

nastawgan

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A GRAND WAYFARING

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"Give me a tent and kittle, snowshoes, and axe, and gun. Send me up in Grand River steering by star and sun."

Sung to Elliott Merrick by John Michelin, 7 December 1930

In the courting of luck and opportunity it occasionally pays to derail business sense long enough for common sense to keep the picture clear. Intuition knew the route we would take, and remained patient while we thrashed all the details around until we found a way to make dreams and doings one and the same.

In the spring of 1989 we met Joe Goudie of Happy Valley,

Labrador, via the phone after a trail of leads and suggestions. Sure he could get us and our party and gear to the ferry terminal after a trip. His house was right on the river and we could camp in his yard. Ten of us descended the Grand River that year and found in Joe the typical generosity and excessive hosting abilities of most Labradorians. At one point when Joe was driving Alexandra and me on some errands without our whole group present something clicked between us and we could all sense a deeper trust. "You guys should come into the Kenamu River with me and Horace this winter."

In unison and without so much as a glance at each other for confirmation, Alexandra and I said "OK". It didn't matter that we didn't have a snowmobile, that flying to Happy Valley/Goose Bay didn't appeal to us and would only get us there, not our winter equipment. In the end we bought a

Ski-Doo and built a komatik with which to tow our stuff. We loaded everything on the Quebec North Shore & Labrador Railway and got off in Esker where a friend trucked us to Churchill Falls. From there it took us eight days by Ski-Doo to go 200 miles further east to Happy Valley because there was deep snow and no packed trail. We got to Joe's, met his brother Horace, and packed for Kenamu.

It was an eighty-mile trip to their trapping camps and since we didn't know each other we thought we might spend a week or two. We got along well. Six weeks flew by and the trapping season ended. It was mid-March when the Goudie brothers headed back to town and it all seemed too soon. None of us wanted to go.

But then the spring of 1990 was threatening to arrive, we had to get back across three hundred miles of snow to the train tracks, as well as take a side trip seventy or eighty miles north to visit another friend in the country. In early April there would be a southbound train we should not miss. So we would have to go, and we did, but not without the seeds of another plan for the following fall already germinating in our minds.

Horace was going to retire after the next season as head guide at a fishing camp. From the camp he planned to paddle to Churchill Falls, and from there descend the final two hundred miles of the Grand River with his brother Joe and show him the fur paths of their father, a number of uncles and others, and Horace himself. The river and a grand oral history would come to life.

Forty-some days of sharing the winter trail, taking meals together in the main tilt, and the countless times when we would stop to "boil kittle," had forged a friendship and closeness that would not build so fast or bond so well except on the trail. Horace knew us well enough by then so we were never invited directly, or given a suggestion regarding the coming trip. Plans were always stated as "when you come next fall" or "on the canoe trip...," and we would respond in the same language of foregone conclusion.

There was never any doubt. It mattered not that there were details to attend to such as abandoning nearly a quarter of our season's commercial trips to our apprentices so we could go, incurring all sorts of additional travel expenses, and investing three weeks time into what anyone with brains and a penchant for securing an income would regard as a lark. But then, such a lark does not come easily or perhaps again.

Horace is the last "Height O' Lander" still able to travel the country with strength and agility. At 68 he is younger than a few of the others like Uncle John Michelin (who died at the age of 87 in early summer 1991), the man who took Kay and Elliott Merrick some 300 or 350 miles into the country in 1930 to become part of the wonderful book *True North* which evocatively and beautifully tells that tale. Horace knew before we did that we would accompany him come what may, and be glad of it. Deep down we knew it too, though we calculated everything out and went through the motions of making a reasoned and evaluated decision. At least we would strive to be savvy in our foolishness, and besides, those who value calculations too highly would be a thousand miles away and we would be the richer for it.

The Goudie brothers are simultaneously bound together

by blood and tradition, and, they are worlds apart. Horace was born in 1922. At age 11 he was allowed to accompany his father, Jim, thus beginning an education on the trail in a stern and wild land. He would learn of the hard work and discipline required for freedom and a high degree of independence.

Joe was born 17 years later in 1939, only two years before the start of the Air Base in Goose Bay when the military presence would catapult the lives of trappers, fishermen, and settlers into a wage economy and a new world populated with outsiders. The sudden shift was ruthless, and for all the good that came of it, devastating as well. Joe had the luxury of an education and made good with it. His careers have included the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, the Ministry of Northern Development, and, later, a number of years as a successful politician in the capacity of Cabinet Minister, and as a member of the House of Assembly.

Eventually Joe suffered a defeat. He was approaching 50 and took a little time to reassess his position and life as he might like it. He wavered a bit, torn between an attempt at a comeback and maybe even a shot at the Premier's office, and an invitation to go up Kenamu for a winter with Horace. The river and his brother tipped the balance that first winter, and for several following. It was about this time that we met Joe and fell under the spell of the Kenamu and of brother-hood recently reunited and full of exploration.

That the Goudie brothers are each extraordinary is not surprising considering their lineage. Their mother Elizabeth was an amazing person of power and grace, a wise and astute observer of life and change. Her book, *Woman of Labrador*, is an unadorned reflection of her life and times. Not only does it present a woman's perspective in the literature of the north, but also an insider's view. There is no condescension or quaintness in her writing, just the truth told well by a woman of character and vision. Their father, Jim, was a man of consistency and vast abilities in an environment that suffered no fools or slackards. Jim passed on in January of 1963, and Elizabeth in 1982.

To travel the river and landscapes of such a country is quite a gift. But to do so in the company of a family whose lives were defined by this grand homeland is a gift beyond reckoning. On this, the third trip on the Grand River for Alexandra and me, the land would speak and come alive. The signatures of the families are sprinkled along the rivers like the old tilts and fur paths. The names of Blake, Baikie, Michelin, Montague, Chaulk, and Goudie are as much a part of the landscape as the rocks and trees.

.... "Their snowshoes streaked the endless plains from Fall till early Spring.

When they set their traps, when they blazed their trails you could hear their axes ring.....

..... It seemed that nothing stopped them bold hearts one and all, not raging rivers or rapids, the mighty waterfalls" ...

from a song by Byron Chaulk"Sons of Labrador"

At trip time in late September it was cold, rainy, and a little snow appeared. As we drove north from Maine toward the Quebec North Shore it looked more as if a winter trip was in the near future. Wood-and-canvas canoe builder Jerry Stelmok bade us "not to worry, it's Indian summer up there; we'll be swimming in the evenings and complaining about the flies." Writer friend Bob Kimber kept his perpetual grin in place and regarded this statement as the balmiest buffoonery. Alexandra and I made up the rest of the van load, and as always happens when the four of us are together, the uncontrolled hilarity that arises threatened to make us drive poorly and give us sore cheeks from laughing.

When we crossed the St. Lawrence it was sunny and a layer of wool was shed. While the Maine contingent drove north there were two canoes and five people starting down the lower Atikonak River in a series of snow squalls. Horace Goudie had finished the season as head guide. Dave Cook, brother of the fishing camps proprietor was joining the trip, as was Colonel Fred Schneider who was in charge of the Luftwaffe's presence in Goose Bay. Carolyn Maybee and Cheryl Butler who were friends of both the Colonel and Horace had also joined the trip.

Meanwhile Joe Goudie was somewhere on the road between Goose Bay, Churchill Falls, and the tracks at Esker, entertaining an unprecedented number of flat tires along the 320-mile ribbon of gravel.

In Sept-Iles, Quebec, we had loaded the boxcar with canoes and gear and marvelled at the sun and heat which had us down to one layer of clothing. As the train headed north into the bush and began its climb up the canyons of the Moisie, Nippissis, and Wacouno rivers, Jerry allowed that "we haven't seen anything yet! When we bust out onto the plateau we'll really encounter Indian Summer. It's sitting up there alright, a big mass of stable hot air, palm trees, and pineapples." At mile 145 when we topped the rim of the plateau, people on the sunny side of the cars were pulling the blinds down to counter the effects of riding in a solar cooker.

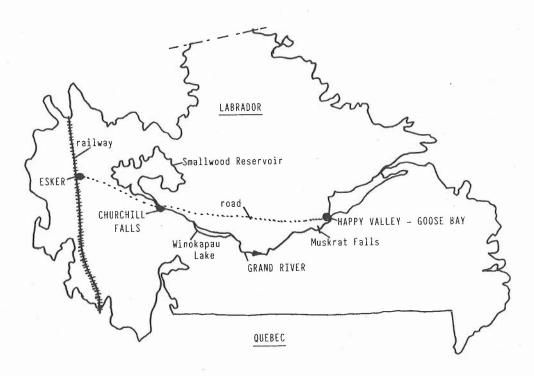
We sought refuge on the platforms between cars and stood in the breezes with our sleeves rolled up watching Jerry point out the tropical plants growing in among the black spruces. When we passed an Innu wall tent pitched within sight of the tracks he informed us that the occupants were not just hunting geese but harvesting Brazil Nuts as well.

We were met in Esker by part of the gang, and successfully drove to mile 35 on the Churchill Road before abandoning one of the trucks for lack of spare tires. This was the fifth flat and we would lose a day to the replacing of tires and recovery of vehicles. "What odds," Joe said, using the phrase that is the hallmark of the Labradorian's equanimity and acceptance of the fates. This phrase might be used by someone looking for a misplaced pencil, or someone who has just lost their canoe and outfit over a falls and faces a winter with no gun and no gear. Comfort with the way things fall in this country has produced a stoicism evolved to psychological perfection.

Over breakfast Horace outlined a few things. "When we travelled this river each canoe was responsible for its own gear, cooking, and everything. We were each independently outfitted and knew what needed to be done and how to do it. This trip is different. For one thing I just retired, I don't want to do a damn thing. Me and Joe got our grub and kittles, you fellas got all yours and whatever else you want. You have to be in charge of all that."

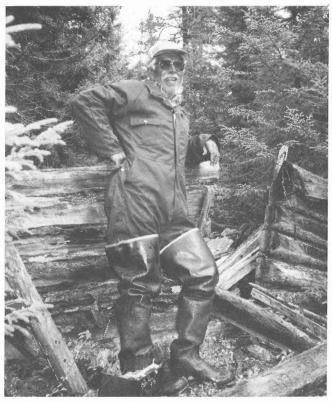
Later Horace asked Alexandra and me to be head guides, a request overheard with some alarm by Fred. Traditionally this role fell to the person with the most trips on the river and was never discussed. Occasionally a man with many trips would assign a younger person, knowing that in such a capacity the youngster would be all but stumbling over himself trying to measure up in technique and wise decisions while learning a role which he would one day occupy.

In this case Horace skillfully choreographed everything into a perfect retirement trip. Responsibilities that did not interest him were diverted to specific people, while we all



Nastawgan Summer 1992

knew and deferred to him as our elder statesman anyway. Should the need arise for a decision or judgement call, a structure and mouthpiece were in place, and if disagreement were to accompany such a call, the heat would seek the mouthpiece rather than Horace. As it was, our party functioned more perfectly than anyone would have guessed without a single lapse of democracy. For the entire time Horace and I engaged in a respectful balancing dance to discover that we were constantly surprised at how much alike we seemed to think regarding the small, day-to-day plans and strategies.



We did not immediately head downstream at the start. Instead we crossed the tailrace where the Churchill Falls hydro project returns diverted water back to its proper riverbed, and ascended the main valley to a small point and cove where the Big Hill Portage used to be. It was here that the Height O' Landers would leave the deep valley of the Grand and climb nearly a thousand feet to the Labrador Plateau, some to continue farther inland yet another hundred or so miles. Here, too, were the remains of Edward Michelin's tilt. Now only the base logs show and bits of old tin stoves and cans. Forty-nine years had passed since Horace made his last trip from the interior of the Plateau, and fifty had passed since Elliott Merrick had stopped by here on his way out to Northwest River by snowshoe and toboggan.

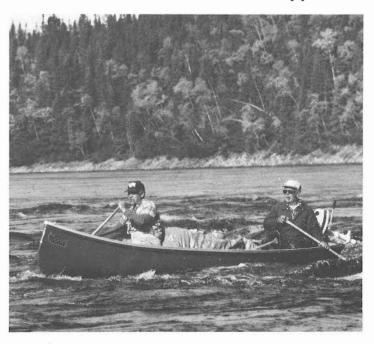
Much has changed since then. A triplet of power lines cross the valley high above our heads spanning a full nautical mile between towers. The river is diverted some miles above where the Grand Falls used to be, and the town of Churchill Falls squats like some Orwellian Ant Farm where no town would ordinarily situate itself. The Big Hill Portage is overgrown and reveals little of the struggles and ambitions of those who had already ascended two hundred miles of river to make this awesome carry.

To the Innu, the original inhabitants of the land, this river was Winokapau Shibu; later maps refer to it as the Hamilton River, the Grand, and most recently the Churchill. To Horace it is the Grand River, and indeed it is. Below the tailrace and after the first few bends, the evidence of rape and abuse are hidden above. We glide then on a river of grand scale, speed, history, and power.

We choose not to acknowledge the most recent name, bestowed by the then Premier Smallwood of Newfoundland when the hydro project was completed. Though the workforce, engineers, and current residents of Churchill Falls are proud of the project and the sheer magnitude of it, it is as easily viewed as a colossal environmental disaster. Not once were the people of Labrador consulted or even asked for their opinions. When the river and falls were stolen by development, and the names changed to honor financiers and politicians, it was news to those who lived there with the river flowing through their lives. The result is that the waters of a 22,300-square-miles natural catchment basin pass through the penstocks at Churchill Falls. When the robbery of other watersheds such as that of the upper Nascaupie River is calculated, this catchment basin is increased to 26,700 square miles. Smallwood Reservoir alone covers 2,200 square miles and drowns the great heartland lakes of Labrador - Michikamau, Sandgirt, Lobstick, and countless others.

Even in the hearts of those who live in Churchill Falls there may be a seed of doubt and regret. Almost every residence has a photo of the falls in full glory. Much as Christians might display a portrait of Christ alive, there are those who display the icon of the falls before they too were murdered and martyred.

Our days on the river were glorious. Rain seemed to fall mostly at night, and the days for the most part were quite warm. Some were sunny. We swam occasionally which is to say that we jumped in and out of 44°F water with great speed and much contraction and screeching. Our three tents went up each night like a small village and the stoves turned red with heat while smoke from the three stove pipes made a



signature in the sky. Hot drinks were made on one stove, supper on another, and flummies were baked for the evening meal and the next day's lunch on the third. We visited privately between tents, or convened in the largest to sing or talk, or reflect on the topics that rose and flew among us. Somehow I always smile at the sight of Joe leaning back on his bearskin sleeping pad in the fragrance of a bough floor while his tin stove hummed with heat and the history of the way things are done in this country. If only his colleagues in Ottawa could see him now, or the European Royalty he has dined with who remember him as a dapper man in a tailored suit.

We stopped at the remains of a tilt with a bark roof in a beautiful birch grove. It had been built fifty years ago by John Groves, and hunted on shares by Wilfred Baikie who was in his twenties at the time. Trapping on shares was done by a man who would yield one-third of his catch to the owner, while retaining two-thirds as his own recompense. The owner would supply tents, stoves, axes, canoes, traps, and all necessary gear, and the system was beneficial to both parties. A young man with no money could get a start as well as a territory, and both parties would take the risks in a poor year or reap rewards in a good one.

John Groves was an ambitious man with a big territory and a number of trappers working on shares. He also ran a small trading post in competition with the HBC on what is now known as Groves Point at the mouth of the Terrington Basin between Northwest River and the main bay.

On a section of wall beneath a small shelf that protected the logs below from the weather we could still read a number of notes left by people passing by. The logs of the tilts, blazes on trees, and even fur-drying boards were all signposts for written messages, and in this way a bush party-line existed. Most of the fur paths were tangent to the next man's territory and often adjacent hunters would meet at a tilt at the end of their lines to visit on Sundays for society and the transfer of messages and news. A government survey party had signed the logs in 1947, as had several canoe parties since then. Most of the notes were from trappers. "Come here today from Fox Island. Killed ten white partridge, but low on flour." "Nothing strange with me, boiled kettle here in dirty weather." "Thinking of her yet?"

As much is said by what is left out as what is stated, and no one ever mentions how the hunt is going. If they ever do in conversation it is always misleading and apocryphal. Thus a record of hunger, work, loneliness for family, and the fun of life is reflected over a vast area by a scattering of hunters.

Savvy and forethought are only part of the equation for life in this country. No one here is fool enough to discount luck. Among the old-timers there is an expression that qualifies any plans that involve the future. If someone planned to build a boat, or a pair of snowshoes, or try a new path, the statement is likely to include "if I lives" as an afterthought. This acknowledges chance, and the possibility of mishap, or the vagaries of life that more pampered souls might regard as "unfair." In this small statement the powers that be are reminded of humbleness and a lack of arrogance.

Our party was happy to accept our own good fortune on Winokapau Lake. This narrow body of water is forty miles

long and flanked by steep hills that cascade to lake level. The western twenty miles of the lake harbor few places to land, and fewer still for anything but the most meager of emergency campsites. Ledges, sheer cliffs, and huge boulders poised at their maximum angle of repose line the shores. Many a night passage has been undertaken to favor lack of wind, or been forced on travellers caught in a bad spot. Our own passage was expected to last until midnight or later, if we lived.



After supper, having already come over twenty miles, we decided to continue on to Long Point some nine miles away. It is the first best camp area on the lake with an ancient history of occupation, recuperation, and watching the weather. We held to the deeper black bulk of the south shore for an hour or two into the dark, and dared to grow pleased with a light tailwind that was springing up. At times each canoe would blink a flashlight and we would assess each others position. There was a bulge in the shoreline coming up and we intended to regroup there before crossing to the north shore. The lights blinked like fireflies and slowly we came together. Gunwale to gunwale we paused and talked a bit and some lit cigarettes. The wind picked up and the rain began just as we made the decision to go. There was a sudden escalation in waves and spray and several voices simultaneously said "get to shore." One was Horace's.

As one we turned broadside to the waves and headed in toward the deeper blackness of land. It was not far and we listened intently to monitor the sound of the growing waves, each of us ready to accept the probability of a shore that would yield no landing potential. Each of us not projecting to the next step if that were true, for the demands of the



moment were occupation enough. Rain gear glistened when lights scanned ahead, voices were calm and matter-of-fact, yet revealed the growing tension. Suddenly there were lights at a different level, they moved with the quickness and certainty of people on land.

Gear was heaved from the canoes and the canoes themselves nested and tied down to rocks as the wind picked up and the rain crossed the beams of our headlamps horizontally. We pitched the biggest tent on a small patch of gravel that we levelled with driftwood scrapers, and eight of us moved in like a swarm of sardines. Two others were able to rig a shelter between two canoes with a tarp and thus avoid sleeping with somebody's knees in their ears or their feet wrapped up with an unrelated rib cage.

At dawn the full extent of our luck became apparent. Not only had we been able to land at the first point of contact, but our tiny beach was the only place to land for some miles. We were bracketed by sheer cliffs to the west and steep boulders to the east. Our hundred-yard-long refuge had only the two sites where we slept available at all and fifty feet back from the water the hillside loomed above us at a forty-five or fifty degree angle. We could hardly believe our fortune.

Glorious fall days passed with more swimming and even a brief re-emergence of black flies. We passed back into the river where the current whisked us along. The rapids below the lake were all runnable with a little care, and as always we paused at the Devil's Hole to plan a route. The Mounies were full of waves and boils and holes, but required only careful backpaddling and ferrying around the worst sets of waves.

We paused at the old tilt Daniel Michelin had established more than ninety years before. The remains included a mix of old and newer items dating from the time of its last occupation by Daniel's son Cyril in the mid 1960s. Wildlife favored us with sightings. We had already seen moose and a bear that allowed a close approach. Partway down a rapid we

noticed nine wolves on the shore. It was difficult to watch them with our attention divided between watching for a route in the quickwater and keeping an eye on the wolves who appeared only when they moved. They blended so well with the rocks on shore that they vanished and appeared like an optical trick depending on whether they were in motion or still.

A few miles further on we found the remains of a moose kill they had made earlier in the week. So sudden and successful was the ambush that the moose never knew what happened. The tracks in the sand were unwavering and the young bull went down in place as if struck by lightning. But then five or six hundred pounds of wolves striking simultaneously from a high hank with perfect cover would tend to allow for quickness and finality rather than the usual stand-off and parry of flying hooves and striking jaws.

That night a rum bottle was emptied and Fred gathered us all in the big tent to "let the ghost out of the bottle." Around the circle the empty bottle was passed and we were instructed to rub it vigorously to warm it up as we addressed the ghost. Our responses ranged from the humorous to the serious. Alexandra thanked the spirits of the old-timers for the glimpse of a grand heritage. Horace was thoughtful for a minute and addressed our own group and another realm simultaneously. "Ghost, I want you to tell all of them that are gone that I'm still travelling the river, and with as fine a company as ever."

Fred received the bottle at the end and gave it a final warm-up rub. "Speak to us Ghost," he said as he undid the cap. We all waited expectantly, and Fred let nothing happen at all for a few seconds until the proper anticipation had developed. "Ah, the Ghost won't speak because it has no light." With that he dramatically scratched a match on the stove and passed it over the mouth of the bottle. There was a whistling rush of bluish flame and a pop which surprised and delighted us all as the ghost spoke, and a second bottle was cracked in anticipation of liberating more ghosts as the trip progressed.



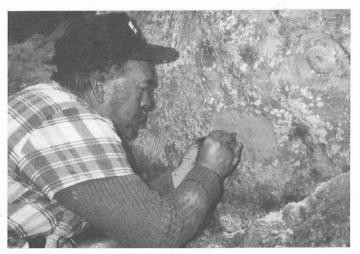
On 28 September we arrived at the remains of a tilt where Horace had hunted with his uncle John Blake in the mid-sixties. There were only four trappers on the whole river that year; everyone else was working for wages on the Base. Uncle John was the brother of Horace's mother, and the two men agreed to split John's line that year. John would hunt from the Mininipi up to the main tilt, and Horace would hunt upstream from the tilt to the head of Slackwaters where Cyril Michelin's line started. It was here where we got to look a little deeper into history, and here that a small china bowl was found still intact.

The bowl was one belonging to Sarah Blake, Elizabeth Goudie's mother, and grandmother to Horace and Joe; it had journeyed from England to Labrador in some trader's ship or among the belongings of an ancestor. At some point it left a home in Mud Lake to journey up the river by canoe or perhaps on a toboggan one winter. Here in the country it would bind a trapper to home and distant family and, unlike the common tin bowls of the trail, this had a delicate rose of subtle shading in the bottom and a thin gold line around the rim. Horace allowed that it might be a nice keepsake from the trip if I wished to take it.

When we departed the site we dropped only a few hundred yards downstream to a small brushy cove where the alders and willows were thick and uninviting. Horace went ashore and soon we heard him call us. We followed his lead and found ourselves at the base of a clay ledge with a perfect round hole cut into it where a small underground cache had been dug. There were many initials and dates cut into the clay and one was older, with moss and lichens nearly filling the incisions: J.B. 1911.

Here was a cache dug by Joseph Blake, Elizabeth Goudie's father, Horace and Joe's grandfather, and the man for whom Joe is named. In 1911 the Indians were not too pleased with the settlers coming so far up the river and establishing traplines, and grub and gear was often hidden during a trapper's absence as the natives might try to starve them out by destruction of goods.

The clay bank had other initials such as Joseph's son John Blake, Leslie Michelin, Horace Goudie, and Hayward Groves. Two faces were carved into the clay and a woman's profile was drawn in another part. Horace and Joe carefully updated their initials while the rest of us backed up a bit to



yield a more solemn space. When Horace invited the rest of us to sign in we moved to a spot a little removed from the proper signatures.

On the river we divided to cover each shore in case we could add a goose or two to the pot, but we encountered none which was all to the good for my goose-hunting eyes were clouded with amazement, so moved and humbled did I feel to have seen the ledge and the Goudie brothers shoulder to shoulder carving with such care. It was then, while I was lost in reveries, that a military helicopter chopped and shredded air and our ears with its arrival. Only a message to Colonel Schneider that all was well on Base in his absence, and his second in command delivered a bottle of Glenfiddich for all of us.



A mixture of sun and rain squalls accompanied us down increasingly faster current toward the great corner where the Mininipi River comes in and where the first major rapids are encountered in going downstream. In the high water the rapids leading to the corner were actually more intimidating than the mile or so of rapids below. To keep on the left bank to favor the inside of the elbow below, you must run the first rapid on the outside of a curve through the strong water that carves along ledges and boulders and rebounds toward midstream where the humped-up flow is incredibly fast. It is not a place where errors can be entertained.

There were two places where the current was altered by room-sized boulders and the drops and wave trains were at the limits of what open canoes with loads could handle.

In each case there was a strong eddy below that justified running rather than lining and we all slipped through with a minimum of water shipped. At the main corner we found a passage all the way down literally a foot or two from shore. Only in a few spots was it necessary to briefly dart outboard around huge boulders and be hosted by the edges of the bigger waves, and flirt briefly with strong diagonal currents that led to the mid-river chaos of huge waves.

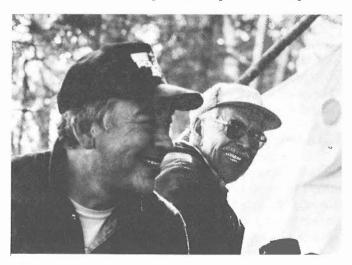
While reading the corner from shore I could see Horace and Joe close together talking. Horace gestured out to some strong diagonals and I thought he might have been showing Joe what to avoid and the danger there. Instead he was pointing out where an uncle had drowned years before on the upstream journey. This was a hard place to line up against



such an incredible current. Often the men would loop their line over their shoulders in order to grab rocks with their hands to increase traction beyond feet alone. There were places where men and river equalled each others force and a man became "hung," unable to proceed and unable to let go. Sometimes another would help, or a pulse in the current would slack off just enough for a liner to continue. But other times the pulse might strengthen, or a boulder roll under a hand or foot and headway would be lost. Occasionally disaster struck, someone would be pulled into the river by the force of the water on the canoe, and occasionally the river would keep a man.

After lunch the day went gray and became cold. We encountered the three pitches of the Horseshoe Rapids already chilled, and the way the waves broke brilliant white in a flat, grey afternoon was ominous indeed. Each pitch looked terrible from above. Either side of the river looked equally bad, and the centre was completely unrunnable.

By staying left snug to shore in the first two rapids, a sneak-route was provided that was not engulfed in impossible waves. The bottom pitch must be run on the right which involved crossing the outwash of the middle pitch. In the high water this outwash was a train of waves that were high with some breaking. Mixed in with these were occasional exploding waves whose pattern and period was unpredict-



able. We thought we would simply stay left and line when we had to, but as we slid down the crease between the big eddy and the outwash it seemed that there was a flat spot of calmer water where the wave lengths were long enough to accommodate a canoe, and fewer waves were breaking. Each canoe made the decision to cross and all were successful, though we lost half a mile in doing so, and were well abreast of the rough stuff on the outside of the curve long before making the relative shelter of a sneak-route close to shore on the inside.

The Glenfiddich bottle was cracked once the tents were up and the rain had started in earnest. We filled the bowl with the rose and toasted Horace: "Thanks to our illustrious leader who has made the landscape speak to us and given the old sites voice." Cheryl and Carolyn were next to Horace and he started to pass the rose bowl to them, but stopped himself. "I don't mean to be rude ladies, but I'll pass this the other way so we don't back against the sun. No sense encouraging bad weather." The bowl circled and we each took a sip. The rose looked pretty good as seen through the amber liquid, and Horace wondered what Grandmother would think: "Oh no. Now they're drinkin, out of my dessert bowl."

Dawn was cold and snow came, but as it turned out the day would develop into the warmest sunny day of the trip with almost no wind. We lined Gull Island Rapids with care and great respect for the power and complexity of huge water among giant boulders. It was deafening along the shore, and communication was accomplished with shouting and gestures. A grand day was followed by a fantastic campsite with a full moon. We didn't know it was our last night on the river.

Headwinds and rain slowed our progress toward Muskrat Falls, and where the shore was along several miles of flat sand we actually lined the canoes into the wind. Somehow the days had passed too quickly. Joe was a day late for work as the Native Liaison Officer between the Military and the Native Groups. As we paddled on when the wind dropped a bit we watched the plane Jerry was supposed to be on cross the river and start to climb before veering off toward Halifax. While we boiled up for lunch the military chopper rattled back into our trip and took Joe and our trash away, and broke the spell entirely.

Hours later it was a dejected bunch that gathered on the crest of the portage trail around the falls deciding who would paddle all the way to town, and who would head back via road. But the gear division got complicated and we decided to end not with the glories of the previous evening's full moon on the beach during our night stroll foremost in our minds, but in the mud of a cold rain where a spur road touched in to eclipse part of the historic carry trail.

Just as the decision was made Joe drove up with tales of town. The chopper had left him off well inside several security checks where civilians seldom tread. Joe stood on the runway in grimy yellow rain gear with a bag of trash in one hand and a day pack in the other. He stared into a small office at a group of officials staring out at him with wonder written on their faces. After a spell he wandered in and asked if someone might call him a taxi, and was fortunate that someone recognized him which made questions and answers easier. The next thing he encountered was his truck safe in his driveway as expected, but one of the tires was flat.

And so we suddenly found ourselves among roads and vehicles and the traffic of our usual culture, a bit disoriented and saddened that we did not paddle all the way to town to climb the river bank behind Joe's house for a proper conclusion. In addition to the cultural jolt, I was overwhelmed with a curious sadness far greater than the usual post-trip depression. Joe sensed it and, privately, as we unloaded gear at his back shed he approached and shook my hand. "It was a great trip, and I'm glad you and Zandra were part of it."

I was startled by Joe's formality, after all we were philosophizing buddies and would convene in Joe's tent to let our minds wander everywhere. But he was far more sensitive and wise than was initially apparent. He must have known how close to tears I was, and he certainly knew that there was no single gesture to encompass the grandness that had infused our sojourn. A handshake would have to do, and he left me standing in the birch grove at the top of the river bank staring over the water of the brook behind his house and the space over the river beyond. When I turned toward the house I saw the same patch of land that Jim and Elizabeth Goudie did so long ago when they climbed the bank to build their house. Joe's house sits squarely on the site of his parents home and he never cuts the birch trees.

A week later I am back in Maine with the stove roaring in our permanent wall tent. My tea is strong and hot in the bowl with the rose. The letter I choose to read first is from my 84-year-old pen pal Elliott Merrick. "You will be coming down the river now, and I wonder how you're making out. I suppose John Michelin's main cabin on Flour Lake has long since tumbled in and disappeared. Fifty years since we were there!"

Again I am consumed with the strange and overpowering sadness that clouds my eyes and raises a lump in my throat.

This time, though, some things reveal themselves. There are parallels. Fifty years ago an outsider was shown the interior regions of a grand heritage. Already the life was fading though no one guessed how quickly things might change. Again in 1990 outsiders are shown a scrap of history through the eyes of one who lived it, through a brotherhood that shared it. But for Horace and Joe everyone on our trip was from away and not in direct line for the passing of heritage. The interest is not so strong among the true heirs and offspring of these families. These are the offspring who leave for greater opportunities; these are the ones who may never come back. If outsiders are not given the glowing coal, who will blow it back to life and flame? It is ever the irony surrounding tradition, skill, history, or the conservation of wild lands. Only those who have lost or never had it regard these things with such value and care.

I am haunted. It matters not what the fate of the Michelin main tilt is by time. It is under the water of Smallwood Reservoir. It may not matter what Horace has shown us along the Grand River. I have seen the reports and plans for a dam at Gull Island Rapids which will back the river up to the tailrace at Churchill Falls, and a dam at Muskrat Falls which will back up the river to the tailrace of the dam at Gull Island. These projects are not affordable now. But what of the time to come? Unlike the tilts and works of the trappers who leave such little trace on the land, or the small percentage of a renewable fur resource they harvested, the works of dam builders and other large-scale exploiters remain in the form of a geologic force. Theirs are alterations and structure of catastrophic scale that may outlast the human presence on earth.

What does it matter if the signature ledge vanishes under water, if the Mininipi corner becomes an odd elbow in an artificial lake that marks another stolen river? Perhaps it matters only to those who value wild land as sacred ground, who respect the passage of those people who were free and lived honestly among themselves, and who preferred fewer links between their lives and that which sustained them.

I suppose I am fearful for what the view might be fifty years from now. And I am only partly comforted by my pen pall's last line: "Blessings on you children of the bush." (Elliott Merrick, 4 October 1990).



ISSN 1828-1327

Published by the Wilderness Canoe Association — Editor: Toni Harting Nastawgan is an Anishinabi word meaning 'the way or route'

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

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

EDITORIAL

One year ago I made the remark that I had a "comfortable backlog" of articles for Nastawgan. Well, that delightful situation has now come to an end, meaning that I'm again anxiously waiting for submissions from you and yours. Send me the products of your hard work, especially reports on short, more or less local trips, and we'll see to it that numerous people will enjoy reading them in our journal. If you don't feel confident enough about your writing abilities to produce an article and send it to us, don't worry. The task of the editor and his valued assistants is to mold the material coming from your pen/typewriter/computer into a finished product that will make the writer feel good and also fit into the Nastawgan style developed over the years. Don't hesitate to ask me for the Contributor's Guidelines; they are intended to help you on the road to gratitude and fame.



NEWS BRIEFS

NASTAWGAN MATERIAL AND DEADLINE Articles, trip reports, book reviews, photographs, sketches, technical tips, or anything else that you think might be of interest to other readers, are needed for future issues. Submit your contributions preferably on floppy computer disks or in typewritten form; contact the editor for more information. Contributor's Guidelines are available upon request; please follow these guidelines as much as possible to increase the efficiency of the production of our journal. The deadline dates for the next two issues are:

issue: Autumn 1992 deadline date: 9 Aug. 1992 Winter 1992 25 Oct. 1992

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

WCA PHOTO CONTEST In February 1993 there will again be a competition for the many photographers in the WCA. The official announcement will be published in the Autumn issue of Nastawgan.

CRCA PHOTO COMPETITION The Canadian Recreational Canoeing Association presents The Nikon Canadian Canoe Photograph Contest. The nine categories are: canoeing skills, natural environment, heritage, heritage rivers, wildlife/plantlife, people and canoes/kayaks, coastal paddling, international, CRCA members. Entries should be submitted to the CRCA before 18 September 1992, 5:00 p.m. The contest is open to anyone, and many prizes are made available to the winners. For more information contact the CRCA in Hyde Park, Ontario, tel./fax (519) 473-2109.

PARTNERS WANTED

Are you retired? Do you want to do some canoeing during the week? Can't find someone to help with the car shuttle? I am in the same position. Give me a call and maybe we can help each other. Peter Verbeek, Scarborough, Ontario, (416) 757-3814.

OUTDOOR CANADA SHOW MARCH 1992

The WCA New Show Booth Committee of Mike Jones, Paul and Diane Hamilton, Sandy and Roger Harris, and Ken Coburn, started to meet in May 1991 to work on redesigning the new booth. Karen Abbott of the Sport Sewing Shop helped us to replace the heavy drapes with a lighter nylon material. We decided to discard the old photos and go for new enlargements. A brand-new WCA banner and a conservation sign courtesy of Jeff Lane finished off the new and improved booth.

Outdoor Canada Show (formerly Sportsmen's Show) 1992 was our grand opening for the new booth. The Conservation Committee display on Small Hydro Dams looked very professional. A last-minute problem found the club in a different location from previous years, but still at the show. The show went on!

The Outdoor Canada Show organization is to be thanked for allowing the club to be part of the show and to also provide the WCA with a grant to cover the cost of the booth space.

The new booth received a number of comments from the members, 24 to be exact. The comments have been passed on to the Board for future consideration. Before closing this report, I would like to thank all the members who volunteered their time to help out on this year's show. Without your assistance the WCA would not have been represented. Thanks!

Ken Coburn



Next year's Outdoor Canada Show will be held from 12 to 21 March 1993. The WCA booth at that show will be looked after by Pat Buttigieg. People interested in assisting with next year's show please contact Pat at (416) 831-3554.

BOARD ACTIVITIES

(This column is intended to keep WCA members up to date on the activities and decisions of their Board of Directors occurring prior to the Nastawgan deadline.)

No report of Board Activities was included in the Spring newsletter so as not to compete with the Directors' Report at the AGM. Those attending had a good time at the AGM and enjoyed both the beautiful surroundings and facilities of the Mansfield Outdoor Centre and the opportunities for outings in the fantastic weather. Dr. Butson, the feature speaker, gave a fascinating account of the mapping of the last stretch of the Antarctic coast.

Retiring Board members Tony Bird, Herb Pohl, and Glenn Spence were replaced by Bryan Buttigieg, Bob Shortill, and Peter Verbeek. The first duty of the new Board was to elect its executive and Duncan Taylor was elected Chairman and Dee Simpson, Vice Chairman.

Membership, which closed the 1991 year at 621, is down sharply due to non-renewals. Former members who are still wondering why they didn't get their Spring newsletter (and are reading this at a friend's house) are urged to send in their renewals.

The Board has authorized the purchase of a laser printer

to replace the old daisy-wheel printer which is keeping Toni Harting's neighbors awake when he gets up to work on *Nastawgan* at 3 a.m. His appetite for short articles on local Ontario rivers remains insatiable.

The Board also authorized an increase to \$1500 in the budget of the Conservation Committee as their ambitious project to oppose small hydro development appears likely to prove capital, as well as labor, intensive.

Considerable dissatisfaction was expressed with our location at this year's Outdoor Canada Show and every effort will be made to secure a more favorable location next year. The WCA also participated in Canoe Expo 92 and, by all accounts, this event appears to have been a much more successful venture.

Plans for the Fall Meeting on 26 and 27 September are well advanced and thoughts are even turning to the '93 AGM. A reservation has been made at the Mansfield Centre for the weekend of 21 and 22 February. It is hoped the WCA photo contest can be revived this year so members are urged to take their Brownies along on their summer canoe trips.

Dee Simpson has volunteered to repeat her superb organization of the wine and cheese party and already has her eye on some potentially exciting slide shows.

Have a good summer and remember that the wide end goes in the water.

Bill King

LITTLE CHURCHILL RIVER 1989

Daniel Jenny

It was a typical late September day in northern Manitoba. The morning snowfall had changed to a fine misty rain and visibility was poor. It was the type of morning when even hard paddling couldn't warm you. We had just come around a sharp bend in the river. It was about 8:30 a.m. and fog hung close to the river. The only sound was the slip of our paddles entering and leaving the water. I looked up on the left bank of the river and not 15 meters away stood a large black bear. He had already spotted us.

As I alerted Dave in the bow, the bear clambered down the bank and started swimming right at us! This lead to the following profound, excited discussion: "He's following us!! ... Whata we do?!!"

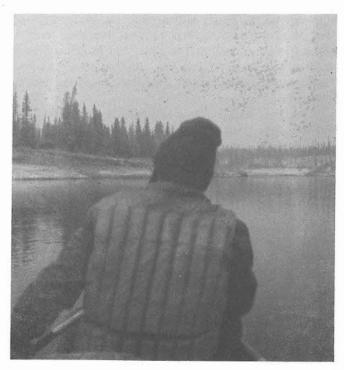
"I danno!!" ... All ahead full!!"

The current was swift and we easily remained out of the bear's reach but he kept up the pursuit. I thought only park bears were not afraid of man. The bruin swam after us for quite a while and finally climbed back on shore only to continue to follow us for a several more minutes.

"Well ... hardly a boring trip!" Dave stated facetiously, breaking a long silence. It certainly had been an exciting trip up to now. The day before, we had hired our first bush pilot to fly us from Thompson, Manitoba, to Recluse Lake, a flight of about 166 kilometers. As we were loading our gear in the Beaver, Dave said, "This plane has seen better days." The young pilot was having trouble tying the canoe to the outside of the plane. The rope he was using looked somewhat "seasoned" and he couldn't figure out what type of knot to tie. This made me even more anxious.



We finally boarded and the noise from the powerful engine was deafening. Dave's Labrador Retriever went into uncontrolled shaking and buried her head under the nearest Duluth pack. After what seemed to be the longest take-off on record, the Beaver lazily lifted off and headed towards the northeast.

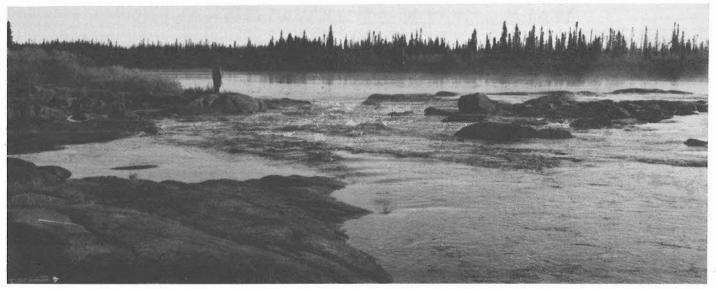


Once airborne our thoughts shifted from personal safety to the beautiful September foliage. It was a crisp, clear fall day and the aspen were showing off their glorious colors. The many lakes splattered below reflected the large cumulus clouds looming overhead. Columns of geese could be seen at a distance heading south. Dave was sitting in the co-pilot seat absorbing the scenery. He looked over his shoulder at me and smiled. Words sometimes fall short. It was good to be here. Even the patches of burnt forest did not seem to take away from the beauty.

Canoeing in September has many advantages. The weather is cool and the bugs are gone. In late September, canoeing takes on new meaning, especially in northern Manitoba. Cold hands seemed to be our biggest problem, particularly in the morning. Rain mixed with snow combined with a healthy north wind also added a new dimension to canoeing. The average high temperature was about 40 degrees F with a low usually below freezing.

One morning we were camped between some trees along the edge of the tundra. It was my turn to get up and make the fire for breakfast. The wind was incredible. The snow had drifted in under our tarp and covered our sleeping bags. After I had the fire going, Dave threw me his pants and said, "Would you mind thawing these out?" His wool pants, wet from rain the previous day, were now frozen as though he was still wearing them. I merely stood them by the fire until they thawed out.

That was the same morning something spooky happened. I had walked about 30 metres out of camp to gather more firewood. It was about 6:00 a.m. and still quite dark.



The wind was howling and the tarp was flapping in the wind. The light from the fire enabled me to see the snow whipping across camp at an almost horizontal angle. Looking back at camp the fire also caused an erie ghost-like reflection of Dave dancing against the trees. He was splitting firewood but his reflection looked like the axe was falling on some unsuspecting victim. As chills ran down my spine, a large flock of ptarmigan came out of nowhere and crash-landed all around us. It almost made me feel this place was haunted. I couldn't wait to pack up and move on.

Several days later we came upon a native trapper's camp. No one was home so we decided to have a look around. Judging from the amount of meat in the cache, a moose had recently been killed. The smoke rack had a bear ham hanging from it, foot and claws still attached. It would have been nice to stay for a visit but we had, as Robert Frost said, "miles to go before we sleep."

Dave and I saw an incredible amount of wildlife over the next several days. Soon after we left the trapper's camp;

A BUTTERFLY

"A butterfly lights beside us like a sunbeam and for a brief moment its glory and beauty belong to our world.
But then it flies on again, and though we wish it could have stayed we feel so lucky to have seen it"

Author unknown (Submitted by Carol and Keri Evans)

we came upon the gut pile from the trapper's moose. That's' when we saw our first wolf. It was combing the shoreline 300 metres downstream and wondered off into the bush. Moments later I spotted it watching us beside a small spruce. It was large and black with penetrating eyes. Suddenly it bolted and was off. Unfortunately, it was too cold for my battery-operated autofocus camera to operate. Lesson learned! During our trip we were treated to several sightings of bald eagles. One afternoon I noticed Dave had stopped paddling and was staring up overhead. Two eagles had clasped talons and were diving straight down. We could hear the whoosh of the wind in their feathers. At the last moment, they let go of each other and soared up again. Truly a memorable moment. Ptarmigan, spruce grouse, ducks, and geese were also a common sight. We even had a large bull moose drop in for our morning tea break. He was as surprised to see us as we were to see him. After staring at us for several moments, he snorted, turned, and trotted back into the trees.

We now had been paddling for about six days. The temperature was close to freezing and the rain and snow were our constant companions. The unrelenting north wind made us struggle for every inch we gained. The long days of paddling from before sunrise to sunset were taking their toll. My hands were always cold and the toes on my left foot were numb because I had gotten them wet. We were nearing the Deer River about 2:00 p.m. when the sun finally came out. And there it was ... the goose camp. This camp belonged to a couple from the town of Churchill, 90 kilometres to the north. We built a fire in the stove, hung our clothes over it, and crawled into our sleeping bags. I'm always amazed how a good warm sleep and a hot meal revives me.

At this point the weather changed. The wind came up from the south and it brought a rise in temperature until it got downright hot. Fortunately the bugs didn't come out. We spent several days working our way up the Deer River to a point were we could catch the train back south.

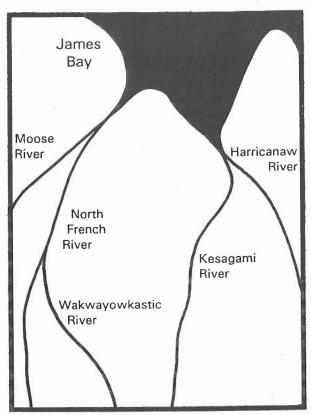
It had been a great trip, in fact, one of my best. The wildlife and scenery were spectacular. Even the hardship and cold were in a strange way enjoyable. Dave proved to be a cheerful, tireless friend. We were already talking about the next trip.

WALK ... WALK ... WAKWAYOWKASTIC

30 June 1991 I don't want to think about how far we have pulled the boats. I'd rather shut down my higher functions and let the primordial hindbrain get me through. I spend most of the day wondering what it would be like to be a crocodile. "My brothers laughed, my parents cried, my priest was scared, my guinea pig died. Life ain't easy, tryin' to be a crocodile" (Scott Merritt). First time I have never had to beach or tie up at night.

1 July Did you feel the earth move? Don't know where we are. Don't know where to go. Don't particularly care. Just happy to drag our boats aimlessly about in the middle of nowhere as the bog mat gently resonates.

2 July We run the beaver dam total to about eighty-seven. They give way to log jams (far many more than beaver dams). Jane Helf falls off a narrow log when I backwater too soon. Her face has the oddest expression just before submersion, which sets me laughing. Very big mistake on my part. I don't know what she'll do to me if I let her back in the boat. Life as I know it is about to end.



3 July Wake up and slog on until we are quite lost. We pass a canoe cache on a long, straight stretch and smell something odd. Jane shoots me suspicious looks while mumbling about swimming. We spend the afternoon walking through countless drops and shoals, while I try to convince Mike Jones that we are several days further down the Wheretheheckarewe River than we actually are. Mike is amazingly patient with me. Obviously an advanced cerebrum.



- 4 July Walk the Wak.
- 5 July Walk the Wak in the rain.
- 6 July Walk the Wak in the cold rain.



7 July Intermezzo: spend a sunny day portaging. An enchanted, entrancing, endless black spruce forest over a moss meadow at the top of a climb.

8 July Gale headwind. Remarkably chilly. Rain. Being cold blooded, I do not want to travel today, but we half drag about 35 km. Lee says she enjoys it. We have something in common: no frontal lobe. "Walkin' in the rain, just walkin' in the rain, what a heinous feelin', Lee Benson's insane" (Gene Kelly).

9 July Bright and warm morning. The rest of the team sleeps while I'm up early practising being a crocodile, sunning on a shoal. In the evening we nose up to a caribou. To a croc, this seems like good auspices for a tent site.

10 July Last night Mike almost floated away in his tent when the river rose a couple of inches. If he had practised with me, he would have been prepared. In the afternoon a very strong headwind off the sea tries to stop us, but at least we're paddling. We've finished walking the Wak.

14-16 July Back home I keep waking in the middle of the night, finding myself standing on furniture while trying to tow the wall along behind me. Looks like the old synaptic gaps are misfiring. Nothing like a canoe trip to condition you.

Richard Culpeper

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

We took the BIG STEP. We bought a food dryer. Ours is 16" by 16" by 24", has ten shelves, a fan/heater and a see-through door. Yes, it WAS expensive, but it is WONDERFUL.

About a month before the tripping season starts we set to work. I put a sheet of 6 mil plastic on the top shelf, carefully turning up the edges. Then I open a can of pineapple tidbits and pour the juice into the tray which is pulled out halfway. Having gently pushed the tray back in, I then put the tidbits on the tray below, spreading them out. On shelf no.3 I place another sheet of 6 mil plastic, open a can or cans of kidney beans, and strain their burgundy juice carefully on this shelf.

Below this, on shelf no.4, I may put yet another sheet of 6 mil plastic, and smear it with tomato paste from the can. On shelf no.5 I now spread the kidney beans. From there on down, I spread the finely sliced or chopped vegetables: celery, parsley, onion, green/red pepper, green or yellow string beans, carrots, etc., one kind of vegetable per shelf. Then a flick of the switch, and the dryer goes into action.

Every 3-4 hours the trays need checking, as some foods dry faster than others, food at the back dries sooner, food in the middle dries sooner, etc., so a certain amount of rearrangement is in order. As a tray load feels completely dry, I empty it and reload with new goodies.

As well as the items listed above, we also dry meat. I buy one or two chuck roasts, and very thoroughly remove all the fat. I may then put it through a grinder, or (pre-arranged) it can be taken back to the butcher who will put it through his hamburger machine. We haven't tried lamb or fish as yet, but they are supposed to be just as successful. Pork is never recommended.

Yes, we dry other foods, especially other home-cooked beans, but we like the canned kidney beans for the flavor of the juice. I do spinach but a word of caution here. It dries in no time and makes dandy soup etc., but the smell of dried spinach is so strong, that I put it up separately in a little plastic jar with a tight lid.

Beside the food dryer I spread a sheet of plastic, and set a tray of dried food on this, preparatory to packaging, because crumbs drop through when the trays are handled (which is why the fruits and juices are put high up). I keep a supply of Glad Freezer Bags on hand and fill these from the trays. (For small quantities of ingredients, I also buy a box of tiny bags, such as will hold spices, from our local bulk food store.)

We try to dry some foods in season to cut costs and give the maximum quality of flavor. Strawberries in June, raspberries in July (if we're home), tomatoes and pears in August, and apples in October are a few which come to mind.

Bernard makes up all the recipes after I've done the drying and laid out the other ingredients. (He knows ahead of time how many onions I've put on one tray, for instance, and how many trays are in one Freezer Bag, so he measures accordingly.) We have about 10 recipes for dinners and when lots of these are made up, usually for two people, then if friends want to go on a trip with us, we just get out the appropriate number of prepared bags for the trip dinners for the four of us and Bob is your uncle. Or if we decide to make an extra excursion ourselves, voila, the food is already prepared.

Spinach will dry in a couple of hours. Onions take about a day. The juices and pastes spread on the plastic sheets take ages, maybe a week for the pineapple, but we're drying food for about 10 days anyway, so juices are really no problem.

When the foods on the plastic sheets are dry (they are then called "leathers"), they peel off. I then roll each up in a tube shape, and slice each tube into little rolls. These too, go into the recipes, each with its companion solid.

We've tried fruit leathers, i.e. smearing mashed fruit such as raspberries, onto the 6 mil plastic but we don't really like the result. It seems too concentrated for snacking purposes, and we'd rather have *sliced* dried fruit for dessert. (On the trail, we'd prefer to nibble some gorp or a dried apricot for a snack.)

We make three concessions to commercialism for foods which we can't duplicate at home: apricot leather, instant mashed potatoes, and Bachelor's Surprise (green) Peas.

Expense? The food dryer costs about \$1.00 per day to run and we never leave it going when we are sleeping or away, so that works out to about a 10-hour day of electrical consumption.

Disadvantages? Because of the sound of the fan going all day and because of the strong mix of smells, a food dryer when in use is best kept away from the main part of the house. We keep ours in the boathouse here at Lake Katchewanooka, but a basement, a garage (closed to keep out animals), or a shed would do just as well.

Other than cost of purchase (expensive) and the work involved in running a food dryer, we consider our acquisition of inestimable value. The foods we eat on our trips are full of goodness and great taste, superior to anything sold across the counter. The other very important consideration is the freedom from additives, a factor which we take very seriously. Sköl to the food dryer!

Claire Muller



THE SHAW-WAN-OSSO-WAY EFFECT

John Mackie

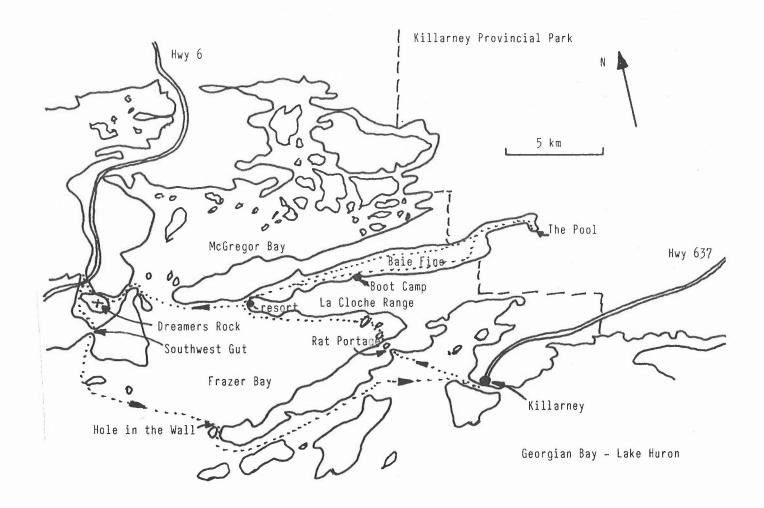
"Rat Portage," "Dreamers Rock," "Baie Fine," "La Cloche," and "Hole in the Wall" are place names which can inflame my winter day-dreams into a spring obsession. Past excursion dangers and discomforts are forgotten in the longing for wilderness.

It was overcast when I arrived at Killarney, about 250 miles north of Toronto, in the third week of July 1991. Rather than wait for the rain to end, I immediately launched and loaded my canoe. My exertions were closely watched from the Sportsman's Inn porch by a group of lounging, darkeyed, unsmiling Indian youths whose attention I found unsettling. In defense, I counted each pack I transferred or left in the car and each pack left in the canoe so that, if anything disappeared, I would know immediately. So intent was my attention on protecting my belongings that I left my keys in the car door. When I returned eight days later, the car was still there, nothing was missing and the car keys still hung outside in the door. I made an apology to the same group of watching Indians by acting the clown and holding the keys above my head as a trophy and pointing my finger at my head as if to blow my brains out with my finger. That got a smile.

Sighting 63 degrees west across Killarney Bay was a two-mile stretch easily paddled in the evening calm. The Rat Portage connects Killarney Bay with Fraser Bay and eliminates a 15-mile paddle around Badgeley Point. The portage requires a 50-foot lift from Killarney Bay onto a pond, a 500-foot paddle along the pond, and a 100-yard portage over a small hill to Fraser Bay. The portage was used and named by the voyageurs in the 17th century. When I reconnoitered the route before carrying, I disturbed two giant muskrats the size of beavers and learned how the route got its name. Something to think about when the same family of animals may have inhabited the same pond for at least 200 years?

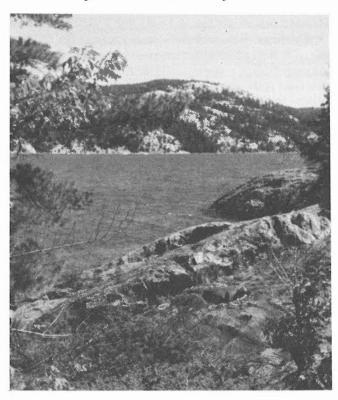
Night descended as I arrived at the Fraser Bay end of the portage. The shore consisted of small boulders for as far as I could see. I have learned to set up my tent on almost anything but how to camp on 8" to 12" boulders has eluded me. Removing the surface stones only exposes the stones beneath. I retreated up the portage path which was the only flat surface around and camped there.

It rained hard all through the night and I was pleased to see my winter- stored tent had remained leakproof. At about



3 a.m., a roaring wind and intense light woke me up. Shadows of branches above my tent were swaying eerily and I lay thinking that "Rat Portage" had become "Alien Portage." When I stuck my head out of the tent, I saw that a huge light hovering above was from a helicopter which stayed for a few minutes and then flew off. Funny time to count trees?

The rain continued and by morning I was fog-bound. The Georgian Bay north shore is a maze of 30,000 islands. I have found that the only way *not* to get lost is to identify each island on the chart as I pass. If the island is not where it should be, I know I am getting lost and stop right where I am until I can figure out my *exact* position. To do otherwise is to re-invite my early navigating experience of being lost for three days. As I had food and supplies, that experience was not threatening, but it was disconcerting.



To cross Fraser Bay in afog, I knew I had to "bump" into three small islands and then follow the coast 97 degrees west. On the chart my route is premarked with magnetic directions only. Trying to calculate deviations between true north and magnetic north or between true magnetic north and local abnormalities is a job for the winter and not in a storm or when one is tired. The fog looked as though it could last for days, so I loaded up at midday and set off to bump, I hoped, into my first island. I carry two compasses: one, the regular Silva Orientating compass which is attached to the canoe directly in front of me; the other, a Silva Eye View Degree bearing compass hung around my neck.

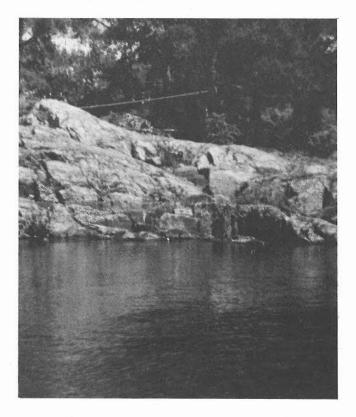
Land appeared out of the fog at the appropriate position of the three islands and at the fourth view of land, I turned 97 degrees west. After two miles I felt comfortable that I was parallelling the La Cloche Range which is 800 feet high, but as I could see no more than 12 feet up, I was not sure. After three miles, the shoreline turned north and the chart showed I was entering Baie Fine.

Winter reading had revealed that Baie Fine was an internationally famous beauty spot. The steep-sided bay was deep, averaged about one half mile wide and was nine miles long, according to the chart. The bay ended in The Pool which, according to the travel books, was the summer hideaway of the rich and famous on their legendary \$1 million yachts. Paddling in the damp, dense fog I imagined myself raconteuring to evening-gowned ladies and dinner-jacketed gentlemen who would insist, over cocktails and caviar, that "I simply must stay for dinner." Meanwhile, I contemptuously slipped past cheap \$100,000 power boats moored at a resort at the bay entrance.

Inside the bay, the fog cleared and I was able to admire the high, tree-etched, white rock sides. Farther in, a headwind sprang up and steadily increased until it was blowing a small gale with choppy seas and whitecaps. When it became necessary to bale it seemed a good idea to get off the water and onto land. The stone shore had followed me since Fraser Bay and now looked particularly uninviting as the wind-driven waves dashed against round slippery rocks. A controlled landing was impossible.

As in past excursions, I had become stuck in a wind funnel where the best I could do was to hold my own paddling against the wind, too timid to turn round and possibly capsize. I have a narrow, kayak-type, 1/3-open canoe, and broadside is not its strongest position. Again I was forced to fight the elements and just as in the past, it began to rain, hard.

After two miserable hours, I had crawled past a rock outcrop about half way down the bay and found it was attached to the south shore by vegetation. The vegetation formed a small harbor and I allowed the wind to drive me



Nastawgan Summer 1992

backwards into the reeds which subdued the waves. I fell out of the canoe, scrambled up the rock, found a flat spot, put up my tent, threw everything in it, climbed in myself, closed the flap, and said goodbye to the world.

The next morning I was hungry and grumpy when I climbed out of the tent. I had not supped on caviar the night before. With machete in hand I intended to vent my frustration by splitting wood for an enormous camp fire to dry my still wet equipment.

As I stood up, my head moved from the shadow of the adjacent rock into golden early-morning-rain-washed sunlight. I looked around. The tent was pitched on a small patch of grass fenced by eight tall evergreens. The site sloped gently so that the rain from the night before trickled over the rocks and did not puddle under the tent. I was ten feet above the little harbor of rock and reeds and as I looked down into the pool, I could see rock perch swimming 15 feet below the surface of the still water. On the pool a red-eyed loon anxiously eyed me as it called a warning.

Ripe blueberries surrounded the camp. Small animal trails led this way and that. A chipmunk sat on a rock, as if waiting for me to cook breakfast. Down the bay the sun shone on the water making diamonds of the small ripples. The rain, clouds, fog, and wind were gone. It was a beautiful morning.

Baie Fine lies behind La Cloche Range and my direction was therefore 90 degrees east to The Pool and the end of this wide crack in the mountains. I left my camp as it was and set out in an empty canoe for a quick look-see at the famous yachts. After four miles the bay narrowed into a river-sized channel about two and a half miles long. Finally I arrived at The Pool but there were no fabulous boats. A few 30' sail and power boats were moored to the steep rock sides but there was nothing you could not see in any yacht club marina. Obviously I was not going to be invited for cocktails, but that seemed unimportant now. There is a small river running into the pool, Artist Creek, but it was so clogged with weeds it appeared impassable.

As I paddled back to my camp it occurred to me that people travel great distances to such places as The Pool, but wouldn't look twice at the little atoll where I was camped and which was much more beautiful. It's the same with Provincial Parks. I visited Killarney Provincial Park once. I went because the scenery in it was made famous by the "Group of Seven" Canadian artists. When I was escorted to my first camp site of trucked-in sand measuring 15' x 20' adjacent to 50 other identical sites in a scrubby wood, I simply walked out and never went back to this famous "natural preserve." There are millions of acres of prime wilderness in Ontario; how people can enjoy a plastic-wrapped "wilderness" is beyond me.

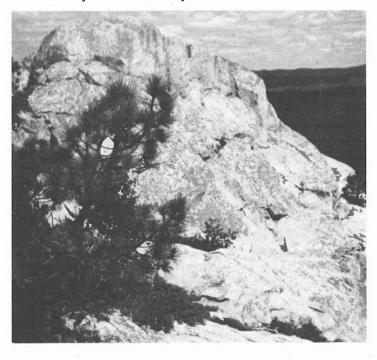
The following day I spent lovingly exploring my threeacre atoll natural park. The weather was perfect. The atoll was shaped like an army boot. The sole and heel were large rock folds rising suddenly from the deep water of the bay. The toe was an even bigger smooth rock pointing down the bay. The laces were trees and vegetation. My camp was where the laces met the toe rock.

Lazily sitting in the sun on a golden mound of granite

which was over two billion years old, I began to notice a relationship between groups of vegetation that had not occurred to me before. The eight evergreens which fenced my camp were Jack Pine. When I looked around, all the Jack Pines were in groups. The tall evergreen tree standing alone at the base of the rock upon which I was sitting was White Pine. All the White Pines on the atoll stood alone. The little evergreen trees which looked like Charlie Brown's scrawny Christmas tree were Red Spruce and they grew alone. The underbrush was Red and Black Oak, Staghorn Sumac, and Sycamore Maple. The ground cover was Highbush Blueberry and Northern Snow Bedstraw. It was as though the atoll was a garden in which trees and flowers had been deliberately planted where they were most appropriate. Obviously a very clever gardener.

Time was passing and I wanted to visit Dreamers Rock. Heading out of the bay the next day I again passed the holiday resort at Fraser Point. The motor launches no longer rested in the fog but buzzed about like deep-throated hornets. As their 700 h.p. motors pushed them through the water past my little craft, the occupants would happily wave, completely oblivious to the threat their bow wave made after they had passed. The traffic was intense and at each passing I had to manoeuvre my canoe to head into their wake, or capsize. After 20 boats had passed causing me to turn in 20 different directions, I eventually disentangled myself from their presence. One day I would like to ask these jolly sailors how they would like their boats, close to rocks, without power, and broadside to a wave three times the height of their gunwale. Perhaps then they might understand the relationship of waves, a loaded canoe, and their blissful ignorance.

Rounding McGregor Point, at the bay entrance, I expected heavy waves from open water but the lake was gentle and obliging. Navigation was simple because the 180-ft-high smoke stack of Canada Cement points to the destination like a sword in the heart of the wilderness. Down Boat Passage and beyond this obscenity lies Dreamers Rock.





There is a legend that an Indian chief and medicine man named Shaw-wan-osso-way acquired the power to heal while meditating on Dreamers Rock. Before the white man, Indian boys were sent to fast on the rock for five days at puberty. During their fast the boys were expected to hallucinate their future. Upon descending from the rock they were to know what nature expected of them and what was to be their life's work, such as warrior, medicine man, story-teller, etc. In comparison, our modern aptitude tests are insipid.

The top of the rock is reached by a winding forest path on the south side. The path starts at the Pow-wow campsite at the foot of the rock. I had obtained permission from the Whitefish River Indian Reserve to visit the rock and camp at their site. Nearby is a cabin used in the Rainbow Country TV series which can be rented now that the series is over.

From the top of the rock I watched the sunrise at dawn the next day. The view stretches across white dolomite and golden granite mountains for 16 miles in the north, east, and west directions. I could see across the intervening hills, back to Baie Fine, and as the sun rose it sent a shaft of light down that bay as if lighting the path to Valhalla, the home of the Gods. I spent the day up there. High above the world I watched nature's day unfold, first with noisy crows circling below me, followed by the bush birds and finally by seagulls sailing up past me on updrafts of warmed air. The world was one massive moving picture with sounds muted by distance. Little dramas played themselves out, such as a sailboat temporarily caught on a rock reef and struggling to extricate itself. The day ended in a replay of the morning overture.

The following day was spent paddling about Cloche Channel bashing likely looking rocks on the shore. Two years ago some WCA members reported they had found the rock known to the voyageurs as Bell Rock which when struck, rang like a bell. (Bell in French is "Cloche.") I was told that the rock was located in a marsh close to the voyageur route. I found the plaque commemorating the voyageurs and bashed every large stone within a mile but never heard one ring. The whole story seemed plausible as the whole area is named "cloche" this or "cloche" that. WCA members love a practical joke and would appreciate how stupid I looked wandering about all day knocking large boulders with small rocks. I hope the ghosts of the voyageurs had a good laugh, they too were great practical jokers.

I had run out of time. At dawn the next day I decamped and headed for the Southwest Gut shown on my chart between La Cloche Island and Little La Cloche Island. It was not there. The open water passage between the two islands had been filled in by a railway embankment. My dismay turned to delight when I found I could float through the 72" culvert under the railway. On the far side was Shoal Bight with jagged rock fingers two inches underwater pointing one half mile offshore.

The three miles of open water at 120 degrees east from Little Cloche Island to Hole in the Wall at Badgeley Point were covered in the early morning stillness without incident, as were the remaining eight miles down Lansdowne Channel back to Killarney. I paddled lazily in no hurry to return to urbanity. I had enjoyed the trip. I enjoyed my own silence and the hush of the wilderness. Like my canoe which leaves no trace in the water, I left no trace of where I had been and that was as it should be. The wilderness had refreshed my senses; given me a new quietness, a new appreciation of the forest growth and a different sense of time when sitting on a rock billions of years old. Call it the Shaw-wan-osso-way effect.

MINDEN WORK WEEKEND

For a number of years during summer weekends on the Gull River and winter canoe rolling sessions in the swimming pool we had talked about the marvellous opportunities for whitewater training the Minden Wild Water Preserve offers for paddlers of both open and closed boats. We had all benefited from the man-made whitewater course and we realized that we should be putting something back in to show our appreciation and to ensure that it continued to operate.

Finally early last October we turned our good intentions into actions. Saturday morning saw the group of us standing outside the Training Centre shovels in hand, watching the backhoe operator fire up his machine. Our first assignment: to relocate one of the outhouses.

Once the backhoe had roughed-out the new hole, it was our job to finish it off with our shovels, and then to build a wooden crib-work over the top so that the machine could lift the structure from its old spot and deposit it gently in its new exalted location. Working under the experienced guidance of Michael Twitchin and Linda Reiche of the Ontario Wild Water Affiliation, we completed our new housing development well in time for lunch. We looked upon our creation with a pride that few others will ever know, save a handful of Tridel executives.

After a brief repast it was Paul Bunyan time for our group and we spent our afternoon gleefully sawing, splitting, and piling wood. Geez, it's fun to wield a chain-saw. Makes you realize why loggers like clearcutting. When you get one of those suckers roaring away in your hands you just don't want to turn it off.

All afternoon the sky had been growing increasingly dark and menacing, so we fixed up a big tarp to eat under. It would have made a lot more sense for us to have just eaten in the training centre, but then none of us have ever claimed to be particularly bright. As I gobbled down my chili and

mused aloud, "I wonder when it's going to rain," the clouds suddenly burst and it came down in torrents. As the winds tore at the billowing tarp, and we huddled beneath it, we looked longinly out through the sheets of rain at the warm dry training centre in the distance.

In spite of the weather we spent a great evening drinking coffee, as well as more potent libations, and exchanging whitewater tales of terror.

From Mike and Linda we heard about how difficult it was to get whitewater paddlers to volunteer a little time to do the type of work that we were doing which was so necessary to help keep the Preserve's facilities in good order. In fact, we were surprised to learn that the WCA was the only club that had sent a group up to help them out during the entire season. To be frank we felt that this was a damned poor showing by the whitewater fraternity. Perhaps the Preserve's board ought to get a little more vocal in telling those individuals and clubs that use the Gull frequently that they have a moral obligation to help maintain the facilities.

The following morning dawned cold and windy. Following a good hot breakfast we all assembled to be given our final duties. Some of us went down to the river to take in the slalom gates while others got the drier duty of dismantling the playground equipment.

When these chores were completed we all were issued with green plastic garbage bags for a final sweep and inspection of the premises to make sure everything would be shipshape for next spring's opening.

After all the great times we had spent on the Gull, paddling its superb whitewater, it made us feel good to return a little something in appreciation.

If you're like us, a whitewater paddler who's enjoyed using the Minden Wild Water Preserve, won't you join us next time? Circle 3-4 October on your calendar, and call me at (416) 321-3005 to let us know you'll be coming along. Thanks.

Bill Ness

THE ROAD MAP

Looking at the mail piled up on a corner of the desk. One unopened packet is from the provincial government. Pretty sure it's the road map requested a month ago. A freebee for the tourists. I try to get a new road map every year. Part of the ritual.

You do wilderness canoeing and you have rituals. Food preparation rituals, packing rituals, exercise rituals, and airline ticket rituals. Rituals prepare body, mind, and spirit to enter the wilderness. It's a lot like entering the sanctuary of a church. Also a holy place.

The road map has been sitting on the desk for two weeks now. Afraid to open it up. Deeply afraid. The map will show new roads. Maybe not many, and maybe not paved, but always new roads. And always stabbing further and further north. Slowly squeezing the remaining wilderness up against Hudson Bay.

Not much wilderness left now. Can feel the pain, and hear the crying, and see the tears as the new road crosses yet another river and extinguishes the word wilderness from that river's character.

There could have been such an opportunity for future generations, but it would never have worked out. There would have been oil or gas or timber or something some interest group would have wanted. Not enough of us to match numbers with them. So many of them and so few of us. More recreation for the majority. More hydro. More pulpwood. More minerals. More jobs. Why should you few be so privileged?

The answer has to be that no one has the right to make all the decisions for all time. Some of the decisions belong to the children and the children of the children.

When my boy was little he would say "Just be" when he wanted to rest. He didn't want to play or read or draw anymore, he wanted to "Just be."

That's what we're asking for the wilderness. To let the wilderness "Just be." Let the children make some of the choices. It will give us the chance to change one heart at a time.

There are enough tears for the world without having to shed some more when I open a road map.

Greg Went

SPHYRAPICUS AND THE FREELOADERS

"Who or what is a sphyrapicus?" you ask. Well, even if you aren't a Latin scholar, you may already know the subject of this article — at least by its English name, the Yellowbellied Sapsucker. The trouble is, the name sounds so ridiculous, and has been used so often to poke good-natured fun at bird watchers, that many people aren't really sure whether the bird actually exists.

To any doubting Thomases we give our solemn word that the Yellowbellied Sapsucker is alive and well throughout the northeastern U.S.A. and southcentral Canada, including Algonquin Park. In fact, here in the Park, the sapsucker is the most common of our eight species of woodpeckers and as such is probably seen most often by Park visitors. It is about eight or nine inches long and mostly black above but with a conspicuous white stripe on the wing. The belly is (sure enough) yellowish white and the head has black and white stripes which rather attractively set off a bright red patch on the crown and, in the male, another red patch on the throat as well.

But, even if this description doesn't ring a bell, you don't have to go far to find convincing proof of the sapsucker's presence. The chances are good that there are telltale, evenly spaced, vertical rows of holes on a white birch near your campsite. These are the holes made by the sapsucker in its quest for the sap flowing in the tree's conductive tissue just below the bark.

White birches seem to be the trees most often tapped in this way, but they are far from the only ones. Maples, alders, some spruces, and the yellow birch all get attention as well. Some species are used at certain seasons. For example, white birches do not leaf out until a month after sapsuckers return to the Park in late April. During this period when there is little sap flowing in their favorite tree, sapsuckers often attack hemlocks instead.

So far, we have neglected the question of how a sapsucker sucks sap. The answer is that it doesn't. It licks the sap oozing out of the holes with its brush-like tongue or drinks it like water — by taking a beakful and tilting its head back. Even more common is its habit of catching insects (the major part of its diet) and "dunking" them in the sap. Sapsuckers often mush mayflies or ants in their sap-holes for several minutes before finally eating them or taking them to their young. This may not get sapsuckers good marks for table manners but it does get them a significant dietary supplement in a simple and unique way.

Even more interesting, however, is the influence the drilling has on other members of the forest community. In effect, what's sauce for the sapsucker is sauce for the neighbors, and a whole host of freeloaders capitalize on the sap flowing from the sapsucker's not so private wells. Flies, wasps, ants, and butterflies (especially the beautiful Mourning Cloak) are all attracted to the sap. So are warblers, other woodpeckers, nuthatches, and red squirrels. Many of these larger visitors not only drink the sap but eat the insects which have been attracted as well. Hummingbirds find active sapsucker trees to be such a good thing that they visit more often

than sapsuckers themselves. Often, a female hummingbird will construct her tiny nest on a nearby branch from which she can make short trips to gather sap and insects for her young.

The activity goes on all night too. At sunset, flying squirrels arrive for their share of the sap, and so do moths—if they can get past the bats that patrol back and forth in front of the tree waiting for just such visitors.

At favorite trees, sapsuckers keep the sap flowing by drilling more holes above the old ones. Occasionally they pay a price for their weakness by drinking fermented sap—and more than one observer has reported seeing sapsuckers that were unmistakably drunk.



But the real price for all this revelry is the one paid by the host — namely the tree. Repeated drilling can effectively girdle the tree, killing the part above the holes. Or, death may be indirect as when fungus spores enter through sapsucker wounds and infect the wood, causing it to rot away. Even when the tree survives, it may be permanently weakened. One of the commonest defects in hemlock, for example, is "ring shake" — a splitting of the wood between annual growth rings. For many years, the cause was unknown, but then someone noticed that, even on shakes over a century old, there were discoloured patches in a pattern of "tell-tale, evenly-spaced, vertical rows." The shakes were caused (you guessed it) by sapsuckers visiting the hemlocks over 100 years earlier.

The name may not be on everybody's lips but Sphyrapicus and the freeloaders have been around for a long, long time.

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

Nastawgan Summer 1992

EMILE PETITOT, MISSIONAIRE EXTRAORDINAIRE.

Richard W. Galaburri

Take the heart and soul of a missionary, the courage of an explorer, the perseverance of an archaeologist, the curiosity of an ethnologist, the formal logic of an anthropologist, the mindset of a scholar, the vision of an artist, and the skills of an author, cartographer, and linguist, mix them all together in the body of a man and *voilà*, you have an extraordinary individual such as Emile Fortune Stanislas Joseph Petitot.

He was born in Grancey-le-Chateau, France, in 1838, and while still a young man hearkened to the voice that called him out as a man of the cloth. But, he heard other voices as well that whispered day and night: "Something hidden. Go and find it. Go and look behind the ranges. Something lost behind the ranges. Lost and waiting for you. Go!" Everything seemed to happen fast. Young Emile entered the Oblates of Mary-Immaculate, studied hard, and was fully ordained as a priest at the age of twenty-four. He was sent to the Canadian North toute de suite, arriving at Fort Providence in 1862 near the western end of Great Slave Lake at the head of the Mackenzie River where, in the previous year, a mission had been established by Monsignor Grandin and named "Notre Dame de la Providence." Soon after Petitot's arrival, the Hudson's Bay Company built a post here.



Petitot remained in the Fort Providence area for about two years and helped to indoctrinate the Slavey-Dene into the mysteries of the Roman Catholic Church while he in turn was introduced into the mysteries of the Far North. In 1864 he donned snowshoes and set out on his first journey with native companions, reaching Fort Resolution by the mouth of the Slave River. He stayed here a few months and then proceeded across Great Slave Lake to Fort Rae, which lies at the end of the lake's North Arm.

At Fort Rae, Petitot began proselytizing to the Flancs de Chiens, the Dogribs or *Tlicho*, as they call themselves. They were very impressed by the bearded white man in black robes and by his words, and we can be sure that Petitot was intrigued by the strange traditions of the Dogribs. In his many books on the North, published later in life, we read of many curious traditions concerning the various Dene tribes. One in particular about the Dogribs is that they actually thought that they were descended from dogs. They are the only North American native group who possess such a pedigree, though they could not explain why to Petitot.

He found out later when he was among the Hareskins that they, the Hareskins, had a memory of their existence in another land. From their own mouths he heard that they once lived very far to the west, beyond the sea and in the midst of a powerful nation whose shamans had the ability to turn themselves into dogs or foxes at night and then turned back into men during the day. This race persecuted the Hareskins and other Dene peoples, waged war against them and stole their wives. The ancestors of the Dene were unable to resist these dog-men who were also formidable cannibals. The Hareskins called these dog-men *Kfwidetele* ("Skinheads") since they wore wigs or skins of animals on their heads.

The eastern Athapascans of Canada have forgotten this old legend of half-dog, half-men creatures but Hareskins remember it because they live farther to the west and closer to the Bering Sea. Though the Dogribs have forgotten it too, said Petitot, it is faintly echoed in their name and in their traditional claim of descent from dogs. In this peculiar myth hinting at the Asian origin of the Dene one sees reflected the bizarre condition known as lycanthropy and the possible source of the wild tales of the cynocephali or dog-headed men brought to Europe by such medieval travellers as the Franciscan Friar John de Plano Carpini who visited Central Asia in the thirteenth century. Perhaps we are getting off the track here, but in truth it attests to the kind of inquiring mind that Petitot possessed and the type of man that he was. A man who devoted his life not only to saving the souls of the heathen but to discovering how those souls came to be what

Today, the Dogribs are still ensconced in the same spot at what is now called Rae-Edzo. As has been mentioned, the Dogribs were very much impressed with Petitot and begged him to visit others of their tribe living farther northward, so he travelled with these people along the Camsell River to Lake Hardisty where the main Dogrib encampment was located. After two months missionary work among the Dogribs, Petitot returned to Fort Resolution and then in late summer travelled far down the Mackenzie River to Fort Good Hope where Father Grolier had established a Roman Catholic mission in 1859. But the Church of Our Lady of Good Hope which is now located there was not built until Petitot took up residence in the area.

From Fort Good Hope Petitot went forthwith to Fort Anderson on the upper Anderson River which rises just north of Bear Lake and debauches into Liverpool Bay on the Arctic coast. Petitot remained in the Anderson River country for the next seven years and made many forays and journeys in the region. This period, 1865 to 1872, was marked by intense activity. During this time Petitot finally found that something that was lost behind the ranges or in this case beyond the Arctic Circle, namely, the Chiglit Eskimos.

It was at Fort Anderson in the spring of 1865 when the first meeting took place between the learned and pious emissary of God and the godless children of the polar north. Two Inuit had arrived from the coast and when the eyes of the black-robed priest of Mary-Immaculate met those of the caribou-

clothed chief the innok-toyark or great man of the Chiglit with the tongue-twisting name of Noulloumallok-Innonarana, something very close to a miracle happened. They took an immediate liking to one another and Petitot was invited to go to the coast and eat seal meat with the Chiglit people.

Among the Inuit of the lower Anderson River Petitot came to be regarded as a great man or innok-toyark, just like the Chiglit chief, and was called "Son of the Sun." He spent many days and months among the Chiglit and among the Inuit of the Mackenzie Delta and with various other bands that roamed between the Anderson and Mackenzie rivers, always observing whatever he could about their habits, customs, and beliefs, making endless mental analogies between Inuit and Dene cultures and comparing these to the cultures of the different races of mankind.

Petitot looked upon the Inuit as a lost flock of sheep. In his mind this was the veritable truth, for one of his theories or beliefs was that at some remote epoch in human history mankind had become scattered across the face of the earth through a series of mishaps and forced migrations losing in

> the process the perfected state and finally resulting in the different races, cultures, and languages that we know today.

Another of his theories, now generally accepted as gospel, is that concerning the Asiatic origin of the Eskimos. When he was among the Chiglit, he observed how closely they resembled the Chinese, the Japanese, and the Mongoloid peoples in general, both in looks and in their customs and material culture. Indeed, he was the first to put forth the idea that the Eskimos and virtually all the native races of the Americas reached the continents from Asia by a succession of mass migrations across the Pacific via the Aleutian Island chain, travelling by boat, canoe, pirogues, bateaus, and various small vessels, from island to island like wandering amphibious rodents, making use of the ease of communication that exists by sea between Asia and America by the islands near Korea, the Japanese ar-

The Church of Our Lady of Good Hope on the Mackenzie River. Petitot painted a series of religious murals on its interior walls in 1878.

> chipelago, the Kuril and Aleutian Islands. He lectured upon the subject in Paris in 1874, the year that he was almost through with his missionary and exploratory work in the Canadian North.

> He supported his theory with all the knowledge and facts gleaned from years of study, intense thought, and close association with northern peoples. He brought forth evidence from geography, ethnology, history, mythology, linguistics, not only regarding that of the Canadian North but concerning the entire circumpolar region and the world. His audience, consisting of learned men of science, savants and laymen alike listened, but they did not, would not, or could

Nastawgan Summer 1992

not really hear. The idea of the Asiatic origin of the Eskimos was too far-fetched; too far ahead of its time; too new; too novel; too upsetting to the scientific applecart. But Petitot apparently was not discouraged by the way his ideas were generally received. Enough of his colleagues were convinced that he might be right, and the good Father instead of casting pearls before swine turned to publishing his theories, observations, and experiences.

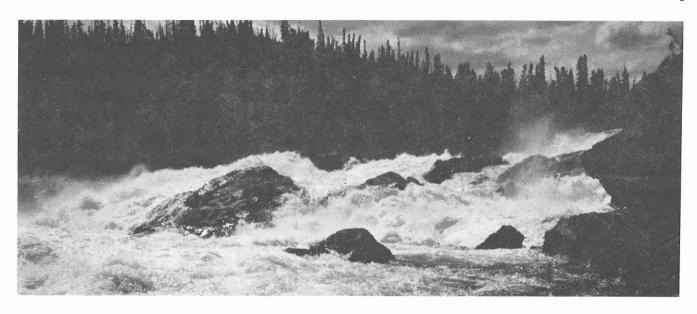
In the following years the abbé produced numerous scholarly papers, articles and narratives, all of which were written in such interesting and lively prose that it is an endless wonder why all of his books and works were not translated into English long ago. As it stands, only two or three of his works have been Englished. In 1981, Professor Otto Hohn translated Petitot's Les Grands Esquimaux (1887) which was published in English as The Chiglit Eskimos. In 1990 there appeared The Asiatic Origin of the Eskimos, translated by the present author from Petitot's original monograph Origine Asiatique des Esquimaux published in Rouen, France, 1890. Sadly, though, most of the abbé's works remain untranslated and largely unknown, including his great Dictionnaire de la Langue Dene-Dindjie, a monument to his genius, consisting of vocabularies and expressions in Chipewyan, Hareskin, Loucheux/Kutchin, and in French all neatly arranged side by side in columns. The actual physical dimensions of this book are something to contend with and it weighs about seven or eight pounds, or about 3.5 kilos. Not the sort of dictionary to carry in your hip pocket.

Had Petitot written no other book but this Dene-Dindjie dictionary, which included a long monograph on the Dene people and a grammar section, his standing as a linguist and author would have been assured. But he was a prolific scholar. In the very same year, 1876, he published his *Vocabulaire Francais-Esquimau*, a French-Eskimo vocabulary containing thousands of words and expressions in the dialect of the Chiglit Eskimos of the Mackenzie and Anderson rivers. This too included a monograph and a grammar section. Of all the explorers and scientifically-minded men who travelled amongst the Inuit there was no one who could parallel or even simulate these two great linguistic productions of Emile Petitot. They remain in a class by themselves.

Today, there are many book collectors who would give their eyeteeth to own one or the other of Petitot's dictionaries but copies are exceedingly scarce and expensive. Other book collectors and librarians long for the day when the rest of his travel narratives will be translated. These include such titles as En Route to the Frozen Sea, Twelve Years Above the Polar Circle, The Exploration of the Great Bear Lake Region, and Around Great Slave Lake. In them one finds day by day accounts of Petitot's travels, his ethnographical observations and geographical discoveries in the regions traversed, and maps that he worked out by firelight. They also contain many charming illustrations sketched by the missionary himself. He was a man of many talents, a polymath of the first water, and one of the greatest all-around explorers who ever set foot in the North.



Illustration by Petitot from his "Exploration de la region du Grand Lac des Ours" (Paris, 1893).



WILLIAM B. HOYT

On 26 March 1992, William B. Hoyt died suddenly during a roll call vote in the New York State Assembly in Albany. He was 54 years old.

Bill was a wilderness canoeist and a strong supporter of the environmental values inherent in that pursuit.

His canoeing began in Algonquin Park and evolved from there to some eight Arctic canoe trips later in life, on rivers such as the Horton and the Bonnet-Plume in the far north. Last summer he was on the Great Whale in Quebec. Some readers may remember him as a participant in our January Symposiums. His knowledge of our North, its waterways, and its history was extensive. He was also a member of the WCA.

In 1974 he was first elected to the New York State Assembly and later became Chairman of its Energy Committee. It



was due to his concern, his initiatives, and his untiring work that New York State eventually reviewed and then cancelled its intent to purchase \$13 billion in hydro from Quebec's James II thus preventing the immediate flooding of this fast wilderness area. I am saddened that he did not live to see the success of his efforts or the longer-term influence of this landmark event on similar future mega-projects.

He was a true environmentalist who understood the need for responsible stewardship of our planet and its finite resources. He believed in the need to fight for fundamental values and to do so thoughtfully, with integrity and truth as his allies. I admired his efforts in the political forum a forum that is always demanding and sometimes brutal.

We will miss him dearly.

George Luste

WATER

by Michael Robinson (a Canadian Indian)

The Earth never offered man water
As a gift
Water was part of her
It is her blood
Her moving force
And in this, she said
You will see your greed
Your mistakes
Your image
But few will see me.

... Bill Hoyt was one of the few ...

EXCÈS SUR LE RIVIÈRE BAZIN

Bob Shortill

The floats of the Beaver skipped over the rippled water of Lac Tapani and the last leg of our trip to the Bazin River had started. The Bazin, which flows southwest to eventually join with the Gatineau River, is reputed to provide a tough and demanding seven-day trip. We had reports of kilometres of class 2 and 3 rapids as well as numerous class 1's and swifts.

As the rasp of the Pratt & Whitney engine droned on, I thought of how our trip had started 12 hours before, when we pulled away from the "Outdoor Inn" in Whitby, Ontario, at 9:00 a.m. Our little convoy had motored through the night along Highway 401, then north on Highway 16. We rolled through the dark deserted streets of Ottawa, crossed the Ottawa River into Quebec, and passed the still bustling bistros of Hull. In the early morning we had rolled through the town of Mont Laurier, and the blush of dawn found us entering the little village of Sainte-Anne-du-Lac, the home base of the floatplane service, Air Melancour.

As the plane passed over the logging settlement of Parent, the pilot banked it steeply onto its left wing, cut the throttle, and dropped quickly onto the headwaters of the Bazin. The air shuttle had saved us an arduous two-day car ferry over very rough roads, and for a small fee they would be placing our van and trailer at a remote part of the Gatineau River.

As we all know, the spring and early summer of 1991 had been delightfully hot and remarkably dry. Unfortunately the Bazin did not escape these conditions and the water level was lower than we would have liked. Throughout the 110 kilometres of the river, it was entirely free of marked or cut portages. That is not to say that none are needed, just that they did not exist. In total we only carried three times throughout the entire trip, which made us very happy. Where we weren't able to pick our way through, we did a lot of wading, lining, and stumbling over the boulder-strewn river banks. Low water in the rapids forced us to do an incredible amount of precise manoeuvring. We drew, pried, backpaddled, and ferried until our arms felt they had extended by

several inches. In some cases we started on one side of the river, back-ferried to the extreme other side, then back again, all in the same run. Every day gave us a number of swifts and rapids. The last day on the Bazin the rapids continued almost non-stop for 16 kilometres – sheer exhaustion.

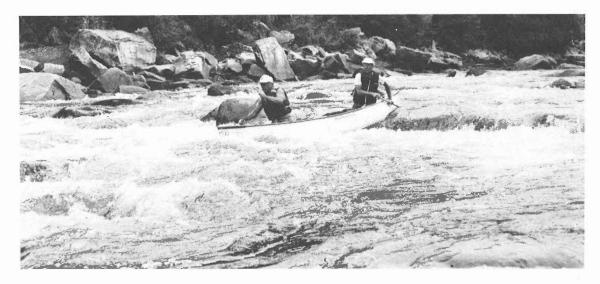
The mixed forest and high hills with numerous rock outcroppings meant constantly changing beautiful scenery. Every bend in the river brought a new and even more pleasing view. The hills had gained a heavy mantle of new mixed growth which did an excellent job of masking the old logging wounds. Young pines were standing above the other trees. Maybe in another 30 years it will look something like it did before the loggers came.

Campsites were at best primitive to non-existent which, along with the absence of cut portages, made us think this river is not canoed very often. The river is paralleled for a time by an old and unobtrusive logging road. Except for this trail and the occasional hunt camp this river could almost be a wilderness trip. The one major portage, around an out-of-service hydro plant, is almost pleasant, for the old structure seems to be blending into the surroundings. While there were abundant signs of wildlife in the soft earth near the shore, we didn't get to see anything, except for a black and white kitty that visited our camp one night. Fishing was excellent at the bottom of almost every rapid, with good-sized pickerel and pike abounding and seemingly ready to bite at anything.

The big treat of this trip other than the fantastic scenery, tremendous rapids, and feeling of remoteness, was the great food. Ah yes, every canoeist's dream, scads and scads of fabulous food. This year we carried a wanagan lined with foam insulation. With the addition of 10 lbs of dry ice we now had a portable and rugged freezer. It worked so well that even through amazingly hot weather, our steaks, butter, bacon, and other fresh foods stayed cold well into the fifth day.

Now let's get on to the good stuff, our menu and the mountain of good food. It was truly – "excess on the Bazin."





DAY ONE Appetizer of fresh corn on the cob. Entree of grilled fresh steak seasoned with a light garlic sauce and accented with a lightly stirfried montage of fresh mushrooms, green peppers, tomatoes, and onions. Fluffy baked potatoes slathered in real butter went down nicely. A relaxing cigar and a mug of steaming coffee rounded out the evening's repast.

DAY TWO Fresh bacon fried to a light crisp, sliced tomatoes, a few panfried potatoes and light fluffy eggs accompanied by toasted English muffins. Perked coffee was the delightful finishing touch.

Drifting along, we lunched on crackers with thick slices of Gouda and Cheddar cheese which had been kept fresh by individual shrouds of paraffin-soaked cheese cloth. Chunks of fresh Polish sausage still cold from the cooler.

Dinner was again fresh steak, served with lightly sauteed fresh mushrooms and green peppers. The potatoes and onions were thinly sliced, lightly buttered, and spiced before being wrapped in foil and broiled over the fire.

DAY THREE Again the perfume of bacon sizzling over the fire and the smell of fresh coffee lilted through the air. How do you like your eggs? Frozen bagels were soon thawed and toasted over the fire.

Lunch beside a tumbling rapids. Flakes of chicken and ham stuffed into fresh pitas, followed by a generous helping of fried pickerel.

Dinner was a delight. While we waited for the meat to thaw, we snacked on hors d'oeuvres of smoked oysters snuggled into a bed of shaved Gouda resting on Ritz crackers. We collapsed after stuffing ourselves with the spaghetti dinner with real meat in the sauce and fresh toasted garlic bread. One or two drops of Southern Comfort in your coffee?

DAY FOUR A light drizzle hurried us through a breakfast of toasted bagels slathered in peanut butter and washed down with tea and coffee.

Chunks of Cheddar and Gouda cheese and slices of Polish sausage while we drifted through a small widening in the river.

Dinner at a pleasant campsite was roasted Octoberfest sausage, served with western-style scalloped potatoes. The potatoes were by Idahoan and were quite good. We topped this hearty meal with a blueberry cobbler covered with real blueberries harvested from the multitude of heavily laden bushes near our campsite.

DAY FIVE Breakfast was a medley of fluffy, blueberrypacked pancakes covered in maple syrup and strips of bacon. Several cups of fresh perked coffee finished it off just right.

While the canoes were tied to the cable of a hunter's handpowered utility ferry, we lunched on crackers and cheese and Polish sausage. How about sardines in delicate lemon sauce to go with the bagels? Mmm, not bad.

An appetizer of fresh pickerel preceded our supper of roasted ham decorated with pineapple slices and complimented by heaping servings of wild rice. A baked bannock loaf laden with fresh blueberries was a delightful accompaniment to the perked coffee and Cuban cigars. A drop of Drambuie in the coffee?

DAY SIX We still had some blueberries left for pancakes or to perk up the porridge.

Taking advantage of a large eddy pool in the near continuous rapids we pulled out and built a small fire to ward off the chill of the rain while we lunched on bagels, crackers, cheese, and kolbasa. To further chase away the chills, a splash of Southern Comfort in the tea.

Dinner at a spacious campsite were the Bazin flows into the Gatineau. Freeze-dried "Alfredo Primavera" by Harvest Food Works will have you going back for seconds and thirds. Chewy chocolate-drop cookies were a nice finish to a great meal. Too bad we let the large pike go, but there had been too many rapids left in the day.

DAY SEVEN Breakfast of toasted English muffins, pancakes, and syrup.

Lunch of the ever-popular crackers, cheese, and kolbasa while drifting through the rock gardens of the Gatineau.

Our final river meal was a Harvest Food Works Stroganoff in red wine sauce. Good but not great.

SUMMARY How successful was the cooler wanagan? Well, if you see a group of people sipping on frozen daiquiri or slurping up real ice cream during one of your canoe trips, it's probably us. Stop and say hello. We might even give you a frozen treat. And how was the river? The scenery is great and the rapids offer a diversity of challenges. Access is reasonable and it's a pleasant drive. I think we all felt it would go on our do-it-again list.

CONSERVATION

HUNDREDS OF DAMS

The Waterpower Association is submitting a proposed water power class environmental assessment to the Ministry of the Environment for approval. The Waterpower Association's scheme will make it easier to build hydro dams on wilderness rivers, so tell the government what you think. Even the Independent Power Producer's Society of Ontario has rejected the Waterpower Association's document! Write the Honourable Ruth Grier, Minister of the Environment, 135 St. Clair Street West, Toronto, Ontario, M4V 1P5. Please send copies of your letters to the WCA Conservation Committee. If you want to become involved in the fight, call WCA Conservation Chairperson John Hackert, (416) 438-7672, or WCA Director Richard Culpeper, (705) 671-3343.

SABLES SHENANIGANS

The Honourable Ruth Grier, Minister of the Environment, has decided **not** to put the dams proposed for the River Aux Sables through environmental assessments. Instead, she has suggested that the developer, Electrogen, form an advisory committee. Unfortunately, the developer is only permitting one person to represent all canoeing organizations without limiting the numbers of groups or individuals who support development. If letting the developer control the committee sounds a bit odd to you, write the Minister at 135 St. Clair Street West, Toronto, Ontario, M4F 1P5.



VIA CUTS UNSCHEDULED STOPS

VIA Rail will no longer let you get on or off its Sudbury-Sioux Lookout run at unscheduled stops. You will no longer be able to use the train to access the Missinaibi River and several other mid-northern Ontario waterways. VIA is tightening up its trans-continental schedule so that you can travel from Montreal or Toronto to Vancouver in less time, so there is no longer any slack for unscheduled stops. If you don't like this, write to Mr. James Roche, Executive Vice-President and Chief Operating Officer, Via Rail Canada Inc., Box 8116, Station A, Montreal, Quebec, H3C 3N3, and be sure to send a copy to Mr. John Rodriguez, M.P., Room 382, Confederation Building, Ottawa, K1A 0A6.

REVIEWS

THE BASIC ESSENTIALS OF PHOTOGRAPHY OUT-DOORS by Mike Wyatt, published by ICS Books Inc., Merrillville, IN, 1991, 68 pages, \$6.95. Reviewed by Toni Harting

This is a simple, easy-to-understand, no-nonsense little book that will help many beginning photographers to make better pictures. It is a collection of tips and information on the general basics of equipment selection, exposure, composition, light, and subject matter. The book also presents numerous helpful suggestions that will greatly improve the quality of anybody's photography when working in the field. One of the better books to introduce the joys of photography to lovers of the outdoors.

(The ICS Books Inc. Spring 1992 catalog of titles for outdoor and travel lifestyles is available free of charge from ICS Books Inc., 107 East 89th Avenue, One Tower Plaza, Merrillville, IN 46410, USA.)

THE KAZAN: Journey into an Emerging Land edited by David F. Pelly and Christopher C. Hanks, published by Outcrop Ltd., The Northern Publishers, Yellowknife, NWT, 1991, 135 pages, \$21.00.

Reviewed by Toni Harting

In July and August 1988, four separate groups of eight canoeists each traversed the Kazan River in the Keewatin region of the Northwest Territories. One of the purposes of this 500-km Operation Raleigh Canadian Arctic Expedition was to conduct a multi-disciplinary scientific study of the natural and cultural heritage of the area. The leader/co-ordinator, WCA member Pelly, and the chief scientist, Hanks, of the expedition have collected much of the findings of the groups into this book that presents in easily readable, non-scientific language a huge amount of information that makes the area really come to life for the reader.

It is the first publication of its kind and therefore of tremendous value to those who want detailed knowledge on this superb canoeing river. The book is illustrated with maps, photographs, and drawings, and also many sensitive, perceptive remarks by several of the young participants. Although *The Kazan* is a bit pricey for its size, it is an indispensable source of fascinating information on a major northern river and its region.

WCA TRIPS

20-21 June WHITEWATER COURSE AT PALMER RAPIDS

Hugh Valliant, Anmarie Forsyth, Jim Morris, Debbie Sutton; phone Hugh at (416) 699-3464, fax (416) 699-3847; book before 1 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, novice, or beginning whitewater paddlers. Preference to first-time registrants. Friends are more then welcome to the Saturday night's festivities; just let us know beforehand. Limit eight canoes.

3-5 July ALGONQUIN PARK MOOSE HUNT Joan Etheridge, (416) 825-4061; book before 26 June.

This trip will start Friday from the Opeongo dock. We will take the water taxi to the north end of Opeongo Lake. From here we will make a number of portages through a chain of lakes where there is a high probability of seeing many moose. Limit four canoes.

4-5 July LOWER MADAWASKA RIVER

Hugh Valliant, Anmarie Forsyth, Jim Morris, Debbie Sutton; phone Hugh at (416) 699-3464, fax (416) 699-3847; book before 22 June.

This is a continuation of the Palmer Rapids weekend. We will meet at Palmer Rapids on Saturday at 9 a.m. sharp. From there we will travel to our put-in point. We will take out at Griffith. This will be an excellent opportunity to practise and further refine our whitewater skills in a tripping environment and in more challenging rapids. In addition there will be plenty of opportunity to learn and practise our river rescue and waterproofing techniques. At summer water levels the lower "Mad" is suitable for novice or beginning whitewater paddlers. Preference will be given to those who attended the Palmer Rapids weekend. Limit eight canoes.

11-12 July KILLARNEY PROVINCIAL PARK, GREAT MOUNTAIN LAKE

Richard Culpeper, (705) 673-8988; book immediately.

This trip will cover a fair distance. Lightweight canoes are essential to facilitate single portaging in mountainous but beautiful country. The journey crosses two heights of land. Limit four boats.

12 July BURNT RIVER

Bill Ness, (416) 321-3005; book immediately.

Join us on a lazy summer paddle down the Burnt from Kinmount to the village of Burnt River. This is a flatwater trip with a few riffles and easy portages. A good trip to bring the kids on. Limit six canoes; novices welcome.

13-17 July KILLARNEY, BYNG INLET

Gerry O'Farrel, (519) 822-8886; book before 1 July.

A very picturesque corner of the Great Lakes. The aim is to paddle and explore around Phillip Edward Island, Collins Inlet, Bustard Islands, and any other places that attract our interest. Travel will range from 35 to 40 kilometres a day. Gerry will either be in a tandem canoe or solo sea kayak; both types are welcome on the trip. Sunny and calm conditions are expected but the wind can rise quickly and paddlers should be prepared for gusty weather. The route lies within the Thirty Thousand Islands so there is some protection. The trip is suitable for confident novices. Limit four boats.

18-19 July LOWER MADAWASKA RIVER

Duncan Taylor, (416) 368-9748; book immediately.

This will be the classic summer weekender from Latchford Bridge to Griffith. We will have a leisurely paddle down the river with plenty of time to play in the rapids and go for a few swims. Limit four canoes with intermediate crews. Singing optional.

18-19 July TEMAGAMI RIVER

Richard Culpeper, (705) 673-8988; book before 10 July.

Delightful whitewater, a pool-and-drop trip with rapids from class 2 to class 3 with enough riffles to make an exciting trip. All the major rapids can be portaged safely. Limit five canoes with experienced crews.

25-26 July MINDEN WILD WATER PRESERVE

John Hackert, (416) 438-7672; book before 17 July.

The Gull at Minden eats boats and people. This man-made whitewater course offers an extremely challenging experience. The course was originally designed for closed boats but is increasingly being used by open boaters. The course is difficult but the runout at the bottom is an excellent spot to develop your whitewater skills. Boats must be properly outfitted with airbags and paddlers must wear helmets. Limit six canoes with keen intermediate paddlers.

1-3 August OTTAWA RIVER

John Hackert, (416) 438-7672; book before 20 July.

The Ottawa is a high-volume whitewater river with several serious rapids. Some of the rapids on the main channel can be expected to have class 4 sections at least. All boats must be fully outfitted with floatation and paddlers must wear helmets. Limit five canoes with paddlers who are experienced in whitewater manoeuvres, including raft-avoidance skills.

8-9 August RIVER RESCUE CLINIC, PALMER RAPIDS Roger and Sandy Harris, Ken Coburn, Bill Ness, (416) 767-5845; book before 31 July.

THIS CLINIC IS SPONSORED BY THE WCA OUTINGS COMMITTEE. This will be a mutual learning experience during which we will practise various rescue techniques. Rescue equipment, rope handling, boat rescue, and survival skills will be covered. Advance reading of the book *River Rescue* by Slim Ray will help. Bring all your rescue equipment, rope, and enthusiasm. This clinic may be especially valuable to trip organizers. See note at end of trip schedule. ALL PADDLERS WELCOME.

5-7 September OTTAWA RIVER

John Hackert, (416) 438-7672; book before 24 August.

As mentioned above, the Ottawa is a high-volume whitewater river with several serious rapids. There are now probably less rafts to avoid and the water should be a bit lower than the August trip, but paddlers should still be prepared for heavy whitewater. Some of the rapids on the main channel can be expected to have class 4 sections at least. All boats must be fully outfitted with floatation and paddlers must wear helmets. Limit five canoes. Suitable for experienced intermediate paddlers.

20 September MISSISSAGUA RIVER

Bill Ness, (416) 321-3005; book before 13 September.

If we get a rainy September the Mississagua can rise to near spring levels, making an exiting whitewater trip. As a bonus during the fall colors, this is one of the prettiest rivers in the area. The outing is contingent on adequate water levels. Limit five canoes with intermediate paddlers.

3-4 October ALGONQUIN PARK, SOLO

John Winters, (705) 382-2057; book before 27 September.

We will be doing an easy weekend trip in the northwest corner of Algonquin Park. A leisurely pace will permit us to enjoy the scenery. Those looking for a gruelling workout will be sadly disappointed. Solo paddlers only please. Limit of six canoes, novices welcome.

4 October ELORA GORGE

Dave Sharp, (519) 621-5591; book before 27 September.

The Gorge is always a good spot to spend a day practising your whitewater skills. Often September rains will bring the water levels up sufficiently to make this a good workout for novice to intermediate paddlers. Limit six canoes.

10-12 October PETAWAWA RIVER

Diane and Paul Hamilton, (416) 877-8778; book before 2 October.

From Lake Traverse to Lake McManus we will enjoy Thanksgiving weekend amid the wonderful scenery of the Petawawa valley. Experienced cold weather trippers will enjoy the challenge. Limit four canoes.

PADDLERS BEWARE

Participants in WCA trips should be aware that conditions for water and weather are unpredictable. Even the most familiar local creek can become dangerous when swollen by meltwater or heavy rain. The general skill level of club members has advanced significantly over the past few years; however we must remember to set an example of safe paddling to novices and less experienced river users.

While we paddle for fun, and risk is part of the fun, we should be prepared to assess the abilities of the whole group and allow for them. The experienced paddlers should be prepared to conduct rescues, should keep an eye on those less skilled, and be prepared to offer advice. All paddlers should be prepared to accept advice; even the most skilled can become tired and careless on occasion and the temptation to push beyond previous limits can lead to accidents. In addition to the PFD, paddlers in whitewater should carry a knife that can be reached quickly even in an emergency. A throw bag and two carabiners are valuable rescue aids. In cold water a wet suit or dry suit will reduce the chance of hypothermia. Paddlers who attempt rapids of class 2 or above are advised to wear a helmet. Boats should be equipped with sufficient floatation, well secured with solid lashing. Painters should be coiled out of the way but ready for access in an emergency. Grab loops at bow and stern should be large enough to reach a hand through and thick enough to hold on to without cutting the skin. Thigh straps, if fitted, should not trap the paddler if the boat tips and should have a quick-release mechanism. Loose items should be kept to a minimum; day pack and bailer should not be able to catch if the boat is upside down in current.

WCA FALL MEETING 25/27 SEP 92

The last weekend in September is the time when the fall colors in Algonquin Park are at their peak. Mild, pleasant days are ideal for hiking, paddling, or just poking around. Cool evenings draw people to the campfire where the focus is on banter and story-telling. Many a morning dawns with mist rising from bodies of water. The orange light of the rising sun is scattered by millions of tiny ice crystals which coat the vegetation near the water's edge. Now and then the wild call of the loon or the splash of a moose feeding in the shallow water near the shore breaks the silence which blankets the land.

And you can be there and part of the magic. This year our fall get-together will be at the Whitefish Lake Group Campground in Algonquin Park. In keeping with the format of the last few years, the emphasis will be on outings rather than 'how-to' workshops.

The complete program and the registration form is enclosed as an insert with this newsletter. From a quick perusal of the program you can see that we have tried for a maximum of variety. You have a number of paddling options, none of them longer than about five hours' duration, and all of them offering the opportunity to practise your portaging skills. There are many short self-guiding hiking trails available for unstructured strolls, an outing with 'artist-in-residence' Toni Harting for those interested in photography, a hike around

Provoking Lake (part of the Highland Hiking Trail). Hopefully also an exploration hike on an as yet incomplete new trail which the Park staff is preparing. You might consider a visit to the logging museum or a few hours picking cranberries near Hay Lake, but an absolute must will be a guided tour of the new Algonquin Park Museum. At present this impressive showcase is not completely finished and it will not be officially opened until the Park's centennial celebration next year.

On Saturday we have arranged for a catered dinner in Whitney, a twenty-minute drive from the camping area. Following the dinner will be a presentation by longtime WCA members Dan and Reg McGuire. Dan and Reg, both experienced canoeists, were on a trip down the Thelon River in 1988 when they ran into difficulties in a rapid and lost their canoes and most of their gear. They were eventually spotted and flown out by a search plane after spending twelve trying days in the Barrens. The intent of the presentation, and the discussion which follows it, is to point out that mistakes in judgment, inattention, or just plain bad luck can lead to serious consequences. It will also show the value of good preparation in coping with emergencies.

Because we have to know at least two weeks in advance how many people we have to accommodate at the campground, and because there is limited space available for dinner, we suggest you register as early as possible. Details are to be found in the insert.

Herb Pohl, organizer, (416) 637-7632

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

This PRODUCTS AND SERVICES section is available, free of charge and on a first-come, first-served 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),

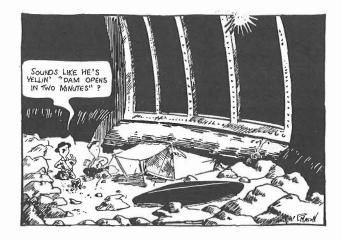
Hepworth, Ontario.

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

CANOE COURSES Becky Mason is offering an instructional canoe program called 'classic solo.' The courses take place at Meech Lake in the Gatineau Park in Quebec north of Ottawa. Basic, advanced, and classic courses clinic, two sessions of two hours each; ratio 1:3. Contact Becky by mail: Box 126, RR#1, Chelsea, P.Q., J0X 1N0; or phone (819) 827-4159.

THE ORIGINAL BUG SHIRT is designed to keep biting insects away from you while keeping you cool. It does not require repellents or chemicals and is compatible with other outdoor clothing. For a brochure and order form, contact The Original Bug Shirt Co., PO Box 127, Trout Creek, Ont., POH 2L0; phone (705) 729-5620.

STOP SLIPPING OFF YOUR SLEEPING BAG Use the *PADGRIPPER*. No more slipping and sliding. This high-quality rubberized mesh grips the slippery materials of your sleeping bag and pad to keep you from sliding off during the night. Generous 24"x40". You cut the size you need. Weight 4 oz. couples use two sideways. Remit cheque or money order (C\$12.25 + 4.75 S&H, US\$10.75 + 4.25 S&H; Ontario residents add 8% PST) to HAV Enterprises, Dept. NS, 35 Pine Cres., Toronto, ON, M4E 1L3.





YUKON PADDLE Float plane or helicopter access from the untouched Yukon Territory. Consider combination hiking and canoeing trips designed to suit your abilities. Explore the Cirque of the Unclimbables on the Nahanni River. Moosepond / Little Nahanni specialized combination trips offer 12 days of Canada's best whitewater. Selfguided economical outfitting or luxury guided tours from our comfortable lodge. 25 Claude Avenue, Toronto, ON., M6R 2T5; phone (416) 533-6301.

PADDLES We make one-piece, hardwood paddles in any style for \$30. Mackenzie Wood Products, RR#3, Bancroft, ON. KOL 1C0; call Doug at (613) 339-2450.

THELON/KAZAN For experienced paddlers interested in canoeing the Thelon or Kazan rivers in the NWT, we offer canoe and equipment rentals and logistics from Kasba Lake, and easy access from Winnipeg or Minneapolis to the edge of the tundra. This is a new and very cost-effective access for all rivers of the central Barrens. We also offer escorted expeditions annually down these rivers, and to the Thelon Game Sanctuary for wildlife photography. Contact 'Tundra Tom' at Great Canadian Ecoventures, P.O. Box 9-E, New Denver, BC, VOG 1SO, phone (604) 358-7727, fax (604) 358-7262.

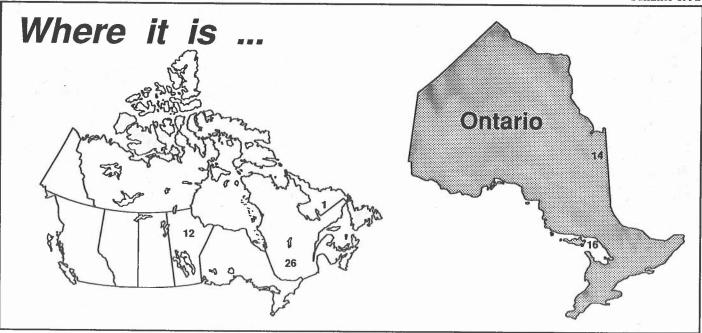
WANAPITEI WILDERNESS CENTRE Experience northern Canada by canoe. Since 1931, Wanapitei has been running quality canoe trips in the Canadian North. Trips and canoe clinics vary in length from one day to several weeks and there are options for all levels of paddlers from novice to expert. Trips are offered 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 POG 1G0; phone (705) 342-5324.

CANADA'S CANOE ADVENTURES Join our canoe and kayak trips that take place in all ten provinces and in the northern territories. Discover gentle holidays for novices or remote adventures for experienced paddlers. Proceeds are donated to the Canadian Recreational Canoeing Association. Contact us for your free color catalogue: Canada's Canoe Adventures, 1029 Hyde Park Road, Suite 5a, Hyde Park, Ont., NOM 1Z0; tel. (519) 641-1261; fax (519) 473-2109.

CANADIAN RECREATIONAL CANOEING ASSOCIATION Established in 1971 to promote heritage and ethics, to establish guidelines, and to distribute information regarding canoeing and kayaking in Canada, the CRCA has valuable materials of interest to all recreational paddlers. Testimonials from adventurous paddlers, resources for canoe route clean-up projects, route suggestions, books/maps/guides/videos/prints and more are all available through the association. Contact us for your free product/service catalogue which outlines one of the most comprehensive collections of padding materials available anywhere: CRCA, 1029 Hyde Park Road, Suite 5a, Hyde Park, Ont., NOM 1Z0; tel. & fax (519) 473-2109.

THE SPORT SEWING SHOP Sewing and repairs to camping gear and clothing, and sale of the necessary hardware and/or fabrics. The Sport Sewing Shop: 100 Queen Street East, Toronto, M5C 1S6; phone (416) 603-0744.



in this issue

- 1. A Grand Wayfaring
- 10. Editorial
- 10. News Briefs
- 10. Partners Wanted
- 11. Outdoor Canada Show
- 11. Board Activities
- 12. Little Churchill River
- 13. A Butterfly

- 14. Walk ... Walk ...
- 15. Food for Thought
- 16. The Shaw-wan-osso-way Effect
- 20. Minden Work Weekend
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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.

RINT CLEARLY!	Date:

☐ New member

Member # if renewal:

☐ Single

Phone Number(s):

☐ Family

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.