

MR. ANDERSON'S PORTAGE

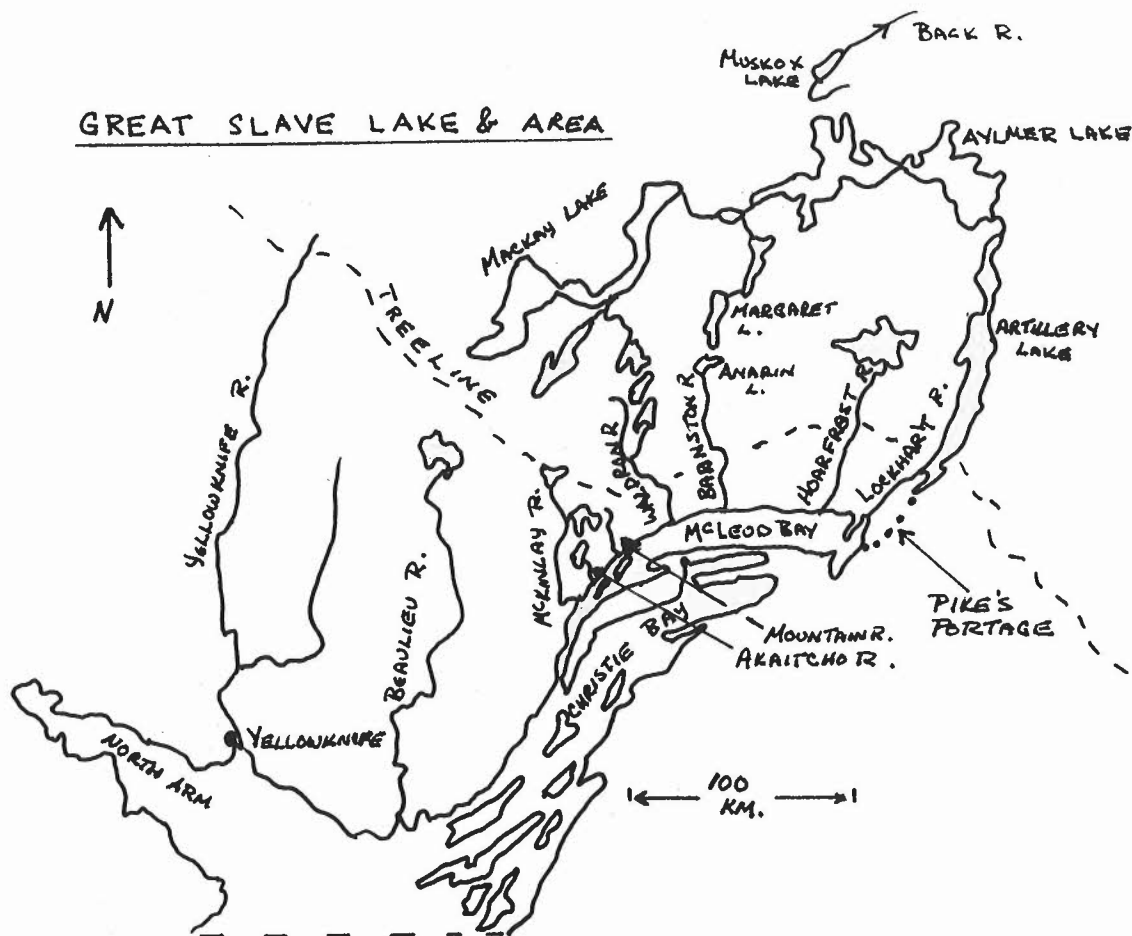
Between Great Slave Lake and the Barrens

John McInnes

Canoeists paddling McLeod Bay of Great Slave Lake, bound for the Barren Lands to the north and east, face a challenge. Dene hunters, Barren Land trappers, eccentric wanderers, or modern recreationists, they all have a stiff climb ahead of them. A 1932 party from the Geological Survey of Canada stated the problem succinctly: "The country north of McLeod Bay is difficult to reach on account of a steep rise in the land from the north shore of the Bay. In that direction, rock hills rise, within distances of from 1 to 4 miles from the shore, to an upland which continues north to Lac de Gras . . . the tops of the hills at

McLeod Bay stand at 900 feet above Great Slave Lake."

The best-known route from Great Slave to the Barren Lands is undoubtedly Pike's Portage. Named after Warburton Pike—an eccentric Englishman who descended it in 1890—this ancient trail leaves Great Slave at its eastern tip, from a fine sandy beach some 10 kilometres south of George Back's Fort Reliance. Its 10 portages—the first one five kilometres long with an elevation gain of 190 metres—link a chain of small lakes stretching nearly 40 kilometres to Artillery Lake. It is one of the most beautiful areas in the North; Pike called it "by far the prettiest part



of the country that I saw in the north . . . a perfect northern fairyland." It was thoroughly mapped by J.W. Tyrrell's party in 1900. Pike's Portage was the highway to the Barren Lands for trappers, prospectors, surveyors, and naturalists until bush planes came to dominate northern transportation. Hanbury, Seton, Blanchet, Hoare, and Hornby: they all went this way, and—with one famous exception—returned. To walk Pike's Portage is to steep yourself in northern history.

But if Pike's route was the highway to the Barrens, there were many byways as well. Pike also used routes near the McKinlay and Mountain rivers, some 100 kilometres west of the trail that bears his name. Maufelly guided George Back to Artillery Lake via the Hoarfrost River.—aspar Whitney, later Leonidas Hubbard's editor at *Outing* magazine, launched his pursuit of the muskox from the far west end of McLeod Bay. A Geological Survey party returning from the Coppermine River worked their way down the Waldron River to McLeod Bay in 1932, and Guy Blanchet's 1924 field notes mention a route following the Akaitcho River to the Barrens. Why such a diversity of routes?

Part of the answer is geography. Wherever you leave McLeod Bay, you face essentially the same problem: a steep climb, of some 250 metres in five kilometres, to reach the plateau above Great Slave. Surmounting this

challenge, you emerge on a mostly barren tableland, thickly strewn with lakes, over which you can travel in almost any direction with no great difficulty. There are many feasible routes to the Barrens, if no easy ones, and for many explorers or hunters it was likely just a matter of following the route their Native guide was most familiar with.

The other part of the answer is ice. McLeod Bay breaks up from west to east in the spring; often its western reaches are open to canoe passage while its eastern tip near Pike's Portage is still icebound. An alternate route could enable a canoe party to save time and avoid the risks of ice-filled waters. The need for haste, and ice in the east end of the bay, were responsible for the choice of the portage route this article will describe: the one Chief Factor James Anderson followed on his Back River Expedition in 1855. But before focusing on just this portage route, it is worthwhile summarizing Anderson's overall achievement.

Assisted by James Stewart, and accompanied by a picked crew of voyageurs, Anderson was dispatched at the request of the British Admiralty. He was charged with investigating the area near the mouth of the Great Fish (now the Back) River in Chantrey Inlet, in response to John Rae's discovery that men of the Franklin expedition had perished in that vicinity. Anderson's party left Fort

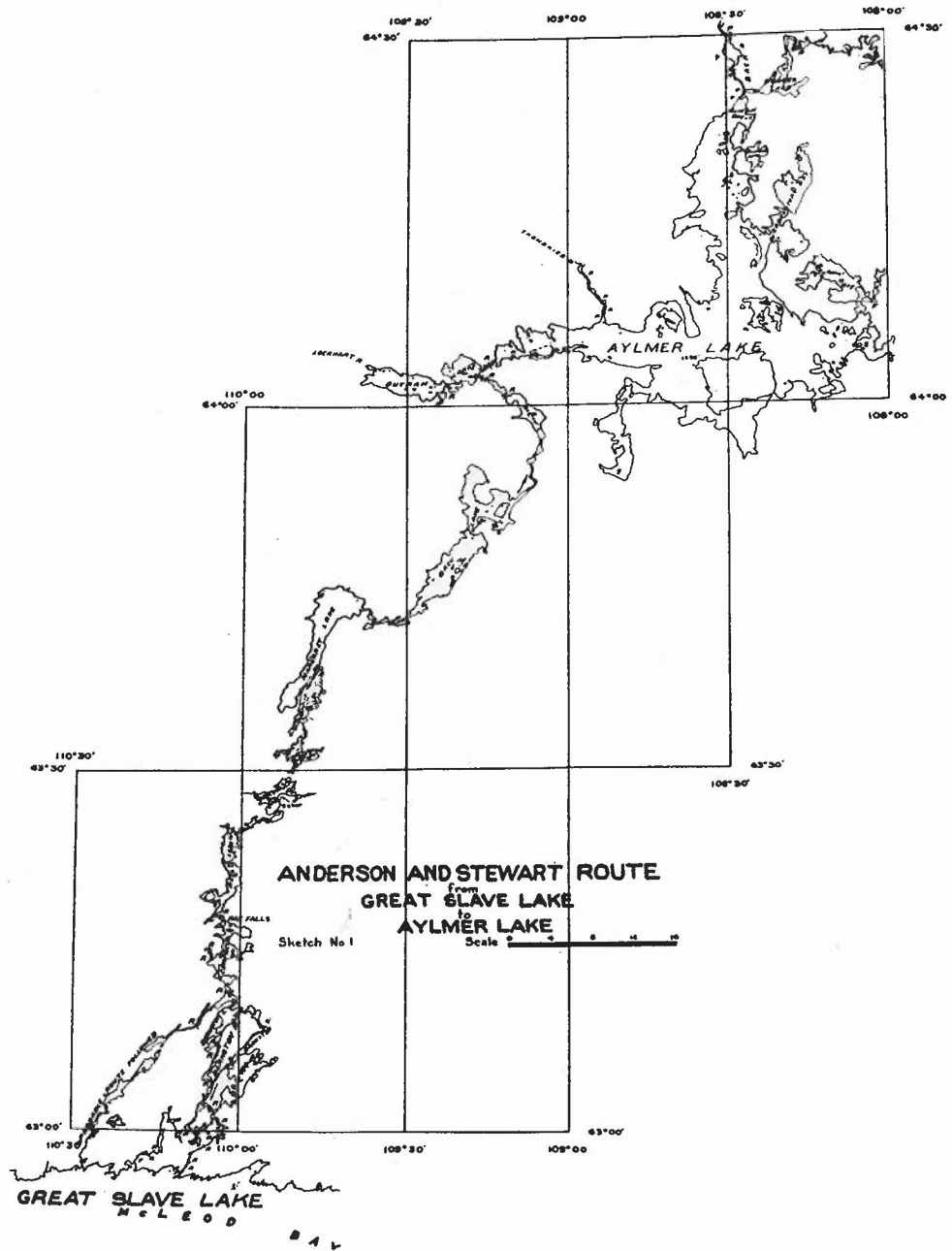
Simpson on 28 May 1855. They travelled up the Mackenzie River and east on Great Slave Lake, struggling through ice in McLeod Bay. Just west of the Barnston River they portaged north out of Great Slave, heading for the Barrens. Reaching Aylmer Lake on the Lockhart River, they portaged into the headwaters of the Back and descended it to the Arctic Ocean. With autumn closing in, they retraced their route up the Back and over to Aylmer Lake. After descending the Lockhart River to Artillery Lake, they followed a portion of Pike's Portage route and a small stream to reach the site of Fort Reliance. On 16 September they were back at the HBC post of Fort Resolution on Great Slave Lake.

Anderson's route that took him up the steep north shore of the bay to the height of land at the headwaters of the Barnston River. I was curious how this route would compare, in relative difficulty, with others I had travelled. And I wondered how closely Anderson's route description would agree with modern maps. At the end of a 1998 trip north of Great Slave, I had the chance to follow Anderson's route down to the big lake. The experience answered a few of my questions, posed some new ones, and renewed my admiration for the rate of travel of 19th century voyageurs over rugged terrain.

To any canoeist, especially one who has paddled in the Barrens, the magnitude of this achievement is obvious. Yet Anderson's expedition remains almost unknown. Anderson never wrote a book and his journal was never published. Outside of references in obscure Parliamentary Papers, his achievement was never publicised. The Hudson Bay Company clearly lacked the Royal Navy's aptitude for creating heroes. When Anderson's field notes were finally printed in the *Canadian Field-Naturalist* in 1940, the editor opined that the circumstances that had kept Anderson and the HBC from the credit due to them for the expedition constituted "an injustice that will now be righted." Perhaps he overestimated the magazine's circulation, or underestimated the world's preoccupation with the war in Europe. Anderson is still a little-known figure today.

Having travelled several of the portage routes out of McLeod Bay, I was particularly interested in the 80-kilometre section of

THE CANADIAN FIELD-NATURALIST

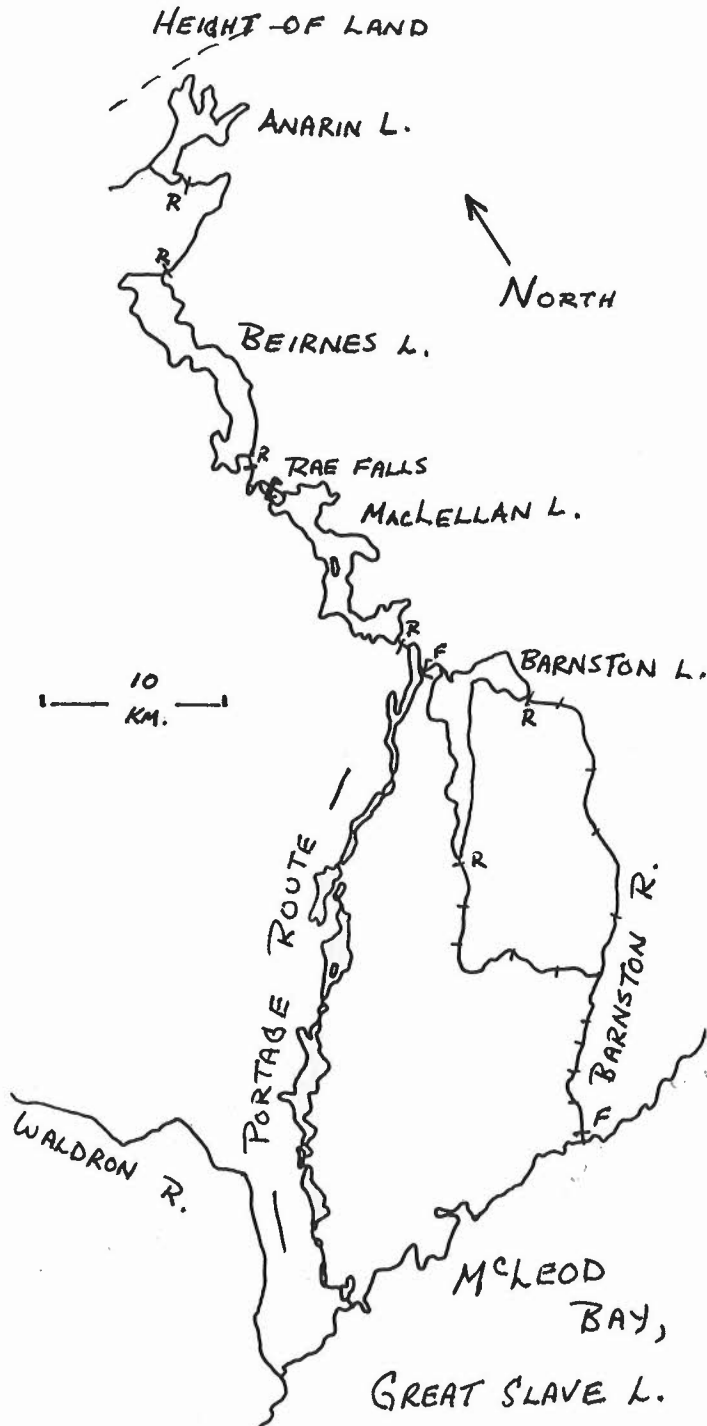


There is some uncertainty about parts of Anderson's route, since the sketch map he made to accompany his notes has been lost. His route through the lakes of the Barnston's headwaters, however, is quite definite. I joined Anderson's route in what is now called Anarin Lake, identified as "David's Lake" in the sketch map provided in the *Field-Naturalist*, a copy of which accompanies this article. Joseph Anarin was an Iroquois canoeeman with Anderson's expedition. "David's Lake" is taken from Pike's map. David was a young Inuit, an interpreter at the Fort Resolution mission, who accompanied Pike and HBC man James McKinlay on their 1890 trip to the Back River.

Camped on a fine sandy rise at the west end of the lake, I contemplated a first question about this route. Anderson's editor comments that Anarin was likely the lake where Pike waited out the spring thaw, camped below a fine bank of reddish sand. But the esker in Anarin is not that impressive, or reddish, and McKinlay's diary suggests this camp was rather by the lake "Au bout des petites roches," likely one of the now unnamed lake expansions on the river below Anarin. Pike's campsite or not, this esker suited me very nicely: it was dry, well-carpeted with lichens to keep the sand from getting into everything, and swept by a breeze to keep the blackflies at bay. An excellent starting point from which to explore Anderson's route.

I set out down the Barnston from this campsite on a grey, showery morning, one hundred and forty-three years and five days after Anderson had travelled this section going north. I was planning to set a gentler pace. Anderson's voyageurs had, on the day they passed through Anarin, "Began to load at 3 a.m. . . . made six portages . . . and about 47 miles through lakes. Encamped at 9:30 p.m., men rather tired." Could you blame them? Actually, Anderson overestimated his mileage on this day. From his previous campsite to his next camp on Margaret Lake, across the divide north of Anarin, is roughly 50 to 55 kilometres. This tendency to overestimate distances is characteristic of his field notes on this portage route. I paddled to the outlet of the lake, and portaged the shallow exit rapids over a barren hill. I made good time through the shallow, rocky lake expansions below, then ran two small rapids into the north end of Beirnes Lake ("Ross Lake" on the *Field-Naturalist* sketch map). Beirnes, like many lakes and features in the NWT, is named after a war casualty. I paddled to the south end of this 13-kilometre long lake—Anderson estimated its length at 12 miles—and portaged a steep, shallow rapids across a flat rock outcrop. According to his journal, Anderson had camped nearby, not far above Rae Falls, on July 4th, 1855.

I crossed a small lake expansion, then portaged Rae Falls—named by Anderson after Sir John Rae—a short steep carry over bare rock. Anderson's description, "a fine fall . . . passes through a door like cut in the rocks" is accurate: the river rushes through a narrow gap in a rock dike. But his height estimate—fifty feet—is off by a factor of three at least. I estimated the drop at three to four metres. The dike is simply not high enough to generate a much larger drop, regardless of water levels. The temptation is to assume that "fifty" was incorrectly transcribed from "fifteen" when the journal was copied. But the editor notes that the same description is included in another version of Anderson's journal, and that a surveyor, John Carroll, in 1938 obtained a ground picture of these falls, which bears out the above description. Was Anderson's 50-foot estimate a slip of the pen? Or were 19th century canoeists, even eminently respectable chief factors of the HBC, occasionally subject to the same temptation to exaggerate, which sometimes afflicts their 20th century counterparts?



Contemplating this riddle, I paddled down MacLellan Lake ("Campbell Lake" on the sketch-map) and camped in another fine sandy site on an island about five kilometres below the falls. This lake's name was changed because there were simply too many Campbell Lakes in the NWT. The origin of MacLellan is unclear—the GNWT historical database simply notes it was suggested by the Topographical Survey. It would be nice to think it was named after Murdo McLellan, an Orkneyman in Anderson's party. Anderson described the lake as "a large body of water, broad and 10 miles in length." It is a fine lake, although pinched by a couple of narrows, and probably closer to 10 kilometres in length. On one point, though, Mr. Anderson and I were in exact agreement: with the skies clearing in the afternoon, the "weather is very warm and mosquitoes and sand flies dreadful."

Next morning brought a fine sunny day with just a light breeze, perfect weather except for a haze of smoke. I paddled to where the Barnston leaves the lake and portaged a steep rapids there, an easy carry over bare rock beside a small falls. With time in hand, I stopped to fish below the rapids. Anderson and his men had reached this point from Great Slave in 2½ days of hard travelling; I had the luxury of five days, going downhill, to reach the lake for my float plane pickup. While better endowed with time than Anderson, I had no more luck: he complained that although the lakes "are said to abound in fine trout and W. Fish; we . . . have caught none." I had the same experience.

From this unnamed lake below the rapids, Anderson's route leaves the Barnston River and heads southwest. For

me, travel would become more difficult. Conversely, Anderson was at this point beginning to find progress easier after his steep climb from McLeod Bay. He joined the Barnston in this lake, "which empties itself into Slave Lake by a very rapid river (unnavigable)," and remarked that the country was becoming less arduous to travel. "The lakes are getting larger and the height of the mountains is diminished." And of the eight portages his men had traversed that day, he could thankfully say, "most of them short."

Paddling to the end of a narrow bay, I soon reached the first portage. Just 500 metres in length, it nevertheless looked unpromising. Steep bedrock hills on both sides forced me to portage along the rocky bed of the creek, which trickled down from the next lake. To my relief, the carry went quite well. The rocks in the streambed are quite flat and well consolidated; further up there are stretches of turf and an easy climb over a sandy knoll to the lake. This narrow lake extends about five kilometres to the southwest, beginning as a narrow gash between high rock hills under a looming cliff. Past the first narrows, however, its shores flatten out and a considerable amount of sand is in evidence. I pushed through a second narrows, and camped on a sandy rise near the end of the lake. An easy day, just 19 kilometres and two portages. Not up to Anderson's standards, but a nice pace for a 20th century vacation.

The next morning was again warm, sunny, and smoky. I paddled to the end of the lake and made a short carry over a sandy isthmus into the lake above. After paddling a few hundred metres along its south shore, I

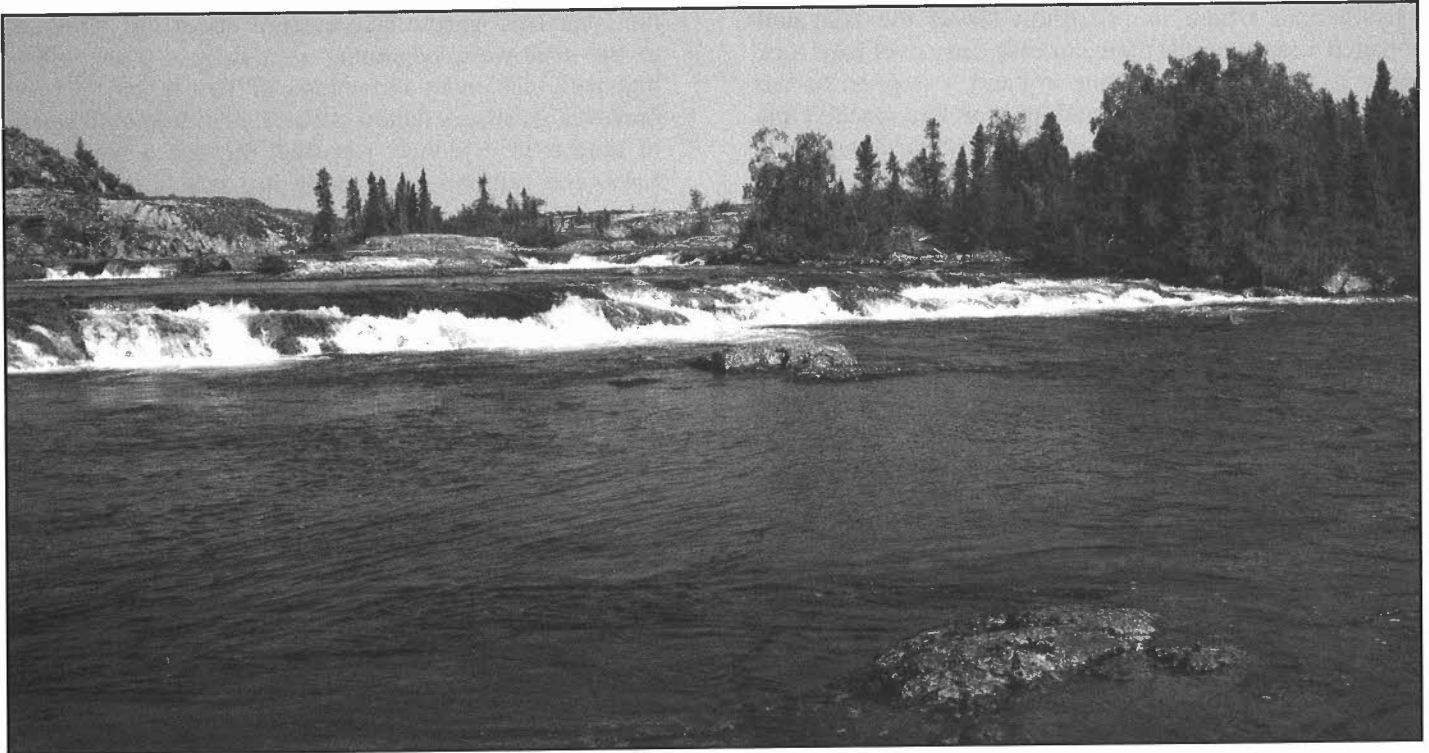


portaged south into the headwaters of the creek which Anderson's route had followed from Great Slave. Again the portage was between steep bedrock hills, but the carry itself was good: downhill, open, and only 250 metres. I appreciated this good fortune, without expecting it to last. Mother Nature usually gets even. After a 400-metre paddle, I reached the next portage. This one was tougher, an 800-metre combination of bog, outcrop, boulders, and brush. While carrying, I noticed a small rock cairn—just a couple of small stones balanced on a boulder—and wondered who had left such an inconspicuous marker behind.

This portage took me to a good-sized lake, almost six kilometres long, running to the southwest. I had intended to camp here, but couldn't find a site. The steep rocky shores were most inhospitable. I did find, on a ridge atop the large island in the lake, a larger version of the rock cairn I passed on the portage. Continuing to the end of the

have been right on a major game trail: wolf, bear, and moose prints were all obvious, and recent. To ensure a restful sleep, I paddled a kilometre to a flat rock shelf on a small island. Some small and incredibly gaunt spruce here bore eloquent witness to the power of the winter winds. Another fairly easy day, just 10 kilometres travelled with five portages.

By my reading of his notes, Anderson had camped in this lake on his second day out of Great Slave, after completing a portage "of about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile, which, tho' it had some steep ascents, was less rugged than the others." Here he gave his men a bit of a break: "we encamped at $7\frac{3}{4}$ p.m. as the men tho' in good spirits seem pretty well done up with their last 2 days exertions." They left camp at 3:00 a.m. the next morning, so as not to fall into any slothful habits. I did not intend to emulate their zeal.



lake, I made a 50-metre portage over bare rock to a tiny pond. Here I saw evidence of chopping in a grove of stunted spruce, but no sign of a fire or camp. This was puzzling. I had expected that any signs of recent human passage would be from winter travel by trappers or hunters—which is generally not carried out under a "leave-no-trace" camping ethos. And the weathered axe marks were just above the ground—not at winter snow depth.

But practical matters had to take precedence over speculation. This pond was also campsite-free, and the afternoon was wearing on. I paddled 100 metres to its end, then portaged some 400 metres to the next lake. This carry began badly, over steep outcrops and through willows, but then emerged onto a fine sand ridge leading to the lake. I was tempted to camp here, but the tent would

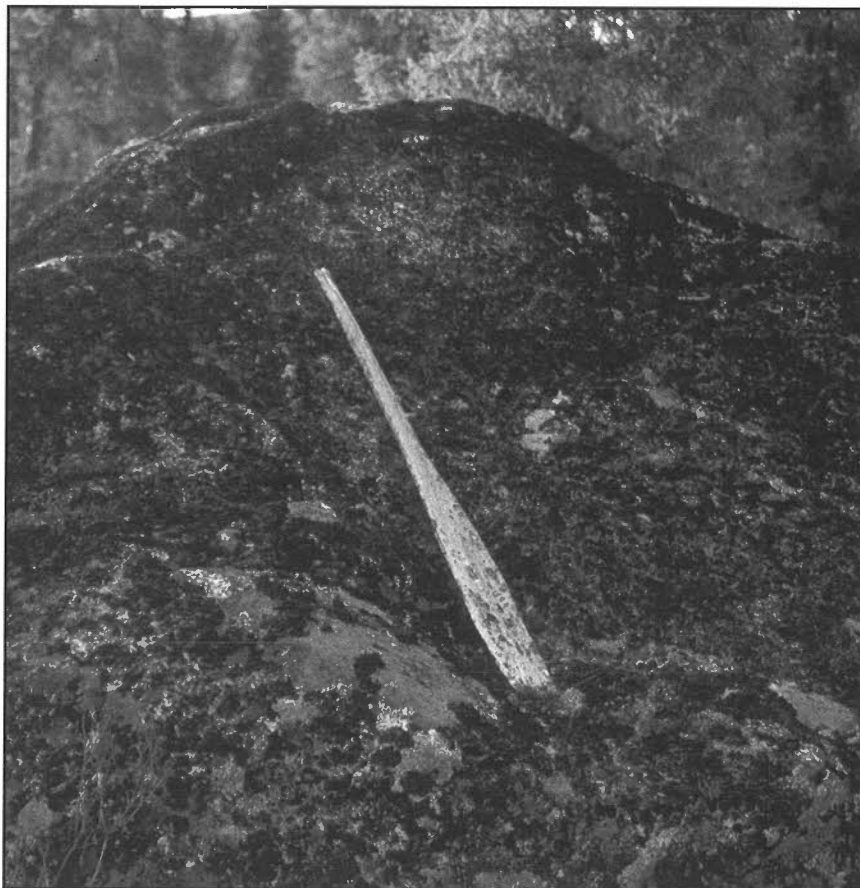
I did hurry out of camp in the morning, however. The day dawned cool and grey, with a strong wind from the northeast and a rising sea. I packed and ate quickly, loaded the canoe with some difficulty in the waves, and shot down the lake with about as much of a tailwind as I could handle. It was a relief to swing into the lake's sheltered southern bay. Here I landed, intending to follow Anderson's "less rugged" portage southwest to a narrow pond, cutting across a bend in the creek. But when I climbed out to scout, the footing looked quite rugged to me, with willows, steep rock, and some old burn. So I elected to follow the creek, and make three short portages between tiny ponds to reach my objective. When the first two carries went easily, I began to congratulate myself on superior route selection, based on modern maps. This proved premature.

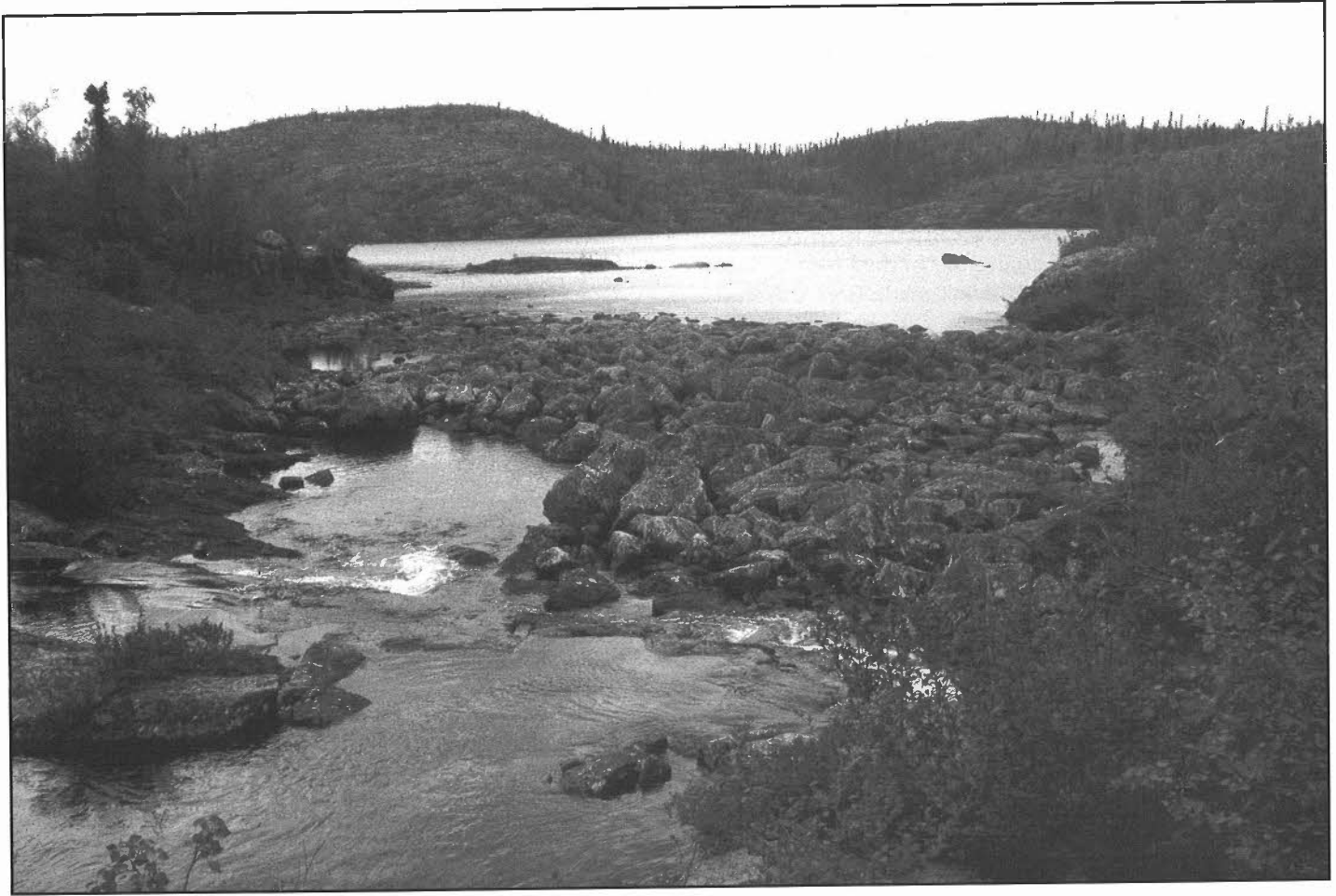
The third portage, 500 metres north of the creek, was tough. I took out over boulders, crossed a short stretch of level turf, and climbed steeply onto a rock outcrop. Then down again, across a gully choked with stunted birch. When I regained an open rock ridge, my spirits rose. But rather than sloping gently down to my target pond, the ridge simply ended. I was left to descend a steep bank, 15 metres high, composed of large but not always stable boulders, with the wind tugging at the canoe and willows grasping at my ankles. It was a great relief to arrive safely at the bottom. Before paddling on, I hiked over to look at the "less rugged" portage I hadn't made from this end. It would have been the easier route, a mostly open valley with a good moose path to show the way. I should have persevered a bit longer with my scouting. I resolved that "factor knows best" would be my motto from here on. Unfortunately, this resolution was soon forgotten.

The wind quickly pushed me to the end of this pond, and I continued southward. In Anderson's words, I "made 2 short portages and crossed 2 small tarns" to reach a larger lake, nearly four kilometres long. Anderson had estimated its length at about 3 miles. These two portages were short, but rugged. The map indicated a sandy area in the north end of this lake, and I had hoped for a good campsite. But the cartographer had been fooled, and the sand he had seen in the aerial photos turned out to be a swath of light-colored boulders. Meanwhile, the wind was still rising, making travel dangerous; the small poplar and

birch on the ridges were whipping furiously in the gale. Just past the first island in the lake, I landed on the east shore, tied the canoe firmly in the willows, and spent the afternoon sipping Earl Grey tea and reading.

After supper, the wind dropped a bit and the sky cleared, so I set out in search of a decent campsite. Just south of the larger island in the lake, I pulled in behind a small point on the east shore. I found a good tent site behind a low outcrop and lost no time in setting up camp. Then something caught my attention. Lying on a large boulder just a few metres away was an ancient paddle. Obviously hand-made, it had been there for many years: it was weathered to silver-grey, and overgrown by lichens. Yet it was in quite good condition, since the rock it lay on was not only sloped, to shed moisture, but also slightly dished, so only the tip and grip of the paddle contacted the rock. A fascinating artifact. It would be an improbable—but tempting—assumption to attribute this paddle to Anderson's expedition, 143 years before. But it did show this had been a canoe route once. And now it was again. Ten kilometres and five portages today. I was now only eight kilometres from Great Slave. With luck, I thought I might be able to paddle three of the eight. There was little solace in Anderson's journal tonight. He described the country ahead as "inconceivably rugged and desolate. The mountains are riven in every shape. Only a few dwarf spruce and birch are to be seen, and scarcely even a bird to enliven the scene."





The next morning was fine and sunny. I was excited, and a little apprehensive, about working down the steep portage route ahead. Anderson had made three portages from Great Slave to reach this lake. In succession, he described them as: "about 1/2 mile . . . to a pond of about a mile in length"; "about 3 miles to a small lake. . (about 1/2 mile across)"; and a final carry of "a mile in length, and, of course, from the steep ascents and the ruggedness of the country, very fatiguing." Relative to straight-line measurements from modern maps, Anderson was still overestimating distances: the first carry scaled some 600 metres, the second about 2200 metres, and the third about 1000 metres. However, opportunities for straight-line portaging were scarce in this landscape. By the end of the day, I would have considerable empathy for his perceptions of distance.

My goal for the day was just to reach the last lake before Great Slave—Anderson's mile-long pond. Rather than follow Anderson's route exactly, I decided to follow the creek more closely, making use of three tiny ponds along it to break up the portaging. It wouldn't reduce the total carrying distance, but I reasoned that with a natural feature to follow, the time required for route scouting and marking would be reduced. So much for "factor knows best."

I had to drag through a rocky shallow to reach the end of the lake, thwarting my ambition to portage in dry boots. But my spirits rose when the first carry to a small pond went very well, about 500 metres through open forest. A couple of hundred metres of paddling brought me to the next portage. This carry would be about 700 metres to a narrow pond, with the potential for 800 metres of continuous paddling! However, this pond's credentials were suspect. It was bisected by a contour line—most unusual for flatwater. I was hoping it was a misprint. The portage started well, on flat and open ground, but soon began to deteriorate. I was squeezed between the willows and boulders of the creek bed and a steep hill thickly clothed in small spruce. I climbed the hill to scout and was rewarded with a tremendous view out over Great Slave Lake, my first sight of the big lake on this trip. Anderson must have found a similar viewpoint nearby. "From the top of one of the highest mountains, perhaps 1000 feet above the level of Slave Lake, I had a fine view of that body of water . . . and counted no less than 15 small lakes or tarns."

I didn't count tarns, but I did spot a reasonable portage route, and carried on to the next pond. It was a disappointment. I had to wade one rocky shallow and portage two more to reach its southern tip, where the

creek slides over a low ledge and tumbles down a wide boulder bed towards Great Slave. From here, I would make my longest single portage, to a tiny pond just above Anderson's first lake. On the map, it looked like about 1.3 of those elusive straight-line kilometres. But I was optimistic: the contour lines suggested a ridge sloping down to this pond, and I envisioned a smooth granite highway as I shouldered my first load.

If my pond had been a disappointment, my ridge was a disaster. There was no highway, just broken granite hills, seamed with crevasses and interrupted by low cliffs. It was impassible, so I set out to explore a route nearer the creek. It wasn't easy; the forest is quite thick on this sheltered south-facing slope, and any clearings are floored with irregular boulders. I succeeded in getting about half-way, by dead reckoning, to the pond, then carefully blazed a path back to the canoe. Soon I was reunited with all my gear, if not in the most auspicious of places: the

the creek, about 200 metres from my tiny pond. Carefully working down to the creek, I followed its bank to the pond. Despite a few willows, the going was fairly open and dry. Then, with the portage only a few steps from completion, it took a final turn for the worse. I broke through a section of muskeg of doubtful parentage, and found myself hip deep in icy, soggy peat with the canoe on my head. My familiarity with this position has not reduced my contempt for it. I climbed out, scraped off most of the peat, waved ineffectually at a large cloud of insects, and pushed out into this tiny pond. Anderson had remarked on the spirit of his men after their long portage: "The whole of the loadings with the canoes were rendered by 10 p.m. and the men are now laughing over their day's work!" My mood was notably less cheerful, and it was soon to deteriorate further.

While Anderson had lamented the lack of bird life in the area, I would have rejoiced in it. A screeching gull



bush ahead was getting thicker. However, I was consoled by the knowledge that, if I wasn't on a good route, I was at least on the best one available. The "ridge" to my left was still impassable, and the brush was thicker and the boulders larger to my right nearer the creek

After some tough going, including a short stretch of very thick spruce through which I had to drag the canoe, I broke out of the bush at the top of a steep bank above

nearly took my hat off with his first swoop. This paranoid individual seemed convinced that all my efforts to reach this fetid pond were motivated solely by a desire to mistreat his family. One more swoop, and I would have been pleased to confirm his suspicions. I saw no genetic characteristics in him that needed to be perpetuated. I could have happily throttled him, his spouse, his scrofulous offspring, and perhaps his second cousins for good measure.

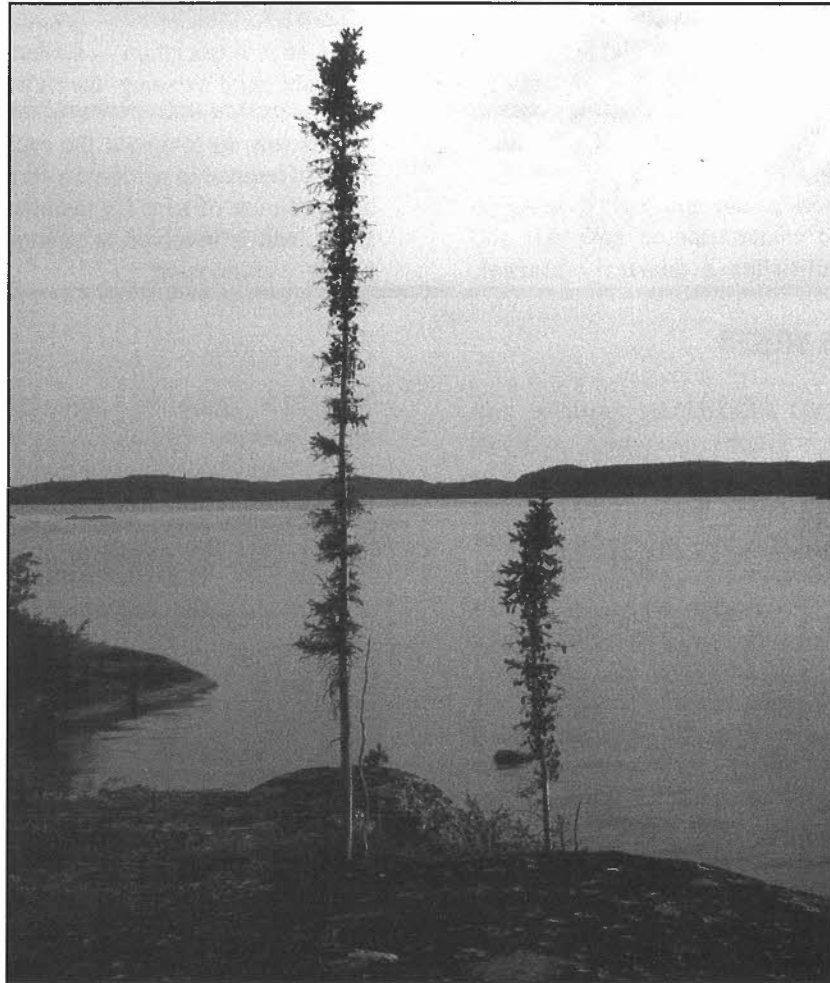
Perhaps, with the innate wisdom of all wild creatures, he sensed his attack could have the opposite effect to that he intended. Or perhaps it was the near miss with the paddle. In any event, he withdrew to a small spruce, and I paddled to the end of the pond. There life began to improve. I found a good tent site among small birch. Dry shoes, clean pants, supper, a wash, and a double rum ration restored my equanimity. Anderson would have approved. I was even able to appreciate another fine view of Great Slave from the ridge behind camp. The long portage was over. Tomorrow, a short carry to the next lake and another to Great Slave would end the trip. Drifting to sleep, I reflected more charitably on Anderson's estimates of portage length. My 1.3-kilometre carry, including time for scouting and scraping off peat, had taken about four and a half hours—roughly the same time as the five-kilometre carry on Pike's route had taken, on a good trail, two years before. Without an aerial map as a check on my veracity, I might have exaggerated a little too.

Next morning I awoke to a strong smell of smoke. A thick grey pall had drifted in overnight from the forest fires raging east of Yellowknife. Great Slave Lake had vanished, and visibility was less than a kilometre. But to find the lake, I just had to go downhill. After breakfast and a few limbering-up exercises to overcome the effects of yes-

terday's exertions, I was off on my second-last portage. After a few hundred metres of generally open going, and a steep descent on a serendipitously located moose path, I was on the last lake above Great Slave. Just one carry to go. Scouting, I found a good portage route west of the stream. Landing on a flat rock shelf, I followed a moose path through a fringe of bush. Ahead was a couple of hundred metres of easy going across a flat rock outcrop, then a steep but manageable descent through open forest. When I dropped the canoe into the marshy bay at the creek mouth, a sleepy mallard shot up in alarm. I guess he didn't see a lot of traffic coming through this way.

A couple of hours later I was camped across the bay, washed, dressed in clean clothes, and sipping the last of the rum. Looking back up the steep hills of the portage route, I thought about what Anderson and his voyageurs had done. In one way, it was hard to relate to. Going uphill, no maps, no royalite, no nylon, no noseemum screens, no DEET, no waterproof packs, no Twin Otter to pick you up if something went wrong. But in another way it was easy, for if the equipment has changed, the country remains as wild and empty as it was in Anderson's day. With wisdom, and luck, it may stay that way for another 143 years.





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Also note the short biography of Anderson available in:

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The quotes in the article itself are all from the Anderson log in the *Field-Naturalist*, except for the quote in the first paragraph (the GSC 1932 Report) and Pike's description of the portage route, which now bears his name, in the second paragraph (his book, also cited in Tyrrell.)



CPM # 0628980
ISSN 1828-1327

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

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WEBSITE WOES

On many canoe trips, one encounters some rough water. A canoe may be pinned on a rock, and, in the worst cases, may even sink out of site.

If you sensed an analogy coming, you are right. In early April, the server containing the WCA website crashed. Our website has sunk below the waves of cyberspace. Although the server is back up and running, none of the data from the hard drive was recoverable. At the time of writing, we are still searching for a backup. It is becoming more and more likely that we will have to re-build the site from scratch.

In either case, I hope that wildernesscanoe.org is back up and running by the time that this issue of *Nastawgan* reaches you. We apologize for any inconvenience that the interruption in availability of the website may have caused. Of course, we all learn from our mistakes. You can be sure that in the future we will have more than one backup.

Bruce Bellair, WCA webmaster



WCA website: www.wildernesscanoe.org

To access the Members' section of the WCA website, find the authentication window and type exactly the following words shown in bold. For the period covered by this issue of *Nastawgan* these are: *User Name: **dumoine** Password: **river***

COMING WCA EVENTS

NEW MEMBERS EVENT

Come out and meet WCA trip leaders and other paddling enthusiasts! Long-standing WCA members are welcome too!!

- Date:* Thursday, 14 September 2000
- Time:* Anytime after 6:30 p.m. The presentations start at 7:00 p.m. Light refreshments will be available.
- Place:* Clarke Beach Park (also known as Cherry Beach) at the foot of Cherry Street in the Port of Toronto area
- What to bring:* Your favorite paddling snack food, canoes, guitars, fiddles. . .
STORIES AND ADVENTURES!!

There will be opportunities to paddle both before and after the presentations. The evening will finish off with a bonfire and marshmallow roast.

For more information, contact Anne Lessio at (416) 293-4116 (h) or alessio@web.net (preferred)

* * * * *

The **Fall Meeting** will take place a bit later than usual, on 13–15 October, at Camp Wanatika in the Haliburton area. A registration form with more information is printed on the inside front cover around this issue of *Nastawgan*. The outings planned for the weekend are presented on page 26.

* * * * *

The **Fall Party**, also called Wine and Cheese Party, will take place on 17 November, again at the Toronto Sailing and Canoe Club. More information will be presented in the Autumn issue of *Nastawgan*.

PADDLERS' TALK

NEW TILLEY HAT

The Tilley hat must rival the beaver and the maple leaf as a symbol of Canada. For canoe trippers who spend long hours in a boat under the summer sun it has no equal. Its top quality cotton canvas is impeccably cut and stitched, and the chinstrap really works. I've worn one for many years, as my natural scalp covering started deserting me longer ago than I can remember.

While I wouldn't go on a trip without my Tilley, I always had one beef with it—when wet the thing took forever to dry. That's not bad when it's hot, but when you're paddling in a cool fall rain, it's another matter. So I was really interested in their new lightweight Model LT5. This hat is made from a nylon material called Nylamonite, which has a beautiful soft cottony feel. But is it waterproof? I spent an April day in the rain, with the hat on but the rain gear at home, and my head was the only part of me dry all day. (Of course the rain ceased just before we got off the river.) By the time I had done the shuttle my hat was dry, while Rita's canvas one remained soggy. One more great feature is a spring metal wire sewn into the rim which keeps it stiff even in a downpour. At \$65 it's not cheap, but definitely a highly functional item that lives up to Tilley's reputation for excellence.

(Nice plug, Bill, but can you fold up small any Tilley hat and put it in your pocket without damaging it? Nooo! That's why I prefer my \$5.00 Army Surplus cotton hat that I've had

now for 15 years; dries fast enough for me! Toni H.)

Bill Ness

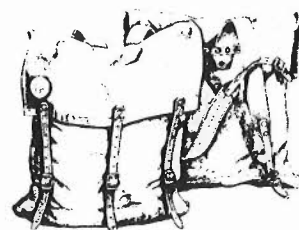
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ZIPLOC

A new kind of plastic "freezer" bag is now on the market. It comes in two sizes (20.5 and 27.5 cm when flat) and is equipped with a handy slider to close the bag. The Ziploc Slide-Loc bags are strong, waterproof, and can be washed easily for re-use. They very conveniently also have a white area on the side that can be written on with a pencil.

Toni Harting

PADDLERS' TALK is your opportunity to publish ingenious solutions to all kinds of big or little problems encountered in the field. To submit your ideas, please contact Bill Ness or Toni Harting; addresses etc. are in the WCA Contacts on the back page.



Results of WCA New Member Survey

The WCA is committed to meeting the needs of its membership and remaining relevant. In an effort to do this, the Board of the WCA endorsed a telephone survey for new members who joined the club from January to May 1999. Thus, the new members selected for the survey had almost one full year and, more importantly, one paddling season as WCA members under their belt. The results of the survey are presented in this article.

Ten current WCA members contacted approximately 50 new club members by phone between February and April, 2000. The WCA Board wants to acknowledge the efforts of the following club members who gave their time and energy to conduct the survey: Gisela Curwen, Ann Dixie, Leslie Dutton, Charles Micallef, Bill Ness, Jutta Schaaf, Anne Snow, Glenn Spence, Bill Stevenson, and Paul Wilcox.

The purpose of the survey was threefold:

1. Identify why people join the WCA
2. Determine if the WCA is meeting the needs of the new members
3. Identify any changes in club processes that would facilitate new member participation

Of the 48 new members contacted, a total of 32 (67%) agreed to complete the survey. Some of the reasons for not completing the survey included: (1) people had moved but had not forwarded their new phone numbers to the club; (2) people were too busy to complete the survey; and (3) people were no longer WCA members and were not interested in participating.

The survey contained four separate sections: General information; Club Events; Club Outings/Trips; and Possible WCA New Events. The results are presented under these four designations.

A: General Information:

When asked how they found out about the WCA, the most popular answer was through shows such as the Outdoor Adventure Show and the Canoe Expo. The second most popular reason that people joined the club was through a friend who had invited them to. Shows and friends accounted for 68% of the people who joined the club.

When asked the main reason for joining the club, the majority of respondents answered that they joined the WCA for its trips and outings. Most respondents by far to this survey were interested in flatwater paddling rather than whitewater paddling. The next three reasons that people joined the WCA were: (1) to meet other paddlers; (2) for the Nastawgan; and (3) for educational opportunities.

B: Club Events:

The respondents were asked about their knowledge and attendance at the four annual WCA events. These events are the Symposium (January), the Annual General Meeting (February), the Fall Meeting (October) and the Wine and Cheese (November).

Most of respondents (84%) knew that the WCA offers four events annually. The majority of respondents knew that the Nastawgan contains information about club events (91%), but less than half (47%) knew that the information was also available on the website.

Of the 32 respondents, 12 (32%) had attended a WCA event during their first year of membership. After answering the questions and learning more about the WCA events, the number of respondents indicating that they would attend one of the WCA events offered in 2000 increased by 30%. It appeared that a personal contact informing new members about the WCA events resulted in a favorable response to participating in club events.

C: Club Outings/Trips:

All respondents (100%) were aware that the club offered a wide range of trips and outings. Although most knew that trips are advertised in the Nastawgan (75%), some did not know they were also listed on the website.

Of the 32 people who were surveyed, only 31% had attended a WCA trip during their first year of membership. When asked whether not owning a boat or not having a paddling partner deterred them from participating in club trips, the majority answered "no." Many indicated that they paddled solo. The reasons offered for not participating in club trips included: (1) the distance to travel for trips; (2) conflicts with personal schedule and commitments; (3) time; (4) were satisfied with receiving the Nastawgan from the WCA.

As with the Club Events, the number of respondents indicating that they would attend a WCA trip during the summer of 2000 increased by 34% if they were to be contacted by a WCA member first.

D: Possible WCA New Events:

The new members being surveyed were asked if they would attend an event specifically for new members where they met trip leaders and another event to meet paddling partners. The respondents favored combining the two events into one event. Approximately 65% indicated an interest in attending one event. When asked their preferred method of advertising the event, the Nastawgan, the website or e-mail, the most popular answer was the Nastawgan. Some respondents indicated they did not have access to the internet at home and could not access the website at work.

Conclusions:

Overall, the respondents were pleased with the WCA. However, this must be balanced with the fact that the response rate to the survey was 67%. Thus, the people surveyed were already positive towards the WCA.

The respondents indicated that they would like a new members event to assist them in feeling more a part of the club. Many stated that receiving the Nastawgan was worth the annual membership fee for the WCA. People who did not live in the GTA commented that the travelling distance made it difficult to attend any of the WCA events.

Many of the respondents stated that they appreciated the WCA members contacting them, and that in turn made the new member more receptive to the club in general. The personal contact and description of club activities also increased the new members' interest in attending club events and outings.

As a result of this survey, the Board of the WCA has decided to do the following:

1. Develop a system so that all new members are contacted by phone one month before a WCA event.
2. Offer a New Members Event where new (and long-standing) members can meet the trip leaders and other paddlers on 14 September 2000 at Clarke Beach Park (Cherry Beach) in Toronto. Pending the outcome of this event, the Board will consider offering a New Members Event on an annual basis.
3. Continue to promote the website and the information it contains.

Submitted by Anne Lessio

PHOTO OP

The Board has agreed to renew some of our WCA display booth materials. We are looking for about a dozen or so photographs showing our members involved in club activities. Photos of canoeing, social activities, meetings, special people, scenery, or wildlife would be appreciated. We will return your materials to you after the Board selects the final shots and has the duplication done. If you have 35 mm print negatives or slide transparencies that you would be willing to allow the club to duplicate, please send them to: Hal Graham, 19,000 Airport Road, RR#1 Caledon East, Ontario, L0N 1E0; 905-5840-2109; hal.graham@sympati-co.ca

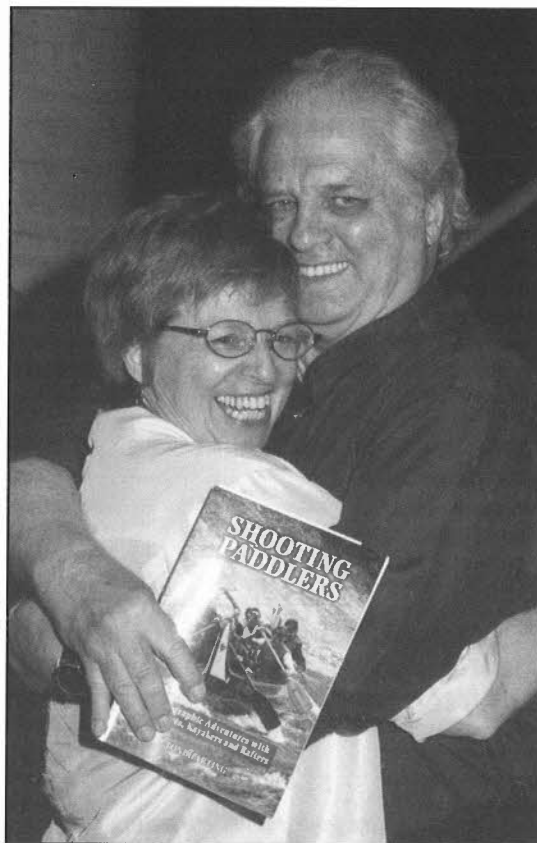
At this time we would like to warmly thank the members who contributed the existing set of photos. You have our assurance they will continue to be valued and used for club activities. When you think about it, hundreds of thousands of people (perhaps a million?) have looked at them over the years of display and exhibit. They have indeed served well. Thank you.

Hal Graham

BOOK LAUNCH

On 31 May, my latest book, *Shooting Paddlers, Photographic Adventures with Canoeists, Kayakers and Rafters*, was presented to the general public at a book launch held in the Mountain Equipment Store on King Street West in Toronto. The event was attended by about 90 people, many of them WCA members, who all seemed to have a good time while doing their best to finish off the abundant light refreshments. I thank everybody present at the launch for their kind words and hope that my book will bring joy and insight to its readers.

Toni Harting



Roger Harris

FOOD FOR PADDLERS

Following is part 2 of the 3-part series of a sample 7-day menu by Pat Buttigieg. Part 1 in the Spring 2000 issue dealt with breakfasts. Part 2 includes ideas for lunches, snacks and drinks. (As well, we have a recipe from Kathy Seifried; she was encouraged to send in the recipe by fellow canoeists who sampled her Birdseed Bars on a spring canoe outing this year.) Stay tuned for the final part 3, which will include suppers. (*Barbara Young, Food Editor*)

BUTTI-BITES, part 2**LUNCH IDEAS**

Hummus (own recipe dried or Fantastic Foods) with pita bread, celery, and carrot sticks. Good for a first lunch. Veggies keep best wrapped in paper towel and in plastic bags. Use left-over veggies on pizza or in rice.

Curried Couscous (own recipe or Fantastic Foods) with added dried vegetables. Couscous takes five minutes to cook. Vegetables rehydrate in 10 minutes soaking in hot water. Substitute dried bananas and raisins for the vegetables for a different taste.

Use combinations of the following toppings: jam, peanut butter, Nutella, Soya margarine.

With:

- Rivita Rye Crackers
- Garlic Bagel Chips
- Bannock made the night before (*Wanapitei Canoe Trippers Cookbook*). We use real lard cut into the flour mix and dried shortening for frying the bannock in.

Along with:

- Babybel cheese balls covered in wax
- Pepperoni sticks or beef jerky sticks
- Canned fish such as mussels, squid in its own ink, kippers in Louisiana hot sauce etc. (Favorites of Bryan Buttigieg – items he doesn't often get asked to share!)

Drink ideas

- Glogg (buy at Ikea) + apple cider mix + peach schnapps (evening drink)
- Juice crystals (to make 1-1½ litres per person/day)
- Black currant tea/ Instant Mocha

Snacks

- Turkey jerky with cranberries and pecans
- Snickers chocolate bars
- Sultana cookies, Fig Newtons, Strawberry Newtons
- Dried fruit and nut mix
- Home-made fruit leathers - strawberry apple banana is my favorite

***Birdseed Bars* (recipe submitted by Kathy Seifried)**

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 1 cup peanut butter (not light) | 2 cups Rice Crispies |
| 1 cup brown sugar | 1 cup pumpkin seeds |
| 1 cup corn syrup | 1 cup sunflower seeds |
| 4 teaspoons butter | 1 cup nuts (unsalted mixed nuts without peanuts) |
| 2 cups Corn Flakes | 1 cup sesame seeds |

Over medium heat, mix the peanut butter, brown sugar, corn syrup, and butter together until just boiling - stir constantly to prevent burning. Take off heat and mix in the remaining ingredients - mixture will be very stiff. Turn into a greased 8-inch x 8-inch pan and pat down. Refrigerate for a half hour before cutting into squares. These squares can be frozen if required.

If you would like to share your favorite tripping recipes, please contact Barb Young, 12 Erindale Crescent, Brampton, Ont. L6W 1B5; e-mail youngdav@interlog.com

VICTORIA JASON 24 April 1945 – 20 May 2000

One of the paddling world's best-known and most-loved members passed away recently. Victoria Jason was a remarkable woman who dared to follow her dream of paddling the Northwest Passage solo in a sea kayak. She accomplished that incredible feat in the summers of 1991 through 1994, and then wrote and published a best-selling book recounting the story of her adventures, *Kabloona in the Yellow Kayak*. Her subsequent lecture tours throughout the country brought her many new friends, all captivated by the warmth of her personality and the heartfelt meaning of her words and ideas. In January 1998, Victoria was one of the presenters at the WCA/Luste Canoeing and Wilderness Symposium held annually in Toronto. She will be remembered with great fondness by all who met her, in person or through her book.



Symposium 1998

THE MEMORY

Final day minus two. Two days to the end of the trip. Starting to think about wilderness canoeing being over for another year.

It's one of the sad parts about doing these trips. Knowing that the trip will end and you will have to go back to your job in the city. The difference from the trip to the job is like free falling from the top of Mt. Everest to the valley floor. You cover the same distance in emotions. Just can't internalize the changes that will have to be made. Too big a drop.

Two days later. Driving south. The direction always seems to be south after a wilderness canoe trip. Wondered why. It's probably because wilderness has been pretty much eliminated from the other points of the compass.

Getting dark. We have just finished eating dinner and gassing the car here in Grand Rapids, Manitoba. One of the buddies tosses the car keys to me. It's my turn to drive. I've got the run from here down to Winnipeg. The three buddies climb in and try to find room among the gear bags.

As we are rolling along it seems awfully quiet in the car. Normally the buddies are running over with joyful exuberance. Not tonight. What little talking going on between the buddies is very subdued. Everyone sad that the trip is over.

Starting to rain. Hard. It has the makings of a bad storm. The full fury of rain and accompanying wind on the metal roof of the car doesn't seem too scary now. We went through a wicked storm the night we were waiting on the shores of Hudson Bay for our boat tow back to Churchill. The two sheets of nylon protecting us from that storm seemed puny compared to the forces of nature that we were dealing with. One more reminder of the difference between life in the wilderness and life outside of the wilderness.

Final day plus two. Back home. The trip is over. Another memory in the bank. You can't cash it to buy anything tangible, but I wasn't planning to anyway.

Greg Went

BIG PROBLEMS AT MCCRAE LAKE

You may have heard about it: The most beautiful spot of the Gibson-McDonald Canoe Route is about to be wrecked for good! McCrae Lake is located about two hours driving north of Toronto, just off Highway 400. After a short paddle, you are at the falls and the cliff where the McDonald River enters McCrae Lake, at the huge granite hump that you need to portage over.

It is a spot that now looks wild and beautiful, with both the charm of the Muskokas and the ruggedness of Georgian Bay. Nearly a thousand canoeists paddle there every week during the summer and enjoy this particular spot. Even though it has become too busy for a wilderness paddler, many of us have kept this place as an option for a quick day trip, useful to show an out-of-town visitor how beautiful canoe country can be.

A snowmobile club has been able to get approval to route one of its roads across the falls to go north, with the help of a steel girder bridge. The result is a road leading to the falls and a 150-ft-long steel bridge right across the falls and portage. Even though the road will not be accessible for cars or trucks, and the bridge itself will be blocked during the summer months to vehicles, the ATV folks will travel the road and the bush without restriction. No need to tell you what popular motorized access means for that specific spot: You have seen the garbage and desecration at other places where motorized access exists. Worse yet, the unique forests and wetlands to the north of the portage are open to the destruction by ATV's. Minor trails have already started to sprout off the main road and, if unchecked, will carve up the land into small islands of vegetation.

Once the WCA got wind of what was happening, we started to work with the Federation of Ontario Naturalists, the Barry Canoe Club, the Friends of McCrae Lake, and the Five Winds Cross Country Ski Club to see what can be salvaged, that late in the game. We are not sure, at this point, what can be saved, as major damage has been done already.

You will ask how such insanity could happen?

It's been done by the rules, and you as a caring paddler should understand that. The snowmobile club planned the route and followed the process laid out by the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) for such projects. They applied to MNR in Parry Sound, which reviewed the plan, published an outline in several local newspapers to solicit comments, letters were sent out to possibly inter-

ested parties, a biological assessment was done, and, after a few months, it approved the project. It all followed the required process, albeit with a slant on getting the trail built rather than to discover possible objections. Today's government (at all levels) favors local business aspirations over conservation, and motorized wilderness access is viewed as a means to boost the local economy. It's too late now to cry foul and point out where the MNR could have done a better job: the road is built and the bridge is lying beside the river, ready to be assembled.

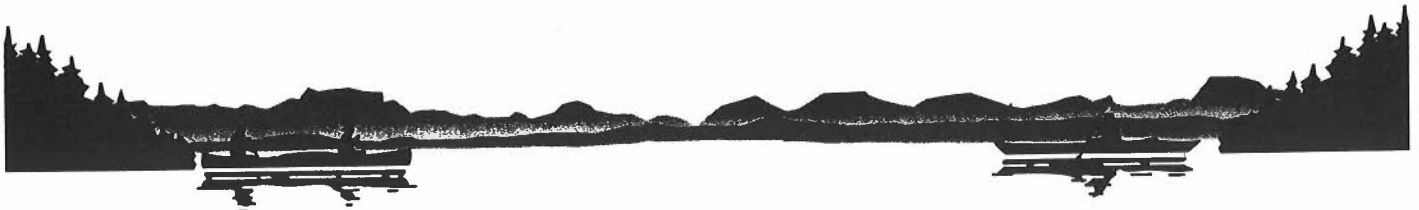
This leaves a question for you: could the same happen to your favorite paddling area? How could you prevent that? In the first place, you have to learn early what is being proposed. Each local MNR office keeps a list of stakeholders for an area and uses it when publicizing plans. In the case of McCrae, no local canoeing organization or individual was on that list and thus the proposal went unchallenged. To get onto that list, find out which MNR office is responsible and then apply as a stakeholder. A number of WCA members have done so since the WCA announced its effort to co-ordinate stakeholders in various areas. You should obtain a document that was published as an outcome of the Lands for Life project, listing all land designations of the Ontario northern lands, including a detailed map. It is called "Ontario's Living Legacy—Land Use Strategy, July 1999" and will be mailed to you upon request (1-800-667-1940).

For help, the WCA is sponsoring a website for paddling stakeholder, which includes such information as: which MNR offices are responsible for what areas and their mailing addresses, hints what to look out for, practical experiences, and a discussion forum. Or you can contact me at 416-293-3755, or mail to my address at 39 Shellamwood Tr., Scarborough ON, M1S 2M9.

So, what is your favorite paddling area? Become a stakeholder and help preserve it!

Reported by Erhard Kraus

PS: If you are unhappy with the events at McCrae Lake, you can write to Andy Heerschap at the Ministry of Natural Resources (7 Bay Street, Parry Sound, ON, P2A 1S4) or call him at 705-746-4201 or e-mail to andy.heerschap@mn.gov.on.ca and express your thoughts.



LOWER MAD UPGRADE PROJECT FUND

Well, that's it, that's all, I'm tired and I've done all one small person can do. I believe in user pay initiatives. I am proud to be associated with paddlers because I am continually impressed by the integrity of the average paddler. Paddlers buy shuttles on the Madawaska River from me and goods from our store—Rapids' End Country Store (formerly the Griffith General Store)—and they've been good to Denis and myself. We wanted to do something good for them, and give them a chance to show the people who set up this free waterway park for them that paddlers are made of the right stuff. So I set up a charitable account to collect funds to upgrade a badly deteriorated stretch of the Aumond Bay access route. I am disappointed to have fallen short by \$3,000.

It will cost approximately \$7,000 for a long-term repair. I have collected \$2,500 from individual paddlers and the Madawaska Kanu Centre, and from a raffle for a shopping spree of Sierra Design Clothes from TrailHead. Ontario Parks had promised \$1,000 if I had raised the rest. Boundless Adventures promised another conditional \$500

if I could raise the rest. That left \$3,000 in the middle and I just can't seem to do it on my own. If I can't raise another \$3,000 before the first week of May, the road will only be filled and it will be washed out again by next year. That means that all those wonderful paddlers contributed for nothing.

Can you give me any advice? I don't know where to turn or what to do. Perhaps you could forward this message to some people who may be interested in helping. The name of the fund is: *The Lower Mad Upgrade Project Fund*. Whether or not you can help, thanks for taking the time to read this note. It's from the heart and I'm running out of time and energy to do this thing right!

Susan Bernhardt, Rapids' End Country Store, General Delivery, Griffiths, Ontario, KOJ 2R0.

Note from the editor: Although the May date has already passed, the above information is sufficiently important to be included in this issue of our journal.

REVIEWS

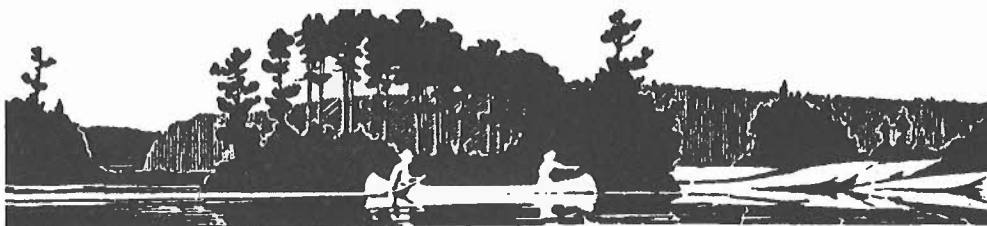
EXPLORING THE FUR TRADE ROUTES OF NORTH AMERICA, by Barbara Huck, published by Heartland Publications Inc., PO Box 103, RPO Croydon, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, R3M 3S7; softcover, 256 pages, \$24.95.

This wonderful book presents a collection of dozens of short chapters on the many aspects of the fur trade in North America, not only Canada but also the United States. Numerous fascinating details sprinkled throughout the text make this an absorbing read. For instance, the page discussing the importance of the fashionable hats made from felted beaver fur (the basis of the fur trade for more than 250 years) is most informative. And the photograph (with the accompanying description) of part of the original HBC lock in Sault St. Marie is a rare gem. There are many such items in this excellent publication. The very high reproduction quality of the hundreds of color and black-and-white illustrations (photographs, drawings, maps) is a feast for the eye. How the publisher can offer such a fine book for the low price of not quite \$25 is amazing; only a huge print run can explain that. This is a perfect gift for anybody interested in how the fur trade opened up a continent and the crucial role canoes played in it.

SNOWSHOES AND SOLITUDE, A Year in the Wabakimi Wilderness, is a 54-minute color video filmed and produced by Wilderness Spirit Productions (416-567-4917) in association with Cottage Life Television.

The video tells the intriguing story of Les Stroud and Sue Jamieson who, in 1994, spent a year in the remote reaches of the Canadian wilderness in northwest Ontario. They lived as close to the land as possible, while attempting to replicate life in North America as it was 500 years ago, before Europeans first set foot on the continent. The often very beautiful images in the video provide much insight into the problems of trying to live such a "primitive" life, and also emphasize the great satisfaction one can find in being independent and having to be resourceful in order to survive. This shows clearly that it is quite possible to make a fine documentary of one's own adventures, without an extra person doing the filming. My only beef is that the video is too short; I could happily have seen another hour on the life of these two people in the bush.

Both reviews by Toni Harting



THE CANOE TRIP FROM HELL

Shirley Williams

The weather in May last year was just gorgeous: day after day of hot sun. So we decided to go canoeing on 1 June. There were tornadoes in Southern Ontario the night before, which should have told us something, but we're slow learners and we set off on Monday morning for the Tim River in the western section of Algonquin Park. It was cold.



It's about 18 years since we were on the Tim in early June, and the water was much lower than we remembered. We're pretty light, so we managed to stay in the canoe in all but a small part of the swampy section into Tim Lake, where we had to line a little. The wind was behind us, but even so we needed our longsleeved shirts and wind-breakers. The sun was shining and it was all pretty pleasant; we even saw a couple of moose, not a bit scared of us, which is one of the nice things about Algonquin. We camped in Rosebary Lake, a good little site with an eastern aspect so we could get the morning sun. There were no bugs at all, neither blackflies nor mosquitoes, because it was so cool.

The next morning, Tuesday, it was cold, but the sun was shining and we headed out early to the short portage from Rosebary into the Tim. Signs of the old logging camp here still persist. The river here was really low, so we had to pole and struggle a lot. At one point we smelled smoke and thought there might be someone camping up on the bank, but we couldn't see anyone. After several hours of this we decided to give up on our idea of continuing on

down the river and into Misty Lake, but our options were pretty dismal—a 1300-metre portage into Queer Lake and then come out the same way, or go on through Queer into Butt Lake and take a string of low maintenance portages back to Tim Lake. We thought we'd wait and see what the weather was like. We had lunch in a shower of rain, then did the portage in sunshine. The trail was in good shape except for a lot of trees down across it that had to be struggled through, around, or over. They must have come down during the high winds last week, as the foliage was fresh.

The first campsite we came to on Queer Lake turned out to be the source of the smoke—a campfire that had probably been burning since the weekend. It had spread in the pine duff into a rough circle about eight metres in diameter, and several trees were involved, including one quite big one, burning away underneath the roots. It took us quite a while to put the fire out with our two dinky little cooking pots, our tiny bailer, and our one-litre water bottle, as well as some sticks for digging. We were pretty tired by then, and took the first campsite we came to with a good exposure to the wind so we could keep the bugs off. What bugs?

We dumped the gear there and went out to get driftwood for the fire. We found a good source and were hard at it when a huge storm blew up, we hadn't even noticed it coming. Torrents of rain and high wind—our rain gear was back at the camp. We realized the site we had picked was NOT good in a storm like this, much too exposed, so we dumped the firewood at another campsite and rushed back for the packs. The rain stopped after we were thoroughly soaked. We put up the shelter and the tent, but then another storm came, this time with thunder and lightning too. When that was over we got the fire lit and had our supper. We were watching and listening to the loons when we noticed smoke again, very thick smoke, blowing in from the west. But it wasn't smoke this time, it was steam! The temperature had suddenly fallen so much that the lake was steaming the way it does in late fall, only I've never seen it so heavy; it was an extraordinary sight. We went to bed as it was too cold to sit up, even with the fire.

Our down sleeping bags barely kept us warm that night, but once again the sun was shining in the morning, though the air was very cold. We decided to do the

portage back to the Tim River while the going was good. The rain last night had raised the water level a bit but the river was still a terrible slog (we were going upstream now, which didn't help although there's not much current in the Tim). The wind was very cold as well as being in our faces, and from midmorning it kept raining in showers. By the time we stopped for lunch we were wearing all our clothes except our emergency fallins, and thinking fondly of those as well. We climbed up the bank and found a level spot to make soup—two lots each—which really helped warm us up. Of course every beaver dam we had charged or just pulled over earlier now meant a big haul up, but that helped to warm us too.

We made it to Rosebary by midafternoon and turned east to camp on Longbow, a long, skinny lake with several low maintenance portages leading to Devine Lake, which we thought we'd explore the next day. It had stopped raining but it was still threatening, so we put the shelter up again. Now the blackflies came out; I don't understand why, since it was still quite cold. But they had a good feast of me before I realized it, and I'm still itching as I write this. Jim isn't nearly as much to their taste, it seems.

Thursday morning had lovely sunshine and blue sky, though still cold, and we drank our coffee and made plans for the day. By the time the plans were made, the clouds had rolled in again and the first drops of rain fell. The heck with this, we decided to call it quits, packed up and headed west—into the wind and the rain. Crossing the lake one expects wind trouble, but I always hope the river will be more protected. No way. The wind blew straight down the channel, which is swampy and wide all the way. One gust blew the canoe, fully loaded with us and our packs, about six metres sideways, poof, just like that. Luckily, into reeds and not rocks. We found a spot to pull out and make lunch—soup again—and while we were eating it we were hit with a hailstorm. Of course, we were wearing all our clothes again by now. This section, which took us three hours to paddle coming the other way, took over six hours coming back.

The final indignity was just as we landed: the heavens opened and poured out everything on top of us. I'm amazed the canoe didn't blow away as we put it on the car. Home felt awfully nice that night. We'll try Temagami at the end of the month and see if we get treated to better weather.



photos: Toni Harting

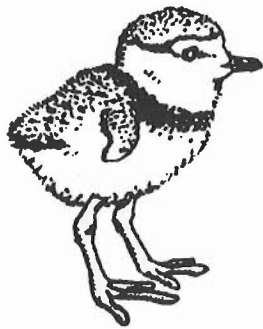
TRICKS OF THE TRADE

It is quite understandable that most visitors to Algonquin think of summer as a time of rest and relaxation. After all, this is the vacation season, and everywhere around us there is warm sunshine and new, green foliage.

For the bird and animal residents of the Park also, this is a time of relative ease and abundance. The hardships and privations of other seasons now seem far away and forgotten. This doesn't mean, however, that the furred and feathered inhabitants of Algonquin can take it quite as easy as we humans are able to. For one thing, most of them are now engaged in the extremely demanding task of raising young and seeing them through to the point of independence.

Readers who are parents themselves will already know what we mean but we are sure that even the veterans among you will find interesting the rather different problems faced by other parents in the Animal Kingdom and the strategies used to increase their chances for success.

Take, for example, the Killdeer. This is the handsome member of the plover family, familiar to many people as a common inhabitant of fields and roadsides back home and which also occurs here and there in Algonquin Park in suitable open areas such as beaches, picnic grounds, and drained beaver ponds.



Newly

Hatched

Killdeer

The Killdeer is superbly adapted to a life of running speedily around bare, open areas and expertly snapping up beetles and other insects; but it is also restricted to such areas. As with most running plovers, the Killdeer does not have a hind toe the way other birds do and so grasping and perching on a branch with its feet is about as hard for it as it would be for us. Among other things, this means that the Killdeer cannot build a nest off in the shrubbery somewhere, but is forced instead to lay its eggs right on the ground out in the open.

The problem is, of course, that any nest full of eggs or baby birds is the animal world equivalent of a fast food outlet. In the case of Killdeers, the eggs must be incubated for 24–26 days and then a further 29–34 days will

elapse before the young birds can fly. That is, a full two months are necessary for an egg to be transformed into an independent bird. This delay would be bad enough even with a wellhidden nest, but for a Killdeer's nest out in "plain sight" for every passing predator, the chances of success would seem to be abysmally poor.

How then, do Killdeers ever succeed in raising young? Well, to begin with, nesting out in the open is not a total disaster. At least the incubating bird has a clear view in all directions and can, at the very first appearance of a predator in the distance, stealthily leave the nest. An incubating Killdeer is relatively easy to see but the eggs are another matter altogether. With their irregular, dark blotches against the irregular surroundings of pebbles and other debris that constitute the "nest," Killdeer eggs are almost impossible to spot unless you make a very careful, inch by inch search. It is therefore an excellent strategy for the incubating bird to leave the nest and hope that the predator continues on by without noticing, or even suspecting the presence of, an appetizing Killdeer Egg McMuffin.

This is not to say, however, that the adults will rely entirely on the eggs' camouflage. If the intruder gets too close, one or both of the adults will fly about vociferously and, if that fails to distract the predator, one of the birds will go into the Killdeer's famous "broken wing" display. This involves the displaying bird crouching low to the ground with one wing extended over the back and the other flapping piteously against the earth. The tail is spread wide, exposing its orange upper surface and the bird calls frantically. The extraordinary performance is virtually certain to make a predator think the bird is grievously injured and will be easy pickings. It always happens, however, that the flopping cripple somehow manages to elude the predator until the latter is hundreds of feet away from the nest and no longer likely to find those precious eggs. Then, the Killdeer miraculously "recovers" and flies away.

Marvellous as it may be against predators, the broken wing routine would be useless against big browsing animals uninterested in eating injured Killdeers or their eggs but which might accidentally step on a nest. Killdeers have been reported elsewhere to fly in the faces of horses and cows, thus deflecting them from the eggs but, as far as we know, no one has seen if Killdeers do this with moose and deer here in Algonquin.

One other major calamity can befall Killdeer eggs. Because they are often out on bare, mineral surfaces, they run the risk of being literally cooked on very hot days. The Killdeer's response to this danger (apparently unique among birds) is to go soak its belly feathers in a nearby body of water and then get back on the eggs—thus keeping their temperature within tolerable limits.

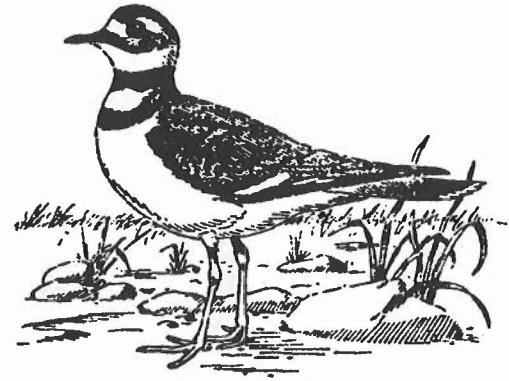
When and if a clutch of eggs lasts until hatching, it normally means that the nest is exposed to even greater

dangers. Unlike eggs, nestlings are not perfectly still and, if they are to be fed, they must be visited often by the adults. Predators are quite alert to such clues. Fortunately, Killdeers are among those birds whose young hatch with well-developed legs and coordination and are able to leave the nest the day after they hatch. Not only that, they can run around and catch their own food, and all the adults have to do is keep distracting predators and make sure the downy chicks don't get lost or fatally chilled.

It sounds easy but, even then, many young die before they reach flying age. The few who make it, representing perhaps 25% or fewer of the eggs originally laid, then have no further use for their parents and wander off to begin new lives on their own.

From our human standpoint, it is a little sad that these lucky ones haven't the slightest inkling of what their parents have accomplished in the face of extreme odds.

Perhaps young Killdeers just enjoy the summer warmth and greenery the way we humans do?



Adult Killdeer

Reprinted from the 2 July 1981 edition of Algonquin Park's *The Raven*, courtesy of the Ministry of Natural Resources.

ONE SCENE FROM A CANOE TRIP

Four old boys, standing and freezing under invisible geese honking south, waiting for the Canadian National en route from Winnipeg to Toronto. Total silence, total darkness, and 25 miles to the nearest road. We paddled in the rain, portaged up past Schultz's empty cabin to the tracks, put on all the clothes we had, and waited. Schultz's Trail is a flag stop between Sioux Lookout and Armstrong, Ontario. Before departure we had phoned in a stop order to a CNR agent named Ian. But would they stop?

Not likely, said Frank, who 10 years earlier had waited here all night in vain: the CNR had gone out on strike. He did not know that, but not seeing even a freight was enough proof. The next day he had portaged across the tracks and paddled south three extra days on slim rations to get out. They better stop, said Roy, who had been reluctantly recruited to this adventure by me in memory of a milder trip in the Adirondacks 40 years before. He despaired of a late return to his family in California. Hope so, said the typically upbeat Reid. Yes, said I publicly, while privately setting the odds at about 3:1, but thinking that either way it's an adventure.

A single track threading the endless boreal forest of the Shield, a place which had built on me over 30 years, nine rivers, and three train traverses, the place of sweep and scary possibilities—too big for answers, too big even for questions. The single track springs out the forest wall 200 yards on the right, S-curves through blasted pink granite, and swings into the forest 200 yards to the left. Scant time to react.

The train is late. We pace. Around 11 Reid starts a fire, and we cycle close and away. It is 3 degrees C. Frank asks if I'm still having fun, or perhaps rethinking my insistence that we finish here instead at Armstrong, which is a scheduled stop. I am having fun; the past two days paddling

and portaging eight times up the Lookout River have been lovely: bright leaves against sombre skies, the delicious feeling of fall closing in, the power and buzz of nearby rapids that we can hear, feel, smell . . . but do not have to run. But I am so cold now that any answer is OK.

About midnight the train explodes out of the bush at full blast with three headlights boring straight head. They are not looking for us! But we jump to the drill: wave flashlights, flap a reflective space blanket. The engine's bow wave swats the fire flat and sparks stream past our legs and into the wet trees. I am looking up to the bright windows of warm cars full of comfortable, unknowing travellers.

"You bastards!" Roy later tells us he is screaming. I am thinking; "At least we can dive into tents and get warm. Tomorrow we will deal with what to do. The next train comes in three days."

But the train stops. The engine is well past us when the wheels shriek and the bright windows slow. Ashley Cromwell-Burford (pensionist from Surrey) is sipping the last of his sherry when the tablecloth, silver, and china begin to slide off the table as the brakes are struck. Letitia Stanhall-Armitage (visiting from Perth) has just put down her Miss Marple and is reaching to extinguish the light when she is nearly cast from her berth.

All this disorder because of four grubby guys.

The train is backing, canted cars appearing one by one around the curve. Finally, friendly and smiling heads hanging from the baggage car. Complete the drill: scatter the fire and throw up the two canoes, the six packs, the six paddles, the camera case, and haul ourselves up the ladder and fall into warmth and light. Later we will find out who knew what about us at Schultz's Trail. Now we relax as the train clicks east.

Robert Herendeen

CANOE KIND OF GUY

Randy Cunningham

There have been many changes in paddling over the years. Clothing and accessories of every imaginable sort have been developed and marketed. Materials for craft have gone from wood and canvass, to aluminum, to royalet and kevlar. None of these have matched in importance the rise of kayaking as the king of paddling—leaving canoeing behind in its wake.

This trend is shown in some anecdotes. Three or four years ago, I took a basic canoeing class from the local chapter of the American Red Cross. The class was filled with no problem. It was one of the last such classes to enjoy that level of enrollment. Since then, basic canoe classes have been cancelled for lack of interest, while for kayaking classes it is standing room only. Last June, the Mad River Canoe road show came to a lake I paddle on frequently. They were also showing a line of kayaks. The canoes lined the banks unused, like wallflowers at a dance. The kayaks were never on dry land for long. This past spring, I signed up for my river canoeing introductory class, again with the Red Cross; I was the only person who signed up for it. The rest were kayakers, taking their river class.

Being a rock-ribbed canoe head, I have not joined the enthusiasm. I would like to try sea kayaking at some time in the future. However, it is at the bottom of the list of priorities, behind all the places I want to visit—in a canoe.

Why this hesitancy to get with it and be so retro? I bear no ill will towards kayakers or kayaks. I sure as hell have more in common with them than I ever will with those who motorboat. (We will not even discuss those barbarians on jet skis.)

I think it boils down to culture and stage in life.

Canoeists wear their baseball caps with the bills facing forward. Kayakers wear theirs facing backwards. A canoeist will call you a guy. A kayaker will call you a dude. A canoeist will react to something he or she approves of with polite or, at best, enthusiastic applause. A kayaker will react like the audience of the Jerry Springer show with whoops and high five's. Canoeists won't admit it, but they identify with Homer Simpson. Kayakers identify with Bart. A canoeist reads a good book or takes care of the unexciting business of maintaining society while not paddling. A kayaker is publishing an E-zine, jumps around in the mosh pit, goes skateboarding, or is diving into a chasm attached to a glorified rubber band. A kayak is a boyfriend or girlfriend. A canoe is your spouse.

The branch of canoeing I identify with the most is wilderness tripping. Another example of the difference in the two branches of paddling is conversation around the campfire. With wilderness canoeing we would discuss sighting a flotilla of loons, or the beauty of a particular lake. The campfire in my river class was utterly different. There were no musings about the sublime around this campfire. Instead, the conversations were about hair-rais-

ing drops and the last time you cheated death. I felt like a Betazoid on the bridge of a Klingon bird of prey. I was surprised that at the end of the night, everyone did not take his or her leave by butting heads while declaring, "May you die well!"

The rise of kayaking and the decline of canoeing can be seen in advertisements. The cult of youth is reflected in kayaking shots. The ads show excitement. They are sexy. They show paddlers who are right out of TV, where the world is only occupied by people who are beautiful, hard-bodied, young, rich, and single. These characters live life on the edge, and when they are on the water, they are in kayaks. Canoes are only shown when the target audience is focused on retirement services, Viagra, menopause, or adult hygienic products. You kayak into the excitement of young adulthood. You canoe to your demise.

Canoeing can be done solo but it really was designed to be a collective effort between two people. Kayaking can be done in tandem, but it really was designed to be an individual effort. It has a better fit to the culture of our present go-go era. Collective efforts are not in vogue. The cultural hero of our time is the lone entrepreneur, sitting behind his laptop, playing Master of the Universe with far-flung investments and economies. You can bet that if he paddles, he paddles a kayak. Paddling by yourself in a kayak is also more convenient in a world where families seldom eat together and more and more Americans live alone. Ever try to organize a canoe trip in today's world? Finding that other partner can be more daunting than negotiating any rapids.

Will canoes be driven from the waters by the kayaking rage? Will canoeists become a small, obscure sub-sect of the paddling world? Since devised eons ago, canoes have waxed and waned repeatedly in popularity, but have never totally disappeared. They still have the edge on their rivals in being able to haul a ton of gear into the bush. Though families kayak together, when you think of a family outing with kids in tow, you think of a canoe. Canoes may return in a future, less frantic time. Our culture may swing back again to where the emphasis is less on the heroic, self obsessed individual, and more on the co-operative effort of two people paddling a craft.

Until the wheel of fashion turns again, canoe aficionados should learn to glory in their underdog status. I can think of no better example of this unhip and proud stand than a recent canoe race that was held in Illinois. The competition was restricted to aluminum canoes. You want to talk about out of fashion! Yet there they were, proudly racing their beloved bauxite beasts! Their spirit should be an example to us all, that we, canoe heads, should keep the faith and continue to paddle into the future the craft that has given us so much pleasure in the past—the humble, unappreciated, but indomitable canoe.

WCA TRIPS

**WANT TO ORGANIZE A TRIP AND HAVE IT
PRESENTED IN THE AUTUMN ISSUE?
Contact the Outings Committee before 6 August!**

For questions, suggestions, proposals to organize trips, or anything else related to the WCA Trips, contact any of the members of the Outings Committee: Bill Ness, (416) 321-3005, rabbit1@globalserve.net; Mike Jones, (905) 275-4371, dd890@freenet.toronto.on.ca; Ann Dixie, (416) 512-0292, Ann_Dixie@CAMH.net; Peter Devries, (905) 477-6424; Gisela Curwen, (416) 484-1471, g.curwen@danielbtborger.com

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

+++++

8-9 July

PALMER RAPIDS PLAY WEEKEND

Bill Ness, (416) 321-3005, book before 2 July, call before 9:00 p.m. ----- Palmer Rapids on the Madawaska is one of the best places in Ontario to enjoy a weekend of whitewater practice and play. For experienced novice to intermediate paddlers, it provides a challenging but safe learning environment. For non-paddling spouses and kids, there's a sand beach for playing and swimming, making this a good family weekend getaway. I'm happy to give informal instruction to anyone looking to work on their basic skills, and if you want help rolling your canoe or kayak, we can do a rolling clinic.

8-14 July

KILLARNEY PARK AND ADJACENT WATERS

Richard Todd, (819) 459-1179, richard@magi.com ----- This trip will have several interesting features, including two nights on Three Narrows Lake in the centre of the park, some open-water paddling, a visit to the village of Killarney, and a final night on Phillip Edward Island. There are only two significant portages, but they are substantial. There is some possibility of fairly big waves as well. Limit: nine people, four tents.

5-7 August

OTTAWA RIVER

John & Sharon Hackert, (416) 438-7672, book before 30 July. ----- We are fortunate to have access to the most beautiful campsite on the river, right where we take out. On Saturday, we will paddle the Middle Channel; on Sunday, the Main Channel; and on Monday, the Middle again. Suitable for paddlers with intermediate whitewater skills who are prepared to portage if they choose to. We will scout most rapids. Full boat flotation and helmets required due to the nature of the rapids. Limit six boats.

6-15 August

GEORGIAN BAY FROM BAYFIELD INLET TO KILLARNEY PARK

Richard Todd, (819) 459-1179, richard@magi.com. ----- This summer marks the 30th anniversary of the leader's first trip on the Bay, from Port Severn to Killarney. Time and the overdeveloped southern reaches of the Bay prevent repeating the trip in its entirety, but some of the original features, including fresh baking along the way, will be relived. Paddlers should possess good basic skills and be comfortable with the possibility of some fairly big waves.

14-21 August

KILLARNEY PARK FAMILY TRIP

Richard Todd, (819) 459-1179, richard@magi.com ----- This trip will begin with an evening in the George Lake campground, then spend six easy days on the lakes in the southeast of the park. Aside from the leader and his family, there will be room for five more people, including children.

26-27 August

MINDEN WILDWATER PRESERVE

Bill Ness, (416) 321-3005, book before 19 August ----- The Gull River at Minden has a manmade whitewater course that can challenge the most proficient canoeist. However, even intermediate paddlers can have fun practising their skills at the bottom of the course. Boats should have full flotation to reduce the chance of damage and facilitate recovery. The Preserve requires that paddlers have helmets.

1-9 September

LA CLOCHE SILHOUETTE HIKING TRAIL, KILLARNEY

Gisela Curwen, (416) 484-1471. ----- Scenic and challenging 100 km backpacking trip. Get a different perspective of Killarney than from the canoe. Incredible vistas of quartzite ridges and turquoise lakes. Major crowds will be gone, and it will still be warm enough to swim

2-4 September

OTTAWA RIVER

John & Sharon Hackert, (416) 438-7672, book before 27 August. Please see trip details above for 5-7 August.

10 September

BURNT RIVER

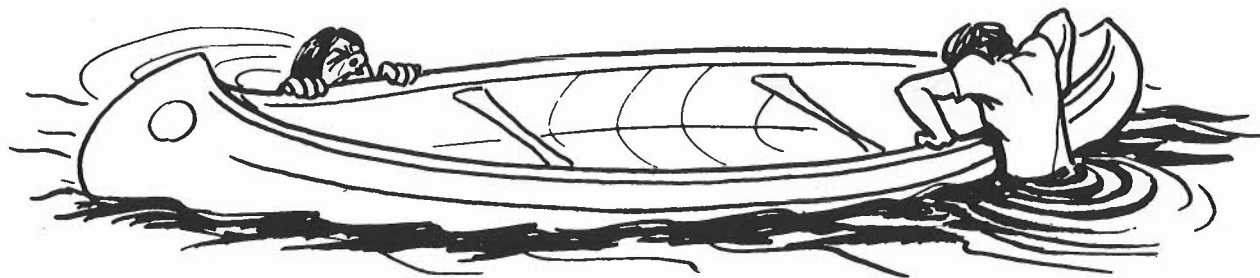
Bill Ness, (416) 321-3005 ----- Between Kinmount and the village of Burnt River, the Burnt is a placid stretch of water with a few small riffles and a couple of larger scenic drops, which are easily portaged. By this time of year there should be few bugs and the fall colors should be starting to make their appearance. This leisurely Sunday paddle makes an excellent family outing. Limit six boats.

16 September MARGARET LAKE LOOP

Rob Butler, (416) 487-2282, book before 11 September ----- Meet at 9 a.m. at the Leslie Frost Centre on Hwy 35, south of Dorset. A loop of about five small lakes, fortunately joined by portages, so we can stretch our legs! Limit four canoes.

22 October ELORA GORGE

Mike Jones, (905) 275-4371, book before 15 October ----- This trip on the Grand River through the Elora Gorge offers some fine whitewater paddling. Autumn rains should bring the river level up. Suitable for intermediate paddlers with fully outfitted boats. Helmets required. Limit six river craft.



OUTINGS PLANNED FOR THE WCA FALL MEETING

Most of the trips planned for the WCA Fall Meeting in Camp Wanakita on 14 and 15 October (see page 13) are repeated from the Fall Meeting of 1998. If anyone is familiar with any of these or other day trips in the area, and would be willing to lead a trip, please notify Jeff Haymer at (416) 635-5801 or jhaymer@ionsys.com.

Saturday, 14 October

1. Pondhopper Special #1: The trip starts with a short car shuttle on the Sherbourne Lake access road. Beginning at Nehemiah Lake the route traverses Ronald, Ernest, and Gun lakes and ends at the south arm of Raven Lake. At less than 10 km this trip can be easily done in three hours, but the pleasant, photogenic scenery demands an unhurried pace.
2. Pondhopper Special #2: From the put-in at the Frost Centre the route crosses St. Nora, Sherbourne, Little Avery and Bruin lakes, to end at Plastic Lake on the Sherbourne Lake access road. More ambitious types can make this a circle route by portaging from Plastic Lake back to St. Nora.
3. River and Lake Special: The trip starts at Wren Lake on Hwy 35, follows the Black River a short distance downstream to the portage into Horse Lake, and continues southward through McEwen and Dan lakes to end at the Margaret Lake access point. Total distance is less than 10 km, which leaves plenty of time to enjoy the surroundings and a leisurely lunch.
4. Hiking the Frost Centre Ski Trails: The proposed route starts at the parking lot on the west side of Hwy 35 opposite the Frost Centre and follows the Fox, Beaver, and Bear ski trails with a lunch stop at the shelter on Dan Lake.
5. Minden Wild Water Preserve: This is a chance for competent people who want to play around in some serious whitewater.
6. Hiking the Camp Wanakita Hiking/Ski Trails: There is an interesting network of hiking trails within the camp boundaries.
7. Big Hawk Lake Loop: Starting from the Big Hawk Lake access point, this 20-km route goes through Clear Lake, Red Pine Lake, and Nunikani Lake, before returning to the starting point. All portages are short and easy, but strong winds can extend what is normally a five-hour outing (including lunch).

Sunday, 15 October

1. Burnt River: A pleasant, "on the way home" paddle from Kinmount to the village of Burnt River. This is a placid stretch of river with a few ripples and some scenic spots along the way
2. A repeat of any of Saturday's trips if there is enough interest.

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

This PRODUCTS AND SERVICES section is available, free of charge and on a firstcome, firstserved basis, to members as well as nonmembers 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 nonsale times at:

- Algonquin Outfitters, RR#1, Oxtongue Lake, Dwight, Ont.
- Rockwood Outfitters, 669 Speedvale Ave. West, Guelph, Ont.
- Suntrail Outfitters, 100 Spence Str., Hepworth, Ont.
- Smoothwater Outfitters, Temagami (Hwy. 11), Ont.

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

CANOE FOR SALE 1915 Lakefield 16' cedar strip, fully restored, asking \$2,900. Paddle a piece of history! Contact Chuck in Killarney, ON; ph.705-287-1023 (eve); 705-287-2900 (days).

CLASSIC SOLO CANOEING instructed by Becky Mason at Meech Lake, Quebec. All levels. Equipment provided. Fee \$70.00. Tel. (819) 827-4158; e-mail: redcanoe@istar.ca website: www.wilds.mb.ca/redcanoe (You can also contact Becky for a list of events she is participating in this summer.)

ADVENTURE PADDLING INC. offers ORCA/OWWA certified canoe/kayak courses, rolling clinics, instructors courses; locations throughout southeastern Ontario and Costa Rica. Weekend courses are in the Guelph/Elora area, just one hour from Toronto. Check us out at www.adventurepaddling.com or phone us at (519) 763-9496.

KUKAGAMI LODGE is a small wilderness retreat located in the forest northeast of Sudbury. We have no road access, so we bring our guests in by boat across Kukagami Lake (newly designated as a Forest Reserve in Ontario's Living Legacy). Plan to begin or end your canoe trip here, with a stay of two days or longer, and we will help you plan a 3 to 6 day flatwater trip in our area. Call: (705) 853-4929 or 853-4742. Write: Kukagami Lodge, RR 1, Wahnapiatae, Ontario, POM 3C0. To find our website, search for "Kukagami Lodge" on Excite!

NATURAL OUTINGS Wilderness hiking/canoeing ecotrips—1 to 2 week bargain adventures May - day hike Arizona's desert parks & backpack New Mexico's canyons. July—backpack Mt. Assiniboine and Jasper's Skyline Trail. August—Yukon: hike the Chilcoot, canoe to Dawson.

September—Arizona/Utah great canyon parks tour. November—Costa Rica ecotours -beaches, jungles, volcanoes. C\$500-800/week. Ph/Fax (705) 434-0848, info@naturaloutings.com, www.naturaloutings.com

SMOOTHWATER PROGRAM CANOE CLINICS AND COURSES: Canoe Tripping Basics 12 July \$80; Kid's Canoe 19 July \$40; ORCA Canoe Tripping Instructor (level 3) 16-25 July \$870. **OUTFITTED AND GUIDED WILDERNESS TRIPS:** Music Making and Story Telling 16-23 July \$673; Women's Quest by Canoe 13-20 August \$673. **WORKSHOPS AND RETREATS:** Wilderness Survival 26-27 August \$200; Spirit of Seven, A Temagami Art and Wilderness Adventure, 9-15 July \$475; Women's Holistic Spa Retreats 27-29 October and 24-26 November \$225. For full details: Smoothwater Outfitters, Box 40, Temagami, Ont. P0H 2H0; tel: (705) 569-3539; fax: (705) 569-2710; temagami@onlink.net, www.smoothwater.com

SNOW WALKERS' RENDEZVOUS at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ontario, on 3 and 4 November 2000. A two-day conference of workshops, demonstrations, scientific presentations, and guest speakers. Our tentative program includes Alexandra and Garret Conover, authors of A Snow Walkers Companion, George Luste, Craig Macdonald, and others. The \$70.00 cost includes fabulous food and free accommodations in our tent village set up in the gymnasium. Vendors are welcome. For more information, contact Allan Brown at 905-648-2139 ext.4221.

SHOOTING PADDLERS, Toni Harting's new book on paddling photography (see page 15 of this issue of Nastawgan), is now available in many bookstores and outdoors/sport stores. It can also be obtained directly from the publisher (Natural Heritage Books, 1-800-725-9982 and natherbooks@idirect.com) as well as from the author (416-964-2495 and aharting@netcom.ca).

KNOW YOUR BEAR POOP

The Montana Department of Fish and Game is advising hikers, hunters, and fishermen to take extra precautions and keep alert for bears while in the field. They advise that outdoorsmen wear noisy little bells on their clothing so as not to startle bears that aren't expecting them. They also advise outdoorsmen to carry pepper spray with them in case of an encounter with a bear. It is also a good idea to watch out for fresh signs of bear activity. Outdoorsmen should recognize the difference between black bear and grizzly bear poop. Black bear poop is smaller and contains lots of berries and squirrel fur. Grizzly bear poop has little bells in it and smells like pepper.

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Wilderness Canoe Association

membership application

I enclose a cheque for CDN \$25 (single) or CDN \$35 (family) for membership in the *Wilderness Canoe Association* (for non-residents US \$25 or US \$35). 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. _____

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

• Send completed form and cheque, payable to the WILDERNESS CANOE ASSOCIATION, to the WCA postal address, c/o Membership.

New member Member # if renewal: _____

Single Family

Phone Number(s):
 (____) _____ (h)

(____) _____ Ext. _____ (w)

e-mail: _____