



COCHRANE RIVER

Article: Dave Bober Photos: Dave Bober and Ralph Zaffrann

Old Crow can make the crossing from Wollaston to Reindeer Lake in less than thirty-two air kilometres, but rivers have a mind of their own. The Cochrane River takes her sweet time, a detour of over three hundred twenty kilometres that will carry a wilderness canoeist into that superb little stick country, the domain of the sand eskers.

Having read Tyrell, Oberholtzer, Downes, and Klein, three of us eagerly paddled across Hidden Bay on Wollaston Lake in late July 1988. Even the cold summer rain was a relief after the gruelling 430-km drive up from La Ronge. Our trio consisted of Ralph Zaffrann, a retired engineer from Rochester, New York; Al Anuta, an engineering professor from Phoenix, Arizona; and myself, a farmer from Hudson Bay, Saskatchewan. Ralph paddled solo in his 14' Mad River Courier and Al and I went tandem in All's 17' shoe-keeled Grumman.

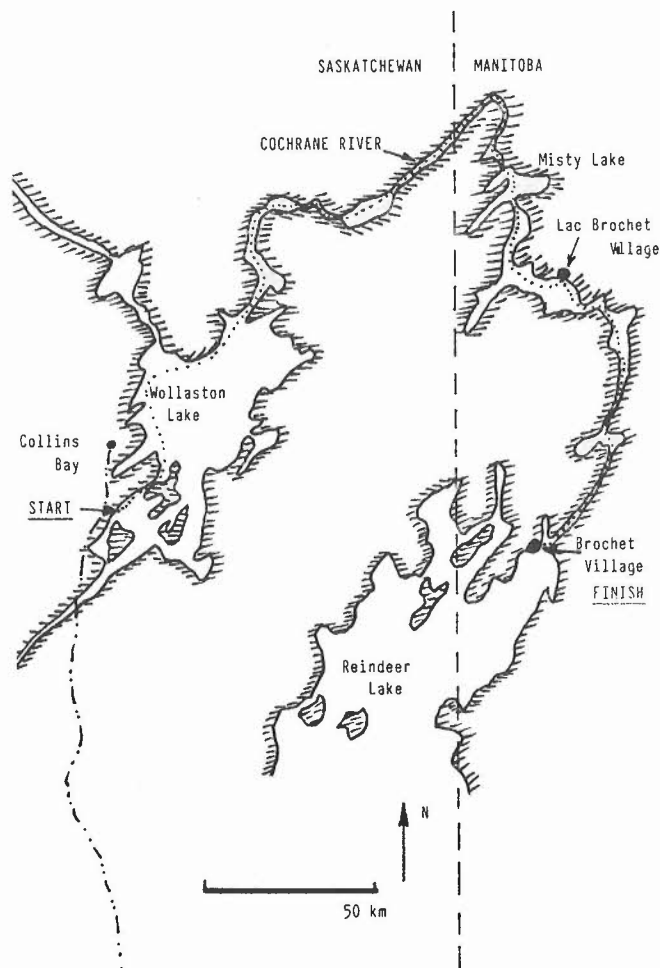
Traffic on Wollaston was nil, except for the barge that serves the several fish plants. The pristine beauty of this lake, the largest within the borders of Saskatchewan, was insulted several years ago by the construction of the Rabbit Lake Mine Road. However, few recreational boaters risk the unpleasant remoteness of that road, so canoeist's still have the great lake pretty much to themselves.

On our first full day we did about 38 kilometres in almost ideal conditions for crossing big water—cloudy, cool, and easy showers. The calmness and translucence of the lake surface added a mystical quality to the many islands that seemed to loom before us like little mountains floating on an inland sea. Our paddle strokes were long and slow, each of us locked in with personal thoughts and impressions. To me the intermittent rain drops were playing a game of intrigue.

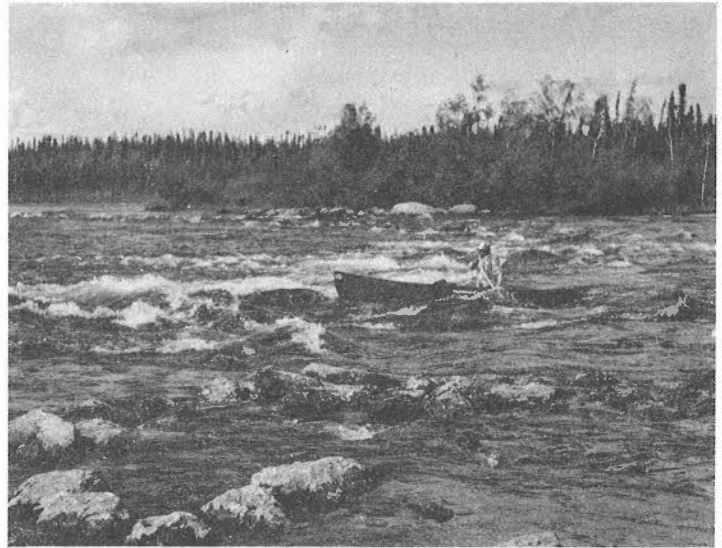
They were glistening jewels glancing off a mirror, there for a split second and then gone, utterly forgotten until the next drop. Camping on Snowshoe Island, we were quickly brought back to reality by the black flies. The sky cleared at dusk and we were serenaded by loon music and a brilliant rising three-quarter moon—utter peace.

Dawn greeted us with welcome sunshine that quickly burned off the chilly mist. A totally beautiful day was ours to savor as lake, sky, spruce-covered esker ridges, and pre-cambrian outcrops painted a continuous panorama before us. Again the pure waters of Wollaston charmed us, only our steady paddle strokes broke the stillness. We felt as one with all of creation. Ross Channel was an abrupt contrast to the open expanse of the lake. Schools of fish swam beneath our canoes and Al tempted one to play hooky, a 3.2-kg jack.

We reached the Cochrane River on our fourth day; only a “swift” heralds its proper beginning in the “Land of the Little Sticks.” For many kilometres our river seemed just like an extension of Wollaston Lake, with many esker ridges to greet the eyes. A little ptarmigan entertained us during our lunch stop on a friendly esker. He was definitely puzzled by our intrusion. Tail winds gave us an easy roller ride during the afternoon and we fairly coasted into our campsite, an esker island covered by a semi-open stand of black spruce, and floored by a soft carpet of reindeer moss. The four bottom logs of a rotting trappers cabin hid tales of harsh days gone by.



We are all early risers—5:30 a.m. was the norm so we could get the edge on the day, paddle our allotted mileage, and locate a suitable camp spot about 4:00 p.m. Tough winds challenged us for thirty kilometres the next day; camp, just above the first fast water of Big Stone Rapids, was a respite, despite the anticipation of the 2.4-km portage waiting for us in the morning.



We scouted the upper rapid but agreed that our skills would serve us better if we stretched our legs on the trail. The dreaded Big Stone Portage was not all that bad, a few bog holes to remind us that we were in remote wilderness par excellence. Whenever the mystique of the portage trail wore thin we reminded ourselves that “we are having fun.” Rain squalls and a nasty blow forced us to an early camp on a Bannock Lake esker. This was a super esker to walk on, a very narrow spline, covered with large spruce and pine. I enjoyed an hours hike while Ralph tried his luck with the rod. He returned with two 42-cm jack fish and we had a gourmet supper, including Ralph’s Cochrane River Bannock. On Bannock Lake you must have bannock or endure dire consequences such as moldy bread!

The next morning I suffered a fit of forgetfulness and left an almost new pair of running shoes hanging on a spruce limb. Day seven was mostly spent on Charcoal Lake, a wilderness gem, its north shore an almost continuous esker, with kilometres of soft sand beaches. These south-facing esker slopes boasted some great tree growth, large white spruce, birch, a few white poplar, and even a few juniper bushes. Again I took an enjoyable evening hike along the esker shore. In this area there were eskers running in almost every direction, resulting in a maze of valleys and ridges that gave me the feeling that I was in a mountain kingdom. As I soaked in the beauty of that walk, a verse of scripture came to mind: “Break forth into singing, ye mountains, O Forest, and every tree therein.” Isaiah 44:23.

The next day we negotiated the Caribou Rapids, running three sets and portaging two. Our camp below the last set was another favorite spot with attractive young jack pine growing right out of the rocky shelves that had been exposed by a forest fire, perhaps 30 years ago. Ralph and I spent a few minutes casting a daredevil into the pool below the fast



water and our reward was two shiny jack fish, 51 and 46 cm long, that made it to the frying pan in less than a half hour. Blueberries grew in profusion here and Al treated us to blueberry pancakes the following breakfast.

Day nine brought us into Manitoba and our farthest point north at the big loop of the Cochrane, just north of the 59th parallel. Head winds and cold rain dampened our spirits but a snug camp and healthy Quetico Goulash soon revived us. The Cochrane now turned abruptly southward, and we somehow managed to end up in a dead-end bay, despite our excellent topographical maps, Ken Buchan's helpful notes, and Berard's interesting (although not always helpful) canoe route map. Back on track we soon passed a large blazed pine that marked the beginning of the Old North Trail to Kasmere and Nuelin lakes—a future trip that beckons.

Our next camp, an esker shelf 15 metres above the river, resembled a manicured park, virtually no undergrowth and the large pine almost evenly spaced. Al baked a chocolate cake in a reflector oven while Ralph and I sampled the fishing. Three casts near a small weed bed netted three jacks and we soon had them baking Chipewyan style, no muss or fuss—just throw the whole fish over the hot coals. The clap of thunder awakened us during the short sub-arctic night and dawn snuck in with an eerie fog.

We slept in late and then enjoyed a leisurely breakfast while the mist began to mysteriously dissolve. The eight kilometres above Remillard Lake were remarkably scenic with the river cutting right through several eskers. On Belfie Lake we passed a small island that

resembled a garbage dump, the remains of an old mining camp. Ralph had an exciting run down the Outlet rapid while Al and I portaged into Misty Lake. Today was berry day: blueberries, raspberries, gooseberries, and dewberries—your choice.

Another day of travel put us halfway down Lac Brochet, one of the larger lakes on our route. A very heavy tail wind assisted our mad dash to a channel on the east shore. That heavy sea was pushing our luck so we camped on a small island that separates the north and south halves of Lac Brochet. A V-shaped rock trap in the shallow water and many pole frames on the island convinced us this was a spring fishing camp. There were trails and litter everywhere and a scarcity of firewood.

The following morning we paddled into the settlement of Lac Brochet, a Chipewyan community of about 500 population. They separated from the Cree at Reindeer Lake back in the 1970s and established their own isolated town here. We took a short walk around their village and noted the sharp contrast in life styles, a few run-down log shacks but mostly attractive homes complete with satellite dishes. Several boys were curious about our canoes and one friendly man told us about the upcoming pilgrimage, a religious festival when many motor boats travel the 120 kilometres down-river to Brochet on Reindeer Lake. With a 40-horse motor the natives are able to run all the rapids except two falls. The air traffic to Lac Brochet that day was unreal, seven planes in about an hour, all wheel planes that land at their esker airport. A short portage across a narrow peninsula was difficult to find due to a fairly recent forest fire. The trail, marked by a number of rock cairns, is located several hundred metres north of the narrowest neck of land. A lone wolf paid us a brief visit during the night, he left his tracks in the soft sand only a short distance in front of our tent.

Chipewyan Falls was an intriguing place, a riverwide ledge of about 1.5 metres. There is a good portage trail on



the north side but the Indians just carry over a short pole skid ramp on the south side. Before leaving the falls I climbed up the steep hill to the south for a spectacular view. Strong winds slowed our progress on Thuycholeeni Lake and I regret that we did not stop at a Chipewyan summer camp at the south end of the lake.

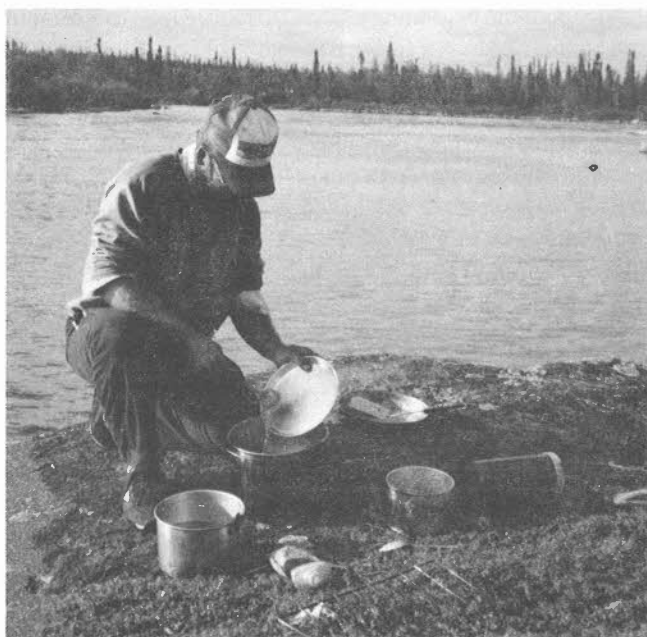
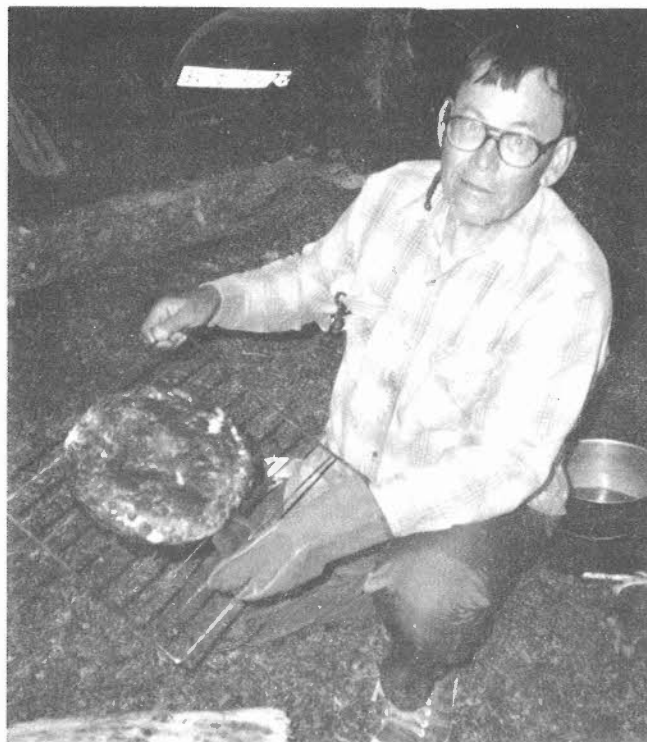
The winds finally drove us to shore and we camped opposite a place called Le Pensie on our topographical map, a site of a former trading post but nothing left now. We had barely pitched camp when sixteen boat loads of smiling Chipewyans zoomed by en route to their pilgrimage at Brochet. Sometimes I wonder what they think of people who still suffer with paddles.



Day fifteen was a "no go" day on Cann Lake with a hot southerly wind kicking up huge whitecaps. After battling those vicious head winds for three hours we camped on a large esker, having made only eight kilometres progress. The mercury reached 30°C and we spent the afternoon resting and exploring the fascinating esker. A cow moose and her calf entertained us at the edge of a very small esker pond. The opposite side of that pond was the sight of a lone Indian grave, the little grave fence long fallen down and partially rotted. With a moose in his backyard, the old chief had been laid to rest in the happy hunting grounds.

The next morning we were up at 4:30 a.m. in an effort to beat the wind. We soon passed two beaver houses, a very rare sight on the Cochrane River as beavers require clay for their building projects. At Kamacheewasik Rapids, an easy horseshoe rapid, Al and I crossed a sharp eddy line and abruptly capsized. We drifted almost 800 metres in the strong water before Ralph could assist us to shore. We were fortunate in that we suffered no damage and lost nothing, and we did get a good bath!

Our last full day on the Cochrane, we encountered our heaviest whitewater of the trip. A heavy rapid, about 1.6 km above Cochrane Falls, boasted some two-metre waves and a few nasty holes. The Indians claim they can manage it with a large outboard motor full throttle, but we utilized the old roller portage. The last major drop on the river is Cochrane Falls, an awesome thunderhouse of power. The 450-metre roller portage was in good condition and we barely completed the carry when a vicious squall hit. Camp was speedily



pitched in the deluge and Al proceeded to prepare a voyageurs' feast. Camping on this ancient and venerable spot was somewhat marred by the profusion of garbage strewn about, and a nice cabin constructed of vertical pine logs had been terribly mutilated.

Sunrise on the Falls was inspiring as the rising mists hit the first rays of golden light. About 1.6 km below the falls I found a souvenir, a hand-carved spruce paddle. The flotilla of Chipewyan boats, returning to Lac Brochet, passed us as we entered the north end of Reindeer Lake. Nearing Brochet settlement we paddled by several small islands with a number of half-starved dogs either tethered in chains or running loose, a pitiful sight and a hazard to passing canoeists. Suddenly we found ourselves at the Brochet dock, our 480-km journey at an end. It was quite interesting walking around this Cree community of 600. Many of the natives were talkative and the local Catholic priest gave us a tour of the old church built in 1861 and their remarkable vegetable garden. We dickered for a boat tow down to Co Op Point (Kinoosao) but decided to call for a bush plane.

Our final camp was pitched on an island just east of the village and that evening we were visited by several friendly Cree. In an hour and a half we heard many tales of the North including stories of giant jack fish and the tragic account of two canoeists who got into trouble at the Big Stone Rapids. We mentioned our freak capsize and they told us the Chipewyan name of that rapid translates to "strange water" in English. Another nearby rapid, or at least its name, was also noteworthy. The 29-letter word translates to "Long Rapid." We also had a nocturnal visitor, a famished Indian dog that helped himself to our food pack. The poor creature was still retching the next morning from an overdose of raw flour.

While we were waiting for our charter at the dock, several curious Cree boys asked to try out our canoes. They

had never paddled a canoe before so we gave them a few pointers—only fifty years and what a reversal in roles! Our float plane, rather float planes, arrived at noon. A Beaver and a single Otter were slight overkill for our crew, but I did not argue with the pilots. That score was settled back at their base at Lynn Lake. The planes brought more curious people down to the dock as we hurriedly stowed our gear, said goodbye to our new friends, and then were airborne over Reindeer Lake heading south towards civilization, a vast inland sea beneath us.



THE THELON GAME SANCTUARY

Scientific Study by Canoeists

David F. Pelly

For two weeks in July 1990, a group of canoeists on the Northwest Territories' Thelon River gave more than a little thought to the future of Canada's pre-eminent game sanctuary. Everyone who travels there marvels at the wildlife and the wildness of the land itself. These paddlers were, in addition, part of an ongoing project to document the incidental observations of canoe trips paddling through the Thelon Game Sanctuary.

This "ProJect Oasis" was developed by Tom Faess of East Wind Arctic Tours, in an effort to publicize the "mineral resource review" of the Sanctuary (the study which considered altering the boundaries to permit mining), and to promote protection of the area. Judith Kennedy, a biologist with the Canadian Wildlife Service, has used her 1989 and 1990 summer holidays to accompany these trips to supervise the scientific fieldwork.

The data collected is important, in that it adds to the body of knowledge on the wildlife populations in the Sanctuary. But, as Kennedy says in her report, "perhaps the most

significant accomplishment of Project Oasis is the impression the area made upon the members of the group who were new to the sub-arctic."

They are now committed members of the growing army of conservationists who value highly the preservation of what little wilderness remains in North America. The strength of this movement is reflected in the fact that this new kind of travel, sometimes called enviro-tourism, is attracting people to the N.W.T. to participate in ecological studies.

While we still await an announcement from the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs on the future of the Thelon Game Sanctuary, plans are now afoot for another Thelon trip in July 1991. Specific scientific assignments are being developed by the Canadian Wildlife Service and the N.W.T. Department of Renewable Resources. For more information, contact: East Wind Arctic Tours, PO Box 2728, Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, Canada, XIA 2R1; tel. (403) 873-2170.



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

The WILDERNESS CANOE ASSOCIATION is a non-profit organization made up of individuals interested in wilderness travel, mainly by canoe and kayak, but also including backpacking and winter trips on both skis and snowshoes. The club publishes a quarterly journal,

Nastawgan, to facilitate the exchange of information and ideas of interest to wilderness travellers, organizes an extensive program of trips for members, runs a few basic workshops, and is involved in environmental issues relevant to wilderness canoeing.

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. Submit your contributions preferably on floppy computer disks and/or in typewritten form; contact the editor for more information. Contributor's Guidelines are available upon request. The deadline dates for the next two issues are:

issue: Winter 1990 *deadline date:* 28 October 1990
Spring 1991 27 January 1991

WCA MEMBERSHIP LISTS are available to any members who wish one for personal, non-commercial use. Send five dollars in bills (no cheques, please!) to Cash Belden at the WCA postal address (see WCA Contacts on the back page).

ARCTIC SYMPOSIUM The sixth annual Canoeing and Wilderness Symposium will be held in Toronto on 25 and 26 January 1991. It will focus on the "central Arctic," from the Thelon River north to the Arctic Ocean, and from Hudson Bay west to the Mackenzie River. Most of this region is north of the tree line. It includes rivers such as the Back, Burnside, Hood, Coppermine, Horton, Dearse, Quoiich. (The more northern islands will be the focus in the 1993 symposium on the "high Arctic.")

The format for Friday evening and all day Saturday will be similar to last year's. The location will be the same, at Monarch Park Collegiate. We plan to mail out registration information in early November to past participants and to WCA members.

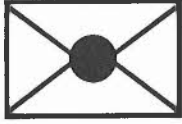
Suggestions for speakers and presentations are always welcome. Contact: George Luste, 139 Albany Ave., Toronto, M5R 3C5; tel. (416) 534-9313.

1991 CANDIDATES FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Your Board of Directors is made up of six members who are elected for a two-year term. The term of three directors end at the next Annual General Meeting and members in good standing are invited to throw their hat in the ring to fill the three vacancies. With one notable exception the current Board is made up of retreads and it would be nice to have fresh, innovative, and energetic candidates who bring enthusiasm and commitment to the task.

Interested individuals who would like to contribute a little more than their membership fee but aren't sure what the job entails are invited to contact any Board member or the secretary of the WCA who will be happy to answer questions. Although nominations may be made up to the time of the elections, candidates are requested to declare themselves prior to the deadline of the Winter issue of *Nastawgan*, so that they can publish a brief platform.



LETTER TO THE EDITOR



SOME THOUGHTS ON CONSERVATION AND THE WCA

All of us as members of the WCA are interested in canoeing in the wilderness, but according to recent happenings within the club it seems that very few members are interested in getting involved in the efforts to save our wilderness. I am referring to recent attempts to re-activate the Conservation Committee. It may be due to wilder-blindness as Raymond Chipeniuk describes in the last edition of *Nastawgan*, or it may be simple apathy. Perhaps I should not be so harsh: "busy-ness" may be a better phrase. We are all too busy to get involved. I for one declined the request to take on the chairmanship.

We agree that Temagami should be saved, that the Missinaibi should be preserved, that the James Bay development should be halted, but we hope someone else will fight our battles for us. I don't think that it is because we believe there is still lots of wilderness around. This may be true for many Canadians but canoeists have in general been aware for some time that true wilderness is getting farther and farther away. No, we are well aware of what is going on and we bemoan the plight of many polluted and dammed rivers amongst ourselves, but we all are too busy to get actively involved; and besides, what would we do?

There are some very simple things that one can do without any need to devote tremendous amounts of time out in protest lines or hammering away at the typewriter keys.

Take a critical look at all your daily activities to ensure they are consistent with conservation ethics and that you are not contributing to the consumerism that is exploiting our wilderness. For example, are you minimizing your paper consumption and using recycled paper whenever possible? It takes no more time to write on both sides of the paper or to buy recycled products. Every time you waste a piece of virgin paper you are contributing to the cutting down of another tree in Temagami! Every time you use bleached coffee filters you are adding dioxins to those very same rivers that you hope to canoe in. There are alternatives to everything we do. It might cost a few extra cents but it won't take any more of your precious time.

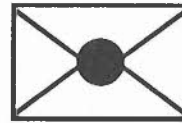
Are you doing everything to conserve electricity? Every time you throw your clothes in the dryer instead of on the clothesline or rack you are contributing to the increasing demand for power that supports the James Bay hydro-electric project and the destruction of a few more of our wilderness rivers. Have you turned your hot water heater down or installed that water-saving showerhead? It will only take a couple of minutes of your time.

Think about the chemicals you are using in your house, on your lawn, in your garden. They are all leaching eventu-

ally into the water table. Was a time in all of our lifetimes when you could swim in Lake Ontario or for that matter the lower half of the Spanish. No one paddles the Abitibi anymore but we are all responsible. We consume the products that contribute to the destruction of our forests and the pollution of our rivers. Many Canadians have not been on a wilderness river. How can they know what they are saving? But if we as wilderness canoeists cannot set an example, how can we expect others to work to save it for us?

Marlene Spruyt

LETTER TO THE EDITOR



STORIES REQUESTED

One of the fringe benefits of riding the Quebec North Shore and Labrador railroad used to be the harrowing tales of canoeing disasters and narrow escapes (real or imagined) as told by the train crew. We used to seek them out. Alas, all of the good story tellers now seem to have retired, and my last few rides up there have drawn a blank. Belatedly I have begun collecting such tales and weaving them into short stories, wishing now that I had written more of them down when still fresh.

Most sought right now are any details, clippings, or other leads pertaining to the macabre mishap on the Moisie about ten years ago in which two canoeists lost their gear in a capsized and were nearly eaten alive by black flies. Then there was the couple said to have become lost for a week just finding their way out of Lac Demille at the start of the Moisie. One hapless party on the Moisie tried to run the utterly impassable gorge below Rim Canyon and spent the night clinging to the walls before being rescued with ropes the next day by another party that just happened by. In 1978, we found someone's pack and sleeping bag abandoned half-way down the Moisie. In another unsolved mystery, in 1987 the Bob Davis party found a green ABS canoe swamped in midstream and abandoned on a very remote part of the Romaine below Lac Louzeau.

Such mishaps as these are now becoming all too commonplace and do not bode well for the future of unregulated wilderness canoeing. But personally I am not interested in simply compiling accident statistics. I am seeking stories with a bizarre or ironic twist. I earnestly request the help of *Nastawgan* readers who can supply me with the material I am looking for. All contributors will receive a printed story in return. Thanks.

Stewart Coffin
79 Old Sudbury Road, Lincoln, MA 01773, USA.

SINE QUA NON CANOE

Elliott Merrick

I fictionalized this episode in a Labrador novel that is long out of print, so perhaps a factual version of the way it really happened will not be amiss. It was open-water springtime in Labrador. My wife and I were on our way by canoe from the village of North West River to Goose Bay, where we were living at the time. This was in the days before planes crisscrossed the north, before any thought of Goose Bay airport. By setting up housekeeping at Goose Bay, we had increased the population of that lovely river-mouth settlement from three people to five.

The vast Hamilton Inlet stretching away 300 kilometres to the sea was so calm it was scarcely winking in the warm sunshine. Far off the Mealy Mountains humped themselves against a blue sky. We paddled along, dodging ice pans here and there, close by the jumbled chunks and slants of shore ice that still lined all the beaches. These great blocks and on-edge-slabs of metre-thick ice tossed up by winter storms would be with us for a long time yet. They were locally known as *balicators*. I'm not positive of the origin of the word, but a trapper told me that when a man drowns in the weak spring ice and is washed ashore, his body gets so beaten up by waves breaking against the shore ice that these barriers are known as *belly carders*, or *balicators*.

Inside the ice were sandy beaches and spruce-fir forests warming in the bright sun and sending their aromatic fragrance across the water to us. As Sigurd Olson and others have said, *Is there anything quite like northern springtime when the ice has gone out!* It is so full of joy and vigor and growth and gladness you can hardly contain yourself.

Our happiness was such, we decided we must go ashore and boil the kettle for a cup of tea. We always carried our quart billy and its battered lid, both so blackened from many fires that they had to go into a special little bag before being stuffed into the pack. Fortunately, we still had some tea, which in the north is very hard to do without. We had just been trying to shop at the Hudson's Bay Company post in North West River, but as usual in the spring, they were out of practically everything. Although it was disappointing, we discovered at the village that a dogteam mail had come in from the south sometime before, so we picked up letters from the faraway United States and from even farther-away Australia, which made the trip worthwhile. We still had some potatoes and flour at Goose Bay, and were beginning to get lots of sea trout and salmon and pike and whitefish in our little gill net. We'd be all right till soon the millions of north-migrating geese and ducks came in, and then everybody would feast. And after that, the yearly supply schooner was due to arrive.

Pulling up the canoe on an ice shelf and scrambling through the jumbled ice blocks, we found a fine lot of driftwood on the beach for our fire. We were sipping our tea and thinking how lovely the world is, when I looked up and to my horror saw our canoe drifting slowly off down the bay on an ice pan. The water gap was gradually widening. The

shelf on which it rested had cracked off in the hot, melting sunshine—silently, mind you—and gone afloat.

Right away I knew that the safe thing was to let it go. But we *couldn't* lose our canoe, our beautiful 18-foot Peterborough Chestnut, Labrador model canoe! I couldn't be so stupid! I was tearing off my clothes and splashing into the paralyzing water and flailing like a windmill. Surely I could swim fast enough to catch it—and there were paddles aboard. It wasn't very far. I was 26 years old and strong as a horse from having snowshoed about 1000 kilometres the previous winter.

But a little offshore breeze was moving the canoe faster the farther it drifted out from under the lee of the land. Halfway out lay an ice pan that I slithered up onto and jumped around on, wishing I had kept on my socks. I mustn't get paralyzed in the icy water—but I mustn't stay, either. I dove off for the canoe realizing *This is it!* I was past the point of no return now, and would catch the canoe or else. It moved in little surges. There was breeze enough now to make little ripples, and everybody knows how fast a canoe can drift, even on an ice pan.

It's all very well to write scholarly articles about hypothermia, but when you're immersed in ice-water to the eyes you get a feeling that such meanderings are extremely academic. You don't have to be a scholar to know that your minutes are numbered, and you'll get out soon or you won't get out at all. With such forebodings, I gave it all I had, feeling my arms and legs becoming like clubs, till at last I pulled up on the pan and grasped the sweet spruce gunnel of that blessed canoe. I beat my arms and beat my legs and beat myself all over. How could I have been so dumb as to let this happen to me!

It was only a short dash to shore in my lifesaving canoe, using a paddle I could hardly feel. Kate pulled up the canoe, while I was scrambling through the ice jumble for the fire she had already built to a glorious blaze.

"You look kind of blue," she said, "but you look good to me."

I danced around the fire so happy to be alive I hardly knew myself. She came and scrubbed my back with an old shirt and wrapped her own warm sweater and her own warm arms around me.

Just one more bit of northern lore, the lesson is: When hauling out on shore ice at spring breakup time, it is wise to haul way in toward the solid land, or to take a long tracking line from the canoe to a boulder or the roots of a sturdy bush, or a tree if you can find one. It may be just that one minute in time when your particular chunk of ice is loosening off and going for a sail. It's wise to take a line ashore at any season. I've seen a canoe in a squall roll wildly down the beach like a wisp of tumbleweed. You don't want to lose your precious canoe, your *sine qua non*, your without-which-nothing.



Whitewater course 1990

Photo by Bill Ness

IT WOULD HAVE BEEN GREAT

Chris Motherwell

The stage was set. We had planned a photographic trip for the May long weekend to the Poker Lake area. A long weekend in the spring is a visual feast—blooming wildflowers, trees just starting to leaf, birds and animals actively nesting. The area is usually fairly quiet except for maybe the odd fishermen. The only foreseeable black spot was the inevitable biting insects. Even a little rain shouldn't deter an avid photographer. It would be an excellent three days of shooting. Yeah!

Paul Siwy and I had been asked to do a photo trip so we got a little strict and stipulated that the equipment must include a tripod. We were looking for the more serious photographers in the club. John Groom and Ann Wilson had signed up quite early to ensure they were able to get a spot. No problem.

Paul went up Friday morning to ensure we would get the campsite we had arranged to meet at. He mentioned on Saturday that it had rained most of Friday afternoon and he had spent a lot of the time in his tent. Fun.

The photography would be superb Saturday morning—everything would still be wet making the colors very rich, and with the overcast conditions the lighting would be even which usually makes exposure and composition much easier. And some of the wildflowers would be in bloom. Alright!

“Would” is the operative word here. It **WOULD** have been an amazing weekend for shooting. I **WOULD** have made some good wildflower shots. I **WOULD** have had a visual reminder of the trip. IF I had only remembered to bring my camera. I had left it in my office in Toronto. Damn....

I cursed myself almost to the point of tears. And if it had not been for the five-hour return drive, I would have gone to

get it. So I eventually decided to make the most of the weekend anyway by doing some birding and learning a few new plants. Fine.

I set out early Saturday morning in search of Paul and the perfect campsite. It **WAS** overcast and everything **WAS** still wet. It felt great to be back in the canoe again, even if it was a short paddle. The only portage was no problem other than leaving a trail of stuff behind me that fell off my pack. So much for the one-trip portage. As I paddled up to the campsite, I looked around for a good place to land and spotted a huge log extending from the shore into the water. I stepped onto it and promptly sunk up to my ankle as this seemingly solid log gave way under my weight. Great.

After greeting Paul and mentioning my camera dilemma, I proceeded to haul up the canoe. The bank was sloped and slippery and I managed to slowly slide into the lake—getting the other foot wet—while Paul frantically grabbed at me to keep me from sliding any further. The whole thing seemed to happen in slow motion. Paul said he had a vision of me slipping to the bottom of the lake with a “what's next” expression on my face. Fitting.

After I set up camp, we went for an exploratory paddle around the lake. Ann and John arrived around noon, with their cameras. It was still windy, cool, and raining slightly. We fixed a bite to eat and then the others when off to shoot. I went for a walk. Right.

All in all, other than the people, it was a forgettable weekend. But that's a comment of frustration. There'll be plenty more weekends when the biting insects are bad and it's just a little too rainy and windy—but I'll have my camera. You can count in it. Yeah.

CANOEING BETWEEN MEALS

Earl Silver

It is with the pleasure of recall, that I am sitting down today to write about my canoeing experience on the Dumoine River under the auspices of Black Feather/Trail Head.

Working from my memory bank, it was a rather cool spring of 1990 when eight of us, including two trip leaders, ventured down the Dumoine. This river is situated in Quebec and flows into the Ottawa River about halfway between Pembroke and Mattawa, Ontario. The total trip can be done comfortably in three to four days, given at least an intermediate level of skill running whitewater.

We flew out from Rapides Des Joachims via Bradley's Air Service. The flight on the one-engine Beaver was rather, shall we say rocky. It may take some nerve to handle whitewater, but it requires one tough stomach to be rollicked about in the air for 30 minutes. Excluding the pilot, only one of the three passengers was rather calm about the whole affair. This gutsy lady of some 50-odd years was as cool as can be. I found out later that Judy was an ex-airline stewardess who had little problem coping with roller coaster experiences.



We landed on the water with few problems and I, for one, was only too pleased to get back to the security of a canoe for the paddle to shore. The weather was not the best for this trip. You take your chances in May. "But Mildred, there were no bugs!" said the optimist. Since we only had a couple of hours of sunshine for the entire trip, this is the last thing I will say about the climate.

We had the first of our fine meals that evening. The typical "Canadian" fair included hot soup, cous-cous with refried beans and tortillas, and fruit salad. A few cookies were consumed by those who needed the extra energy. The

next day we started out by eating a bacon-and-egg breakfast with wonderful oven-baked bagels accompanied by a spread of cream cheese.

Since one cannot eat all day, we went canoeing. The first day for me was a waste. As one can appreciate with these organized trips, the leaders need to get a feel for the level of expertise of the participants. They spent the first day taking a look at our skill levels and providing some pointers for all of us. Even though my partner Stan is in the early stages of his development, he is an excellent flatwater paddler and has the added bonus of possessing a cool head and a strong paddle stroke. By the way, we had stir-fry for supper.

With day two came the serious whitewater treats. We were hard pressed to maintain control in the bigger sets given the strong spring current and loaded canoes. To add to the challenge, there were not too many eddies to sneak into for a quick snack and a serious look down river. On the other hand, there were some lovely big standing waves for the "ride 'em cowboys" in the group. That evening we managed

to swallow a wine/cheese fondue for supper with Bob's freshly baked cake for those who do not mind a moist and mouthwatering desert after a day on the water.

Day three turned out to be different whitewater. Generally, the rapids were smaller in size and back-ferrying was the popular choice within the group. Some of the sets would have been worthwhile to play in, but unfortunately the time for this kind of fooling around was not as frequent as I would have liked.

Our final campsite was situated within a short hop of the Trail Head Canoe School on the river. Because it was Victoria

Day, it turned out to be an ideal location. The instructors from Trail Head's other clinics brought fireworks. It was a delightful display on the water and it certainly captured the spirit of revelry for those who came out to watch.

It was about this time that our leaders, Jean and Jim, acquired their nicknames. From here on in they will be referred to as Neon Man (in reference to the less than conservative nature of his dry-suit attire) and his companion-in-paddle, Mars Boy, given Jim's liking for a particular brand of chocolate bar. In fact, one of the advantages of this trip was the qualities of Neon Man and Mars Boy. Both



individuals were excellent canoeists, had a fine-tuned sense of fun, plus took appropriate care and caution with members of our group. For those whose primary goal was to upgrade their skills, the instruction was encouraging and helpful.

As you may have noticed, the word portage has not yet appeared in this account. In fact, there were only two portages of any significance. One a kilometre in length around the major falls on the river, and the other, about half the distance, around a particular ugly set of rapids. All the rest, of which there are few, would be classified as short with little difficulty.

The last day offered maximum contrast: the most challenging sets of rapids on the Dumoine as well as the flatwater that comes at the end where the river flows into the Ottawa. Of course, you may get lucky, have the wind at your back, and be able to sail a good portion of the flatwater leg.

A final word on the whitewater of the river. Towards the end you will encounter a variety of big water, with twists and turns plus numerous eddies for the technicians in the group. Given the bends in the river one can almost always choose between the safe inside route or the challenge of the outside big stuff.

I would like to add my credos on the environmental sensitivity of Neon Man and Mars Boy. Campsites were left cleaner than we found them, disposal of human waste was handled with the local ecology in mind, and biodegradable products were used wherever possible. Since Black Feather uses the Dumoine numerous times during the season, all of these "little" elements do add up to something meaningful.

We certainly were not starved for food and cookies nor denied a chance to challenge our skills. As such, the expenditure of about \$500 per person, including the flight charges, was perceived to be a reasonable deal. What I have found with most guided trips is you seem to sacrifice play time for the security of quality leadership. For my first time down the Dumoine, this was a small price to pay. What was not a concession, was the sharing of the experiences with a worthy group of individuals. Strangers became compatriots of the water who gained more than another notch on their paddle.

THE BOUNCE TEST

Fishing at the end of a long granite shelf a quarter of a mile from camp. All hard granite from there to here, here to there. Tail of a big rapid and we're spending the night. Almost dark now. Can see the yellow flicker of the campfire even from this far away. Time to wrap up fishing and head back to the campsite.

Noticing on the way back that the feet seem to be doing much better. Had a lot of trouble with them this past winter in the city. Looked like the old agility was going. Kept tripping over curbs and the edges of sidewalk squares lifted up by tree roots. All winter couldn't walk anywhere without tripping. Clumsiness carried over to the river trip. Stumbling over everything the first couple of days. Finally had to have a talk with the feet. A long talk. Told them that they were responsible for all the mobility up here. Could not come on river trips unless they did their part. Too dangerous otherwise.

Talk seems to have done some good. Feet now have a life of their own. Feet watching where they walk, gripping imperfections in the granite, and lifting over obstacles. Feet almost revelling in it. It's as if they're saying, "It's good to move and bounce and grab. Trust us. We're strong and we like this as much as you do."

Giving the feet the bounce test on the way back. Running up sloping granite; never stopping or gravity will win. Bouncing and stretching and jumping until the feet say, "No problem. We're in condition and can play as long as you want."

"Thanks, feet. Need you up here. Could never come without you as a strong and willing partner. Wait up. We'll walk back together."

Greg Went

WILDER-BLINDNESS

(Part 2 of 3)

Raymond Chipeniuk

Consider the title of the most authoritative American text on wilderness: *Wilderness Management*.⁵ Wilderness management?

As far back as the word "wild" goes in English, it has had as one of its chief senses the meaning of "uncontrolled." And according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, one of the two possible derivations of the word "wilderness" is from the combination of



"wildeorern-," meaning "wild," with "-ness," meaning as it still does, "state or condition." In the English of our day it has perhaps been shortened to "wilder- + -ness," and we could think of it as "wildness," with the understanding that the state being talked about is concretized in place. Therefore what is managed, or controlled, is by definition not wilderness—at least not by this definition.

The trouble is that right from the beginning "wilderness" has had another sense to it, figured in the second possible derivation of the word: "wilddeer + -ness," or "wild deer + -ness," to be rendered approximately as "resort of the wild beasts."⁶ (At one time "deer" meant wild animals in general.) In this second view of the word, wilderness is land in more or less a natural state, as manifested in teeming wildlife and an absence of domestication. And that kind of wilderness a government department can manage.

We notice this confusion rather a lot these days, because Canadians, as usual, have bought their intellectual inspiration from the U.S. If the Americans think you can manage wilderness, that is good enough for us. As already noted, our provincial governments, especially those in British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, and Ontario, have declared a few "wilderness parks." Our federal government, through Parks Canada, has erected a class of wilderness parks in the North, and in the South has designated wilderness zones in some of the older national parks. There we are, Canada steps into the van of world trends in natural resource management.

Or, for Heaven's sake, our preservationist societies will strive to create "wilderness" reserves in, let us say, southern Ontario. At one recent meeting in Ottawa it was seriously proposed that a local square of land about ten kilometres on a side be defended as a "wilderness." That parcel is surrounded by farms and private woodlots. It has been logged over once or several times. On any given day it may have hundreds of fishermen, hunters, snowmobilers, tricyclists, and picknickers in it. Plainly, this is not "wildern + ness," land uncontrolled by humanity; it is at best "wild deer +

ness," land given over to wild things—and not too clearly that, either.

More ominously, some of the top park planners in this country, for that matter some of the supreme policy planners, clearly do not comprehend the difference between "wildern + ness" and "wild deer + ness." Dinner-party chat exposes the naked truth that these experts take their role to be the provision of nature preserves and minor tracts of wild country that, because they are in a more or less natural state, the preponderance of visitors will mistake as "wildern + ness," the uncontrolled wild. Still worse, those who do make the distinction between the two kinds of wilderness and who acknowledge that what they are in the business of providing is "wild deer + ness," sometimes make the defeatist admission that they just no longer care.

They do not care because some time ago recreation academics made a thoroughly depressing discovery.⁷ If somewhere there exists a block of wild land, remote, hard to reach, demanding of skill and mental toughness to travel in, it will be used for recreation by a few individuals who prize its rare virtues. If, then, that reach of wild land is emparked in some fashion, and a few services are brought to it, more people come. The early so-called traditionalist visitors then leave, feeling crowded and not liking the decline in the quality of their experience. Their replacements, though, are satisfied by what they find, because the land looks as wild to them as any they are accustomed to seeing. After all, if they did not have the sort of expectations visitors to parks have, they would not have come in the first place.

Now, because recreation managers base their schemes on what a majority of people have been satisfied with in the past, they build more and better facilities to handle the increased number of users. True, further development drives out many of those visitors who tolerate some development in a park but not too much. However, as the second generation of recreationists moves on, it is replaced by a third, people who are still less demanding. "Regardless of the types of opportunities provided, a majority of recreationists will be satisfied with them," and the outdoor-going public grows more and more accepting of environmental degradation.⁸

In the end nearly everyone is happy, most users, the park planners and managers, and even the public-interest watchdogs over park systems, no matter how wretched an excuse for wilderness the park protects. Only the die-hard traditionalists hold out for higher standards, as they search for remoter country. But the planners have the solution for them too. Eventually a time will come when no more "challenging environments" will remain. Then everyone will have to rest content with the second- and third-rate. Indeed, in the long run they will not even know what the first-rate is.⁹

In sum, Canadians have been encouraged to believe that

“wild deer + ness,” land in a natural state, is the same thing as “wildern + ness,” the unmanaged country. But land in a natural state is not the kind of wilderness Canadians think or care much about. Parks, game reserves, Crown land under management for natural products: surely we have all the “wild deer + ness” we need. And as for the other kind of wilderness, the “wildern + ness” — well, at this point a cold frisson runs up our spines.

Here is why.

Wilderness is a strange gestalt of land in a natural condition and a state of being invoked in the person who finds himself (or herself) in that land. It is the state of being that is so interesting, because it means different things to different people. Until the late 1700s, and then only in England, it meant nothing worth experiencing. It was a nasty state of mind. Only in the 1800s did the English Romantic poets, as well as the inspired Americans Henry David Thoreau and John Muir, teach the world to prize it at least in its conventional mouthings. Only since then have a few Canadians sought it with a passion.

In truth, the one constant psychological component of genuine wilderness has to be fear.¹⁰ Yet in varying proportions other things are mixed into the experience every time.

Because lack of control—it is “wildern + ness,” after all—allows for the entry of danger, a human being exposed to it feels uncertain of himself. His uncertainty fosters alertness as the close calls accumulate: a habit of scanning the landscape on crawling out of one’s tent in the morning; a tendency to respond to a barely noticeable hush in the air. And caution attends alertness: just because the last ten sets of rapids were runnable does not mean one should not go ashore to inspect the current set instead of running it on sight.

In wilderness one is very conscious of the humanity one shares with other persons, above all with friends. They are what stands between one’s small self and the cold of outer space.

In wilderness one soars with exaltation at the extravagant beauty of the world, strides erect as a Blackfoot warrior in one’s mastery of discomfort and pain, cups between the extended digits of one’s rib cage a stillness so still that mere mortality sloughs off it and lies in heaps at its base.

But the fundamental psychic dimension of wilderness is fear. For there is much to fear. If it is indeed wilderness a person is in, it will present dangers from wild animals and violent weather. Hence the emblazonry of ferocious bears, the misdoubted wolf, jagged mountains, and the sea. In really wild land, where our knowledge is always inadequate, danger lurks within a handful of berries.

And in real wilderness, if one gets into trouble perhaps nobody will help one get out of it. Help comes from other people, usually of one’s own kind. If there were more than the thinnest scattering of people around there would be human control, and what we are talking about would not be wilderness.

This dimension of aidlessness may explain how it is that Americans can in one breath define wilderness as “an area ... where man himself is a visitor who does not remain”¹¹ and in the next say that the wilderness was a barrier and a threat to 16th- and 17th-century settlers because “it hindered movement, it harbored Indians.”¹² From those Indians the Euro-Americans had done their best to deserve hatred, not help,

so they became mere themes among the uncontrolled forces of the wilderness. Though early Euro-Canadians too thought of native people as “sauvages,” or wild men, during later times relations were better and the one in trouble could generally depend on the other for help. So in the Euro-Canadian tradition native people were a factor mitigating the wilderness.

Now, if fear is the living, gnawing, central constituent of this state of mind we are at pains to characterize, then most Canadians even in the large southern cities can sense it often enough not to forget it altogether. It comes back to them in winter, when the zero Keewatin wind cuts to their cheekbones at the bus stop. It comes to them slyly but awfully when their car stalls in a deep drift on a country road and they shiver to death wearing their leather shoes and flimsy imported topcoats. It is in their yearning for green when the last days of March run out and the snow has still not begun to melt. As Gilles Vigneault put it in his popular song, “mon pays, ce n’est pas un pays, c’est l’hiver”: my country isn’t a country, it’s winter.

Thus Canadians come face to face with a deadly, frightening wilderness for several months every year. Some quietly suffer it, perceiving the cold as pain, dashing from insulated house to warmed-up car to overheated office. Others, anguished with their maladaptation, head south to the tropics. Winter is not their country.

Wild, uncontrollable nature comes to Canadians every year. For that reason they cannot see wildern-ness as something different from what is all around them, And how could what is all around them possibly need protection?

Wilder-blindness.

Footnotes

5 Hendee, Stankey, and Lucas cited above.

6 This is the derivation Roderick Nash, in “Historical Roots of Wilderness Management,” chapter 2 in Hendee, Stankey, and Lucas, cited above, p. 27, appears to believe is the unique one; though it must be admitted that Nash is well aware of the modern nuances to the word.

7 There is an excellent summary of this research, footnoted, in Daniel L. Dustin and Leo H. McAvoy, “The Decline and Fall of Quality Recreation Opportunities and Environments?” in *Environmental Ethics*, Spring 1982, Volume 4, Number 1, pp. 49-57 (see especially pp. 51-53); see also J.S. Marsh, “Recreation and the Wilderness Experience in Canada’s National Parks, 1968-1978,” in J.G. Nelson, R.D. Needham, S.H. Nelson, and R.C. Scace, eds., *The Canadian National Parks: Today and Tomorrow Conference II* (Waterloo, Ontario: Faculty of Environmental Studies, University of Waterloo, 1979), pp. 151-177 (especially p. 167).

8 Dustin and McAvoy, cited above, p. 52.

9 Marsh, cited above, p. 167.

10 As is recognized in the recreation literature; see J.S. Gardner, “The Meaning of Wilderness: a Problem of Definition,” in *Contact*, Volume 10, Number 2, 1978, pp. 7-33.

11 This is the definition of wilderness given in the U.S. Wilderness Act; Hendee, Stankey, and Lucas quote it on p. 9 of their book, cited above.

12 Hendee, Stankey, and Lucas, cited above, p. 10.

KIPAWA RIVER NOTES

Richard Culpeper

The Kipawa River, from Lake Kipawa to Lake Timiskaming, is whitewater nirvana. There is something for everyone, from open canoeists to kayakers, during all water levels. Somewhere on the river you will find a set that tests the limits of your technical ability.

The river drops through some very pretty country. Cliffs that are 150 m high face the mouth of the Kipawa from Timiskaming's far shore, and 10 km further up that shore is the mouth of the Temagami region's Montréal River.

The Kipawa is a rugged river. Early canoe freight between Lake Kipawa and Lake Timiskaming was not brought up and down the Kipawa. Instead, it was transported through a series of small lakes named Premier lac du Portage du Sauvage, Deuxième lac du Portage du Sauvage, and Troisième lac du Portage du Sauvage. Get the picture?

An accurate description of the safest lines through the Kipawa's worst rapids has been assembled by NOLAC (The Northern Ontario Liquid Adventures Club). They are a well-established club who host a recreational river rally on the Kipawa in late June for the Ontario Wild Water Affiliation. If you wish to run the river, you should consider bringing this guide and heeding its warnings closely. NOLAC's address is P.O. Box 153, Kirkland Lake, Ontario, P2N 3M6. Doug Skeggs, a highly experienced rescue kayaker, is a good person to talk to about the Kipawa : (705) 567-5469 (h) or (705) 642-3222 (w).

NOLAC's guide notes: "The 16-km section of the Kipawa River from Laniel to Lake Timiskaming has 18 individual rapids, ranging from class II to class IV, one class V, and a 28-m waterfall." Lake Kipawa is about 90 m above Lake Timiskaming, which makes the overall gradient 5.7 m/km, or 0.6%. The gradient of the last half kilometre is 37.9 m/km, or 3.8%.

Fortunately, there are several access points: above or below the Laniel dam, the Hwy. 101 picnic site at km 4, the abandoned logging road to Broken Bridge at km 9, the trail to Grand Chute at km 14, and the Kipawa River Lodge at the mouth at km 16.

At medium flow, approximately 75 m³/s, the standard put-in is below the Laniel dam, and the standard take-out is the river mouth. In low water, below 50 m³/s, put in at the picnic site, and take out at the mouth. In high water, above 150 m³/s, you might wish to put in above the Laniel dam, but seriously consider taking out at Grand Chute.

The Laniel dam is about six metres high. When the dam is open and flowing at over 150 m³/s, running it makes for a breathtaking ride. At this level, the flow shoots out for nine metres. I don't know about the mathematics, but my best guess is that you race off the lip at 28 km/h, which may not sound like much, but is extremely fast for flowing water. While you're rocketing out, you're also descending along a parabola. You'll feel it in the pit of your stomach. This is truly a roller-coaster ride!

There are two caveats if you choose to run the dam. Check that you fit under any of the dam's logs that may not have been raised all the way up. You would look awfully silly if you were clotheslined as you launched off the edge. Also, know which side of the spillway you are running. Usually one side is open, while the other is closed. In late June 1989, a kayaker blithely paddled down the closed spillway and dropped straight down, six metres. He was moving at about 38 km/h when he hit. One metre of water and his plastic boat blowing apart saved him.

One kilometre downstream of the dam is Rock 'n Roll. The operative word is rock. Pretend that you are a pinball. Find where you want to pop out at the foot, and plot your course by working upstream. If you're on the ball, you won't get pinned.

There are some small rapids over the next two kilometres, after which the river widens as it passes the picnic site. In low water, the section above the picnic site is rather dull, so you might as well skip it.

Following the picnic area, the river sweeps left, straightens, and abruptly cuts right at the head of a class IV rapid. Welcome to Buttonhook. In high water, there are some large waves and wide holes. Tom Brown, in his kayak, found that the waves would flip him backwards. He inevitably would roll up just in time to be dropped into a hole. He seemed to enjoy it. Claire Beckett, with her open canoe, and I, with my kayak, chose to portage, which we certainly did not enjoy. There was no trail, the topography was rugged, and the bush was very thick. The best way to handle this rapid, and many others on the river, is to develop your skill so that you do not need to portage.

The difference between a river suitable for intermediate paddlers and a river suitable for advanced paddlers is not so much the difficulty and frequency of the rapids, but rather the difficulty and frequency of the portages. If the topography is moderate and the brush clear enough for overhead carrying, then you can finish a portage in less time than it takes to thoroughly scout, establish rescue points, and run a class IV rapid. If, however, you must fight through thick brush and cross steep ravines, dragging your boat half a metre at a time, then you will quickly exhaust and dehydrate yourself. Regardless of how few kilometres you wish to cover, you are left with decreased physical resources to draw upon, a strong desire to run rapids rather than endure further portages, and a decline in alertness which could easily affect your judgement.

In low water, upper Buttonhook is a delightful rock garden with some very tight eddies. Between Buttonhook and Broken Bridge are three short class III rapids. In low water they are class II. Broken Bridge is a wave followed by an easy set of rapids. At medium water levels, it is *the* surfing wave on a river crammed with surfing waves. Lance Collins, retired rescue kayaker and Outside Store owner, perks up

whenever you mention Broken Bridge.

Following Broken Bridge is Island Rapids, class III. Left of the island is the easiest route, though a boulder at its foot will do its best to jump out at you. The route to the right of the island is more interesting, for it offers two small drops that must be lined up accurately. If you're slightly off line, you will slam-dance with a rock wall.

Now the river gives you a rest while it winds left to begin its rush to Lake Timiskaming. Between kilometres 11 through 13 are five sets of class III rapids. They offer a smorgasbord of long sets, short sets, rocks, holes, surfing waves, and drops. If you can't find something to your taste in this section, you should trade your boat for a bingo card. In high water, several of these rapids are class IV due to

rather large holes, but if you can avoid the holes, you will be rewarded by taking negative g's off some very large standing waves.

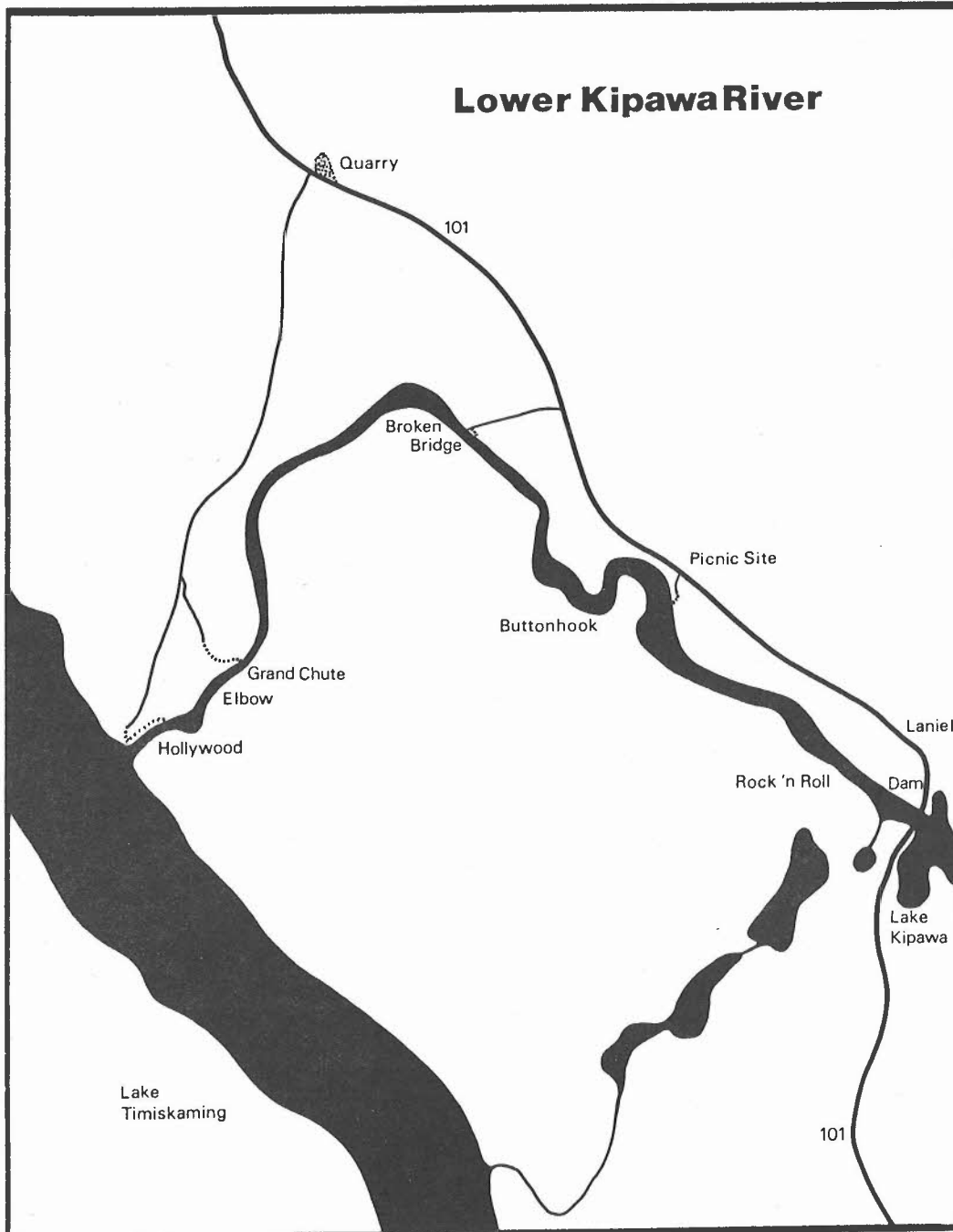
At kilometre 14, the river becomes serious. Keep to the right and portage early when you hear Grand Chute. It is a spectacular 28-m double falls preceded by two serious drops. Several kayakers have run the preliminary drops in low water, but the run must be graded as class VI, sub-class Stupid Pet Tricks. The double falls' first section is vertical; the second section is sloping. In high water, an exploding wave is caused by a pillar at the top of the second section.

In high water, you should seriously consider pulling out at Grand Chute, even though it means a 15-minute portage. The put-in below the falls is difficult. You must hand your

boats down a small, sandy cliff. Unfortunately, in high water you may not be able to place a person at the base of the cliff. Catch-22. Once you are launched into the turbulent pool below the falls, you must cross the river to scout the top section of the next set of rapids, The Elbow, and then re-cross the turbulence if you wish to run these rapids.

The Elbow is a class IV which bends left. It takes the water a while to realize this, so it insists on pushing you to the right bank. You can't cut the corner because it is blocked by boulders. To avoid being swept to the outside of the bend, you must start on the outside of the bend. Catch-22 again. In high water, if you are not precisely on line, you will be swept into a vicious keeper. Paul Cook, medic and rescue kayaker, missed his line through The Elbow by centimetres and almost paid with his life. In low water, The Elbow remains a class IV, but is much more forgiving. There are more holes, but no killer ones. The boulders are exposed, and allow you to eddy-hop your way through the bend.

The final set of rapids is Hollywood. One-half a kilometre of class V; triple falls; 37.9 m/km, 3.8% gradient; massive boulder garden. Wolf Ruck states: "In



heavily obstructed passages, a gradient of 2% approaches the upper limit of safe paddling." Do you *really* need to run this section? The portage is on the right. Step right up, folks.

In high water, Hollywood is as much air as it is water. If you find someone who has run Hollywood in high water, *never paddle with this person*. In medium water, portage the first half to avoid the triple falls. In low water, don your body armour and sing British Navy songs. You might wish to put Hollywood on your top-10 play list.

In low water, the first quarter of Hollywood cuts left and bends right, through a random assortment of boulders, holes, and eddies. The second quarter is where things get interesting. There is a triple falls, with each drop separated by a small pool. The first drop is about 1.2 metres. You attack it directly. If the hole or reactionaries don't get you, you can spin out into a micro-eddy on the left. Tom Brown came in slightly low on this eddy and flipped. He snapped up immediately, but was swept sideways over the second drop.

The second drop is deceptively challenging. It looks, and often can be, easy enough, but will do its best to ruin your day. The Human Probe, Mike Palkovits, has described it with the adjectives "dirty, stinking, rotten." Mike has been flipped by it. Tom Brown has been pivoted 90 degrees and washed over a ledge. Dave Andersen has blown his spray skirt and been submerged. I have been flipped and dragged twice, once entirely out of my boat.

To run the second drop, you start right, jig left off a rock wall's pillow, drop 1.2 m down diagonally across a hole formed by a strong reactionary, and wash along a 20 degree slope for four metres. If you are on line, you can pull out at the bottom in a large eddy on river right. If you are off line, you will be swept over the third drop.

The third drop is a 2.5-m vertical waterfall with a pool that allows you to recover before going over a small drop leading into the final half of Hollywood. The waterfall flows over a corner. Run it on river right, and try not to get stuck in the backwash. If you do find yourself underneath the flow, you can escape by working your way left to a pillar in the corner, but, once there, you then must avoid being caught by the backwash of the flow dropping from river left. I T-rescued Dave Anderson from under the main drop, but had extreme difficulty working our way out from the two backwashes.

Mike Palkovits enjoys ending off the third drop. His boat submerges entirely before rocketing back up, in a wilderness equivalent of pool practice off the three-metre tower. Thanks to flipping and drag-

ging in the second drop, I have gone over the third drop both backwards and without a boat. Backwards was no problem, but without a boat I played ping-pong with the boulders in the pool below the third drop. Consequently, I do not recommend ending off the third drop. Take it flat by doing a sit-up on your last stroke, and avoid the possibility of a vertical pin.

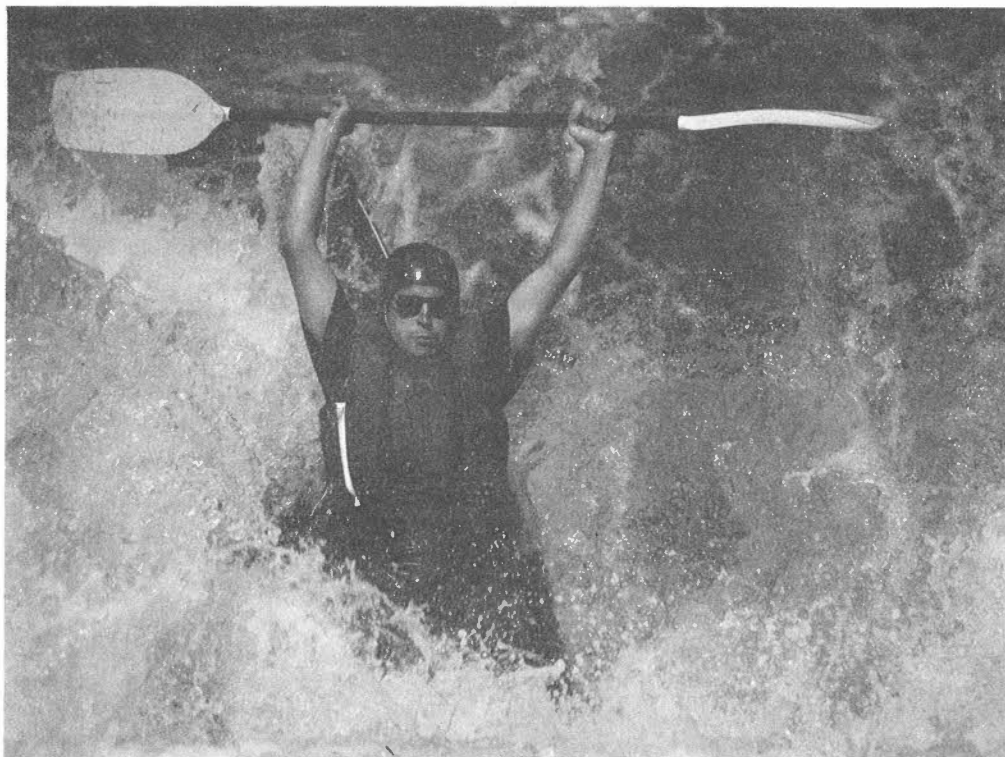
The second half of Hollywood is a severe boulder garden. There is no channel. Pinning is common. Dave Anderson says: "You don't try to run it, you just try to survive it." To enjoy this section, you must make your boat dance.

If you are up to it, you will find Hollywood tremendously enjoyable. The action is non-stop. Every move you know will be put to use. You will find yourself reacting instantly to the rhythm of the river. By the end of the rapid, you will be drained both physically and emotionally. In sum, it doesn't get much better than this.

At the foot of Hollywood, the Kipawa flows into Lake Timiskaming. At the confluence is Scott Sorenson's Kipawa River Lodge, (801) 225-8674. The guest book includes comments by survivors of the St. John's Boys School folly. Fourteen people, mostly children, drowned when three large canoes flipped on Lake Timiskaming in a wind storm. The boys had driven through the night from southern Ontario, set out after snacking on some cold sandwiches, and flipped while sitting high upon their packs. The messages left in the guest book are heartbreaking.

The lodge's older buildings were built for Lana Turner, who came to the area for a movie shoot. Scott has added a beautiful log chalet, which he built himself. The lodge offers climbing, hiking, swimming, board-sailing, volleyball, and two favorites of mine, recreational car shuttling and competitive sauna sitting. The price is absurdly low.

Give the Kipawa a try. You might get hooked.



A NOT-SO-BRIEF ENCOUNTER

John Mackie

I live on the north shore of Lake Ontario. My frequent need of off-shore rescue by passing sailboats eventually convinced me that I could not control my open canoe when an off-shore wind blew up. On the lake, the wind would catch my canoe like a kite, and despite strenuous paddling I would retreat farther and farther away from shore, out into the 60-kilometre-wide lake. One night while bobbing up and down in mid-lake in the dark waiting to be found and rescued, I decided that it might be a good idea to try a craft with an enclosed hull that did not catch the wind.

The sea kayak had not reached its current popularity at the time. At the Sportsmen's Show I met Sundance who built custom-designed canoes at a plant in Gravenhurst. He designed and built me a hybrid. The hull is cedar-strip and epoxy with a wood-framed canvas superstructure. It is 17' long, 26" wide, and 9" deep with a 6'-long cockpit (5.1 m, 65 cm, 22.5 cm, 1.8 m). The large aproned cockpit is for easy access, generous packing for cruising, and for sleeping in on long crossings.

Solo flatwater canoeing has its own hazards and is not for everybody. Sometimes it can even be spooky. For example, during my '89 voyage a lake freighter tried to run me down. I know it was deliberate because when I changed direction, it changed direction. I was in open water between two headlands 16 kilometres apart on Georgian Bay. About one-third across, I noticed a ship 16 kilometres off heading for the bay I was crossing. It looked like a giant black caterpillar floating on the horizon. No problem, I thought, by the time it reaches my position I will be five kilometres away.

Being a cautious type I kept an eye on the ship's position over my right shoulder. As I expected, it swung round and pointed its blunt nose at me. I was not concerned as it would be easier to paddle past the 18-metres width of the thing, rather than its 150-metres length. After 20 minutes of paddling I began to wonder why the bulbous nose was still pointed directly at me, even though I must have paddled 1.6 km from the first sighting. I leaned more into my paddle stroke in case an unseen current was holding me back without my knowledge. Ten minutes of pressure paddling and still that thing was heading directly for me and getting closer.

A funny thing about big ships; they travel at 30 km/h but they do not make a noise. They are not like the heavy launches which can be heard far off. Nor the run-abouts which suddenly whine past and rock the canoe with their wake. Loaded with 8,500 tons of cement, the 6,600 horsepower engines throb in deep harmony with the water which

absorbs its sound. Perched 15 m above the water the bridge captain and crew look like fleas on the ears of an elephant and appear to exercise as much control over the monster. These big black beasts seem to have a mind of their own and this one had made up its mind to get me.

I knew I had moved by checking the site angles of distant points. If I had moved and the thing was still heading directly at me, which it was, then it must have deliberately changed course to come after me. I was not comforted by this conclusion. On occasion, I have been known to react energetically to an emergency, but I would never panic. Let it be said that by rapid movement of all my body muscles, my canoe imitated a water spider skipping across the lake as if it were a mill pond. Crab fashion I moved in one direction, while looking in another. It was now so close that the ten-metres-high bow hid the rest of the ship and bore down on me preceded by a heaving bow wave. I turned away in terror and paddled like hell. I could feel the water being compressed by the ship's massive displacement. As I paddled I had the crazy thought that maybe I could surf on the bow wave. How would I keep my balance, I wondered? If I fell in, could I catch the side of the ship and hold on like Captain Abab held onto Moby Dick, the giant white whale? Any crazy notion would do to occupy my mind and keep it from thinking of what would happen to me and my canoe when sucked under by the ship's churning propeller.

Any minute I expected to be snapped like a twig, but it did not happen. The compression in the water gradually eased but I kept paddling frantically. Finally exhausted, I turned round to confront the inevitable but the monster was not where I expected it would be. The ship had made a 90-degree turn and was now headed in the direction from which I had come.

I sat there, frightened, limp, and sweating and realized the ship was going to dock on the shore I had left. To bring itself about it had made a wide swing which had kept it pointing at me, until the turn.

As I said, solo wilderness canoeing is not for everyone. It can have a disturbing effect on the imagination. Night noises become marauding carnivores and passing ships become malevolent monsters. Shamefully I continued my crossing but as I turned my back, from shore a thunderous crash like 8,500 tons of twisted metal swept across the lake. I did not know what caused the crash and I did not go back to find out. As I paddled, I wondered if maybe there was no dock on shore. Maybe the monster beached itself in frustration at not catching me, this time?



PARTRIDGE CREEK

Mike Jones
Ross Sutherland

Sometimes, after travelling the globe, we can find a true gem like Partridge Creek overlooked in our own backyard. Discovering this diamond was a little rough, but well worth the effort.

Partridge Creek is a tributary of the Skootamatta River. It is not too far from Toronto (three to four hours northeast by car, west and south of Bon Echo Provincial Park) and is easily accessible. It provides an interesting two- to three-day paddle through fairly wild country. The scenery is varied, from marshy wetlands to rocky shield, and the wildlife plentiful.

On 3 May the two of us started out to explore this thin blue line on the map. The rough part of the trip came from putting too much faith in maps. Our plan was simple. Follow the dirt road indicated on the map to its end, about 2/3 of the way down Skootamatta Lake, paddle to the end of the lake, portage about a kilometre into Partridge Lake, and paddle downstream.

About 15 kilometres after leaving the paved comfort of highway 41 our rough cottage road turned into a wide upgraded forest access road. Ontario does take care of its loggers.

The road went on and on. It seemed a bit far but the map showed the road ending on a bay of Skootamatta Lake. Then we crossed a small creek that did not seem to be on the map. It had been six or seven kilometres since we had last seen the lake when we came to a narrow bridge and a paddlable creek.

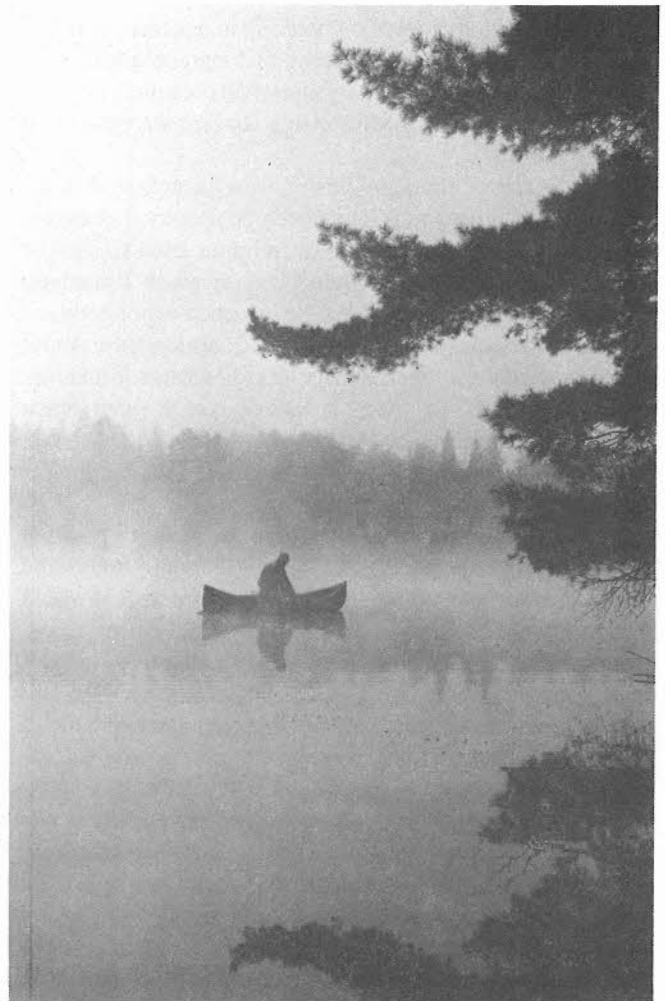
After some "uming" and "ahing," and since it was a nice day that was quickly passing, we decided to take our boats off the cars and head downstream. It had to be Partridge Creek. What else could it be?

The creek was wide and meandering, with a good current through a series of wetlands, large marshes, and willow swamps. A couple of beaver dams were easily run.



Over lunch, on a bare rock outcropping, we mused about where we might be. After serious consideration of the map, our memories of the car shuttle, and of the lay of the land, we decided we had to be somewhere downstream of Partridge Lake. Which was nice because we had to get back a bit early for our Skootamatta trip on Saturday morning. It was already Thursday afternoon.

A couple of hours after we put in, the shorelines narrowed and the creek dropped over a runnable ledge and entered a long set of rapids. One other ledge that afternoon required a short liftover.



About supertime we came to a lake. Based on our lunchtime divining this should have been Deerock Lake. It did not exactly look like Deerock Lake, and neither of us could remember passing under hydro lines, but we were hungry, it was a beautiful evening, and there was a nice exposed campsite facing the setting sun, so we decided to set up camp now and find ourselves later.

The tent sites were passable, not great, and the place was a waste dump. Cases of empty beer bottles, along with liquor



bottles, garbage bags, shotgun shells, and other human droppings were rotting in the woods. Too bad, otherwise the setting was idyllic.

After a good dinner and a full reconnaissance of our current location, it could not be denied that this was Partridge Lake, about five kilometres upstream from where we thought we had started. At least we knew where we were. It was to bed early and up at sunrise since we now had our entire two-day trip to do the next day.

Next morning 6:00 a.m. was superb. A thick mist was starting to lift as we paddled off into the first swamp. The sun was a bright hazy ball reaching its arms around budding trees. Birds were singing. It was the kind of morning that made up for the hoards of early spring black flies we knew would be out in a couple of hours.

The creek flowed through a beautiful marsh, over a couple of runnable ledges, followed by another marsh with a wide, unobstructed channel, followed by another set of rapids. This pattern continued all the way to Deerrock Lake. In all we made three short portages around picturesque falls.

Deerrock Lake had some good-looking campsites and road access via a conservation area. Unfortunately our car was still another 12 kilometres downstream. To speed up our trip we left one canoe at Deerrock Lake and paddled tandem to Flinton.

For a couple of kilometres after Deerrock Lake the creek meandered through an ill-defined channel that was repeatedly blocked by fallen trees. This mess cleared up after the creek joined the smaller Skootamatta River. Flatwater, a lift-over, and a long rapid were all that were left before we took out. By the time we completed our car shuttle and had a quick dinner it was 9:30 p.m., just in time for a shower and some sleep before we headed down the rest of the Skootamatta.

Few portages, beautiful wetlands, and enjoyable rapids make Partridge Creek a gem of a trip in early spring. We canoed much more of the creek than we intended and we were glad we did.

REVIEWS

SOFT PATHS: How to Enjoy the Wilderness Without Harming It, by Bruce Hampton and David Cole, published by Stackpole Books, Harrisburg, PA, 1988 (US\$ 10.95; C\$14.50).

Reviewed by Joan Etheridge.

The authors of this book on minimum impact behavior in the wilderness are teachers at the National Outdoor Leadership School in the U.S. They describe practical ways to reduce our impact on the pristine areas that we all love, and also on the not-so-pristine places that are still worth visiting and preserving.

As the population increases, if the percentage of people who enjoy spending time in those places that are uninhabited by man merely stays constant, the actual numbers of people going increases too. This has already resulted in regulations limiting the numbers permitted to enter certain areas at peak seasons, e.g. in Algonquin Park.

The causes of trail damage are discussed first—probably because the authors are hikers—but who amongst us hasn't hiked on a portage trail? Some of us may not be too thrilled with their recommendation to plod directly through the muddiest sections after rainfall but their rationale holds water! It doesn't take many footsteps on the sides of trails to destroy the vegetation, which results in the loss of more soil

during wet periods, and then permanent widening occurs.

They describe the different factors we should consider in selecting and camping in pristine areas versus locations that have a lot of use. Camping on rock is encouraged—so even though Thermarest can't make a sloping, uneven surface into a flat, smooth one, I'll have to change my ways.

Carelessly constructed campfires are probably the most common impact that we see as canoeists. They are usually surrounded by damaged trees, both dead and live. As we go further north or to higher altitudes, the rate of growth of trees gets slower, so the recovery of a site takes longer. The authors feel that we should think of fires as a luxury and continue the trend toward the use of stoves. However, they do talk about places where fires are acceptable and the safety aspects of using them, along with descriptions of campfire construction in pristine sites and cleanup before departure. When I lived in Australia, the philosophy of the hiking club I belonged to was to leave a campsite in such a condition that someone passing by later that day would probably not be able to tell that we had stayed there. I still try to operate in that fashion.

The next chapter gets into sanitation and waste disposal, in a manner of speaking! There are three objectives to keep in mind when disposing of wastes that must be left behind, such as body wastes: minimize the chance of water pollution,

minimize the chance of anything or anyone finding the waste, and maximize the rate of decomposition. They do not recommend urinating directly into rivers because resistant pathogens are found in the urine of certain human populations. Other kinds of trash can be minimized by carefully planning what we take into the wilderness in the first place. When bathing with soap, discard the water at least 70 metres from a river or lake—even biodegradable soap does not decompose *instantly* and can alter the pH of the water.

Special environments, such as deserts, arctic tundra, or bear country, may require special techniques. These are covered in separate chapters. There is also a well-organized suggested reading list with books grouped according to topic.

The book ends with a quotation that says it all:

Let no one say
and say it to your shame
that all was beauty here
until you came.

Although most of us know a lot about low-impact camping, who knows it all? This books has many good ideas and makes its points logically.



CANOEING WILD RIVERS: A Primer to North American Expedition Canoeing (expanded and updated edition), by Cliff Jacobson, published by ICS Books Inc., Merrillville, IN, 1989 (US\$19.95; C\$26.95).
Reviewed by Toni Harting.

The first edition of this attractive book appeared in 1984 and received an enthusiastic review from Herb Pohl (*Nastawgan*, Autumn 1985). Since then Cliff has improved his knowledge of wilderness canoeing, much of which is now included in this second edition. Herb concluded in his review: "It is easily the best book of its kind I have come across, and one that every serious canoeist should read." There is very little I can add to that comment regarding the new edition, only to say that the more than 200 changes and dozens of new additions make it even more an important book that every serious canoeists should read.

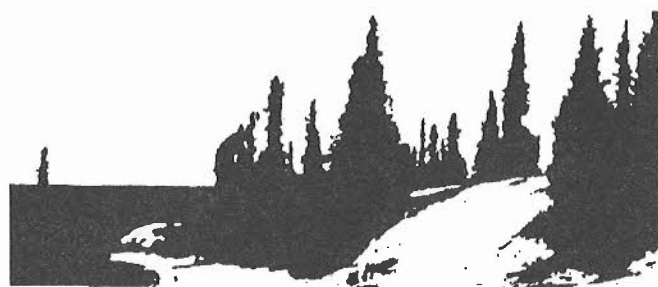
DOWN NORTH TO THE SEA: 2,000 miles by Canoe to the Arctic Ocean, by Alden C. Hayes, published by Pruett Publishing Co., Boulder, Colorado, 1989 (\$16.00 from Northern Books, see information in Products and Services section, p.23).
Reviewed by Toni Harting.

This is the absorbing story of a 1938 canoe venture by six young men who started their adventure on the Sikanni River, north of Fort St. John, B.C., and then paddled the Nelson, Liard, Mackenzie, Rat, Bell, Porcupine, and Yukon rivers into Alaska and to the Beaufort Sea. It makes fascinating reading and is well provided with maps and photographs. Especially the richly detailed account of their hard slogging up the Rat River is a must for anyone interested in that area. It is a rather small volume, but its 126 pages present a wealth of experience, information, and anecdotes from the times of wood-canvas, down, and wool.

DAN MCGREW, SAM MCGEE AND OTHER GREAT SERVICE, by Robert Service, published by Wilderness Adventure Books, Fowlerville, Michigan, second printing 1990 (US\$12.95).
Reviewed by Toni Harting.

Not that they have much to do with wilderness canoeing, but Robert Service's "rugged and romantic" Yukon period poems are cherished by many of us who have a profound love for wild places. In the years that Service spent as a bank employee in the Yukon (1904-1912) he produced dozens of delightful poems, ballads, verses, whatever one cares to call his creations, that over the years have been enjoyed by millions of readers all over the world. *Great Service* presents a collection of some of his finest work from that period, as well as a few lesser-known World War I poems, 57 in all.

Besides Service's timeless and fascinating writings, there are two other factors that make this book so appealing. First, it is enlivened by numerous excellent black-and-white illustrations by Mark Summers that nicely compliment the poems; and second, the book contains a most informative introduction by Tad Tuleja to the live and work of Robert Service.



REQUEST FOR REVIEWS There is always room in our newsletter for reviews of books and other publications that appeal to wilderness paddlers. Your short (maximum 300 words) reviews of books etc. that have caught your fancy are most welcome. We are especially interested in your opinion on books that have something special to say, such as James Raffan's *Summer North of Sixty* and Christopher Norment's *In the North of our Lives*. If you have read any book that you would like to have mentioned in *Nastawgan*, please send us your review.

WCA PHOTO CONTEST

The WCA again offers its members an opportunity to participate in an exciting and rewarding competition. Have a good look at your photo collection, select the shots that you particularly like, and enter them in this unique contest, which is for all of us who try to express photographically something of our wilderness experiences. Each photograph you enter means a chance of getting published in *Nastawgan*.

CATEGORIES

1. *Flora*: wild plants in their natural settings.
2. *Fauna*: wild animals in their natural settings.
3. *Wilderness*: scenery, landscapes, sunrises/sets, mood shots, close ups, etc. that interpret the 'feeling' of the wilderness. There should be no evidence of man in the photographs.
4. *Wilderness and Man*: as in category 3, but with man in harmony with the natural environment.

CONTEST RULES

1. Entries will be accepted from WCA members only.
2. *Not* eligible for entry are: photographs that received prizes or honorable mentions in previous WCA contests, photographs made by the panel of judges, and photographs by professional or semi-professional photographers.
3. All photographs must have been taken by the photographer her/himself.
4. Any kind of photograph is acceptable: color as well as black-and-white, slides as well as prints (minimum print size 3 1/2 x 5 in., maximum 11 x 14 in., border or no border, unmounted or mounted, no mats or frames).
5. A maximum of four photographs per category may be submitted; you may enter as many of the four categories as you want.
6. The WCA reserves the right to use any of the photographs entered in this competition for reproduction in *Nastawgan*, and to have duplicates made for the purpose of WCA promotion.

HOW TO ENTER

- a. Select a maximum of four photographs per category.
- b. Each photograph submitted should be numbered and clearly marked with the photographer's name. Include with your entry a sheet of paper stating your name/address/phone, and indicate by number for each photograph the category entered and the title of the photograph.
- c. Include with your entry the \$3.00 fee in bills (preferably) or by cheque made out to the contest organizer Chris Motherwell, regardless of the number of photographs entered.
- d. Pack everything in a strong box or between two sheets of cardboard in a sturdy envelope marked "photographs" and send or deliver to: Chris Motherwell, 90 Hollywood Cr., Toronto, M4L 2K6; tel. (416) 461-2741, *to be received no later than Sunday, 20 January 1991.*

JUDGING will be performed by a panel of experienced photographers who will look for content, spontaneity, originality, feeling of wilderness, and joy of photography.

PRIZES: The winner of each category will receive a matted 8x10 enlargement of the winning photograph. All placed photographs will receive a certificate in recognition of their achievement. Honorable mentions will also be given if deemed appropriate. All winning photographs and a selection from the other entries will be published in *Nastawgan*. Winners will be announced at the Annual General Meeting in February 1991, where all entries will be shown and constructive comments will be given on many of the photographs.

RETURN OF PHOTOS: Entrants may pick up their photographs at the AGM. Those not present there can pick up their photographs at Chris Motherwell's home, or they will be returned by mail (in that case, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope of appropriate size). Indicate with your entry how you would like to have your photographs returned.

FALL PARTY

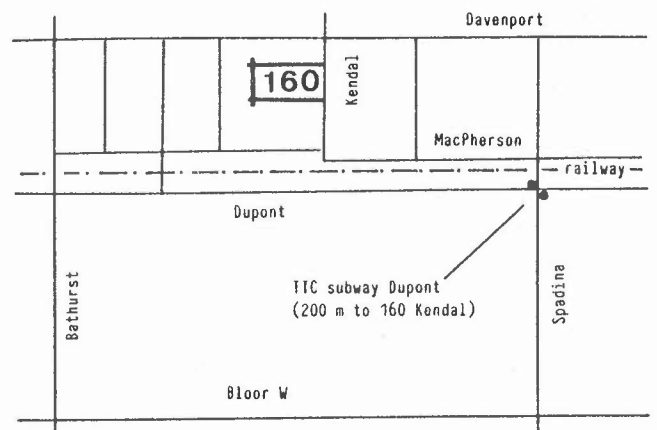
Want to meet old canoeing friends? Want to hear some tall paddling stories and see interesting photographs? Want to find out what the WCA is all about, who its members are, and what inside information they can give you?

Then come to the WCA Fall Party, also called Wine-and-Cheese Party, on Friday evening, 30 November, in the staff lounge of the Casa Loma Campus of George Brown College, 160 Kendal Avenue, Toronto. Non-WCA members are also welcome. Admission, to be paid at the door, is \$6.00 per person.

Program

- 7:00 - 7:30 Registration and welcome.
 7:30 - 8:00 Slide shows.
 8:00 - 9:00 Meet the people, enjoy the wine and cheese.
 9:00 - 10:00 Slide shows.
 10:00 — Coffee and gab.

For more information, contact Tony Bird at (416) 466-0172.



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

WCA TRIPS

13 October HEAD AND BLACK RIVERS

Doug Ashton, (519) 654-0336; book before 9 October.

This trip will begin on the Head River near Sebright and continue to the confluence with the Black River. We will then continue downstream the Black to the take-out, just east of Washago. The river in this area is generally flatwater and is suitable for novice paddlers. Limit six canoes.

14 October BURNT RIVER

Bill Ness, (416) 321-3005; book before 6 October.

From Kinmount to the town of Burnt River, this is a relaxed trip with a few short portages. Slow-moving water with a few riffles and plenty of time to appreciate the fall colors at their best. Suitable for the family. Limit six canoes.

14 October ELORA GORGE

Ken Coburn, (416) 767-5845; book between 8 and 13 October.

Often the water level is quite high at this time of year so we could have an exiting trip. Whitewater play for intermediate paddlers prepared for colder weather. Limit six canoes.

20 October LITTLE ANSTRUTHER LAKE

Rob Butler, (416) 487-2282; book before 12 October.

Fit paddlers will welcome this chance to find some new canoeing territory in this exploratory trip. The organizer is familiar with the area. Limit four canoes.

20 October SOUTH GEORGIAN BAY

Hugh Valliant, (416) 699-3464; book before 12 October.

A flatwater trip suitable for novices who are prepared for inclement weather. The trip will begin north of Six Mile Lake Provincial Park and run west to McCrae Lake where we will set up a base camp. We will then paddle to Georgian Bay Island National Park. Along the way we will see a historic shrine and a wooden cross. Limit five canoes.

21 October BRUCE TRAIL HIKE

Jasper and Mary Megelink, (416) 877-0012; book before 8 October.

An easy day hike near Toronto makes a pleasant way to spend a fall Sunday. Pack your lunch and a raincoat.

27-28 October HENVEY INLET

Ron Jasiuk, (519) 942-2972; book before 13 October.

An exploratory weekend trip travelling down the Key River to the Henvey River. A fine chance to explore this area in the northeast corner of Georgian Bay. Suitable for novice paddlers. Limit four canoes.

27-28 October MEW LAKE AREA HIKING

Doreen Vella, (416) 463-9973; book before 19 October.

Light day hiking from a camp at Mew Lake in Algonquin park. On Saturday we will hike around Mew Lake and on Sunday we will cover part of the Western Uplands Trail. The weather can be cold and wet in the fall so pack warm sweaters and rain gear. Limit ten hikers.

10 November GRAND RIVER

Steve Lukasko, (416) 276-8285; book before 2 November.

A four- or five-hour run with swifts and moving water. Ontario farm country makes a scenic background to this trip. Limit six canoes.

24-25 November MYSTERY HIKE ON BRUCE TRAIL

Joan Etheridge, (416) 825-4061; book before 9 November.

The weather will determine the location and length of this weekend of hiking. Either two days of backpacking with an overnight camp or two one-day hikes from a base camp. Warm clothing and blithe spirits. Limit ten hikers.

2 December HOCKLEY HILLS HIKE

Ron Jasiuk, (519) 942-2972; book before 25 November.

A cold-weather hike led by a local naturalist. There are plenty of hills to keep everybody warm. Limit eight people.

CONSERVATION

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

I need people to help with conservation issues. Wilderness canoeing areas are diminishing fast—this is surely a concern to us all. We are all busy—what we find time for is a question of priorities. Is wilderness canoeing area preservation a priority for you? Please call and help out. Stephen Crouch (416) 782-7741.

CONSERVATION NEWS AND UPDATES

ORCA ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE — Some significant progress has been made by the Ontario Recreational Canoeing Association. They have intervenor status at Ontario Hydro, and are able to make presentations to the Environmental Assessment Board on Ontario Hydro's 20-year plan currently undergoing review and approval. They have got the MNR sending all timber management plans to them. Several are received every week. ORCA is trying to get the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation to sponsor an Environmental Response person to monitor environmental issues. Such a

person would review things like timber management plans to insure there are no negative effects for recreational users. The canoe route monitoring system is progressing but is not yet a well-established formal system. If you see any environmental horror shows on your canoe trips, ORCA would very much like to hear from you. You can contact them through me.

TEMAGAMI — The Temagami Advisory Council is holding a series of information sessions to allow interested parties to become aware of and participate in the Temagami Area Council Planning Process.

MISSINAIBI PROVINCIAL PARK — The Missinaibi Provincial Park management plan is progressing. More than 450 completed questionnaires and letters were submitted to the Provincial Parks Council in response to the management plan proposal. The council will be reviewing this information before making their recommendations to the Minister of Natural Resources in October. The timber management plan for the forest adjacent to the park is in the process of being approved.

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

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

DISCOUNTS ON TRIPPING SUPPLIES WCA members who present a membership card will receive a 10 percent discount on many non-sale times at:

- ABC Sports, 552 Yonge Street, Toronto,
- Algonquin Outfitters, RR#1, Oxtongue Lake, Dwight, Ontario,
- Rockwood Outfitters, 669 Speedvale Ave. West, Guelph, Ontario,
- Suntrail Outfitters, 100 Spence Str. (Hwy 70), Hepworth, Ontario.

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

SWIFT CANOE COMPANY Algonquin Outfitters has established a new manufacturing division committed to building the best tripping canoes available. WCA member and Marine Architect, John Winters, has designed three sleek, seaworthy tripping models now in production. All models are available in fiberglass and Kevlar constructions with aluminum or wood trim finishes. Plans for 1991 include the introduction of two Royalex tripping canoes (16'4" and 17'4"), a solo model, and an 18' performance tripping canoe. All models as well as prototype designs are available for demonstration or rental use. They are available at a 10% discount to WCA members. Contact Algonquin Outfitters, RR#1, Oxtongue Lake, Dwight, Ontario P0A 1H0; tel. (705) 635-1167.

FLY-IN SERVICES A booklet has been produced listing all the charter fly-in services available in Ontario. Many also provide hunting, fishing, and canoe package vacations. Experienced bush pilots can take you to a comfortable outpost cabin, or help you set up in a remote area. To obtain this free-of-charge publication, contact Ontario Travel, Queen's Park, Toronto, M7A 2E5.


WHITE SQUALL Join us in exploring the 30,000 islands of Georgian Bay by sea kayak. We teach carefully and with a smile. Our shop has paddling and trip gear that works, fine folk music, friendly chickens, and the best selection of canoes and kayaks on the Bay. RR#1, Nobel, Ontario, P0G 1G0; tel. (705) 342-5324.

Plan your 1991 canoeing adventures with the Canadian Recreational Canoeing Association's "Canoe-toon Calendar" by Paul Mason.

ORDER TODAY!

C.R.C.A. & Paul Mason
Canoe-toon Calendar
1029 Hyde Park Rd., Suite 5
Hyde Park (London) Ontario
N6M 1Z0
(519)473-2109 Fax (519)473-2109

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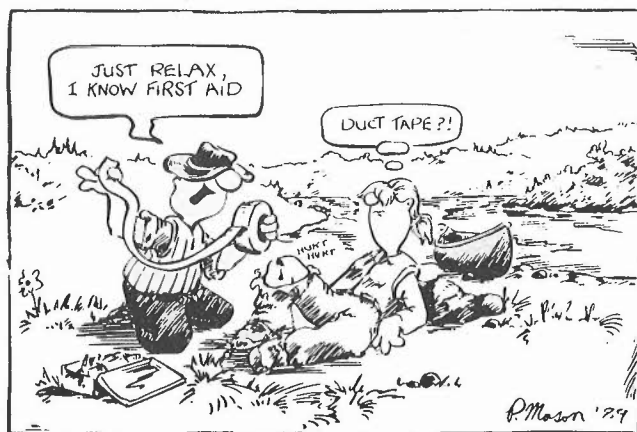


\$6.95 plus \$1.00 P&H

NORTHERN BOOKS Used, rare, reprinted, and select new books with northern and/or wilderness focus; emphasis on canoeing, exploration, fur trade, Arctic anthropology, etc. The new catalog is now available. Write: Northern Books, P.O. Box 211, Station P, Toronto, M5S 2S7.

UNIVERSAL SOAP is a more than 98% biodegradable multipurpose cleaning concentrate. It is pH balanced, free of phosphates and alkalis, and environmentally safe. It has been used successfully in Europe for over forty years and is now available in Canada. WCA members will receive a discount. Contact: Robert Pare, 25 Mossom Road, Unit 2, Toronto, M6S 1L9; tel. (416) 767-4396.

CATALOG The 1990/91 edition of the Map and Aerial Photograph Catalog published by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources can be obtained at no charge from the Ministry of Natural Resources Public Information Centre, Room 1640, Whitney Block, 99 Wellesley St. West, Toronto, M7A 1W3.



CANOE-TOONS
PAUL MASON

PARTNERS WANTED

I am planning to do the Nahanni River in July 1991, paddling solo. I intend to drive from Toronto to Blackstone Landing on the Liard River, a distance of 5000 km, and fly in from there to Moose Ponds, the headwaters of the Nahanni. Then I plan to descend the river over a period of three weeks, back to Blackstone Landing (and my car). Along the route I plan to climb about 1000 metres to the top of Mount Wilson at the Moose Ponds and take time out to visit the many interesting places. If there are any accomplished whitewater canoe trippers that are interested in coming along, give me a call. Peter Verbeek, (416) 757-3814 (h) or (416) 980-8857 (b).

Where it is ...



... in this issue

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|-----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Cochrane River | 12. Wilder-blindness | 22. Conservation |
| 5. Thelon Game Sanctuary | 14. Kipawa River notes | 23. Products and services |
| 6. News briefs | 17. Not-so-brief encounter | 23. Partners wanted |
| 7. Letters to the editor | 18. Partridge Creek | 23. Canoetoon |
| 8. Sine qua non canoe | 19. Reviews | 24. Where it is... |
| 9. It would have been great | 21. WCA photo contest | 24. ...in this issue |
| 10. Canoeing between meals | 21. Fall party | |
| 11. Bounce test | 22. WCA trips | |

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Wilderness Canoe Association membership application

I enclose a cheque for \$25 (adult) or \$35 (family) for membership in the Wilderness Canoe Association. I understand that this gives me/us the opportunity to participate in WCA outings and activities, and entitles me/us to receive *Nastawgan* and to vote at meetings of the Association. New member Renewal

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____ Phone Number: _____ (h) _____ (w)

* This membership is valid for one year.
* Send completed form and cheque, payable to the WILDERNESS CANOE ASSOCIATION, to the membership secretary at the WCA postal address.