



Lining down Fer-à-Cheval Rapids

CANOEING QUEBEC'S ASHUAPMUSHUAN IN THE FALL

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In memory of Joan Foster, Bonaventure River canoeing friend.

Almost nothing can surpass the exhilaration of canoeing Quebec's Ashuapmushuan River—and that's just what 13 of us did in September 2000. The Ashuapmushuan—translated from the Cree variously as “the path the moose fol-

low,” “the place the elk is laid for,” “where the caribou cross,” or “where one watches the bear”—is steeped in history and tradition. Also known by its French-Canadian name of Chamouchouane, this major river has long attract-

ed my fascination. Rising in the Quebec highlands and first flowing northeast out of its Lac Ashuapmushuan (Chamouchouane) headwaters and then southeast, the river surges down its 110-mile whitewater route to Lac St. Jean. This connecting waterway was long used during the fur-trading era, when it served as a vital canoeing artery in two directions: to the south via the Saguenay River to the St. Lawrence; to the north via portages over a height of land to Lac Mistassini, and down the Rupert River to James Bay, the southernmost arm of Hudson Bay.

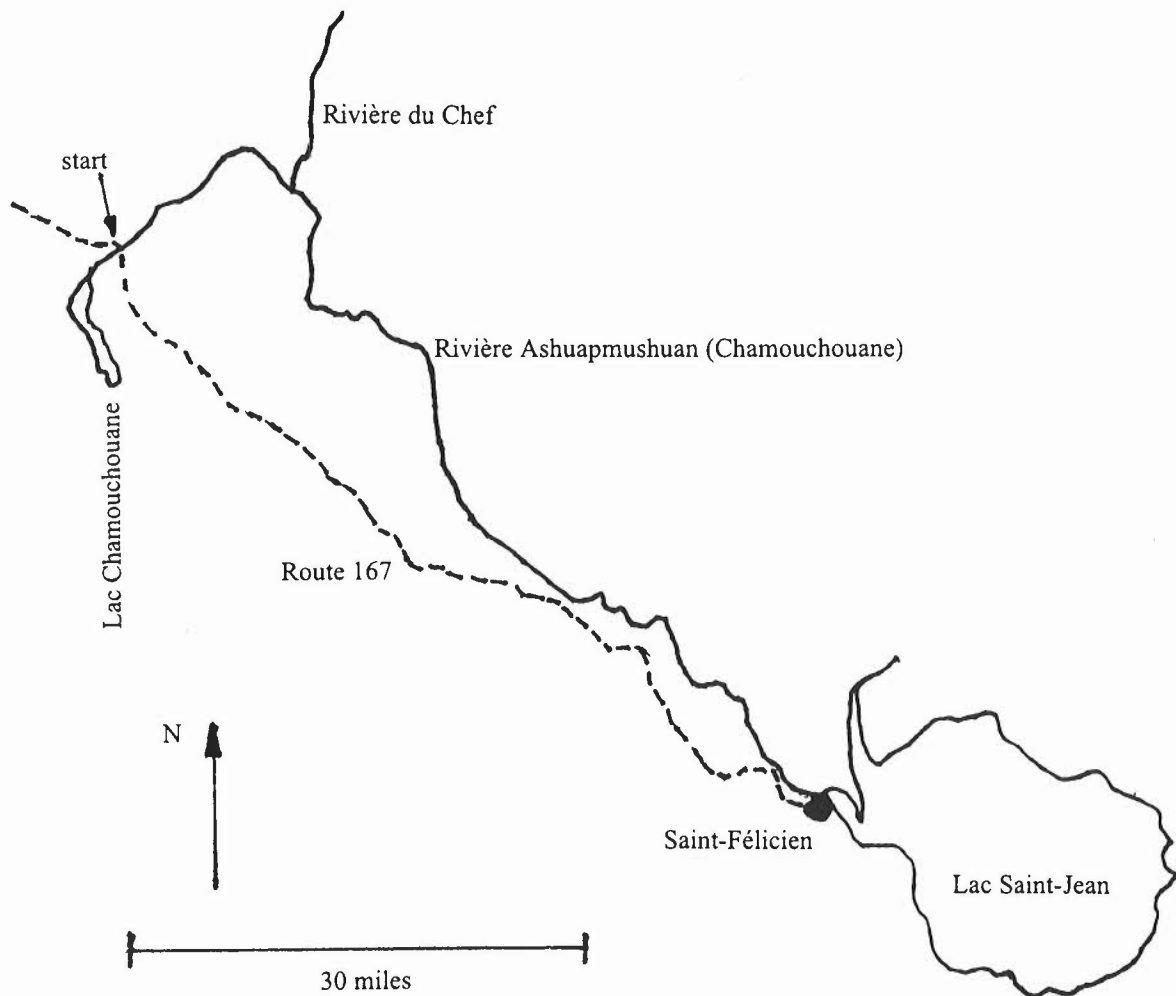
Before my trip, I had eagerly read Jesuit Father Charles Albanel's narrative of his 1672 Ashuapmushuan ascent. He was successful in saving souls along the way but less than happy with the rapids, headwinds, portages, rainstorms, and mosquitoes. Read in the context of an expedition report, canoeist Albanel's account of his arduous ord al rings true even today.

Some 330 years later, the river is, for the most part, in its original wild state, about the same as Albanel experienced it, except for Route 167, the Saint-F elicien-Chibougamau paved road going through the R eserve Faunique Ashuapmushuan, a provincial park. During the 1980s, Hydro Quebec entertained plans to dam the river—textbook-perfect for hydroelectricity, with many gorges and an extraordinary volume of water—but local opposition killed the proposed project. The river attracts

perhaps a thousand paddlers annually. Unlike many other excellent, but rarely run, whitewater rivers in Quebec, the Ashuapmushuan draws canoeists because the put-in and take-out are readily accessible by paved road, while other worthy rivers, often isolated and remote, are not conveniently linked to civilization.

In terms of difficulty, most experts rate the Ashuapmushuan halfway between the extremely demanding Moisie and the less ferocious Bonaventure, with plenty of "big water," breadth, power, and rapids—a formidable river by any classification or standard. We would put-in some distance below its headwaters to paddle about 75 of its 110 miles. And what a contrast between the upriver 1671-72 trip and our downriver 2000 one. With a late start, numerous portages, and the advent of snow and ice, Father Albanel was forced to overwinter halfway up the river. Even without the mosquitoes, we would have it so much easier, just by virtue of paddling downstream.

Our twenty-first-century party also enjoyed the advantages of the latest equipment, detailed maps, and a thoroughly professional guiding team. Serge, our chief guide, had canoed the river three years earlier and knew every rapid and campsite. With him were Claude who doubled as guide and driver of the bus/canoe trailer, and Claude's niece, Elodie, both of them thoroughly familiar with every aspect of river expeditions.



At 65 years old, I have diminishing canoeing skills—or perhaps I never learned them properly in the first place. Working at a Portsmouth, New Hampshire, library, and writing history books did not provide enough daily exercise and conditioning for such a strenuous expedition. But I had no reason to worry. The rest of the group, all Americans—most of them 30 or 40 years younger than I—were highly qualified outdoor-recreation professionals enjoying the proverbial “busman’s holiday.”

Six of our party hailed from New Jersey, led by Phil, who had founded Project U.S.E., an organization designed to teach outdoors skills to young people, many from dysfunctional families. Three other U.S.E. members were also in our party: Phil’s brother, Mike; Anthony, Phil’s executive assistant; and Mike, an instructor. Two additional New Jersey natives included Geoff, a newspaper advertising editor in his late twenties, and Mickey, a recently retired high school physical education teacher. Three experienced canoe trippers from New England—Tom and Leslie from Massachusetts, and Faith from Vermont—were the most recent additions to our party. I was indeed joining some of the top people in the business.

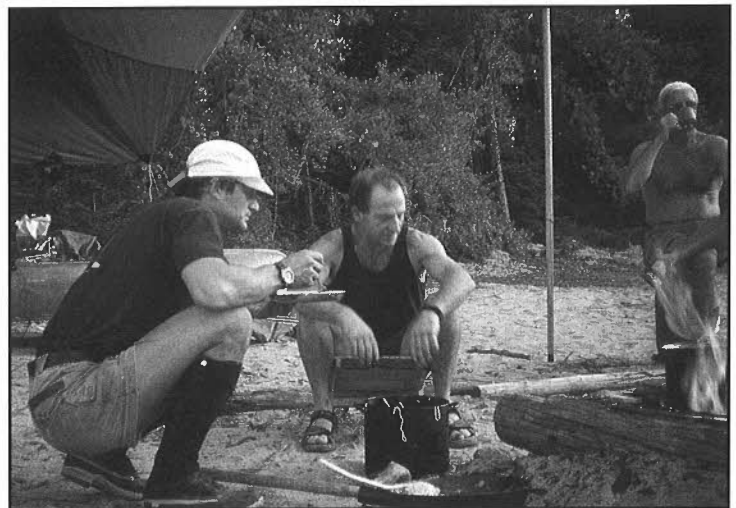
In high spirits, our group had arrived at Saint-Félicien, about 175 road miles northwest of Quebec City, on Sunday night, 10 September, en route for our next-day launching. Attempting to find a suitable campsite, we discovered that the gates of the town municipal park were locked for the night. So we ended up unrolling our sleeping bags at a seaplane base on the banks of the wide mouth of the Ashuapmushuan, just before it flows into mammoth Lac Saint-Jean.



Discussion at the put-in point

FIRST DAY, Monday, 11 September

After a 75-mile ride, we waved goodbye that afternoon to the shuttle-bus driver as she pulled away with an unloaded trailer and empty canoe racks, leaving us alone on the banks of the Ashuapmushuan. At that moment, I remembered the comment of a veteran Arctic Barrens canoeist: “That’s the best part of the trip, when the bush



Preparing a gourmet dinner

pilot flies away.” As the distractions of civilization departed with that bus, we were free to turn our attention to the river, probably fifty yards wide at this point. In five tandem and three solo canoes, we backpaddled and swung downstream into the slowly moving current. “It’s a short, easy paddle to the campsite,” Serge said.

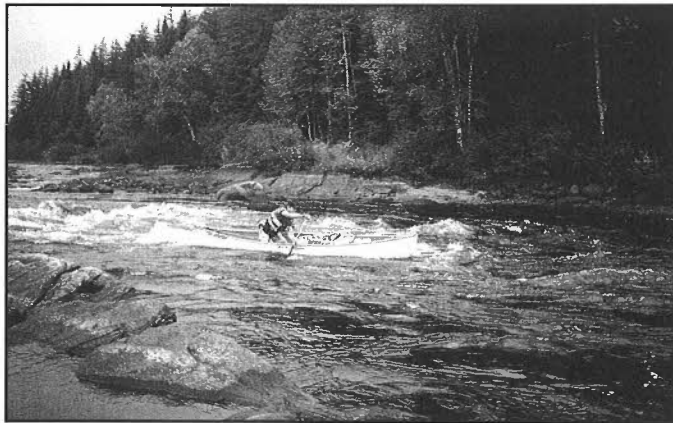
And it was—just enough time to limber up our muscles and feel euphoric about being back on a river. Looming ahead was the Route 167 bridge, its mid-river supports churning up a few ripples, which we ran easily. Downstream a mile or so on river right was a long sand beach, with enough campsites for a small army. We landed, finding we had the place to ourselves. As with other Canadian rivers I have run, nature was left alone, without designated campsites, signs, privies, or other manmade eyesores. We were free to pull off the river anywhere we might choose. There were seldom fire rings; ample driftwood, dead snags, and windfall provided fuel for our cooking fires. As it turned out, we never saw another canoeist, fisherman, or hermit during the entire trip.

We quickly reverted to adolescent behavior, charging across the sand toward the forest border to find the best campsites, dropping a pack or hat to stake our claim. Most of the time on this trip, this get-there-first competition was unnecessary, as there usually were many excellent sites. Mickey and I pitched our tent close to the forest cover yet far enough from the cooksite area to avoid the smoke and noise.

It was quite warm, almost hot, on this glorious Indian summer afternoon. Near the tent, Mickey crouched down to show me some dwarf plants, reindeer moss, and British soldiers with olive-green stems and scarlet heads, like British army uniforms. Yellow birch leaves floated down, bright in the sun, like an Impressionist painting. Russet marsh grasses, in full fall color, grew near the beach.

Seeing others taking advantage of the mild air temperature, I joined them for a skinny dip, a bracing swim that stimulated my appetite for the evening meal. Serge

was a master chef, determined to provide the best for his guests and himself. Our dinner was a delicious seafood medley with rice. In French-Canadian style, grated cheese was sprinkled over it, as with everything else we ate throughout the trip—whether breakfast eggs or vegetables or even soup. Accompanying our dinner every evening was an excellent red wine.



Serge shooting a rapid

SECOND DAY, Tuesday, 12 September

As Mickey and I paddled out on this raw, chilly morning, Indian summer had departed, replaced by a squishy overcast front that had moved in during the night. Mickey frequently scanned the sky, checking how fast the charcoal-grey clouds were being buffeted to gauge the wind speed of the threatening rainstorm. Lowering his gaze, he said, "Look at that unruffled calm surface along the shore, with the more turbulent waves roughing out toward the middle." Within minutes, light rain began to fall.

Ahead, we saw the spindly gray legs of Hydro Quebec stanchions carrying wires high across the river. We had seen such lines almost constantly during the drive north from Quebec City, but encountering them here came as something of a shock, a rather jarring intrusion. I could hardly be grumpy, though, as almost every hill and ridge in the United States—whether historic or scenic—now seems to be dominated by a telecommunications tower. Our party paddled under the power lines without hearing the usual ringing, buzzing noise; perhaps it was drowned out by the rushing waters, which picked up their pace with each canoe stroke.

Soon we were in fastwater, replaced by whitewater; the river, the misty rain, and the sky—all blending into a gauzy swirl. The rapids abruptly appeared, a bit too early in the trip, I thought. Already we had reached Four Mile Rapids. Mickey and I shot the first set. With Serge signalling directions, we eddied out behind a rock pile. The water-slick stones, even bedrock, felt unstable enough to cause slippery footing. The paddle served as an excellent support, almost a crutch, to prevent a fall. Mickey cautioned me, "Your paddle is your Bible, always carry it with you."

Back on the water and into a second set, Mickey and I thought we had safely manoeuvred through a rock garden, only to strike an underwater ledge that hung up our canoe. No amount of prying, rocking, or grunting could free us. Claude angled over and tugged at our painter, releasing our canoe from its perch. "We're off," we exclaimed in unison. After running a wicked-looking, around-a-hard-corner rapids, we eddied out to watch the others coming down.

After shooting the same sequence, Mike and Geoff elected, along with another tandem boat, to paddle upstream and then peel out for an exciting ride downstream. The first duo executed the manoeuvre in textbook fashion, but Mike and Geoff leaned too far and dumped almost instantly. Clinging to the canoe, they were carried downstream perhaps a hundred yards. Again Claude came to the rescue, closing alongside to grab hold and steer the overturned boat. Fortunately, nothing fell out of the cap-sized canoe, as all of us were conscientious about tying in all our dunnage each morning. The two canoes landed safely on river left. After drying off and changing their clothes, Geoff and Mike ferried across the river to join us for a stand-up lunch. We were now ready again to combat the rapids.

The Ashuapmushuan evolved into a bold, brash river of multiple rapids, one after the other, with no letup. Many runs were more complex and involved than they originally seemed. Some stretches continued on for half a mile. All afternoon, our party slid by, scraped by, or crashed into boulders and ledges above and below water, amid shouts of "no gunwale grab," "stay low," "we're coming through," and "don't hold!" Even the most experienced paddlers could not avoid all the obstacles. We knelt for maximum stability, as the water kept crashing over the deck, soaking anything not waterproof. We often eddied out and bailed. It became a physical and mental ordeal.

Finally, by late afternoon, as the rain cleared out, we entered a wider, gentler stretch. On river left was a large beaver lodge. Mickey's sense of humor quickly returned. "Why did the beavers build the dam?" he asked. I was tempted to respond with a made-up scientific explanation, but Mickey jumped in: "Because they had the contract."

High ground rose on river left, where Serge landed and checked out a grassy site along a creek tributary. But it wasn't exactly what he wanted. Finally, he landed at the base of a steep, forested ridge and waved us in. This would be home. Our tent city sprang up on an established site atop the plateau, and a steak dinner rewarded our efforts.

At dusk, Mickey and I gazed down through the trees at the canoes and beach below. The day's fading light dimly illuminated the river and the rocks, accompanied by the soft hush of downstream rapids, almost like soothing background music. "I've waited for this all my life," Mickey said. "The river and the mountains." Minutes later, the rains came, sending us scurrying for cover in our tent.

THIRD DAY, Wednesday, 13 September

Morning fog hovered over the river, with black rocks silhouetted in the mist. After a delayed start under emerging sunny skies, our expedition embarked on a particularly beautiful stretch of river, with occasional white rock cliffs topped by pine forest on either side. According to custom, which prevailed for the rest of the trip, we swapped canoeing partners for a change in conversation and paddling styles. I resumed my usual bow seat, paired with Anthony, who wore a canteen bag apparatus on his back with a connecting tube near his mouth so he could drink without interrupting his paddling. For most of the morning, we manoeuvred pleasantly in class 2 rapids, reading the river in a mental-stimulation exercise like a series of chess moves. With Anthony's educated paddle and precise commands from the stern, we rarely bumped boulders. During the late morning, Faith switched from her canoe to mine.

Ahead the river pinched, with an accompanying roar, indicating the start of class 4 rapids. No portage trail was evident on either side of the river, thus committing us to this run. I dropped to my knees in anticipation of big water. It didn't take long. The water swept down a gorge with tremendous power, moving us so fast that the rocks whizzed by. The canoe dropped into holes and catapulted up, taking on a lapful of cold water each time. I felt half fear, half exhilaration, responding to instinct without a second to think. The whole wild run must have been three-fourths of a mile long by the time we reached the end of the cataract. All of us remained upright and eddied out river left to a rock bench. In every canoe were loose canteens and bailers bobbing in several inches of sloshing water.

When lunch was done, we began a long flatwater paddle that lasted the rest of the afternoon. After many easy miles, we noticed a major tributary flowing in from the left. Serge turned northward into it. "This is the Rivière du Chef," he said, "with a campsite a short paddle upstream." I was elated, having done some reading about the rarely paddled "Chief's River." Perhaps this brief reconnaissance could lead to a future trip.

The mouth of the new river was a wide, braided delta with sandbars extending far out from either bank; the sediment-carrying capacity of the slack current had diminished to almost nothing. The trick now was to seek the deepest water and avoid grounding on the sandbars, which reached out like tentacles to trap us. In this almost-motionless water, we shifted back and forth constantly, reacting to a totally different river configuration from what we had experienced on the Ashuapmushuan.

After a 45-minute upstream paddle, we approached a long tongue of land and hopped out onto a desert-like landscape—the remains of an esker, drumlin, or moraine, debris dropped by the retreating glacier thousands of years ago. Scraggly pine lined a bony, boulder-and-gravel ridge. Walking around, we soon discovered we were on an island. Mickey had paddled around to the far side, landed, and jammed the blade

of his paddle in the sand to claim the island for Cime Aventure, the trip's outfitter.

The earliest arrivals in our group charged up the overgrown suggestions of paths to claim the most desirable campsites on the ridge. Those less fortunate, myself included, settled for sites on the sandy plain below. Within a few minutes of our landing, the rain began. Mickey and I pitched our tent in the greatest haste. We had the best site—to the north of our tent, beyond a remote beach, the Rivière du Chef gurgled down, its sound ringing rhythmically in my ears. In the glow of flashlights and headlamps, we ate our supper.



Taking a rest along Four Mile Rapids

FOURTH DAY, Thursday, 14 September

In the early hours of the new day, I crawled out of my tent for a brief stretch and walk. The rain had stopped. Above, the stars blazed brightly to illuminate the landscape, so I could easily see my way around. I looked toward the North Star, in the direction of the river cascading down from its highlands. The North suggested to me not the monetary wealth of Klondike gold, of oil wells, or of Barren Lands diamonds, but rather of spiritual wealth just in the joy of being there. I felt a yearning to return someday to this river or another one in the North Country, to paddle forever on a river journey that never ends. I had found a magical place where the air, the water, and the thoughts flow free. Here I was, already dreaming about the next trip on the next river, when reality called me back to the tent for more sleep.

At a more decent hour later that morning, our party was in high spirits, perhaps because Serge had informed us, "It will be an easy day, no rapids, and almost all flatwater." Serge organized a football huddle, with everyone participating in a mutual neck-and-shoulder massage, followed by light karate chops—his effort "to improve morale." We stood around in our circle, loosening the muscles of those in front of us.

Although the water from the Ashuapmushuan and the Rivière du Chef officially was safe to drink, we all performed the daily ritual of refilling our canteens with the help of a water filtration pump. The filter extracted everything—dirt, scum, even giardia—to produce pure drinking water. Obtaining the cleanest water for this process

requires reaching out from the stern of the beached canoe, dipping the hose into the river, and starting pumping, while another person provides stability by sitting on the beached bow end. The two then reverse roles to fill the other canteen. With our canteens full, we were ready to disembark.

I was reunited with Mickey for a lazy paddle down the Rivière du Chef. Along the way, he expressed some of the same thoughts I'd had earlier that morning. "I retired in June," he said, "and now I have the time to go on more of these trips." His wanderlust seemed as great as mine. The whole group, in fact, from the second day onward, had talked constantly of planning a future reunion on yet another Canadian river.

Once we were back on the Ashuapmushuan, the river widened, picking up considerable water from its chief tributary. And we ourselves picked up a dose of harsh reality in our wilderness fantasy—a logging road cut into the bench above river right. We would often hear a throaty rumble in the distance, followed shortly thereafter by billowing clouds of dust. Every few minutes, trucks with revved-up engines would barrel through, obviously exceeding the speed limit—if any such regulation existed in this remote locale. The huge trucks rolled on, coming and going, carrying massive logs to the sawmills and pulp mills. For the rest of the day, the river and the road ran parallel, so we were never out of earshot of the thriving forest-products industry.

On the bank below the road, we gradually approached a gray object, which turned out to be a long-abandoned aluminum canoe, thoroughly banged up and twisted. Claude landed his solo canoe and lifted the old hulk out of the weeds. Surely this relic had a story to tell.

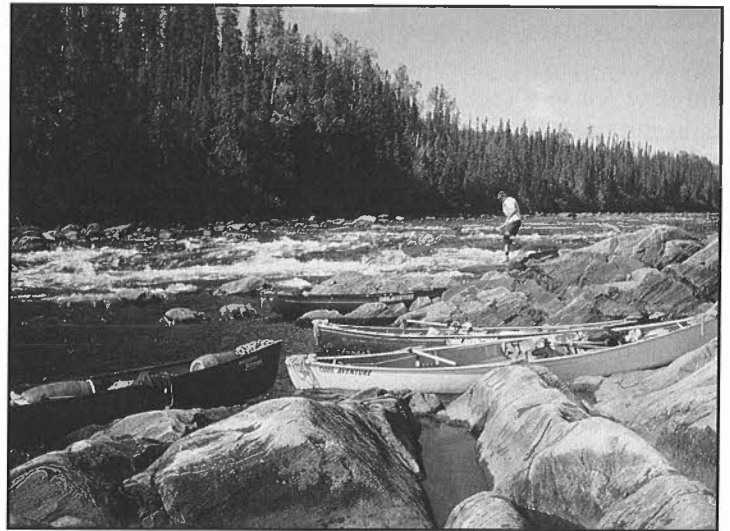
At our lunch stop on a gravel bar, a brook flowed in from the left, bringing nutrients to support a thriving fish population. Mike landed a northern pike, but it was full of bones and too small to keep. Mike and Anthony collected some rounded stones the size of softballs, in anticipation of preparing a steam tent that evening. Back on the river, we observed Canadian geese flying in V formation, honking high overhead as they headed south. They obviously had more common sense than us human beings, seeking warmer climes well before the onset of snow. By late afternoon, we pulled into our campsite, a mile-long gravel bar on an island.



Before long, Mike and Anthony had pitched a tent, left it empty, and weighted the bottom flaps with sand and gravel to seal it tight. After building a fire to heat the rocks they had collected, they transported the hot stones, one by one and using a carefully balanced shovel, to the tent. Others carried pitchers of water up from the river. Once inside the tent, with the door closed, they poured the water on the rocks to produce instant steam.

At first, I lingered outside, but soon, tempted by curiosity about this purifying ritual, I donned my bathing suit. Then I opened the door, hopped inside, and closed the flap as quickly as possible to prevent the steam's escape. About five people were in the tent—I think. The steam was so dense I couldn't see, or even tell who was beside me. Only the voices were recognizable. I took a normal breath, inadvertently inhaling scalding steam, and started coughing vigorously. "That sure cleaned out your lungs—and everything else," someone remarked. I lasted only three minutes before bolting out, joining others in a wild dash for a dip in the Ashuapmushuan. Those who had spent 15 minutes or more inside the tent looked like boiled lobsters—probably a sure cure for any ailments they might have had.

The evening rain began on schedule. Serge served up a delicious chowder, made with cod, onions, carrots, and celery in a clear broth. It was a dish worthy of the finest Parisian chef.



Lunch stop at a rock garden

FIFTH DAY, Friday, 15 September

It rained all night without letup. "This is a class 5 rain," Serge commented at breakfast. Everything was wet and gritty with sand—clothes, hair, skin, sleeping bags, tents. The rain would continue with varying intensity for the next three days on the river, at the take-out, and on the long drive back to Quebec City. Regardless of the weather conditions, though, we needed to make time.

Geoff and I teamed up for the next two days. His dump on the second day had not fazed him as he adapt-

ed quickly to this demanding river. His paddling strength in the stern, coupled with common sense and a cheerful attitude, made him an ideal partner. At our lunch stop under a tarp, our rain-soaked party enjoyed Bonaventure River salmon, a real delicacy. (Properly cured, it can keep for three years without spoiling.)



Wrecked aluminum canoe

With relatively easy water during the afternoon, we pushed on until we approached Fer-à-Cheval (Horseshoe) Rapids. The first set of rapids amounted to a mere warmup exercise for the hard work we knew lay ahead. The intense roar picked up with each stroke. After landing on the river-right rock bench to scout the possibilities, we understood instantly that these were class 3 or 4 rapids—a broken ledge with water streaming through gaps, accompanied by tremendous spray, then dropping into holes. Perhaps under ideal conditions, Serge, Claude, and Elodie might have attempted a run. But today, with the storm adding so much water to boost the intensity, that was not an option. Even lining, the only viable alternative, involved risk.

As we planted our feet on the slippery bench, we still found ourselves sliding as we half-hauled and half-pulled the canoes over the shelf. After lowering the canoes into a rocky channel, we let out line to swing them around boulders and then pulled back hard. Claude and Elodie, almost waist-deep in water, co-ordinated this effort, canoe by canoe, until we finally floated the last boat around the final obstacle and into less turbulent water. Our guides were well aware that faulty footing or loss of balance would probably cause them to drop the ropes, and they'd be swept downstream. But they held on, to come through in magnificent fashion.

We hopped back into our canoes; but at this point no paddling was necessary, just an occasional quick correcting stroke to maintain the boats' direction. As the river charged down its channel, we simply hitchhiked on the current for a fast ride. Muddy, debris-laden water cascaded, occasionally as waterfalls, off the high banks, with the stripped-away topsoil being carried over the cliff face in an awesome display of erosion.

At about 5 p.m., most of us were hung up on rocks as we struggled to land to check out a potential campsite, which turned out to be marginal at best. The humpy sites

were few, and quite exposed. The landing approach was wretched. We decided to push on for a more desirable campsite downriver. At least the paddling kept us warm.

The next two hours passed quickly—fairly routine paddling, broken by only a few shallowly submerged sandbars. At about 7 p.m., as we were approaching a campsite Serge had remembered from his earlier trip, I was surprised to hear the sound of surging rapids ahead. It was now dusk, so every minute of light was precious. We shot the rapids without incident, only to realize that we were not done. More whitewater lay ahead; the river was demanding still more from us.

Knobby cliffs rose on both sides of the river as we faced a tough decision—whether to pitch our tents among these rock piles in thick forest, or to risk running the last apparent rapids in waning light to reach an established campsite. Ever since our put-in, these river and campsite decisions, whether major or minor, had affected every move we made—plan A, option B, contingency C, or whatever else seemed sensible. If we had arrived fifteen minutes earlier, with adequate daylight, the rapids ahead would not have been an issue. We decided to go for it.

In solo boats, Tom and Mickey ran the rapids river left and disappeared. A minute later, a flashlight beam signalled that they had made it. Fading light merged into semi-darkness. The remainder of our party ferried to river right to attempt a less difficult run. We paddled our canoes around rocks, playing follow-the-leader, as full darkness descended. Then the light across the river—our beacon for making the crossing—went out. Later I learned that Tom's batteries had died, and he had no spares on him. Ahead, the water appeared calm despite a maze of boulders, and a new light downstream shone in our direction. It was Mike holding a flashlight. Geoff and I paddled forward to Mike who was standing on a ledge, speaking to us calmly. One by one, all the canoes assembled at this rallying point. Finally, someone at the campsite beamed a powerful flashlight across the river, and our little armada aimed for it. Canoe by canoe, we made it, with Elodie the last to arrive. As we dragged our canoes up onto the

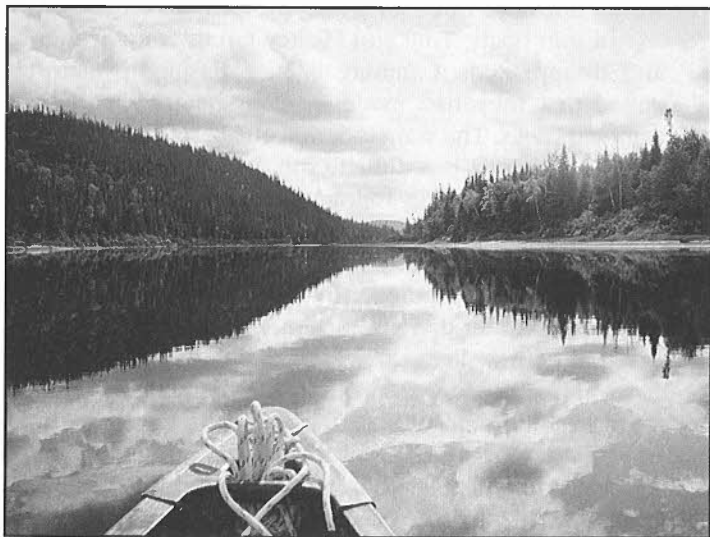


Sandy island in Rivière du Chef

beach, we scarcely noticed we were standing in the shallow water. With adrenaline flowing, I felt totally warm.

Finding our flashlights was our first priority. We fished through our duffels for the dry bags, usually discovering the lights at the bottom of the heap. In one or two cases, people had switched canoes during the day, so their belongings were in other canoes, thus prompting a more protracted search. As I aimed my light randomly around the woods, I was amazed to see many superb tentsites on level ground. Serge walked around, passing out chocolate chunks in celebration.

Anthony stepped forward to help me pitch my tent. The zippers, clogged with sand and grit, refused to work, but I cared little at that point. Once inside my tent, I crawled into my dry sleeping bag, reached for my canteen, and fumbled around in my daypack for some granola bars. What more could I want? I'd never before felt such a sense of luxury, of pure joy, of sheer exuberance. I said to myself, "I know now that there is a god who looks after canoeists." Outside, heavy rains let loose. I slept soundly.



Paddling down Rivière du Chef

SIXTH DAY, Saturday, 16 September

The next morning, I was the first to rise, crawling through my open tent door for a walk in the early light. The day was blessed with a lull in the rain. I walked around, not knowing fully what to expect, and beheld a peaceful scene: the beach and the river below, the rocky knobs on both sides of our landing site. The section we had descended during the previous evening looked benign, as all we had done amounted to skirting a few boulders in the stillwater. The rapids that had produced the steady roar were in fact considerably downstream. From the noise we'd heard during the night, they seemed so much closer. One by one, our group began emerging from the tents. Mickey soon joined me on the beach, remarking for all to hear, "I'm going to church every Sunday for the rest of my life."

After our fire-toasted breakfast of Canadian bacon sandwiches, we carried our tents down to the river to remove the sand from the floors and around the jammed zippers. Nearly everything else was soaked. Many of us had already stuffed one plastic bag full of wet clothes and had begun filling a second. Bailing out the canoes, with up to half a foot of rainwater, took time. My camera jammed, bringing my photography to an end. Despite annoying equipment problems affecting everyone, I heard not a single discouraging word—only lighthearted comments such as Anthony's contention that Serge would be taking us all to a Quebec City nightclub later that evening.

Once underway for our last day on the river, we anticipated a lunchtime take-out. Geoff and I paddled out into the flatwater, soon picking up riffles and minor rapids. Our group had not been on the river for more than a minute when Geoff heard a clamor. We looked back to see that Phil and Jim had dumped, with Jim clinging to a rescue canoe. Phil was still in his stern seat, while his unbalanced bow pointed heavenward at a 30-degree angle. A successful rescue took them to shore. They were unhurt. "We hit a rock," Phil said. Fortunately, their raingear and boots had protected them from chill, and after dumping out the water, they were ready to continue.

Two hours later, the whole landscape became a blur of gray, with off-and-on rain for most of the morning. Serge landed river right on a rock shelf, where thick brush almost blocked a vaguely defined portage path. Without knowledge of the place, we might have paddled on, perhaps even to be sucked into the rapids around the bend. We got out to scout. The path was almost completely overgrown, so the many wet, springy branches gave us a second soaking as we slithered by. A ten-minute bushwhack took us to a high knob overlooking boiling rapids, the meanest-looking ones of the whole trip.

Below the knob, I heard someone exclaim, "blueberries, blueberries!" We stooped down to pick the just-ripened, sweet-tasting berries, a discovery that one participant labelled "the highlight of the whole trip." As we gorged ourselves, morale shot up tremendously.

When we returned from our excursion, Serge was buoyed enough with his scouting intelligence that he and Claude decided to do a trial run in solo canoes. The New Jersey contingent made its way downstream with throw ropes. Once safety precautions were in place, the canoeists took off. Putting on our packs, Faith, Leslie, Phil, and I opted for a hike along the portage path. Within a couple of minutes, we were totally surprised to encounter Serge and then Claude, both beaming broadly. "We ran it," they exclaimed. "It's not as bad as it looks." Our hiking group reached the end of the long portage path, quite a bit downstream, where the water was relatively calm. We doubled back to pick up a rude cut-off path we had bypassed to clamber over rocks and ruts and arrive at the river, where all the canoes were waiting for us.

We hikers, alas, had missed the show, a run described as "easier than what we went through last night." With Serge and Claude completing two or three solo runs,

Elodie, Mickey, Geoff, Mike, Jim, Tom, and Anthony teamed up to run the great gorge. "You missed it," I was told, but I could picture the great runs. They had skirted a rock tower pinnacle in the middle of the river to veer hard right and avoid a killer hole about 15 feet downstream. The serpent's olive-white mouth would have swallowed and capsized any canoe that entered its open jaws. This section, known as the Rapide de l'Engoulevant, is occasionally run by canoeists, but it's usually portaged or lined.

"The takeout is now just a quarter-mile away," Serge assured us. With the prize so near, I was more than willing to forgo an exhausting and time-consuming portage. Ahead were some boulders and fast water, nothing out of the ordinary. All went well as Geoff and I approached a fang-like rock tongue, which we avoided by swinging wide. With the van in sight, we dug ahead, only to hit a totally unexpected "invisible" submerged sleeper. The abrupt collision rocked the canoe, tilting it crazily back and forth until we righted it. "Not so fast. You haven't completed the trip yet," the impish Ashuapmushuan seemed to be saying. "I am not going to let you off so easily." Geoff and I felt foolish, but as we neared the rock-slab takeout, I glanced back a few times. Another canoe was going through the same shaking motion before the paddlers stabilized their craft. Finally through the last maze, they had earned their passage.

As Geoff and I began unloading, someone said to me, "Dick, you have another river now." I laughed it off, responding, "No, you don't have it right. The river almost had me." I felt no sense of victory, only a sense of humility.

After a strenuous ninety minutes of takeout work in the rain, we changed into what few dry clothes we had. Claude drove over a dirt road to Chutes Chaudière, or Chaudière Falls, probably a mile downstream. Hiking down a foot trail through deep woods, we heard, long before we saw the river, its deep-throated, almost deafening roar. On the slippery rock lip, we gingerly stepped out as far as we dared. The Ashuapmushuan swept down a

gorge through solid rock, with a great, geyser-like leap at the end of the falls, and spray rising like smoke. This section is unrunnable, even for extreme canoeists and kayakers—assuming that they would be crazy enough even to attempt it.

For five days, the Ashuapmushuan had stretched our muscles and consumed our souls, as we pressed on to the next bend, the next campsite, the next confluence, and the next rapids. Our elation at take-out, alas, was only temporary, rather like taking a deep breath. Being addicted to exploring the watery veins of the North American continent, we guests and guides alike would remain on land for only so long before putting in at some remote riverbank to commit ourselves all over again.

Vive l'Ashuapmushuan!



Tranquil beach campsite

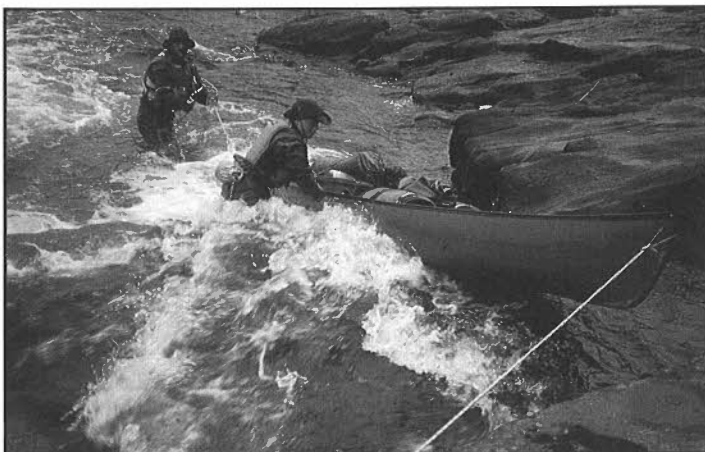
PRACTICAL INFORMATION

For those intending to descend the Ashuapmushuan, I strongly recommend a guide, or a leader who has previously paddled the river. Three outfitters are currently available:

1. Gilles Brideau, Cime Aventure, 200, chemin A. Arsenault, Bonaventure, Quebec GOC 1E0, tel. 418-534-2333.
2. Martin Brown., Sunrise International (Sunrise County Canoe Expeditions, Inc.), 4 Union Plaza, Suite 21, Bangor, Maine 04401, tel. 1-800-RIVER-30, or 1-888-490-9300, or 207-942-9300.
3. Warren Cochrane, Allagash Canoe Trips, P.O. Box 713, Greenville, Maine 04441, tel. 207-695-3668.

* * * * *

Two articles on the Chamouchouane River have been published in previous issues of *Nastawgan*: Autumn 1983 and Autumn 1984. (ed.)



Hard work at Fer-à-Cheval Rapids



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

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

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

NEWS BRIEFS

NASTAWGAN MATERIAL AND DEADLINE Articles, trip reports, book reviews, photographs, sketches, technical tips, or anything else that you think might be of interest to other readers, are needed for future issues. Try to submit your contributions by e-mail, on 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: Autumn 2001 *deadline date:* 5 August
Winter 2001 28 October

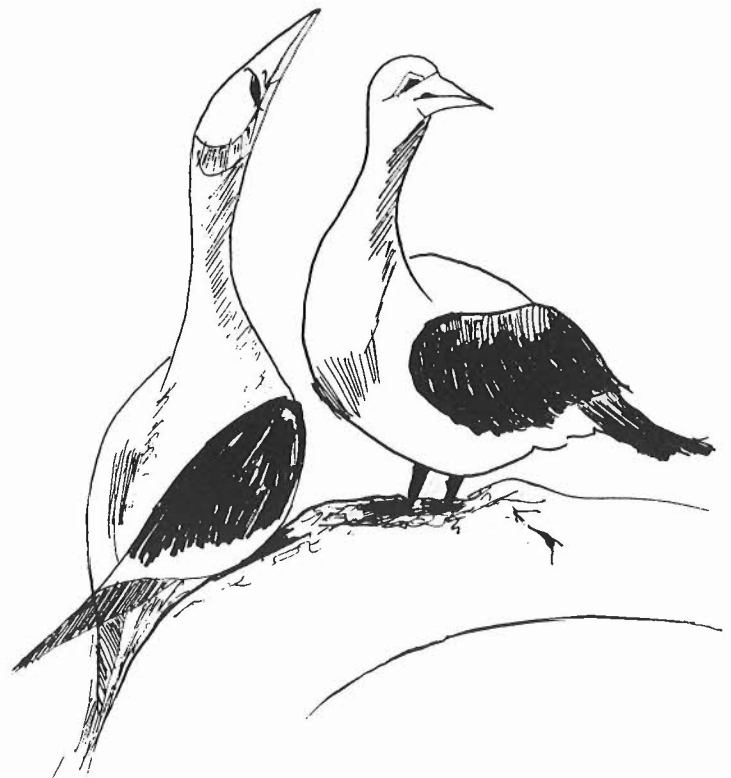
WCA MEMBERSHIP LISTS are available to any members who wish one for personal, non-commercial use. The list can be ordered by sending a five-dollar bill (no cheque, please!) to Cash Belden at the WCA postal address (see WCA Contacts on the back page).

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.

RIDEAU CANOE CLASSIC On Saturday, 7 June 2001, join the Canadian Recreational Canoeing Association in the excitement and fun of the Merrickville Canalfest at the Burritts Rapids Locks, southwest of Ottawa. The main event is a canoe race over a distance of 9.75 km; there are 11 categories to participate in. For more information, contact the CRCA at: PO Box 398, Merrickville, Ontario, K0G 1N0, tel. 613-269-2910, toll-free 888-252-6292, fax 613-269-2908; info@crca.ca; www.crca.ca

SOLO PADDLERS If you enjoy solitude and solo paddling, contact like-minded people at: Going Solo, c/o Robert Perkins, 18 Hawthorn Street, Cambridge, MA 02138, USA.

FREE JOURNALS WCA member Roger Nelis makes available free of charge an almost complete collection of WCA journals 1978–2000 (*The Wilderness Canoeist*, *Nastawgan*) to any interested paddler, especially recent WCA members. To give everybody a fair chance to get hold of this fine collection, a draw will be held on 1 August 2001 where the prize goes to the winning name from the collection of names submitted to the editor before that date. See the back page for address, etc. (If necessary, postage will be paid by the WCA.)



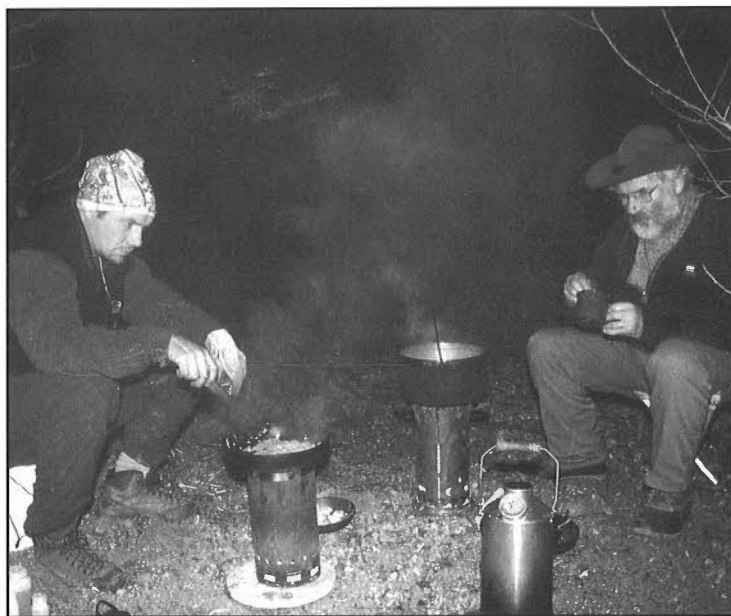
PADDLING NEWS FROM EUROPE

Ueli Meyer

Europe may not be the canoeing paradise—in quality and quantity—that Canada has to offer, but there are enough places here where a dedicated canoe tripper can find some fine paddling opportunities to satisfy the soul. I live in Switzerland and with my wife and some friends I regularly manage to get away and dip our paddles in challenging waters in various western European countries.

One of the rivers we visit is the Allier in central France. The Allier is possibly one of the last rivers in these countries left in a more or less natural state, at least according to our standards. From 6 to 16 December, three friends—the oldest being 72—and I paddled the river. The first three days we had to stay put, the wind raging with speeds up to 130 km/h. We sat nicely under our tightly strung tarp, smoking crooked Swiss stogies, and partaking of all kinds of goodies. Later on the situation improved and we had a great time. Good campsites, glorious sunsets, full moon, great food, agreeable temperatures, hardly any rain, happy hour (l'heure du Pastis, tea with brandy or vieille prune), wine to go with the meals—although the latter was at times a little bit on the cold side.

I took my standard **environmental wood cookstove** along, and it worked beautifully. (My friends used the collapsible version.) My stove is a kind of iron or steel cylinder with a “floor” two inches above the ground. You put the stove on the ground anywhere, no need to look for rocks to prepare a fireplace, just any flat space will do. You put some kind of fire starter in and a little kindling, and within one minute you have a fire going and can put the pots on. The stove needs extremely little wood, no heat is lost because it gets all up right to the pots or pans,



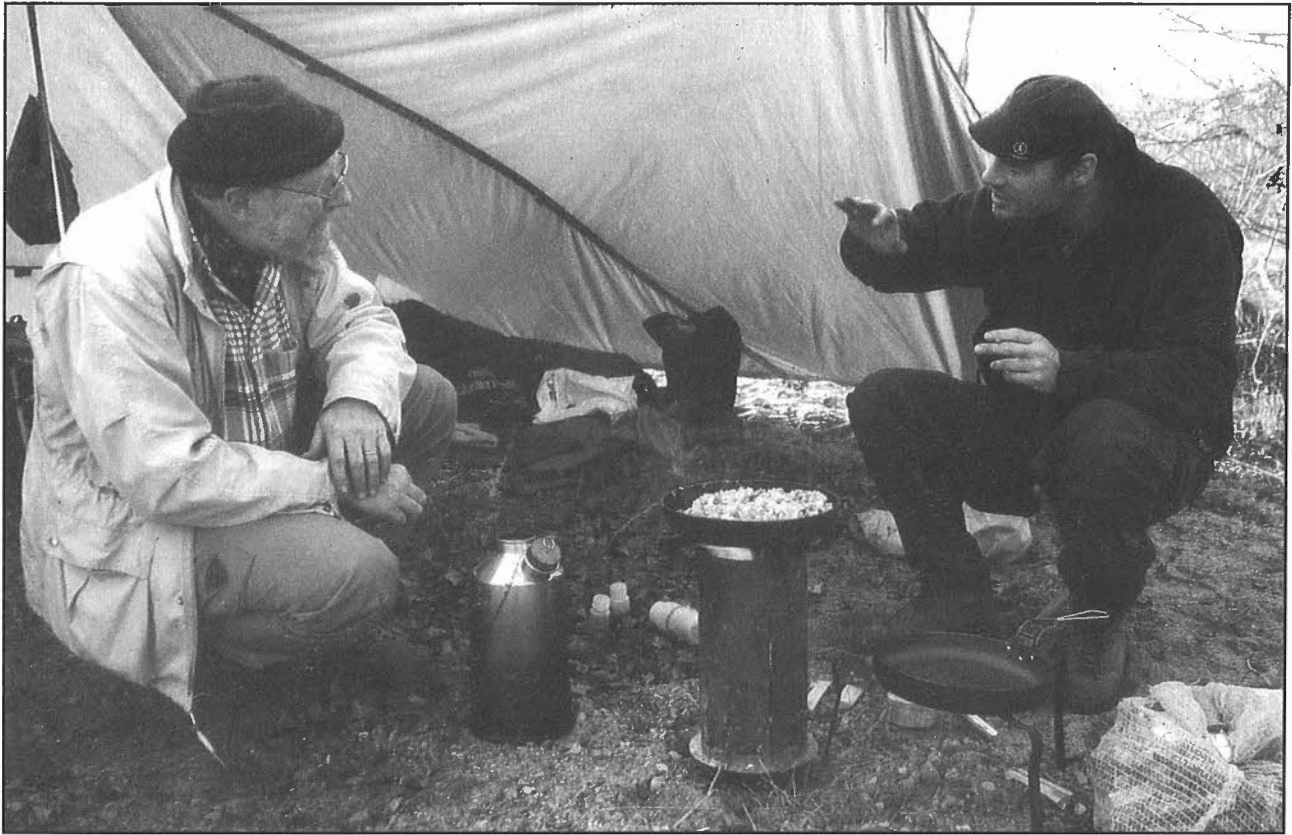
even in high winds, and you can use scrap wood lying around. If it is wet you can arrange it around the stove, and, soon enough, you have to take it away or it will ignite.

Even if you have only one such stove, it is possible to work with several pots or pans. Rain is no hindrance; the pot does not let the rain get at the fire. The ground does not show any scars, hardly any ashes are left, you take the stove away and nobody sees there has been a fire. You could surely put it on a grand piano and light it, without causing any damage. I always use a fire-resistant base underneath, just to make sure.

I got that contraption from a German member of a rather traditionalist open canoe group of which I'm a member. Being a metal worker, he developed and tested it over the years. It does not have any nuts or bolts or parts to be assembled for use; you just put it down and that's it. So, even in the snow, there is no danger of losing any parts. When I brought the stove back to Switzerland and used it for the first time, it met with immediate enthusiasm.

The Swiss being perfectionists, a fellow paddler who is also a “metal

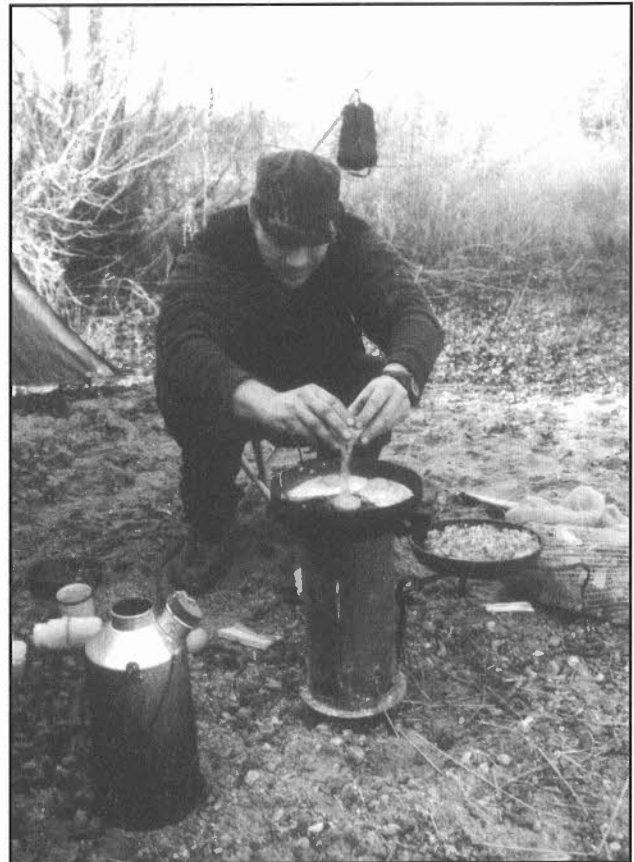




guy,” already had ideas for—in his mind, necessary—improvements when he saw the stove in use for the first couple of times. He developed a model of his own, but it is far too complicated, though much nicer to look at with caribou, loons etc. cut out of the metal. It also needs assembling and disassembling, which is a major disadvantage in snowy conditions, since it is very easy to lose small, but important, parts, particularly when working with clammy hands. He has since realized those drawbacks and has gone back to a simpler solution.

Some people said that, while the stove is sensational, it should be collapsible so that one could take it along on backpacking trips. A collapsible version was therefore constructed, but, same as the first “improved” model, it draws far too much compared with my stove. The idea of my stove is to have a very small fire, with the wood lying parallel to the floor grate on the coals, and not sticking up along the sidewalls. I’m also including a couple of pictures of former trips in France with my wife, Silvia, cooking on that same stove.

On several pictures you see some kind of a **metal can with a cork** in one of the two openings. This is an absolutely ingenious water-boiling contraption, made in England. The can has a double wall all around containing 1.5 litres of water; the inside is hollow and acts as a chimney. You make a fire underneath, or simply put it on the stove, the flames roar up through the chimney, and the 1.5 litres of water are boiling within five minutes or so, with hardly any wood!

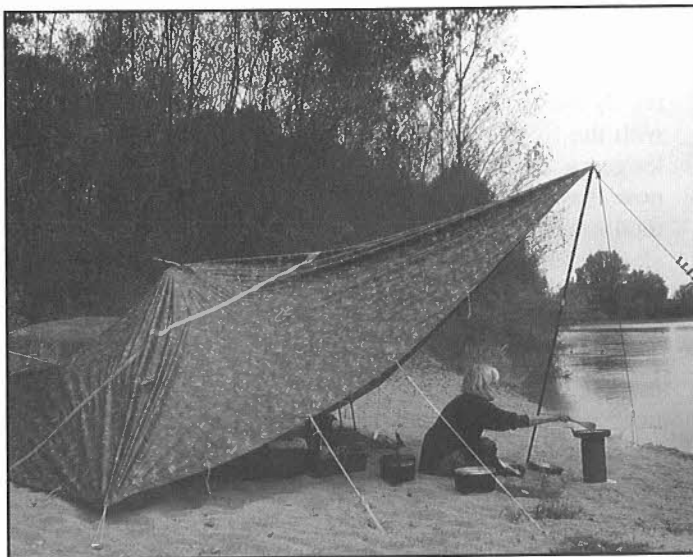




The **tarp** we often use is a somewhat bigger copy of the Buckley Dryfly that Dave Buckley presented in the winter 1991 issue of *Nastawgan*. It works very nicely indeed, and everybody is full of praise for this useful piece of equipment. The picture with the Buckley Fly and the canoe at its side is from a trip in Germany about ten years ago. The tarp shown in the photos with my wife cooking is a different kind of tarp, made from camouflage material of the Swiss Army.

On Saturday, 20 January, Swiss Open Canoe, an informal organization of lovers of Canadian style tripping, had its annual Slide, Film, and Video Festival here in Burgdorf where I live. I organized the meeting and about 80 people attended to listen to the interesting presentations.

And finally: a Swiss Open Canoe member is always solo paddling a very heavy 17-foot fibreglass canoe, a real Panzer. The guy was apparently fed up with either putting up a tent or a tarp, so for a trip on France's Loire River, he decided to transform his canoe into a tent. The result is shown in the photograph.



This is it for now. Maybe later more canoeing news from Europe.

ACTIVISM IN THE WCA, YES OR NO

The following two essays, profoundly disturbing as they are, underline the perishable quality of remoteness. They conclude by imploring us to increase our level of activity in attempts to maintain the presence of remoteness. The authors call for renewed efforts of advocacy for the preservation of uninterrupted space in our northlands. As planners and developers continue to press into areas of Canada that have "nothing" in them, roads and access routes leave fewer, and always fewer, uncut sections visible on the maps. There is an escalating tendency to diminish the value of the unused portions of boreal forest and tundra that have yet to be drawn to serve human needs.

The Board of Directors for the WCA is presently discussing the topic of advocacy as it applies to our canoe club. It is without question that we want canoe routes and portages protected from the scars of development, resource extraction, and in-filling. It is also without question that we wish future generations of canoeists to be able to experience the thrill of exploration and the awe of natural majesty, as they experience the mystique of morning mist and the gurgle of laughing waters.

The Board faces at least two primary questions. First, what are the details and the limitations of advocacy activity? and second, how much advocacy is realistic for our WCA organization? These questions are being debated, at times quite vigorously, against the backdrop of the WCA organizational structure. At present, we are about 600 in number; many of us middle aged and older, widely varied in vocation and profession, and, as a club, not terribly well-heeled economically. As volunteers, we share a fer-

vent passion for all things canoe, and, as well, the environmental ideals and issues which surround the remote and wild areas of Canada. Do we, as WCA, fit the profile of a politically active organization? If we do not, then who can we turn to in order to carry our beliefs forward to political decision makers?

These are simple questions, but they are not easily answered. As the Board discusses the content and challenges of the articles mentioned, we turn to the membership to contribute to the ongoing dialogue. Perhaps you have expertise to share; perhaps you have ideas as to how advocacy could proceed; perhaps you feel that advocacy and lobbying are not within the mandate of the WCA. The task is psychologically and physically overwhelming when considering the incidence of incursion into remote areas across Canada. The WCA has a good local record of becoming involved with canoeing issues and has offered input in many situations. Conservation efforts by the WCA over the last two years have taught us a lot as to what is possible and what is difficult. Yet we have established the WCA as a significant and determined user group with the Ministry of Natural Resources. Can we do more? Do we want to do more?

You are invited to write/e-mail Erhard Kraus, Hal Graham, or the *Nastawgan* editor, with your viewpoints. (See back page for addresses.)

Erhard Kraus
Director, WCA

Hal Graham
Chair, WCA

THE DEATH OF WILDERNESS CANOEING?

You know the feelings:

Scenario 1: After spending several days paddling, portaging and working hard to get way back into what you thought was a remote area, around the bend comes a motor boat with tourists gawking at you, as if you were from outer space. "How did you get in here?" they ask.

Scenario 2: After a hard day of running whitewater, portaging, and lining, you are relaxing at a great campsite with the lake glass calm, taking it all in and remarking on the skill levels it took to get here under your own power. Suddenly you hear the drone, and then the motor boat zooms right by your campsite, uncomfortably close. The wake crashes in on the shoreline, and you have to run down to pull up the canoe that was quietly resting on the beach. The fishermen in the boat barely look at you.

Scenario 3: Way back in what you thought was wilderness, you find boat caches at a portage around some rapids no motor boat could ever run. The motor boats with the fly-in fishermen don't have to run it, and it is no longer a barrier to motorized navigation, because they now have boats at either end. They just portage the motors and gas. There will be motor boats and people along your entire route, who don't know and don't care how self-propelled travel works.

Scenario 4: It is late in the day and a thunderstorm is coming as your group searches for a campsite. You spy a potential campsite and paddle quickly towards it as the skies darken and the wind picks up. When you land, you are dismayed to find mounds of garbage strewn about the place. You find fish remains all over the site, from a party of slob anglers who used this site for their fish cleaning

and shore lunch. The fire pit is massive enough to smelt iron, and you note the lack of firewood around the site. To make matters worse, a few feet from the edge of the only flat tent sites is an open latrine emanating the stink of human waste.

Scenario 5: After several days of paddling and portaging into an area that the topo maps showed as uninhabited, you are exhilarated by the wildness of beautiful Shield country, complete with lots of bare rock, lichens, jack pine, and black spruce. As you round the bend there it is—the “remote” tourism lodge with its fleet of motor boats pulled up on the shore. The lodge’s outhouses are perched on the shallowest of soils, and you wonder when the water will be permanently contaminated with coliform bacteria. You wonder if drinking water directly from the lake is still OK, like it always used to be.

Scenario 6: You are paddling and portaging back into your favorite wilderness lake on the civic holiday long weekend. This takes several portages and you are looking forward to great fishing. When you get there you are shocked to find an army of car campers at a new road access point, several camps already set up, and boom boxes echoing electronic noise through the once quiet wilderness. A logging road has just been punched through to access some timber, and nothing was done to protect the remote wilderness qualities of this lake. It’s over.



Such scenarios of disappointment could go on and on. The fact is that all over Canadian canoe country, wilderness is disappearing at an alarming rate, and being replaced by multiple-use zones with road-based access, or exclusive remote tourism lodges and outpost camps, which come complete with fleets of motor boats.

More and more waters are becoming polluted with human fecal coliform, which means your children may never know the experience of dipping a cup into a pristine lake and drinking the cool, clean waters. The experience of drinking clean water straight from the lake, is perhaps the epitome of the wilderness experience, since the larger ecosystem has to be healthy, and have relatively few people living in the watershed.

Aside from the “remote” tourism camps which are occupying most of the large lake and river systems now, the logging roads are expanding to cover all of the boreal forest outside of the relatively few parks we have with quality multi-day canoe routes. In Alberta, the logging and oil and gas roads are expanding into the last roadless areas of the province, right up to the 60th parallel. Saskatchewan’s roads are expanding past Reindeer and Wollaston lakes towards the 60th parallel. In Manitoba, the forest management units with all their roads are now planned up to the Seal River watershed.

In Ontario, the last of the remote areas within the currently licensed commercial forest are being roaded, and new permanent roads will soon be expanding to open up additional commercial forest. In Ontario, most of the First Nation communities in the roadless boreal forest have stated that they want permanent all-weather roads, which will allow them to build extensive road networks around their communities for new forest management, mining, and tourism development opportunities. These roads will penetrate the last of the roadless forested areas of the Hudson/James Bay watersheds.

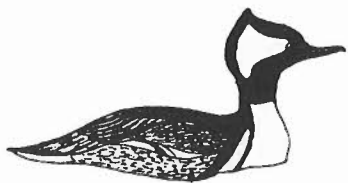
In the North West Territories and parts of Nunavut, the Canadian Arctic Railway, with rail lines crossing the Barren Lands, has already been mapped, and is being advertised and promoted. Some government members in the NWT are promoting the roading of all the Barren Lands, with roads to the Arctic Ocean coastline for sea-ports, in order to service the expanding mining sector, and to make non-viable mines viable by reducing the transportation and power costs.

Every major Barren Lands river has been studied for hydro development, and the presently remote mines are asking for the damming of rivers for new hydro development, in order to offset their winter road costs for hauling diesel fuel for power generators. And in Quebec, of course, most people are familiar with the massive plans Hydro Quebec has on the books. All of the major hydro developments include permanent roads.

All of the powerful hunting and angling organizations in the country are of one mind when it comes to roads: They want more and more roads, with full public access to all Crown Land by motorized vehicles. They have a well-developed lobbying industry, and have multi-million dollar support from their trans-national sponsors, which manufacture trucks, powerboats, all-terrain-vehicles (ATV's), and snowmobiles.

Many of our canoeing parks are maxed-out with visitors, well past the point of over-crowding. Canoeists, many of them inexperienced and not knowledgeable about no- or low-trace travel in heavily used areas, are themselves now responsible for garbage despoiling of campsites, and the fecal contamination of many waterways. Many parks do not have pit toilets in the interior, which accelerates the pollution problem. Many of these popular parks now require reservation bookings months in advance, and there are line-ups at the put-ins and portages. Encounter rates are high, and there is daily stress to find good campsites before they are taken. Overcrowded and polluted parks, and the requirement to book months in advance, is counter to the entire spirit of travelling through wilderness.

Interestingly, there are other canoeing parks which have very few users, but as the word spreads, these will quickly be filled up too. There is an insatiable demand for quality wilderness experiences from millions of urban-bound Americans, Europeans, and Japanese tourists with money to spend. The hoards are coming—make no mistake. Those countries have no wilderness left for canoe tripping (other than parts of Alaska), and they will be coming to Canada. As the world eco-tourism industry explodes in growth, the popular routes in Canada will become crowded, especially in the few canoeing parks we have.



Wilderness canoeists need to wake up and get politically active, because the last of the wilderness canoe routes on Crown Land outside of parks are being destroyed, or are in planning process to be destroyed. The routes will still be paddle-able, but they won't be wilderness or "back-country" anymore. They are being converted to "front-country" multiple-use management. Not one major political party is committed to the protection of a significantly expanded wilderness/back-country canoe route system on Crown Land. Politicians respond to public pressure. Have you ever asked your political candidates or representatives to protect more wilderness canoe routes?

In the boreal forest, the forest management planning process drives most of the road building. Often this is done without any detailed land use plans, so the roads continue to creep, based on resource extraction criteria. Even if there are detailed land-use plans, the fact is that wilderness canoe route protection is seldom a "use management strategy" for roads. Governments often make no distinction between back-country and front-country routes. In fact, they convert back-country to front-country routes on a daily basis without any recognition or reporting that this is happening.

There are many things we, the wilderness canoeing community, can and must do to halt this trend and save many wilderness waterway routes for future generations. **However, we must get organized and speak with one voice!** Ontario, where I live, with the largest population in Canada, and with a huge portion of canoe-able Canadian Shield, represents perhaps the most pathetic example of wilderness canoeist apathy. There is no Non Governmental Organization (NGO) which speaks effectively and authoritatively for wilderness canoe route protection. Canoe Ontario, which many of us thought spoke for route protection, in fact does not have this mandate and never did. (Besides, Canoe Ontario is at present largely ineffective because it is fighting to overcome great financial difficulties.)

Canada-wide, the Canadian Recreational Canoeing Association (CRCA) publishes a fine magazine, and does some lobbying, but it is spread way, way too thin. The CRCA is also in the midst of a process of re-organization, and we cannot expect them to do tough government lobbying in every province and territory. They do not dare risk losing their magazine advertisers, since advertising is what keeps the magazine alive. I am not sure if they receive government grants, but if they do, then they cannot be politically active.

Most importantly, wilderness canoeists have to become knowledgeable on how resource management planning (or lack thereof), works. *For example, it is quite possible to plan fully sustainable forestry operations, complete with temporary roads, and harvesting just as much wood, but with access restrictions and active physical road abandonment.* Access restriction planning is routine practice today for the creation of roadless "doughnuts" to protect the business interests of expensive fly-in "remote" fishing and hunting lodges, with their fleets of motorboats. This common management strategy provides exclusive, non-road accessible, high-quality fishing rights and the facade of wilderness for a relatively few motorized fishermen, many of whom are foreigners. Sometimes strategic bridges are removed after forest harvesting, so that roads are inaccessible, and don't require the politically difficult decisions to post "access prohibited" signage. If the fly-in fishing industry can obtain what is called "functional roadlessness" road access restrictions, then why can't wilderness paddlers obtain the same thing for remote wilderness canoe routes?

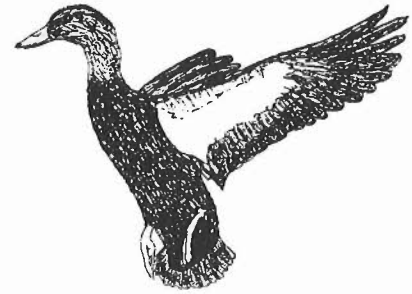
Throughout Canada there are aircraft-supplied and winter road-supplied mines. However, some mines can only be economically viable with service from permanent all-weather roads. But again, where there is a conflict with remote values protection, these mining roads could be regulated with no-access restrictions except for mining industry personnel.

It is interesting but depressing to know that there are no policies on Crown Land (that I know of) to protect the interests of the self-propelled wilderness travellers who fly-in, or paddle and portage into remote areas and travel the landscape, nor for the outfitting industry which supports it. The mechanisms to protect wilderness routes could be exactly the same as for the lodge-based tourists, without impacts to the resource extraction industries, but somehow this is seldom considered.

For those paddlers living isolated in the big cities in the south, you may be very surprised that we have had laws on the books for many years which give provincial governments the ability to prohibit access on various roads on Crown Land, in order to protect the remote resource-based tourism industry while allowing resource extraction. These controlled-access areas are not parks. This is a good use of the law, because it can protect remoteness, while allowing full resource extraction for societal economic benefits. However, governments also exercise another mandate to increase motorized vehicle and road-based recreational opportunities on Crown Land, which means more roads, boat caches, and boat launches on many waterway systems. These issues are highly contentious, but most of the decisions are made locally, and so the cumulative effect of these decisions is a continuous landscape-level erosion of functionally roadless wilderness.

Governments also decide, based on public opinion or lack thereof, on the disposing or disposition of Crown Land for cottage and commercial tourism developments. (When people or governments talk about disposing of land, it indicates how they value it.) Once Crown Land is sold to private interests, development rights are granted, and that often leads to pressure for developing permanent roads. Human settlement nodes with permanent roads then cause a feedback loop effect which produces local pressure for real-estate development and expansion.

Many regions of Canada do not have effective land use planning processes in place for Crown Land, which is most of the wilderness canoeing area left in Canada. Land development is instead driven incrementally by industrial development demands. Look at any province or territory: governments are always under pressure to create jobs, and they react to these demands by opening up more public lands for resource extraction jobs, ignoring the eco-tourism job opportunities which already existed. The forest management planning processes occurring all over boreal Canada are the prime drivers of land development. In the Barren



Drawings by Donald. L. Lloyd

Lands, mining demands are driving the development of roads and hydro developments. First Nations are also flexing their political muscle and demanding economic development opportunities based on modern industrial development models, i.e. more roads, mines, and big-scale forestry.

Wilderness canoeists are not on the radar screen of government land use planners. **If we don't get organized nationally and provincially, wilderness canoeing is dead.** The mechanized tourists are going to win out, and the few canoeing parks we have will soon be overcrowded if they are not already. These parks are not going to satisfy the wilderness paddling demands in the near future. The creation of more parks is also not a viable option because most voting public will not stand for the locking up of timber and mineral resources. In northern Ontario where I live, most stakeholder groups are vehemently opposed to more parks. Land-use regulations using thoughtful zoning strategies for wilderness route protection, while allowing for resource extraction, is the only practical solution I can see. Creating more massive parks would be nice and I would vote for it, but I don't think it will happen.

The only organization I see out there, which has a national wilderness paddling experience in its membership, who are well-travelled and educated, have seen much of this country, and whose organization is not beholden to governments, is the Wilderness Canoe Association. I am throwing out the challenge to the WCA to become the lead NGO in Canada, to start a sustained and effective lobbying campaign to develop wilderness canoe route protection policy and plans in every province and territory in Canada. It has to be by province and territory because Constitutional powers in these matters rest with these jurisdictions. It is a huge job. But if the WCA does not lead this process and recruit partners, it will soon be too late. No one else is stepping up to the plate.

What is it going to be?

Glen Hooper
Thunder Bay, ON
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NORTHERN WILDERNESS AT RISK

An ill wind is blowing in Northern Saskatchewan as the Provincial Government attempts to double the annual timber harvest in Saskatchewan. Much of our province between 54 and 57 degrees latitude will be subjected to large-scale logging, jeopardizing the long-term health of the forest in exchange for short-term economic benefits. The push for timber moves into the Precambrian Shield.

I would encourage northern residents and others with vested interests in healthy forests to voice their concern on a number of issues including: traditional native uses, forestry, mining, fishing and wildlife, forest fire protection, wild rice production, cabin development, road construction, hydro-power generation and dams, and recreation and tourism. Preliminary policy drafts quickly become massive volumes of data, but unless people are knowledgeable of what is at risk, such drafts are essentially a smoke screen for government and industry to push their agenda while providing an illusion of control to local residents. Official governmental policy, once enacted, will have far-reaching effects and will be very difficult to alter.

Northern residents are being bribed with unrealistic promises of economic growth and employment opportunities. In reality, the logging industry offers relatively few jobs with the new high-tech timber harvesting machinery being used. Healthy economic diversification for the North should be encouraged by governmental incentives that promote the wise use of resources such as eco-tourism, fishing lodges, commercial fishing, wild rice harvesting, wild plant gathering, and native crafts. Selective logging for local use may be acceptable but large-scale logging in the Shield, for which an impartial environmental assessment has never been conducted, will certainly impact the above industries in many negative ways. Lands south of the Shield that are presently being logged must be managed more intensely with better methods of reforestation, and fast-growing hybrid poplar and soft woods should be developed.

The government track record on reforestation is a dismal one. What assurance do we have that the future will be any better, especially in the rugged Shield country, where climate is severe and tree growth extremely slow? Water quality and access are key issues in forestry as they directly affect the survival of boreal species. And we must not overlook the implications of global warming that we are only beginning to understand. Without a doubt, the unsound practice of clear-cutting will adversely affect the

lakes and streams and all life found in fragile riparian areas. Silting and undesirable runoff from steep granite slopes or sand ridges, characteristic of the Shield, will be a threat for years to come.

Proposed buffer zones along water courses are marginal at best, and will be difficult to monitor. And some rivers have no proposed buffers at all. A decent buffer of at least one kilometre is necessary to provide a sponge effect for runoff and a reduction in the number of trees blown down by wind once clear-cutting is completed above the water course. The devastating results of extensive clear-cutting are readily evident in the Pasquia and Porcupine Hills where tiny creeks have gouged out deep ravines after heavy summer rains. The sponge effect of the forest has been lost, resulting in extensive erosion and repeated bridge washouts. Logging industry promises of respecting water bodies do not carry much sincerity, as we have learned in the past. Once the timber has been cut, recreational users with four-wheel-drive trucks and all-terrain-vehicles (ATV's) move in and it is impossible to keep them out, even if the logging roads and trails are officially "retired." This increased access will result in poaching, man-made fires, pollution, and a decline in fish stocks.

The public should not forget that Sask Power's agenda for expansion still includes hydro-development on the Churchill and other rivers. Of all rivers in Canada, the Churchill and Sturgeon-Weir are certainly worthy of Heritage River Status. Canoeists—wake up to reality; wilderness rivers, streams, and lakes will be denuded and your favorite campsites and portages obliterated! The long-term devastation of large-scale logging in the Shield goes far beyond cosmetic damage—it will alter the ecosystem and threaten the biodiversity of species.

The greatest resources in the North are water and forest. Old-growth forest and the clean water found in pristine lakes and streams are unique treasures that cannot be replaced once lost to greed and mismanagement. Few places on earth have what still exists in Northern Saskatchewan. We can no longer take our quality wilderness for granted. Some kind of protection must be mandated soon to keep it safe for its own sake and for all people, now and in the future.

Dave Bober
Hudson Bay, SK
1-306-865-3680



Back in 1969, three members of a local kayak club were interested in the quality of the water they drank from the lakes and rivers they paddled on in southern Ontario. They contacted the Department of Health and were shocked by the reply: "No surface water of any

lake or river in Ontario is safe for drinking without treatment."

On their next outings they collected samples of water and took them to the Department of Health for analysis. The results are as follows:

<i>location</i>	<i>date</i>	<i>drinking water</i>	<i>coliform</i>	<i>feecal</i>
Moon River	2 Sep 69	unsatisfactory	80 plus	80 plus
Muskoka River	2 Sep 69	unsatisfactory	80 plus	80 plus
Georgian Bay	2 Sep 69	doubtful	80 plus	0
1. Madawaska R. campsite	13 Oct 69	unsatisfactory	80 plus	80 plus
2. Madawaska R. campsite	13 Oct 69	unsatisfactory	80 plus	80 plus
1. Black River	24 Aug 69	unsatisfactory	80 plus	18
2. Black River	24 Aug 69	unsatisfactory	80 plus	22
1. Severn River	24 Aug 69	unsatisfactory	38	14
2. Severn River	24 Aug 69	unsatisfactory	40	18
Yeo Lake	24 Aug 69	doubtful	14	0
River to Yeo Lake	24 Aug 69	unsatisfactory	80 plus	6
Lake Ontario near Yeo Lake	25 Aug 69	unsatisfactory	10	2

The Department of Health did not want to count above 80 plus coliform colonies. This figure could be anywhere between 81 and 100,000 or more coliforms per 100 ml.

At some time during the past 25 years I have drunk water from all the above locations, except for Yeo Lake and Lake Ontario, without suffering any ill effects. Maybe, instead of blaming old age for the arthritis in my

neck and shoulders, I should blame all the untreated water I drank when out canoeing with the WCA. However, not being a water filter convert, I now boil my drinking water. Well, most of the time.

Jim Greenacre

PADDLING LINKS

If there's a website you think is worth introducing to others, please send its address to Nastawgan, and include a short description of the content of the site.

If you are interested in river conservation and management, a good site to try is www.riversofdreams.org A useful resource for paddlers of every ilk is the Canoe & Kayak Magazine Web Ring, which contains a very large number of links to a wide variety of sites, also international ones: www.paddlezone.com/canoe

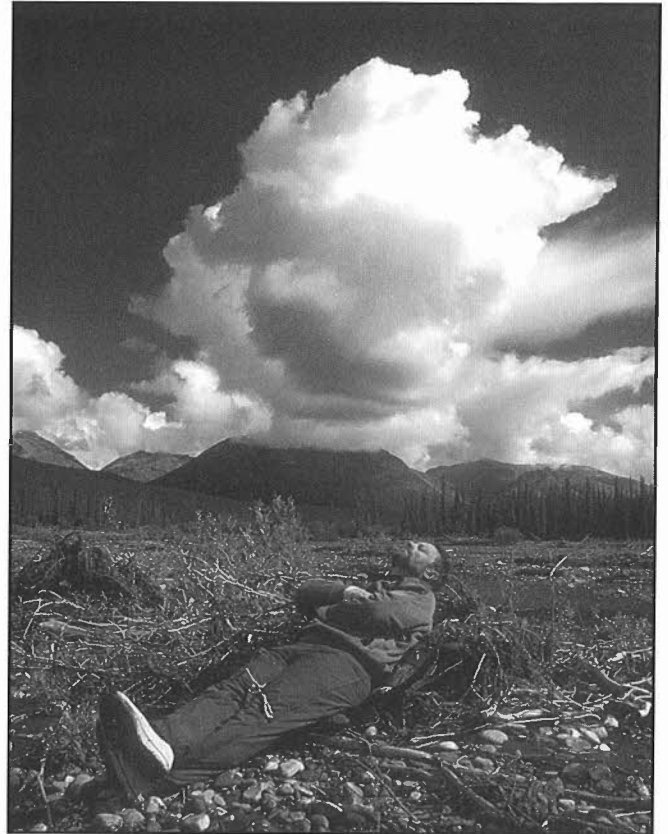
WCA FALL MEETING will take place a bit earlier than usual, on 7-9 September, at the Haliburton Scout Reserve. A registration form with more information is printed on the inside front cover around this issue of *Nastawgan*.

THE BOCCÉ BOYS DO THE MOUNTAIN RIVER

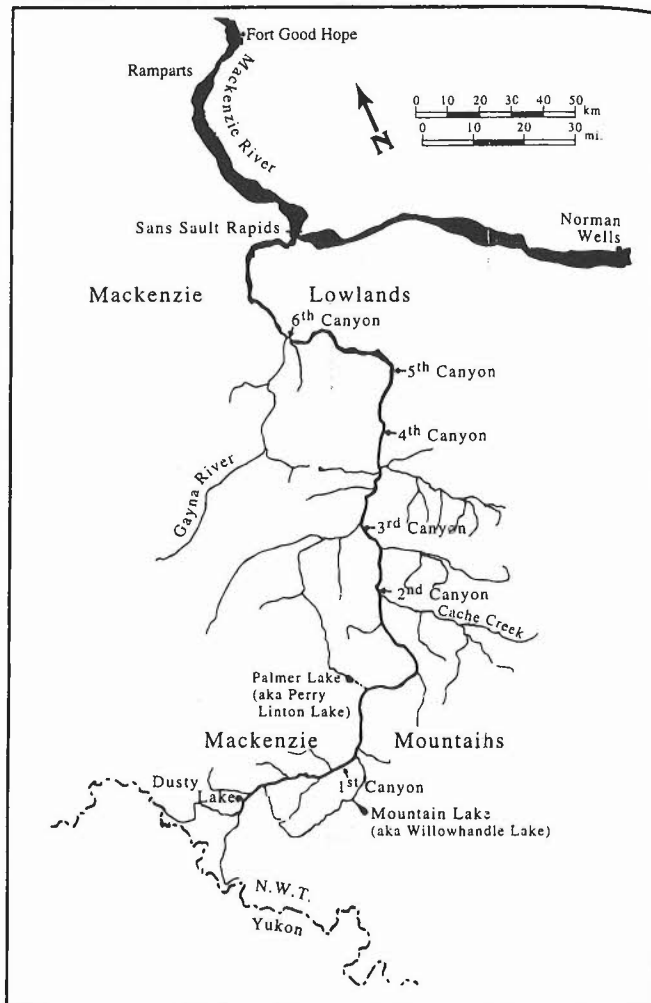
Earl Silver

Bocce is the Italian form of lawn bowling that we discovered can be played anywhere. Since there were no manicured lawns along the Mountain River, Al, our leader, improvised using gravel bars along the shore. River stones turned into bocce balls and we had a scoring system reminiscent of school days. As you may suspect from the opening, this article will focus on our experiences with the Mountain rather than the technical details associated with the whitewater.

The members of the July 2000 Bocce Team were Al Pace, co-owner of Canoe North Adventures, Gord Burke, Don Cooper, Jeff Osborne, Rob Stimpson, professional naturalist/photographer and supplier of the pictures for this article, and myself. The setting, was the Mountain River that flows off the Mackenzie Mountains from the Yukon/N.W.T. border into the Mackenzie River, about 90 minutes via float plane north-northwest of Norman Wells.



Mountain River



When one travels down a river with a group of strangers led by an outfitter who has never done the waterway before, there is a certain level of apprehension on how it's all going to work out. I confess that the amount of research I did on the Mountain was minimal at best, so I was unprepared from this standpoint as well. This potential catastrophe-in-the-making did not happen. The Mountain was a joy to travel. There were many spots to stop and explore, and we landed the canoes often to take pictures and enjoy the scenery along the way.

A hint of what the focus of attention would be on the trip came when we loaded the Twin Otter. Eyeing the amount of food we took, one would have thought we were going to be out a lot longer than 14 days. This was again evident when everything was unloaded at our first campsite at Willow Handle Lake. I asked myself, "How are we ever going to fit all this stuff in three canoes and still have enough freeboard to run the rapids?" Fortunately, we started slowly and spent a few days consuming food at this first spot. As Rob noted, it takes a while for one's digestive system to get acclimatized to camp cooking. Al raised the bar with his Coleman oven that magically made bread, lasagna, cinnamon rolls, and muffins, to mention only a few goodies. To add to the variety of cuisine, each of us was assigned to bring an appetizer and a dessert

prior to the trip. On his day, Gord prepared a delicate entree of smoked salmon, cream cheese, capers, and crackers. Some days I felt that we were canoeing between meals or just canoe-hopping from one campsite to another to eat.

From our initial drop-off point we started our voyage with a paddle across a small lake and a portage of about one mile to a stream no wider than the canoe. (This was the only portage on the whole trip of some 190 miles.)



The tiny stream turned into Black Feather Creek that twisted and turned with a few technical bits of whitewater through a couple of canyons before emptying out into the Mountain River. There is nothing like learning about your bow paddler in a fully laden canoe to find out his approach. Jeff, my cohort, turned out to be a very cool-headed person who has good judgement on the water. Our styles melded together quite nicely as we sought to be at one with the river.

Paddling on the Mountain River felt like canoeing in soup. It was also very pushy and dropped some 20 to 25 feet per mile in its upper and middle sections. Except for the last few kilometres, the canoe was going downhill throughout the entire trip. Typical of most of our sites, we camped on a gravel bar even though it can be dicey on mountain rivers that gather volume very quickly when it's raining. Our staking of the water level indicated the river was actually dropping. We estimated it came down almost two feet during the time we canoed down the river. (Note: in August a private trip on the Mountain had to be evacuated by helicopter. They had a major dump in the 4th canyon where the river level rose 12 feet as a result of heavy rains over a period of less than a week. This river is no Mickey Mouse tributary.)

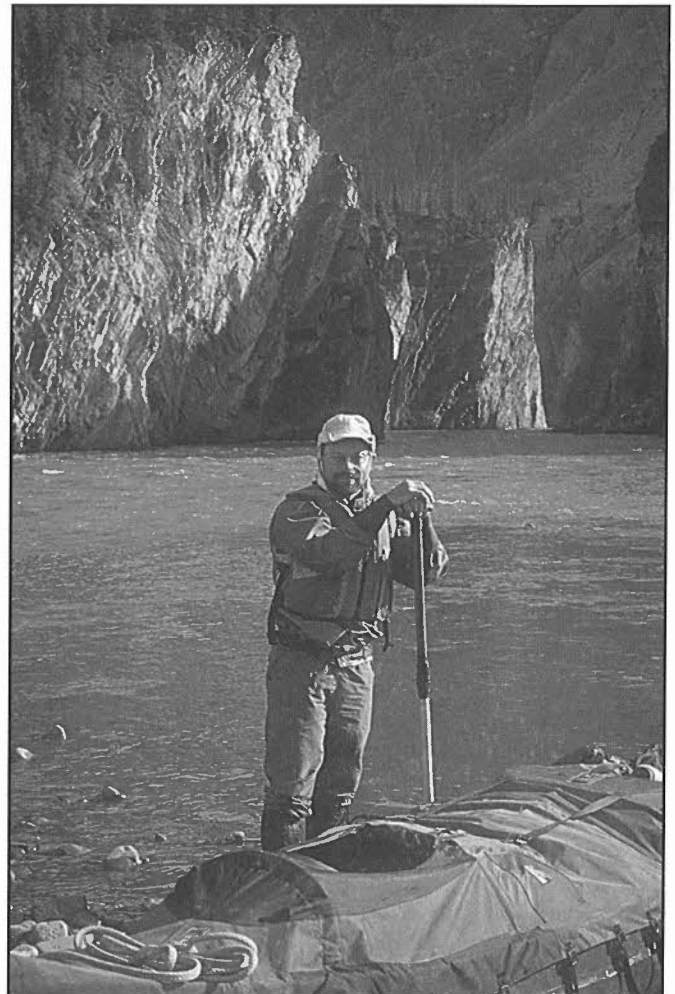
The huge advantage of the Mountain are the many spots where one can take day/evening hikes up creek or river valleys. These sojourns up the mountains can be relatively non-technical or a real challenge, but they provide wonderful vista views. Gord climbed to the top a few "hills" and discovered sea fossils from eons ago.

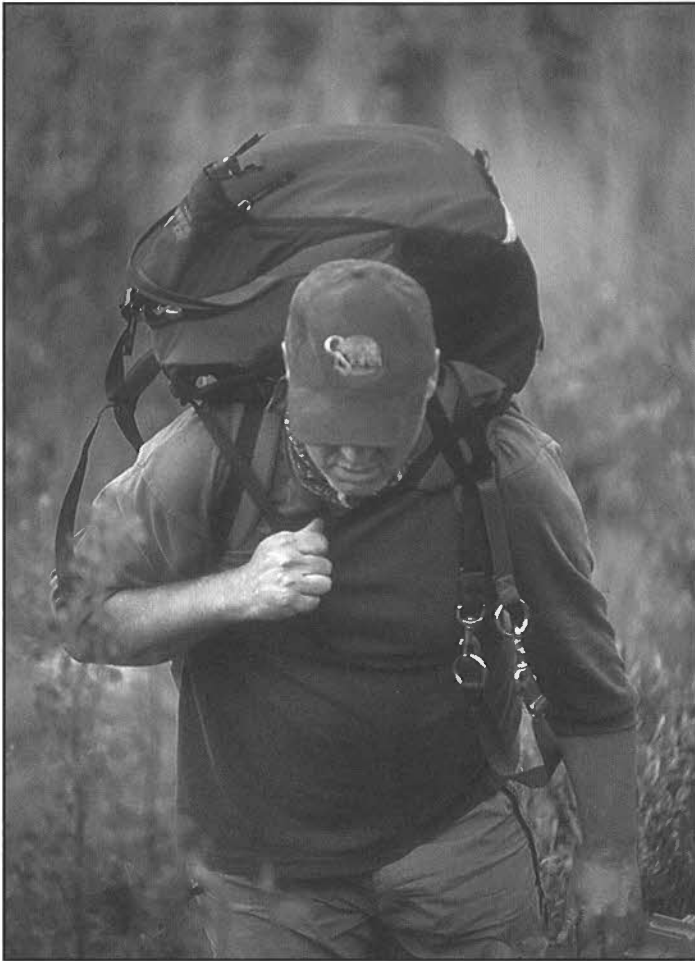
What I found exceptional about the Mountain were the colors and shapes of the river stones strewn across the

gravel bars. One could spend hours admiring the diversity of this geological paradise; the colors included blue, gray, purple, and browns in pastel hues. One stone had a pictorial display of a couple of canoeists paddling along beside a mountain (as seen on petroglyphs). Others we found made excellent bocce balls or became resource material for inukshuks.

In the middle of the trip, Jeff celebrated his 50th birthday. Al generously gift-wrapped a bottle of rather old scotch and a few golf balls for the occasion. The festivities didn't stop there. Al and his sidekick, Gord, took advantage of the very large gravel bar campsite and went on their merry way to construct a four-hole golf course. The "Canyons" layout contained yardage, flags, and sand greens. Each hole received a name that could only originate from a bunch of guys predisposed to discussing stamens and pistils. Upon announcing T-off time, the rest of us busily started making clubs out of surrounding driftwood. We had a blast.

Golf is not my game but, when played in a mountain canyon that could rival any course scenery in the world and strictly for the fun of celebrating a colleague's birthday, I loved it. One can almost hear the echo off the canyon walls from the club hitting the ball, not to mention the cheers from the gallery as the ball headed directly for





rubberized two-person craft. For the first part of the Mountain we saw them over a few days as we leapfrogged each other while travelling downriver. On one occasion, they arrived at our appetizer time and we invited them over for a wee drop of Yukon Jack along with the snack of the day, shrimp crackers. Compared to us, they had to travel very light given their limited storage space. Wolf and Renata enjoyed our abundant fare and we, their company and stories.

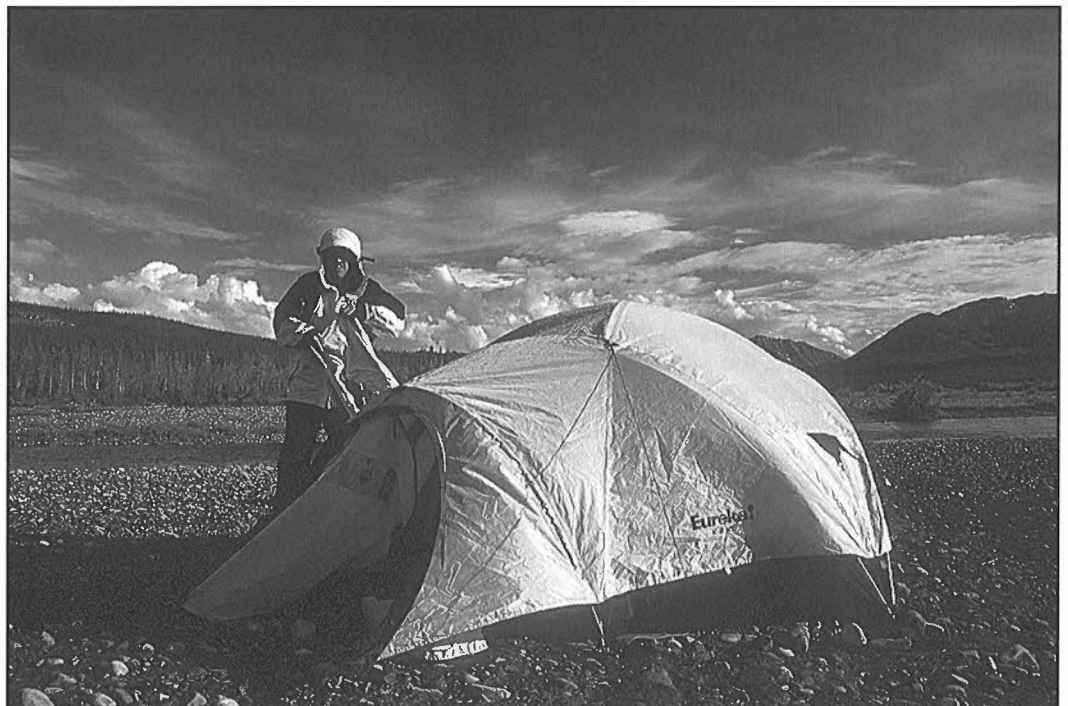
It was not until the end of the trip, at a campsite on the Mackenzie, that we met our third and last person, a character in an old motorboat from Smithers, BC, who builds log houses. He was vacationing in the area and counting birds of prey while travelling. He stopped on his way to Norman Wells, another three to four hours south by boat, and was treated to a cup of soup and a scotch to wash it down.

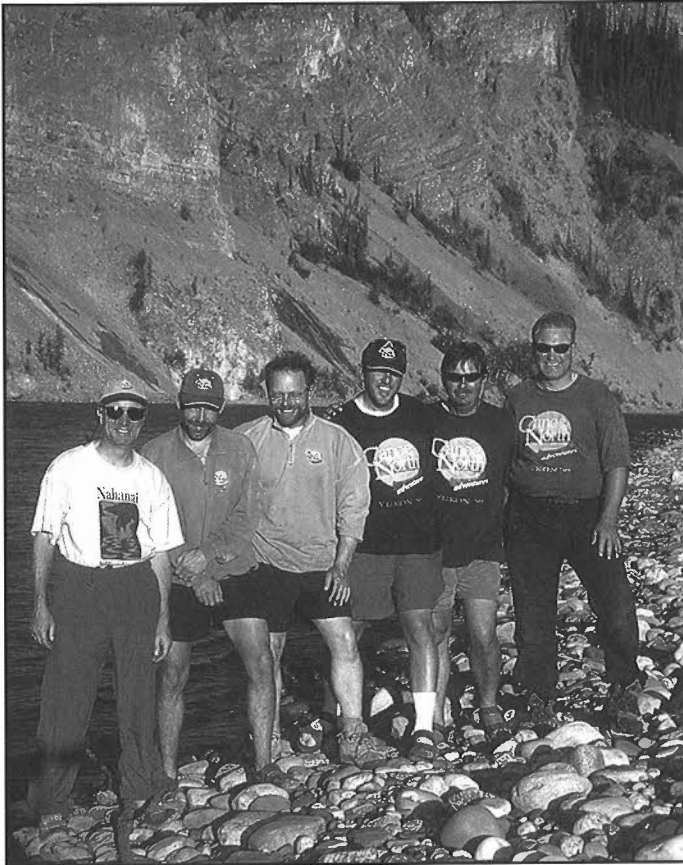
The landscape supplied small surprises everywhere in the form of unique ecosystems, like jewels in a crown of mountains. At one campsite just before the entry into the first canyon, there were two streams that had a unique configuration. One flowed on top of the ground and the other from an underground cavern. They joined to create a pool that cascaded as a waterfall over the hillside. The area surrounding these brooks was lush green with semi-tropical-like vegetation that appeared nowhere else in the vicinity. Besides the water gurgling over the rocks, the only other sound was the clicking of cameras.

At the last canyon was a sulfur spring that was warm to the touch and had a distinctive aroma. There was a pool just large enough to bathe in. Around the pool were unusual plants that seemingly loved the water's temperature and all the minerals leaching out from the source. In

the hole. The announcer who provided the color commentary whispered, "It is a hot summer day at the Canyons, the temperature hovering around 30 degree Celsius as Don Cooper addresses the ball with his inimitable hockey style grip on his three driftwood...."

Part of the adventure in travelling these isolated wilderness rivers is that you and your group are alone with nature. In fact, some of us canoe these waters because there are very few homo sapiens visible to the naked eye. Yet, when one does meet fellow travellers, the introduction and subsequent get-together is special. We connected with a couple who had flown over from Germany along with their





the South, we would likely shy away from the slime and ooze; however, when you have not had a warm bath for about 10 days, your perspective changes. We all took our turns refreshing our bodies and souls. By this time, the group had established a certain rhythm and we took our private soaking without the need to communicate a schedule. A zen-like individual and collective experience unfolded quite naturally.

The name of the river is quite mundane; the offering is a treat to enjoy. The speed of the current will take you down in no time. I was glad that we stopped and let our senses absorb what mother nature offered. At journey's end the mighty Mackenzie River appeared underneath our canoes all too soon.

On the flight back to Toronto, Don, our Edmonton representative, invited us to his home for supper during the five-hour layover between flights. Since we could not fit all of us and our few bags into one cab, we opted for a stretch limo (with the interior size of a Twin Otter). This long gleaming-white limousine swallowed us with ease and provided the most dramatic contrast that any wilderness paddler may ever experience. The Bocce Boys ate it up.

THE WHITE HORSES

I like seeing rapids on wilderness canoe trips, mainly for the good fishing found in the bottom pools below the last waves. Sometimes I'm scared though, because of the danger involved in getting to the bottom pools below the last waves. Just can't reconcile my feelings concerning rapids. One part wants to be on shore safe from the rampaging waters always threatening to overwhelm the canoe. The other part knows that running whitewater in the wilderness is one of the great experiences of life. One to be treasured.

My favorite rapids are horizon-line rapids. These are ones where the river looks like it just disappears. As you are paddling along, watching the shore on both sides, you go to seeing just sky with a thin line going across the river in front of the canoe.

It's a horizon line. You can't see either shore beyond the horizon line. Many years ago when we saw our first horizon line it was very unnerving. What was up there ahead of the canoe? Where did the river go?

Now after many wilderness canoe trips and after many rapids have been passed, we have come to learn that seeing a horizon line just means that there is a drop up ahead. A big drop. One with no rough water preceding it. The river just drops neat. Hard rock causes it.

Otherwise, over time the river would erode back some to give a more gradual drop over a longer distance.

Sometimes you can see spouts of water kicking above the horizon line. This happens when rocks just below the start of the drop are still in place and throw water back up over the horizon line. Someone once called the spray thrown up by these rapids as the manes of horses. White horses who are prancing with their manes flashing in the wind. Horses as wild and as free as the water that flows down the river.

Breaking horses means training a horse to submit to the will of man. To carry a saddle and rider. To pull a wagon. To go fast when its master wants it to go fast. Isn't that what we want from our rivers? To be harnessed by dams? To be released to flow on command? To be corralled with roads on both sides of it?

Maybe that's why we are so afraid of wild rivers. They remind us of wild horses that haven't been broken.

Some horses aren't meant to be tamed. Neither are some rivers.

Greg Went

REVIEWS

R. M. PATTERSON: A Life of Great Adventure, by David Finch, published by Rocky Mountain Books, Calgary, 2000, hardcover, 304 pages, \$34.95

Reviewed by Ria Harting.

This book celebrates the life of R. M. Patterson, best known for *The Dangerous River*, a book every self-respecting canoeist must have read and which, according to the press release accompanying the present book, "made Canada's wilderness famous."

In *R. M. Patterson: A Life of Great Adventure*, David Finch paints a detailed picture of the man's life, well illustrated with black-and-white pictures from Patterson's collection. The book really comes alive thanks to the copious use of quotes from the numerous letters written by Patterson. The reader learns about most aspects of Patterson's life including his public school years, his service during the first world war, his short career as a banker in London, England, and, of course, his years as a homesteader and wilderness explorer in Canada. It also contains chapters on Patterson's career as a writer and a chapter dealing with his twilight years. Unfortunately, I found these last two chapters to be tedious and too full of minutiae. Finch's enormous amount of research, which is his strength in the majority of the book's chapters, becomes a bit of a burden in these two chapters.

Still, *R. M. Patterson: A Life of Great Adventure* is a wonderful book. David Finch has succeeded in placing Patterson in the time frame when his explorations took place. For example, in the chapter entitled "Hard to Kill—1927" he writes: "As Patterson and his paddling partner Dennis France loaded their canoe for their summer's float on northern rivers, the last member of another British expedition was dying of starvation." He was alluding, of course, to the Hornby disaster.

* * * * *

GONE CANOEING, Weekend Wilderness Adventures in Southern Ontario, by Kevin Callan, published by The Boston Mills Press, Erin, Ontario, 2001, softcover, 160 pages, \$19.95.

Reviewed by Toni Harting.

This is book number seven by Callan, six of them published by Boston Mills. The guy is a truly precious fountain of canoe route information, and *Gone Canoeing* is again a very useful collection of interesting trips, presented in his usual laid-back style. Twenty routes are offered, ranging from easy trips for novice paddlers to more challenging ones for experienced canoeists. All trips are located in Southern Ontario and last from one to three days. The book provides numerous good tips on canoe tripping and camping, backed by 21 excellent maps and many nice photographs. (What is missing, unfortunately, as an

overview map giving on one page the locations of all the routes discussed.)

Most of the book is in black-and-white, but there are also eight pages of fine color photographs. What I especially like is the convenient one-page list at the end of each route description that gives a short overview of what the trip is about and what maps, sources of information, outfitters, etc. are available. Sixteen pages of "Food for Thought" with many enticing recipes are also included. Again, a "yummy" book!

* * * * *

CANOEING ALGONQUIN PARK, written and published by Donald L. Lloyd, distribution by Hushion House Publishing Ltd., Toronto, second printing, March 2001, softcover, 334 pages, \$23.00.

Reviewed by Toni Harting.

One of the joys, and dangers, of self-publishing your own book, is that nobody tells you what to write and how to put the book together. In many cases the lack of strict control from an outside party can lead to disaster but in the case of Don Lloyd's book this is by no means so. On the contrary, he has produced a delightful and information-packed guide to Ontario's most famous canoeing destination and has done so without compromising quality for convenience.

This is not the first book about the park, but it surely is the most comprehensive. The pages are packed with useful and interesting information, leaving very little empty white space. The 37 maps provided are excellent and the 60 landscape sketches and more than 200 flora and fauna drawings—all done by the author—make this a fine companion to take along on any canoe trip. But also the stay-at-homers can benefit from the historical background and the natural history of the park as presented here. There are no photographs in the book, but this does not diminish its quality in any way.

The amount of research performed by Lloyd—who has paddled Algonquin Park since 1945—is most impressive and the many end notes and selected references can help the reader delve deeper into the subject. Two indexes, one on flora and fauna and the other on geography and history, make using the guide a pleasure. Any Algonquin Park tripper should get hold of this splendid publication to experience more fully the fascinating beauty of one of our most precious landscapes.



WCA TRIPS

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

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, bness@look.ca; Barry Godden, 416-440-4208; Ann Dixie, 416-512-0292, Ann_Dixie@CAMH.net; Peter Devries, 905-477-6424; Gisela Curwen, 416-484-1471, g.curwen@danieltborger.com

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

+++++

All season

HAVE PADDLE WILL TRAVEL

Harrison Jolly and friends. Call Harrison at 905-689-1733. ---- We paddle wherever the good whitewater is, from ice-out to freeze-up. Usual locations (depending upon the season) are such rivers as the Upper Black, Gatineau, Ottawa, Petawawa, and Beaver. We also go south as far as West Virginia to rivers such as the Gauley. While some rivers we visit require advanced skills, many of these rivers can be paddled by reasonably skilled intermediates with some coaching and judicious portaging. We're friendly people who like to help newer paddlers develop their skills. Give me a call to find out where we are going.

All Season

HAVE PADDLE WILL TRAVEL

Barry Godden, 416-440-4208. --- I spend most weekends till freeze-up paddling wherever there is good whitewater in Southern Ontario or Quebec, with the odd side trip to the Appalachians. If you would like to join me and my friends, please call to find out where I'm going. Suitable for good intermediate or advanced paddlers.

All Season

FROST CENTRE CANOE ROUTES

Ray Laughlin, 705-754-9479. ---- There is some superb lake paddling in the routes out of the Frost Centre near Dorset. As I live in Haliburton and have a flexible work schedule, I visit the area frequently, especially during the week. If you would like to paddle with me, give me a call. Outings are suitable for novices.

August-October

MINDEN WILDWATER PRESERVE DAY PADDLES

Bill Ness, 416-321-3005. ---- I frequently go up to the Gull on Saturday or Sunday through the summer to early fall. If you would like to join me, give me a call. See description of rapids in 25-26 August trip below. If you have recently bought a whitewater canoe or kayak and want to learn to roll, this is an excellent opportunity. I'm happy to do some impromptu instruction.

4-6 August

OTTAWA RIVER

John and Sharon Hackert, 416-438-7672, book before 29 July. ---- We are fortunate to have access to the most beautiful campsite on the river. The Ottawa is big water and many of the rapids are quite difficult. You should be at least a strong intermediate paddler to safely enjoy it. We recommend that you join us on some of our spring trips to develop and practise your skills before attempting this river. Limit six boats.

4-12 August

NORTHERN KILLARNEY PARK

Anne Snow, 416-482-0810. --- This trip will take us through northern Killarney, mostly on Crown land. The loop will cover Lang, Nellie, and Lowry lakes. Suitable for fit intermediate paddlers. Limit four canoes.

6-12 August

GEORGIAN BAY-30,000 ISLANDS CIRCLE TOUR

Don Andersen, dhandersen@aol.com and Bill Stevenson, 416-925-0017, book before 1 May. ---- Starting and ending at Byng Inlet, including following island groups: Champlain, Churchill, Bustard, Outer Fox, and Rogers. Suitable for competent novices. Limit six canoes.

25-26 August

MINDEN WILDWATER PRESERVE WEEKEND

Bill Ness, 416-321-3005, book before 19 August. ---- The Gull River at Minden has a man-made 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.

1-3 September

OTTAWA RIVER

John and Sharon Hackert, 416-438-7672, book before 26 August. ---- Please see 4-6 August for details.

- 1-9 September **LA CLOCHE SILHOUETTE HIKING TRAIL, KILLARNEY**
Gisela Curwen, 416-484-1471, book before 25 August. ---- Scenic and challenging 100-km backpacking trip. See and experience this gorgeous area from a different perspective than the canoe routes. Incredible vistas of quartzite ridges and turquoise lakes. Major crowds and bugs will be gone, and it will still be warm enough to swim.
- 8-9 September **NUNIKANI LOOP**
Paul and Diane Hamilton, 905-877-8778, book before 1 September. ---- Hwy 35 at Hall's Lake. This is a pretty lake loop with plenty of time to take pictures; with a few short portages from Big Hawk Lake to Red Pine Lake to Nunikani Lake and back to Big Hawk. We'll make camp on Red Pine Lake. A nice scenic paddle. Suitable for novices. Limit four canoes.
- 16 September **BURNT RIVER**
Bill Ness., 416-321-3005, book before 9 September. ---- 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 are few bugs and the fall colors should be at their peak. Don't forget your camera. This leisurely Sunday paddle makes an excellent family outing. Limit six boats.
- 22-28 September **NIPISSING RIVER**
Ray Laughlin, 705-754-9479. ---- Join me on a leisurely trip in Algonquin Park, going down the Nipissing and back up the Tim River. The leaves should be gorgeous at this time of year and we should see lots of moose. Suitable for novices. Limit four boats.
- 23 September **MISSISSAGUA RIVER**
Bill Ness, 416-321-3005. ---- One of the prettiest whitewater river trips in southern Ontario. This trip used to be a fall favorite before the dry summers of the last few years. Certainly no guarantees as to water, but I will check the water levels earlier in the week with the guy who controls the dam. We might get lucky. If you want me to let you know if there does turn out to be enough water, give me a call. Suitable for experienced novices or better.
- 23 September **WELLAND RIVER**
Rob Butler, 416-487-2282, phone by 20 September for confirmation. ---- Meet at 9 a.m. on Hwy. 20 at Smithville, go south on Port Davidson Road (Regional Road 16) to its end at a T intersection, turn right and it's a quick right onto South Chippawa Road. In a short distance the meeting point, the Davidson Weir parking spot, will appear on the south side(left) across from the Robert Land Academy. We will go with the flow and no liftovers or portages to O'Reilly's Bridge. An easy paddle on a surprisingly substantial river. Suitable for novices.
- 29 September **COON LAKE TO LONG LAKE**
Doug Ashton, 905-654-0336, ---- This will be a relaxing paddle through a string of small lakes in the Apsley area. The rugged landscape and trees in their autumn colors should make this a memorable outing. An enjoyable family outing for all ages and abilities. Limit five boats.
- 6-8 October **KILLARNEY PARK**
Gisela Curwen, 416-484-1471, g.curwen@danielborger.com ---- We will meet at George Lake Campground and set up our tents there. On Saturday, we will paddle on a day trip into Killarney or OSA Lake to experience the magnificent scenery in fall colors. On Sunday, we will hike to The Crack for one of the most spectacular views in the whole of the park over Killarney and OSA Lake, where we paddled the day before, and out to Georgian Bay. If you can portage, you can handle the scramble up the rocks to The Crack!
- 6-8 October **OTTAWA RIVER**
John and Sharon Hackert, 416-438-7672, book before 30 September. ---- Please see comments about the Ottawa on 4-6 August. This trip will be run if the weather is fairly mild. A decision as to whether or not to go will be made on the preceding Wednesday. You will want to wear a dry suit, of course.
- 6-8 October **THOUSAND ISLANDS**
Frank and Jay Knaapen, 613-687-6037 ---- We will be canoe touring the 1000 Islands to enjoy the fall colors. Wet/dry suits in case of bad weather is advisable, as is some kind of flotation.

OUTINGS COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP CHANGE

Mike Jones has retired from the Outings Committee after many years of much appreciated service to fellow members in helping to provide an interesting and varied outings program. On behalf of everyone who has enjoyed our club outings, thanks, Mike.

We are pleased to announce that Barry Godden

will be coming on board, joining Anne Dixie, Gisela Curwen, Peter Devries, and Bill Ness on the Outings Committee. Barry brings to the team many years of experience as a highly skilled whitewater paddler and instructor with as strong interest in making paddling a safe and enjoyable sport.

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.

NEW CANOEING VIDEO Classic solo canoeing with Becky Mason; approx. 40 minutes; \$39.95 + tax + shipping. Tel. 819-827-4159; fax 819-827-8563; redcanoe@istar.ca; www.wilds.mb.ca/redcanoe

CLASSIC SOLO CANOEING Instructed by Becky Mason at Meech Lake, Quebec. All levels; equipment provided; fee \$70. Tel. 819-827-4159; fax 819-827-8563; redcanoe@istar.ca; www.wilds.mb.ca/redcanoe

FORGOTTEN PLACES IN THE NORTH A new book by S.R. (Sandy) Gage, looks at three remote sites where heritage buildings have withstood the tests of time and severe weather: York Factory, Herschel Island, and Site 415 of the Mid-Canada Line. At your local bookstores, or contact Mosaic Press; 905-825-2130; mosaicpress@on.aibn.com

FOLDING KAYAK FOR SALE Folbot's Greenland 2 model tandem folding kayak, with tough hypalon skin over aluminum tubular frame, packed into two bags which fit in car trunk or as regular baggage on plane. Assembly and dismantling take 20-30 minutes by one person. Very stable, paddles faster than canoe, excellent tracking. Comes with rudder, spray skirts, and paddles. Picture and specs at www.folbot.com. About seven years old but not used a lot; in good condition. Asking \$1500. Test paddle can be arranged. Call Alan at 905-660-1899.

INTERWILD IMAGES Books, music CDs, videos, posters, original paintings, national and provincial maps, compasses, GPS receivers, and more. Good prices, good products, and a 10% discount for WCA members. To order, contact: tel. 905-584-2109 or fax 905-584-4722 or www.interwild.com

SMOOTHWATER OUTFITTERS 2001 TRIPS AND WORKSHOPS Spirit of Seven, a Painting and Wilderness Adventure (co-sponsored with Ontario College of Art and Design) 8-14 July; Mother and Daughter Canoe Trip 16-21 July. Women's Quest by Canoe with Yoga and Painting 12-19 August. Walk Through Time: Temagami Archaeology Tours 10-14 September. Songwriting, Ancient Pines, and a Canoe with Ian Tamblyn 14-17 September. Remote River Trips: Wakwayokastic River 18-28 June, Kattawagami River 3-15 July, Harricanaw River 23 July-2 August, Mistissibi River North East 6-16 August. Saturday Specials in July and August: After Eight Speaker Series; Old

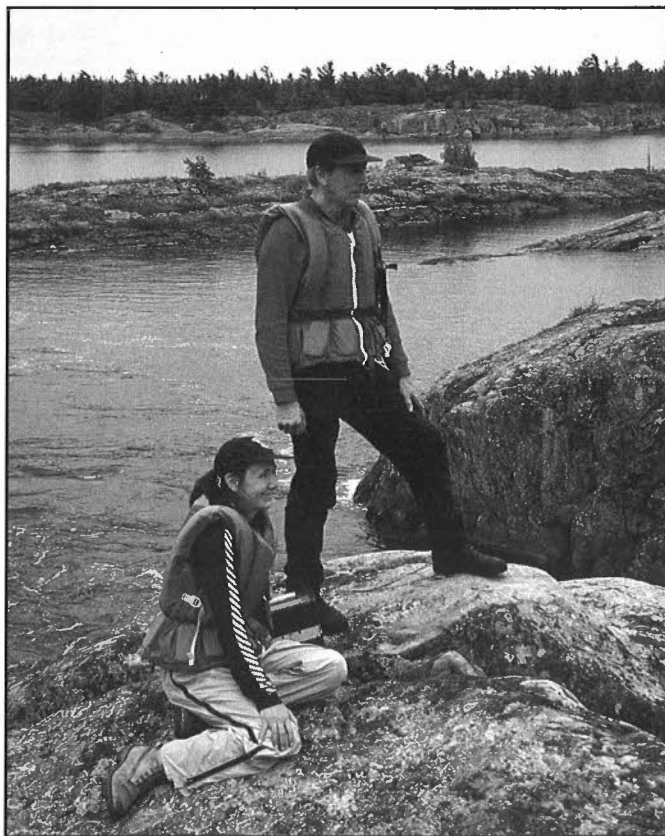
Growth Forest Guided Day Trips; Sunday Picknicks to High Places. Contact: Caryn Colman, Box 40, Temagami, ON., P0H 2H0. Tel:705-569-3539; Fax:705-569-2710; temagami@onlink.net; www.smoothwater.com

PAKBOATS NEWSLETTER Subscribe to free e-mail Pakboats Newsletter, published once or twice a month with all kinds of information on folding canoes and kayaks. Contact join-pakboats@lyris.dundee.net

PADDLING ONTARIO ALLIANCE is a dedicated group of more than 20 adventure tourism operators who have joined forces to promote Ontario as the world's finest canoeing and kayaking destination. Respected names such as Algonquin Outfitters, Canoetours, Smoothwater, Wabakimi, and others offer everything a paddler looking for a unique adventure could want: flatwater, whitewater, river tripping, sea kayaking, eco lodges, history, self-guided trips, and more. The Alliance members provide first-class access to destinations in the whole province, offering safe wilderness experiences that excite and enlighten. More information in: www.paddlingontario.com

SHUTTLE FOR THE NOIRE Rob Evis has a tripping company in Davidson near the mouth of the Coulonge River in western Quebec and will provide shuttle service for the Noire River (\$150) and presumably the Coulonge. Contact robb@paddlefoot.ca

CUSTOM PHOTO LAB The correct phone number for Les Palenik's Advantica Custom Photo in Richmond Hill, Ont., is 905-764-8766; see previous issue of *Nastawgan*.



Where it is ...



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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: _____

New member Member # if renewal: _____

Single Family

Phone Number(s):

(_____) _____ (h)

(_____) _____ Ext. _____ (w)

e-mail: _____

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