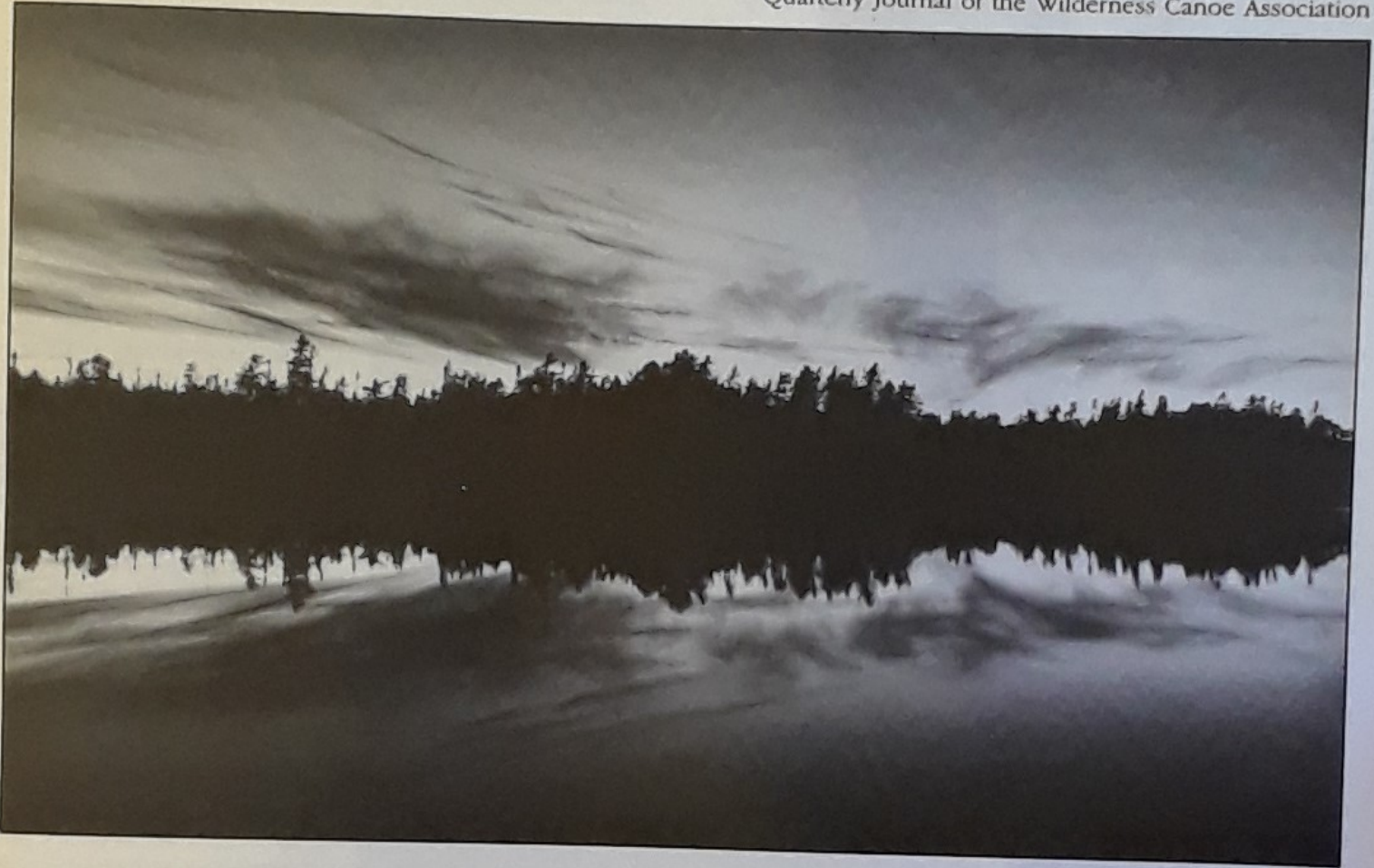




nastawgan

Autumn 2000 Vol. 27 No. 3

Quarterly Journal of the Wilderness Canoe Association



THE MAGNIFICENT MISSISSAGI

Mark Robinson

The summer of 1999 had been a busy one and we were in need of some rejuvenation of our spirits. The perfect prescription was, of course, a wilderness canoe trip. I'm a dairy farmer from southern Ontario and my wife, Wendy, is an office administrator for a propane company. Our third partner on the August trip was Buddy, an Australian Shepherd puppy. We picked the Mississagi River because it's a good week's paddle and reasonably unroaded, unpopulated, and uncrowded. The "Lands for Life" process had just added some acreage to Mississagi River Provincial Park and we were hoping to see lots of pine and some old-growth areas.

We left Friday evening after work and drove all night to meet our shuttle at Aubrey Falls Trading Post, north of Thessalon. We then headed up Hwy. 129 towards

Chapleau with three of us, Bud, our gear, and our royalex Dumoine all loaded in and on our Honda Civic. From the Sultan road we saw the devastation our consumptive habits are inflicting on our beautiful northern forests. Most people could never imagine the devastation and fewer could understand its disastrous consequences to the forest's natural ecosystems. They never see it and don't think it affects them. Maybe they don't care or they would make it a major issue at election time. We have no shame or conscience and this makes my heart ache.

Turning south from Ramsey we missed our planned put-in at Spanish Chutes where the Spanish River runs into Abney Lake, driving about 60 km too far south before turning back. This region had all been logged by E.B. Eddy and the wood trucked to the mill in Espanola. Most

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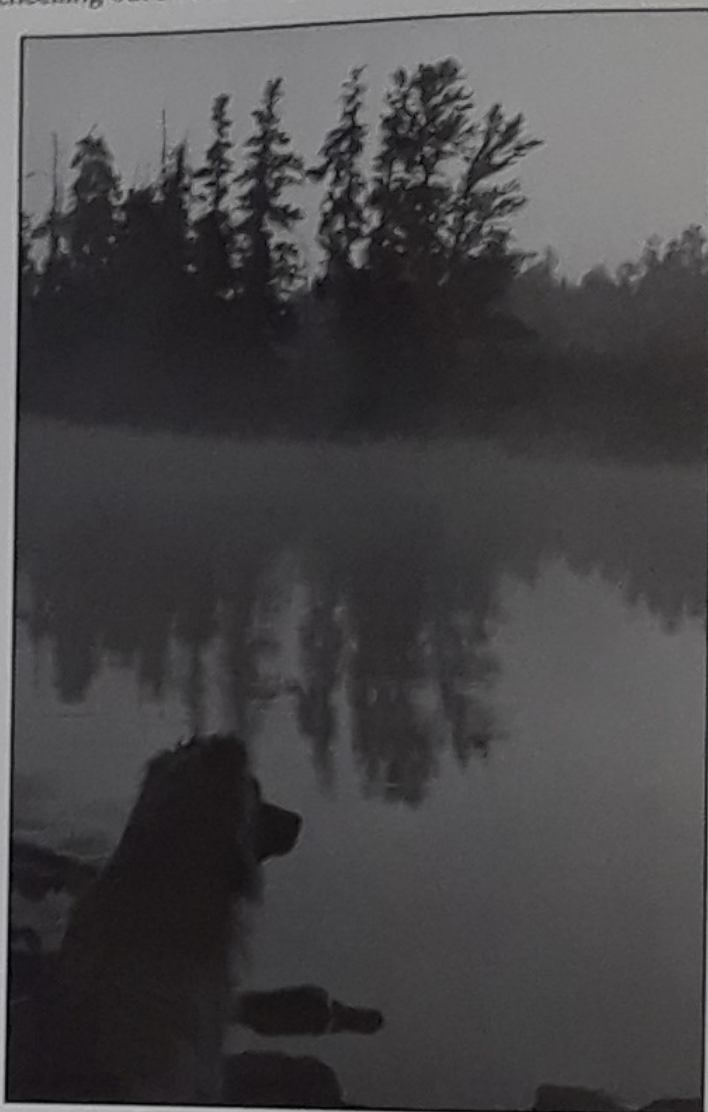
of the area was clearcut, a very disturbing sight. When we finally got in the water at our starting point, we'd been 22 hours getting there.

A short paddle up the river brought us to our first portage (500 m) into Spanish Lake and we realized the water levels were very low. The water was clean but tea colored. We saw a pair of osprey. There is a chain of islands that crosses Spanish Lake and a big black bear was swimming from island to island checking out all the camp-sites for leftovers. We could have paddled quite close to the animal but didn't want to disturb him. He didn't seem afraid of us. Bud woke up and let out a few woofs. I think he thought he was a big Rottweiler and was going to eat the bear.

After a short portage over the dam into Bardney Lake, we started looking for a campsite. At the dam it was kind of messy from fishermen left-overs, but after paddling out of the bay the lake became much prettier than Spanish Lake and with clearer water. The shore-lines were covered in jack pine and a lot of aspen, evidence of forest fire history. There had been no frosts yet, so the forests were still very green. We found only one campsite and it was well used by fishermen. Eventually we camped on a rock ledge on the western shore overlooking the lake, surrounded by jack pine. A pair of osprey circled and fished the north end of Bardney Lake. After a quick supper and swim we hit the sack and slept well.

Next morning, we had a northern tailwind and surfed down the lake to the 450-m portage into Sulphur Lake. There we found a log book dating back to 1992. Among the entries was one by Gary and Joannie McGuffin with Kalija when they were doing their 'Ancient Forest Trail' trip. Another guy wrote he had caught a 16-kg northern monster in Bardney. We always have that relieved feeling of 'getting out and away' when we're surfing along in our canoe and viewing some of the most beautiful scenery anywhere. Spectacular!

Across Sulphur is a 200-m portage down the creek bed into Surprise Lake and then a 1000-m one into Circle Lake. The trail is good, well travelled and dry, just a couple of short hills. From Circle Lake there's a 90-m carry



into a small unnamed lake and another 90-m one into Mississagi Lake. We were now in the Mississagi River watershed, all downhill from here. On these portages there was absolutely no sign of moose. Lots of bear scat filled with berries, but no moose. The little streams were practically bone dry.

Immediately, we noticed the huge pines as we paddled down Mississagi Lake. Big reds on the north and east shores and then white pine further south. This was why

we were here, fabulous! We could also see hills in the distance that had been logged in the past and burn areas regrown with jack pine. This is a very pretty lake. The Mississagi River enters the lake from the west draining from White Owl Lake. I wish we had paddled into White Owl but we realize that even on wilderness trips we never take enough time to do such things. Next trip! There was an aluminum boat at the portage, probably from a fly-in camp on White Owl. We cruised down Mississagi Lake and near the south end a huge bald eagle flew up from a point near a bunch of gulls. We also saw a second one, landing in a big pine. Magnificent birds, dark with white head and tail. That encounter made the day's efforts more than worthwhile.

The river narrows down and where it enters Upper Green Lake it swings to the east behind a big sand spit. A modern lodge is built here on or near the site of an old North West Company post. This Mississagi Lodge is nice and neat with several cabins along the sand spit. It has a stone chimney and moose antlers are nailed over the front door. There was smoke coming from the chimney but we were afraid if we stopped for a visit we'd drink all their rum. We paddled around the point and found a campsite where the old fire ranger cabin had burnt below the fire tower on Upper Green's east shore. This is a beautiful campsite with lots of pine and a good view of the lake and the western sunset. The waters in the Upper Mississagi River watershed are crystal clear and cold, great for a refreshing swim. This campsite offered us a great spot to sit around the fire and think about what it might have been like years past for trappers, fire rangers, and native people in this beautiful country. Grey Owl's "men of the last frontier."



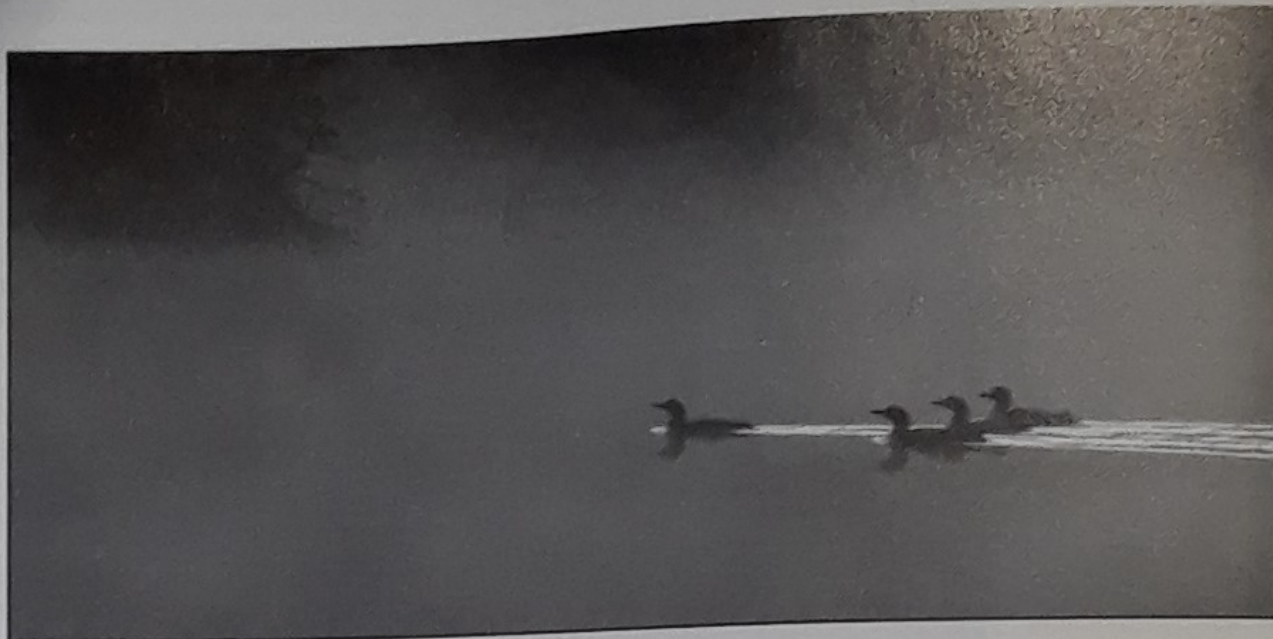
Next morning we had a hearty breakfast and bush-whacked our way up to the fire tower. It's a steel tower with 1957 etched in the cement and it gives a grand view of the surrounding country and lakes. A bush plane flew up from White Owl Lake. Probably there are outfitter cabins all over the place. This is superb northern pike country, a favorite of American fishermen. On our return to our campsite we realized the old ranger cabin was surrounded by the refuse of years of canned goods and cabin life.

We packed up and headed down Upper Green Lake to the short portage into Kashbogama Lake. Another aluminum boat was at the portage and you could see a camp directly across the lake. The river flows out of Kashbogama to the south and the portage is from the bay east of the river mouth. It's a good 300 m into the river and a short paddle into Shanguish Lake. This is a beautiful, rocky lake with many good campsites and lots of jack pine and some red and white pine. All the lakes look like great pike lakes. I had brought my fishing gear but we had sufficient food and not enough time to do everything.

At the south end of Shanguish, the river empties through a nearly dry rapid. Our possibilities for running

whitewater on this trip were not looking so good! A 30-m carry leads to a small pond and a view of the only bridge crossing the river above Aubrey Falls. The Mississagi then widens into Limit Lake. We saw more large pine as we headed south. A 60-m carry brought us to Kettle Lake, another beautiful lake with rocky shorelines and lots of jack pine. These shorelines reminded me of country much farther north. We camped on the rocks on a little island near the south end of the lake. We relaxed that evening, doing some gear repairs around the fire, watching a colorful sunset.

On my farm I usually get up at 4:30 a.m. seven days a week and the habit is hard to break. It's a special time of day. This early morning on Kettle Lake was magical. There was a heavy fog that faded and thickened and drifted around, giving us glimpses of the surroundings but never allowing us to see the whole scene. All the while a glowing orange-pink sunrise added to the drama. Loons called in the distance, announcing the morning like boreal roosters. A family swam within metres of our shoreline with a veil of mist behind them. Gorgeous mornings, my favorite time of day.



With breakfast done and things packed up we headed down the river where it enters Upper Bark Lake. There is a couple of little portages into the lake. The pollen line was half a metre or so above the water level and the abundant beaver houses were high out of the water. Curiously, almost all houses lacked feed beds or the feed beds were old and uneaten. A lot of beaver that were here are now gone.



Upper Bark Lake is beautiful with towering white pine everywhere. There was a marked campsite on the western shore occupied by canoes and tents, the first sign we had seen of other canoeists. The wind was in our face again, making for good exercise. The narrows leading into the south section of Upper Bark was shallow, so we had to line through it. I don't think it's even supposed to be a swift or rapid. We stopped for lunch, pondering what the anticipated rapids on the river section of our trip might have in store for us. As we sat munching on gorp and sausage, two guys came up in an aluminum boat, trying to ascend the shallows with the help of their motor. I got in the water and towed them up with the bowline. They were all dressed in camo, possibly bear hunting.

We had planned to take the portage straight across the lake that goes past an old cabin of Grey Owl's and then into Bark Lake. But we decided to paddle around, following the river and adding 15–20 km to our trip. This section is very scenic with lots of pine. The forests of the interior of this loop we made are supposed to be protected now. For how long we can only guess. We paddled nearly a full circle and a strong wind blew in our faces from every direction we faced. Our royalex boat is much more sluggish loaded compared to our kevlar Kipawa. Bark Lake is big and long, draining to the south into River Aux Sables and westerly into the Mississagi.

Grey Owl's cabin is on the north shore of Bark Lake where the Mississagi drains from the lake. Two portages (100 m and 500 m) behind the cabin lead to Upper Bark Lake as the alternate route. We paddled to the dock and an old fella came out to meet us. He and his two grandsons and son-in-law had been flown in by Frontenac Outfitters from north of Blind River. A couple of Americans were fishing from the other cabin; they had caught 95 pike in three days. The old guy offered us coke, food, and all sorts of stuff but we didn't need anything. He didn't have to twist an arm too hard for a cold beer,

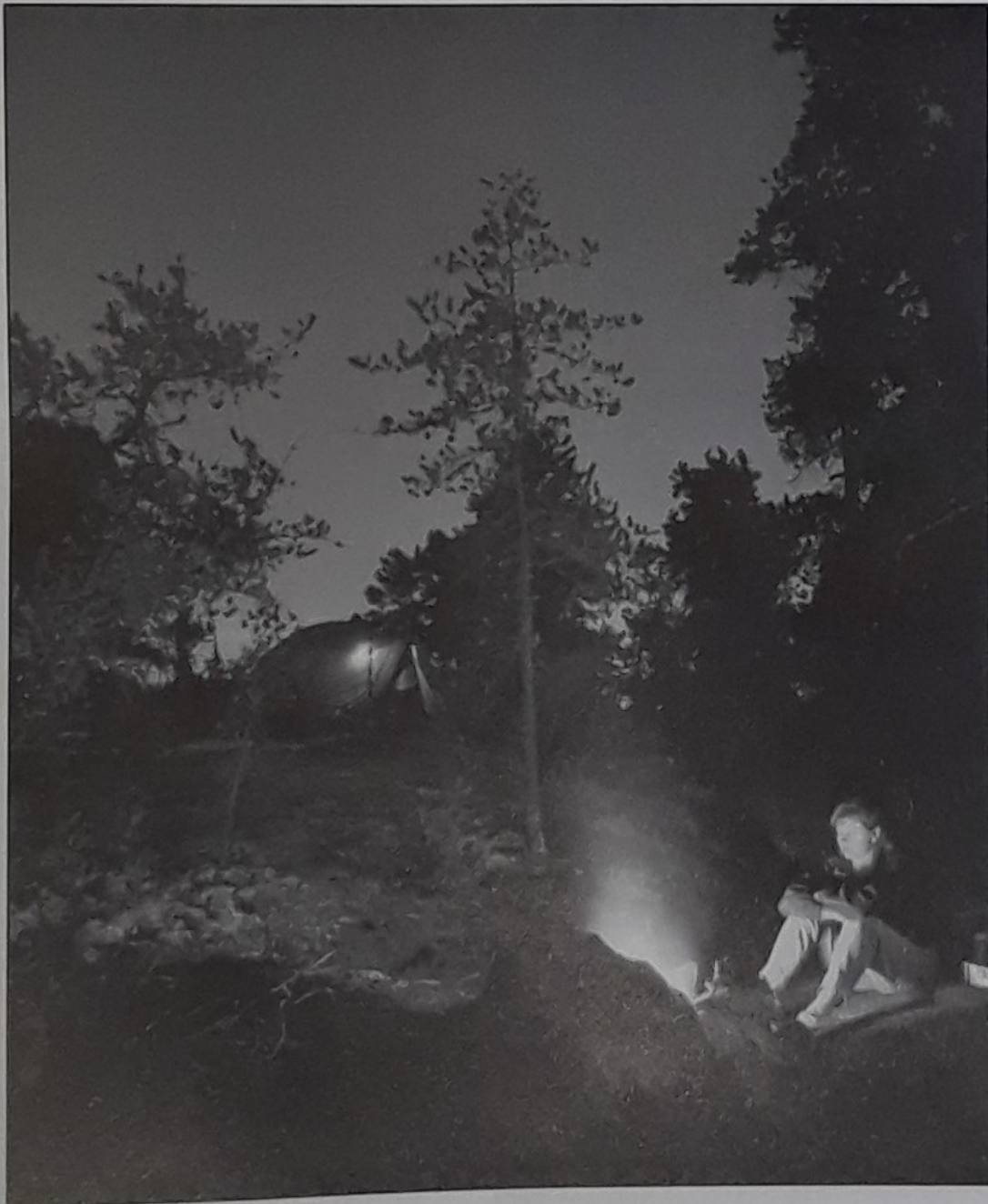
though. He apologized for it being light beer but that was just fine with us. Archie Belaney (Grey Owl) and his partner William Draper had carved their names in one cabin when they were patrolling as fire rangers in 1914, but this cabin is now locked and used as a supply shed by the outfitters. We were pretty disappointed, expecting that it would have been preserved somehow as a historic site.

We continued downriver to the first marked campsite amongst tall red pines. That evening, someone shot off 50–75 rounds from a heavy handgun, near the cabins. The target was set up facing down the portage trail. Bud was totally terrified.

The Mississagi runs northwest 5–6 km, then takes a 90-degree turn to the left and runs 5–6 km southwest; it is between 25 and 100 m wide. The shores are flat and lined

with predominately jack pine and some red and white pine. The river then swings back to the west and becomes more varied with small swifts and riffles, some of which needed lining because of the low water level. We saw our first sandhill cranes in a small marsh. We swung south of southwest and started into more whitewater but still had to line and wade a lot. In warm water this is fun too, but it doesn't compare to the exhilaration of good whitewater. The country here is awesome, with sandy, jack pine-lined banks and rocky outcrops at the rapids.

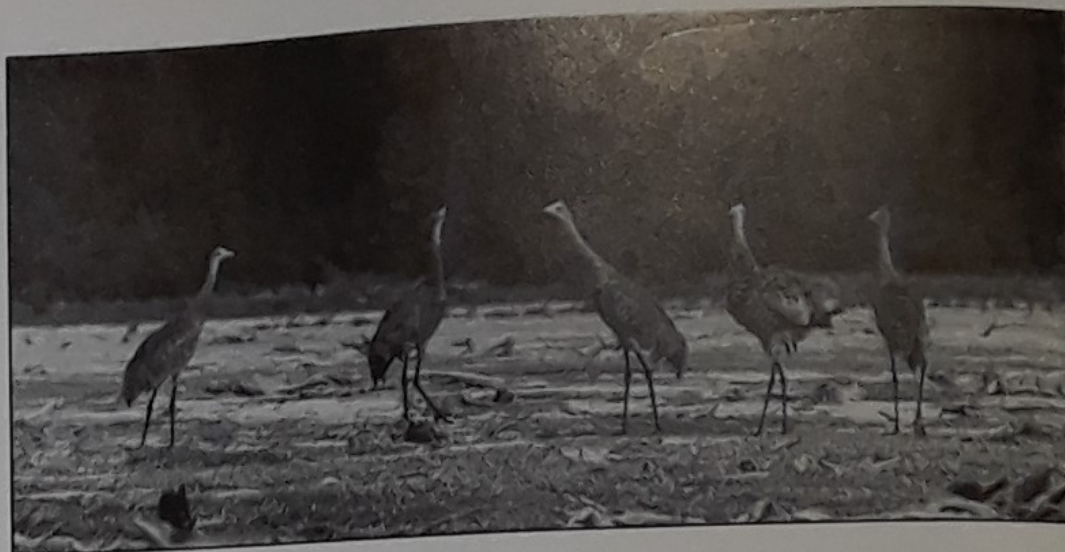
We decided to spend the night at the Hellgate Rapids portage, which bypasses a spectacular canyon with three or four tough drops, a crooked gnarly waterfall, followed by a 9-m drop and steep rocky banks on both sides of the river. This is a "must" portage at any water level. It would



Nastawgan

be awesome to see the fall in spring flow. We had a refreshing swim and a nice fire. Our entertainment for the evening was a little aurora borealis display.

We awoke to a magical misty morning and headed across the 1200-m portage. Below the canyon we paddled through more beautiful country. We only portaged a couple of times but lined and waded a lot. The water was still nice, clear, and cold despite low levels. A bush road coming off Hwy. 546 accesses the river from the south and we began to see many tree stands and tent sites from moose hunters, but there was still no moose to be found. The Mississagi carves itself to the northwest into a huge lowland marsh where it twist and turns on itself for miles forming oxbows and deadends. We saw a few more sandhill cranes and some waterfowl but not nearly as many as would be expected in this habitat. We became more aware of the lack of wildlife and signs of wildlife as the trip progressed. There was absolutely no recent sign of moose in this country that was ideal for them. I had hoped to hear wolves in the evening, but the forest was just too damn quiet. We didn't even hear warblers or songbirds in the woods. Something



appeared wrong.

This section of the river was sandy but turned muddier as we passed the mouth of the Abinette River. Unfortunately, our schedule did not permit us to paddle up that river.

The Mississagi splits 6-7 km below the mouth of the Abinette. We took the right fork but soon ran out of water, backtracked, and then headed down the longer left fork. We lined a few rapids and camped at a rapid before the big marsh, pitching our tent on the rocks. The marsh was 3-5 m above the water level and was bone dry, with snails, clams, and minnows laying dead on the hard pan. We had a nice fire on the rocks and hung our food pack in a tree a few hundred metres downstream.





At 4:00 a.m., Bud awoke us barking. I tried to focus out the tent door with my groggy eyes while Wendy tried to relax Bud. Looking at our tent door was a big black fella, swinging his head back and forth, wondering what the heck we were doing there. I just said to Wendy, "there's a bear," and that was enough to send the visitor crashing through the brush, away from us. Needless to say, we weren't going back to sleep so we started our biggest campfire yet. Bud went back to sleep.

The next day we headed downriver through this big marsh that was high and dry above where we could see. The river was gradually widening and the water becoming darker and considerably warmer as we neared Rocky Island Lake. At the entry to the lake was one last swift. The water line on the granite outcrops of the shoreline was seven vertical metres above the lake. The shorelines are marsh and mudflats and the shallows all pine stumps from the pre-dam era. Rocky Island Lake is a huge reservoir of water to power the hydro turbines at Aubrey Falls during the summer, making Rocky Island Lake a pretty sad sight in late summer.

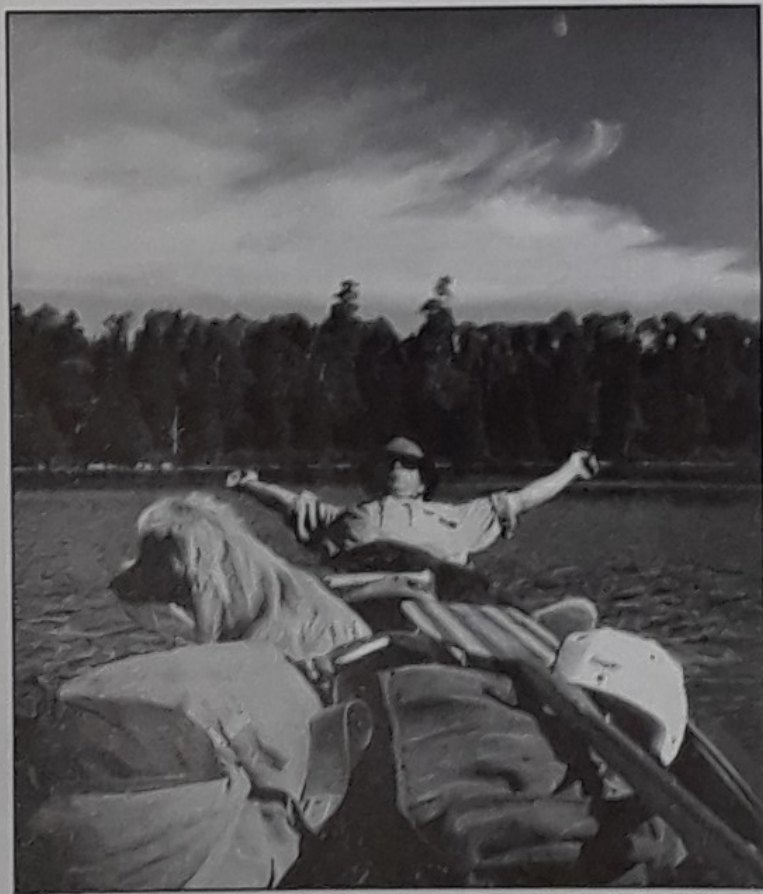
As we stroked down Rocky Island Lake, I tried to imagine the beauty of the scene before us as it must have been years ago. Rocky hills surrounding a valley with the mighty Mississagi flowing cold and clear through a river bed enveloped by monster pine and enriched by scattered small marshes and mini-deltas. Now the pines are gone and the water level in that zone fluctuates up and down some seven-odd metres. If the lake stayed at the high water level it would appear very beautiful, but the most important wildlife habitat is under water at fluctuating levels depending on our air conditioning requirements.

On an exposed mudflat a flock of sandhills picked a meal. We pulled over to get a picture and to our surprise Bud took off after them, sending the birds bugling into the air. We camped on an island above the dam holding back Rocky Island Lake.

Our last day on the Mississagi we had a good swim but it wasn't quite as refreshing as upriver. Two guys in home-made stitch and glue kayaks paddled by. They were here last summer too and said the water was the same then. We portaged around the dam into Aubrey Lake. There are campgrounds on Aubrey so the water levels are kept stable at the expense of Rocky Island. Aubrey is a beautiful lake surrounded by rocky hills but the water quality has suffered.

As we crossed the lake, another bald eagle lifted off from a big dead pine and soared up and up on the wind. This was one last treat before we ended our trip at Aubrey Falls dam. We loaded up, had a swim, and hiked down to see the falls before we left.

Another trip in high water would be fantastic, but I'll always wonder what spectacular sites we'd see paddling the Mississagi in Grey Owl's days before it was dammed and the headwaters clearcut. It seems we come home with similar questions after most trips into what is left of the wilderness.





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

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

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

EDITORIAL

WANTED: MATERIAL FOR PUBLICATION IN NASTAWGAN!! See the first item of the News Briefs below for the contributions you can make to your journal and how to submit them.

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

MULTIPLE-YEAR WCA MEMBERSHIPS are now possible, albeit with no discount. This will help alleviate much of the (volunteer) administrative work, save your time and postage, and also hedge against future fee increases. Contact Cash Belden for more information.

NEWS BRIEFS

NASTAWGAN MATERIAL AND DEADLINE Articles, trip reports, book reviews, photographs, sketches, technical tips, or anything else that you think might be of interest to other readers, are needed for future issues. Try to submit your contributions by e-mail, on 3.5 in. computer disk (WordPerfect or MS-Word or text files preferred, but any format is welcome), or in typewritten form, but legibly handwritten material will also be accepted. For more information contact the editor (address etc. see WCA Contacts on the back page). Contributor's Guidelines are available upon request; please follow these guidelines as much as possible to increase the efficiency of the production of our journal. The deadline dates for the next two issues are:

issue: Winter 2000 *deadline date:* 5 November
Summer 2000 27 January

GREAT LAKES HERITAGE COAST A discussion paper on this important signature site within Ontario's Living Legacy can be obtained from local district MNR offices or by writing to: Great Lakes Heritage Coast Project Office, Ministry of Natural Resources, Suite 221A-435 South James Street, Thunder Bay, Ontario, P7E 6 S8.

CLASSIC SOLO CANOEING VIDEO The premiere screening of this instructional video by Becky Mason will be presented on Monday, 4 December 2000, at 7:00 p.m., in the auditorium of the National Library of Canada, 395 Wellington Street, Ottawa, Ontario. For more details contact:

redcanoe@istar.ca
<http://www.wilds.mb.ca/redcanoe>

WCA WEBSITE

Because re-designing our website and setting it up properly has run into some difficulties, the site will not be available until further notice.



FALL PARTY

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

Then come to the WCA Fall Party, also called Wine-and-Cheese Party, on Friday evening, 17 November, at the Toronto Sailing and Canoe Club (TSCC), 1391 Lakeshore Blvd. West, Toronto. There is free parking for 150 cars. To help cover the expenses, an entry fee of \$10.00 per person will be charged at the door. Everybody is welcome, including non members. If you arrive early, you could

have as a special feature a fall paddle by launching at the TSCC. Stay inside the break wall and dress appropriately.

Program

7:00	Registration and welcome
8:00	First presentation
8:45	Meet the people, enjoy the treats
9:15	Second presentation
10:00	Coffee and clean-up

For more information contact Anne Snow at 416-482-0810.

CONSERVATION

UPDATE ON MCCRAE LAKE

On page 18 of the previous issue of *Nastawgan*, I had described that a local snowmobile club near Parry Sound was able to build a road to the east of McCrae Lake and is set to erect a bridge across the falls on the McDonald River. Since that time, the WCA attended a meeting arranged by the MNR where we, the Barry Canoe Club, the Five Winds Ski Club, the Friends of McCrae Lake, and the Federation of Ontario Naturalists (FON) detailed the problems that will result from the decision that allowed the building of the road. Three representatives of local snowmobile clubs were also present.

The visual spoiling of that spot is the least impact when compared to the other consequences of the road: the anticipated ATV traffic will bring erosion and garbage, side trails will sprout off that main road to carve up the forest and threaten the sensitive ecology. The MNR explained that it has received more written comments than it can reply to, and has acknowledged that problems exist. Notification of the project, even though done according to the MNR's guidelines, was inadequate and thus the MNR has built an extensive address list for future notification. It acknowledges the shortcomings of the biological assessment and is willing to base future assessments on guidelines that will be prepared by the FON. It acknowledges the anticipated garbage problems and hopes that the township in co-operation with the Friends of McCrae Lake will "manage" the situation. It also acknowledges the

threat from ATV traffic and has finally accepted that the MNR has the responsibility to control the impact. It currently hopes it can stop these vehicles by blocking the road at key points.

The extension of the road further north is currently halted by a pending First Nation land claim. Once this is resolved, the issues will come up again as the road will want to cross the Gibson and the Musquash rivers with new bridges.

If you have written to the MNR to protest, I commend you because this made the MNR sit up and realize the paddling community cares. The road is here to stay, the bridge will go up this fall, and the next issues are just around the corner. The FON and the Friends of McCrae Lake will monitor the impact of the road. New snowmobile roads will be built elsewhere, and it is in your hands to prevent a similar disaster as on McCrae Lake. You should realize that the MNR's notification lists are specific to each area, such as McCrae, and for instance the Moon River will have its own list. Also, there is no sharing of these lists across MNR offices. Sign up as a Stakeholder for your favorite paddle area or else hold your peace when you discover someone has received blessing to wreck a nice spot.

To find out how to sign up, contact Erhard Kraus at 416-293-3755 or check out the Paddling Stakeholder's website at <http://www.interlog.com/~erhard/SHindex.htm>



REVIEWS

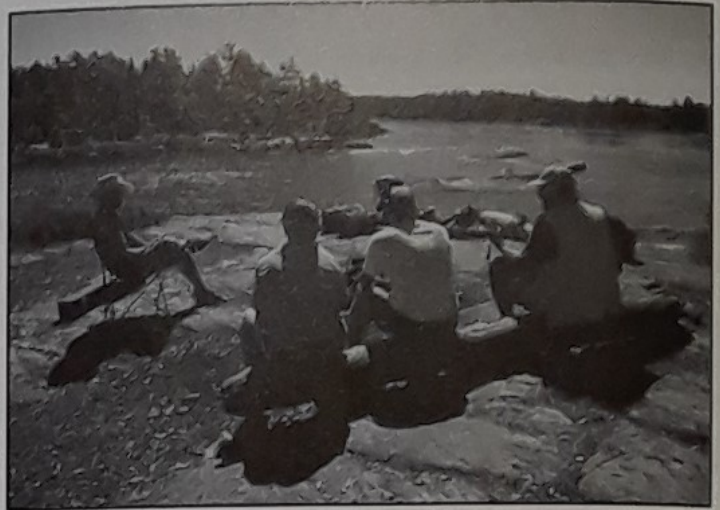
THE MAZINAW EXPERIENCE — Bon Echo and Beyond, by John Campbell, published by Natural Heritage / Natural History Inc. (P.O. Box 95, Station O, Toronto, M4A 2M8), 2000, softcover, 170 pages, \$24.99.

Reviewed by Toni Harting.

Many WCA members have fond memories of Ontario's Bon Echo Provincial Park with its beautiful Mazinaw Lake (out of which flows the "Canadian" Mississippi River, eventually emptying into the Ottawa River near Arnprior), offering many opportunities for fine flatwater canoeing. The present book, researched and written by a long-time resident of the area, provides much useful background information that makes the area really come alive. Although the book is not aimed directly at canoeists, paddlers interested in the places they're visiting will surely benefit from this interesting book.

The amount of research behind this study is truly impressive. The author presents detailed information on the history of the area (First Nations Period, Pictographs and Mythology, Lumbering, Settlement, Mining, Bon Echo Inn, Tourism), as well as the physical and natural setting of the Mazinaw. The book includes an extensive bibliography for further study, and also a thorough index. The dozens of black-and-white photographs, many made in times long past, are well reproduced.

The author obviously has a great love for the Mazinaw. He succeeds very well in transferring that warm feeling to the reader through this fine book.



Double Rapids, French River

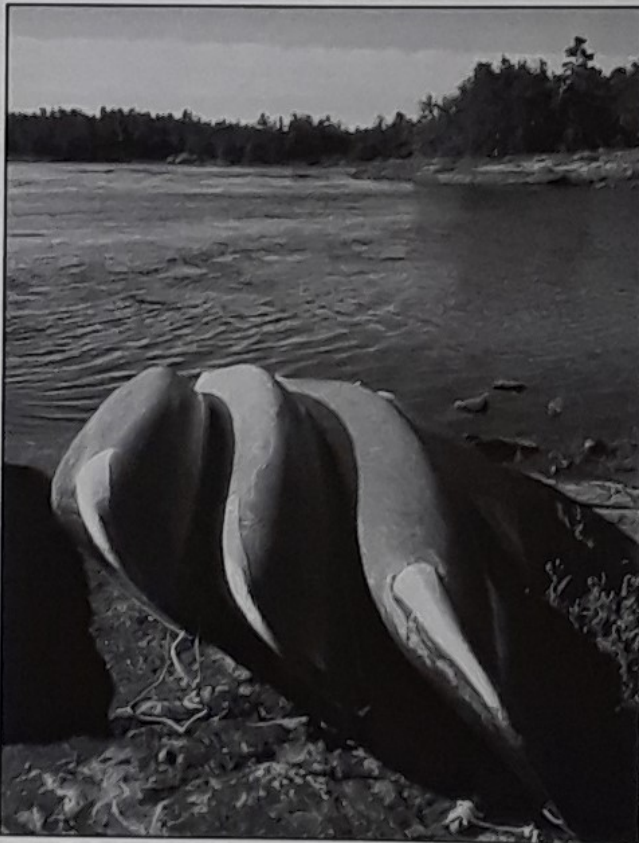
SHOOTING PADDLERS — Photographic Adventures with Canoeists, Kayakers and Rafters, by Toni Harting, published by Natural Heritage / Natural History Inc. (P.O. Box 95, Station O, Toronto, M4A 2M8), 2000, softcover, 176 pages, 238 photographs, \$29.95.

Reviewed by Bryan Buttigieg.

All too often the techniques of good photography seem shrouded in mystique and known to only a select few. How many times have you had an expert paddler and wilderness tripper almost apologetically show you their "snapshots" from their big summer trip? While many of us spend years improving our paddling and tripping skills, it is a rare paddler who also takes their photography skills beyond the very basics of composition and exposure. No doubt that one of the reasons for this is the fact that very little information is available on the photographic challenges that are somewhat unique to paddling.

In this book, our editor, Toni Harting, has gone a long way towards demystifying the craft of making memorable photographic records of paddling events. The book is primarily text based. There is at least one black-and-white photograph on every page. The color section is rather small and one hopes that a second book is in the works dealing with all the complexities of using color. But the value of the book is in the detailed commentary Toni provides on the qualities (good and bad) of each photograph in the book.

The technique works very well. Reading the book is like sitting through an intensive workshop with one of the masters of the craft. Throughout the book, Toni's philosophy comes through loud and clear: even a technically poor picture is still of value if it evokes some special memory to you. As Toni says, "Experiment, play, enjoy. Get to know your subject and learn" (p. 154). With this book in hand, paddlers have the chance to add yet another layer of learning and enjoyment to their favorite activity.



photos: Toni Harting

THE LAST CANOE TRIP

Viki Mather

The morning dawned calm and foggy. The air had warmed overnight. Without a hint of a breeze, the fog barely moved over the flat water on the lake. The day had come. Our "last" chance to get out for a full day of canoeing. I packed a lunch and enough warm clothes to keep us comfy should a sudden blizzard appear from the north without warning.

There is an awesome beauty to the stillness of a fog-covered lake in October. Keeping the shoreline just in sight as we paddled along, the reds and golds of maple and birch peered out of the mist with an intensity unseen on a clear day. Deep greens of spruce and pine served as a backdrop to the colors of the hardwoods. Islands suddenly emerged from the fog, then disappeared again as we passed.

The fog began to lift just as we reached the portage. Vesta took her pack and paddle and was off along the trail before we even had the canoe unloaded. I hoisted the pack, which had enough stuff in it to keep us warm and fed for two days (though we planned to be home before dinner). Allan carried the canoe across the long and narrow path.

Memories of summer brought a longing for a taste of the blueberries we had feasted on just a few months ago when we last walked this trail. From the top of the hill, where the blueberry bushes now flamed red with autumn, we could see the lake ahead through the thinned golden leaves of birch and poplar.

The fog was gone by the time we packed ourselves into the canoe and began to paddle down the lake. A gentle breeze from the south blew at our backs.

There is a very deep quietness that descends upon the land at this time of year. The loons that usually greet us as we pass into the open expanse of the lake had already gone. When we were here in July, a group of eight loons had come to look at us—to see who came to visit their remote hideaway. All had flown south by now. Their cries no longer echoed in the hills.

Only a lonely little red squirrel chattered at us from a pine tree on the shore. Likely she had seen no people for weeks or maybe all summer. Not much traffic passes this

way. She scurried down the trunk to retrieve one of her pine cones, then scurried back up before scolding us once again for invading her territory.

Two kilometres northward, and I looked around in wonder. The magnificent forest reached forever all around. Hillsides covered with jack pine, patches of birch, some scattered old red and white pine, and even a bit of sugar maple to the east. The quiet beauty seeped in. I wondered why it had been so long since we'd come this way.

Halfway up the lake, we saw a loon in the distance. One lonely loon. From far away, I looked at it through the binoculars. It hadn't noticed us yet. I suspected it was this year's young, alone now that its parents had migrated for the winter. How long would it stay? How would it know what to do when the ice started to form on the edges of the only lake it has ever known?

As we got closer, it finally noticed it was not alone anymore. It was very shy. Didn't know if we were friend or foe, and it retreated; diving deep, and reappearing a good distance away.

At the north end of the lake we took the portage into the next lake. Amazingly, it was bluer than blue. Clearer by far than the very clear lake we just left. No fish at all

can live here. There weren't even whirly bugs on the surface of the lake. We saw only the white patches of crayfish diggings deep in the water below us. We let the southerly breeze carry us along while we lunched. Sandwiches and hot soup from the thermos.

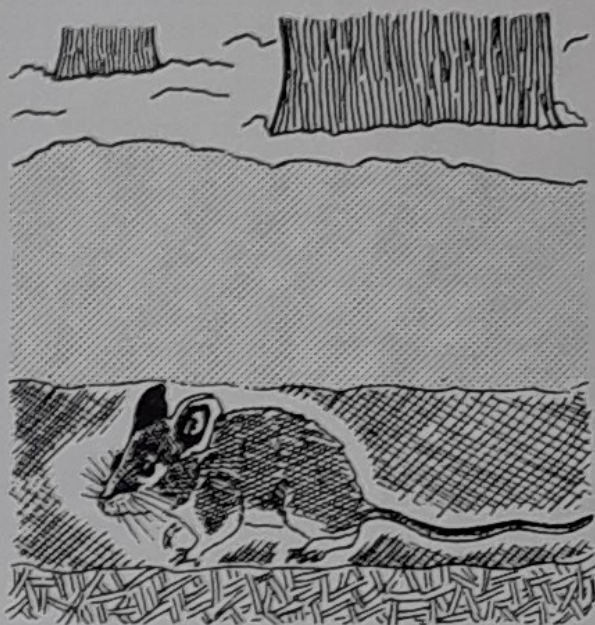
All the while, we were watching for signs of the loon chick we saw here in July. With no fish in the lake, it was not surprising that the chick was not there. While its parents could fly to other lakes to eat, the poor little one could not. We had hoped against reason that the little loon would have beaten the odds. Clearly it had not.

Turning south again, we headed home under sunny skies. After the short portage, Vesta pulled out her schoolbooks and got to work. Allan and I paddled the long lake once again, hoping to see the one loon chick that did survive this summer.



WINTER ROULETTE

September is here again and fall is unfolding as it should. The days are clear and silent and the nights are nippy. Birds are leaving for the south and already we have patches of red and orange foliage foretelling the peak of colors at the end of the month. October will then see the turning of tamaracks and aspens, the building of winter food piles by our beaver colonies, and the closing down of the Park's staffed facilities after Thanksgiving weekend. All these things are normal and regular events, year after year, and we know that many of our fall visitors share our appreciation for their comfortable predictability.



The age-old progression of the seasons is such a familiar fact of life, indeed, that you may be surprised when we point out that the one after this—winter—is not going to be predictable at all. Now it is true, just as day follows night, that the winter of 1990–91 will bring cold and snow to Algonquin. In that sense, the coming winter will be just as normal as the present season. Nevertheless, the winter will also bring events of wild randomness and these events will have an enormous, quite unpredictable bearing on the lives and fortunes of Algonquin Park inhabitants. It is almost as if they were dragged into a casino and forced to bet everything they had on a single game of chance. We grant you this may seem to be an exaggeration, but if you join us in following the events of a typical winter you will see what we mean.

By the end of October the days will be noticeably shorter and we will be having hard frosts just about every night. The cold will intensify and the first snowstorm may occur in November. Then again, it may not—and therein lies a question of deadly importance. Algonquin's vast

army of mice, voles, and shrews is a vital link in the Park's food chain. They consume insects, seeds, and snails and in turn are food for larger animals like weasels, foxes, martens, and owls. Shrews and most mice remain active all winter but their own internal heat generating capacities are just not good enough to keep their tiny bodies warm in truly cold weather. When the temperature dips to twenty below for any extended period they are doomed to freeze solid, even if they huddle together in well-insulated underground nests.

The only thing that can save them is a good, thick layer of insulating snow, but who is to say a life-saving blizzard will arrive in time? It may well be that the first storm of the year passes north or south of the Park. Even worse, we could get a big dump, the snow could all melt, thoroughly soaking the leaf litter and the underground tunnels and nests of the Park's small mammals and *then* it could get really cold. On such seemingly unimportant details about the timing and sequence of cold and snow hang the lives of literally millions of Algonquin mice and shrews. If the numbers don't turn up right in a given year, the Park's small mammal populations can be decimated, and with their collapse can come that of the predators that depend on them. Then too, even if the mice and shrews are saved by the timely arrival of deep snow, this doesn't necessarily ensure the salvation of their predators. If the snow is too thick the predators may not be able to get at them.

As long as the snow cover is light and fluffy, the mice and shrews will be content to tunnel along on the soil surface. That, after all, is where their food is and where the snow insulation is best. Although foxes and owls can hear mice scurrying along down there and can plunge their legs unerringly down to the sound source through amazingly deep snow, there are still limits nonetheless, especially for smaller predators. With more



snowfalls, the outlook for predators might seem increasingly dim but other chance events can turn this around. As the snow thickens, and especially if a warm spell causes the upper layers to compact and lose their fluffiness, life will become less comfortable for small mammals down at the bottom of the snow. Carbon dioxide, released by the slow but continuing bacterial decay in the soil, will no longer be able to escape upwards and will start to build up in the tunnel networks at the bottom of the snow. The mice and shrews will be forced to build and maintain ventilation shafts up to the surface but when they do, of course, they again come within range of those owls and foxes.

The important question once more, for both the hunters and the hunted, is the precise timing of events. If deep snow comes early, and cold temperatures delay compaction, the mice and shrews may be able to stay out of reach for so long that predators will either starve or wander out of the Park. It could all depend on a chance warm spell in the first week of January. If there is one, owls and foxes might live; if not, they might die.

Small mammals and their predators are far from the only creatures, of course, whose fortunes are greatly affected by snow depths. Regular Park visitors are well familiar with the fact that deer start to have serious difficulties in moving about when the snow is 50 cm (20 in.) or more in depth. Indeed, severe winters, especially when there were two or three of them in a row, all but destroyed the Park's deer population on a couple of occasions. What may not be appreciated is how chancy these events were. The difference between a bad winter and an easy winter for deer can be as little as two or three snowstorms/snowstorms that might just as easily have missed the Park or not materialized at all.

Then too, what is shaping up as a killer winter can be transformed into a paradise for deer almost overnight. It sometimes happens that a freak warm spell followed by a good hard freeze will quickly transform metre-deep snow, in which deer were floundering, into a snow "pavement," hard enough and strong enough to allow deer to move about with ease. Not only that, but the new surface may in effect elevate the deer up off the ground into range of a whole new supply of nutritious browse that was out of reach beforehand.

As in any game of chance, however, what is the lucky number for one player can be a disaster for another. The same hard crust conditions that sometimes spell salvation for deer can spell just the opposite for grouse. Grouse escape the bitter cold of winter nights by plunging down into soft snow and hollowing out a snug, well-insulated chamber. Needless to say, grouse can't do this and may freeze to death if there is a very cold night and a rock hard crust? or they may break their necks if they try.

Or, strictly by chance, there could be the worst of both worlds. The crust could be strong enough to prevent grouse from flying into the snow but also too weak to consistently support large animals. Under such conditions, deer and moose may irregularly break through the crust,

lacerating their legs and expending great amounts of energy as they struggle to get back on top. Even worse, this may make them much more vulnerable to wolves. Many a healthy deer, that otherwise would have gotten away, has fallen victim to wolves just because, a few days earlier, weather conditions happened to make a crust strong enough to support wolves but not a running deer.



There is no doubt that the unpredictable interplay of snow and rain, cold spells and warm spells, can have enormous, life-and-death consequences for many individual Algonquin Park inhabitants but it goes much further than that. Depending on how deep the snow is, for example, and how easy or difficult it is for a cow moose to move around and get food, she will finish up the winter in a correspondingly better or worse nutritional state. This has an immediate bearing on the vigor of her calf that will be born a month or two later, and that in turn has a big influence on the calf's prospects for survival. Not only that, but cow moose are apparently unable to make up the nutritional consequences of a bad winter very quickly. In fact, a bad winter can still have a lowering influence on survival of calves born as much as three summers later. It is almost like a person who has lost his life savings because of one unlucky event and then has to spend years digging himself out of his financial hole.

Seen in this light, the chance events of the coming winter are of much more than trivial importance. No matter how reassuringly normal the fall now appears, the inhabitants of Algonquin Park will soon be obliged to play a potentially deadly game of roulette. They have stepped up to the table (made it this far), determined the stakes (their lives and future offspring), placed their bets (chosen their life styles), and the wheel (winter) is about to spin. ... Good luck!

Reprinted from the 6 September 1990 edition of Algonquin Park's *The Raven*, courtesy of the Ministry of Natural Resources.

PADDLERS' TALK

IF IT'S NATURAL, IT'S GOT TO BE GOOD FOR YOU— RIGHT?

In recent years there has been a trend towards so-called natural products for personal care and as an alternative to traditional pharmaceuticals. Outdoors people have long been suspicious of DEET as an insect repellent. A chemical that dissolves plastic and is absorbed through your skin to the degree that 10% is recoverable in your urine may not be all that healthy to bathe yourself in. Consequently, some paddlers have turned to plant-based, naturally occurring compounds as alternatives. But, effectiveness aside, how safe are such products?

Oil of citronella has been used as an insect repellent since your great-grandparents days. It is widely used in "natural" topical insect repellents today and, unless you try drinking it, is benign.

Garlic capsules have been occasionally touted as an insect repellent, though the more common benefit currently attributed to garlic is a reduction of cholesterol. By the way, the active ingredient is allicin, which also gives garlic its characteristic odor. Taking odorless garlic capsules is pointless. Experimenters should be aware that the substance decreases platelet aggregation. Fortunately, for

most persons this does not lead to serious problems, and marketers of these so-called "nutraceuticals" may even promote this as a positive for reducing heart attacks and strokes. However, tendencies to spontaneous or post-operative bleeding problems have sometimes occurred. Anyone with a blood-clotting disorder, or taking platelet inhibitor or anticoagulant drugs should avoid this product.

Increasingly we can expect to see exotic herbal preparations we have never heard of before being marketed to us. There are over 20,000 being sold today in North America, each claimed to be a safe, natural, effective alternative to the factory-made drugs and personal care products we now use. Among these is the herb pennyroyal, said to be effective for treating menstrual disorders and repelling insects—an interesting combination. Unfortunately, its possible adverse reactions include abdominal pain, diarrhea, vomiting, fever, lethargy, gastro-intestinal bleeding, shock, and death. Personally, I'd stick with Midol and Muskol any day.

The bottom line when considering any of these so-called "natural" products, which are, coincidentally, not subject to government regulation for efficacy or safety is: *caveat emptor*

Bill Ness

DOUBLE BLADE PADDLES

When it comes to solo paddling, I am hooked on the double blade. Although some purists scoff at the double blade, it will take you faster and farther than any single blade, especially in a wind. On several occasions when someone in our group backed out, I paddled solo, and with the help of the double blade was usually able to keep up with the tandem boats. I have two double-blades, an 8-ft and a 9-ft; both break down into two pieces. With a special handle adapter each piece can be used as a single blade paddle. The double blade works great in whitewater (as good or better than a single blade) and seated in the middle of the canoe you are ready almost instantly to go into ferry mode. With my nine-footer I have discovered a unique stand-up paddle style that really gives me speed and torque (it works for me because I am so short). Stand-up paddling offers a rest for the posterior and allows you to use the powerful hip and leg muscles.

However, there are two drawbacks to the double-blade: you will get wet and some hunter may mistake you for a moose. This happened to me on a solo trip in late September—I was in the hunter's rifle scope for a few minutes until the hunter realized I was NOT what he was hunting for! In hunting season a paddler should always wear something bright orange just to be safe.

We have also experimented with a double blade in a tandem canoe. With a double blade in the bow and a long single blade in the stern we could really boogie on the big lakes and handle some pretty heavy seas. We used this method on the big lakes of the upper Dubawnt, and I swear we were "almost" surfing on those huge rollers. Landing at the Selwyn Lake Lodge dock, we were greeted by a fishing guide who exclaimed: "Finally—some canoeists with a brain!" Obviously, he was a kayaker.

Dave Bober



photo: Bill Ness

Double Blade on the Burnt River

YOU DON'T BELONG HERE

Heard it for the first time this year. We were camped on a point where the river met a large feeder creek. The competing forces of the two streams had pushed up a nice bluff so the sleeping would be on soft sand. Scenic view of the mountains beyond the feeder creek. Plenty of driftwood. All in all, a good place to camp.

On this trip a feeling was slowly growing. That we were really alone. The journal said that it was now 13 days without seeing anyone else. Longest for many years. Didn't see any traces of others travelling this way before. No old campfires, no litter. In fact, we didn't even see any pieces of wood showing axe marks.

We were careful to keep up appearances. All charred pieces of wood were deposited in the current. Each morning before we left, fresh sand was spread over the black spot of our campfire.

Map says we were above 66 degrees latitude, so the all-night light would be with us. This meant that there would be plenty of daylight after camp chores were done to fish, to hike, to explore. Washed the dinner dishes and then took the fishing pole and tackle box and started walking up the creek; catching and releasing small grayling. It went on like this for several kilometres, fishing and walking, until I was a good 45 minutes of straight hiking from camp.

I was casting in this one riffle and was struck by the silence. Eerily quiet. No wind. Some grains of sand were moving around, but no vegetation or leaves were stirring in response to them. Even the alder leaves were quiet.

The feeder creek was quiet too. It was barely murmuring. Kept an eye pointed upstream. A bear working the shore could be a problem. And then the message came: "You don't belong here. Travelling on the main river is acceptable, but the creek does not belong to you." Maybe it was just the many days of travel without seeing anyone else, or maybe it was the leaves changing color, or maybe it was the realization that another canoeing season was ending. I don't know. But the message was sent: some places don't belong to man.

Have heard others mention the loneliness factor. In fact, it's one of the great treasures of wilderness canoe travel. I guess we were never out far enough, or maybe the amount of loneliness necessary to trigger that awareness must be greater for us than for others. Never felt it before.

Quit fishing and started hiking back to camp. Took the direct route to the tents and the buddies. Did not tell them about the feeling that I had experienced. Too embarrassed to let them know of my fear.

Compensated for the fear with extra joviality around the campfire. Very glad for the buddies as we sat around talking. Every so often, I would sneak a glance at the creek, looking in the direction I had just come from. Just to see if there was going to be a reinforcing message to not go back upstream.

There wasn't, but I didn't need it anyway.

Greg Wert



PADDLING LINKS

The amount (and quality!) of information relevant to what WCA members are interested in is steadily growing on the Internet. More and more links to useful websites are becoming available each day, and easy access to information is improving. To help our web-minded members find the best sources, Nastawgan is making some space available where suitable sites can be mentioned, so that they can be added to the collection of sites already known. If you have a site you think is worth introducing to others, please send it its address to *Nastawgan*, and include a short description of the content of the site.

The first one listed in this new column is the extensive, non-commercial site designed, operated, and financed by Richard Munn, a WCA member who over the last few years has built a solid reputation as a dependable and extensive source of tripping data and canoe routes. The site exists 1) to research, document, and present Canadian canoe route information in a consistent format, and 2) to provide a "meeting place" for Canadian wilderness paddlers. At present, most of the route information is concerned with Ontario routes, but gradually the rest of Canada will also be covered. The site's homepage is <http://www.canadiancanoeeroutes.com>

FRENCH RIVER BIRCHBARK CANOES

In the early years of the twentieth century, birchbark canoes were still the usual transportation for the Indians of the Upper French River in Ontario, about 200 miles north of Toronto. Many were rigged for rowing, and those small enough to portage were used for family transportation and freighting over considerable distances. For instance, about the time of World War 1, Albert Beaucage rowed his family in a birchbark canoe from Lake Temagami, down the Sturgeon River and across Lake Nipissing, to the French River for two weeks of guiding work.

By 1920, the birchbarks were disappearing. Rowboats, mostly double-ended, manufactured canoes, and eventually outboard skiffs replaced them.

Cottagers began to build on the French River about 1903, one such cottage and a wall tent platform appearing in the background of the photo. Some of these summer people purchased bark canoes and paddles made by the local Indians. The last of the early bark canoes was built, probably by Felix Lariviere and his son William, in the early 1920s, for an American cottager. Thirty or so years later, in 1955, William built a 14-footer for me, then a 12-footer in 1962.

All these canoes, and the several others I have seen from the area, are Algonquin style, a bit modified, and all are somewhat roughly finished work canoes, rather than pleasure canoes.

Although three bark canoes have been built in the past twenty years by Upper French River Indians, the two I have seen are more Chipewyan in style than Algonquin, and were built under the tutelage of a white man from the States. The third was supposedly built by a local elder, but I have not traced its whereabouts. It may be the right style.

Today, birchbark canoes in use are virtually unknown on the French River, and the few extant are in boathouses or cottages, or have been transported to area museums and Indian craft shops. No one seems interested in making them anymore, although I have hopes that increasing pride in native heritage and traditional skills will change that.

Jack Gregg

(Courtesy of the August 1999 issue of *Wooden Canoe*.)



Indian family (probably the Felix Lariviere family) on the Upper French River, Ontario, 1906.

photo © John R. Gregg

Valediction To Missinaibi

I don't know
 whether I will return
 to Missinaibi,
 to this stony point,
 or whether again
 I will raise my arms
 beneath low sailing clouds
 in homage
 to the lake's dark power
 and the beneficence
 of warm morning sunlight
 falling over my body.

I don't know
 whether I will be held again
 by the water's cool embrace
 as I stroke lazily out from shore
 and splash and souse my head
 beneath the waves,
 or whether, in the cool morning air,
 I will arch and sway
 arms and torso
 to the slow cadence
 of my breath.

I don't know
 whether I will taste again,
 as I tasted this morning,
 the lake's dark medicine,
 and in an evanescence,
 like the singing of the wind
 through conifer's feathered limbs,
 know its infusion in my frame
 and see dark obsidian waters
 from far horizon extending
 to touch my heart,
 and in their ebbing,
 know a peace
 like that hidden
 at the center of the soul.

Night Spirit

When the night has stilled the passions
 of wind and wave, the Spirit of Missinaibi
 passes above the lake in his bark canoe
 playing his willow flute -

oo...o - wa...ah - who...o - ho...o
 oo...o - wa...ah - he...e - ho...o
 oo...o - wa...ah - who...o - ho...o

Again and again I hear the haunting sound
 from ever further down the lake,
 and from cover of reeds
 and star-mirroring water,
 amens of duck and loon,
 until all is quiet, save echoes
 murmured, where tiny fingers
 soothe dark trap rock
 of the island's taut body.

Alan Dragoo
 summer 1998

36 HOURS ON THE MAGNETAWAN LOOP

Brett Hodnett

In May of 1998, I and my canoeing comrade, Alex, decided to pack as much canoeing as we could into a weekend and do a loop in the Magnetawan River area north of Parry Sound, Ontario. We planned two hard days where we would cover a total of 80 km, over 10 km of this portaging. As it turned out, the two days were even more difficult than we expected.

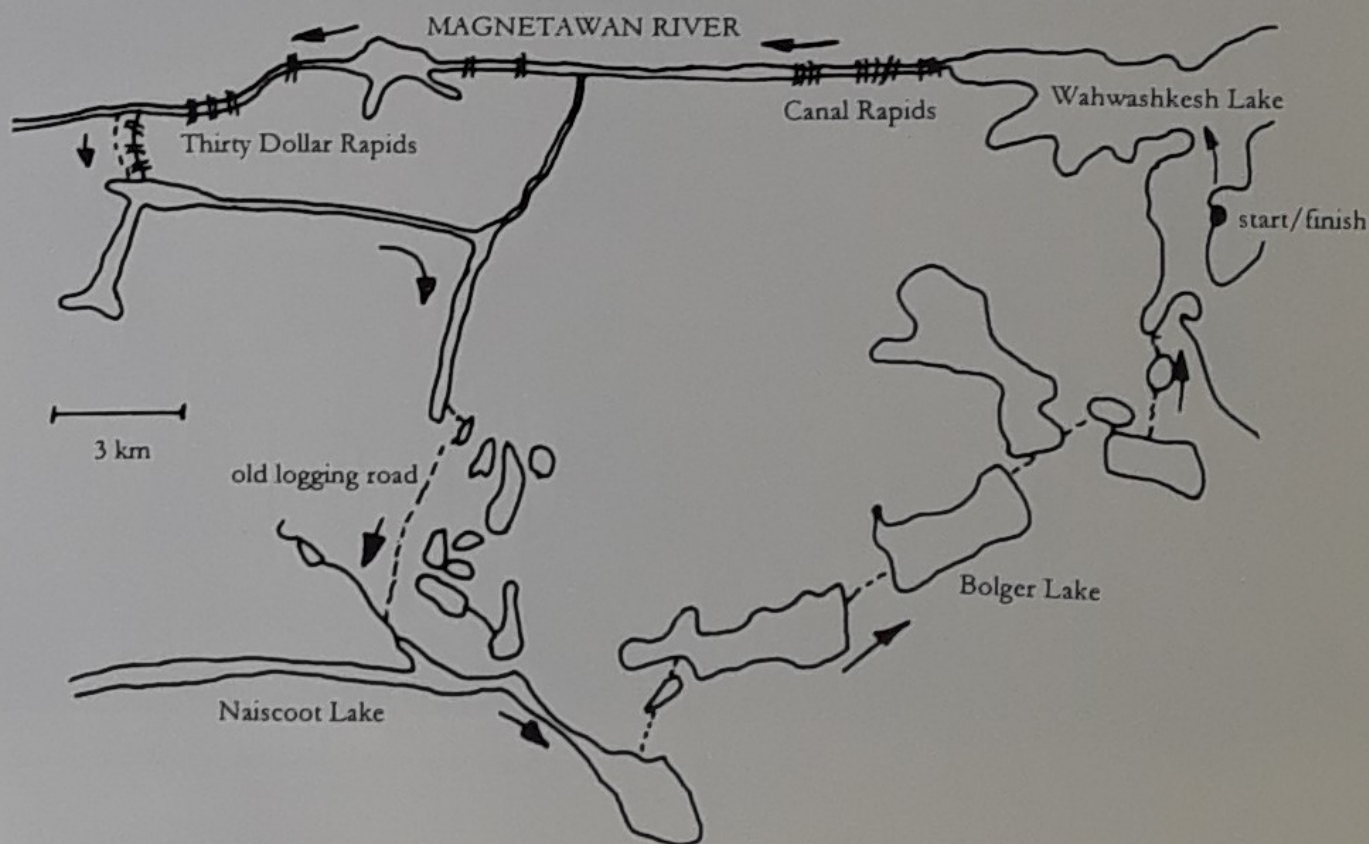
We began in an early Saturday morning fog at Wahwashkesh Lake, and headed northwest to where the Magnetawan becomes a river again. Since we had an early start, we decided not to do the 2285-m portage around the first set of rapids of the trip, Canal Rapids. We would instead ignore the "Danger Fast Water" sign and paddle, line, or carry through them as the situation demanded.

This canyon-like stretch of river is beautiful, and we were certainly glad that we didn't take the portage and miss the sights. We successfully ran and lined the start of these rapids, but the river becomes narrower and the shores steeper until there are cliffs on either side with a narrow chute running between them. We debated running it, but decided to take our lumps on land instead. Unfortunately, the only way around the rapids was to backtrack and crash through the bush up to the top of the cliff and down the other side. No easy task. Because of this bushwhacking and the time spent lining and scouting, we didn't get past Canal Rapids until about noon. We had only gone a total of about 10 km and were seriously behind schedule.

A few hundred metres away are the next rapids, The Graves. These are quite long and fairly technical. We picked a route through and ran them perfectly. This renewed our confidence and got our adrenaline going again. The steep climb through the bush already seemed forgotten in the distant past.

We continued paddling for another 20 km or so, running some rapids and portaging others. This is a great stretch of river for a canoe trip, and if you don't mind a car shuttle I would think you could avoid doing a loop and take the river right to Hwy 69. We, however, were doing a loop and had to portage from the North Magnetawan River onto the South Magnetawan River. We had been using a Magnetawan River Canoe Route map put out by the MNR. This map indicated that before we reached this portage there was another 2380-m portage around three sets of rapids called Thirty Dollar Rapids. Because of our ordeal at Canal Rapids, and because it was quite late, we decided to do the portage and skip Thirty Dollar Rapids altogether. Unfortunately, after the portage passed the first of the three rapids, the trail ended. From the edge of the river we could see an easy rapid ahead and then a long stretch of flatwater. So we put in and paddled a short ways to where we had to get out and walk around the third set of rapids.

According to the map there shouldn't have been any more rapids after this, but it looked like there were more ahead. The sun was low in the sky and directly in front of





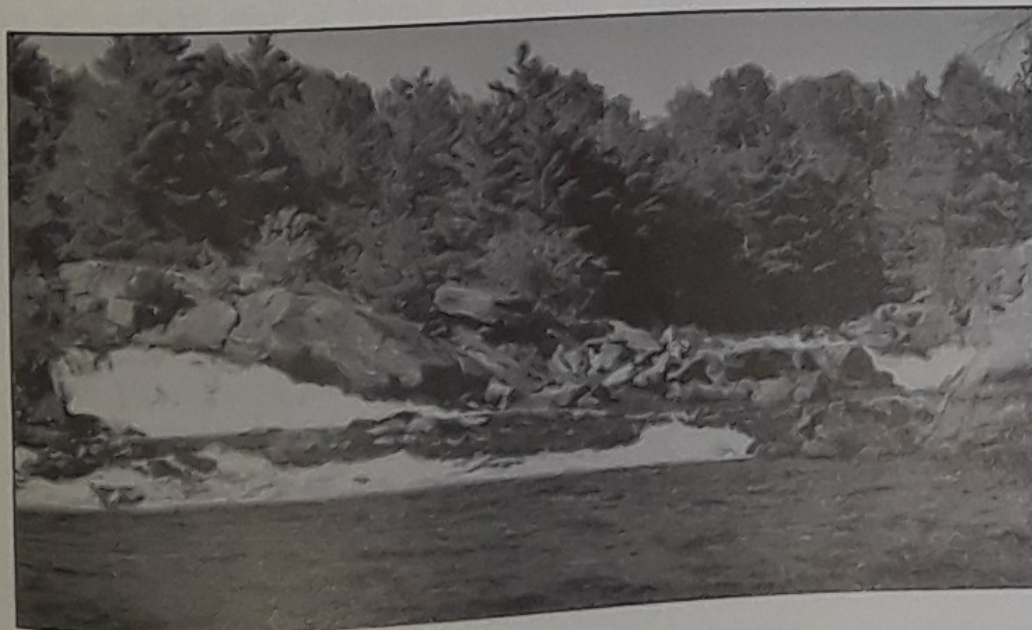
Canal Rapids

us, which made it extremely difficult to see. We started into these rapids expecting them to be of no consequence. This assumption caused us to make the stupid mistake of being drawn into them as they gradually became more and more difficult. The river got very narrow and the water was getting quite big. We went over a drop and took in a bit of water. This first drop was immediately followed by a much larger ledge which created a big hole and standing wave. We backpaddled like crazy but there was nowhere else for us to go, leaving us no choice but

to paddle straight into it. We managed not to get caught in the hole but the boat nearly filled up with water. A third ledge, although nowhere near as big as the last one, filled us up even more. Just as it looked like we had made it, we hit a rock that was submerged slightly under the water. Although we kept upright, this rock put a dent the size of the handle of a paddle into the front of the canoe. Anything but a royaalex canoe would have been shattered. The scary thing is that this could have been a 15-m waterfall that we were drawn into. We haven't made the mis-

take of getting drawn into rapids or of putting all our trust in maps since. At about 9 p.m. we finally got to a site on the South Magnetawan River and quickly ate and went to bed.

Next morning, we were on the water by 7 a.m. and paddled to the bottom of Big Bay on the South Magnetawan River where the map shows a 70-m portage into Clear Lake. We lost all faith in our map when this portage turned out to be at least 500 m long. The portage out of Clear Lake was marked as 250 m, so we were sure we would have a kilometre walk ahead of us. It turned out much worse. The portage ended at an old overgrown logging road. We looked around but could



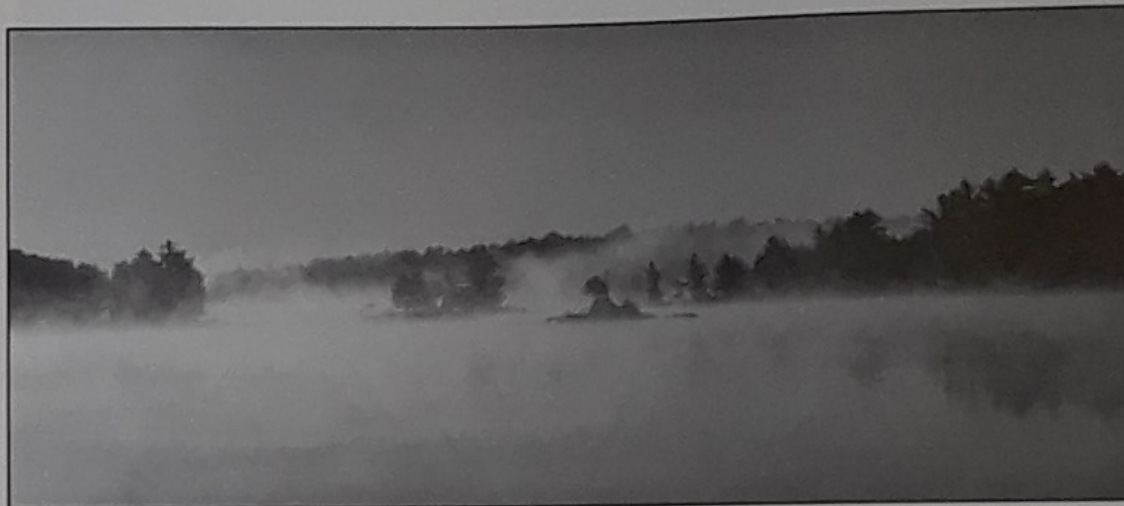
Nastawgan

see no sign of the next lake, or any way to get there. Reluctantly we followed the old road. Although there was no sign of them, it appeared that we were walking around the west side of the next five lakes. After at least 4 km of portaging, accompanied by large numbers of deer flies, we finally reached a creek. We followed this creek, with numerous stops to climb over fallen trees, to Naiscoot Lake and were back on track again.,

Although this was a relief, we still had a few fairly long portages to do to get back to Wahwashkesh Lake and we were worried that they would be impassible. Happily, these remaining portages are easy to find and also to follow. The only disappointment was that the

map makers had underestimated most of the portage lengths, again. I have a feeling that they had estimated their lengths based on the shortest distance between lakes from an aerial photograph. The maps claimed that the next five portages were a total of 3862 m, but we measured them to be over 4800 m. We weren't complaining, though, and were just pleased that there were any portages at all. These portages connect a string of fairly large lakes that are rather unremarkable. They certainly can't compare to the beauty of the Magnetawan River itself. We finally got back to the car on Wahwashkesh Lake at about 8 p.m.

It had been a busy and fulfilling two days.



*South Magnetawan
River*

A BEAR PIECE

Early August last year, the thunderstorms on top of the McArthur-Kiwetinok Col had hurried me down out of the snow to Kiwetinok Pass at the head of the Little Yoho Valley in the Canadian Rockies. I had just reached the top of the trail and turned to approach the ice-free part of Kiwitenok Lake to get some water. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw movement behind me and turned to see what it was.

It was following me, shorter than a mature human, bigger than a marmot, bigger than a porcupine. It was a bear, ambling along the same trail I was taking.

I stepped out as far as I could on the rocks on the shore, addressed the bear in an assertive manner, let him know that I was going to stay where I was, and suggested he go past me well away from the shore.

The bear gave a start, came to a sudden stop, looked at me, considered the situation, and, like any well-mannered individual, gave me the widest possible berth (not more than 50 metres) as he continued down the path.

In the same spirit of good manners, I waited a few minutes before continuing down the path in order not to crowd the bear. When I proceeded, I

made noise to avoid any more surprises for either party.

I have encountered bears in the wild (here I mean several kilometres away from any road or human habitation, i.e. garbage) a number of times and have so far always found them well-mannered.

In reflecting on these encounters, I realized that I have never experienced the adrenaline rush of fright that is a near daily experience on the road as a pedestrian, cyclist, or rollerblader when inconsiderate motorists hammer past in their multi-tonne vehicles cum deadly weapons less than a metre away.

For such people I have just one question: "Is that how close I should come to your child when I am driving?"

George Grinnell, at this year's Wilderness Canoe Symposium, mentioned that six of his fellow bicycle couriers have been in accidents with cars recently.

I'm really beginning to believe that we're safer with the bears. Mind you, it never hurts to be carrying an ice axe.

George Haeh

FOOD FOR PADDLERS

Following is part 3 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 in the Summer 2000 issue dealt with lunch, snacks and drinks. Part 3 includes ideas for dinner. (Barbara Young, Food Editor)

BUTTI-BITES, part 3

DINNER IDEAS

Homemade Vegetable Chili. Dried in food dryer. Serve with brown rice cooked at home and dried. Saves time and fuel on trip. Meal rehydrates in hot water in 15-20 minutes. **Vegetable Chili:** sauté 2 onions, 3 cloves garlic, 1 green pepper, and 2 tablespoons canned hot peppers in 1 tablespoon olive oil. Add 1 can of tomatoes, 1/2 teaspoon coriander, 1/4 teaspoon whole cloves, 1/4 teaspoon allspice berries, 2 teaspoons oregano, 2 tablespoons chili powder, 2 tablespoons cumin, and 2 cups kidney beans. Simmer 30 minutes.

Pizza Pesto. Cooked in Outback oven. Use Light Travel Mix or own recipe. Use leftover pepperoni and vegetables and cheese from lunch. Cole-slaw: rehydrate dried julienne cabbage and add vinaigrette. This salad works well with rehydrated dried grated carrot and raisins too.

Eschuan Noodles with Peanut Sauce (from Jane Brody's Good Food Book, p. 359). Mix 1/2 cup hot water, 1/2 cup smooth peanut butter, 2 teaspoons soya sauce, 2 teaspoons vinegar, 2 scallions (dried), 2 cloves garlic minced, 1 teaspoon sugar, and 1/4 teaspoon hot red pepper flakes. Mix into cooked spaghetti.

Sweet and Sour Curried Rice with Dried Fruit (from Wansapitei, p. 68). Bring 7 cups of salted water to a boil; add 2 cups brown rice, one cup bulgur, and one package onion soup. Simmer 40 minutes. Meanwhile sauté fruit mix (1 1/2 cups mix of raisins, dried apples, apricots, banana chips, dried pineapple) in 4 tablespoons margarine and 1 teaspoon salt, 1 tablespoon garlic powder, 1 tablespoon curry powder. Add 1/2 cup walnuts (I use cashews or peanuts that do not seem to spoil so quickly). Mix 1/2 cup brown sugar, 1/4 cup vinegar and 2 tablespoons soya sauce with 1/2 cup of water and add to fruit. Simmer. When rice is cooked, mix together with the fruit.

Salmon Patties. Mix 1 tin salmon, 1 cup instant mashed potatoes rehydrated with water, two tablespoons rehydrated dried onion, 1 tablespoon dried celery, 1/2 teaspoon salt, 1/2 teaspoon pepper, 1 teaspoon butter buds, 1 leftover egg (if available) or egg substitute. Make into patties and fry in dried shortening. Serve with Green Bean Casserole: mix Durkee Fried Onions, 1 package rehydrated freeze dried green beans, 1 package powdered mushroom soup, with half of whole milk powder, and water required to make soup. Simmer and serve. Don't try this at home—it's disgusting, unless eaten after strenuous tripping!

Lentil Stew. Mix 1 cup red lentils, 1 package onion soup mix, water, 1 potato cubed, 3 tablespoons tomato paste, 1 cup macaroni, 1 can of tomatoes, mixed sautéed vegetables: 2 stalks celery, 1/2 cup green pepper, 2 cloves garlic, 3 carrots diced, 1 teaspoon savory, 1/2 teaspoon basil, 1/4 cup parsley chopped. Simmer 30 minutes. Cook at home and dry in food dryer. Rehydrate in hot water for 20 minutes at camp.

Chicken, Coconut, and Galangal Soup. In one pot add 2 chicken cubes, 4 cups water, 2 lime leaves (kaffir lime leaves available in Thai grocery stores), 2 inch piece lemon grass chopped, 1 inch galangal or regular ginger, 4 tablespoons fish sauce (substitute soya sauce if desired), 3 tablespoons lemon juice, 1 package freeze-dried chicken rehydrated, 2 dried red chillies (optional), 1 package dried coconut milk powder. Simmer. Serve with pompadour fried to crisp chips in one inch very hot oil in frying pan. This dish was definitely the highlight of our food on our trip down the Sand River in Lake Superior Provincial Park this year with our children!

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



The **FALL MEETING** will take place a bit later than usual, on 13–15 October, at Camp Wanakita in the Haliburton area. A registration form with more information is printed on the inside front of the wrap around this issue of *Nastawgan*. Although applications will be accepted until 6 October, please return your application as soon as possible since we would like to have an early estimate of the number of participants.



WCA TRIPS

WANT TO ORGANIZE A TRIP AND HAVE IT PRESENTED IN THE WINTER ISSUE?
Contact the Outings Committee before 12 Nov.!

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@danielthorger.com

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

+++++

ELORA GORGE AND/OR MINDEN WILD WATER PRESERVE

October, dates to be determined.

Fred Lum, 416-482-3774, roocnu@interlog.com, book immediately — Got to get out and paddle; I intend to be in my boat this fall to the bitter end! If you're looking for some whitewater paddling this fall, give me a call. Depending on water levels and weather, it could be on the Gorge or at Minden. Good fun for intermediates. Please note that the regulations at both locations require users to wear helmets.

7–9 October

KILLARNEY THANKSGIVING TRIP

Richard Todd, 819-459-1179, richard@magi.com, book immediately — Two nights on Killarney Lake with a variety of possibilities for exploring and/or hiking. Spectacular fall colors all but guaranteed. Suitable for novices. Limit nine people.

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.

5 November

LONG LAKE LOOP

Bill Ness, 416-321-3005, book before 29 October — There is a group of small lakes in the rugged Kawartha countryside north of Peterborough and just west of Apsley that make a wonderful fall paddle. Multiple routes are possible depending on the weather and participants' interests. There are a number of portages, but they are well marked and not particularly difficult. As the lakes are small, and the portaging easy, it can be a good outing for the family.



PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

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

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

- 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).

CANOE FOR SALE Mad River "Flashback", royalex, solo whitewater boat, outfitted. \$500. Contact Mike Jones at 905-275-4371.

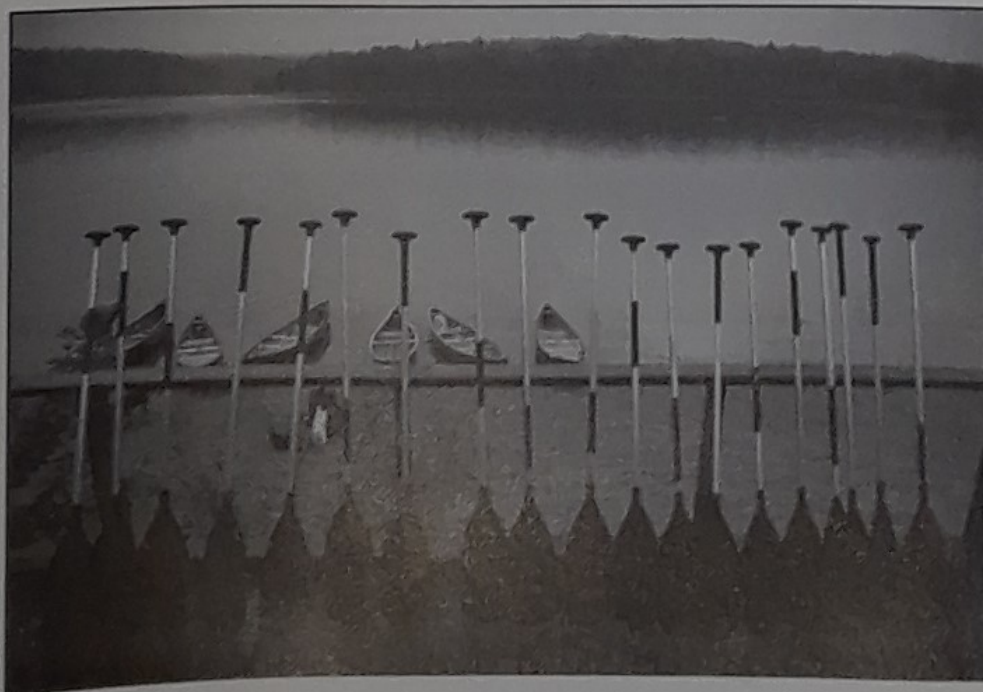
CANOE AND KAYAK FOR SALE Canoe: 16' Tremblay cedar strip and verolite canvas. Small amount of canvas needing to be tacked under gunnels. Otherwise, good condition. \$650 or best offer. Kayak: R7, used three seasons, good condition, stored inside, comes with neoprene skirt and air bags. \$500, negotiable. Call Douglas/Marilyn at 905-526-0430 and leave message.

CANOES FOR SALE Almost brand-new cedar and canvas canoe, hand built at Kim Pressnail's Class, Western Tech, both babich and hand-woven cane seats, 16' long with hand-carved ash yoke. Wife says, SELL IT! Probably best and most reasonable offers! Also for sale: well-built solo canoe, from stripper solo design, constructed from kevlar and fibreglass, completely refinished, 15' long. Wife says, GET RID OF THIS ONE TOO!! Douglas Niles at 905-564-7868 or 905-826-7169 or dougniles@sympatico.ca

SMOOTHWATER PROGRAM Women's Holistic Spa Retreats 24-29 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 is now available in many bookstores (also on-line) 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 at a discount (416-964-2495 and aharting@netcom.ca).



*Pine Cove Lodge
Wolseley Bay, French River*

Where it is ...



... in this issue

- 1. Magnificent Mississagi
- 8. Editorial
- 8. News Briefs
- 8. WCA Website
- 9. Fall Party
- 9. Update on McCrae Lake

- 10. Reviews
- 11. The Last Canoe Trip
- 12. Winter Roulette
- 14. Paddlers' Talk
- 15. You Don't Belong Here
- 15. Paddling Links
- 16. French River Birchbark Canoes
- 17. Poems

- 18. Magnetawan Loop
- 20. A Bear Piece
- 21. Food
- 22. Fall Meeting
- 22. WCA Trips
- 23. Products and Services

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WCA WEBMASTER

Bruce Bellaire
www.wildernesscanoe.org

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 *Nastaugan* 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: _____