



nastawgan

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A BARRENLANDS CIRCLE

David F. Pelly

with journal excerpts from Laurie McGinnis

We're in real wilderness now, paddling waters that perhaps no white person has paddled before. The only signs of human life we see are rings of stones where Inuit pitched their tents, holding down the skins with stones. Scattered about these "campsites" we often find bleached bones, the remains of caribou. The sky is huge up here, wide enough to see various kinds of weather at the same time, hues of grey, blue, and purple, and every type of cloud.

The entry in Laurie's journal came a few days into our Barrenlands trip — the wilderness needs awhile to take hold,

or rather we need awhile to let go and open ourselves to the wilderness around. For me it was a return to the land I know and love from many years of travel; for Laurie it was an initiation to the real Barrenlands. Seeing it afresh, through her eyes, was a renewal for me.

We travelled alone on this trip, just the two of us in a single canoe. That's not a practice I'd advise, particularly in the Barrens. But in this life you take risks in order to meet certain objectives. We wanted to be alone out there; it was important to us. The risk was measured, and mollified some-

what by my familiarity with the land nearby Baker Lake and by our local contacts with Inuit hunters who knew our plans.

We left Baker Lake on a Saturday afternoon in mid-July, after less than 24 hours in town, busily repacking, buying stove-fuel, checking out with the RCMP, visiting local friends, and exhuming our canoe from under Tularialik's house where it had spent the winter.

By late afternoon we had carried our packs and canoe down to the water's edge, with the help of two 12-year-old Inuit girls who wanted to know if people speak Inuktitut where I come from. We shoved off about 5:30 p.m., with the sun still high in the sky. Unfortunately, an east wind had blown back a lot of ice that had been blown out towards Hudson Bay. We had quite a time paddling among the ice, looking for enough of a path to get us around the edge of the lake. Although I expected the ice to be thin, it was actually almost a metre thick.

Once across the lake we camped beside a swift-flowing river marked without a name on the map. The first part of our exploration lay up this river. Inuit use it, occasionally, as a winter ice-route, or in spring after break-up when the water's high, with their high-powered outboards. So far as we know, other paddlers "from down south" have never ventured this way. It's unlikely many will in future. Upstream work is hard any time. This struggle exceeded even our worst expectations.

For most of 70 km the current was too strong for paddling, so we walked along the bank, lining the canoe with ropes. Hard work, and slow. Lining against a strong current successfully requires a technique that I'd read about and dabbled with, but had never really used. It took some practice, indeed, but after several kilometres we became quite an adept team, Laurie handling the directional control with a line to the stern, and my line to the bow providing most (though not all, to be fair) of the horsepower to move the canoe upstream. Part way up the river, a small unnamed lake offered temporary respite, an opportunity to paddle. It seemed to us a haven.

As we entered the lake, we came upon a pintail duck leading her brood. The ducklings promptly scattered but momma duck continued to squawk and fuss about in front of us for about 2 km, apparently quite relieved that her tactic of diverting our attention from her young had worked! At about the same time, I caught my first fish ever! — a 3 or 4 pound lake trout. We had a wonderful lunch of fried fish and curried rice. Then we paddled out onto the lake.



It was eerily quiet and flat, with a London-like fog enveloping everything. Between the grey sky and equally grey water there was just a sliver of land visible on the horizon. The lake was teeming with life, however: red-breasted mergansers, Canada geese and snow geese swimming together, tundra swans with their babies, yellow-billed loons, herring gulls, long-tailed jaegers, scoters, and a colony of fifty or more arctic terns.

As we left the lake and re-entered the river, we began to see ice floating by in larger and larger chunks.

Finally, at the end of a week of heavy going, we were in the final approach to Pitz Lake. After a few kilometres paddling with ice chunks passing swiftly in the opposite direction, we climbed out of our canoe and walked up onto the ridge of sand beside the river just where it flows out of Pitz Lake, and looked out across a solid sheet of ice. It was 22 July. The first signs of break-up, just where the river exits the lake, had created a virtual dam of metre-thick chunks of ice. "Now what?" we asked each other. We both dreaded the thought that we had come this far, only to be blocked and forced to return back down the same river — a descent that would only take a day!

All night long we heard the cracking, gnawing, grating sounds of the ice. Sometimes, when the ice was jammed, we'd hear only the pelting rain. Then loud crashing as the ice jam was released. We awoke, unbelievably, to see a completely clear blue stream flowing past our campsite, and a cleared lake beyond. There was still a substantial amount of ice in the lake, but what had not been removed by melting and movement downstream through the night was pushed by the winds to the south half of the lake. Amazingly, our path had been cleared by the combination of winds in the right direction and stormy weather. Not only had the winter ice broken on the night before our crossing, but the wind conditions were perfect for paddling. It was absolutely calm.



We were lucky: 13 km of open water and ideal conditions. As we paddled, we readied ourselves for what lay ahead. Someone later asked me how was the upstream work — I replied that it was a hell surpassed only by the four-day portage that followed! We had decided to cross the height of land between Pitz Lake and Princess Mary Lake. That meant three-trip portaging from pond to pond for 30 km through a pass in the hills dividing the two watersheds, often plodding through soggy muskeg.

From an old Inuit camp on the shore of Pitz Lake, we climbed up to the ridge that led gently toward the height of land. From there we could look back on Pitz Lake below, and ahead down the valley that would lead us to Princess Mary. The price was high — it is certainly the hardest I've ever worked — but the rewards were plenty. Old signs of Inuit hunters were all around us; signs of other white voyageurs were nonexistent. A peregrine falcon circled and swooped over its nest right at our height of land. Across the valley ahead, a herd of tens of thousands of caribou moved slowly southeast.

On the first night of the traverse, we camped along the ridge, miles from the closest water, our tiny tent looking quite lost in the vast landscape. The end of the next day found us eight kilometres into the traverse, in the deepest wilderness imaginable, camped at an old Inuit site with all the appearance of a well-used seasonal hunting camp.

Continued west toward Princess Mary by a combination of paddling small lakes, dragging the canoe up narrow streams and portaging fairly short stretches. Soon after starting out, we passed through the narrow entrance of a small lake. Minutes later, from mid-lake, we heard loud splashing behind us, and turned to see about 200 caribou crossing at the narrows through which we had just passed. It seemed remarkable that all those animals were so nearby when we entered the lake, yet we had no clue of their presence, either by sound or sight, and could quite easily have missed them. This gives some indication of the amount of caribou crossing the land all around us, yet unperceived. A few moments later, a group of about ten caribou passed by us at closer range, bulls leading, followed by females and four very young, fuzzy babies. Bringing up the rear were a couple more bull caribou. Advanced 8 km today!

On the fourth night since leaving the beach at Pitz Lake, having passed through the most untouched wilderness I've ever been in, we were camped on the shore of Princess Mary Lake. It had taken a total of 13 days to get this far,

117 km from Baker Lake. The rest, though much farther, was all downhill. As if to celebrate our success, a following wind the next day pushed us down the eastern edge of this beautiful lake toward its outlet into the Kunwak River. The lake must have been named many years ago, perhaps by an early explorer with the Geological Survey of Canada, probably after King George V's daughter. I can imagine why: it is a captivating lake, with its surrounding hills and rounded islands, a suitable setting for a princess' domain. Once again, travelling with someone who had never seen the Barrens' splendour before helped to open my eyes.

The land here is principally covered with a thick layer of mosses and lichens that provide a spongy, soft carpet for camping. Scattered about are various types of dwarf birch and willow — the tallest vegetation towering at just over a metre. Interspersed among this mustard-yellow, olive-green, and chocolate-brown covering is an array of colorful wildflowers. It seems that about half the ground area is dry and half is rather wet and soggy and covered with tussocks (mushroom-shaped clumps of grass) that make for difficult walking.

Strewn about everywhere is every size and shape of rock, mostly covered with lichens in shades of black, grey, white, bright orange, and other colors. Many of the rocks look like

they were tossed about by some giant hand. Others are grouped in crooked lines or piled high like partially constructed stone fortresses. In fact, they were pushed about and left in their present locations by the glaciers of the last ice age.

Any canoeist can imagine how good it felt when the current of the Kunwak River began to tickle the bottom of our lone canoe. Relief turned to exhilaration as the power grabbed us and we began the sweeping descent of a new Barrenlands river. With the sun shining and a fresh wind blowing on our backs, we fairly flew down the 30-km stretch of river, past banks often lined with caribou and geese. By early afternoon we had joined my old friend, the Kazan River, at the west end of Thirty Mile Lake. There's a hill there that ought not to be missed; it's worth the climb.



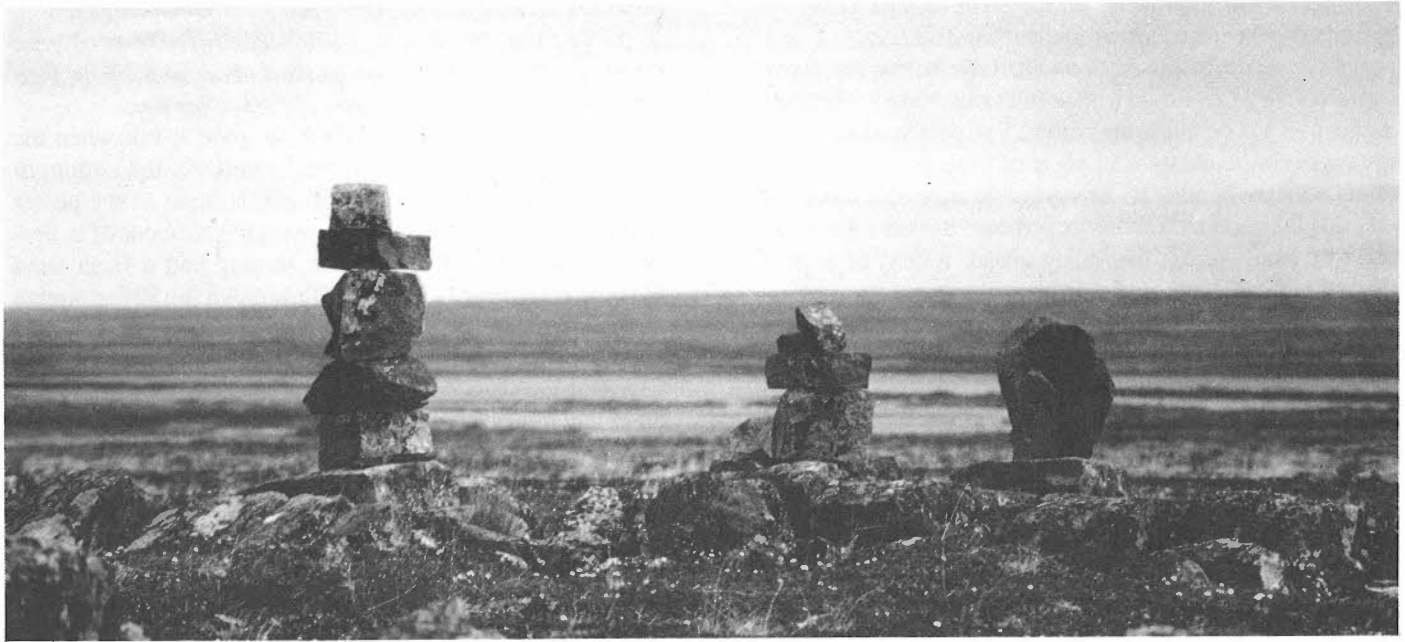
The view was spectacular. Miles and miles of open, unchanging land, more and more lakes, hills, rivers — all gave me some idea of the immensity of this land. Seeing our tiny tent and speck of a yellow canoe at the bottom of the hill, and knowing that in all likelihood we were the only human beings for many miles, is truly humbling.

That hill was also used by Inuit hunters who, perhaps while they waited for caribou, carved stone tools there, their labours revealed by the many chips of stone left scattered on the ground.

The stretch of the Kazan that flows through Thirty Mile Lake and then winds north and east toward Kazan Falls is one of the most beautiful in the Barrens. It also offers much of archaeological interest, for Caribou Inuit sites can be found on almost every point. We had hoped for more time here, time to wander into the hills, but the trials of our first two weeks, the river ascent and subsequent portage, robbed us of that pleasure. We pushed on toward the Falls, stopping to examine just a few of the old Inuit camps along the banks.

At the top of a hill, hidden from view on the river, was a Caribou Inuit grave site. There were a number of inuksuit and two graves: stones placed in an oval shape, within which the body would have been placed, aboveground. In or around the grave, belongings of the deceased were placed. At one grave we saw a kayak paddle; at the other was a tin cup. In both graves, most of the bones were gone (apparently carried away by animals), but the skulls remained.

After the last of our stops at an archaeological site, we got into the canoe in the early evening for the final stretch down to the Falls. It was a paddle we both remember: the river's beauty spoke to us alone for one last time.



It was a lovely paddle. The sun was sinking low, the river was wide and glassy. Inuksuit stood along the right bank, silhouetted against the sky. Two red-throated loons were enjoying their evening swim, diving and calling as we passed.

We camped near the Falls that night, and spent half the next day enjoying that magical, powerful spot. We added our message to the cairn built in 1974 by WCA member George Luste during a trip that he described as “glorious and good hard work.” For years that beautiful wilderness location, near the end of the Kazan River, has been celebrated by passing canoeists, many of whom have added their names and comments to the cairn’s collection. Today it enjoys wider recognition, as last summer the NWT government unveiled a plaque beside the falls commemorating the river’s designation as a Canadian Heritage River.

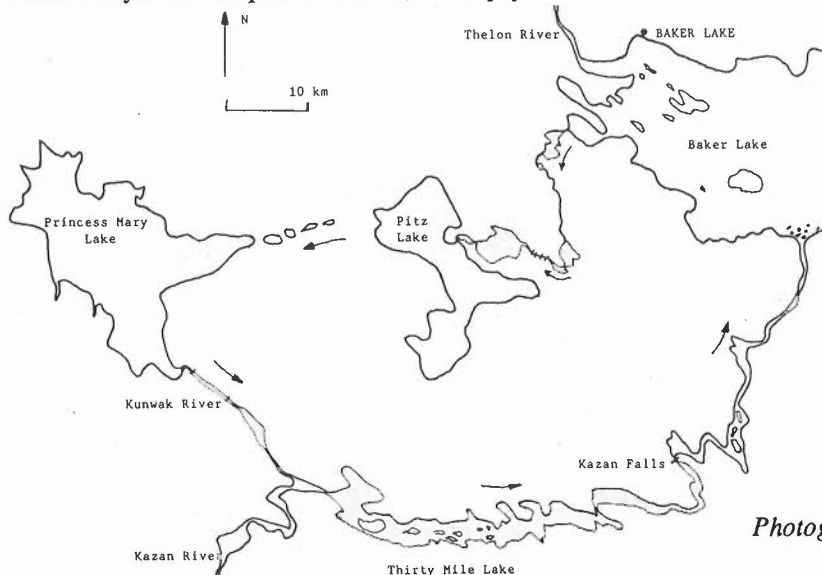
The last stretch of the river, from the Falls down to Baker Lake, flows swiftly past red, rocky banks. It is used a lot by hunters from the community of Baker Lake searching for caribou, so we knew we’d be encountering people, marking the end of our 24-day isolation. We were met at the rivermouth by some friends from Baker Lake, three of the Mannik boys. We camped with them, and enjoyed a feast of

bannock and their freshly caught caribou. Our circuit was complete. That felt good; a “circle trip” in the Barrens is not easy, neither easy to find nor easy to do, with the inevitable upstream work. As in the past, I stood beside the last run of the river, knowing that some day I’d be back again, and wondering when.

The Kazan is fast from this point to its mouth. We had fun bouncing over waves and watching the rocky sides of the river fly by. We stopped a couple of times to look at peregrine nests, and saw one with three babies. They had their “flying wings” but still had downy bodies. The babies screeched at us, imitating their parents above. Their crodgedy little faces were quite humorous as they barked their warning at me.

When we reached the mouth, it was a still and misty evening. As we paddled past numerous beaches and rocky islands, we could see the huge blue Baker Lake in the distance, the end of our expedition.

At press time, David and Laurie are in Honduras, looking to paddle a *pipante* up the Rio Platano.

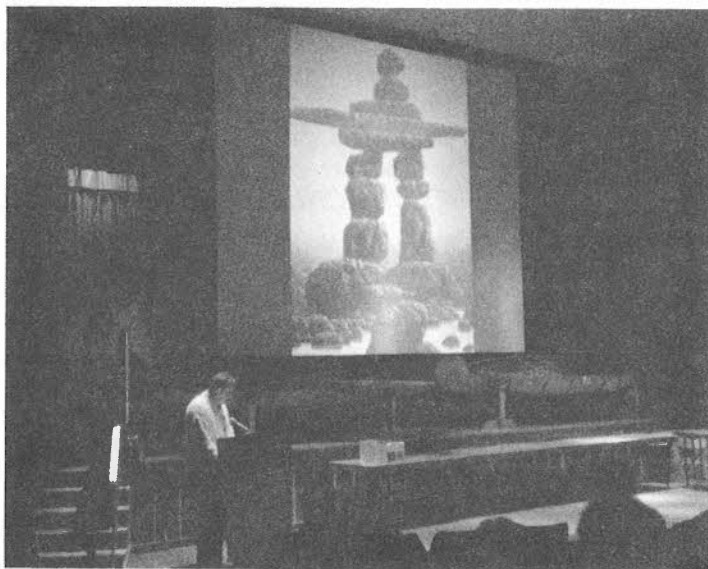


Photographs by Laurie McGinnis and David Pelly.

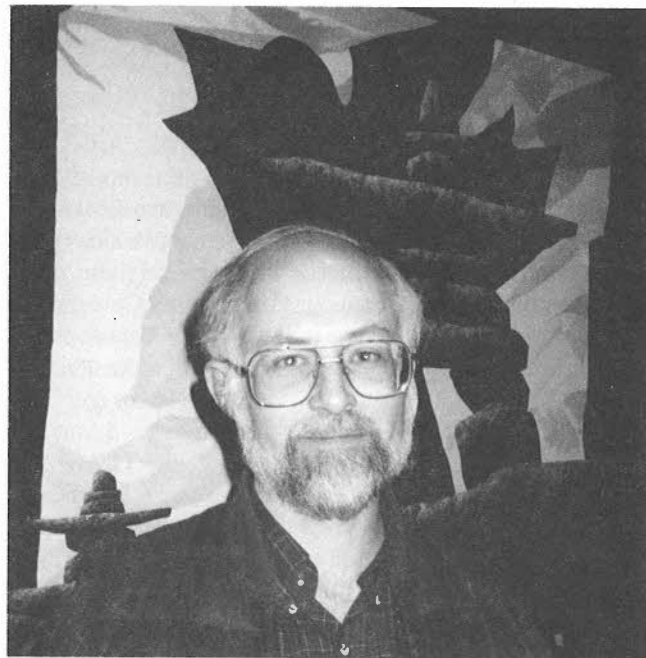
CENTRAL ARCTIC SYMPOSIUM

A enthusiastic crowd of over 650 people listened eagerly to the 19 presentations made at the now celebrated George Luste/WCA symposium which was held in Toronto on 25 and 26 January. A wide variety of subjects, all relevant to the area of the Canadian Arctic roughly centered around the Back River, and ranging from canoe trips to native issues to history to flora to fauna to literature to wildlife to autumn colors to personal experiences, was presented by a quite varied group of men and women:

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|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| - Summer North of Sixty | (Jim Raffan) |
| - Arctic History and George Back | (Stuart Houston) |
| - A Northern Perspective | (Jim Bourque) |
| - Horton River Harmonies | (Pascal Baillargeon) |
| - In Quest of Stef's Cabin | (Bill Hoyt) |
| - Interpreting Arctic Literature | (Ian MacLaren) |
| - Autumn in the Barrens | (Donna Barnett) |
| - Billy Hoare in the Barrens | (Sheila Thomson) |
| - Barrenland Express (movie) | (Jean-Marc and Louis LaCasse) |



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|---|-------------------|
| - Arctic Flora | (Josef Svoboda) |
| - Arctic Fauna | (Ann Gunn) |
| - Wager Bay Wildlife | (Barry Griffiths) |
| - Morse River Summer | (Michael Peake) |
| - With Morse on the Coppermine | (Jack Goering) |
| - A Northern Reading | (Larry Osgood) |
| - Arctic Canoeing -
Variety and Change | (Bob O'Hara) |
| - Lands Forlorn Revisited | (George Luste) |
| - Into the Great Solitude | (Rob Perkins) |
| - In the North of our Lives | (Chris Norment) |



Time and enthusiasm willing we hope to keep this annual WCA event going in the future. At next year's symposium, which will again be held in the last weekend of January and not the first weekend of February as announced at the last meeting, the geographical focus will be on Northern Quebec and the North Shore. If you have any suggestions for speakers, please contact George Luste in Toronto at (416) 534-9313.

CANOE REGISTRATION LICENCE?

After several years of debate, Transport Canada is drafting proposed legislation that will require all water craft — from canoes to ocean freighters — to pay an annual licensing fee and have all craft in Canada on a data base just like your car.

The Canadian Recreational Canoeing Association (CRCA) has long been opposed to having canoes and kayaks or sea kayaks be legislated to pay an annual licensing fee. The Association proposed that canoes, kayaks, and sea kayaks be exempt from this annual licensing fee because of the lack of service provided by the Coast Guard to paddlers. In general, canoeists, kayakers, and sea kayakers would be

subsidizing search and rescue costs for Great Lakes, power boat, and ocean going vessels. It was also proposed by the CRCA that optional registration be made available if paddlers so desired to be registered.

Until recently it was believed that this recommendation was to be accepted, but the minutes from a recent Transport Canada meeting did not include this exemption.

Unless you wish to pay an annual licensing fee for enjoying your favorite paddling sport, send a letter to Transport Canada expressing your concerns. Letters can be sent in care of: Council of Boating Associations, c/o Allied Boating Association, 5468 Dundas Street West, Suite 324, Islington, Ontario, M9B 6E3.

This highly disturbing news item was discovered in the Winter 1990 issue of *Kanawa*, the magazine of the CRCA.

CONSERVATION

The Conservation Committee has taken on two main issues: Magnetawan/Pickerel area and Algonquin Provincial Park. The intent is to: gather information; write to government officials; provide informative articles in *Nastawgan*; monitor the area with exploratory canoe trips; get together with other conservation organizations on issues in the areas.

As part of these efforts the Committee is planning exploratory trips into Algonquin Provincial Park this spring and summer. These trips are in support of and in co-operation with the Wildlands League, the Ontario chapter of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society. The Wildlands League will identify areas where they would like to keep abreast of current activities. Trips into those areas will be organized with side excursions to investigate and take photographs. See WCA Trips program for trip dates.

Stephen Crouch

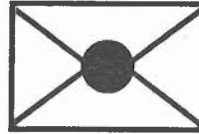


PARTNERS WANTED

ALGONQUIN AUTUMN COLORS I will be taking a three-week trip through western Algonquin Park, from 21 September to 14 October this year. The leaves will be turning, there will be few other visitors in the back country, and the plants and animals will be wearing their fall garb and engaging in their fall activities. I'll be going from Kawawaymog to Cedar, to Canoe, to Louisa, to Galeairy, to Kingscote.

I am looking for companions for this trip. If you would like to join me for all or part of the trip, please write or phone me at the address below. I am an experienced tripper, having taken a number of long trips, including a 20-day trip in 1990. Steve Isaacs, 1678 Shattuck Avenue #25, Berkeley, CA 94709, USA, phone (415) 526-1830.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR



CARDINAL RULE OF SAFETY

I thoroughly enjoyed reading Jim Greenacre's article 'A Very Close Encounter' in the Winter 1990 issue of *Nastawgan*. I must, however, comment on his belief that canoeing alone is breaking "a cardinal rule of safety."

A solo trip is a very special experience which I have enjoyed in the past and fully intend enjoying again in the future. Although my solo trips have not been on the grand scale that others have been on, such as Herb Pohl, they have nevertheless been trips where a mistake could have proven fatal.

The secret of a safe trip, especially important on a solo trip, is not in having all the skills required to get out of every conceivable disaster, but to exercise skill in avoiding situations that could lead to life-threatening predicaments.

On a solo trip I always wear a life jacket whenever I am in the canoe. I always try to stay within an easy swim of shore. Yes, Jim did break a cardinal rule of safety, but it was not that of canoeing alone.

Stephen Crouch



WCA PHOTO CONTEST CANCELLED

Due to the low number of entries for this year's contest, I regretfully had to decide to cancel the competition for this year. Since there were only five entrants, it would not have been as intriguing as it has been in the past. I hope this is just a temporary lull in interest for this annual insight in the visions of the natural world by WCA members, and that next year we again will all have the chance to enjoy these visions. I look forward to organizing and presenting the entries in '92.

Chris Motherwell

ONE WHO CARES

(A response to Bill Ness' Chairman's Letter in the last issue.)

Dear Bill:

I'm one of WCA's new members, just joined a year ago after coming to a couple wilderness canoe symposiums in Toronto. After reading your letter in the Winter 1990 issue of *Nastawgan*, I felt compelled to write in support, even though I'm just a faceless name to you. Sure, I joined the WCA to get news of wilderness canoeing in the journal. But I also paid my twenty five bucks hoping, someday, to learn how to canoe whitewater and travel some wild Canadian rivers with other, more experienced WCA members. Being so far from the hub of WCA activities, however, won't make that easy, and it's difficult to be otherwise involved except for reading the journal. Maybe some day ... ?

After your "Who Cares?" letter in the last issue, I'd be surprised if some member didn't write you telling you to change the journal's name to *Nasty-awgan*! Having made that play on words, let me be quick to assure you, I can identify completely with your situation and agree wholeheartedly with your assessment of it, as well as sympathize with your frustration. I know it's the truth without knowing much about WCA. I'm an old hand at knowing how discouraging it can be, how easy it gets to burn out. In fact, I could excerpt and paraphrase your letter and send it out to my organization. You see, I've run an outings club similar to yours, but for kids, for 20 years - and many times I've communicated such feelings, often in vain, to our members and their parents. Many times I came to the point of wanting to chuck the whole thing. But I go on doing it anyway, and don't regret it. It's really worthwhile. I just adapt by trimming the workload here and there.

Early on, I reluctantly came to the conclusion that groups such as ours continue to exist only on the strength of an individual or core of people who have an undying love for and commitment to the purposes of their organization. (Of course, the more of these you have, the easier it is.) Aside from these few, however, it seems the majority are content to draw benefits from their membership to lesser degrees, having supported the group's purposes at least by their dues and occasional participation. Only those of us rabid enough to relentlessly pursue the experience and care of wilderness will make the big sacrifices of time and effort necessary to keep the group going. The alternative is to go it alone. Much less work that way, but also much less enjoyment if you like to share your vision and enthusiasm with others.

My respect - and encouragement - to you for toughing it out!



Larry Lemanski
Lansing, MI
USA

MOOSE FOR SUPPER

"It's a moose"
said Dale , as we ate supper.
He looked across the lake.
"It's moose again"
answered Joan with a sigh.
"Don't you think that
we might see something
different sometime?" she asked.
"I love moose" said Dale firmly,
"It's what I want to see."
"But moose with EVERY meal?"
asked Joan -
"One night it's cow moose
The next night it's bull moose
One day it's 2 yearling moose
The next day it's a cow & baby moose
Big moose, little moose
Standing moose, swimming moose
Moose for breakfast
Moose for lunch
Moose for supper
Moose for brunch
Moose, Moose, MOOSE!
I'm getting a little tired of moose!"
shouted Joan.
"I love to see moose", said Dale.
"It's what I want."

Gerry Yellowlees

The above (fictional) outburst was inspired by David Booth's poem "Soup For A King" and a trip to Algonquin Park on the 1 July 1990 weekend, where Dale Miner, Joan Etheridge, and Gerry Yellowlees saw 21 moose.



PADDLING TEXAS STYLE

Les Palenik

Southern Texas boasts many navigable rivers, of which perhaps the most famous one is the Colorado. It flows directly through Austin, but because it is heavily dammed in that area, it is more suitable to sailboats and windsurf boards than to canoes. Although its green color makes it look very pretty, the Colorado River in that section is heavily polluted and, according to the Austinites, should be avoided.

Fortunately, this area has many other beautiful rivers, and although they don't fall into the wilderness category, some of them offer crystal-clear water and spectacular scenery. Due to the rocky bottom, most rivers there sport that nice green Colorado color.

Because there are so many rivers in that area, it makes it difficult for a stranger to choose among them. At the time I was there, the temperature hovered just below 40 C, and since all I could think of was a cool stream I decided to head for the nearest one—the Guadalupe River situated in the nearby Hill Country, about halfway between San Antonio and Austin.

The Guadalupe flows into large man-made Canyon Lake, and it is accessible above the dam and also below. The river is more peaceful and very warm above the dam, but the most popular stretch starts shortly below it and continues along Farm Road 306 for about 40 km to New Braunfels. The river offers swift Grade 1-2 whitewater, with a few waterfalls and ledges in the lower section. The velocity of the current changes because it depends on the amount of water let out from the dam. According to the locals, this year (1990) the Guadalupe has had the best flow in several seasons. With about 400 cubic feet per second it was a swift, yet easy ride. In the early spring the water release can reach over 800 cubic feet per second which makes the river very fast and more technical.

Canyon Lake itself is touted as Texas' cleanest lake. Covering 3.331 hectares, the lake has 128 km of shoreline and a maintained level of 277 metres above mean sea level. The Guadalupe flows out again from the bottom of the imposing 2.082-metres-long Canyon Dam, and because of the size and depth of the lake, the lower portion of the river is surprisingly cold. In fact, on that 40-degree hot day, the water in the Guadalupe was much colder than in most Ontario rivers at that time of year. The water seemed relatively clean (at least for swimming), but due to its limestone bottom, the water visibility was only about 30 cm in depth.

Well, I'd heard before about doing everything in a big way in Texas, but I wasn't ready for thousands of rubber canoes, big rafts, and even more innertubes. The local outfitters offer not only the boats, but also accommodations with RV hook-ups, hot showers, and grocery stores. What I appreciated most, however, is that they provide very inexpensive truck shuttles to the put-in and take-out points. That simplifies greatly the trip logistics, especially for a lone solo-paddler. I rented a 16ft ABS flat-bottom Old Town boat, but on

the day I was on the river, I saw only one other "real" canoe afloat. All other boats were made of rubber. It seems that the Texans like their comfort and prefer the soft rafts and inner tubes. I had to get used also to a new terminology: the ABS boats are called "hard" canoes and the spare paddle is a "chase" paddle.

As I was slaloming downstream between the rubber rafts and tubes, I noticed that I was also the only one on the whole river without a cooler aboard. The tube teams ranged from young couples to groups of several families or entire graduate classes. All tubers (and many rafters) were dragging an extra tube (or two), which I first assumed would be the "chase" tube. However, upon closer examination I discovered that the primary function of that vessel was to transport the cooler. There were even several tubers with separate tubes for their dogs.

Most sailors just floated downriver, with occasional hand paddling to steer away from the shore or other tubers. It reminded me of a big party, where people get together to drink and chat. If you run out of food or drinks, you can stop at one of several river restaurants, where you can get a hamburger and a beer, or replenish your provisions. The Americans make the whitewater sport real easy. Actually, the traffic wasn't as bad as it would seem because the river is quite long, and the boats get separated on the river. As a matter of fact, there were several stretches when I didn't see any boats at all.

All these things made for an interesting trip, but as you already guessed, paddling the Guadalupe couldn't possibly pass as a wilderness experience. However, the scenery was very beautiful and, beside the mentioned private camps and cottages, the river passed through many picturesque ranches, meadows, and below towering cliffs. Some of the sandstone bluffs rise more than 100 metres above the river.

In other places, the river banks are lined with bald cypress, cedars, and oaks which are homes to many interesting birds. The trees are sometimes covered with Spanish moss, housing many small birds which are a source of the most peculiar jungle sounds. What amazed me most on that scorching June day was the lack of mosquitos. As a matter of fact, there were no insects, period.

Considering the heavy traffic, the river and its banks were surprisingly clean. I wondered if this was due to the educated and considerate boaters or to regular cleaning crews. Comparing it with my previous "deep-south" canoeing in Florida, the Texas rivers offer incomparably prettier scenery, no insects, and last but not least, alligator-free swimming.

Because I started my trip only in the afternoon, I covered barely 12 km on the Guadalupe, but I thoroughly enjoyed it and had several refreshing dips in the cool water. If you are planning a trip south, mark this river on your map.

CANYON OF THE RIVER AUX SABLES

Richard Culpeper

One of the most enjoyable rivers near the North Shore of Georgian Bay is the River aux Sables. In May 1990 we ran a WCA trip down the canyon section just north of Massey, in class IV spring run-off.

For this section, one portage requires landing in a current, and there are no portages for most of the class I and II rapids. Therefore, if you wish to run this part of the river you must be comfortable in class II (moving current, small waves, occasional obstacles) and be willing to portage quite a few major rapids. There are no extremely difficult portages, but the pace for this section is quite slow.

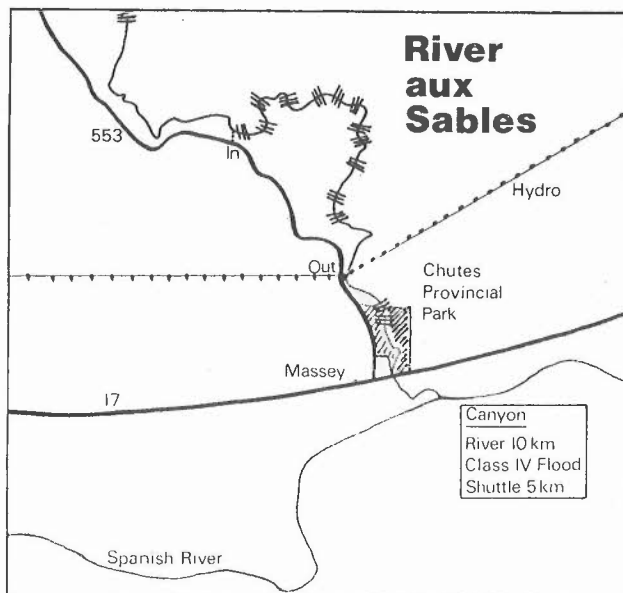
You should enjoy a trip on the aux Sables if you are an expert paddler who wants to push the envelope, or an intermediate paddler who doesn't mind portages if there is fine scenery. *Do not try this river if you have never run rapids before, if you have trouble controlling your boat in a current, or if you are a beginner paddler.*

You will find this section mapped on 1:100,000 planometric 41J/SE Blind River, 1:50,000 topographics 41J/8 Whiskey Lake and 41J/1 Spanish, or 1:20,000 base 20 11 4100 51200. They indicate continuous pool and drop with a significant 0.46% overall gradient through a small canyon in rugged country.

The take-out is at the Hydro line north of Massey on Route 553. The put-in is five kilometres by road north of the take-out. Just trust your odometer and swing the wheel when you hit five km. The paddle is 10 km long.

While you're in the area, you might want to stop in at Chutes Provincial Park for a look at a spectacular section of the river. Except for the fall fair, Massey is not that interesting, although the Imperial Pawnshop advertises shotguns which you can "buy now, use now, and don't pay for until hunting season."

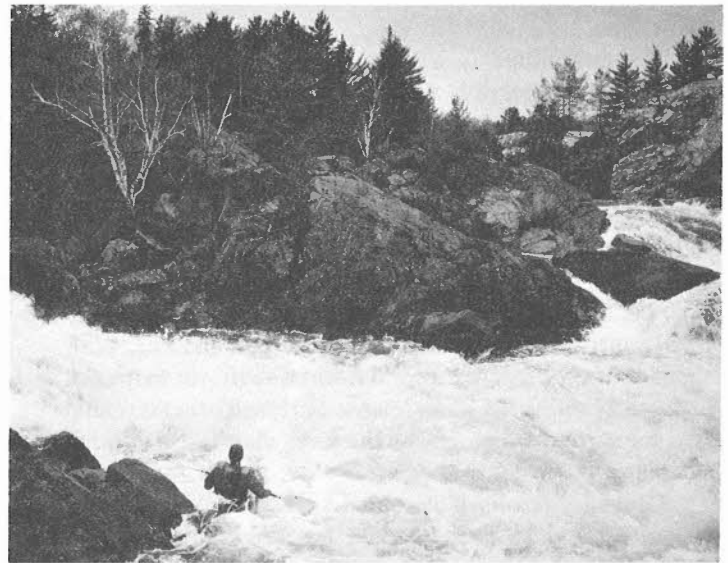
A descriptive phrase for the aux Sables is "just around the next bend," for usually the next set of rapids is just around the next bend.



The first rapid is just around the bend from the put-in. The portage is on the right and offers an excellent view of the action. Centre-left offers a short, challenging, technical run. Centre-right is less challenging, but places you within projectile range of the spectators on shore.

The second set is a simple ledge with a tongue on river right. The base is a bit squirrely, and the current flows around the next bend into a serious set of rapids, so rescue boats should set up for less-experienced paddlers. Sassy the Wonder Dog tried kayaking this second set, but was not too successful. Neither was INCO's Bill McCaffery, which raised an ethical problem. Who should one rescue: Man or Beast? (We went for the dog.) About this time, Terry Kelly paddled to the beach for meditation.

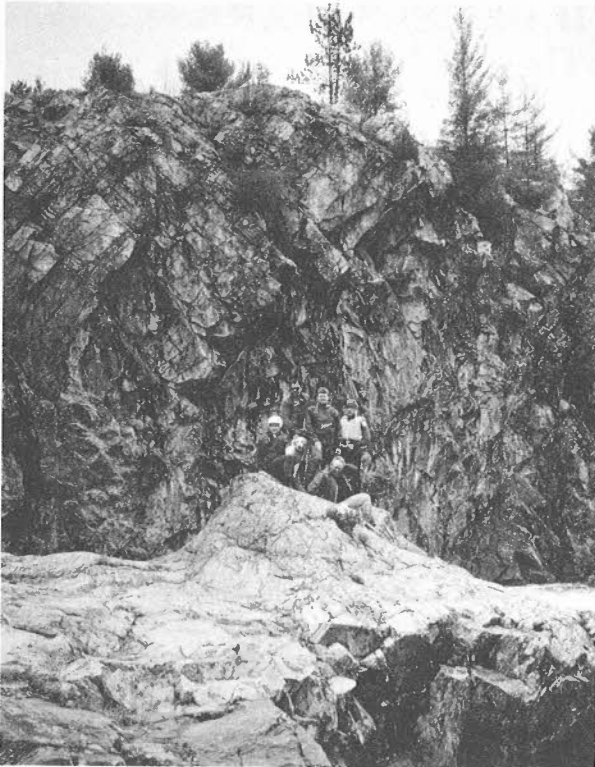
The beach at the head of the third rapid is very pretty, with white sand bounded by pink and grey granite, and surrounded by tall pines. It would make a perfect campsite. If you forgot your camera, this would be an appropriate site for the sacrifice of a novice paddler for atonement to the river god.



The third rapid is a technical IV with the chicken route on the left. The more interesting route on the right demands that you surf a wave toward a hole before pivoting. I tried this and found myself stuck in the hole, which popped me out upside down and washed me into the set's bottom hole. So much for grace and decorum.

The river continues in this pool-and-drop fashion until a couple of kilometres before the take-out. Unless you are with a guide, you should scout every set, for many have large drops at their bases.

Most rapids are quite short, but there are four long sets, the first one being double falls. You'll hear this one well before you see the lip. The take-out is on the right at the head of the falls, so don't make any mistakes. The top of the falls is class V, the bottom is class VI. The Human Probe, Mike Palkovits, has made noises about running the falls but has not made an attempt. I hope he never does.



There is a lovely sand shoal in the bay across from the outflow of the falls. It's one of those special places where you can rest, look about, and feel at one with the river. All the effort it takes to get there is immediately and obviously worthwhile.

The second long set seems to be a class III with large eddies on either side. If you find yourself on this one, take

out on the right or run the falls at the bottom on the extreme left, for this lovely class III ends with a class V drop into a river-wide hole. The Human Probe enjoys this drop, but freshwater biologist Ed Snucins, who has swum it, has rather more negative feelings. The portage on the right is fairly easy, though you might need teamwork in a couple of places. When we portaged, Terry claimed that there was no trail. I thought that there was, by virtue of my having walked there the previous year. When this type of disagreement arises, you know that you're in the middle of nowhere.

The third long set is quite enjoyable, with standing waves and tight eddies. The only catch is that you must finish on river-right for the final drop. On the portage on the left, Terry found some fresh bear scat, and Sassy the Wonder Dog went missing for an extended period. This caused considerable consternation, for we had visions of the bear eating our probe-in-training.

The fourth long set is also the last serious rapid on the river. At class V, our Human Probe is the only person I know who has run it. I don't think most open canoes should try this set. The portage is on the left, and offers a fun put-in for those who can roll: a cliff launch. Normally I delight in this launch, but a few days earlier I had trouble with a five-metre tower launch, so I was quite nervous. My friends on the aux Sable didn't help much with their chanting "Face Plant! Face Plant! Face Plant!"

These are certainly not the only challenging sets, just the longer ones. If you want to give the river a try, be conservative in your judgement. Remember, drowning is terribly rude. It disturbs your companions' tranquility and pollutes the water.

MORE SW ONTARIO RIVERS

Murray Brown

MAITLAND - Over the years, I have canoed this river from Wingham to Goderich, though never all in one trip. This is mostly a spring and fall river as the water level can get low in mid to late summer. Rapids are few and mild from Wingham to Benmiller with the stretch from Benmiller to Goderich providing more of a challenge in high water including one or two small falls. One set of rapids (or maybe I should say rocks!) left its signature on our canoe on my very first paddling trip. Oh, the cost of experience! Wildflowers and waterfowl abound on this river and occasionally the well-treed banks open up to prime agricultural land. Five campgrounds are located on the Maitland with Wawanosh Valley Conservation Area between Wingham and Auburn and Falls Reserve Conservation Area just downstream from Benmiller probably providing the most enjoyable camping.

SAUGEEN - This river is slightly larger than the Maitland and runs from Hanover to Southampton. I have only travelled from Walkerton to Southampton and again not all in one trip. The best rapids in this section occur downstream from

Walkerton. I found these on my first solo trip this past summer and what a joy that trip was. The river is mostly navigable all summer although a loaded canoe may meet very short stretches of resistance. The holiday weekend in May sees the river swell with party-goers, and weekends through the summer aren't exempt of them either, though they generally detract little from the grace of this winding river. High sandy cliffs provide a home to hundreds of cliff swallows and wildflowers are plentiful also. The Saugeen is promoted as a canoeing river by the local tourist associations and it caters to canoeists by providing six campgrounds. Two of note are McBeath Conservation Area which is small (and free), sparsely treed and has no running water but is accessible only from the river, and Saugeen Bluffs Conservation Area which is a very nice, well-treed campground with full facilities including a landing dock. These Conservation Areas are located about 3 1/2 hours apart (depending on water level) on either side of Paisley and make good stops on a lazy three-day trip from Walkerton to Southampton. There are at least two shuttle services available on the Saugeen and at least one also offers a guided "Voyageur canoe" trip in high spring water.

Both rivers empty into Lake Huron and can provide good fishing for bass and trout. Brochures on the rivers are available from the Ministry of Natural Resources in Wingham.

THE MISSINAIBI RIVER WILDERNESS PARK

A plea for help — from George Luste

BACKGROUND INFORMATION Ever since I first canoed Ontario's Missinaibi River in 1973, I have been concerned about its protection and possible demise as a wilderness waterway. It is now a Provincial Park and has been nominated to the Canadian Heritage River System. But this status has not guaranteed its wilderness survival. The local pulp and paper and logging interests, from Kapuskasing and Hearst, wish to have free reign in their operations at the Missinaibi. Unfortunately, this means more river crossings, more bridges, more nearby roads and a minimal buffer of trees next to the water. To counter their pressure it is essential that we speak out on behalf of the Missinaibi, otherwise its wilderness character will disappear forever.

For those not familiar with the Missinaibi, a few brief words about it may be appropriate. On a map of North America, the Missinaibi River straddles the narrow land-waist of Canada, between Lake Superior and the arctic salt waters of James Bay. In the fur-trade era, this geographical feature gave it a strategic significance as an access route to the interior from the Moose Factory post, and a number of trading posts were built along it. It is still free-flowing for 500 kilometres from its headwaters near Lake Superior and the Michipicoten River to the Moose River junction and on down to James Bay, without a dam and with only one highway crossing at Mattice. It is the last significant free-flowing river we have that is also accessible to the population of southern Ontario. It is a spectacular waterway, with numerous rapids and waterfalls along its course, culminating in Thunder House Falls and Hell's Gate, where the Canadian Shield drops off into the Hudson Bay lowlands.

GORDON COSENS FOREST DRAFT TIMBER MANAGEMENT PLAN In December of 1990 this draft plan was made public. It seriously threatens the existence of the Missinaibi as a wilderness waterway. In addition to the existing winter crossing and the existing temporary bridges, at camp-95 and over the Brunswick River, it proposes a number of additional river crossings. These crossings are deemed more economical than trucking north and south, parallel to the river.

WCA MOTIONS REGARDING THE GORDON COSENS FOREST DRAFT TIMBER MANAGEMENT

PLAN

Preamble: Whereas the Missinaibi River is a unique historical, geographical and wilderness waterway in Northern Ontario, its integrity as a meaningful, extended wilderness travel route must be preserved. The Missinaibi River Park has the potential for a world-class wilderness canoe experience and a major, renewable northern Ontario tourist resource in perpetuity, but this is only possible if its wilderness integrity is not compromised with permanent or semi-permanent bridge crossings.

On 14 December 1990, the Board of Directors of the Wilderness Canoe Association unanimously passed the following set of motions:

I-A. The Wilderness Canoe Association is opposed to the Gordon Cosens Forest Draft Timber Management Plan proposal for bridge access across the Missinaibi River and the Brunswick River between Missinaibi Lake and the town of Mattice, excepting the existing railroad crossing corridor at Peterbell.

I-B. The Wilderness Canoe Association believes that, with the exception of the existing crossings at Peterbell and Mattice, future logging done on the east side of the Missinaibi River must be accessed from the east side and future logging done on the west side must be accessed from the west side of the river.

I-C. The camp-95 bridge crossing on the Missinaibi and the Brunswick Rivers must be removed. These crossings represent the single most serious and irreversible long-term threat to the viability and integrity of the Missinaibi River Park.

I-D. The Wilderness Canoe Association believes that unless the integrity of the Missinaibi River as a wilderness waterway can be preserved, the Missinaibi River Park concept makes no sense and should be abandoned.

If there are any members or non-members of the WCA who might be interested in joining a (tentative) Missinaibi River Conservation canoe trip this summer, sometime in July or August, please contact George Luste, 139 Albany Ave., Toronto M5R 3C5, phone (416) 534-9313.

RAIN

Rains on us 40% of the time we are on the river. Year in and year out. They say rain percentages can be as low as 10% to as high as 90%. Depends on your luck. We already have some pretty impressive experiences concerning our luck. You'd have to like mildew.

Even 10% for rain is a mean number when you are not prepared for it. Have to keep all the gear dry, make miles, and still set up dry at the end of the day. No little skill and one that usually involves some hard lessons before you grasp it fully.

Ranting and raving when the rain comes. A side benefit of being in the wilderness. Can go crazy mad and rampage around and the men with the white coats and the big net don't come to lock you up.

Screaming until all the anger is expended. Pointless. Buddies are used to it and river and sky don't care.

We have a kind of balance system set up anyway. River and

sky get to vent their moisture and we get to vent our displeasure at the unfairness of it all.

Our long-term philosophy is to consider rainy days as just one more payment that must be made for enjoying the good weather days up there. Only a precious few good days each year up there. Have to enjoy every one of them. In any given year the good day that you are experiencing may be the last for the year. Winter is always around the bend. Cruel and cold and tough, but that's the land up there.

If the land were overflowing with sun and green the maps would have little black squares on every lake and at every rapid. The 1:250,000's don't because the land is hostile. Pretty tough to live on it all year. Not enough good days. Way too few for most. Most men need a little more kindness from their weather.

Greg Went

DECEMBER CANOEING

Advanced Technique (Tandem)

Chris Riddle

Having recently purchased an island in the Haliburton area, Jeff and I decided to paddle out and visit the property.

Not a soul was in sight and the lake stretched before us like a mirror. Not too surprising really, fresh black ice has that quality - and it probably explained the lack of other paddlers. Open water came close to shore just a few hundred metres from where we had planned to put in, and it was an easy matter to 'skate' Piglet (our ABS Mad River Explorer) into the lake. Just how much of the lake was open water and how much was ice was not easy to determine. As we paddled out, I tried to remember the Bill Mason film I had seen where he demonstrated the 'running ice landing' - making it appear simplicity itself to propel the canoe out of the water and far enough onto an ice sheet to have it support its weight. The image was clear in my mind but the technique escaped me.

The bow broke through the first ice sheet before we even saw it. Just a bridge of thin ice forming over shallow water. No loss of momentum. "This is going to be easy," I said. Jeff, in the stern, was silent.

The next sheet of ice was more massive and quickly brought Piglet to a halt. It appeared to completely surround the island. We tried skirting the ice sheet, hoping that the windward side of the island would be in open water. Rounding the northernmost point of land, however, we saw the ice sheet stretching away into the distance.



The first blow of the axe jarred my arm. As time went by our technique improved and after redistributing the weight to stabilize Piglet, we began to make real progress. I, as bowsman, would move back in the canoe as we made a full-power assault on the weakest point in the ice sheet. Piglet's lightened bow would rise up on the ice and stop, momentarily. This was the point at which Bill Mason would have leapt out, rope in hand, and hauled his canoe onto firm ground. We lesser mortals stayed on board the canoe but moved forward to increase the weight in the bow thereby causing the cracks in the ice to deepen before we and Piglet slid back into the water. Once cracked, the ice soon gave way to a few blows of the axe and, slowly but surely, we carved out a channel - more or less in a straight line - towards shore. Being early in the season the ice varied considerably in

thickness and gave way completely to slush in a few places. This, and a tendency to favor right-handed blows with the axe, made our course somewhat curved.

Lacking a hovercraft — used in the arctic to cross permafrost — it was clear that Piglet had won the day for us as we finally stepped ashore on our island. ABS may not have much finesse but it sure does take abuse! This we proceeded to demonstrate, once Piglet was unloaded, by widening the channel and floating quite large bergs out into the lake.

"From Toronto, are you?" said the man operating the tow truck, two days later, as he successfully extracted our station wagon from the snowdrift where we had parked it to ensure an easy carry to the lake. It was not really a question, more a statement of the obvious: just about every other vehicle in the area was towing a snowmobile and the sight of Piglet on top of the car had been an amusement for the locals as we had driven through Haliburton on the way up. Much pointing, turning of heads, and half-hidden smiles.

But now we were smiling. After a weekend in a warm cabin on a pine-covered island with fresh snow on the ground, we had experienced the peace of a large lake in-between the summer paddlers and the winter snowmobilers. A woodpecker had serenaded us in the morning and an over-friendly mouse had welcomed our presence in the evening.

In addition I had an 'appendix' to Bill Mason's "Path of the Paddle" forming in my mind. Under a general heading of "Special Strokes for Special Folks" it would have a series of photographs illustrating the advantage of the 'two handed axe-pivot' over the 'cross-bow chop'; to be followed by detailed advice to stern paddlers on the 'sliding berg pry' and the 'ice brace'..... well, it was just an idea.

Matachewan Consolidated Hides From Toxic Spill Accountability

Matachewan Consolidated Mines does not believe that they should be 100% financially responsible for the clean-up after their Montreal River spill, according to their representative, Richard McCloskey. A beaver dam was washed out by heavy rains. This flooded the company's tailings pond, which spilled lead, arsenic, cyanide, and mercury into Ontario's Montreal River.

Matachewan Consolidated has been ordered by the Ministry of the Environment to prevent further spilling and to restore water supplies to communities that have been affected. McCloskey says that the Ministry is stretching the law by ordering the company to take financial responsibility, and that the company will appeal the clean-up order.

By placing blame on a beaver, Matachewan Consolidated implies that their design of the tailings pond did not take into account that beaver dams are prone to washing out, as all beavers know.

Too bad that the design group of a major mining operation knows less about pond building than a large rodent. Too bad that Matachewan Consolidated accepts as much public accountability as some of the beaver's rodential relatives.

Richard Culpeper

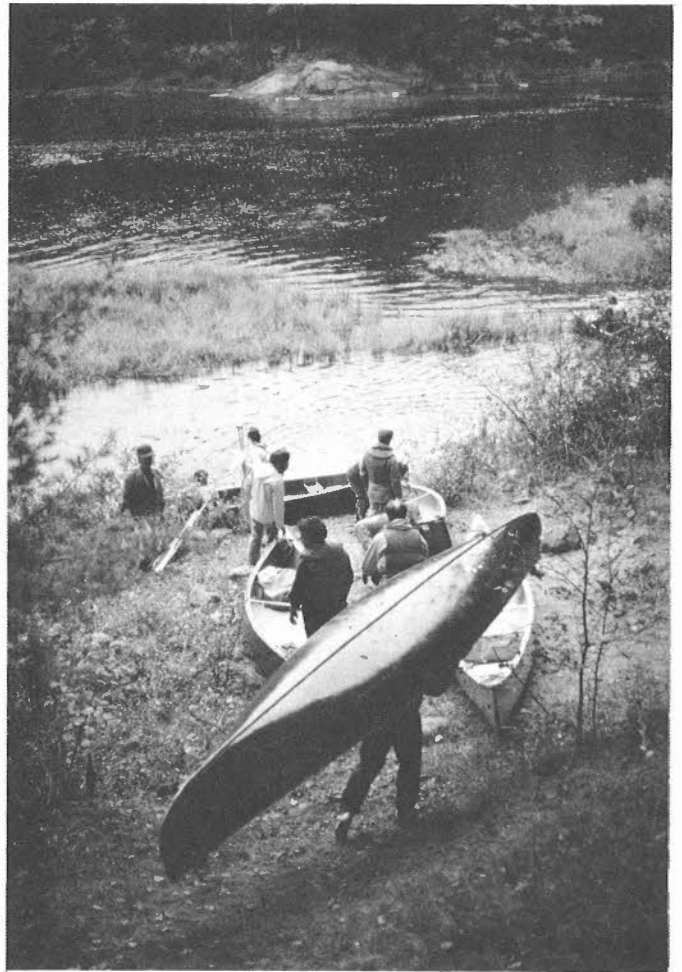
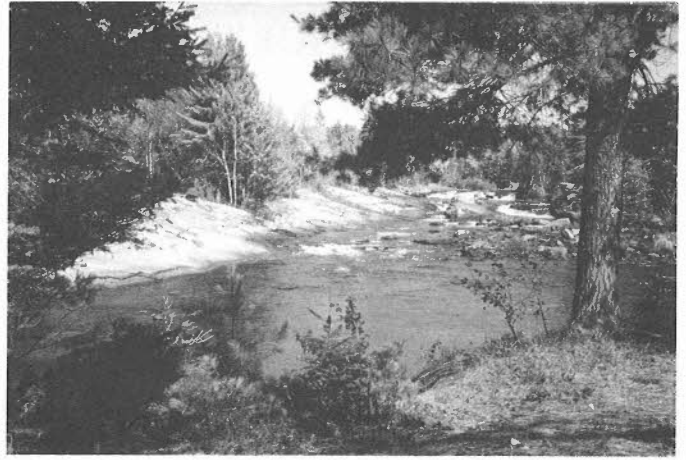


Burnt River

- trip length 17 km, Kinmount to Burnt River
- very pretty, quiet day trip
- seven rapids with portages 40 to 380 m on private land
- official campsites: four
- level: novice
- info: Ministry of Natural Resources, Minden District Office, Minden, Ontario, K0M 2K0; phone (705) 286-1521
- map: Burnt River System Canoe Routes
- Kinmount is about 200 km from Toronto, on Highways 121 and 503

Toni Harting





QUETICO PROVINCIAL PARK

Jim Greenacre

The first thing that puzzled me when registering at the French Lake access point was the total lack of interest in where I was going on my twelve-day loop. Unlike Algonquin Park where they not only require your route but also the color of your canoe and tent, the Quetico people only ask for the first lake on your route.

Later that evening I talked to a young park ranger on the subject of mishaps and search and rescue: how would they know where to look in the event of someone going missing? "Quetico is a wilderness park" he informed me, "and if you are venturing into the wilderness you had better be capable of looking after yourself. Besides, you cannot go far in Quetico without encountering other canoeists; they will help you find your way out." I would suggest that anyone canoe tripping in Quetico Park be sure to leave all route information with a close relative.

The northeastern corner of the park has few lakes and the two longest portages in the park, hence not much traffic. It was here that I managed to go two and a half days without seeing another person. The portages here, because of little use, are not maintained to any extent by the park rangers, and are

blocked by masses of deadfalls and blowdowns which involve many bushwhacking detours. The area is also flat and marshy with lots and lots of ankle-deep soft spots on the trails. This area of Quetico reminded me of Algonquin Park.

As one paddles out into the southeast corner of the park, the terrain gradually becomes more rugged with higher secondary ranges rising behind the initial shoreline ridges. Open, bare rockfaces are also numerous, reminiscent of French River and Georgian Bay lakes scenery. The "Falls Chain" region, which is easily accessible from Minnesota and the Boundary Waters Canoe Area, is heavily used, the majority of canoeists being American.

Prairie Portage access point, right on the U.S.-Canada border and accessible by road on the American side, was crowded with canoeists, rather like Canoe Lake in Algonquin Park on the Saturday morning of a long weekend. The popular mode of dress was U.S. Army camouflage battle dress with matching head-dress. Bent-shaft paddles were much in evidence but not too many paddlers seemed to know how best to use them. Power boats are allowed on those lakes adjacent to the U.S. border. Portages in this corner of the park are well maintained by park authorities, catering no doubt to the heavy usage by U.S. paddlers.

Quetico, like Algonquin Park, is a mass of lakes joined by portages. On my twelve-day loop I had fifty-seven portages. Many were short (50-100 metres) but many others were rough and strenuous (I finished 3 1/2 kg lighter than when I started). The Yum-Yum portage, for instance, is 1250 metres; no great deal if it were flat. But it isn't. Travelling east to west it ascends at a very steep angle (45-50 degrees) for about 600 metres, sometimes over smooth polished rock, and then drops more gradually on the other side. Footing is treacherous over a mass of exposed tree roots. I met one

group who were going to do an extra day-and-a-half paddling with two lift-overs rather than tackle the Bonhomme portage (1465 metres) and the Sauvage portage (2000 metres). Good compass skills are beneficial when paddling on the larger lakes because of the multitude of islands which make navigation difficult.

The official park map, published by "The Quetico Foundation," shows you the lakes, rivers, and portages. That, according to the aforementioned park ranger, is all you really need for a wilderness park. But the official park map is not always accurate when it comes to portage locations. On a number of occasions I found portages to be on the opposite side of a river or creek from what was indicated on the map. Not much of a problem to an experienced tripper, but disturbing to a novice and I met quite a number of those. In planning my trip it took me two letters to park headquarters and weeks of waiting just to find out if a small river I was considering was navigable.



If you want detailed information as to routes, time allowances, and campsite locations you will have to go to American sources. There is a book on canoeing in Quetico by an American author and publisher. The many Americans I met and talked with all had maps of Quetico, published in the U.S., showing routes and campsite locations (similar to the Algonquin Park map produced by our MNR). Campsite locations were not important to me because I was travelling solo, but to a group it could be quite important. About half my campsites were "official" (well-established with monstrosously large firepits built of loose rocks by park rangers) but the best were those I found myself where there was no problem in finding readily available firewood.

Considering that Quetico Park is two long, hard days' drive from Toronto (and two days to return), I feel you can experience just as good a wilderness canoe trip in the interior of Algonquin Park, Killarney Park, or Temagami without the hassle and expense of all those highway kilometres.



HISTORICAL RIVER TRAVEL

An Annotated Historical Record of River Travel in Northern Canada

The four of us are in the long-term process of compiling an annotated, geographically-sensitive, cross-referenced record or index of river travel, primarily by canoe and primarily recreational and administrative, through the Canadian North. The Record will feature the names of the trip leaders and participants (where possible), the dates, and the basic route, all organized by watersheds.

The time frame is from the Geological Survey to the Wild River Survey, roughly the century from 1873 to 1973. The rivers include all those which are north-flowing into the Arctic, including Hudson and James Bays, the Bering Strait, and the Labrador Sea, as well as those flowing south into the Gulf of St. Lawrence, eastward from and including the Moisie. It will, however, not include the upper (southern) portions of great rivers such as the western Churchill or the Saskatchewan.

The very key trips will have a narrative descriptive paragraph.

The Record will also contain both a nominal index, with short canoeing biographies of the key personages, and a bibliography on the key historical sources.

Our research of books and periodical literature is proceeding well, if slowly. We need, however, more assistance from surviving trippers and armchair voyageurs, especially for the more unsung expeditions. Don't be modest. Please send us the dates and routes of your northern river travels, and those of your friends. Obscure literary references would also help.

Address your comments and correspondence to any of us personally, care of "Historical River Travel," Frost Centre, Trent University, Peterborough, Ontario K9J 7B8.

As active canoeists, we extend best wishes.

Bruce and Carol Hodgins
Gwyneth Hoyle
Seana Irvine

UPPER KOBUK RIVER

Location: Alaska, USA; north of the Arctic Circle; flows east to west after issuing from Walker Lake.

Description: The upper Kobuk traverses a wide, forest-covered valley with sweeping views from the river of nearby mountains. A wilderness environment exists downstream to approximately the Pah River area. Further downriver, the Kobuk is a major travel corridor for local inhabitants.

Watercraft: Raft, kayak, or canoe all suitable.

Time: Six days from Walker Lake to Village of Kobuk; 2-3 mph current downstream from Kobuk.

Attributes: Extreme headwaters, Walker Lake, and Upper and Lower Canyons are particularly scenic. Hiking, except in extreme headwaters, is not good due to dense undergrowth, tussocks, etc.. Fishing for sheefish, northern pike, grayling, whitefish, chum salmon, and lake trout (Walker Lake).

Special Considerations: One-third mile of WW3-4 located 3/4 mile downstream from outlet of Walker Lake; can be portaged on left bank. Lower Kobuk Canyon (1 mile of WW2-3) can be lined along west bank.

Access: IN - Floatplane from Battles or Ambler to Walker Lake. OUT - All villages along the Kobuk River have scheduled commercial air service.

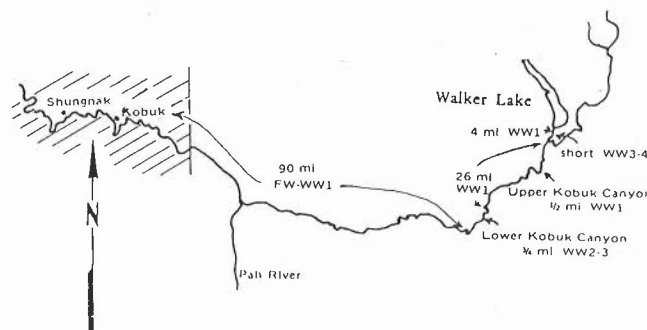
USGS Maps (1:250,000): Survey Pass, Hughes, Shungnak.

Public Land Manager: National Park Service.

Sources of information:

— *Alaska Paddling Guide* by Jack Mosby and David Daphno, published by J&R Enterprises, P.O. Box 140264, Anchorage, Alaska 99514, USA; price US\$7.95.

— Library of Congress Data: GV776.A4M67 1986 917.98 86-11669.



Submitted by Greg Went who notes: "Did 1990 trip, easy, fantastic salmon fishing, saw first grizzly in wild after 20 years, beautiful scenery, not a sign of man for eight days to the Pah River."

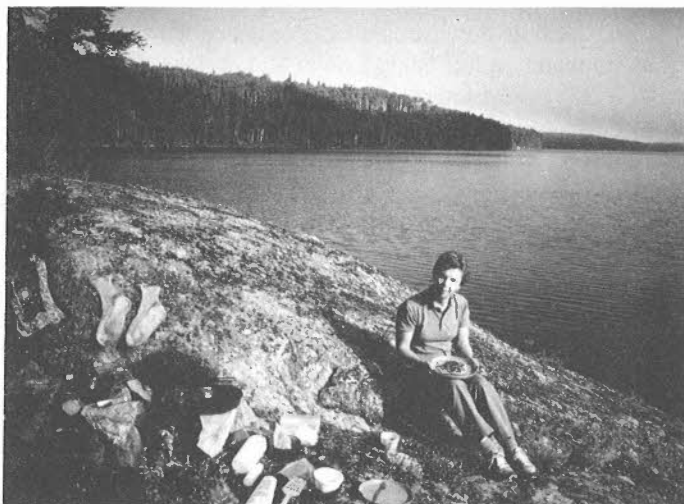
THE OTHER MISSINAIBI

Dave and Beth Buckley

Back in 1987, Beth and I made plans to run the upper Missinaibi River from Dog Lake to Mattice. As it happened, almost at the last minute, our trip partners had to cancel. Disappointed, we reluctantly decided to shelve the trip till the following year. So there we were, all dressed up with no place to go.

I cast through *CANOE ROUTES OF ONTARIO*, looking for an alternative we could undertake on our own. "Hey, there's *another* Missinaibi right in the same neighborhood," I observed. "And I don't think it'll require such a long shuttle."

The *other* Missinaibi was the Little Missinaibi River, described on the *Shumka to Missinaibi Canoe Route*. A quick check of our maps and "presto," we were in the van heading north, more than a little uncertain of the exact nature of our destination. Our concern was unnecessary. In reality, the route proved to be a very pleasant second-choice surprise.



As to the pleasant part, the 80-km circuit is a mix of easy lake and river travel which indeed has a relatively simple shuttle, all within a long day's drive of Toronto. The entire route is within the Chapleau Game Preserve and the scenery is some of the prettiest in the district. There are some splendid campsites, no killer portages, and no recent intrusion by extractive industry. Numerous native rock paintings can be seen along the route including the vivid pictographs at Fairy Point. The fishing's pretty good too.

The surprise was that we found the nicest part of the circuit had been very lightly travelled. Early in the trip we came across an MNR register box that looked as though it hadn't been checked for a long time. The curled and faded logbook registered the passage of only a few other parties over recent years, a remarkable contrast to the heavily travelled "regular" Missinaibi route not far to the north. Our friends, Brad and Becky Sheeler, report the same dishevelled book was still in the box when they came through in the fall of 1990 and there was still plenty of room in it.

One reason for the light use may be the old bridge on the bush road leading to the put-in near Shumka, an abandoned CPR rail siding. This bridge, spanning the Goldie River, quivered and swayed alarmingly when our little van tip-toed across in 1987. If it hasn't been repaired or replaced, it's likely in the river by now. At the time of our trip, the road across the bridge was only a shoulder-high tunnel in the alder, 10 km long. There were many deadfalls and one steep rocky hill to negotiate.

Actually, we could have gone in to Shumka on the train, and probably should have. The CPR Budd car passes there daily in alternating directions. The day we went in, it happened to be headed the wrong way. Last fall, the Sheelers planned more carefully. They left their cars in the parking lot at the Missinabie Hotel and hopped the Budd car for the short (25 km) run to Shumka.

Our first night's camp was a fine site on a sandy point about midway down Bolkow Lake. From there, the route passes eastward through a number of small lakes and streams on the way to the Little Missinaibi River. A few of the portages were pretty well overgrown and may now be difficult to find and follow. In general however, the terrain is not demanding. The greatest impediment to my own travel was the profusion of big, juicy blueberries along these portages. Some of the rocky hollows were just blue with them, even at a distance.

Our next camp was on a terraced island in Trump Lake. I recall a fine sunset, a wild thunderstorm, and a reluctant, misty dawn...with lots of blueberry pancakes. Trump Lake is within the boundary of Missinaibi Lake Provincial Park. The carry from there over to the Little Missinaibi River showed signs of more regular maintenance.

The Little Missinaibi River isn't very big, and gathers to less than a canoe width in the tightest chutes. Below the portage, there are several light bouldery rapids, some of which we were able to run even at a moderate July water level.

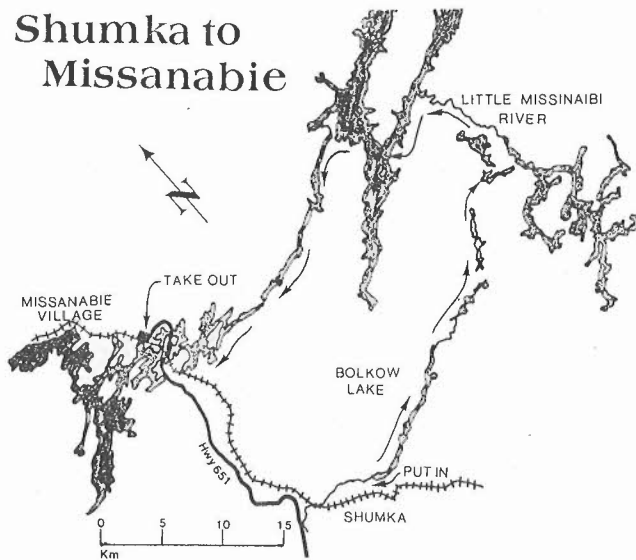
Last fall, the Sheeler group turned south before the portage into Trump Lake, paddling instead into Little Missinaibi Lake. They describe this fairly large lake as a



spidery complex of irregular bays separated by rock outcrops. There are a number of pictographs on the lake that relatively few people have seen.

They also report there is a stretch of technical whitewater in the river from Little Missinaibi Lake down to the portage Beth and I carried over from Trump Lake. After September rains, our friends were able to run some of these drops and had to portage others. There are some waterfalls that could be dangerous and only the barest of portages exist on this uppermost section. Apparently, the MNR assumes canoeists will go back over into Trump Lake and join the river considering Trump is perhaps the prettiest lake on the route.

Shumka to Missanabie



The Little Missinaibi River ends with a roar into Missinaibi Lake at Whitefish Falls. The rapids leading to the falls squeeze into a tight fault in the granite, a definite carry. The portage climbs through a burned area around the rock outcrop and drops into a quiet bay a few meters from the falls.

The surrounding forest had burned only a few weeks prior to our trip in July of '87. The rapid regeneration was quite astonishing. Amid blackened stumps and charred timbers, spring wildflowers bloomed anew. Ferns were just unfurling and bunchberry blooms twinkled in the ashes.



Bright green aspen shoots rose a meter high. Raspberry and fireweed rushed to fill the blackened openings. Jackpine seeds, freed from their tight cones by the fire's heat, had grown into tiny, green bottle-brushes.

We settled on a small campsite not far from the portage landing. A couple of accommodating pickerel graced our dinner that evening.

Missinaibi Lake deserves respect. It is by far the largest lake on the route and plenty intimidating to paddlers coming down the "regular" Missinaibi canoe route on their way to Mattice. From Whitefish Falls the Shumka route travels "backward" on the main route, directly into the prevailing wind. To complicate matters, a long peninsula divides the lake, terminating at Fairy Point. Paddlers logically hug the lee of this peninsula. On rounding Fairy Point heading west, the waves may suddenly build to unmanageable level. The vertical cliffs at the famous pictograph site can chew up canoes that broach trying to turn back.

The moral, of course, is to be prudent in approaching Fairy Point. With reasonably flat water it isn't a problem. And it's worth a bit of patience. These are some of the best examples of rock art anywhere and shouldn't be missed.

Leaving Whitefish Falls at dawn, Beth and I paddled out to the point. The big lake was a pussycat...dead flat. The rising sun strongly backlit the painted granite, making photography difficult. We resolved to return again in the low light of evening...next year, on our way down to Mattice on the "big" Missinaibi River.



THE REAL MCCOY

John Hackert

A trip on the Ottawa River was led by Dale Miner on last year's Labour Day holiday. We enjoyed a beautiful quiet campsite close to the river and close to our take-out in a white pine forest. We had six canoes: two solos (a Dagger Encore and a Mohawk 12) and four tandems.

Each day we ran the middle channel consisting of Mccoy, Iron Ring, Butterfly, Garvins, Upper and Lower Noname, and Black Velvet. Mccoy is one of the largest rapids in Ontario and one of the busiest. At any time on a weekend there will always be a large number of rafts and plenty of kayaks.

Mccoy is about 200 metres long. At top river left is a ledge below which is Sattler's Hole. On river left is an eddy below which is a ledge and Phil's Hole. Most of the river goes through Phil's. The recommended method to get down here is the suicide ferry. Start at the eddy at the top and then do a front ferry on top of Phil's which will get you downstream of Sattler's. At that point there is often a tongue which you can then peel out of downstream. It's called the suicide ferry because the reward for any small mistake is a swim in Phil's which is a good way to glimpse one's own mortality. The water is huge and usually the hole will spin you around quite a few times before spitting you out.

From the eddy below Phil's one can front-ferry back to the main current and do an S-turn into a strong large eddy on river left. From the eddy one must exit high, front-ferry across the main current, then peel out. This takes one to the end of the rapid which has a stopper on the left with the main current pulling one into it. The stopper is easily three metres high and will always flip anyone who hits it. In the middle is a tongue about three metres wide and to the right is a much smaller stopper. Below the tongue is a royal ride over tremendous standing waves for another 100 metres.

It is possible to spend the day at Mccoy practising front-ferries and peel-outs below the rapids in the heavy runout and still have lots of excitement. The heavy flow of water means long, wide, and quite complex eddy lines with boils running through them. At the top of the runout are surfing holes that attract kayaks, rafts, and canoes all day long.

On Sunday, Dale and Pat successfully completed the suicide ferry for the first time. Steve was also successful. The big eddy to river right claims most of the rafters who fall out and kayaks that spill near Phil's. We watched one kayaker spin in the eddy for about 10 minutes before his friends could figure out how to rescue him.

Leaving that eddy is also very difficult because the water pushes the canoe back to river left and downstream into the stopper on the left. On one occasion we front-ferryed across but started low because a raft was in the top of the eddy. We got stuck and could not get far enough over, missing the tongue and hitting the stopper instead. The stopper was a brick wall three metres high and tossed us over instantly: time for a swim.

Iron Ring is a narrow chute with a narrow tongue. Below the tongue are turbulent and moving eddy lines and whirl-

pools in high water which make for a very unpleasant swim. Fortunately we had low water and were able to play below the chute. There is a small surfing hole at the bottom of lower Iron Ring which will hold a solo sideways and a tandem straight. We spent an hour there each day.

The next rapid is Butterfly which is a ledge with a two-metre drop and a well-defined tongue, good standing waves, and an easy runoff. This is real fun ride through bucking, high, standing waves. However, if you miss the tongue which is on river right and easy to find, you will end up in a hole which is unpleasant at certain water levels. Sharon and I proved on the Civic holiday that it was not a good surfing hole when it grabbed us and spit us out upside down. The best part of Butterfly is that there is a small island in the middle that allows an easy carry to run the chute again and again. Pat determined that the entire run takes seven seconds downstream and 10 minutes upstream.

Garvins is a waterfall which has to be carried or lined at the far right. I believe that this is where the only rafting fatality occurred.

Upper Noname is a rapid with good well-defined eddies on each side, allowing us to go from side to side practising and playing in fast, heavy water. If you spill here, please get out before you hit Lower Noname. We spent about a half hour at Upper Noname.



Lower Noname has a very mean keeper on river right in which I have watched a kayaker almost drown. It must be scouted. Therefore it is best to treat it with respect. The rapid can be run in a couple of different ways all of which involve hitting a large, safe eddy on river left. The standing waves in the bottom half will fill most canoes at least half full of water. When we finished I thought I was in my bath tub.

Black Velvet is another chute with huge standing waves and a royal ride. The tongue is well defined and can't be missed if you stay at river right. Unfortunately by the time we got here exhaustion was taking its toll.

The best part of a whitewater trip like this is that one can



REVIEWS

SUMMER NORTH OF SIXTY: By Paddle and Portage Across the Barren Lands, by James Raffan, published by Key Porter Books, Toronto, 1990 (\$24.95 hardcover), 229 pages.

Reviewed by Sandy Richardson.

For six weeks in the summer of 1980, James Raffan and five friends made a 700-kilometre canoe trip from Munn Lake, near the treeline 250 kilometres northeast of Yellowknife, through numerous lakes and connecting rivers and over three heights of land, to Bathurst Inlet on the Arctic Ocean. *Summer North of Sixty* chronicles this voyage.

As Raffan and his companions travelled across the arctic tundra they shared in all the essential elements that are part of the wilderness canoeing experience. They ran challenging rapids, battled wind and waves to cross large lakes, struggled over gruelling portages, endured hordes of insects, survived a storm that flattened one of their tents, and went through the interpersonal frictions that inevitably arise when six people are isolated in an intense and physically demanding experience.

All was not hardship, strife, and strain, however. The canoeists also enjoyed companionship, spectacular scenery, wonderful encounters with wildlife, including wolves, bear, caribou, musk ox, and numerous birds, and moments of quiet contemplation. As Raffan describes it, "Wilderness canoeing is hardship, pain and real problems.... But simultaneously this rugged journey breeds inner peace. Survival and spirituality, hell and heaven, enlightenment and profound contradiction, all together in the same wilderness package."

Summer North of Sixty, however, is more than simply the story of this canoe trip, or a tale of arctic adventure. "Physical journeys like this arctic odyssey on the Burnside River," writes Raffan, "are fun and adventuresome, but fleeting... The details fade, leaving a journey of the imagination, a mythical encapsulation of places and people on one's internal landscape." Raffan's book is primarily the story of his inner journey toward understanding "how one comes to belong to the land in a special way on a canoe trip."

talk to people who appreciate how important and meaningful surfing holes are and that eddies should be hit high. We stayed up late into the night (10 p.m.) watching the fire and wondering who would be the first to hit the hay.

The evening conversation gave us a chance to relive the day and exchange valuable hints. We talked about different types of canoes and the rivers we've been on. But the most popular topics of conversation were dumping and swimming. Whitewater canoeists love to talk about the spills they've had that day and all previous days. If you'll listen they'll gladly tell you about swims they've had in the past. In the Ottawa a mistake often means a swim so there's lots to talk about.

The Ottawa River is a wonderful place to canoe if you like heavy whitewater but it can also be very nasty and mean if you tip. You should have air bags and should be with people who know the river and can rescue you in an emergency. We were very fortunate in that we had no dangerous moments.

The physical realities of the canoe trip serve as starting points for Raffan's sometimes naive, but more often insightful, commentaries and philosophic musings about rivers, the environment, the North, history, wildlife, ecology, and human relationships as he explores "the transmutation of the physical journey into a journey of the imagination." In the end, the journey itself proves to be a great teacher.

Raffan is a joy to read when he describes the canoe trip and the northern landscape, and when he contemplates the meaning of his voyage. He is irritating when he recounts inane little vignettes of camp life (maybe you had to be there), and when he quotes contrived and stilted exchanges that are supposed to be conversations among the participants. These serve no real purpose, but detract from Raffan's principal aim of using the myth of his physical journey to explore "the attachment, or reattachment, to the land engendered by wilderness travel." Fortunately these intrusions on the narrative occur less frequently as the book goes on.

In the final analysis, however, these are merely unfortunate distractions to an otherwise rich and probing narrative of a canoe trip through the arctic wilderness. It was a trip which Raffan describes as "the most significant journey in my experience," a journey that took "us to the edge of our thinking and allowed us to come to a state of mind in which we can hear the music of the land and the music of the journey itself." *Summer North of Sixty* lets the reader join Raffan both on his physical journey and on his inner journey.

(This review originally appeared in *Arctic Circle*, Nov./Dec. 1990.)



THE NIAGARA ESCARPMENT, A Portfolio by Pat and Rosemarie Keough, produced by Nahanni Productions and published by Stoddart, Don Mills, Ontario, 1990 (\$75.00), 204 pages.

Reviewed by Toni Harting.

After making publishing history with their highly successful books *The Ottawa Valley Portfolio* and *The Nahanni Portfolio*, the Keoughs have managed to produce yet another masterpiece based on their same combination of fascinating subject, meticulous research, intelligent writing, superb photography, and top-quality production values. *The Niagara Escarpment* is just that, a heart-warming labor of love that makes you want to hug its creators out of gratitude, it's so beautiful.

As in their previous books, Pat and Rosemarie Keough take the reader on a varied tour through an area that is not only a geographical and visual marvel, but also most interesting from human and historical points of view. The Canadian section of the Niagara Escarpment, running as a long, narrow strip from Queenston north of the Niagara Falls to Cockburn Island just west of Manitoulin Island, is a unique collection of some of the best that nature has to offer in southern Ontario. In 131 photographs, rich in color and superbly reproduced, the Keoughs give their view of the beauty in and around this immense limestone ridge. The technical quality of the photographs becomes even more impressive when one realizes that they were all made with 35-mm equipment.

The amount of research the Keoughs must have performed to collect the information they present in the first, historical part of the book is immense. In 174 beautifully restored old black-and-white photographs and sketches, accompanied by informative text and captions, the reader is told about the captivating history of the land, its first peoples, the colonial frontier, and the onset of development in the 1800s and early 1900s.

However, the most important quality of this book may very well be the grave concern it expresses about the use and especially the abuse of this marvellous and irreplaceable natural treasure, caused by a steadily increasing population pressure. *The Niagara Escarpment* is not only a feast for the eye, the heart, and the mind, it also forces us to think about the natural environment and our place in it.



A WALK ON THE CANOL ROAD by R. S. Gage, published by Mosaic Press, Oakville, Ontario, 1990 (hardcover \$19.95, US\$17.95; paperback available in Canada only \$12.95), 152 pages.

Reviewed by Herb Pohl.

During the period immediately following Pearl Harbour, the United States Military High Command was gravely concerned with the defense of Alaska from Japanese attack. In an attempt to ensure an adequate and safe supply of fuel for the war effort in the region, it was proposed to build a pipeline from the oilfield at Norman Wells on the Mackenzie River to Whitehorse and beyond. Started in 1942, the costly project, initially scheduled for completion within five months, was not finished until the spring of 1944 and almost immediately abandoned. The author examines the historic events which surround this extraordinary construction project and manages to do so in a most interesting way — he combines the story of the historical backdrop with an account of his impressions as he walks some 325 km along the remains of the road which paralleled the pipeline.

It is clear that this well-researched book is written by someone equally at home in the library and on the trail. With rare good style the author avoids overloading the reader with facts or flowery prose. He tells an interesting story which connects the past and present, satisfying both constituencies: the historian and the northern traveller.

ARCTIC ARGONAUTS by Walter Kenyon, published by Penumbra Press, Waterloo, Ontario, 1990 (softcover \$14.95), 150 pages.

Reviewed by Toni Harting.

The early search for the northwest passage has produced a small number of names of arctic explorers — some well-known like Frobisher, Baffin, Hudson, but several regrettably all but forgotten — who tried in vain to find a direct road to the fabled riches of the east. In his posthumously published book, *Arctic Argonauts*, Walter Kenyon presents a detailed chronicle of the thirteen explorers who, in seventeen expeditions from 1576 to 1632, probed the northern waters and shores from the high Arctic to southern James Bay, hoping to be the first to discover the elusive northwest passage. Their tales of perseverance, suffering, and — in all thirteen cases — disappointment, make fascinating reading and present a clear insight into the hardships and problems associated with arctic exploration in the years around 1600.

The book furthermore contains material that is not always easily available to the general reader: detailed background information on how people lived and worked in those days. Kenyon, the former curator of New World Archeology at the Royal Ontario Museum, vividly describes the vessels used in the expeditions, and the personnel, diet, ailments, clothing, wages, navigation, and shipboard routine. Also presented is a short discussion of explorations made after this first, 17-expeditions phase, culminating in the second phase of arctic exploration which began in 1818 and which was almost entirely a naval project.

The well-written text (edited for the press by M. T. Kelly) is enlivened by numerous black-and-white maps (both contemporary and modern), photographs, and drawings (edited by Robert Stacey). A bibliography with 23 entries is also included in this informative book that should appeal to anyone interested in the history of arctic exploration.

guidelines for wca trips

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

canoe safety rules

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

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



difficult - use own judgment



all clear - with caution

SIGNALS



danger - do not run

WCA TRIPS MAY HAVE AN ELEMENT OF DANGER.

THE ULTIMATE RESPONSIBILITY FOR A MEMBER'S SAFETY IS HIS/HER OWN.

trip ratings

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

WHITewater TRIPS

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

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

FLATwater TRIPS

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

WCA TRIPS

16 March OAKVILLE CREEK

Howard Sagermann, (416) 438-6090; book before 10 March.

Oakville Creek is a narrow stream that can have fast moving current. There may be sweepers to avoid and participants should be experienced in manoeuvring in cold whitewater. Limit six canoes.

16 March LOWER CREDIT RIVER

Jon Kirby, (416) 276-1718; book before 9 March.

Cold water, a stimulating rapid under the Eglinton Ave. bridge, and the possibility of good run-off make for a challenging trip. Participants should dress for the cold and have experience in whitewater. Limit six canoes.

23 March LOWER CREDIT RIVER

Ken Coburn, (416) 767-5845; book before 16 March.

The trip down the Lower Credit from Streetsville is nearly continuous grade 1 and 2 whitewater. This is a great run in itself and a good warm-up for better things to come. Suitable for intermediates. Limit six canoes.

24 March ELORA GORGE

Ken Coburn, (416) 767-5845; book before 16 March.

Water levels can be high in the spring runoff. Certainly the water is cold and canoeists should be well prepared for adverse conditions. This is a very scenic trip, the rapids can vary up to class 3 depending on precipitation and dam release. Experienced intermediate canoeists are welcome. Limit six canoes.

24 March UPPER CREDIT RIVER

Mike Graham-Smith, (416) 877-7829; book before 18 March.

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

29-31 March SALMON, MOIRA, LOWER BLACK RIVERS

Dale Miner, (416) 639-1337; book before 24 March.

A challenging Easter Weekend, if the ice permits paddling in this area. Three day trips, through some very rugged country. The rivers offer a variety of rapids and flat water sections, which can be windy. Intermediate paddlers prepared for the unexpected are welcome. Limit 5 boats.

30 March BAYFIELD RIVER

Will Bartlett, (519) 268-3701; book before 16 March.

From Clinton to County Rd. 31, the river is not large but offers several interesting rapids and obstacles. If water levels are not adequate, the Maitland River is an alternative. Suitable for intermediate paddlers prepared for cold weather. Limit four canoes.

6 April BRONTE CREEK

Diane and Paul Hamilton, (416) 279-0789 after 6 p.m.; book before 29 March.

Bronte is a small, fast creek in the Burlington area. The water is cold and the swift current makes precise manoeuvring essential. Intermediate paddlers. Limit six boats.

6-7 April WEST BRANCH, SUSQUEHANNA RIVER

Daniel Jenny, (412) 443-1913; book now!

Only a five-hour drive from Toronto, the Susquehanna is the

most remote river in Pennsylvania. This trip offers a very different canoeing experience from Ontario rivers and is well worth the visit.

The Susquehanna runs through mountainous countryside with beautiful valleys and waterfalls down cliffs at the edge of the river. There is no significant whitewater and the trip is suitable for novices. Limit five canoes.

7 April GRAND RIVER

Dave Sharp, (519) 621-5599; book before 30 March.

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

7 April NONQUOM RIVER

Jane Burgess, (416) 466-3154; book before 29 March.

The Nonquom winds through marsh, a conservation area, a dog training club, and the farmlands of Seagrave. We begin at Hwy 12 and take a leisurely approach to the trip. Ideal for family canoeists. Limit eight canoes.

13 April ERAMOSA RIVER

Jeff Lane, (519) 837-3815; book before 6 April.

Essentially a flatwater trip with some swifts and easy portaging. Suitable for novices prepared for cold weather. Limit eight boats

13-14 April SALMON AND MOIRA RIVERS

Glenn Spence, (613) 475-4176; book before 6 April.

Just north of Belleville, these two rivers offer a chance to enjoy exciting whitewater and fine scenery. The Salmon River is the more gentle of the two but there are some ledges to practise your skills. The Moira, from Lost Channel, has larger rapids with a possibility of class 3 at high water levels. This is one of Southern Ontario's most delightful spring rivers. Intermediate paddlers will enjoy a chance to paddle these rivers with an organizer who has travelled them frequently. Limit six canoes.

13-14 April BEAVER CREEK, SKOOTAMATTA RIVER

Dale Miner, (416) 639-1337; book before 6 April.

Beaver Creek is a narrow, swift stream that will provide a thrill for even the most seasoned paddlers. Rapids can vary up to class 3+ if the water is high. The river is suitable for experienced whitewater paddlers.

The Skootamatta is a pool-and-drop river and this trip may well involve portaging on rugged terrain. This is an exploratory trip for the organizer. Limit five boats.

14 April UPPER BLACK RIVER

Del Dako, (416) 421-2108; book after 7 April.

From Cooper to Queensborough this river offers strenuous paddling through a series of rapids. The put-in is on private land and there is a small parking fee. Suitable for advanced paddlers. Limit five canoes.

20-22 April UPPER AND LOWER BLACK RIVER, BEAVER CREEK

Karl Schimek, (705) 487-0172; book before 12 April.

The Black River near Madoc is a fast-moving, rocky little stream with plenty of rapids. We will run the Upper on Saturday and finish the Lower on Sunday at Highway 7. Beaver Creek between Shannick and Highway 7 is similar to the Black, but the rapids are more demanding with some short portages. Participants can sign up for either river but preference is given to those who want to do both rivers. Suitable for intermediates. Limit five canoes.

21 April ELORA GORGE

Jeff Lane, (519) 837-3815; book before 13 April.

The water levels could be high and early in the season the water is very cold. The Gorge offers stimulating whitewater paddling, suitable for intermediate paddlers. Limit six boats.

27-28 April LITTLE ANSTRUTHER LAKE

Rob Butler, (416) 487-2282; book before 18 April.

A camping trip to Little Anstruther Lake via the Anstruther Lake Loop. There are about 10 portages on this scenic route. Limit three canoes with fit crews.

27 April ELORA GORGE

Doug Ashton, (519) 654-0336; book before 24 April.

The Gorge at this time of year can be very challenging. Participants can expect cold water and swift rapids. A wet or dry suit is advisable. The trip is for experienced paddlers, equipped for the cold. Limit five boats.

28 April ELORA GORGE

Ken Coburn, (416) 767-4845 before 9 p.m.; book before 19 April.

For the intrepid camper who stayed overnight, or the paddler who did not make yesterday's trip. Experienced paddlers. Limit six canoes.

28 April WILLOW CREEK

Mike Jones, (416) 270-3256; book before 20 April.

An excellent trip for novices on a gentle stream. The trip goes through part of the Minnesing Swamp and many birds may be seen as they migrate north to breed. Limit six canoes.

4-5 May LOWER MADAWASKA RIVER

Ken Coburn, (416) 767-5845; book before 26 April.

This trip is timed for maximum water levels, shortly after the ice goes out. Ideal for advanced paddlers who are looking for big water experience and who have cold weather gear. Call before 9 p.m., the organizer needs his beauty sleep. Limit four canoes.

4-5 May BLACK RIVER, VANKOUGHNET TO COOPERS FALLS

Cathy or Hans Grim, (416) 655-3485; book before 26 April.

At this time of year the water level assures pleasant paddling. Relatively uninhabited countryside, punctuated by some short portages. An early-morning start on Saturday will ensure a leisurely Sunday. Suitable for novices with some moving water skills. The portage access points are very close to the top of the rapids. Limit four canoes.

4-5 May UPPER MADAWASKA, OPEONGO RIVERS

Dale Miner, (416) 639-1337; book before 26 April.

The Upper Madawaska is a river for experienced whitewater paddlers only. Some of the rapids are severe, reaching grade 3 and above.

While the rapids on the Opeongo are not as intense as those of the previous day's trip, they are more continuous. This river requires good whitewater manoeuvring skills. Limit five canoes.

4-5 May UPPER WANAPITEI RIVER

Richard Culpeper, (705) 673-8988; book before 20 April.

Break out of the rut! Paddle on a "northern" river. Get some wilderness experience. The Upper Wanapitei, just west of Temagami, offers class 2 rapids and more class 2 rapids. Suitable for paddlers who want a taste of river tripping and insist on enjoying themselves.

4-5 May PORT LORING AREA

John Winters, (705) 382-2057; book before 1 May.

We will paddle the small lake area southwest of Port Loring. This is an exploratory trip to find new areas for paddling. Suitable for novice paddlers, solo paddlers are always welcome. The weather is always unpredictable, so be prepared for the worst.

6-10 May DOG LAKE, ILLFED LAKE

John Winters, (705) 382-2057; book before 1 May.

An exploratory trip south of Port Loring into Dog and Illfed Lakes, and who knows where afterwards? Eventually we will get back to Port Loring! Suitable for those who don't mind bushwhacking or strenuous travel. Solo paddlers are welcome if they promise not to complain about the difficulties. See previous trip for weather report.

11-12 May PICKEREL RIVER

John Winters, (705) 382-2057; book before 1 May.

A leisurely float from the Ess Narrows on the Pickerel River to Naganosh Lake and vicinity. Suitable for novices who think my usual trips involve too much work. See above for solo boats; see above for weather.

11 May ELORA GORGE

Dave Sharp, (519) 621-5599; book before 28 April.

By this time of year the water levels are a little lower but still good enough for some fun. The air and water should be warm enough to encourage budding whitewater canoeists to try the Gorge's numerous rapids. Suitable for novices with moving water experience and a sense of adventure. Limit six canoes.

11-12 May FRONTENAC PARK

Anne Snow, (416) 482-0810, Enid Weiner (416) 489-2401; book before 1 May.

A weekend trip with the possibility of an overnight stay at the organizer's cottage nearby. This park offers many small lakes and the route will pass through several of them. Portages are excellent. Limit four canoes.

18-19 May LOWER KIPAWA RIVER

Richard Culpeper, (705) 673-8988; book before 20 April.

An expedition for lovers of heavy whitewater. The water levels can easily reach class 4! Suitable for experienced whitewater paddlers comfortable with extremely turbulent water and who have sound judgement of their own abilities. Steep technical water at full flood. Helmets essential.

18-20 May BONNECHERE RIVER

Karl Schimek, (705) 487-0172; book before 10 May.

Moderately strenuous trip upstream on the Aylen River to McKaskill Lake (two portages). The first part of the Bonnechere River includes some lining and portages while the lower section has some demanding rapids. We will end the trip at Aylen Lake. Suitable for fit intermediate paddlers. Limit three canoes.

18-20 May PETAWAWA RIVER

Cathy or Hans Grim, (416) 635-3485; book before 10 May.

Spring conditions should ensure an exhilarating run on this very picturesque river. There are portages around all the rapids for those who prefer to walk. Suitable for intermediate whitewater paddlers. Since campsites are small we will limit the trip to five canoes.

18-20 May FRENCH RIVER

Anmarie Forsyth, (416) 881-5145; book before 10 May.

We will meet at the Hungry Bear Restaurant at 9:00 a.m. and proceed to Wolseley Bay where we'll park the cars. We will paddle via Commanda Island to our base camp. Within a short distance from this spot are several fine rapids where we can practise manoeuvring in Big Water. Wet suit or dry suit a must, solo canoeists welcome. Limit five canoes.

18-20 May SMOKE LAKE AREA

Jasper and Mary Megelink, (416) 877-0012; book before 10 May.

This is an easy trip through an interesting part of Algonquin Park, suitable for novices. Limit four boats.

25-26 May TIM RIVER

Howard Sayles, (416) 921-5321; book before 13 May.

A meandering river with many twists requiring the ability to manoeuvre precisely in moving water. The trip will begin at the Tim Tiver access site and continue via Tim Lake to Rosebary lake, the Shaw Portage, and beyond. Suitable for novices. Cold conditions make warm clothing essential. Limit three canoes.

25-26 May LOWER MADAWASKA RIVER

John and Sharon Hackert, (416) 438-7672 before 9:00 p.m.; book before 18 May.

An overnight camping trip on this scenic river. Water levels will be fairly high so come prepared for some splashes. The trip will start at the Latchford bridge and end at Griffith. Limit five canoes with crews prepared for cold conditions.

1-2 June OPEONGO, UPPER MADAWASKA RIVERS

Karl Schimek, (705) 487-0172; book before 18 May.

We will paddle the Opeongo River on Saturday. This river has long, runnable sets of rapids. On Sunday we will move to the more technically challenging Upper Madawaska River. This makes an exciting whitewater weekend. Restricted to good intermediate paddlers, or better. Limit five canoes.

1-2 and 8-9 June TANDEM WHITEWATER

Bill Ness, (416) 321-3005 before 9:00 p.m.; book before 15 May.

This clinic takes place over two weekends, the first on the Elora Gorge and the second on the Madawaska River at Palmer Rapids. It is designed to give new WCA members the necessary skills and experience to enable them to participate more fully in our outings program.

Participants can expect two intense, skills-building weekends that will teach the fundamentals of water reading, whitewater strokes, manoeuvres, and river safety. Registration is limited to 10 canoes to permit individual instruction. Preference will be given to members who have already been on club outings. An ABS canoe and a good PFD and whitewater paddle are essential.

8-9 June SAUGEEN RIVER

Orrie Wigle, (519) 542-9677; book before 30 May.

From a base camp at Saugeen Bluffs Conservation Area we will take two, one-day excursions in the Hanover, Walderton, Paisley area. Bring the non-canoeing members of your family and relax with leisure paddling, hiking, and camping. All welcome. Limit five canoes.

8-11 June SOMEWHERE IN ALGONQUIN PARK

John Winters, (705) 382-2057; book before 1 June.

Unknown destination, as the purpose of the trip is to inspect and photograph logging practices in the Park. The terrain will undoubtedly be rugged as these areas are off the usual canoe routes.

A good chance to do some constructive conservation. This is peak blackfly season, wimps need not apply. Suitable for those who are unafraid of the unexpected and difficult and blackflies.

Limit, see above.

15-16 June LOWER MADAWASKA RIVER

Ken Coburn, (416) 767-5845; book before 11 June.

Finally dried out from the early May trip on the old Madawaska? Can't wait to do it again? Join Ken. The water should still be high and there will be lots of great play spots. Intermediate whitewater paddlers welcome. Limit four canoes.

15-16 June WHITEWATER COURSE, PALMER RAPIDS

Hugh Valliant, Anmarie Forsyth, Jim Morris, Debbie Sutton; phone Hugh, (416) 699-3464 evenings; book before 5 June.

We will meet at Palmer Rapids on the Madawaska River for an exciting and instructional weekend. The emphasis of the course is on the strokes and techniques necessary to safely negotiate a set of rapids. Palmer Rapids is considered class 2. In this controlled and structured environment where the pace is slow, there will be plenty of time to practise and perfect your strokes. You will learn how to control a canoe in moving water so that you can go where you want to go (most of the time). The river will no longer control your canoe (all of the time).

To feed your hungry appetites there will be a group bbq on Saturday night featuring a real salad, real steak, and real potatoes using real charcoal. A deposit of \$15 is required.

Open to experienced flatwater and novice or beginning whitewater paddlers. Limit eight canoes.

22 June BASIC FLATWATER CANOEING WORKSHOP

Doug Ashton, (519) 654-0336; book before 14 June.

This workshop is being offered to new members who wish to develop their skills. We will discuss the basic strokes, portaging, and canoe safety. The day will be slow paced with plenty of time for practice. Participants will be expected to provide a suitable canoe, PFDs, and paddles. Registration is limited to 20 people, who must be current club members.

29 June - 1 July WHITEWATER COURSE, FRENCH RIVER

Hugh Valliant, Anmarie Forsyth, Jim Morris, Debbie Sutton; phone Hugh, (416) 699-3464 evenings; book before 20 June.

This is a continuation of the Palmer Rapids weekend. We will set up camp near Commanda Island from which we can easily reach a number of rapids that can be run repeatedly. This is an excellent opportunity to practise and further refine and hone your whitewater skills in more challenging rapids. Suitable for novice or beginning whitewater paddlers. Preference will be given to those who attended the Palmer Rapids weekend.

Sorry, no group bbq this weekend, unless someone wants to bring the drums in. My barge is already full and I didn't get my "kicker" for Xmas. Limit 10 canoes.

7-21 July LAKE SUPERIOR PROVINCIAL PARK

Jeff Haymer, (416) 635-5801; book before June.

After driving to the Park we will take the train to Sand Lake and paddle the Sand River. On completion of this trip we will take the train to Canyon Station and paddle the Agawa River. Limit four canoes. Food to be planned as communal meals.



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.

HORSEBACK TRIP Looking for people interested in outfitted horseback trip in Rockies. Mary Schaffer's 1908 trip - Nigel Pass to Maligne Lake. 22-31 July 1991. Contact Bob or Kathleen Henderson, 2 Helen Street, Dundas, Ont., L9H 1N3; phone (416) 627-9772.

THE WILDERNESS PADDLER Tired of buying equipment that self-destructs after one week into a month-long trip? Tired of taking out a second mortgage to be able to buy a new tent? THE WILDERNESS PADDLER is a new company dedicated to providing canoe and kayak trippers with high-quality equipment at affordable prices. For a free catalogue featuring Coleman/Peak 1, Pelican, Nalgene, and many other products, please write to: The Wilderness Paddler, 520 Adelaide Ave. West, Oshawa, Ont., L1J 2S1, or call (416) 571-2339.



FOR SALE Mad River Flashback canoe. A solo whitewater playboat, 13 ft long, Royalex construction, vinyl gunwales; outfitted with whitewater saddle, knee pads, and thigh straps. \$600.00. Call Chris Hornell at (416) 576-0068.

WILDERNESS BOUND Our new summer 1991 color brochure, presenting outfitted wilderness canoe trips as well as canoe instruction courses, is available by contacting: Wilderness Bound, 43 Brodick St., Hamilton, Ontario L8S 3E3; phone (416) 528-0059.

WILDERNESS VOICE Environmental Awareness Through Outdoor Skills. Learn wilderness survival and primitive living skills while experiencing the comfort and beauty of a northern Ontario canoe trip, hiking trip, or weekend lodge visit. Included are edible wild plants, fire by friction, native tool and craft making, shelter construction, and much more. These skills will further your environmental awareness and enhance your personal wilderness tripping. For information and a free brochure write to: Wilderness Voice, c/o 1104 Claredale Rd., Mississauga, Ontario L5G 1T6, or phone (416) 891-2520 or (416) 221-2766.

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.

FOR SALE Blue Water Saugeen canoe, 16'6", wood trim. Asking \$500, or best offer. Contact Jeff Lane at (519) 837-3815.

WANAPITEI WILDERNESS CENTRE Experience northern Canada by canoe. Since 1931, Wanapitei has been running quality canoe trips in the Canadian North. Trips and canoe clinics vary in length from one day to several weeks and there are options for all levels of paddlers from novice to expert. Trips are offered throughout Canada, from Quebec to the NWT. From our base in Temagami, Ontario, we also offer complete outfitting services as well as a unique canoe trip camp for youth ages 9-18. For a free brochure, contact Wanapitei, 393 Water St. #14, Peterborough, Ontario K9H 3L7; phone (705) 745-8314.

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. White Squall, RR#1, Nobel, Ontario P0G 1G0; phone (705) 342-5324.

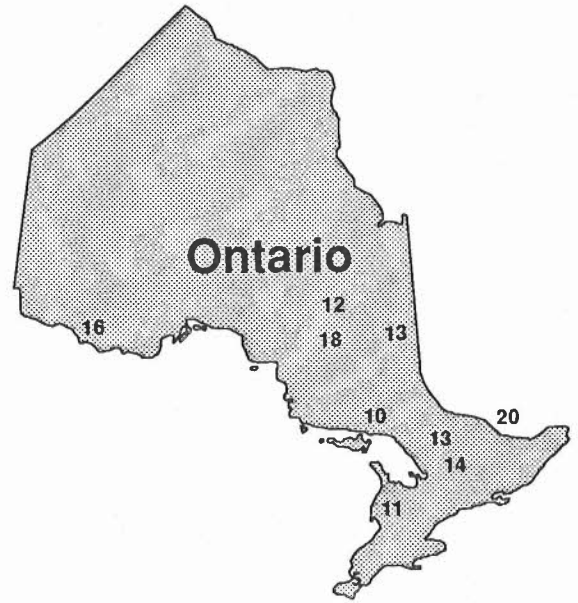
FOR SALE River canoe Apple "Rout 15", solo, length 15 ft, 30" beam, heavily rockered, weighs 49 pounds, Duraflex Spectra hull lay-up, wood trim, portage yoke. Owner Phil Nusbaum leaving Canada, must sell. Asking \$475.00. Wife Thea will show canoe. Call (416) 221-5345.

MYSTERY COUNTRY INTERNATIONAL of Thompson, Manitoba, has prepared a canoeing guide for their own area and other more distant areas in that sector of the province. Possible trips range from short to long, easy to difficult, flatwater to whitewater, safe to hazardous, lakes, streams, and rivers — something for all tastes. There are excellent entry and exit points and a good transportation web. Any needed equipment and supplies are available in Thompson, and safe parking is provided free. Contact: Mystery Country International, 4 Nelson Road, Thompson, Manitoba R8N 0B4.

CANOE TRIP IN EASTERN SIBERIA You are invited to join a small group of Canadian and U.S. paddlers who will descend the upper Kolyma River, secreted in the snow-mantled Cherskogo Mountains of far eastern Siberia, for about 400 km during July and August 1991 on the first Western river exploration in this region. You will be supported by Altour, an experienced Siberian wilderness outfitter, and a veteran American paddler ready to tackle his third Siberian river. Contact: John Lentz, 5424 Mohican Road, Bethesda, MD 20816, USA; phone (301) 229-4968 (h) or (202) 566-8208 (w).



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Wilderness Canoe Association

membership application

I enclose a cheque for \$25 (single) or \$35 (family) for membership in the *Wilderness Canoe Association*. I understand that this gives me/us the opportunity to participate in WCA trips and activities, and entitles me/us to receive *Nastawgan* and to vote at meetings of the Association. I also understand that WCA trips may have an element of danger and that the ultimate responsibility for the member's safety is his/her own.

PRINT CLEARLY! Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Prov. _____

New member Member # if renewal: _____

Single Family

Phone Number(s):

() _____ (h)

() _____ (w)

* This membership is valid for one year. Postal Code: _____ Ext. _____

* Send completed form and cheque, payable to the WILDERNESS CANOE ASSOCIATION, to the membership secretary at the WCA postal address.