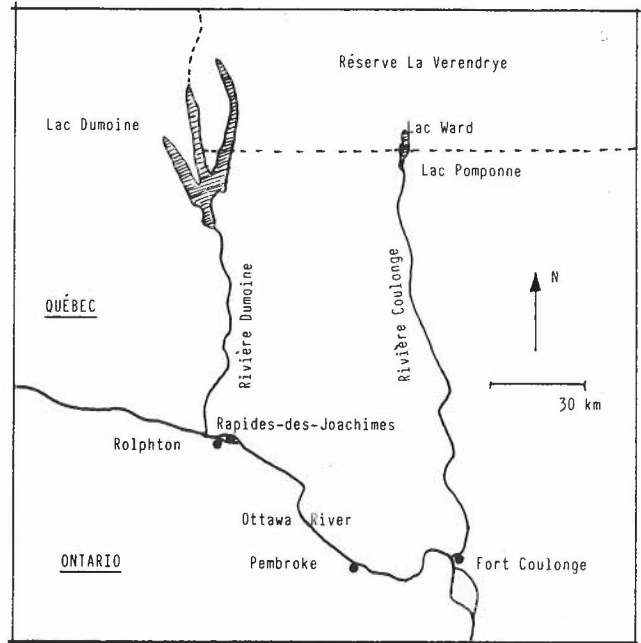


With or without the logs, we still had to line

The general opinion of our group, (Lee DeSoto, Rick Wilson, Dave Robinson, Jack Doherty, Jim Laxton, Kim Klodt, Don Johnson, and myself) was that this is a better river all around than the Dumoine. The maps from the Québec Canoe Association accurately grade the rapids for loaded, open canoes. Overall, it is a very safe, pool-and-drop river with the rocks nicely spaced laterally. A covered canoe would be an advantage in places but by no means a necessity. We had four Mad River Explorers which was a mistake. They take slop over the bow and nickel-and-dime you into a wet boat. The Québécois we saw on a weekend outing from a canoe club used Blue Holes with a flat bottom and a high bow and stern, with no covers. Definitely a smart choice.

The big bonus for us after paddling the freezing Mistassibi last summer was the warm water and the frequent jacuzzis. There was almost always a perfect jacuzzi at each lunch or camp. At the end of your trip be sure to have a tour of the Fort Coulonge logging chutes—they are spectacular. The hostess at the Visitor Centre was overjoyed to see us—she was nearly as lonely as the river.

Access: There is a road to Lake Pomponne if you want to try the Québec Backwoods Experience. We flew with Bradley Air from Des Joachims near Rolphton to Ward Lake just above Lake Pomponne for \$265 per canoe and contents. This is a 45-minute flight. Due to the rocky shore you will be put in your canoe on the lake for a short paddle to a campsite shown on the map. The campsites are not apparent from the air due to their infrequent use. Our pilot had taken no other paddlers in this summer.



A lunch-time soak

Liftoff: About two kilometres below the bridge on the right and above the Chutes at Fort Coulonge there is a golf course. This is marked with a sign off Highway 148. A car can be left here or at the local motel.

Length of Trip: From Lake Ward to Fort Coulonge is 170 km. We left home at 7:30 a.m. on 14 August 1988 and returned home at 6:00 a.m. the 22nd, with six and a half days on the river.

Maps: Write to the Fédération Québécoise du Canot-Camping Inc., 4545 av. Pierre-de-Coubertin, CP 1000 Succursale M, Montréal, Québec H1V 3R2.



A relaxing evening camp

CAMPING LICENSE: TWO RESPONSES

On page 18 of the previous issue of *Nastawgan*, a letter was printed in which Cliff Jacobson expressed his displeasure with the camping license fee that non-residents of Canada are required to pay for overnight stays on Crown land in certain portions of northern Ontario. We received the following responses to that letter, one by an American and the other by a Canadian citizen, both WCA members, expressing a different point of view.

Dear Editor:

I am responding to Cliff Jacobson's letter to the editor in the Winter 1988 edition of *Nastawgan*. Cliff requests a member of the Wilderness Canoe Association respond to his concern about Ontario's camping fee for non-resident users of Ontario's Bush Country. Even though I am an American member of the WCA, I think it is appropriate a different perspective be presented. First of all, Cliff must realize Americans are aliens in Canada, and consequently, we basically have no rights other than those which Canada conveys to us. Secondly, he suggests the fee is peanuts, but then complains about the fact that it is "God Awful". Obviously, the fee is not significant for a wilderness trip of any magnitude. A three week trip would cost an individual about \$62 in U.S. currency. If there was a bush pilot flying associated with the trip, the \$62 is insignificant. I think it is inconsistent on Cliff's part to argue that, given the fee, he will limit his canoeing to Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories. Obviously, Ontario has much to offer.

Moreover, I think it is important we put in perspective Cliff's position regarding "slob" fisherman and canoeists. I am not at all convinced most fisherman and canoeists carry garbage with them or bury their refuse. Furthermore, with the increasing popularity of tripping and general recreational fishing, it will be important for Ontario to provide increased resources for the citizens of this Province. Ontario has to be complimented in the fact they have set aside a number of wilderness waterways, like the Winisk, Kesagami, Nemegosenda, and Chapleau. If we were to reverse the situation and ask the question, Where can Canadians canoe or camp in the United States without paying a fee?, the answer would be very few places if any for the typical tourist.

In conclusion, I think the strongest argument against suggesting the fee is inappropriate is the simple fact Canada has the wilderness that wilderness canoe trippers desire to see. The Province of Ontario has decided it is appropriate that individuals who use this resource help support the costs of its maintenance. Also, Ontario has been consistent in the fact that if you are a U.S. citizen and lease property and consequently pay taxes, you are exempt from this regulation.

In closing, I would like to pose a question to Cliff. If the rest of the Provinces adopted a similar camping fee and if the Northwest and Yukon Territories follow, where will you go canoeing?

Brian G. Gnauck



MORNING MIST—Isabel Boardman
(Honorable Mention, Wilderness; WCA 1989 Photo Contest)

Dear Toni:

Attached is a letter I have sent to Cliff Jacobson in response to his appeal for WCA support against Crown Land non-resident user fees.

Mr. Jacobson was not very honest in his plea, for though he complained about "the god-awful fee which takes the wild out of the wilderness," he made no mention of his using our wilderness to earn his living. He portrayed himself as a tripper, when in fact he is a professional who makes a profit from our land without contributing to its preservation. I am sure he is well intentioned, but he does not realize how vital the Ministry of Natural Resources is, and how much it costs to operate.

I would appreciate your publishing the letter I wrote him, for it might help illustrate how our land is taken for granted even by highly experienced, caring members of the paddling community.

Richard Culpeper

Dear Cliff Jacobson:

I'm sorry you're bothered by the small *per diem* for Northern Ontario camping. I realize you are a well-intentioned and experienced canoeist, so please try to consider my comments constructively.

If it were not for the Ministry of Natural Resources, the land you enjoy would be logged over, dammed up, and burnt out. Ontario residents benefit from the MNR's efforts when we go paddling, but we pay heavily through taxes for this privilege. As a non-resident you do not financially contribute to the MNR, so you are asked to help by paying a small fee.

Your annoyance over the principle of renting out Ontario's wilderness is egocentric. What you see as wilderness is our home, and we pay dearly to maintain it. Why should we subsidize your trips, and to some degree, your livelihood?

You say we should accommodate you, and personally I would be glad to, but as an author you must realize that when you write about Canada you encourage your fellow Americans to follow in your footsteps. While you are both experienced and environmentally alert, many of your readers are not. Where you go, they follow -- and leave their mess.

In October 1986 you wrote about the need for maps and a change of clothes. In May 1987 you wrote about taking extremely inexperienced youths into the Canadian wilderness. In July 1988 you wrote about crashing a trailer while big-game fishing in Canada. Clearly much of what you write is directed to an audience that is not as knowledgeable as you.

Every year I encounter greater numbers of tourists in wilderness areas that used to be little-known. In general they are dangerously under-skilled, obnoxiously loud, travel in large groups, and leave trails of garbage. When you write about our country you direct your inexperienced readers to us. Why are you so hostile when you are asked to pay a small part back?

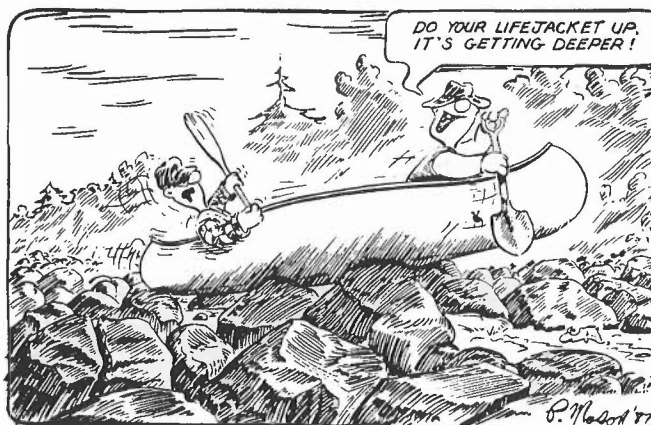
You perform a valuable service when you encourage trippers, but please remember that there is a learning curve of many years before even the best intentioned wilderness user can travel relatively invisibly, and even then, many never become fully at ease. We need to continue to encourage these people, but we must be careful to point out that there is no such thing as true wilderness. There is simply a continuum that ranges from urban to inaccessible. The land needs protection -- all of it -- and this takes funding.

The MNR tries to find a balance between different land uses, from extraction of raw resources to public enjoyment. If you were to go to a recreational park you would pay more than if you were canoeing through a wilderness park. I am sure you realize why there is a cost difference. The fee you oppose is simply a continuation of this practice. The MNR is still hard at work outside of the parks. Someone has to pay for this.

If you were wondering just what you get for your fee, give the MNR a call. They have a general information line at (416) 965-3081, and accept collect calls. Spend the time to track down a few regional directors. Ask them what the MNR does, and be prepared to wait for a lengthy reply. Then ask yourself, "Would my wilderness trips be possible without the MNR?"

I'd be glad to show you some wonderful canoeing, hiking and skiing, but please don't take these experiences, write about them for less capable readers, and then gripe about having to pay a small fee for your privileges. Free use of Canadian resources is not an American right.

Richard Culpeper





24 March LOWER CREDIT RIVER
 Organizer: Bill Ness 416-321-3005
 Book before 19 March.

The trip down the lower Credit from Streetsville is nearly continuous grade I and II whitewater. It's a great little run in itself and a good warm-up for bigger and better things to come. Suitable for intermediates. Limit six canoes.



Photo by Jeff Lane

24-26 March SALMON, MOIRA, AND LOWER BLACK RIVERS
 Organizers: Dale Miner 416-730-8187
 Norm Wheeler 416-489-8080

Book immediately.

The Salmon is a good river for intermediate paddlers at this time of year, with some big waves and interesting eddies, making it a good warm-up for Saturday's trip on the Moira. The Moira will likely be a wide, big-water river with big waves, long boulder fields, and a couple of interesting ledges. Suitable for intermediates. Sunday we will run the lower Black from Queensborough to Hwy 7. There are a series of steep, tricky ledges, requiring good intermediate skills. Accommodations are being arranged at the West Wind Motel. Limit eight canoes.

26 March UPPER CREDIT RIVER
 Organizer: Mike Graham-Smith 416-877-7829
 Book before 19 March.

The upper Credit with its many swifts, gentle rapids, and canoe-grabbing rocks is a pleasant early spring run. Suitable for novice paddlers with some moving-water experience. Limit six canoes.

1 April OAKVILLE CREEK
 Organizer: Diane Wills 416-493-1064
 Book before 27 March.

Oakville Creek offers fast, turbulent water at this time of the year with a few ledge rapids and the possibility of obstructed channels. Experienced whitewater paddlers only should consider this trip. Water temperatures will be low so wet suits are recommended. Limit six canoes.

1 April ROUGE RIVER
 Organizer: Mike Jones 416-270-3256
 Book before 19 March.

The Rouge River from Steeles Avenue to Lake Ontario makes a good six-hour trip in spring run-off. There is a continuous strong current, and if we are blessed with high water, some substantial standing waves in spots. As well, sweepers may lurk to snare the unwary. Suitable for experienced novices or intermediates. Limit six canoes.

1-2 April MOIRA RIVER
 Organizer: Dale Miner 416-730-8187
 Book immediately.

The Moira should be a big-water river again this weekend, featuring the same big waves and boulder fields experienced the previous weekend. On Saturday we will run from Lost Channel to Latta; on Sunday we will eliminate a long flatwater stretch by doing two trips from Chisholm to Latta. Suitable for intermediates. Limit eight canoes.

8-9 April MAITLAND RIVER
 Organizer: Herb Pohl 416-637-7632
 Book between 22 and 31 March.

Saturday we'll paddle the upper Maitland which has good current and a few riffles -- an excellent way for novices to start the new season. Sunday will be spent on the lower part of the river which has a much more pronounced gradient and lively rapids. Definitely not for novices. Participants may sign up for one or both days with preference given to weekenders. Limit six canoes.

9 April BEAVER CREEK
 Organizer: Roger Harris 416-323-3603
 Book before 1 April.

This river is similar to the upper Black, but is technically more demanding. Dry suits are nice. Limit six boats.

9 April GRAND RIVER
 Organizer: Dave Sharp 519-621-5599
 Book before 2 April.

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

2 April LOWER CREDIT AND HUMBER RIVERS
 Organizer: Duncan Taylor 416-368-9748
 Book before 29 March.

Join us on this annual WCA outing. We will canoe the lower Credit first and then move over to the Humber, starting at Hwy 401 and taking out at Dundas Street. The Humber can offer some challenging rapids if water levels are high. Suitable for novices with some experience. Limit six canoes.

8 April UPPER BLACK RIVER
 Organizer: Roger Harris 416-323-3603
 Book before 1 April.

Narrow and rocky, the upper Black can be a challenge (if the ice has melted). Experience needed. A vicious stream, beware of bear traps. Limit six boats.



Photo by Jeff Lane

15-16 April SALMON & MOIRA RIVERS
 Organizer: Glenn Spence 613-475-4176
 Book between 1 and 6 April.

This special event marks the 73rd time that Glorious Glenn will brave the swirling flood of these two rivers. Paddlers of intermediate skill level are invited to come along and observe and learn. There are exciting rapids and ledges with substantial waves to negotiate. And a role model of the proper approach to save and enjoyable canoeing will lead the way. Participants are asked to conduct themselves in a deferential manner when inquiring about this trip. Limit five canoes.

15 April UPPER SAUGEEN RIVER
 Organizer: Phil Nusbaum 416-221-5345
 Book between 1 and 9 April.
 Between Durham and Hanover this stream rolls through placed farm country but also moves swiftly over rocks and around bends. An interesting trip for experienced novice or intermediate whitewater paddlers. Limit six canoes.

15-16 April SEGUIN RIVER
 Organizer: Karl Schimek 416-222-3720 (before 9 p.m.)
 Book before 7 April.
 The Seguin is a small river flowing west from Seguin Falls to Mill Lake near Parry Sound. The river has a number of easy rapids and some short portages around falls. Suitable for intermediate paddlers. Limit four canoes.

16 April MINDEN WILD WATER PRESERVE
 Organizer: Dale Miner 416-730-8187
 Book before 7 April.
 The rapids in this man-made whitewater course offer strong currents, tight eddies and painfully sharp eddy lines. Flood conditions and very cold water makes this a trip for experienced paddlers. Limit six canoes.

16 April ERAMOSA RIVER
 Organizer: Jeff Lane 519-837-3815
 Book before 9 April.
 Our leisurely paddle down this scenic river begins at Rockwood and continues into Guelph. This is an excellent entry-level trip for beginners who want to get some easy moving water experience. Limit eight canoes.

16 April NOTTAWASAGA RIVER
 Organizers: Steve Lukasko 416-532-0898
 Mike Jones 416 270-3256
 Book before 10 April.
 This is a flatwater trip suitable for novice paddlers. Water levels permitting, we will start the trip on Willow Creek and finish at the Edenvale Conservation Area. The river goes through the Minesing Swamp which will give us an opportunity to observe migrating birds. Limit six canoes.

22-23 April MACDONALD - GIBSON ROUTE
 Organizer: Howard Sayles 416-921-5321
 Book between 1 and 14 April.
 This trip offers pleasant flatwater paddling in a scenic area north of Six Mile Lake Provincial Park on Hwy 69. Suitable for novices. Limit three canoes.

23 April BLACK AND HEAD RIVERS
 Organizer: Bob Haskett 416-251-9203
 Book before 19 April.
 We will start on the Head River, northeast of Sebright, and at the Head's confluence with the Black continue downstream to just east of Washago. These rivers feature some short rapids with moderate waves, separated by enough flatwater to give you time to relax and enjoy the scenery. Suitable for novice paddlers with some whitewater experience. Limit six canoes.

23 April ELORA GORGE
 Organizer: Jeff Lane 519-837-3815
 Book before 16 April.
 The water in the Gorge at this time of year is cold and could be fairly high. Its numerous technical rapids should provide a good workout for experienced intermediate paddlers. Limit eight canoes.

23 April HEAD CREEK LOOP
 Organizer: Rob Butler 416-487-2282
 Book before 19 April.
 From Moore Falls on Hwy 35 we will head west to Victoria Lake, then south down Head Creek to Head Lake, and end with a short car shuttle. This is a rugged, untravelled route with several portages. Limit three canoes with fit crews.

29-30 April UPPER MADAWASKA RIVER
 Organizer: Dale Miner 416-730-8187
 Book before 21 April.
 We will camp near the village of Madawaska and run sections of the Madawaska River between Whitney and Madawaska on both days. Suitable for good intermediate paddlers. Limit six canoes.

29-30 April MISSISSAGUA RIVER AND EELS CREEK
 Organizer: Bob Haskett 416-251-9203
 Book before 19 April.
 On Saturday we will run the Mississauga as it tumbles from its source in Mississauga Lake down to Buckhorn Lake in a series of scenic falls and short rapids, separated by sections of quiet water. For intermediates it makes a challenging six-hour trip.
 On Sunday we will run Eels Creek, a narrow, twisting little stream with a number of highly technical rapids that require precise manoeuvring skills to navigate. As several of the rapids involve blind bends and terminate in waterfalls, good judgement and the ability to get off the river fast are definite assets. This creek is suitable for good intermediates with lots of moxie.
 Participants can sign up for a day or the weekend. We will try to arrange overnight accommodation in housekeeping cabins.

29 April BLACK RIVER
 Organizer: Gerry Lannan 705-636-7419
 Book before 25 April.
 We will start at Coopers Falls and take out near Washago. This trip is a good introduction to moving water paddling. Suitable for novice paddlers with some experience. Limit six canoes.

29-30 April EAST RIVER - LOWER OXTONGUE RIVER
 Organizer: Karl Schimek 416-222-3720 (before 9 p.m.)
 Book before 21 April.
 This outing will consist of two one-day trips. The East River is a small river with easy rapids. The lower Oxtongue has more challenging rapids with some falls which can easily be portaged. Suitable for experienced novices who are prepared to portage. Limit four canoes.

30 April NOMQUOM RIVER
 Organizers: Jane Burgess 416-466-3154 (res.)
 Karl Stevens 416-961-5690 (bus.)
 Book between 14 and 23 April.
 From Hwy 12 to Seagrave. A small river with a gentle current, which winds its way through marsh, conservation area, and a dog-training club, then along a trapline to the farms of Seagrave. For those who don't want to get up early or drive far and insist on starting the season slowly and staying dry until at least mid June. This is a trip for everyone. Novices welcome. Limit eight canoes.

6-7 May ALGONQUIN PARK
 Organizers: Diane Wills 416-279-0789
 Paul Hamilton
 Book before 28 April.
 A weekend in Algonquin Park in search of spring wildlife without the bugs. The route has still to be determined. Bring your camera. Limit four canoes.

1-4 May RIVER AUX SABLES
 Organizer: Phil Nusbaum 416-221-5345
 Book between 10 and 20 April.
 This old loggers' river is a little to the west of the Spanish River. Participants would spend Sunday and Thursday nights in the Sudbury area. The river descends 150 metres in the four days of travel. I anticipate daily distances of not more than 15 km due to the exploratory nature of this trip. MNR indicate that this river is best run right after the spring break-up. Intermediate paddling and camping skills required. Limit three canoes.

6-7 May BURLEIGH - HARVEY RECREATION ZONE
 Organizer: Glenn Spence 613-475-4776
 Book before 30 April.
 This trip will involve a weekend of lake and creek travel in the Burleigh-Harvey Recreation Zone. The exact route will be determined by the skill and enthusiasm of the participants. Suitable for novices. Limit four canoes.

6-7 May WHITES LAKE EXPLORATION
 Organizer: John Winters 705-382-2293
 Book before 29 April.
 An exploratory trip into the area south of the Magnetawan River. There should be a potential loop into Whites Lake and joining with the MNR loop at Portage Bay on Kashegaba Lake. Suitable for those unafraid of the unexpected and willing to bushwhack. Limit three canoes.

6-7 May OPEONGO AND UPPER MADAWASKA RIVERS
 Organizer: Doug Fairbanks 416-622-5711
 Book before 28 April.
 On Saturday we will paddle the Opeongo which offers long, runnable sets of rapids. In high water there are sections with continuous waves and three difficult ledges which should be scouted. The more technically challenging upper Madawaska will be run on Sunday. Suitable for good intermediate whitewater paddlers. Limit four canoes.

13-14 May BLACK RIVER
 Organizers: Cathy and Hans Grim 416-767-7365
 Book after 1 May.
 This is a scenic, gentle river which we will paddle from Vankoughnet to Coopers Falls; the car shuttle is easy. Suitable for novices. Limit four canoes.

13-14 May LONG LAKE - BIG CEDAR LAKE
 Organizer: Jim Greenacre 416-759-56
 Book after 7 May.
 A leisurely lake loop with a short car shuttle north of Burleigh Falls. Suitable for novices who don't mind eight portages, most of them short, with the longest being only 990 m. Limit four canoes.

20-22 May KILLARNEY PARK
 Organizer: Jim Greenacre 416-759-9956
 Book after 14 May.
 We will meet at 9 a.m. on Saturday and head for David Lake. On Sunday, time and the physical fitness of the group permitting, we may be able to take the trail up to Silver Peak. A few portages. Suitable for novices. Limit four canoes.



20-22 May MATTAWA RIVER
Organizer: Richard Culpeper 705-673-8988
Book before 14 May.

Sorcerer Indians, Brulé, Champlain, Marquette and Joliet, Radisson and Groseilliers, La Vérendrye, Henry, Mackenzie, brigades of canots de maître -- and now you! Saturday: Kag Trail morning walk; afternoon white-water clinic. Sunday: Mattawa fault day trip. Monday: Amable du Fond morning play. If you are a novice and want an introduction to Shield whitewater, you'll enjoy this legendary passage. Solo canoeists welcome. Suitable for novices. Limit six canoes.

20-22 May FRENCH RIVER
Organizer: Jeff Lane 519-837-3815
Book before 14 May.

We will be paddling in from Wolsley Bay to set up a base camp at Blue Chute. From our camp we have a choice of visiting several excellent rapids that we can play in. Suitable for intermediate paddlers. Limit eight canoes.

20-22 May NIPISSING AND TIM RIVERS
Organizer: Howard Sayles 416-921-5321
Book between 1 and 7 May.

We will start at Tim Lake, make our way on to the Nipissing River, portage into Rosebary Lake, and then return via the Tim River. This will be an easy-paced trip in a very scenic part of western Algonquin Park. Suitable for experienced flatwater trippers. Limit three canoes.

Wed. 24 May: evening class BASIC FLATWATER CANOEING
Sat./Sun. 27-28 May
Instructors: Lisa and Doug Ashton 519-654-0336
Rob Cepella, Jeff Lane, Howard Sagermann
Bill Ness 416-321-3005

Book before 19 April.

This course is designed to offer new members the basic flatwater canoeing skills needed to participate in organized flatwater outings. It will allow the new canoeists to grade themselves and to feel confident on their first outings.

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

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

27-28 May SAUGEEN RIVER
Organizer: Orrie Wigle 519-623-5731
Book before 20 May.

This is a relaxing weekend cruise through the scenic countryside of western Ontario; bring the family. On Saturday we will paddle from Walkerton to Paisley. After a night of camping at Saugeen Bluffs Conservation Area we will continue downstream, possibly as far as Denny's Dam. Suitable for novices. Limit eight canoes.

27-28 May ALGONQUIN PARK
Organizer: Jim Greenacre 416-759-9956
Book after 22 May.

We meet 9 a.m. Saturday at Canoe Lake and head north for Burnt Root Lake. Sunday we return via Iom Thompson Lake. There are ten portages, the longest one 680 metres. Suitable for novice paddlers. Limit four canoes.

27-28 May LITTLE STURGEON RIVER
Organizer: Roger Harris 416-323-3603
Book before 17 May.

This is an exploratory trip for the organizer. We will start on Hwy 11 north of North Bay and finish on Hwy 17 east of Sturgeon Falls. The topographical map 31-L5 indicates that this could be an interesting trip. There could be some rough portages at the beginning and middle sections of the trip but we hope to be rewarded with some challenging rapids. Suitable for experienced paddlers only. Limit four canoes.

June BASIC WHITewater CANOEING COURSE
Instructors: Bill Ness 416-321-3005
Rob Cepella, Jeff Lane, Neil McKay
Book before 15 April.

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

3-4 June OPEONGO AND MADAWASKA RIVERS
Organizer: Karl Schimek 416-222-3720 (before 9 p.m.)
Book before 26 May.

Saturday we will run the Opeongo. The water level will probably be low, but it is a scenic trip and it will give us an opportunity to practice our manoeuvring skills. The upper Madawaska at low water is technically more demanding than the Opeongo. Participants can register for one or two days with preference given to weekenders. Suitable for intermediates. Limit four canoes.

10-11 June MINDEN WHITewater WEEKEND
Organizer: Jeff Lane 519-837-3815
Book before 4 June.

Join us for a weekend of whitewater fun at the Minden Wild Water Preserve. The course provides a challenge for experienced intermediate to advanced paddlers to develop their paddling skills in the fast, technical rapids. Novices can also use the bottom of the course to advantage to work on their ferries and eddy turns. Suitable for intermediates. Limit six canoes.

10-11 June GEORGIAN BAY - BRUCE PENINSULA
Organizer: Bob Knapp 519-371-1255
Book before 6 June.

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



Photo by Dale Miner

17-18 June LOWER MADAWASKA RIVER
Organizer: Dale Miner 416-730-8187
Book before 9 June.

We will paddle from Aumond Rapids to Griffith, camping on the river. A variety of short rapids will provide ample opportunity for practice and play. Suitable for whitewater-trained novices and intermediates. Limit six canoes.

17-18 June WHITewater WEEKEND AT PALMER RAPIDS
Organizer: Jim Morris 416-793-2088
Book before 7 June.

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

17-18 June TIM RIVER
Organizer: Howard Sayles 416-921-5321
Book between 1 and 7 June.

Join me on a leisurely trip down the Tim River to Rosebury Lake, where we will set up our camp. We should have some time to explore this very attractive area in western Algonquin Park. Suitable for novice paddlers with some canoe tripping experience. Limit three canoes.

1-3 July WHITewater WORKSHOP ON THE FRENCH RIVER

Organizer: Jim Morris 416-793-2088

Book before 21 June.

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

1-7 July SPANISH RIVER

Organizer: Bob Shortill 705-277-3538

Book a.s.a.p.

Loading canoes into the train at Sudbury, we will travel by rail to Bischof. From there we will start off through some lake country before picking up the west branch of the Spanish. If all goes well, we'll still have adequate water but the worst of the bugs will be behind. The lovely and historic Spanish has a nice blend of good scenery, which may soon disappear because of clear-cutting, and some challenging whitewater. The pace should leave adequate time for side trips or other fun things. Suitable for people with intermediate whitewater skills. I will be taking my son (13) along as bowman. Other responsible young people are welcome. Limit four canoes.

9-15 July MONTREAL RIVER

Organizer: Jeff Haymer 416-635-5801

Book before 30 June.

A week trip on the Montreal River starting at Gowanda Lake and finishing at Sydney Lake. This is a picturesque route in the northern Temagami region, offering a variety of lake and river travel, including some rapids, tracking, and portaging. Communal food will be organized. Limit four canoes.



Photo by Lisa Ashton

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

ALGONQUIN OUTFITTERS Widest selection of canoes in Ontario, including Sawyer, Mad River, Clipper, Bluewater, Blue Hole, Dagger, Mohawk, White-sell, Old Town, and Nova Craft. We specialize in kevlar tripping canoes, solo canoes, and Royalex whitewater canoes. We also carry Norse and Iliad paddles, as well as Extrasport pfd's. All models are available for free test paddling and rental usage. Free comprehensive canoe catalogs are available. We have an excellent repair shop and offer custom outfitting of any canoe. Contact Algonquin Outfitters at 705-635-1167.

NORTH WEST EXPEDITIONS offers guided canoe trips on lakes and whitewater rivers in northern Ontario. Our base camp and rustic wilderness lodge are located on Anima-Nipissing Lake in the Temagami region 500 km north of Toronto. Winter trips by snowshoe, cross country ski, and dogsled are also available. For more information contact North West Expeditions, till June '89: Westtown School, Westtown, PA 19395, USA (215-399-6930), or after June '89: P.O. Box 183, Temagami, Ontario, P0H 2H0, (message number 705-676-2424).

WHITewater INSTRUCTIONAL CLASSES are offered by Bob Foote of Mad River Canoe. The classes will be held on separate days from 5 to 8 July 1989, inclusive: small water class, large river class, Ottawa River running, canoe rolling. For more information contact Algonquin Outfitters at 705-635-1167.

1989 NORTH AMERICAN CANOE SYMPOSIUM will be held 9-11 June at camp Winona, Bridgton, Maine, and offers lectures, workshops, demonstrations, and on-water practice sessions for both beginners and for those more experienced. For more information contact North American Canoe Symposium, L.L. Bean, Freeport, Maine 04033, USA.

SURVIVAL IN THE BUSH INC. in conjunction with Humber College, teaches important life-saving skills which will be needed in the event of an accident, an emergency, or being lost. Throughout a ten-week program, essential information on shelter construction, fire starting, signalling, direction finding, and practical first aid will be covered. Also taught are the uses of edible and medicinal plants and how to deal with the problem of insects. Classes begin on 27 April 1989 and run every Thursday evening. Cost is \$152. Survival In The Bush also offers an intense nine-day program with seven of these days spent entirely outdoors with little or no equipment. Dates are 5 to 13 August 1989, inclusive. For further information contact Dave Arama of Survival In The Bush Inc., 3343 Acala Crescent, Mississauga, Ontario, L5A 3E4 (416-897-8762), or Humber College, Athletic and Recreation, Humber College Blvd., Rexdale, Ontario, M9W 5L7 (416-675-3111).

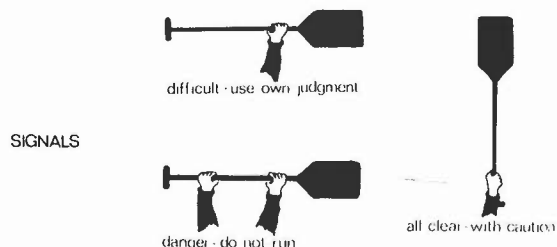
guidelines for wca trips

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

canoe safety rules

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

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



trip ratings

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

WHITEWATER TRIPS

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

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

FLATWATER TRIPS

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

H