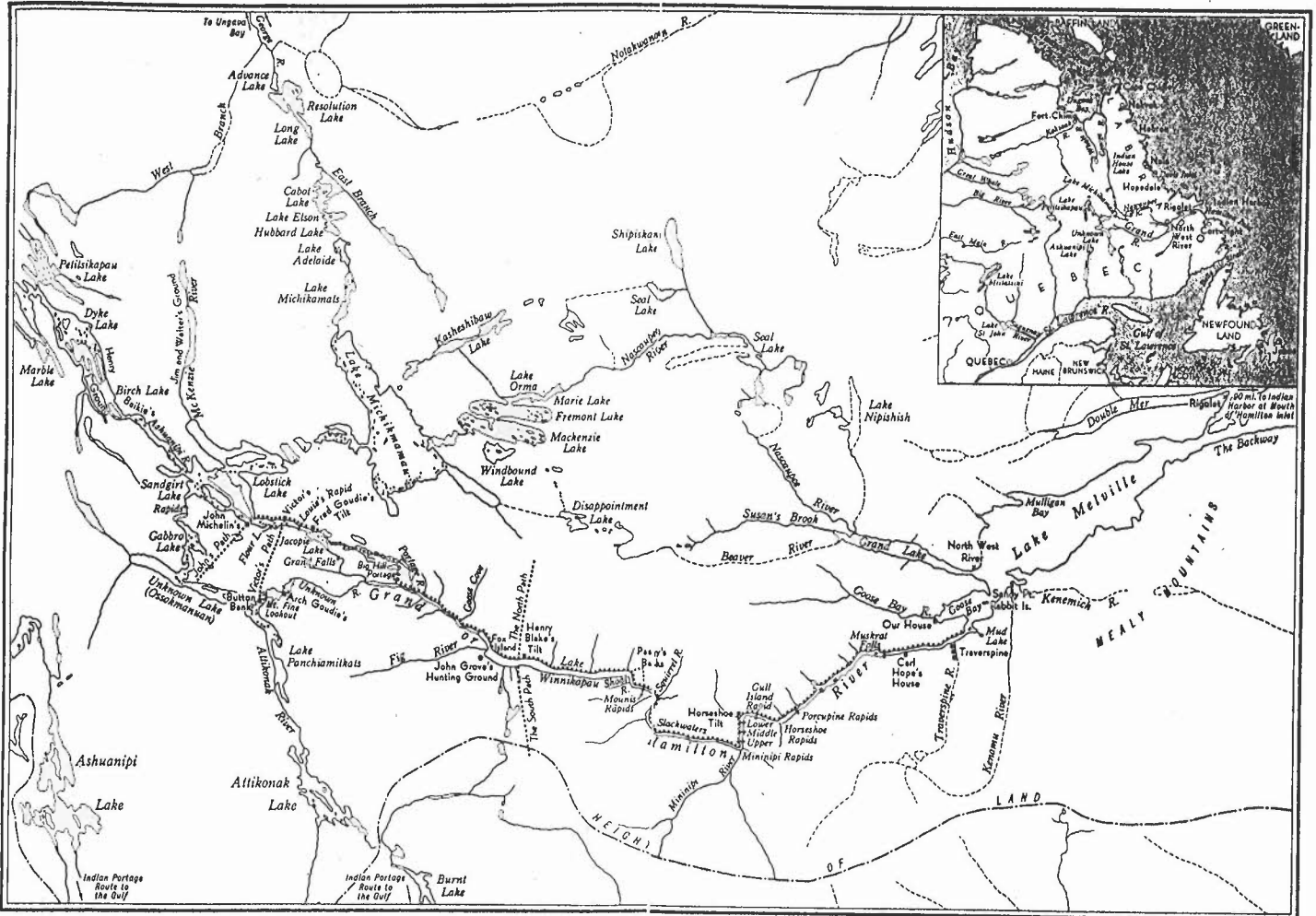


nastawgan

Spring 1994 Vol. 21 No. 1

Quarterly Journal of the Wilderness Canoe Association



Map from first edition (1933) of book True North

WILDERNESS DISCOVERED

Elliott Merrick

This is the text of a presentation Elliott Merrick intended to make at the recent Quebec North Shore Symposium (see page 8). Unfortunately he was not able to attend because of ill health and bad weather. The text was read for him by M.T. Kelly.

I know you don't want a long speech! But be of good cheer. As Zaza Gabor is reputed to have told her fifth husband, "I will not keep you long."

Last time I was here [Labrador Symposium, 26 and 27 January 1990, ed.] I talked about my book *True North*. So I

mustn't talk about that again. Still, I need to give you a little background.

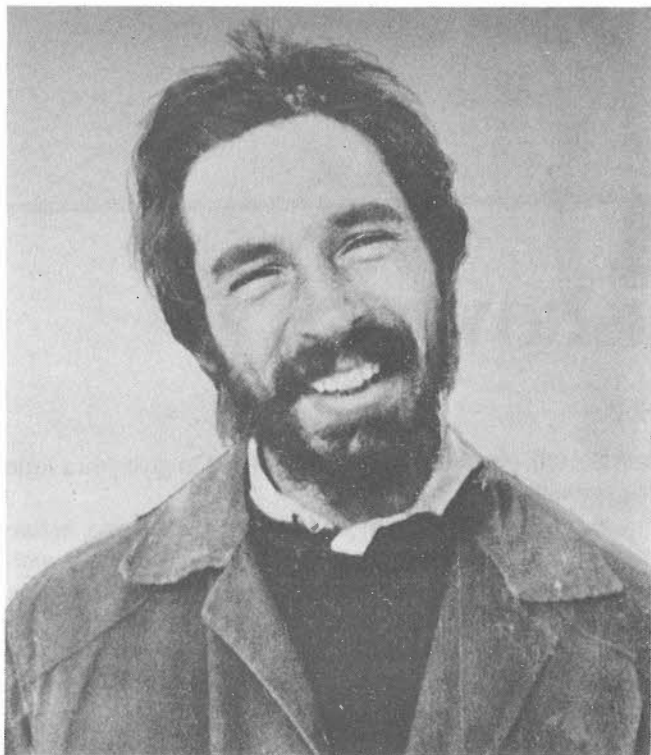
A long time ago, in 1929, sixty-five years ago, before most of you were born, my wife and I made a trip with trappers up Churchill River by canoe some 300 miles to the Height of Land. We were 14 trappers in 7 canoes, and as we progressed, different men dropped off at their accustomed hunting grounds. We left the village of North West River, which is at the head of Lake Melville — Hamilton Inlet, September first, in order to reach the portage lakes if possible before they froze over. I had been teaching 3rd and 4th grades

in the Grenfell Mission school, and Miss Kate Austen, the Australian nurse whom I married (or did she marry me — who ever knows about such things?) had been for two years nurse in the little frontier hospital at North West River. So we knew all these men, or they wouldn't have taken us with them.

We were gone 4½ months, coming back down the river by snowshoe and toboggan. On the way, Christmas Day 1929, we stopped to see Churchill Falls, which we called Grand Falls then, and lying on a mound of frozen-spray ice, held onto one another's feet while we peered into the depths of this mighty cataract. A savage rapid almost too terrible to look at leapt over the brink with a roar that made speech impossible, a column of spray rose half a mile into the sky, and the very earth trembled as the immense volume of water fell twice the height of Niagara. Now it is only a trickle marking a hydro. I tell you this to illustrate the immense changes. Nobody could see the falls now, because they don't exist.

Similarly, it is hard to make you understand the atmosphere of isolation in those days before planes. To the village of North West River and the little settlements where waterways were the only roads, nobody from the outside would come in for seven months each winter. And nobody went out. The last coastal steamer brought contact in November, then the sea and bay froze, and the mailboat did not get in again till the following June. From early November to early June! There were a few battery radios, but the battery was generally dead, and no way to charge it. Now, at least one plane comes into Goose Bay every day. And there is the iron-mine railway into the heart of Labrador, and the skidoos and bush planes.

We were all to ourselves, an entity, self-contained, not concerned with the outside world and the outside world



Merrick in North West River

wasn't concerned with us. food. We made our own day too. Many of you have experienced, I'm sure, the sense when camped by a faraway wilderness lake, all to yourselves to live or die.

I realize that this meeting is concerned with Labrador south-slope rivers, rivers running from the Height of Land



Muskrat Falls

to the St. Lawrence Gulf shore. So I am going to tell you a story that has a connection with one of those rivers, though it may not seem so at the start. We begin slightly far off, with rivers flowing the other way, to Hamilton Inlet and the Atlantic. It is a story from the book *Northern Nurse*, which Mrs. Merrick and I wrote together and collaborated on. The book is now sold out and out of print, but it is to be reprinted next year again.

Mrs. Merrick was then Nurse Kate Austen, in charge of the hospital in North West River village, hub of such waterways.

Every springtime after breakup, along in June, floating on the fast flood current past the town, some 18 Montagnais Innu canoes appeared, coming from their winter of hunting near Lake Michikamau on the headwaters of the Nascopi, we never knew where. They landed on the long sand beach across from the town, and we saw the tents go up, and smoke curling. They would spend July and August on this Bay shore to get away from the flies. They'd trade a little at the Hudson Bay Company post, see their priest who came every summer to baptize and marry, and be fishing, smoking caribou hides, making canoes or snowshoes for the coming year. In those days the Montagnais made the most beautiful snowshoes in the world.

Very soon a group of Innu came paddling across the river, helping a crippled woman up from the beach to the hospital to see the nurse. Taking her into the ward, Nurse saw the woman had a swollen, infected knee the size of a cabbage. The hospital staff came to calling the Montagnais woman Mrs. Nepishish, being unable to pronounce her real name. The Innu in their turn called the Nurse Toganish Squish, or Doctor Girl. Mrs. Nepishish had a breast-fed baby boy about six months old who was for the moment laid on a bed and appeared quite contented, accustomed to being stuck up on the snow or parked most anywhere while momma made camp.

One of the hospital nurses aids was very fortunately Benson Blake, daughter of the famous guide Bert Blake who

...Mina Benson Hubbard on her
 ...North West River to Michikamau
 and down the George to Ungava Bay. Benson, named for
 Mina Benson Hubbard, had from earliest childhood been
 playmates with the summering Montagnais children, so that
 she spoke their language almost perfectly. Nurse had Benson
 apply the ether cone to Mrs. Nepishish's face, and as the
 woman began to fade, made three quick incisions from
 which gushed quantities of matter. "Tell them, Benson, she
 will be here at least a week."

The Innu went down the stairs sideways, very cau-
 tiously, murmuring *meeami abishish*, which means 'good-
 bye' or 'good-bye for a little while.' You could tell they
 weren't accustomed to stairs. There was no penicillin, no
 antibiotics, in those days. Now began the four-hourly hot
 poultices night and day to bring down the swelling and
 resolve the infection, the time-honored treatment. Nurses
 worked very hard in those days.

Benson and Nurse had a look at the baby. They discov-
 ered his name was Payuk, or something like that. He was
 wrapped in soft, velvety, tanned caribou skin, washable,
 windproof, in many ways superior to any cloth ever made.
 Inside of that were many-colored cloth garments pieced
 together and rag-wrapped caribou moss pads that served as
 diapers.

They decided to give Payuk a warm bath, which he
 kicked and chortled in like an old-timer. He had a beautiful,
 smooth skin. Benson said the Indian women rub their babies
 with oil, and that's how they keep them so clean.

"What kind of oil?"

"Oh, goose grease, beaver fat, bear fat, whatever."

They dressed Payuk up in fresh, white hospital clothes
 and took him in to see his mother.



She clapped her hands and laughed with glee.

Benson interpreted, "She says he looks like a king."

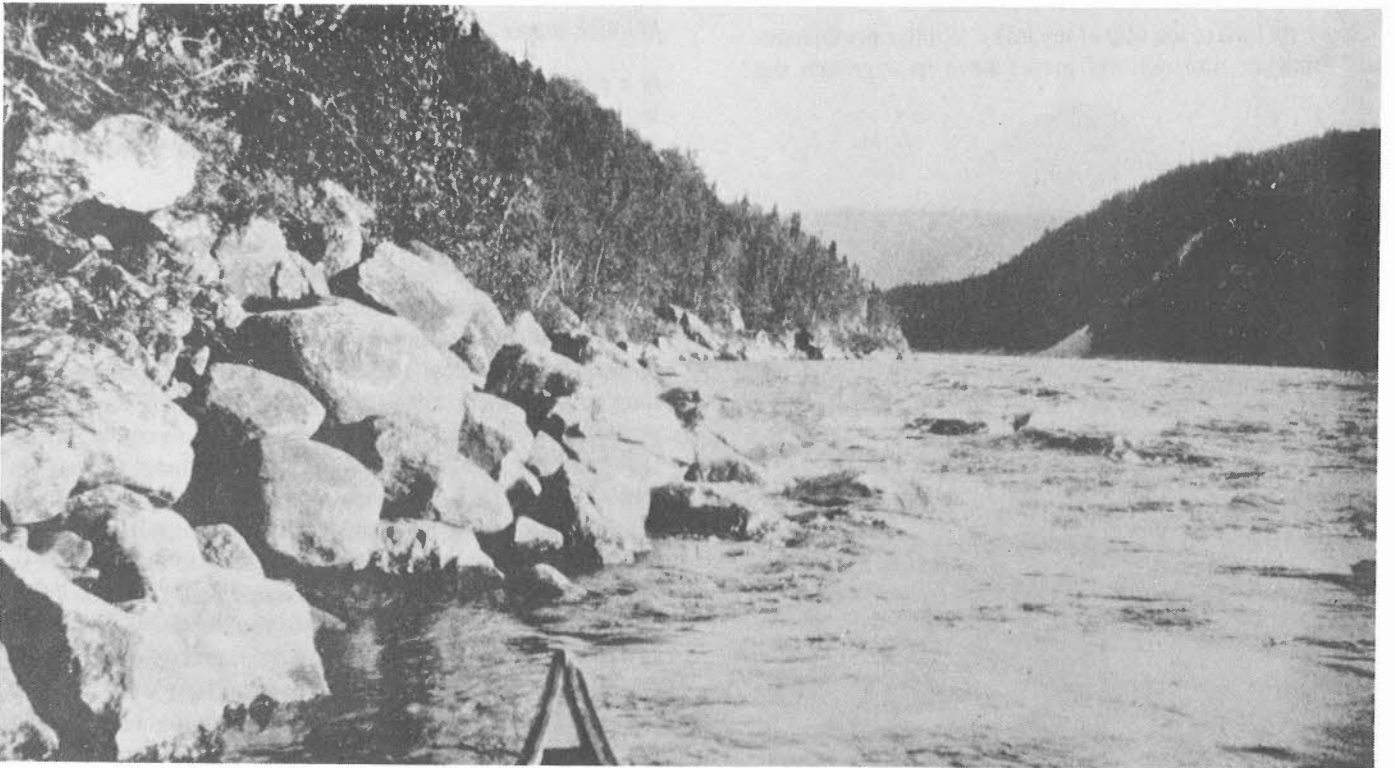
"What do you suppose she means by a king, Benson?"

"Like Jesus, I s'pose, Miss."

Mrs. Nepishish spent her time diligently sewing away,
 and every day about 16 Innu came to see her. One day Mrs.
 Nepishish ran her hand over the sheets and blanket and gave
 a little jounce on the springs.

"I've never been in a bed before," she told Benson.

Mrs. Nepishish made moccasins and mittens of caribou
 skin for her husband that week, and beautiful work she did
 too. She also made a little coat for Payuk. But the principal
 thing she worked on was a beaded Indian woman's cap. They
 are longish toques, shaped sort of like an old-fashioned
 nightcap. But they are made of triangles of red and black
 broadcloth (stocked especially by the Company for this
 purpose) which taper off at the crown down flat over one ear.



"All these men know the individual rocks, eddies, points and cliffs better than the lines in their own palms."

The base of this cone was stiff with tiny red and blue and white glass beads (wampum style) which she spent days embroidering. Nurse became quite fond of Mrs. Nepishish, and showed her in the mirror how pretty it was. She got Nurse to try the cap on too.

After a week Mrs. Nepishish, quite restored, went back across the river to the Indian camp. Often when Nurse could spare the time she'd row or paddle across the stream to visit Mrs. Nepishish, always busy smoking fish or baking bannock or knitting trout net or tanning deerskin. These two women, of such different cultures, one from modern Australia, the other from the ten-thousand-year-old lakes and rivers of the wilderness, became in some strange way close friends, each having enormous respect for the skills of the other.

End of August came and the Innu paddled away upstream to disappear into that immense wilderness that was their home. Nurse never expected to see Mrs. Nepishish again, and she never did. But next spring when the Montagnais band came again to camp by the Bay, a handsome young woman paddled across to see the Nurse. She patted her knee and waggled it around, pronouncing, "Good" and pointing off to the southwest. She made Miss Austen understand that Mrs. Nepishish and her husband and baby had gone this summer across the low divide via Lake Ashuanipi and a portage path still visible today into the headwaters of the Moisi and down to Sept Isles, which was in those days a little Hudson's Bay Company fur post and village where Montagnais summered by the Gulf shore. The girl was a sister of Mrs. Nepishish. She handed the Nurse a packet done up in birch bark. She waggled her knee again and said, "Good." Inside was a beaded Indian woman's cap, a perfect fit too. We have kept it all these years, and here it is for you to look at and see how it is made:

Now we turn to the title of my talk, "Wilderness Discovered." Like all tiresome old men I have to approach the



Beaded Indian woman's cap

subject obliquely.

Many years ago when I was at the University of Vermont, I was friends with the principal of a large high school in the town. He was jolly and full of fun, loved puns and jokes even when the jokes were on himself. Very clever too. One year Columbus Day came and he had to invent a school play celebrating the discovery of America. I don't know whether you have a Columbus Day holiday in Canada or not, probably not. I always like a story about Columbus: when he started out, he didn't know where was going. When he got there he didn't know where he was. And when he got back home he didn't know where he had been. For this reason he is known as the Great Navigator.

Well, this is the play my friend devised. The curtain rises disclosing Indians lurking behind trees. They are peering out



Merrick starting up Grand River in February

at a painted screen showing Columbus debarking from his high-sterned vessel into a ship's boat to be rowed ashore. The Indian chief declaims to his followers, "Now we are discovered!"

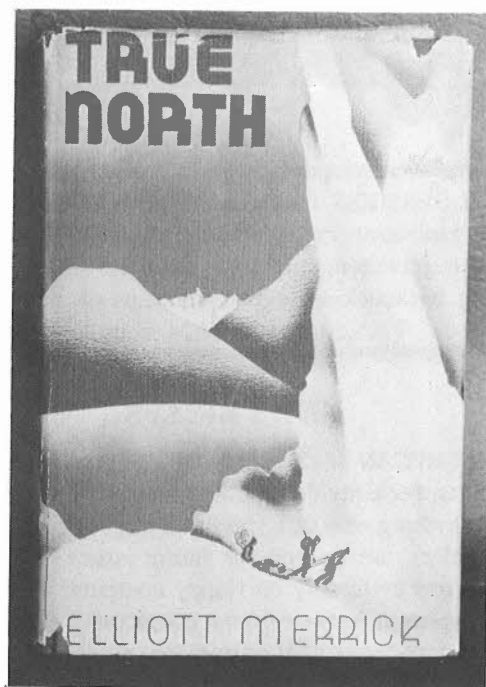
Columbus was discovering America and native Americans were discovering Columbus and multitudinous followers, much to their sorrow. Makes you wonder who was discovering whom.

It is a little like that with us and the wilderness lakes and rivers. They are new to you and fresh and thrilling. But they've been there a long time. It is really you canoe-and-portage travellers who are new to them. It would be poetic fallacy to assume the wilderness says anything. Of course, one of the world's worst examples of such poetic fallacy occurs in a story by Rudyard Kipling in which a number of big black railway locomotives are talking to one another in the freight yard. Absurd! the great brooding man-less wilderness is just *there* not caring whether you live or die. It doesn't say anything. And yet, in some magic, unexplainable way, something very much like that happens. Those wild, faraway places inspire you, they make you strong and happy, they teach you, they also force you to become humble, they punish your mistakes, and make you alert and observant and keen to know the ancient arts of survival.

I like to imagine an ideal scene. It is sunset by some wild lake or clear-flowing river. You sit on a driftwood log or a rock. A little breeze blows the flies away. The gold and scarlet western sky reflects itself in the close-by water. Spruces are beginning to turn black against the glowing west. The trip is going well. Food is holding out. The canoes are not too battered. You know pretty well where you are. For the moment you have no worries. You are at peace and can let the surroundings sink into you. It is like a pilgrimage. You have sacrificed, you have suffered, you have planned and studied. Now you have arrived at the sacred place. For this earned moment you are not a modern man looking at Nature. You are in some impossible way just a part of the natural world, you belong, you have arrived.

When you meet the plane that comes to take you out, maybe you don't want to go, you'd like to stay there always. But you will take this moment with you. In the City subway, in the busses, and the commuter trains, and the office and the elevators and the bustle, this something will be with you, calming you, strengthening you, making you feel a little different from other people. You have been there, and its has changed you for all the rest of your life.

So that's it. It is an honor to talk to people like you. Thanks for listening to me.



First edition (1933) of book True North

Elliott Merrick was born in Montclair, New Jersey, on 11 May 1905 in a comfortable environment. His father was president of Hoyt Metal, a branch of the National Lead Company.

Yet, at quite an early age he exhibited an instinctive aversion to the business world, the industrial, urban landscape and the impersonal social structures of both. By 1929 he had quit his New York advertising job and volunteered for service at the Grenfell Station in Indian Harbor, Labrador. For two years and a bit he lived in Labrador, assisted in the hospitals, taught in Northwest River, and for a while lived as a trapper.

These experiences and observations seem to have set his values for the rest of his life. Over the years he published eight books and countless stories in the *New Yorker*, the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Colliers*, and elsewhere. Four of his books — *True North*, *Frost and Fire*, *Northern Nurse*, and *The Long Crossing* — deal with Labrador. Only two of these — *True North* and *The Long Crossing* — are currently in print and readily available. The latter title, published in 1992, has an excellent Introduction by professor Ronald Rompkey from Memorial University and is the best source of information on the author that is available.

To capture more of the essence of the man, I would like to quote the text on the dust jacket of his fourth book, *Frost and Fire*, published in 1939. It reads as follows:

“Wild, harsh-going and perilous as the Labrador life described in *Frost and Fire* may be, it somehow pays off in a deep inward glow of satisfaction and serenity that one

seldom finds in the grind of modern industrial life. Elliott Merrick knows because he has experienced both.

“A graduate of Yale, reporter, New York City office worker, he has always had a feeling for simple places and natural people. And some years ago he pulled up stakes to begin living as he believed. He left a good job to go to Labrador where he spent two and a half years and married an Australian girl nursing in a Grenfell Mission hospital there. From the Labrador years came *True North*, a tale of Mr. and Mrs. Merrick's own travels with trappers up Grand River into the heart of the peninsula; and now *Frost and Fire* which tells the life-stories of the hardy folks who were their friends.

“For five years now, the Merricks and their three children have been farming and writing on a small place in northern Vermont. There's wood to cut and cows to milk, some skiing in winter and some sailing in summer. ‘The “new” part of the house,’ he says, ‘was built with the pay that a soldier sent home from the Civil War. The old part was apparently made from timbers of the Ark. Neither part has ever seen any paint, near as I know, and both look it. But it's a great life.’ [1939]”

“It's a great life” — is how I feel while canoeing in the North each summer and how I relive it while reading Elliott Merrick. He had the courage to live his life as his instincts urged him and to share himself through his writings. In doing so he has given me encouragement and the courage to try and do likewise. For this I will always be grateful.

George Luste



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.

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 (Word-Perfect preferred, but any format is welcome) 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: Summer 1994 *deadline date:* 1 May 1994
Autumn 1994 7 Aug. 1994

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

WCA ADDRESS The postal code has been changed slightly, to M4S 3C6 from M4S 3C0. Please take note! The rest of the address remains the same.

BOOBOO A 1000 times sorry, Herb, for the upside-down picture on page 18 of the previous issue of *Nastawgan*! My mistake, this time. It will surely happen again.

RAILROADED The National Transportation Agency has decided to abandon the Ottawa Valley railway and increase use of the line going through Algonquin Park. This disturbing development will be discussed in more detail in the coming Summer issue.

KAYAKING FOR CANCER On 14 May 1994, WCA member Michael Herman will be leaving Thunder Bay, Ontario, by kayak for Toronto, to raise money for the Canadian Cancer Society. Please help the fight to find a cure by making a small donation. Look for coin boxes in your area marked Kayaking for Cancer, or send a cheque to the Canadian Cancer Society, 1639 Yonge Street, Toronto, M4T 2W6. Thank you for your support. Michael Herman, Bolton, Ontario, phone (905) 857-3311.

DON RIVER PADDLE The Don Watershed Task Force invites you to celebrate Toronto's Don River on Sunday, 15 May 1994. So, bring your canoe, paddles, and life preserver and paddle the Don from Eglinton to Harbourfront. For more information call: Bill King at (416) 223-4646, Tija Luste at (416) 588-7517, and Joanne Paterson at (416) 661-6600, ext. 325.

PARTNERS WANTED

TEMAGAMI 1-10 JULY 1994

A flatwater trip including Obabika Lake and River, Wakima, Temagami, Diamond, and Lady Evelyn lakes and several others. Some moderate portages. Four canoes maximum. Richard Todd at (819) 827-3175 (h) or (613) 990-4760 (w).

GEORGIAN BAY 13-21 AUGUST 1994

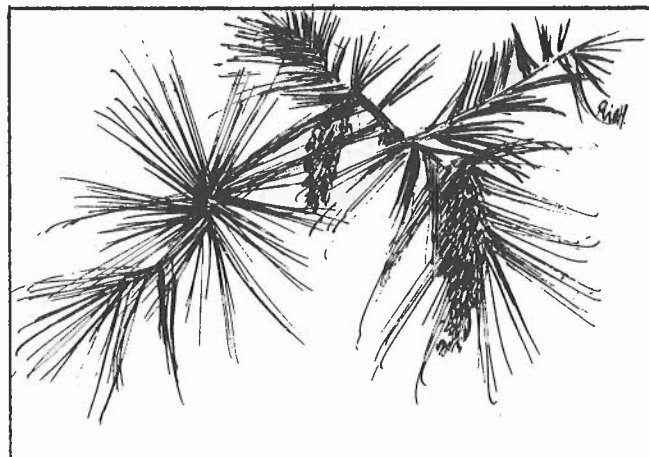
From French River or Key River to Snug Harbour. Weather permitting, we will spend three days exploring the McCoy Islands and the nearby Minks. This will be a conservative trip suitable for paddlers with sound basic skills and reasonable stamina. Richard Todd at (819) 827-3175 (h) or (613) 990-4760 (w).

SEAL RIVER SUMMER 1994

Partners wanted for a trip down the Seal River in northern Manitoba. This will be a wilderness trip of about three weeks duration. Experienced paddlers only, please. Bob Knapp, RR.7, Owen Sound, Ontario N4K 6V5; phone (519) 371-1255.

ANY TRIP JULY 1994

I'm looking for companions to join for a four-week (?) trip possibly in July '94. I'm competent in all aspects and enjoy a variety of paddling activities including whitewater and wildlife, creeks and cooking, lakes, fishing, and portages. I have both solo and tandem craft. Dave Gendler, 1115 Hawthorne, Ypsilanti, MI 48198, USA; phone (313) 482-0690.



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Please keep *Nastawgan's* foreign and non-paddling content. I find that views of distant places and viewpoints of distant peoples tremendously enrich my paddling. Let's take a contextual look at Siberia when we look at the Canadian fur trade, at the North East passage when we look at the North West passage, and at Australian Aboriginal boats when we look at Arctic material culture. One of my favorite Wilderness Canoe Association meetings included slide presentations of an Antarctic mapping expedition and an African truck tour. Neither had anything to do with North America or paddling, but both were fascinating and seemed quite appropriate.

Let's say I'm a spider sitting in the middle of my paddling information web. Canadian rivers form the centre of the web, while South Pacific ethnology, or High Arctic skiing, or CAD boat design are at the edges. When one of these distant threads of the web is touched, the whole structure vibrates, and my sensation of the web underneath me, my understanding of wilderness paddling, changes. When fellow club members travel to remote places, or come across odds and sods which fascinate them, I'd like to learn about it in *Nastawgan*, for even if it is not at the centre of my web, it will affect my awareness and enjoyment of what is at my centre.

If paddling were restricted to Tilley hats, Chestnut canoes, and local rivers, I would quickly loose interest. Have you ever listened to wild water paddlers' conversations? Sometimes it seems that you hear the same story, year after year, with only the location of the river and the size of the hole changed. How many hours can you listen to sprint boat racers passionately discussing VO₂ MAX? Can you do anything but shake your head and set aside a newsletter which spends much of its editorial time defending a Prospector as the answer to everyone's paddling needs? Other organizations have these problems, but not the Wilderness Canoe Association, thanks in a great part to the depth and scope of *Nastawgan*.

Most newsletters and magazines become formulaic over time. Eventually once you have read one, you have read them all. I can't say this about *Nastawgan*. Some articles I may enjoy tremendously, while others I may pass on after scanning the first few lines, but I have never been disappointed by an issue. Narrowing the focus of *Nastawgan* would eliminate articles in which some people would not be interested, but it would also eliminate many articles which bring brilliant sparks of light to the publication. I'm not interested in skiing hills with the rocks and bumps smoothed over, or paddling rivers with the portages widened and levelled, or reading outdoor adventure publications with the contents homogenized and homologated. Let's keep *Nastawgan* as eclectic and interesting as the members of the club which it reflects.

Richard Culpeper



OFF OF THE SHIELD

Just a couple of days from James Bay now. Dropped down off of the Shield and unto the limestone overburden yesterday. Fairly clear demarcation line. Fossils appear in the rock, rapids are less steep, river broadens. We always stop at the first clear evidence of limestone and give thanks there. The river let us enjoy another year of its beauty. I wonder how many more years the river will have before its beauty is surrendered to development interests.

The appearance of the limestone is the signal that the end of the trip is near. Could also tell the end was near when packing up the gear this morning. Light bags. Some not even half full. The buddies claim it's just food that has been converted into calories to paddle the canoe. ERG's of work to physicists; UGH's of work to canoeists.

But the bags were lighter because there was less of other items besides food. Two fishing lures claimed as prizes by the winners in the 8-lb. test category. The match count down by the number of campfires that have cooked our food, dried our clothes, and provided light to our nightly home in the wilderness. A shirt ripped badly by a branch on a portage trail donated to the fire. A deck of pinochle cards one ace short and three cards identifiable from the back side deleted from the nightly campfire activity.

Other gear that should be in the bags is on the missing-in-action list. A poncho knocked out of the boat in a rapid, a pot misplaced three days ago at a lunch stop, and a pocket-knife that disappeared somewhere during yesterday's 25 kilometres of river travel. Wilderness canoe trips have always been tough on gear.

Not much to take back. Going back with what you can carry inside, in your heart. The only item that grew during the trip.

Greg Went

QUEBEC NORTH SHORE SYMPOSIUM

A crowd of more than 700 lovers of the outdoors were again entertained royally at another of the famous George Luste / WCA symposiums, held in Toronto on 28 and 29 January. The following presentations were made:

- ◆ Exploring the North Shore by Canoe Stewart Coffin
- ◆ Revisiting the Moise and the Complete Wilderness
Paddler James West Davidson and John Rugge
- ◆ Wilderness Discovered Elliott Merrick,
read by M.T. Kelly
- ◆ Attiuk (film) René Bonnière and Craig Macdonald
- ◆ North Shore Winter Travels Bob Davis
- ◆ Beluga Whales of the St. Lawrence Robert Michaud
- ◆ Sea-bird Conservation and Education Kathleen Blanchard
- ◆ Innu Legends and Animal Knowledge Daniel Clément
- ◆ Aitnanu — This Is How We Live Serge Jauvin
- ◆ The Magpie River Trip Paul Barsevskis
- ◆ Saint-Jean River Gaston Dionne
- ◆ Natasquan River Stephanie Hunt-Foster
- ◆ Aguanus — The Land of Arthur Guy Doré
- ◆ Energy, Rivers, and Québec Hydro Perihan Sheard
- ◆ The Land, the People, and Quebec Hydro Gilbert Pilot
- ◆ Petit Mécatina River Serge Théoret
- ◆ Solo Canoe Sojourn on the Romaine Pat Lewtas

George Luste's postscript:

— Given the adverse weather conditions on 27 and 28 January, the near perfect turn-out by the presenters and attendees at our annual gathering was a remarkable event in itself. Thank you all for making the effort to be there. I'm sure there must be several interesting stories behind some of those travel efforts.

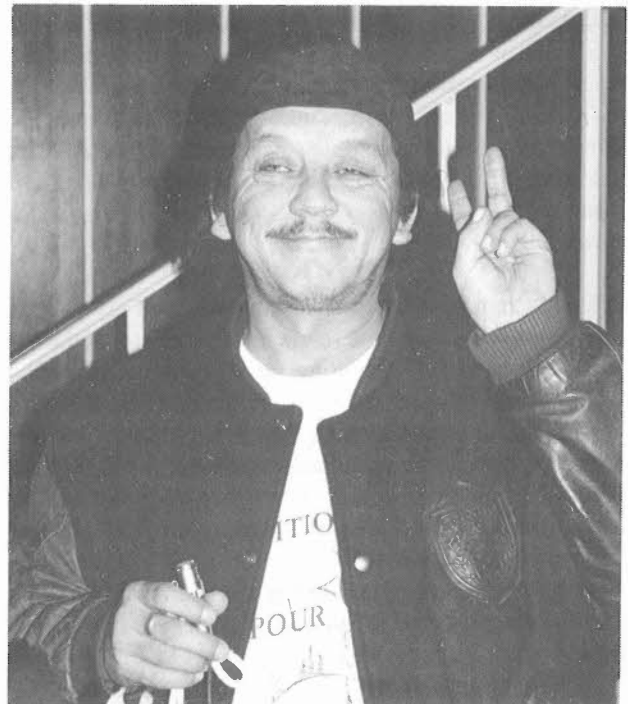
— The very generous donations made by many towards the Innu and Gilbert Pilot's efforts have been turned over to him. Gilbert has sincerely thanked me, but his gratitude is really owed to all the anonymous donors. I too share in both — in your feelings as well as in the gratitude towards all of you for the support.

— I did not know during the symposium that one of our scheduled Saturday evening speakers, Armand Mackenzie, had left a message early Friday on my telephone answering machine in my office. A family emergency had occurred. His mother had to be evacuated for medical purposes from Schefferville to Quebec City and he had to be with her. He expressed his regret for not being able to come to Toronto.

— To mark our tenth year and to try something different at the 1995 event, the presentations next year will not have any geographical constraints. Anything "northern" that seems particularly "worthy" or "interesting" will be considered. Again I welcome all suggestions.

— A special thanks and a big round of applause is due to Cash Belden for his symposium work every year. He, with his computer system, records all the registrations, seat assignments, meal options, payments made, refunds, etc.; he

also provides the annual mailing list, with remarkable accuracy and dedication. Without his help and efforts I might well have given up in frustration by now. Thanks Cash.



Sandy Richardson reports on the SYMPOSIUM MUSIC:

In response to the many enquiries about the music we played during the breaks at the symposium, here is a list of musicians, recordings, and sources for those who wish to track them down:

The Innu music was by the group Kashtin from their *Kashtin* (PPFLCD-2009) and *Innu* (PPFLCD-2011) CDs. These are on their own label and widely available in record stores; they are distributed by Musicor, 2620 Route Transcanadienne, Pointe Claire, Quebec, H9R 1B1.

The Quebecois and Breton music was by the group Ad Vielle Que Pourra from their *New French Folk Music* (GLCD 1099) and *Come What May* (GLCD 1112) CDs. These are on Green Linnet Records, 43 Beaver Brook Road, Danbury, CT 06810, USA. (They should have their third recording out by the time you read this.)

The hammer dulcimer music was by Ken Haslem from his *Step Out of Time* (RDRCD 372) CD. This recording is independently produced and is available from Ken Haslem, P.O. Box 26, Fordwich, Ontario, N0G 1V0.

The two additional songs that rounded out our music selection were *Woman of Labrador* from Figgy Duff's *Weather Out The Storm* CD (A&M Records, 71356-1000-2), and *Le Vingt-cinq de Juillet* from *The Colour of Amber* by Anita Best and Pamela Morgan (Independent ACD 9008, distributed by Denon Canada Inc., 17 Denison Street, Markham, Ontario, L3R 1B5).

All these recordings are available on cassette tape as well as CD. If you have trouble locating any of them, please contact Sandy Richardson in Toronto at (416) 429-3944.

COPPERMINE RIVER 1993

Peter Verbeek

In the summer of 1993, I and three companions canoed the Coppermine River in the Northwest Territories and I want to pass on the information I have gained to other people who want to organize their own self-guided trip. I will be using the military grid reference system to indicate locations, e.g. Obstruction Rapids is located at VH375025.

The water level in the Coppermine system was very high last year. Max Ward (of Wardair fame), when we met him, said he had never seen the water as high. The last of the ice had gone from Point Lake only a few days before we started. Water temperature on Lake Providence and Point Lake was 6 C. On the river it was about 10 C.

Until the last two days, there was always enough wood to cook on a woodfire. One of our group brought along a bug tent, which was also water resistant to a large extent. We used that to cook when it was raining, to eat our meals away from the bugs, and for our daily conferences during which we told stories of previous trips, discussed what happened that day, and what might be in store for us the next couple of days.

I drove to Yellowknife carrying "SP", my solo canoe. The 4900 kilometres from Toronto took me five days, the last one in the rain over a mud road; it was awful!

At the 60th parallel, the Welcoming Centre staff were very pleasant and showed various videos on request. Their small campground is very close to the Hay River and was thick with mosquitoes. However, when dusk finally came there were some bats trying to reduce the number of flying pests; it was fascinating to see them swooping through the air. Another interesting sight was the ferry that carried me across the Mackenzie River. Several swallows had made their nests on the ferry and were going back and forth with it. I wondered how they would recognize their own nest.

Ralph Zaffrann arrived after a couple of days with his Mad River Courier solo canoe. We met at the Fred Henne campground opposite the airport in Yellowknife. This place is quite nice; it has 90 sites, two enclosed kitchen shelters, a shower building with hot showers and flush toilets, a swimming beach, and a four-kilometre hiking trail that shows many of the geological features of the area.

For Doug Niles and Joop Steinfort we had rented a 17' Old Town Tripper from Bathurst Arctic Services in Yellowknife, who also arranged our flight via Air Tindi to Providence Lake. Ralph's Courier fitted perfectly inside the Old Town Tripper.

When Doug and Joop arrived by plane, one of Doug's packs was missing. After some frantic phoning, it was located in Edmonton; the airline brought it on the next plane, later in the evening. We could not have started without it.

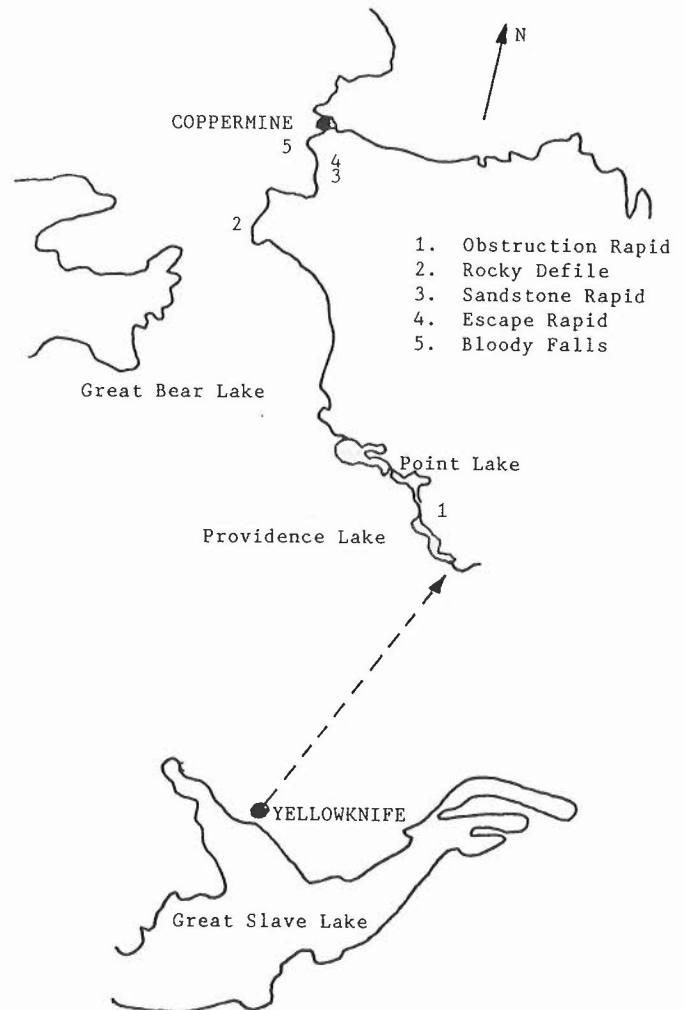
On 17 July we flew in to Providence Lake. As the plane descended, we had an excellent view of the last rapid of the river before the lake (VG549680). It was a mass of white and certainly would have required a portage. On Providence Lake we saw two camps of the Geological Survey which is quite active in the area, apparently in connection with the prospecting for diamonds that is going on there. Several times we saw helicopters flying back and forth. One camp

was at VG490845, the other at V0390960, both locations prime camping spots.

There is a rapid before Obstruction Rapid (VG355987) which is hard to scout because of all the willows along the shore. It is possible to run this rapid if you don't mind hitting some of the many rocks in it. The alternative is a portage of about 500 m on the right along caribou trails. I ran most of Obstruction Rapid partially loaded but took in a lot of water while doing so. The waves were huge.

Ralph lined his canoe most of the way but at the end, where the biggest waves were, the canoe got away. Fortunately, Doug and Joop were able to retrieve it without any loss of gear. The portage around this rapid is 1.5 kilometres long on caribou trails and polished rocks which are extremely slippery when wet. If you want to see this rapid, because John Franklin had some of his problems there, it is a lot easier to fly in to the bay below it and take a walk upstream.

The previous winter, I had written to Jim Peterson who has a fishing camp on Point Lake and asked him to indicate





Above Rocky Defile

on an enclosed map where his camp was. In due course he sent the marked map back. When we were near the spot, we looked for the camp but there was no sign of it. It was in a different location (UH630495), about 10 km away, high up on an esker. Why he indicated it wrong on the maps I don't know. Due to wind speed and direction, we were unable to go to it.

The water levels in Point Lake and Redrock Lake are essentially the same, so the short stretch between the two lakes is nothing but fast, deep water. The same goes for the river between Redrock Lake and Rocknest Lake, except the water is a bit more turbulent. It was on Redrock Lake that we saw the beautiful place that Max Ward has built on a point (PC260660). It is past Rocknest Lake that the river really starts. At this point the river has a current which varies from two to four km/h, depending on the width and the depth of the river.

The first rapid (PC320880) was difficult to scout due to the high water levels that had flooded the shores. You sneak to the left of the rock bar on the right, keeping out of the large standing waves on the left and move into the eddy behind the rock bar. Then further down, you ferry over to the left to avoid a large souse hole on the right. There is a portage trail on the right of about 500 m.

The next rapid (PC305895) has lots of rocks on the right and big waves on the left. There is a portage on both sides. The right portage trail is somewhat shorter (500 m) but the left portage trail is better for landing a canoe and leaving again. At this rapid we met a group of four Fins. Two had tried to run the rapid and had capsized, one of them lost his only pair of boots. At lower water levels, this rapid may be runnable.

The next rapid (PC277895) could be run on the right

almost to the end where there was a short (100 m) carry over a rock ledge on the right. About 2.5 kilometers further on, a long rapid starts which can be run with care. Just beyond it an esker with good campsites comes from the right.

There is fast water after this for some distance. At PD190140 another rapid starts with shallows on the left. The best channel is along the right shore.

At PD180260 a very long and wide rapid starts which seems endless; the left is shallower than the right but there are rocks everywhere. It is best to stay in the middle. Near the end at PD195280, there is a large boulder bar coming out from the right shore; there is a good chute to the left of the boulder bar but it is hard to see from upstream.

The next rapid (PD220327) has a boulder bar on the right at the bottom. We kept to the middle and had no problems. The next rapid starts at PD240370 and continues for several kilometres until past the point where the Fairy Lake River joins. There are rocks everywhere and we kept mostly to the left. However, at lower water levels the right side of the river may be better.

There are a couple of dilapidated cabins at ND812987. People use the walls of one of the cabin to leave their mark. You can see if the HACC group really came that way in 1992 (they did). If you look closely, you'll see our names too.

Past the Big Bend, the river current is rarely less than four km/h. Before you know it you reach Rocky Defile (NE345350). Just prior to Rocky Defile, we met a group from White Wolf, who were rafting down. The "guests" were all senior citizens, but you should have seen them clamber up and down the hills. They were camped on the fan of a tributary that entered the river at that point, and had seen a herd of muskox that day, not far away.

We portaged some packs and scouted the river on the way back, observing the cairn in memory of two canoeists who died in these waters. Just below the cairn there was a nest with hawks and their young who showed little fear. The upper part of the rapid had big waves, 1.2 to 1.5 metres high, and due to the high water levels, the last part had enormous boils on the right which tended to drive you into huge waves on the left. Ralph and I decided to run the upper part, but to portage over a good 50-metre trail along an old river channel for the last part. It was a wild ride! The main portage is on the right and is supposed to be 600 m long, but it sure seemed more than that. It was not bad and, except for the steep hill at the start, had good footing.



Start of Rocky Defile

Before Rocky Defile and also at the end of the portage there are good places to pitch a tent, and the surrounding area is great for hiking.

From this point we started seeing caribou that had begun their southward migration. We camped at the mouth of the Copper Creek (NE510570) high up on the bank where we found a very nice and flat place amongst the trees. From that hidden vantage point we saw several groups of caribou crossing the river. That night, the temperature went down to 0 C, the lowest on the trip.

From this point, there were numerous rapids which could be run, usually on the inside of the curve. This required frequent ferrying from one side to another. The next rapid was Muskox Rapid (NE550742), consisting of two narrowings. At the first one, you should land on the left side and scout on the other side of the point. You may find that you can pass the first constriction to an eddy on the left, just before the second narrowing with big waves. There you can do a short 100-m portage. Past Muskox Rapid, keep to the left of the big island.

A little further, you can see the layers of red sandstone appearing in the cliffs on both sides, announcing the approach of Sandstone Rapids. The

gate to Sandstone Rapids (NE570810) is sometimes called Gibraltar Rapids because of a rock in the river that looks a lot like the rock of Gibraltar. Just before the narrows, there is an island. If water levels are high, go to the left of the island; otherwise, keep to the right. You have to watch the currents here. We kept Gibraltar Rock to our right.

Just past Gibraltar Rock, the map shows an island, but that "island" is now firmly connected to the left shore. Keep to the left shore here and just before Sandstone Canyon go into a big eddy on the left (NE580825). There is a portage on the left of about 800 m and a portage on the right of about 2.5 km. After portaging a few packs, we scouted and then ran, starting in the middle and moving quickly to the right, before ferrying over to the left. From here to Escape Rapids there are numerous rapids that can be run with some scouting, generally keeping to the inside of a river bend. The river here has a fast current.

Escape Rapids (NF645007) must be scouted. There are big waves on the left, which run into big curlers and souse holes on the right. We identified two possible routes through the rapids. If you can get to the left shore, there is a narrow, clear channel next to the left cliff which leads to a V with four or five very large waves. Past those waves on the left, the water is relatively calm right to the end. In the second route you keep the big waves at the start on your left and go to an eddy on the right. Then you have to do a powerful ferry in a short distance to get to the left side in order to avoid all the messy stuff on the right. If you don't like the odds, the portage is on the right and is about 2.5 km long.

The map shows the portage at Bloody Falls (NF687142) on the right. Don't believe it, it's on the left and about 1.2 km long. There are several places here where you can pitch your tent.

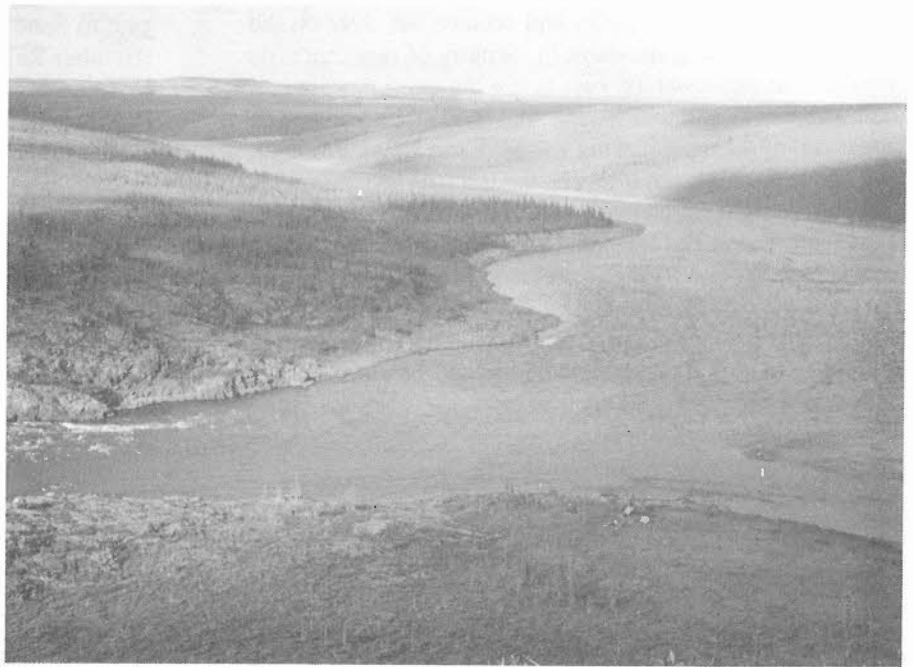
Below Bloody Falls, the current varies depending on the tides. At low tide, there is some current; at high tide there is little if any. There are many sandbanks in this part. You begin seeing cottages along the shore. Then in the distance you can see oil storage tanks and the intake of the water supply. When you paddle around the headland, you see numerous motor boats pulled up on the shore.



End of Rocky Defile

Carry on until you see a swimming beach. No kidding, a swimming beach! If you land there, you are within 100 m of the RCMP office and the First Air cargo office. There is a lodge there too, but usually it is fully booked up. The lodge does have a pay phone, in case you want to let someone know that you have arrived. If you ask about a campground, some people will refer you to a spot some distance out of "town." It has the brackish water of the bay at the front and a stagnant pond behind. I put up my tent at the swimming beach and nobody objected, although around midnight a bunch of teenagers came to swim, amongst other things.

There are two stores, the Northland which opened at 1:00 p.m., and the COOP which opened earlier. Of the snackbar that had been reported in a 1986 *Nastawgan* article, there was no sign. Return of canoes always depends on whether the airline has space available. I had received information that on Thursdays an extra plane arrives that is mostly reserved for cargo. And indeed, so it happened. On Thursday 5 August we were able to get all three canoes nested together and on that plane. In the whole plane there were only 10 seats available, the rest was cargo space. Ralph and I were the only passengers and our equipment, plus two other canoes, was the only cargo. Doug and



Below Rocky Defile

Joop stayed in Coppermine until the next day. That day, a group from Wanapitei had to leave their canoes behind and fly out without them.

Except for the two rainy days at the start, we had only some light rain showers once in a while. If there is any information that I have not covered, send me a letter and I'll gladly furnish it.

WILD WATER TECHNOJUNKIES, BEWARE

When I began running rapids, wood and canvas canoes were the norm. We knew that our boats were delicate, so swimming, or even crunching, simply was not an option. Did this restrict us? Not at all. My old Chestnut has happily danced through the Petawawa's flooded Rollway and surfed the hole at the bottom of the Ottawa's McCoy's. It is three times my age, and almost as heavy, but still going strong. Folks quite often ask me if I'm worried about breaking my boat, and yes, I am, but I'm far more concerned about breaking my body. If I keep my boat out of trouble, I keep myself out of trouble.

Plastic canoes and kayaks, helmets, drysuits and wetsuits, impact-resistant PFDs, knives, throw ropes, whistles: individually, they will make it possible for you to either run more challenging wildwater or to be rescued when you mess up, so they are extremely important; collectively, they might give you a false sense of security. Remember, your body is now the weakest link in the chain.

It used to be that you could not simply purchase a boat, immediately put in to serious wildwater, and hope to return home with more than a bundle of kindling tied together with strips of #10 cotton. It took a few years of experience before you would venture beyond Class III. Times have changed.

My novice kayak students run Class III on their first full day-trip, and Class IV by the end of their first season. The technique is easy enough to learn, and the equipment is superb, but I wonder: do these new paddlers truly understand the forces with which they are playing? I doubt it.

They do not realize how quickly a run can go sour. The horror of dragging or pinning are only abstract constructs. The insidious nature of hypothermia is just something from a book. As an instructor, the hardest part of my job isn't teaching technique, it's conveying the absolute necessity of conservative judgement and teamwork.

When you go out this spring, please keep safety at the front of your mind. Think through the possible ramifications of your actions, and communicate and work closely with others on your paddling team. You will live or die by your decisions, so don't be led down the rock garden path by the durability of your equipment. Remember, a plastic closed canoe has run Niagara Falls successfully, it's just the paddler who didn't survive.

Richard Culpeper

A WEEK ON GEORGIAN BAY

Richard Todd

"Those aren't canoeing waters!" a letter from the Ontario Department of Lands and Forests warned me 20 years ago, when I enquired after some detail or other regarding Georgian Bay. I didn't bother to write back and tell them that I had already paddled the entire Bay from Port Severn to Killarney and beyond, twice in each direction, in an open canoe. I especially didn't tell them that I'd done most of it solo! Back then, Georgian Bay was the almost exclusive preserve of power boats. Kayaking hadn't yet caught on, and even sailing vessels were a rare sight, at least along the northeast shore. As for open canoes, I only saw one other than my own on the open Bay in months of paddling.

In recent years circumstances have allowed me to rekindle my love affair with Georgian Bay, the most ardent flame of my ebbing youth. Much of the rekindling has been done solo, as befits so intimate an enterprise, but in August of 1993 I had the good fortune to travel with two WCA members, Doreen Vella and Lisa Martin.

I had advertised in *Nastawgan* that the trip would be conservative. Doreen and Lisa are strong paddlers, though, and more inclined toward a bit of adventure than otherwise. In fact, Lisa had already done a lot of paddling on the Bay with her family. We ended up venturing several times into conditions more exciting than the advertisement suggested.

We put in at Hartley Bay on the lower French River system, a convenient place to leave a shuttle vehicle. Our ultimate objective was Snug Harbour, north of Parry Sound, where we'd already left another vehicle. Doreen and Lisa paddled Doreen's tandem canoe, while I was master of my skinny Mad River Independence. Since it was past midday by the time we were on the water, we set ourselves the modest goal of a campsite just above Dalles Rapids. There we spent most of the evening getting acquainted and working out some details of the trip.

The next morning we backtracked a couple of kilometres to allow us to descend the Eastern Outlet of the French. A few abandoned cabins, remnants of an old establishment called Rainbow Camp, mark the entrance to Bass

Creek, the exit to the Georgian Bay. Since the creek is never navigable, a hand-operated tramway was built in the early part of the century. Both the camp and tramway have been abandoned more than once, but the latter at least has been rebuilt and is maintained now by the MNR. We spent a few minutes poking around in the old cabins, one of which appears to be used as a stopover by a girls' camp. The portage along the tramway, the only one of the trip, was so easy as to be vaguely sinful.

The first hour or so on the Bay was restful. We paddled through the narrow channels that separate the hundreds of exquisite islands in the vicinity, enjoying emerald waters and dramatic shorelines. But soon we decided to venture more on the outside. It was the one decision of the trip that led us into just a bit more excitement than any of us cared for. As we gradually emerged from the shelter of the Outer Fox Islands, the waves became bigger and bigger. For the most



part they were enjoyable, but just before we reached the next bit of shelter, we experienced two or three waves that were too big to see over. No harm was done, but we all agreed that we would have done better to take the sheltered route behind Major Island. After catching our breath, we poked around looking for another sheltered passage. Instead we found a long, blind inlet. We hadn't wanted to stop for the day just yet, but the place was so lovely, and the campsites so flat, expansive and inviting, that nothing would do but for us to set up there for the night.

One of the things that attracted us to the particular site we chose was a skeletal lean-to kind of structure with a stone foundation. We couldn't think of any practical use we might make of it, but it was the subject of much conversation and a number of photos. That night I slept under the stars and marvelled greatly at them, as I am wont to do when bugs and weather permit. Everyone has their own opinions on the matter, but for me there is no other place on earth so close to the heavens as Georgian Bay.



The excellent weather we'd been having gave way the next day to heavy clouds and an occasional light drizzle. We'd planned on camping on Champlain Island, but failed to find a site that "spoke to our condition" there. We ended up instead at a small and wonderfully sheltered bay just inside Kantos Point, about two kilometres east of the island. When we got up the next day, there was quite a wind blowing major seas into Sandy Bay, the next stretch of our route. Accordingly we declared a day of rest, which we each spent in our own way, reading, exploring, swimming, and loafing.

Then around supper time, the clouds went away and the waves began to diminish. We watched the weather as we ate and decided to see if we couldn't at least get past Sandy Bay before nightfall. Once we were on the water, conditions continued to improve, and we ended up paddling about nine kilometres to McNab Rocks near the mouth of Byng Inlet. Lisa found us another magical campsite, this one on a smooth rock island, frugally adorned with a handful of cedar shrubs and a few grasses. The sun was just setting when we arrived, the sky was incredibly clear, and the Gireaux Island Light blinked comfortingly at us from the south. Best of all, once the moon set the stars were more glorious than ever.

We left early the next morning to avoid a rough crossing to Gireaux Island should the wind come up. All of the light stations on the Great Lakes are automated now and the old-time lightkeepers gone, but some of the living facilities are used to house rescue personnel during the summer. Tying up at their dock, we asked the members of the Gireaux rescue team if we might prepare our breakfast there, and enjoyed conversing with them while we were preparing it. Then we set off on what was to be the longest day of our trip.

Below Gireaux Island the small-craft channel follows an outside route which is suitable for canoes only in gentle weather. Innumerable rocks and shoals make a less exposed route unfeasible for high-speed craft and their propellers. But for a canoeist with a good map, there are hundreds of



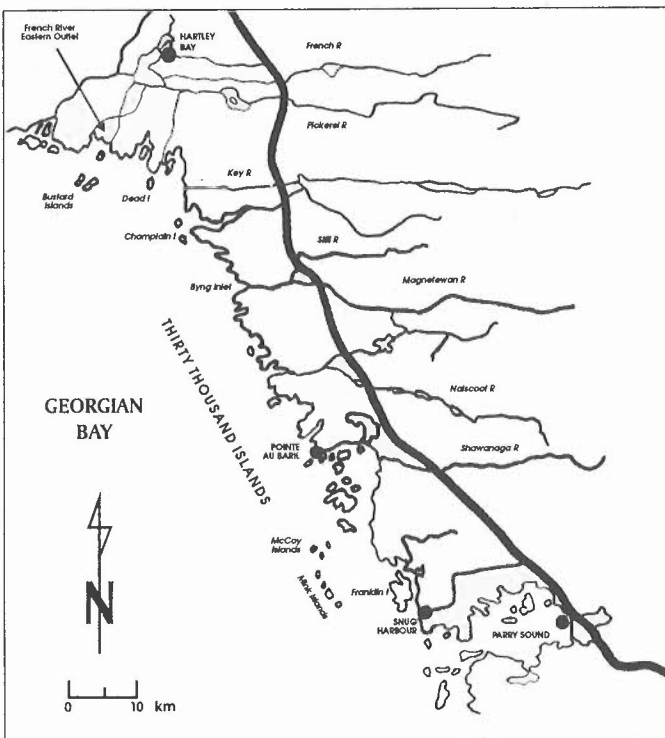
sheltered passages that can make up a route almost all the way to Pointe au Baril. Since the waves were moderate, we opted for a mixture of exposed and sheltered paddling. The calm waters behind Foster Island were especially scenic and soothing. Another detour by way of Alexander Passage and Hangdog Channel was a little less enjoyable because of higher cottage density and a bit of motor boat traffic. Even at that, it was a pretty stretch of country.

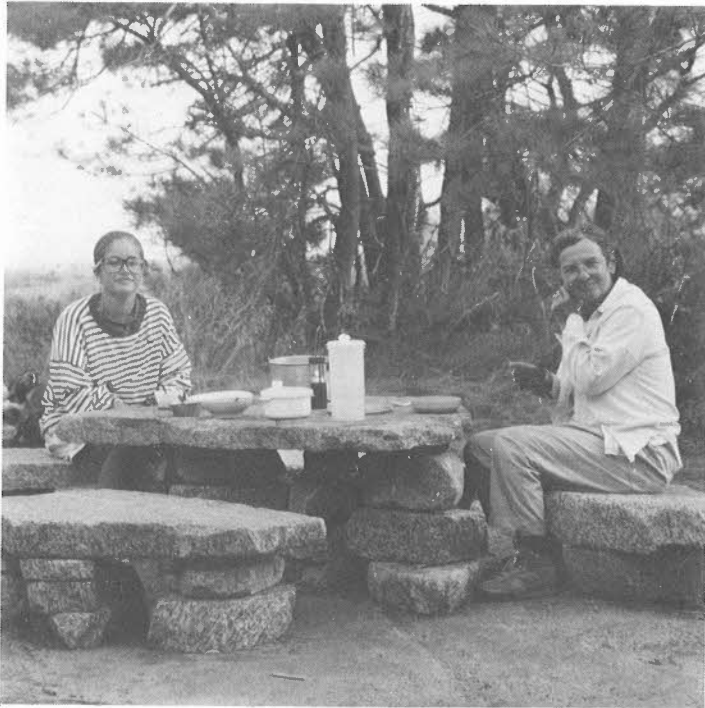
We had begun to talk about reaching the marina at Pointe au Baril before it closed. Visions of soft drinks and ice cream bars had been forming in our heads, and I wanted to make a phone call. We cleared Hangdog Point shortly after 4:30, and could have made it to the marina within an hour, but we were all getting tired and didn't know what time the store closed. So we set about looking for a campsite, which turned out to be a major undertaking in that area. Finally we found one, about a kilometre from Pointe au Baril, and we set up and settled in. The next morning we struck camp and paddled to the marina in just a few minutes.

If Snug Harbour was our ultimate objective, the emotional climax of the trip was a visit to the McCoy Islands. From the marina we paddled almost due south, wending our way through cottaged islands and barren rocks for an hour or so. Then we went outside to enjoy some open water paddling. The waves were very moderate and the paddling relaxing. After lunch we set our course directly for the McCoy's, now just five kilometres away and looming large on the horizon.

I've always thought of the McCoy's and the adjacent Mink Islands as the heart and soul of Georgian Bay, and being there reminded me why. There's a beauty to those isolated islands that is only hinted at on the rest of the Bay, and scarcely dreamt of anywhere else. On top of that, the numerous campsites there are commodious and supremely scenic. Big McCoy Island in particular is blessed with dozens of flat, well-shaded places to set up and be comfortable.

Shortly after our arrival on Big McCoy, I took an exploratory stroll. Among my discoveries was a clearing in which someone had constructed a kitchen and dining area from big slabs of rock. It was easy enough to find on the beach the fractured sheet of rock from which the slabs had been taken,





but I could only wonder at how the table top, which must weigh the better part of a ton, had been transported and put in place. When I returned to our campsite, I offered to make supper that night and asked Doreen and Lisa not to visit that part of the island before we ate. I fixed up as fancy a meal as I could manage, even providing candle light. True, the sun was still high in the sky and my candle lantern isn't exactly fine crystal, but the atmosphere was nice and elegant all the same.

The special feeling of that supper was particularly appropriate to the occasion. Not only had we achieved our trip's goal, but it turned out to be our last evening together. When we got up the next day, the weather was deteriorating visibly, and the weather radio warned that a major storm system was approaching. We reluctantly decided to forgo exploring the McCoys and head for Franklin Island, where we would camp for our last night. Yet there was something decidedly anticlimactic about the paddle to Franklin; once there, we would only be an hour's paddle from the shuttle car we'd left at Snug Harbour. At one point we had to land to sit out the first cell of the storm as it blew over us, and it was then that we decided to cut the trip a day and a half short and head directly for Snug.

Sometimes the finishing touch on the best of trips can be a decision to head home at the optimum time. I've been wondering ever since then whether the time really was right, or whether I sold my companions short. The storm eventually developed into something to reckon with, and I was glad to be in my car rather than in a tent for the hours that it lasted. But the next day the weather was fine and I kept wondering.

Even if the trip did come to an untimely end, it was wonderful while it lasted. Seven days on the vastness of Georgian Bay surrounded by the splendour of its countless thousands of islands is a priceless joy. I'll be doing a similar trip this August, making minor changes to the route and emphasizing the things we all liked best. I can only hope that I'll be as fortunate in my companions this year as I was last.

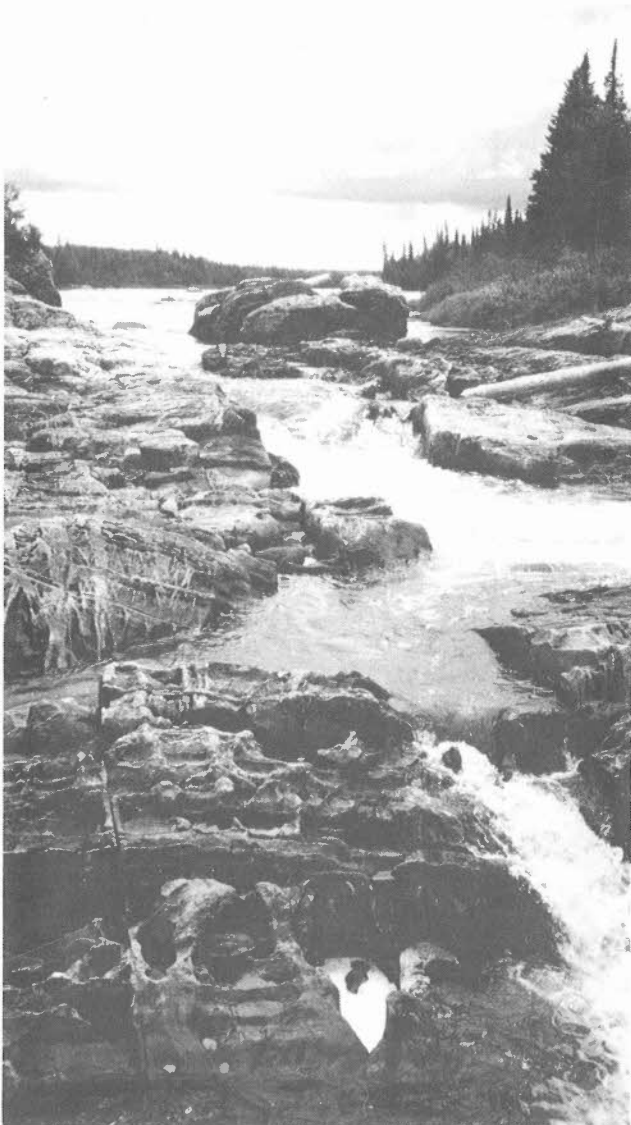
(Photos by Doreen Vella and Richard Todd)



MISSINAIBI

Missinaibi, valley of pictured waters,
 sacred place of the First Nation,
 historic highway for exploration and commerce,
 popular destination of modern-day voyagers.

The journey of mind, soul, and body
 runs concomitant to the life-blood flow
 of a river system, rushing from spring-fed trickle
 to great expanse of lake, through mighty thundering falls,
 to the greatest of all gathering of waters.

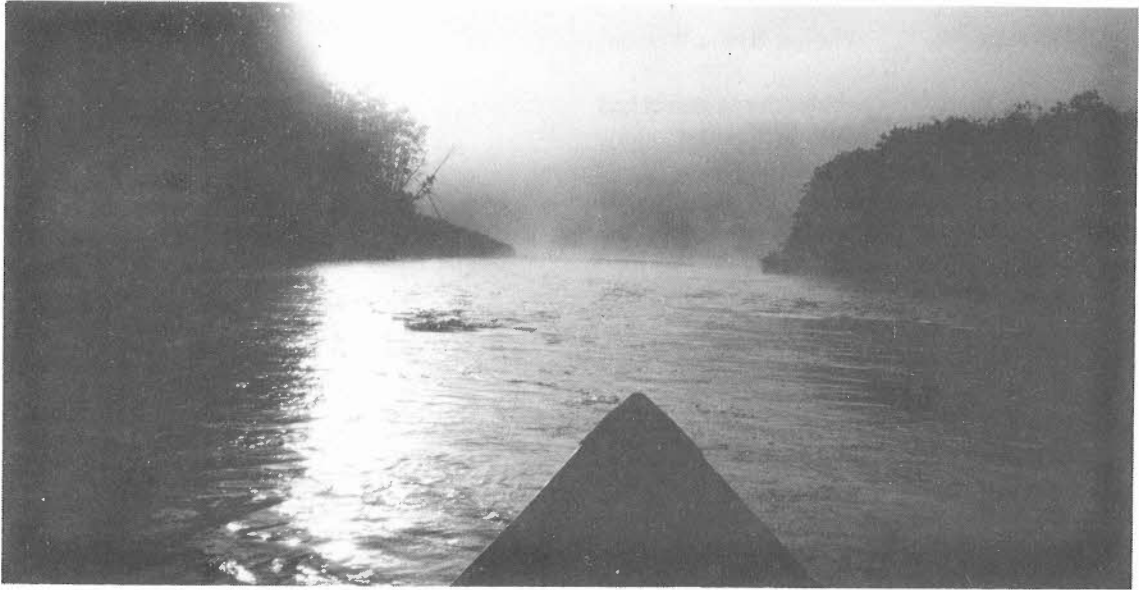


Photos by Mark van Stemp

I set the course, aligning bow and stern,
 sometimes parallel to the current,
 sometimes resorting to subtle or strong angulation
 to correct my position relative to the ongoing flow.
 Secure in the unbroken rhythm of reach, dip, and pull,
 following the path of the paddle
 in the deep and dark channel,
 attuned to the earth's downward tilt
 through the ancient Pre-Cambrian shield,
 I relinquish control to greater forces,
 knowing that I and my canoe are mere flotsam
 and the destination is predestined.

Vision is linear here, drawn to fine directional focus
 by the parameters of tree-lined bank
 or jagged canyon wall reaching to the sky;
 nevertheless, acutely aware of distant horizon
 as well as approaching obstacle.
 Ears are straining to hear the future,
 assimilating the timbre and nuance of pitch,
 minutely measuring the decibels of a rapid's song.
 Olfactories sense the transition
 from mixed poplars and evergreens
 to the pungent boreal beauty of spruce and tamarack.
 Taste and touch have come alive to texture and contrast
 in unimaginable acuity.
 I have become a perceptual, instinctual being.

Time is measured here by movement of the sun
 and the ability of muscle and sinew
 to maintain the pace of paddle and portage.
 Nourishment and immersion in the life-giving waters
 refresh the body and lift the flagging spirit,
 creating a new person to carry on the northward progress
 stroke by stroke.
 Dusk falls with streaks of red and purple in the west,
 sleep becoming the mystical vale through which
 evening colors blend into morning light.



Life is simpler here,
stripped of any facade to impress our companions,
reduced to the elemental core
of our most intimate, vulnerable selves.
Food and shelter become our only material concerns
and well-planned provision
frees us to move beyond the physical realm.
There is a sense of wholeness in the experience;
to be one with the river
is to know the integration of body and spirit,
transcendental harmony of ancient quest.

Safety and good health are priceless treasures
to travellers on the river.
We rely on good weather conditions, skill, and each other
in a way that builds trust and deep bonds of friendship.
I am reminded by the mangled blue canoe
pulled up on the rocks below
that there is little margin for error.
Even so, I am drawn to wilderness, fragile and remote,
where inward renewal awaits.



We are touched by metamorphosis,
from the unpretentious upper reaches
to the power and magnitude of the lower river,
as the Missinaibi, Mattagami, Abitibi, and Moose rivers
become one before the final plunge to the Bay.
For an infinitesimally short time,
we are privileged to be a part
of something immeasurably great,
unspeakably beautiful.

Martha J. Shaak
27 July 1993

ONE WAY DOWN THE MAD RIVER

Article: Boris Swidersky

Photos: Byron Wesson

In its upper reaches, the Mad River babbles over a gravel bed that makes it one of the best trout streams in Simcoe County. It is easy to find places to cross this wide stream with dry feet in ordinary rubber boots. The babbling becomes an angry roar during spring run-off or after a heavy rain as the Mad tears at its banks.

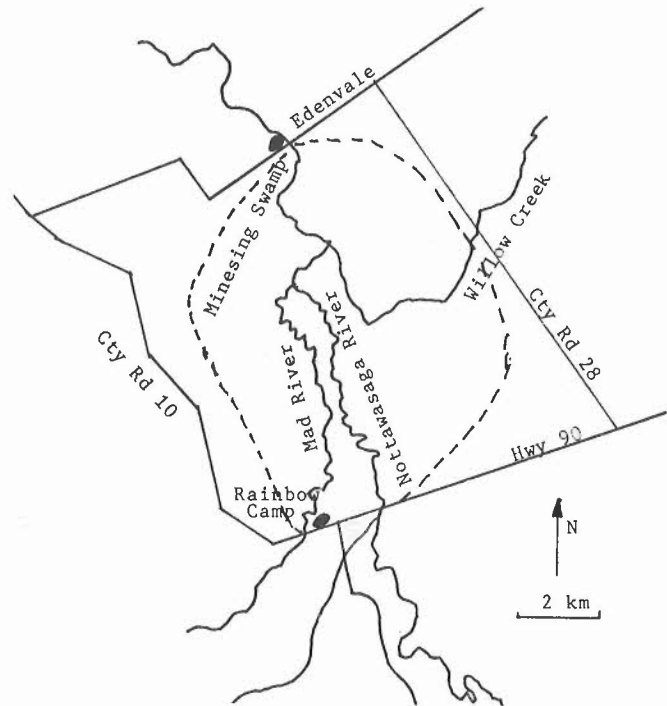
Farther downstream, near Angus, just before the Mad enters the 15,000-acre Minesing Swamp, its character changes and the river becomes a narrower stream with high mud banks.

The question I was asking last year was: can you take a canoe down the Mad to the Nottawasaga in the summer?

Representatives of the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority and the Ministry of Natural Resources said it would not be possible because of low water and numerous log jams. However, Bob O'Brien, owner of Rainbow Campground, Angus, said some of his campers had travelled down the Mad and had a wonderful trip.

There are two established canoe routes through Minesing Swamp. Over the years I have made several trips down the Nottawasaga River through the swamp. Late last spring Byron Wesson, an NVCA naturalist and swamp tour guide, took me down the second water route through the swamp, Willow Creek, famous as a British army route during the War of 1812.

Low water was supposed to be a problem on Willow Creek in late spring and summer. Byron and I went down the creek in early June. The water was low enough to cause some anxiety. A trip scheduled for the next day by the Barrie Canoe Club was cancelled because it was considered there was not enough water. But the Willow trip is another story.



I did not have much trouble convincing Byron that it was worth exploring a possible third canoe route through the swamp.

On a sunny morning in early August last year, we headed down the Mad. Delightful is a word that could be used to describe the start of the trip as we launched the canoe in Rainbow Campground. The Mad winds pleasantly through softwood deciduous forest. It was like a gentle paddle through a park.



After about 20 minutes of paddling, we came to our first log jam. It was not a big one and we managed to slide the canoe over the logs without a portage but not before Byron was soaked to the waist doing a log rolling act. The man is amazingly fast on his feet, but not quite fast enough.

To our surprise, log jams did not prove to be a major problem. We ran into only two or three small ones farther along the river. It was the giant willows that almost did us in.

Well into the swamp, the banks of the Mad are lined with massive willows. As the trees become too large for their roots to hold them up in the wet swamp muck and the river undermines the banks, these giants lean toward the river until their branches rest on the river bottom, creating a barricade.

At first we were able to dodge the branches. When this became impossible, we resorted to saw and axe to cut a way through the maze. Finally we had to portage.

This was the midst of Minesing Swamp. There was no walking out of here. Although it was early August and there had been little rain, there was little dry land. We were so far from any roads that no vehicles could be heard. The only sounds were the songs of numerous birds that nest in the swamp. Carrying the canoe around fallen willows and through nine-foot-high swamp grass makes one feel like an ant. Overhead, great blue herons would fly by, several at a time, like pterodactyls. It is a different world in Minesing. It is almost enough to make one wonder if dinosaurs really are extinct.

Early in the trip, we had startled a great horned owl who took refuge in a large willow that was playing host to a convention of crows. They quickly and noisily sent him on his way. We saw two more great horned owls later in the day.

Narrower than upstream in the Avening and Glencairn areas to the west, the Mad carries a greater volume of water in the swamp as it is joined by small tributaries. As we continued, it narrowed yet again so the canoe was brushing against the overhanging swamp grass on both sides of the



river. If the river became too narrow to navigate, there was no dry land at this point for portaging.

I tested the river's depth with my paddle and found no bottom. Wading was out of the question. If we ran out of river, we would have to go back if that was possible.

We pressed on and to our relief, the river gradually widened. In the distance, we could see a messy tree-top stick-nest of a great blue heron. Minesing Swamp has the largest great blue heron population of any swamp in Ontario. The colony near the Mad River has about 150 nests.

For some time we had been noticing areas of trampled swamp grass that had a distinct odor of barnyard manure. I thought it must be deer but Byron said he had never known deer to stay in areas that wet. As we rounded a bend in the river we discovered the identity of the grass trampers when a large flock of Canada geese made a noisy exit.

There was a great variety of water fowl in the area including mallards and blue-winged teal. Every time we rounded a bend, they took wing, startling us.

It took us seven hours to fight our way down the Mad to the Nottawasaga and a further two hours to paddle and portage down the Nottawasaga to the takeout point at Edenvale. Tracks on the banks of the Mad at some of the portages, paint scrapes, and fairly recent cuts on branches showed we were not the only madmen to try the route, arduous as it is.

Navigating the Mad River is a trip to be approached with caution. At low water, the river course is obvious, but levels rise fast after a rain, even in summer. During spring run-off much of Minesing is under water and the channel disappears. It is not unusual for careless fishermen or canoeists to get lost and spend a cold night in the swamp.

With some work, the canoe route down the Mad could be the most interesting paddling trip through Minesing Swamp. If you should try it in the meantime, you are not likely to see anyone along the way.

You can launch at the bridge west of Angus where the Mad crosses Simcoe Road 10. If you want an early start, call Bob O'Brien at Rainbow Developments, Angus (705) 424-5405. Although Rainbow Campground is a seasonal trailer park, he will probably let you set up your tent in the field beside the launch spot in the campground.

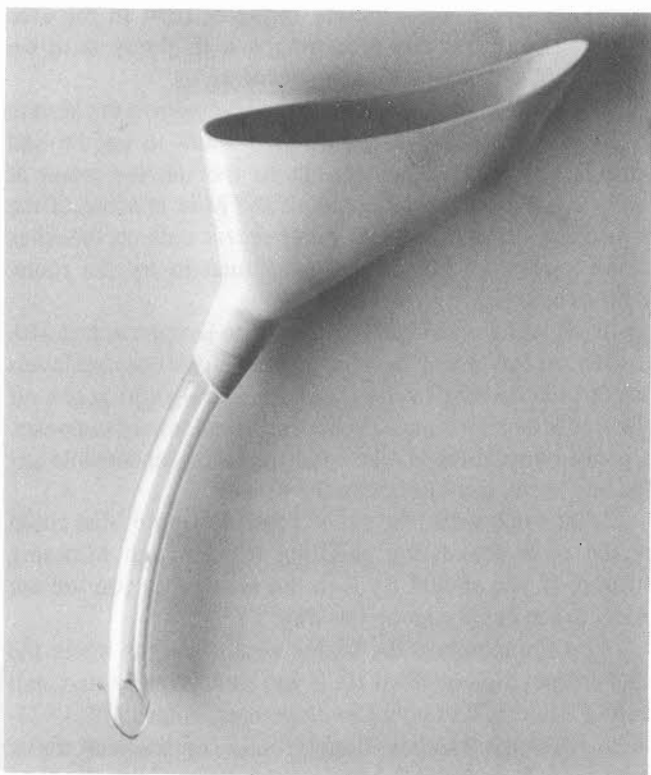


THE PEE OF PADDLING

It was gratifying to see the enthusiastic responses to the request for tips re. methods female paddlers could use to solve 'relieve' problems in difficult situations (see 'Pee Bottle' on page 24 of the previous issue of *Nastawgan*). Here are the wise words received from both sides of the gender fence.

Shirley Williams writes: My female equivalent of Toni Harting's and Herb Pohl's solution to the wet/snow/mosquitoes at night is a marvellous little gadget which is called the "Freshette." The current price is US\$14.95 (including shipping, but Canadians should add tax) and it is available from Sani-Fem Co., P.O. Box 4117, Downey, CA 90241, USA. This, together with a half-litre wide-mouth Nalgene bottle (the limits of my fluid storage system are smaller than Toni's), in an appropriate yellow plastic bag, comprises my Sweet Pea. The Freshette, which looks like a squashed funnel, is worth every penny (Brits will get the pun). I expect one could use an ordinary funnel but with a lot less comfort. I've had this one for years, and my only Canoeing Fear is of losing it.

Peter Verbeek reports that the Freshette is also available from a camping supplies company called Campmor, 810 Route 17 North, P.O. Box 997-P, Paramus, NJ 07653/0997, USA. This company furthermore supplies several other nifty personal hygiene products.



The Freshette

Ria Harting has recently bought and tested the Freshette and appears to be pleased with it. She has a few points of advice regarding this instrument: use it a few times at home before setting out on a canoe trip, so you have some experience when applying it in the dark engulfed by a cloud of bugs; cleaning it with water and soap works fine; aim down-wind (learn from men, they have done this a whole lot longer than us women).

How to shit in the woods is a curious but very important little book that in Chapter 5 (For women only: how not to pee in your boots) describes, among other useful information, the Freshette and another funnel-type gadget called Le Funelle. HTSITW has been reviewed on page 25 of the Autumn 1992 issue of *Nastawgan*.

Willy Wicha has her own ingenious method of dealing with the problem: I carry my Peak 1 stove in a black felt bag and the whole unit fits into an aluminum cover with a lid fitted neatly over the top (it is manufactured by Coleman). The aluminum "pot" measures five inches square and is quite a sturdy and *stable* little gadget. It is ideal for 'the girls' while camping in inclement or buggy weather. It has served me well in the past while camping in Temagami, Algonquin, and the Kawarthas. The aluminum gadget is meant for storage protection of my cookstove and as an extra cooking pot. Needless to say I *do not* use it as the 'soup pot' but carry my cook kit along. However, it does suffice for those needy moments and also to boil dishwater, so it does get a thorough daily cleaning. Not a shabby idea, eh?

Pamela Morse gives us some interesting information on the long-time use of a 'pee bottle' by her late husband, the famous pioneering canoeist Eric Morse: We hit on the same idea years ago, and I was always astonished that more people hadn't thought of it. I agree that using a plastic bag is living dangerously and that the Nalgene bottle works well. We used to call it the Pee-Can, and the equipment list usually had it as Pecan.

Henning Harmuth writes: Many years ago when paddling on Great Slave Lake I had to come up with a solution for my wife since there was no possibility of making a landfall every two hours or so. The solution was a large sponge that we carried to soak up small amounts of water in the canoe. It soaks up other liquids too, wherever they originate, and works fine as long as there is plenty of water to wash your hands. The method does not adapt well for use in a tent.

Deborah Percival presents the following illuminating information: I was relieved to read Herb Pohl's description of the pee bag and Toni Harting's description of the pee bottle in the last *Nastawgan* as I had been worried that I was the only person who resorted to such nighttime gymnastics. I'm glad to see *Nastawgan* bringing the subject out of the closet, but since the woman's perspective is still lacking I'll confess to my trials and tribulations and hope that it might save other women from having to learn the hard way.

The good news is that the Ziploc bag is just as easy for the female to fill. This I discovered the night my husband and I foolishly thought it was just the tall grasses surrounding our tent that was leading to the high insect content of the air. But after pulling up stakes, carrying the tent (with contents still inside) to a non-grassy (but adequately boulder-strewn) site and throwing down the tent, we were again forced inside by the little blighters. We spent an entertaining thirty minutes gently crushing the tent-bound insects. That done we were determined to stay inside; the two boulders that created a domed region under each sleeping bag were no deterrent: we could just curl around them. But that wee hour call of nature almost got us out of the door. Ziplocs to the rescue!

The bad news is that the Ziploc bag has the same tendency to leak for both sexes. I never use one now before doing the blow-up, seal, and squeeze test. But even then, there's no real guarantee. Like the morning in the Hudson Bay lowlands when I awoke to find the underside of my sleeping pad was just a little damp.... How do you explain to you companions the necessity of washing your sleeping pad and ground sheet in the morning? Did they really believe I was trying to get off some mildew?

The good news is there is a female version of the pee bottle, the pee pot. I find that the five-pound peanut butter tubs with tight-fitting lids and handles work exceptionally well. They have the decided advantage of being free standing, and they are also easy to rinse out. Large margarine tubs are also adequate and either can be used to store the precious T.P. during the day.

Speaking of margarine tubs, I also find them handy in the cook kit. They make nice, light-weight bowls when you have too many people along to just eat out of the pot. Even



better, the lids keep the bugs out while the pudding is setting, the coleslaw is reconstituting, etc. By collecting a variety of sizes you'll be able to find ones which will nest neatly with your billies.

One final note: don't confuse your margarine tubs.

John Winters closes the contributions to solutions of this pressing problem by telling us about the ways they go about it on the high seas:

Superfluous fluids and Their Effective Elimination Under Unstable and Inhospitable Conditions.

Canoeists are not the only group who have disposal problems at sea. Small boat sailors long ago solved this problem for both sexes. The solution? A bailer usually made from a bleach bottle or a windshield washer fluid bottle. These are large enough to reduce the need for accuracy (very important in a heavy sea and small sailboat or, for that matter a small canoe) and their size makes them suitable for females. I once had a sailing crew member who contoured the bottle to suit her anatomy and wept bitterly when the thing floated away after a capsized.



An important feature is that the bottle is large enough to protect one's modesty. One must, of course make sure the top of the bailer bottle is screwed on firmly. It was a favorite joke among sailors to loosen the top when a competitor wasn't looking. The results were most disconcerting especially if the device were used during a light air race on a hot muggy day. My wife, who considers exposing her tushy to hordes of mosquitoes an unnecessary hardship, takes it into the tent at night. After use she opens the tent flap a smidgen and gives it a hard flush into the bush. She has not yet flushed it into a neighboring tent and considers it one of the few civilized aspects of camping.

I commend the editor's use of a bottle which hints at either a very stable canoe or exceptional accuracy. (Never had to use it in a boat, yet, but thanks for the compliment, anyway. TH)

NEAR MISS ON THE SPANISH

Article: Peter B. Irvine

Photos: Angela C. Irvine
and Vijay Verma

We all learn from our mistakes. The mark of true wisdom, however, is to learn from the experiences of others. Perhaps you can learn from ours.

After a long car ride from Pittsburgh, Penna., the eight of us with four canoes and lots of gear got on the train in Sudbury. A pleasant ride on the "bud car" from Sudbury to Pogamasing, an unscheduled stop on the railway map showing nothing but the river and the track right next to it, marked the beginning of our late-June-1989 trip down the Spanish River. We had to ask the conductor to stop at Pogamasing as the train does not do so without a special request. On the way up we saw a beautiful waterfall, several lakes, and a deer bounding into the woods.

On the train we met an older couple who were going back to the river after canoeing the Spanish the previous year, when they cracked their fiberglass canoe in a rapid they called The Wall. They were travelling alone, and when the accident occurred they lost everything and had to hike back to the train track for help. Unfortunately, the train only runs three times per week, and so they had to wait some time before being picked up. After an experience like that, it was incredible to us that they had decided to return. We had an ominous feeling about our own trip. What would happen when we encountered The Wall? Were we in over our heads?

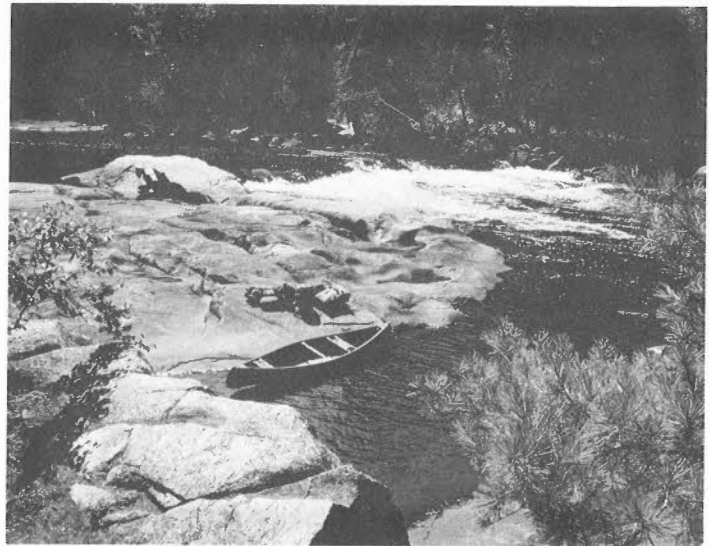
The most difficult rapids on the Spanish River are contained in the Graveyard set, a series of seven rapids (by our count), some of which may be run after scouting, and some of which must be portaged. Our advance information on these rapids was gleaned from the book *Canoeing Ontario's Rivers* by Ron Reid and Janet Grand, which proved quite reliable.

We determined to tackle the entire Graveyard set in one day, camping at the Elbow the night before, running as many of the rapids as possible, portaging the rest, and stopping that evening in the old lumber camp at the base of the last rapid. As it turned out, we were able to accomplish our objective, but not without a major mishap.

We got on the river at 11 in the morning in good spirits, ready for a long day of paddling and portaging. We passed two small islands and found the first portage without difficulty. Walking down the trail, we could see that the first part of the rapid was runnable. Then we reached a point in the trail where someone had tied an old glove to a sapling. This marked a second entrance to the trail from the river and the beginning of more formidable rapids. We agreed not to run this second set.

Running the first set would save us a 350-metre portage, but we would be in trouble if we were to miss the portage marked by that old glove on the sapling. We walked back to get the others and made fairly quick work of the rapid and then the first portage. We took pictures of each other in front of the rapid at the foot of the next 150-metres-long portage on the right.

We shortly came to the subsequent portage on the left, scouted the rapid, and pronounced it unrunnable. The trail was rough over many rocks. We passed a campsite right over a beautiful fall, and one of us said that we should have camped there the night before. She liked the idea of camping next to the fall. The portage was 100 metres long, and we were all tired at the end. As we were resting, our friend turned to me and said, "Peter, I just want you to know that I'm having a good time." After all the complaints about the voracious black flies in camp the day before, and the threats never to return to Canada because of those pesky little creatures, that remark did me a lot of good.



The Wall

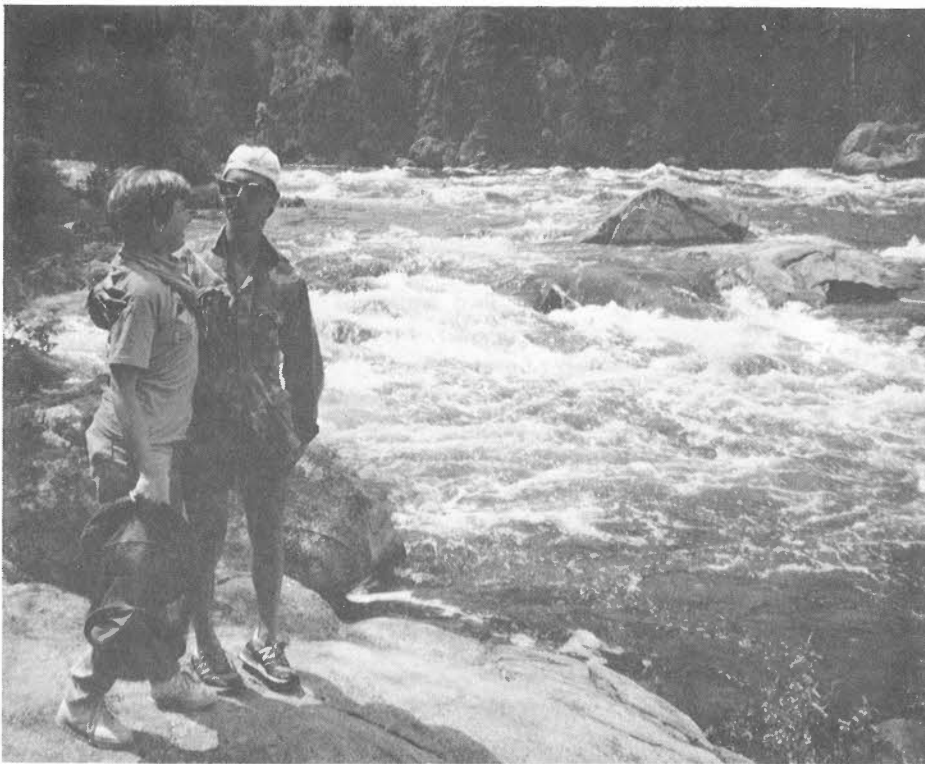
Photo by Toni Harting

The next rapid, known as The Wall, was a disaster. Characterized by our guide book as having a liftover on the right, the rapid's nature was somewhat unclear to us. We did not recall whether a liftover referred to a rapid suitable for lining or merely a short portage. In retrospect, it turned out to be the latter. It may help to note here that when we find a portage marked on a map in Canada, it indicates to us that the rapid is absolutely unrunnable, no ifs, ands, or buts. The problem was, there were several questionable rapids marked "check before running," and it was tricky keeping the classifications straight.

In any case, two of our party got way ahead of us. As we approached the rapid, we saw that their canoe had capsized and their gear was floating all over the river below the rapid.

We spotted the short portage trail on the right, pulled over, and jumped out to go after the people in the capsized canoe. We ran to the end of the portage, but there was no sign of our friends.

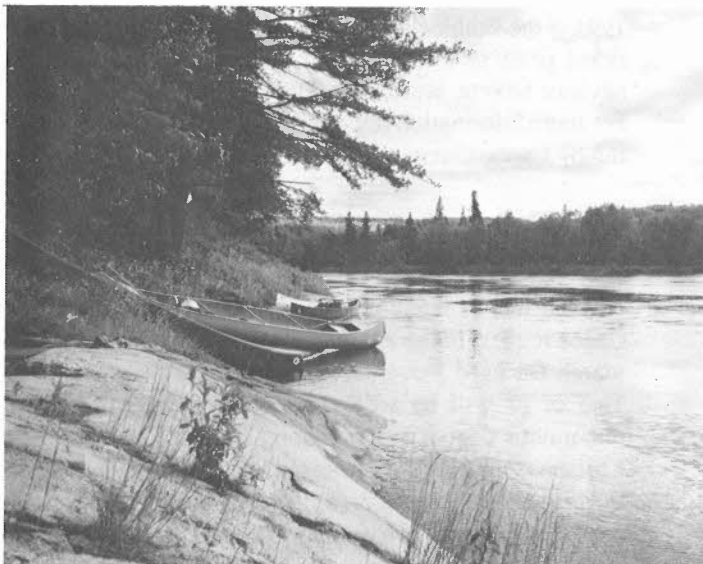
My partner shouted we unload our canoe and try to find them. We called for someone to bring a throw rope, then unloaded our canoe and double-carried it down the path. Our friend with the throw rope was nowhere to be seen. We ran back for the paddles, returned to the canoe, and paddled downriver.



It seemed an interminable time before we reached the floating gear. The canoe was on the right-hand side of the river. The bow had been bent at right angles to the stern. In desperation, we shouted to our missing companions. To our great relief, one of them answered that they had both survived, miraculously unhurt. They were hidden from our view on the left side of the river. One had been washing-machined in a hydraulic below the rapid and was badly shaken. We quickly paddled across the river to pick them up.

My female partner got out of our canoe to stay with the other woman, and the second survivor and I began picking up the floating debris, paddling across the river to the damaged canoe. It looked like a total loss. We were worried about getting all of us out of there with one less canoe.

We dragged the boat over to the shore and pulled it out of the water. The canoe being made of aluminum, we were

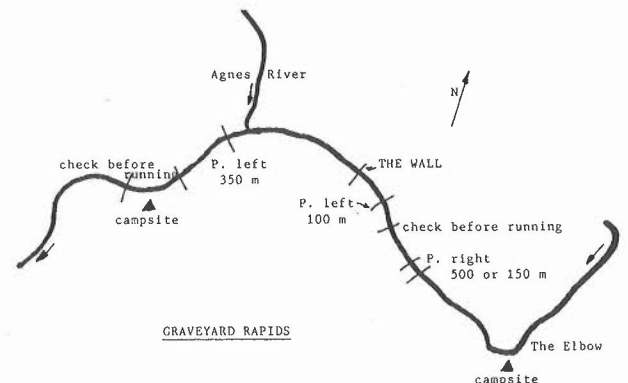


able to bend it back straight. One of the thwarts was broken, but the canoe appeared salvageable. We needed the hatchet-sized maul (which we brought for splitting wood and pounding tent pegs) to complete the job, so we went back up to the portage to fetch it. Our friend with the throw rope was waiting for us. He had run down the right bank through thick underbrush after our lost companions. When he had found they were all right, he returned to the portage.

Two of our group took our canoe to go down and fix the damaged one. The rest of us began portaging the gear and remaining canoes.

After a long time, the shaken couple came back with my partner. One person was still with the broken canoe. Three of us paddled down to get him and the repaired canoe back to the portage. They had done an admirable job repairing a puncture in the hull, caused by the broken thwart, with duct tape and replacing the thwart with a strong tree branch.

After this three-hour ordeal, we sat down to eat lunch. No one was hungry, but we ate anyway.



There was some discussion of staying there for the night, but we decided that we should push on and do the last portage in the Graveyard set. This portage was 350 metres long, on the left side of the river; it was muddy, swampy, and buggy. We did it fast, barely pausing for breath. We then ran two rapids before finding a campsite. Some Canadians we had seen earlier were kind enough to invite us to share their camp, which had two sites, and we gratefully accepted.

Over dinner that night, the post-mortem discussion revealed that our companions who had gotten so far ahead had tried to scout The Wall from the river, but by the time they got close enough to get a look, it was too late to turn back. They had missed the take-out. The canoe hit a wall of water, the force of which catapulted the bowperson back over the stern and bent the canoe at an angle. To our great surprise we discovered that the canoe had not been wrapped around a rock, as we supposed, but rather had been wrecked by the sheer force of the water in The Wall's hydraulic.



The lesson we learned from this terrible experience, in which, after all, the fates were with us, is this: do not overestimate your abilities. Even an expert is capable of making a mistake, and wilderness rivers can be very unforgiving. *If in doubt, scout, and do it from the shore.*

Our trip on the Spanish was a delightful one in many ways, but were we to attempt it again, there are two things we would do differently. One, we would go in August rather than late June, as the black flies were horrendous when we were there. Two, we might break up the Graveyard set into two days, instead of trying to run it all in one. Haste is the mother of grave errors.

Finally, we recommend that anyone running the Spanish River have confidence running Class III whitewater, as there is much to challenge even the experienced canoeist. The most essential ingredient for any canoe trip, however, is sound judgment, and that is hard-won, often as not, through many mistakes and learning experiences.

WORLD WILDLIFE FUND REPORT CARD

Ontario is off to a slow start with its endangered spaces initiative. Last fall, the province received only a B on the 1993 national report card issued by the World Wildlife Fund, who would like to see 12% of Canada's lands and waters set aside. Ontario has 6% of its area protected, and falls quite short once the massive Polar Bear Provincial Park is discounted. However, there have also been some major accomplishments, including designation of parts of Toronto's Rouge Valley as the world's largest urban park, which has helped move Ontario from its 1992 grade of C+.

Much of the improvement in Ontario can be attributed to governmental recognition of wilderness protection needs and a willingness to plan for these needs. It remains to be seen how effective will be the implementation of wilderness protection programs such as the endangered spaces initiative.

Richard Culpeper



IF YOU NEED AN EXCUSE

On New Year's Eve, a local windsurfer declared: "Ah'm stayin' at home, man. Like, ya know, in the basement. With ma helmet on. It's too dangerous out there, man!" Now we have learned from The Environmental News that "Outdoor air in our cities may be bad, but it is estimated that air in most homes is 70 times more toxic." If you are reading this at home, for your health's sake, put aside your newsletter and go outside for a ski or paddle immediately. I know I am.

Richard Culpeper

CANOE EXPO 1994

Canoe EXPO is Canoe Ontario's annual canoe/kayak consumer show which features displays, seminars, and demonstrations for the most experienced paddler to the cottager who just likes to paddle around in the summer.

EXPO-goers can expect to see the Etobicoke Olympium filled with over 80 exhibitors retailing items from outdoor wear and paddling accessories to the paddle craft themselves. They will also see actual demonstrations like: "how to roll a kayak", or "how to bear-proof a campsite", or even something as practical as "how do I canoe with children safely?"

The Etobicoke Olympium provides Canoe EXPO with the use of two pools, the product demonstration pool and the Olympic-sized pool (50m). Canoe Ontario has made Canoe Expo an educational exhibition, not just a consumer show with some fun thrown in for spectators. There is always a strong instructional, informational, and environmental aspect as well.

The show runs from Friday, 8 April to Sunday, 10 April 1994 at the Etobicoke Olympium in Etobicoke, Ontario. The ticket price is \$9.00 at the door, but weekend discounts, advance tickets, senior and family passes are also available. For more information regarding EXPO, or any other program run by Canoe Ontario, please call (416) 495 4180.

PAK-CANOES

I would like to thank you very much for printing our Pak-Canoe request in the Autumn 1993 issue of *Nastawgan*. Our search for used Pak-Canoes has yielded two boats, so far. Two of us will be wilderness testing one of these on a one-month canoe trip in Papua New Guinea during our Christmas break. We managed to scam some free plane tickets to Sidney and it is (relatively) cheap to get from there to PNG. It should be a really great trip.

Georg Jander

WHAT CAN WE LEARN?

Bear attack in Algonquin Park

Most, if not all, readers of *THE RAVEN* (Algonquin Park's news bulletin) are aware of the tragic bear attack that took place on October 11, 1991, on Bates' Island in Lake Opongo. Such an incident is deeply disturbing and the Park has been flooded with calls from people all across North America, quite understandably seeking an explanation of what went wrong and some indication of what might be done to prevent a recurrence.

In this issue of *THE RAVEN* we will try to think things through and to find answers to these very important questions.

First, some facts. The attack occurred when Mr. Raymond Jakubauskas, 32 years old, and Carola Frehe, aged 48, were setting up camp not long after arriving on the island. We believe Ms. Frehe was attacked first, and that Mr. Jakubauskas then tried to drive off the bear with an oar. (Long bruises were later discovered on the bear and the oar was found broken at the scene.) Both victims were killed by a single blow to the head.

Over the following five days the bear dragged the bodies away in a series of stages, feeding on them from time to time and covering them with leaves at each stopping place. By the time the campers were reported missing and our search revealed what happened, the remains were 375 feet away from the campsite in the fourth and last pile of leaves. The bear was destroyed not far away.

(A number of people have asked us why the bear had to be killed. The concern of these questioners was inspired no doubt, by the assumption that human victims had somehow intruded on the bear's space, provoked it, or otherwise brought on the attack. This kind of scenario occurs frequently in Grizzly Bear encounters but, so far as we know, Black Bears that kill people are apparently almost always motivated by predation and we believe that is the most likely explanation for what happened in the Bates' Island incident.

In a way, however, it doesn't really matter. Whatever the exact sequence of events leading up to this attack, the bear ended up feeding on its victims. Everything we know about bears indicates that they have excellent memories for a wide range of foods and their sources. We know that this bear was "rewarded" for his innovative behavior and there is no reason to think he would forget what he had just learned -- that humans are edible -- and easy to kill. That is why there was no question about our having to destroy this animal.)

In seeking to understand why the attack occurred, most people want to know if the bear was rabid or had anything else wrong with it that might explain its highly abnormal behavior. The simple answer is "no." A detailed examination by Ministry of Natural Resources and University of Guelph wildlife pathologists and veterinarians revealed no disease, no brain abnormality, no injury, nor indeed any other condition that might predispose a bear to attack humans. The bear was an apparently healthy eight-year-old male weighing 308 pounds.

A second major question to be asked concerns the be-

havior of the people. Could it be that they did something, whether deliberately or inadvertently, that could have attracted the bear or provoked it into attacking? Once again the answer appears to be "no." It is true that the campers had started to prepare a meal and it is therefore possible that the bear was attracted by food, but there are problems with this idea. For one thing, a tray of ground beef was still untouched, even five days later when we came on the scene. Besides, every day in bear country all over North America, tens of thousands of campers do basically the same thing as these people did (start getting supper ready) but that doesn't get them attacked by bears as a result. Something beyond the presence of food is necessary to account for this bear's behavior.

Many of our callers, including half a dozen doctors, were aware that menstruation was implicated as a possible factor in two Grizzly Bear attacks out west, and they wanted to make sure that this possibility was checked out in the Bates' Island case as well. In fact, menstruation has not played a role in any of the Black Bear attacks known to us. Also, a study recently published in the *Journal of Wildlife Management* casts serious doubt on the idea that menstrual odors elicit any reaction at all from Black Bears.

Where does this leave us? If the bear was not diseased and the people did not do anything out of the ordinary to bring on the attack, how then can we explain what happened? It is here that an examination of other Black Bear attacks can be helpful. In his book, *"Bear Attacks,"* Dr. Stephen Herrero of the University of Calgary documented a total of 26 deaths in North America from 1900 to 1983 resulting from Black Bear attacks. These include the three boys who died on 13 May 1978 in Algonquin's only other bear attack, at Lone Creek on the far east side of the Park. No two attacks were the same in all respects but Dr. Herrera was able to detect some general trends. The attacks took place throughout the non-denning season, (almost always during the day), and more often involved male bears. Only one case involved a female possibly trying to protect her cubs. Whenever the offending bear was killed and examined it was found to be free of rabies or any other factor that might predispose it towards aggressive behavior.

Most important of all, however, is Herrero's conclusion that in the great majority of cases the Black Bear was deliberately preying on its victims. It seems that Black Bears, unlike Grizzlies, rarely ever kill people just because the people have intruded into their space or might be a threat to their cubs. Rather, when a Black Bear kills a person it seems to be because the bear wants to eat that person. Another strong trend revealed by analysis of the extremely rare fatal attacks on people by Black Bears is that very few of the bears were already used to getting human food or garbage. In other words, a bear that kills people is almost never a "campground" or "garbage" bear that has become progressively less and less afraid of people and then "decided to go one step further," as it were, and kill somebody. On the contrary,

almost all of the "killer" Black Bears were truly wild bears living in remote areas and they had little or no prior contact with humans.

(It may be useful for readers trying to come to grips with the Bates' Island attack to recognize that in animals, just as in humans, there exists a tremendous range of physical and mental attributes. When we see an Albert Einstein or a Wayne Gretzky among humans, we don't ask what is 'wrong' with them; we just accept the existence of the occasional truly exceptional individual. Similarly the Bates' Island Black Bear may simply have been a truly exceptional, off-the-end-of-the-scale bear.)

The picture of a wild, so-called "predaceous" bear may come the closest to describing the Bates' Island bear. Certainly it was a bear that was unknown to us. It had not been handled or relocated before (in which case it would have had ear tags). Nor had there been any bear trouble on Opeongo in the summer of 1991, and almost none in the Park as a whole, which is quite understandable since last year was very good for a wide variety of bear foods. We don't need to tell anybody how frightening it is to think that occasionally there are Black Bears that prey on human beings, but we probably do need to point out some important implications. Many people want to know what they should do to avoid an attack like the one on Bates' Island. In asking such questions, they are unconsciously assuming that there is some "right way" of camping or handling food that, if followed, would eliminate or significantly reduce the possibility of an attack. The problem is that, faced with a predaceous bear, you probably can't do anything to prevent an attack. After all, if the bear is after you, how is better handling of your food going to help? Or, to take the particular case of the Bates' Island animal, if it truly was one of those mercifully rare "predaceous" Black Bears, there is probably nothing Mr. Jakubauskas and Ms. Frehe could have done to prevent the attack. They may simply have been in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Of course, whether or not this view is entirely correct, the question it all boils down to in most people's minds is: "Should I be afraid to go camping in Algonquin Park or anywhere else there are Black Bears?" To answer this ques-

tion we have to consider the odds of encountering a predaceous bear and, clearly, those odds are almost nil. Even here in Algonquin where we have now had two fatal bear attacks, the fact remains that there were over 8,000,000 non-fatal visits to the Park between the 1978 bear attack and the one in the fall of 1991. Surely we cannot let our lives be dominated by fear of remotely improbable flukes. Or, if we really do decide to never go camping again because of the supposed danger from bears then, to be consistent, we should also stay indoors on cloudy days. After all, we are much more likely to get hit by lightning (or killed by a bee sting for that matter) than we are to be attacked by a bear. And needless to say, we should never cross the street or get into a car.

There is one more thing that you should know about. There is a spray whose active ingredient, capsaicin, is derived from cayenne pepper. Although it is non-lethal and causes no lasting ill effects, when delivered to an animal's eyes it causes severe and almost instantaneous pain. High-strength versions with a powerful spray propellant have been credited with saving four lives in Canada, Japan, and the U.S. Because of wind conditions and other circumstances of an attack, of course, having a can of capsaicin spray could never be considered an absolute guarantee of safety. More to the point, your chances of ever having to use it against a predaceous Black Bear are next to zero because your chances of meeting such an animal are next to zero. Nevertheless, the product does exist, is legal, and you have the right to know about it -- if only for your peace of mind.

We hope the above has been of some help to you in sorting out how you should view the Bates' Island bear attack and its implications for your own safety. None of this, of course, will do anything for Carola Frehe and Raymond Jakubauskas. They died in the saddest and most unfortunate of circumstances. We did not know them and for this we are sorry. We only hope that their deaths will help us to understand a little better the beautiful but sometimes cruel world in which we live.

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



Photo by Bill King

guidelines for wca trips

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

canoe safety rules

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

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



difficult - use own judgment

SIGNALS



danger - do not run



all clear - with caution

WCA TRIPS MAY HAVE AN ELEMENT OF DANGER.

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

trip ratings

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

WHITewater TRIPS

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

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

FLATwater TRIPS

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

WCA TRIPS

The skill level of some of our paddlers is increasing and we find ourselves on the rivers immediately after the spring thaw begins. Trip organizers and participants need to be aware that water and weather conditions vary greatly from year to year and a river that was a challenge last season may be a greater challenge when paddled this year.

Safe canoeing requires sound judgement and an appreciation of the risks involved. As we attempt more difficult trips, the potential for serious accidents increases. Even close to the city, flood-level waters have surprised experienced paddlers. Proper clothing, safety and rescue equipment are essential.

Highly specialized whitewater playboats may successfully negotiate water unsafe for normal boats. The decision to run or not run a rapid is personal and no one should be ashamed of portaging water beyond the level of their canoe or their skill.

We draw your attention to the safety rules published in this issue of *Nastawgan*. Enjoy the spring paddling.

The WCA Outings Program is one of the central activities of our organization. A successful tripping season depends on three main elements, the three W's of canoeing:

— Water (not too much or too little)

— Weather (always a head wind)

— Willingness of volunteers to organize and plan trips and to invite other members to join them. All of our trips are organized by volunteers and this is as good a time as any to thank them for their efforts and to encourage others to join them in planning for the summer. We need more trip organizers so if you have suggestions for new trips, or would like to organize your own, contact one of the members of the Outings Committee:

Bill Ness (416) 321-3005

Ken Coburn (416) 767-5845

Mike Jones (905) 270-3256

You will notice that my own name is not listed; I have decided to step down from the committee. Again, my thanks to all the organizers who have given their time and energy to the program, and a special thank-you to Bill, Mike, and Ken, who have linked all the information together and coordinated the trip listings.

Roger Harris

Remember that WCA trips may have an element of danger and that the ultimate responsibility for your safety is your own.

13 March ELORA GORGE

Steve Bernet, (519) 837-8774, book before 6 March.

Survivors from the previous weekend (see *Nastawgan* winter '93) are invited to take their friends on a similarly cold trip down the Elora Gorge. Wet or dry suits and fully outfitted boats essential. If the water levels are unsuitable the trip may be changed to the Credit. Limit five canoes.

26 March OAKVILLE CREEK

Mike Jones, (905) 270-3256, book before 20 March.

Narrow and winding, this is a run that requires accurate manoeuvring on swiftly moving water. Put-in and take-out will be determined by prevailing conditions. This can be a long day paddling and has been known to be a cold and wet trip. Limit five canoes or kayaks. C1s accepted.

27 March LOWER CREDIT RIVER

Duncan Taylor, (416) 368-9748(H), (416) 327-1400(W), book before 20 March.

The traditional Lower Credit run, from Streetsville to the golf course. Cold, fast-moving water. Experienced paddlers in properly equipped boats. Wet suits required. Limit six canoes.

27 March UPPER CREDIT

Paul and Diane Hamilton, (905) 877-8778, book before 18 March.

An early run from Ingleside to Glen Williams. The river will be fast and cold with some small rapids. Paddlers should be prepared for cold, wet conditions and wear wet suits. Limit five canoes.

2 April UPPER SALMON RIVER

Steve Bernet, (519) 837-8774, book before 27 March.

This trip could provide the whole spring canoeing experience. If the lake is frozen the start is a hike/wade. Experienced whitewater paddlers in fully outfitted boats must be prepared for the unexpected. Limit six boats.

2 April SAUGEEN RIVER

Jon Kirby, (905) 276-1718, book before 6 April.

If the weather and river are co-operative, a trip from Durham down the Saugeen River towards Hanover offers gentle moving water followed by rapids. Depending on water levels, Class 1 to Class 3 rapids may be present. Experienced moving-water paddlers familiar with negotiating sweepers and avoiding rocks are welcome. Suitably outfitted boats and wet or dry suits required. Helmets recommended. Limit six canoes.

10 April ELORA GORGE

Mike Jones, (905) 270-3256, book before 3 April.

Elora Gorge can reach extremely high levels in the spring. This is a trip for advanced whitewater canoeists with properly equipped boats and wet or dry suits. Assuming that there is water, it will be fast and extremely cold. There are few exit spots once the trip is begun and the narrower sections have very large waves and holes. Limit four canoes.

10 April GRAND RIVER

Dave Sharp, (519) 621-5599, book before 4 April.

A gentle flatwater trip starting at Cambridge and, depending on water levels, ending at Paris or Brantford. An excellent trip for novice moving-water paddlers. Limit six canoes.

16-17 April SALMON AND MOIRA RIVERS

Glenn Spence, (613) 475-4176, book before 9 April.

Just north of Belleville these two rivers offer exciting whitewater and fine scenery. The Salmon is the more gentle but has some ledges to practise your skills. The Moira has larger rapids possibly up to Class 3. This is one of Southern Ontario's finest spring rivers. Intermediate paddlers welcome. Limit six canoes.

17 April UPPER AND LOWER BLACK RIVER

Del Dako (416) 421-2108 or Steve Lukasko, book before 6 April.

From Cooper to Highway 7. This river offers strenuous paddling through a series of demanding rapids. The rapids will be scouted from our boats as much as possible. Participants must have fully outfitted boats and be comfortable paddling Class 3 rapids. Limit five canoes with advanced paddlers.

**23-24 April TORONTO SEWER SURFING**

John Winters, (705) 382-2057, book any time.

On last year's Grenadier Pond Loop a participant accidentally fell through a manhole and discovered some of the finest (white) water in southern Ontario. Huge diagonal standing waves at the intersection of the Bathurst and Bloor sewers promise exciting surfing and reliable spring runoffs (occasionally augmented by overflows of untreated waste) promise a fast run. We will try to do the Bathurst, Yonge, Humber, and Don Valley Sewers, keeping accurate notes on conditions for publication in a future *Nastawgan*. This is an exploratory trip suitable for advanced paddlers with appropriate subterranean paddling gear and a complete series of international health shots.

24 April BLACK RIVER, WASHAGO

Bill King, (416) 223-4646, book before 16 April.

A gentle moving stream flowing through spring woodlands. A few small riffles and one, or possibly two, portages suitable for novices and anyone else who would enjoy some pleasant spring canoeing. Limit six canoes.

24 April MISSISSAGUA RIVER

Bill Ness, (416) 321-3005, book before 17 April.

This will be a day trip from Mississagua Lake to Buckhorn Lake. There are a number of Grade 1-3 rapids and some falls that require portaging. Suitable for confident intermediate paddlers. Limit five canoes.

1 May MOIRA RIVER

Bill Ness, (416) 321-3005, book before 24 April.

By early May the level on the Moira is usually just right for experienced, enthusiastic novices who want to begin paddling intermediate-level rivers. There are some excellent play spots at this level to challenge the newcomer and delight the veteran whitewater paddler. Limit six canoes.

1 May GIBSON RIVER — GEORGIAN BAY LOOP

Tony Bird, (416) 466-0172, book before 26 April.

Starting early in the morning at Gibson Lake, we will canoe down the Gibson River into Georgian Bay and return via McCrae Lake and Crooked Bay. A day trip for those who enjoy a long paddle (approximately 10 hours). Suitable for fit novices. Limit four canoes.

1 May WILLOW CREEK

Mike Jones, (905) 270-3256, book before 24 April.

Novice paddlers are welcome to participate in this scenic trip on a gentle river. Limit five canoes.

6,7,8 May WEST BRANCH SUSQUEHANNA RIVER

Daniel Jenny, (412) 443-1913, book now.

Only a five-hour drive from Toronto, the Susquehanna is the most remote river in Pennsylvania. This trip offers a very different canoeing experience from Ontario rivers and is well worth a visit. The Susquehanna runs through mountainous countryside with beautiful valleys and waterfalls down cliffs at the edge of the river. There is no significant whitewater and the trip is suitable for novices. Limit five canoes.

14-15 May UPPER MAGNETAWAN

Tim Gill, (416) 447-2063, book before 7 May.

An exciting whitewater weekend on the Magnetawan, from Ahmic Lake to Wahwashkesh Lake. The upper section contains a series of Grade 2-3 rapids and some falls that must be portaged. Cold water equipment and floatation advantageous. Fit intermediate whitewater paddlers should enjoy the challenge of this historic waterway. Limit five canoes.

15 May ELORA GORGE

Dave Sharp, (519) 621-5599, book before 8 May.

The "Gorge" can have high water levels and the temperature will still be cold. Properly equipped, experienced whitewater paddlers are welcome to try their skills at Elora. Limit five canoes.

21-23 May RIVER AUX SABLES RENDEZVOUS

Richard Culpeper, (705) 671-3343, (705) 674-5873, fax/modem (705) 671-2581.

Victoria Day Weekend 1994. The WCA, in conjunction with other paddling clubs and organizations, has been trying to protect the River Aux Sables, near Massey, from small hydro development. If you enjoy serious wild water (III-IV) and lovely scenery, you should attend. Canyon of the Aux Sables trips will be guided daily.

21-23 May BARRON RIVER

Pat and Bryan Buttigieg, (416) 831-3554, book before 7 May.

Starting at Achray, the eastern boundary of Algonquin Park. The river is flat and follows a steep-walled, narrow valley with many scenic spots, including the Barron Canyon. Six medium-length portages (less than 700 metres) will be part of the trip. We will end at Squirrel Rapid, where the Barron River leaves the Park. This trip is exploratory for the organizers. Novice paddlers are especially welcome. Limit four boats.

21-23 May MAGNETAWAN RIVER

Paul and Diane Hamilton, (905) 877 8778, book before 11 May.

A whitewater spring loop from Harris Lake, upstream to just above Mountain Chute, running as many of the rapids as we can back to Highway 69. Suitable for good intermediate paddlers; wet suits advised for rapids. Limit five canoes.

28 May BASIC FLATWATER WORKSHOP

Doug Ashton, (519) 654-0336, book before 15 May.

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

28-29 May HENVEY INLET

John Winters, (705) 382-2057, book before 10 April.

Same trip as last year, but without the ice. We will do a weekend circumnavigation of Henvey Island. A good trip for intermediate paddlers who don't mind cold weather and can handle open water paddling on Georgian Bay. Plans subject to conditions. Limit four canoes.

18-19 June WHITEWATER COURSE

Hugh Valliant, (416) 699-3464 (evenings), book before 28 May. Assisted by Anmarie Forsyth, Jim Morris, and Debbie Sutton.

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, a real steak, and real potatoes using real charcoal. A deposit of \$19 is required to secure your spot on the roster.

Open to experienced flatwater, novice, or beginning whitewater paddlers. Preference will be given to those who need it. Friends are more than welcome to the Saturday night's festivities. Limit eight canoes.

25-27 June WHITEWATER PLAY WEEKEND

Bill Ness, (416) 321-3005, book before 17 June.

Palmer Rapids on the Madawaska at this time of year is one of the best spots in Southern Ontario for good novice to intermediate whitewater paddlers who want to sharpen their skills. The rapids provide some good challenges but are very safe. Limit eight canoes.

1-3 July FRENCH RIVER OR LOWER MADAWASKA RIVER

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

This is a continuation of the Palmer Rapids weekend; an excellent opportunity to practise and further refine and hone your whitewater skills in more challenging rapids. The location of the course will depend upon summer water levels. Suitable for novice or beginning whitewater paddlers. Preference will be given to those who attended the Palmer Rapids weekend. Limit 10 canoes.

Early August RIVER RESCUE CLINIC

Bill Ness, (416) 321-3005, Roger and Sandy Harris, Ken Coburn, Mike Jones.

This clinic covers a variety of rescue techniques and is sponsored by the WCA Outings Committee. Rope-handling skills, rescue equipment, boat recovery, and rescue organization will be discussed and demonstrated. Bring all your rescue equipment. Advance reading of the book *River Rescue* by Slim Ray is recommended. All paddlers welcome.



CANOE TOONS
PAUL MASON

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.

NORTHERN BOOKS Used, scarce, and select new books on northern, arctica, Canadiana, wilderness, and canoeing topics. Write for new free catalog #10, Northern Books, Box 211, Station P, Toronto, ON, M5S 2S7, or call (416) 531-8873 and leave a message.

CANOE FOR SALE Beautiful 14 ft. Heritage with cane seats, carrying thwart, weighs only 38 pounds but is a tough tripper. \$1100. Sandra Ross, (705) 385-2162.

CANOE AND TENT FOR SALE Blue Hole Sunburst whitewater solo playboat fitted with floatation and kneeling thwart, excellent condition, \$1000. Also four season Eureka Traverse tent with vestibule, unused, \$300. Bill Scott, (613) 834-8887.

KNAPSACK FOR SALE Brand-new JANSPORT "carry-on" knapsack, \$75 (retail about \$200); Howard Sayles, (416) 921-5321).

WINTER CAMPING AND SLEDDING EQUIPMENT

Get your winter camping and sledding equipment from a recognized expert in this demanding field. Hand-pulled sleds and toboggans; dog sleds and toboggans; traditional wooden toboggans and sleds; tent stoves; stove pipe thimble; reflector oven; irons; tent poles; clothing; snowshoe moccasins; snowshoe route map; tents; tent flies. For a free 1994 price list contact: Craig Macdonald, RR.1, Dwight, Ontario, POH 1H0; phone (705) 635-3416 (evenings).

CLASSIC SOLO CANOE COURSES Four hours of instruction by Becky Mason in the Gatineau Park, 20 minutes from Ottawa. Ratio 1 to 3 per class; all equipment is provided. Becky Mason, Box 126, RR.1, Chelsea, Quebec, J0X 1N0; phone (819) 827-4159.

OUTER PLACES All-Season Wilderness Adventures. Winter skiing/camping packages, whitewater canoe instruction courses, and completely outfitted customized wilderness canoe trips anywhere in Ontario and Quebec from two days to several weeks. For more information, contact Dale Miner at OUTER PLACES, 15 Cheston Road, Toronto, M4S 2X4; phone (416) 489-2067.

SNOW SHOES Form for making Ojibway-style snow shoes, available free to anyone planning to make good use of them. David Young, Don Mills, Ontario, (416) 444-2440.

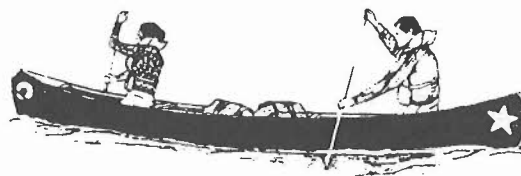
BAFFIN TRAVERSE '94 is a 2750-km, 6-month expedition carried out in sequence by sled and ski, by kayak, and on foot to travel the length of Canada's largest island. Fund raising

depends primarily on the sales of a limited edition print of the best image taken by noted arctic photographer John Dunn during the expedition. In 1990 a similar issue of 300 prints in support of the Ellesmere traverse (see *Canadian Geogr.*, October 1990, and *Nastawgan*, Winter 1992) was fully subscribed. For \$150 the subscriber will receive a set of John's arctic greeting cards and a copy of the popular "Iceberg cave" poster. After the expedition the subscriber will receive a signed and numbered lithograph print, double matted, glassed, and metal framed. To subscribe or for further info, contact Graeme Magor, RR 1, Markdale, Ontario N0C 1H0; phone (519) 986-3579.

WILDERNESS EXPERIENCE is offering canoe trips, a wilderness retreat, and an ORCA instructor certification course. Trips are 8 days in length and each one has a specific theme including: Yoga in Killarney in May, Native culture and history (Temagami) in August, a wilderness retreat at a remote location on the Magnetawan River, and fall colors in Algonquin Park. Group size is small. We take time to enjoy the beautiful setting through which we travel. For more information and a brochure (printed on 100% tree-free paper) contact Reuben at 44 Park Hill Road, Toronto, M6C 3N1; phone (416) 782-4589.

PADDLESPOUT BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES FOR SALE Several outfitting and adventure travel opportunities are available: *Quetico*, adventure travel outfitting business overlooking French Lake 3 km from park entrance; *Temagami*, outfitting business and outdoor education centre includes land, lodge and buildings, and extensive equipment on prime Temagami waterfront; *Algonquin Park*, outfitter for winter adventure dogsledding trips, located on the Madawaska river at the eastern entrance to the park; *Toronto waterfront*, Canada's largest canoe school located on prime Toronto waterfront with attractive lease, has been in operation for over 15 years and counts over 40,000 graduates. For an appointment to discuss these and other paddlesport business opportunities call Mark Boekelman at (416) 620-4256 h) or (416) 236-2666 (w).

MOUNTAIN EQUIPMENT CO-OP is holding elections for the Board of Directors. WCA member Stuart Weinstein M.B.A. would appreciate getting your vote because of the need for equal representation across Canada. It's your Co-op, get involved, vote! For more information contact Stuart in Toronto at (416) 256-4869.



"THE VOICE OF PADDLING IN CANADA"

1 year \$12 (4 issues)* 2 years \$24 (8 issues)*

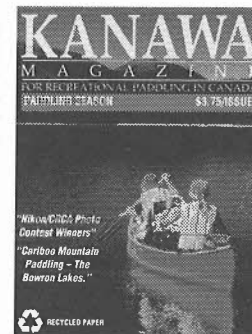
Subscribe to "KANAWA Magazine" and learn about the world's number one canoeing and kayaking destination—Canada. Canada's only magazine on canoeing, kayaking and sea kayaking provides paddling enthusiasts with a wide variety of trip destinations, environmental issues, campfire recipes, paddling events to attend, boat repair information, book reviews, heritage features and an extensive mail order section. "KANAWA" is full colour and printed quarterly. When you support "KANAWA Magazine" you are supporting the preservation of Canada's canoeable wilderness in cooperation with the Canadian Recreational Canoeing Association. The word "KANAWA" is trilingual for canoe.

JOIN TODAY!

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ Prov/Terr/State _____
 Postal Code _____ Tel () _____

*Make all cheques/money orders payable to "CRCA"

CRCA/Kanawa 1029 Hyde Park Rd., Ste. 5, Hyde Park, Ontario, Canada N0M 1Z0
 Tel (519) 473-2109 Fax (519) 473-6360



Special WCA Offer

* New subscribers only

Where it is ...



... in this issue

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Wilderness Discovered | 12. Wild Water Technojunkies Beware | 24. If You Need an Excuse |
| 6. News Briefs | 13. A Week on Georgian Bay | 24. Canoe Expo 1994 |
| 6. Partners Wanted | 16. Missinaibi | 24. Pak-Canoes |
| 7. Letter to the Editor | 18. One Way Down the Mad River | 25. What Can We Learn? |
| 7. Off Of the Shield | 20. The Pee of Paddling | 27. Guidelines WCA Trips |
| 8. Quebec North Shore Symposium | 22. Near Miss on the Spanish | 28. WCA Trips |
| 9. Coppermine River 1993 | 24. World Wildlife Fund Report Card | 30. Canoetoon |
| | | 31. Products and Services |

WCA Postal Address: Cathy Grim
P.O. Box 48022 Oshawa, Ont.
Davisville Postal Outlet (905) 655-3485
1881 Yonge St.
Toronto, Ontario M4S 3C6

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Duncan Taylor
Toronto, Ont. (416) 368-9748

Bob Shortill (Chairman)
2 Hamilton Dr.
Bethany, Ont., L0A 1A0
(705) 277-3538

Mike Jones
Mississauga, Ont.
(905) 270-3256

Earl Silver
Toronto, Ont.
(416) 486-7402

Paul Hamilton (Vice Chair.)
Georgetown, Ont.
(905) 877-8778

WCA Contacts

SECRETARY
Bill King
45 Hi Mount Drive
Willowdale, Ontario
M2K 1X3
(416) 223-4646

INFORMATION
Herb Pohl
480 Maple Ave., #113
Burlington, Ontario
L7S 1M4
(905) 637-7632

WCA TRIPS
Bill Ness
194 Placentia Blvd.
Scarborough, Ont., M1S 4H4
(416) 321-3005

JOURNAL EDITOR
Toni Harting
7 Walmer Road, Apt. 902
Toronto, Ontario M5R 2W8
(416) 964-2495

TREASURER
Rob Butler
Toronto, Ontario
(416) 487-2282

MEMBERSHIP
Linda Lane
Elora, Ontario
(519) 846-2586

COMPUTER RECORDS
Cash Belden
Toronto, Ontario
(416) 925-3591

CONSERVATION
Richard Culpeper
160 Wembley Drive
Sudbury, Ontario
P3E 1N2
(705) 671-3343

Wilderness Canoe Association

membership application

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

PRINT CLEARLY!

Date: _____

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Prov. _____

New member Member # if renewal: _____

Single Family

Phone Number(s):

() _____ (h)

() _____ (w)

* This membership is valid for one year.

Postal Code: _____

Ext. _____

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