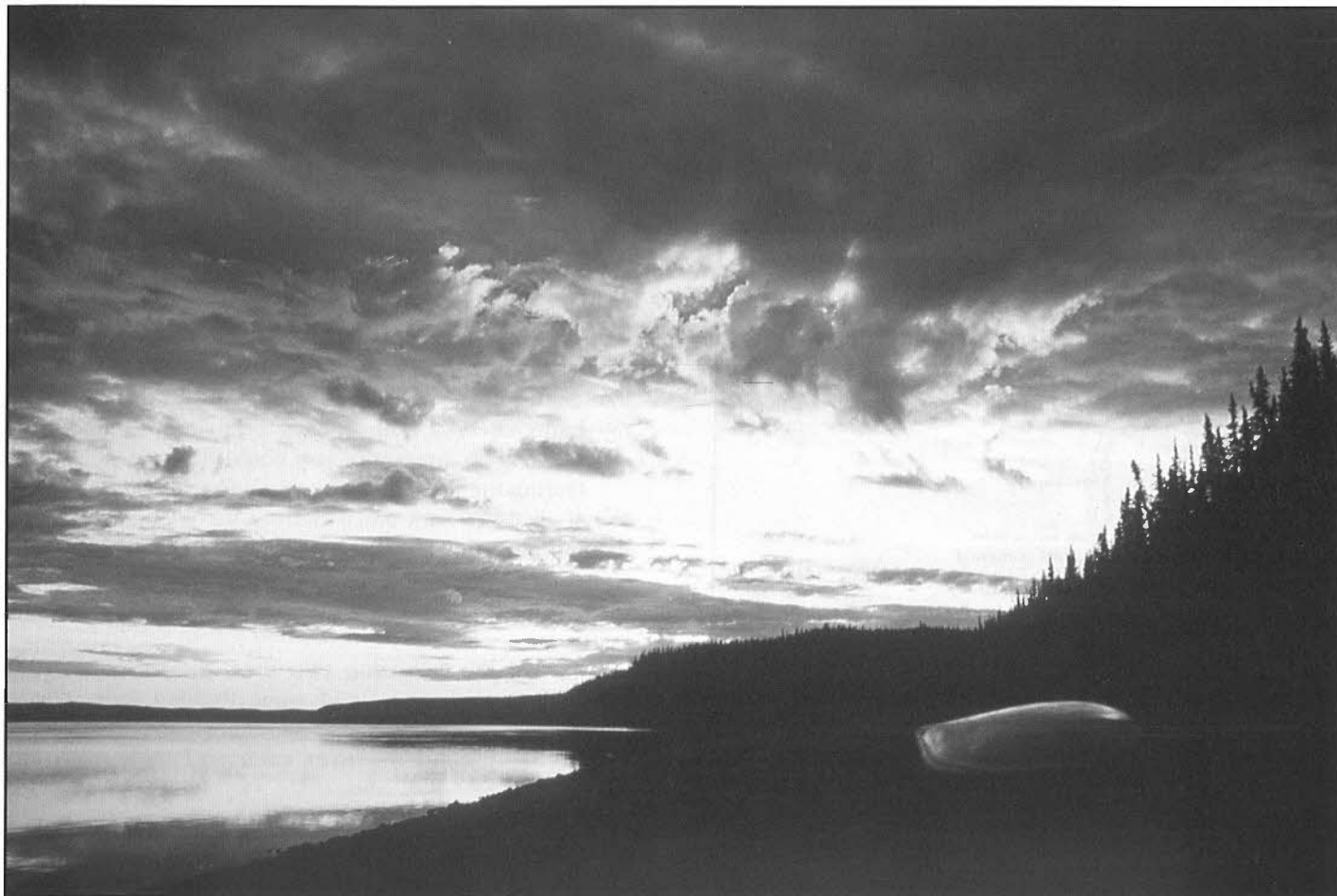




nastawgan

Spring 2002 Vol. 29 No. 1

Quarterly Journal of the Wilderness Canoe Association



Night on the Mackenzie River

THE MACKENZIE, RIVER OF LIFE

Kate Krabel

The ferry shuddered as we rammed another ice plate, then ploughed on. I leaned over the rail to watch the plate slice back up to the surface, then bob away downstream. To the south, the river mouth yawned open and beyond that the white horizon of ice on Great Slave Lake gleamed in the bright June 1996 sunshine.

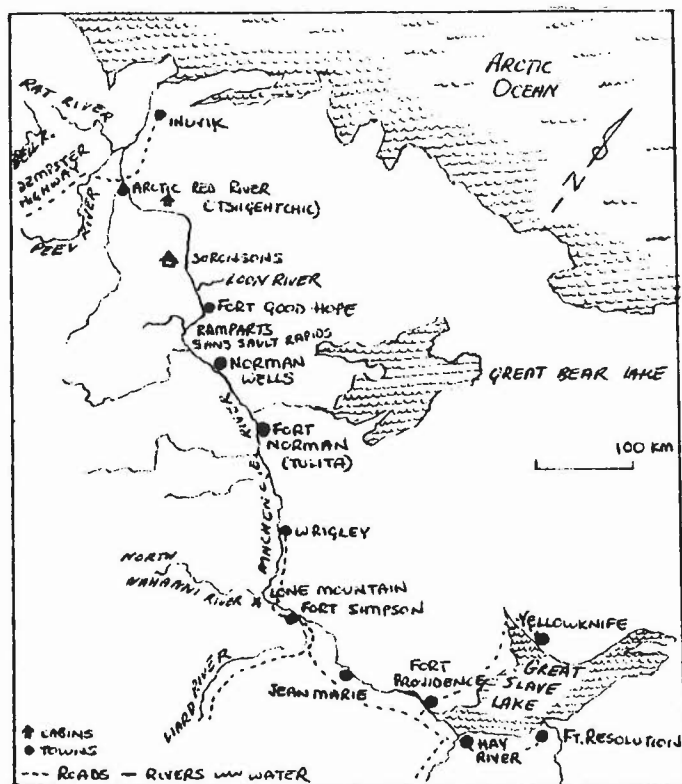
A week later the midday sun burned down as I squatted on a bank overlooking the deep murky water of the

"Deh Cho," otherwise known as the Mackenzie. The river, now ice-free, flowed smooth and wide. Beside me my bags lay in the grass.

I should have left hours ago, yet I felt a strange reluctance to begin. I remembered the worst of my summer 1995 trip from Leaf Rapids, Manitoba, to Fort Resolution, N.W.T., battling head winds and waves and the fear of forest fires omnipresent. (See "Westward Bound" by Kate

Allcard in the summer 1996 issue of *Nastawgan*.)

Why was I here? Did I really want to do this, or was I just "keeping my word?" My planned route ran from here—Fort Providence—down the Mackenzie to Arctic Red River, then up the Rat River and over the mountains to catch the Bell and Porcupine rivers down again to Fort Yukon, Alaska. I had been strongly advised against doing the Rat, "Why go through all that pain?" Why indeed.



Without enthusiasm I loaded the mountain of gear into my beloved canoe, Skookum, and pushed off from the dock. The swift current picked me up, shooting me past the first bend and into a different world. With the houses, motor boats, and fighting dogs left behind, I entered into the spellbinding silence of solitude. The paddle felt good in my hands and all doubts left with the last signs of civilisation. My muscles relaxed into rhythm as the canoe sliced forwards.

Deeply I breathed in the clear air, rich with bush smell. Ah, this was the life! My spirits soared. How could I have forgotten? Cotton floated gently on the air. The sparkling water lapped against the hull and the vivid sky held a few clouds of burnished silver. Excitement, uncertainty, freedom.

A short squall passed overhead, the rain drops dancing merrily on the surface. Then sun again, hot and drying.

At that moment I arrived at Mills Lake, the far shore a pencil-thin line, and promptly became windbound. I rammed Skookum into a bed of thick reeds where she rocked gently while the swaying grasses hushed and sighed. Lying down, I daydreamed, gazing up into deep blue infinity.

My luck was in and the wind switched: a tail wind! An exhilarating sail drove me to my first campsite. Camp was chaotically built late into the night as the setting sun struck fire into black storm clouds to the north.

Rising with the sun at 4:30, I found my tail wind still blowing, so hurriedly ate and broke camp. Adrenaline surged as I surfed on the foaming waves off the lake. The bubble stream from my wake tracked far back over the choppy water. And so on I raced until lunch, by which time both the wind and I had exhausted ourselves.

I realised that I had made a serious miscalculation. The only Mackenzie map I could afford was the Territory road map whose scale took a little getting used to. I had told the R.C.M.P. that I would take four days to Fort Simpson. To achieve that it became increasingly clear that I had some long paddling days ahead.

Each river meander was so massive that often both shore lines, ahead and behind, disappeared below the horizon. Paddling close to the shore I would pause occasionally to peer into the wilderness and listen intently to the birdsong. A black bear nosed along the beach.

I set up camp in the rain, building a snug, if leaky, kitchen using an old tarp. I also discovered that in making my bannock mix, I must have doubled the amount of salt—a taste no amount of jam could disguise.

During the night I awoke to an animal sound. A sharp "hey!" elicited a bark and a snort as the creature bolted. In the morning I found my life jacket had been ripped by sharp bear claws. Food for thought. I wasn't to see any other species of big animal on the river, only several bears.

During the following two days the channel would suddenly narrow and I had some thrilling roller coaster rides on the huge boils erupting from the depths. Otherwise I found the river calm and wide with little excitement.

The Mackenzie has many communities and cabins along its length, and so of course plenty of river traffic. I



The wide Mackenzie

passed three motor boats of waving occupants before sliding past Jean Marie. With wood smoke drifting up lazily from the houses, the settlement looked cosy and tranquil in the evening light. The perfect reflection warped in my wake, then stilled again as if I had never been.

The next couple of weeks were spent suffering from re-occurring bouts of giardia picked up in the States. Whoever said one should dig one's hole 50 yards from the water line has no understanding of the effects of giardia. I'd feel the urge, paddle like hell to the closest shore, make a flying exit, sprint up the beach, pants down, phew! 50 yards? Not a hope! I was sure glad when modern medicine dealt swiftly with the problem.

On Day 3, I was woken by the throbbing of a tugboat straining upriver. Around mid-morning I paddled past two barges moored to the bank, loaded with containers and new pick-up trucks. I soon learnt the names and silhouettes of the tug-boats, the Matt Berry being my favorite. I had expected them, so wasn't disappointed by the intrusion. Indeed I found the barge traffic unique, the pulse of the Mackenzie, bringing life to the communities. How exciting the first visit of the season must be.

Once I was nearly caught out, though. While loading my canoe at the water's edge, a tug-boat roared around the bend, pushing an incredible number of barges. I ran to gather up my remaining gear which I threw in as I leapt onto my seat, pushing off just as the wake crashed ashore.

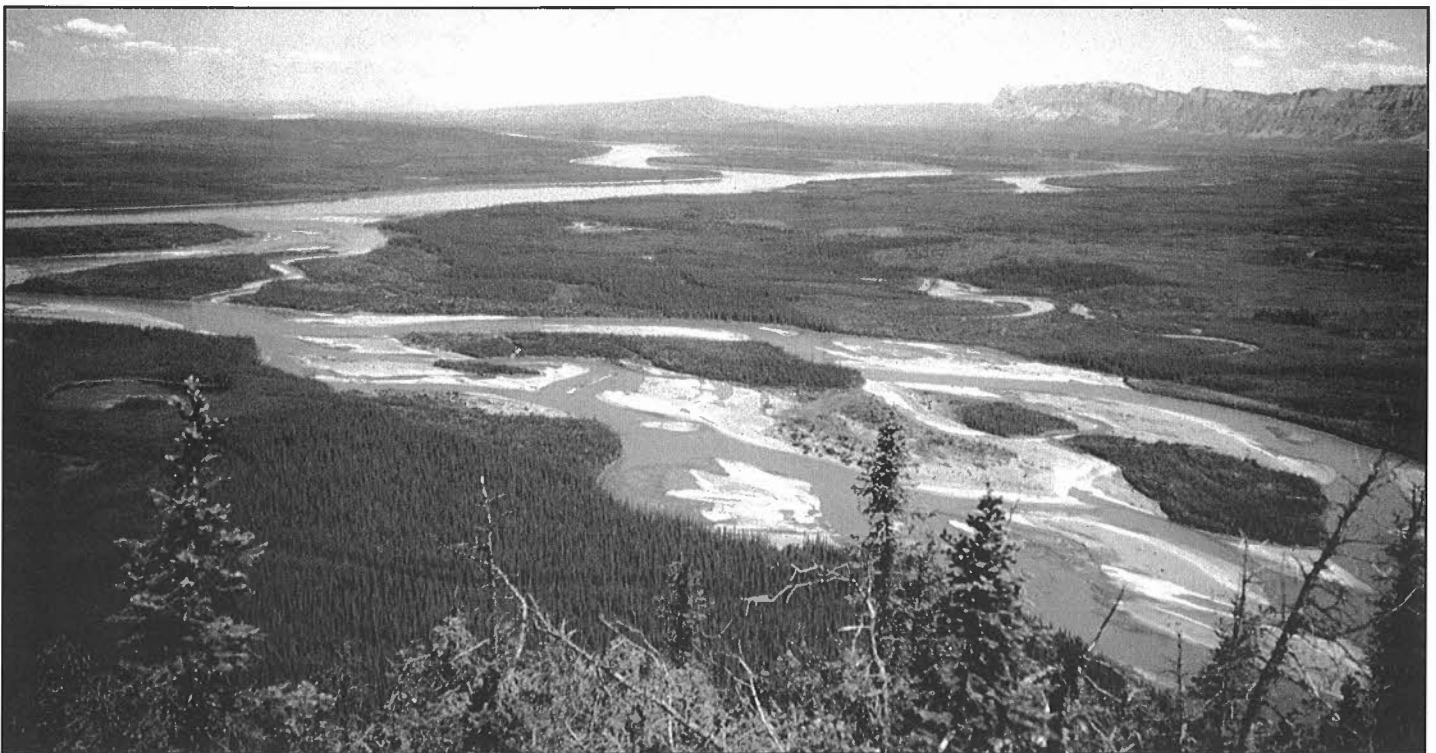
The next day I arrived at Fort Simpson unexpectedly early. Knowing the town well from the summer I was a Nahanni River guide, I had no intention of staying at the campsite, which is plagued by mosquitoes and drunks. I

beached near a Swiss couple who had arrived moments before, and ambled over. I felt strangely self-conscious, dying to talk and yet panicky at not knowing what to say. My voice sounded weird, too loud. Then suddenly I realised that I was rattling on and on while they smiled politely. I shut up, ashamed and surprised. The reaction was new to me and never to be repeated.

I arranged to camp at the river guide's compound in town. There I saw no familiar faces, but all were friendly and I spent several days happily loafing about and visiting a bar while I could. But, much as I enjoyed myself, it was with relief that I slipped away at five one morning, paddling into a steady head wind. With the strong current helping, at 8 p.m. I arrived at the entrance to the North Nahanni River. Here the Mackenzie deflects off a mountain range and sweeps to the right around the Big Bend.

Warmed by my campfire, with waves lapping at the gravel and blue mountains rising high above the river, my happiness was hard to contain. Friends of mine knew Garth and Nancy who manned the fire tower on the summit of Lone Mountain, a little way up the North Nahanni, so I decided to visit. I cut and used a pole to move the canoe upriver for the first time, finding it surprisingly easy and effective. The morning passed enjoyably lining, poling, and paddling upriver.

I snacked at the foot of Lone Mountain, which towered vertically above me for some 1,000 feet. I had heard that Garth routinely ran down and up the mountain as part of his daily exercise, so I figured the trail couldn't be too technical. Accordingly, I carried a plastic bag of food and water with my bear rifle slung across my back. The trail



The North Nahanni River joining a distant Mackenzie; view from Lone Mountain



Camping at Fort Norman

wove up amongst the trees and ended at the base of a sheer cliff.

I should have taken into account tales of Garth's other feats of endurance. Faint foot- and handholds led up the face. Climbing warily with only one hand free, I didn't dare glance down. Finally the path led through a short but steep gravely cleft where I clung to the walls, leery of a landslide. The top at last! A short walk brought me to their little log cabin topped by a square fire tower. All the necessities of life, including water, have to be flown in by helicopter.

I shouted "hello" but no one heard, so I knocked and instantly two horrified faces appeared at the door. Once recovered from their shock they welcomed me in and were the best of hosts right down to freshly baked cookies.

We talked late into the night, and around midnight I stepped outside to stand transfixed as the blazing sun sank behind the curved horizon. Far below, the Mackenzie ran like melted gold into the darkness off the edge of the Earth. My eye travelled up the dusky North Nahanni where it wound into the mountains, and I swore I'd be back one day.

At Old Fort Point I took the channel behind a little island and ran my only whitewater of the Mackenzie. Just some short standing waves, enough to remind me what fun rapids can be, but not much more. I tried to fish and caught an occasional grayling but gave up as the days progressed.

The weather remained hot and sticky with the bugs becoming more numerous, although never really troublesome. Frequently I dodged submerged logs virtually invisible in the muddy water. Ice had grooved the beaches and large chunks of it lay high up the shore, glaring white in the sun.

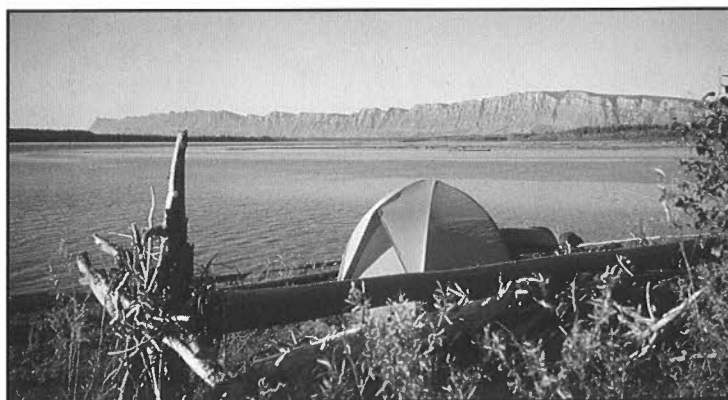
The glorious weather stayed and the days drifted by. I visited all the little communities along the banks and, as a lone female, was greeted everywhere with the amazing hospitality of the North.

Day 12 saw me paddling into Fort Norman (Tulita) being followed by the Norweta, a smart little cruise ship that plies the waters between Yellowknife and Inuvik. They steamed by me twice more as I headed downriver, each time passing with a cheerful toot of the whistle. I felt accepted, a part of the North; I belonged.

In Fort Norman the locals threw a potlatch, barbecuing delicious trout and moose. Later a group of men, both young and old, beat drums hypnotically while chanting, and two elder women shuffled onto the dance floor. An impressive amount of their local tongue was spoken, even to the scores of giggling children.

I met up with the Fort Simpson Swiss couple yet again. We continued to hop-scotch the length of the Mackenzie as I paddled faster but stayed longer in the towns. Locals would often give me a rundown of all the canoeists that were ahead and behind me; it was always interesting to hear of everyone's progress.

A day's paddle brought me to Norman Wells with its oily water and artificial islands, each supporting an oil rig, strung across the river. A quartet of locals, perched on a log, waved me in for a drink, a pleasant end to the day.



*Camping at the mouth of the North Nahanni
(hidden behind left-hand bushes)*

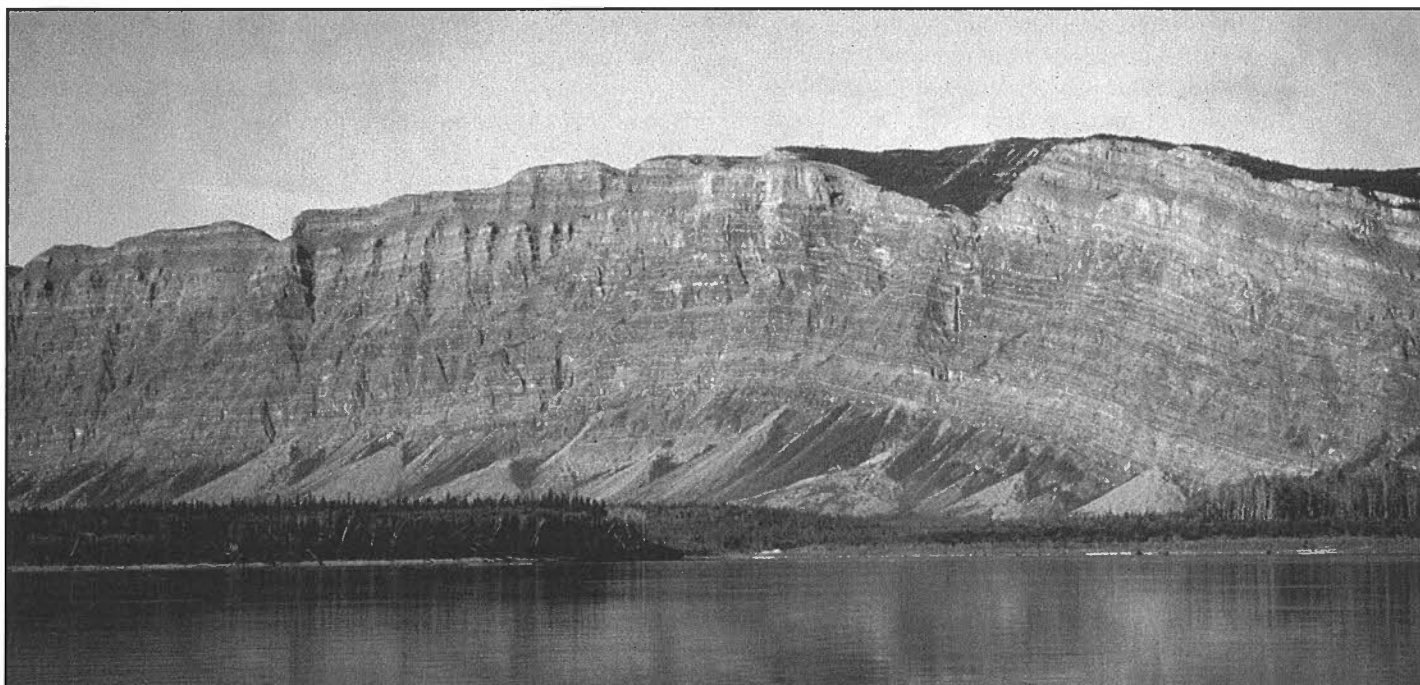
Later, as I ate dinner outside the tent, I noticed one of my drinking buddies weave up to the road. Suddenly two teenagers set upon him and beat him to the ground with a sickening final kick to the head. Disgusted at my own cowardice, instead of interfering when I saw they might head towards me, I piled Skookum with gear and headed upriver to a safe, peaceful spot well away from people.

Once again I was enveloped by incredible generosity. One family invited me to dinner, another man insisted out of pure kindness that I stay at his house. Stormy weather swept in so I was especially grateful. For a week, wind and rain battered the windows while I lay curled up on the couch, steaming hot chocolate in hand, working my way through his movie collection.

tentedly in the hot sun, watching the fire die while reading Yukon gold rush poems by Robert Service. Some stam-peders floated by this very spot, also taking the Rat River route over the mountains. How different their experience would have been, and yet the actual rivers hardly changed.

Barge markers drew a dot-to-dot channel along the entire Mackenzie. Mostly I ignored them, taking short cuts behind islands and over sandbars, although the soft pastel colors of the latter made these hazards nearly invisible.

A little plywood teepee above Sans Sault Rapids stands in remembrance of a teenage son who had gambled with the rapids and lost. I could hear the roar of whitewater and carefully kept to the river markers. Now I



The Big Bend, Mackenzie River

Then early one morning the water was calm, all rain had ceased. Quietly I prepared, impatient to be moving again. The clouds were lifting as I passed the wet limp tent of the Swiss. They must have had a miserable few days.

A loon arrowed low across my bow. Then an eagle. With powerful wing strokes the predator caught up and, bang! broke the loon's wing. The wounded bird plum-meted, a bundle of wild feathers crashing onto the sur-face. The eagle dive-bombed, again and again. Again and again the crippled loon splashed, struggling, managing to fight off its attacker. This grim battle of life and death was shocking in its silence. Then the eagle slowly circled high into the sky, defeated. Flying beyond the trees, he left the loon to her fate.

The river banks rose ever higher, evolving into cliffs which I framed one night with my tent opening. I sat con-

found the current fast with turbulent waves, but soon shot into the shelter of an island. To the east spread a beautiful panorama; a sweeping valley joining mountain ranges. Lower lay the cute, contorted Bat Hills, while Beaver Tail Mountain seemed to swim in the distance.

Bulldog (horsefly) season arrived with a vengeance. They hid in Skookum's wind-shadow, ever ready to attack. Baking hot days flowed by without a breath of wind. I canoed half naked—the freedom of aloneness.

The Ramparts is a deep, quarter-mile wide gorge with smooth cliffs rising sheer out of the river, the pale yellow walls smeared to a dark rust and stunted black spruce marching along the ridge. Amazingly pure echoes rang back so I talked and sang, self-conscious to hear the strangeness of my own voice. I tried to linger, but all too soon I was through and Fort Good Hope lay ahead.

Fort Good Hope's notoriety for petty crime reached far upriver, so it was with trepidation that I left my loaded canoe amongst the numerous boats. I made a quick tour of the community and checked in with the R.C.M.P. who generously (politely?) offered me a jail shower. All lay undisturbed on my return to Skookum and I escaped to sleep on an island by the far shore.

So as to be alerted by the noise of any approaching animal, I like to camp on gravel. I woke in the dark. Heavy footsteps crunched closer. Grabbing my rifle I peeked out, heart pounding. A black bear watched from ten yards. I hopped out of the tent, safety off. I banged loudly. His ear twitched. I shouted aggressively. He snorted aggressively. Having made his point, he ambled over to my food cache. After a cursory sniff he jogged back to the tent. Heck, even bears wouldn't eat my food! I tried chasing the bear and he ran around the tent and I ran after him. We circled faster. Who was chasing who? I stood off to one side. Shouting, I waved my arm again. He stopped.

I raised my rifle, finger on the trigger. The sights shook with each heartbeat. He charged. I began to squeeze the trigger. Then suddenly he swerved aside and strolled up to the bushes. Sitting down, he thought and watched. I watched back through the sights, my arms quivering with the weight of the gun. Then he got up and slowly walked away, occasionally glancing back. With one hand clenched to the rifle, I sprinted to collapse my tent. Wildly I stuffed everything into Skookum for the fastest camp breakup ever.

I was floating in space, voyaging between galaxies. The dark water mirrored the immense universe above, the treeline a black void slowly gaining substance in the morning light. The only sounds were the loud drip-splash of the paddle, my breathing. Peace flooded my soul. Low clouds began to glow in hidden sunlight. Delicious smells wafted from shore, no longer of roses but of trees, damp earth, and sometimes a powerful whiff of mint or wolf-willow. At 3 a.m. the sun floated silently up from behind the earth, giving life to the world. I felt honored, the sole witness.

Sleep caught up with me by late morning and I camped near Loon River. The site was crowded but the sweet water diamond clear. Across the mouth of the trib-



The Soronson's cabin at Grand View

utary stood a cabin, on the beach below a team of dogs sat staked out. One had pulled her pin and ran loose with line trailing.

Alongside me a Fort Good Hope family were camping in a large canvas tent, their river boat moored to the bank. Children of all ages played, shrieking in the mud. Dad fished while Mum prepared caribou meat. They had shot one the night before and she was slicing the meat in one-eighth-inch-thin sheets to drape over the rack constructed above a smokey fire. Her hands flowed so smoothly, unhurried yet fast, fascinating to watch. The caribou head, legs, and various organs also hung up to dry.

My new friends entrusted me with two plastic bags full of mail to deliver to a cabin downstream. Weighed with responsibility, I set out early in the morning of Day 24.

I arrived under a sky dramatic with summer thunderstorms. Bright flowers fringed the Soronson's cabin. Fred and Irene were a fun, interesting couple with unlimited generosity. Their home overflowed with plants and "things"; all types of furs adorned the walls. They received the mail gratefully and invited me to stay. Fred and I hauled in their fish net and cleared it; the catch consisted of three massive innconu, a small loche, and whitefish. Like many riverside families, he smoked fish to sell; the technique a matter of debate, each person swearing by their own unique method. Bad weather struck again so I spent several pleasant days with them repairing my clothes and gear while the wind and rain lashed the river into a fury.

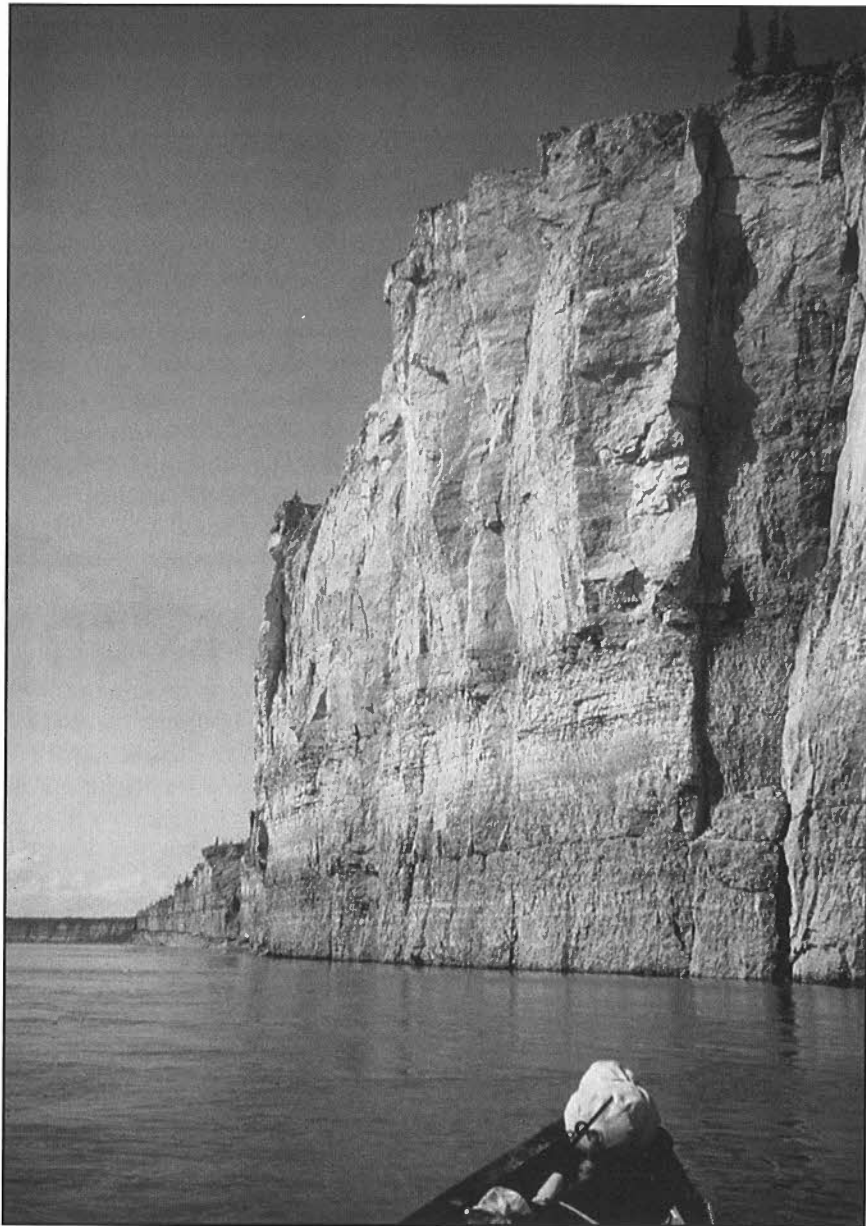
Day 29 dawned sunny and calm. After being filled with a huge pancake breakfast and plied with extra rations for the road, I canoed on, at peace again with the big river under its huge sky.

My last night on the Mackenzie was spent happily with Gabe and Andre, father and son, at their cabin. Everything was built with care; one of the most organized cabin sites I'd seen.

Their log smokehouse steamed. Exploring, I stepped into the thick darkness. In the gloom, rows of sliced fish hung along poles while the low fire glowed and flickered in the centre of the earthen floor. Sun rays struck through the wide gaps between logs, dancing in the gently swirling smoke.



The Matt Berry at Fort Good Hope



The Upper Ramparts, Mackenzie River

Gabe scraped a caribou hide with a bone tool. When I had a go, I realized it took practice. I enjoyed helping them scrub out their boat and paint plywood for the shed roof. During the night the dogs barked at an animal crashing in the bush. Dan shot twice in the air and we slept on undisturbed.

The final day, Day 31, paddling to Arctic Red River (Tsiigehtchic), was exhausting with storms chasing me, head winds, rain, and breaking waves. The banks rose into cliffs again, the Lower Ramparts, and as I turned the last corner a vicious squall hit with winds so strong that for a while I could barely hold my own. But up ahead there was the church, an imposing white sanctuary standing out proudly like a vision through the deluge.

The town is nestled snugly below the cliffs at the junction of the Peel River, with dozens of dogs staked near the shore. A ferry runs from the Dempster Hwy. crossing over to Arctic Red, making it a busy place. Someone waved and beckoned from the ferry. Eckhard, another solo canoeist, suggested we share a campfire. The first leg was over.

That summer I completed my journey over the mountains to Alaska. Eckhard and I met again and I caught a ride with him to Winnipeg. Somewhere en route we fell in love. Now, five years later, we live in the Yukon and are planning a short canoe trip on the Yukon River, this time with our two sons, three and one years old, to add to the fun. How contorted are the twists of fate.



CPM # 40015547

ISSN 1828-1327

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

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

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

NEWS BRIEFS

NASTAWGAN MATERIAL AND DEADLINE Articles, trip reports, book reviews, photographs, sketches, technical tips, or anything else that you think might be of interest to other readers, are needed for future issues. 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:	Summer 2002	deadline date:	5 May
	Autumn 2002		4 August

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 membership secretary Gary James for more information.

PADDLE THE DON on Sunday, 5 May 2002. Bring your own canoe/kayak, paddles, and life jacket. Beginning between 9 a.m. and 12 noon at Serena Gundy Park (located in Sunnybrook Park just north of Eglinton Avenue East and west of Leslie Street), the first leg of the paddle is on the West Don River until you reach the East Branch. The trip then continues south down the Lower Don to the Keating Channel. The river ranges from class 1 to class 3 whitewater and there are three portages along the way. Be sure to bring extra warm clothes sealed in plastic. Complimentary refreshments are available. Transportation back to the cars is provided. The paddle is free, but donations to Regenerate the Don are gratefully accepted. For more information, call 416-661-6600-ext.5283 or visit www.trca.on.ca To register and get your starting time, call 416-661-6600-ext. 5397. If you want to help with safety at the weir, call Bill King at 416-223-4646.

BOOBOO! The reborn WCA website is, of course, <http://wildernesscanoe.ca> (without the www.). Please pay it a visit and send your comments and contributions to webmaster Jeff Haymer.

PARTNERS WANTED

Stikine River: Frank and Jay Knaapen (613-687-6037 or jneilson@nrtco.net) Summer 2002 or 2003. Flying from Dease Lake, northern BC, to headwaters at Spatzizi Park. Take-out above Stikine Canyon at Telegraph Creek. Start 29 June for two weeks (upper section). Lots of hiking on the plateau. Participants may continue for another two weeks of paddling the lower Stikine, from below the canyon at Telegraph Creek, to Wrangle, USA, returning to Prince Rupert by ferry, for a grand 600-km paddle, and five weeks of glorious scenery. Strong class-2 big-water skills, fully outfitted, spray decks required. This is big grizzly terrain with superb fishing. (A useful paddlers' guide is "The Stikine River" by Jennifer Voss.)



SOUTHERN ONTARIO RIVER LEVELS

Paddlers have frequently contacted me to find out if I knew the current water levels on particular rivers in Southern Ontario, or if I could tell them where such information could be obtained.

For a number of years, the Ontario Wildwater Affiliation of Canoe Ontario had a pre-recorded phone message service giving river levels for a number of popular Southern Ontario rivers. Its only downside was that it gave the levels in cubic metres per minute or gauge levels, but you had to know what these readings translated into for conditions on the river. Unfortunately, this service was discontinued two seasons ago as Canoe Ontario became essentially dormant due to lack of funds. The OWWA has transformed itself into a new organization for whitewater paddlers, Whitewater Ontario. They hope that sometime in the future they may be able to offer this valuable service again.

In the interim, there are a few resources that are handy to be aware of for those seeking river level information.

The best general source of up-to-date information on local rivers during the height of paddling season is the boater board on the Wildrock Outfitters website: www.boatwerks.net. Later in the season don't be surprised if it only covers the Gull and the Ottawa rivers. However, if there has been a lot of late-season rain, you should be able to hear about what's going on all over Southern Ontario.

For rivers on the Trent system, such as the Mississagua River or Eels Creek, call the Trent-Severn Waterways office in Peterborough at 705-742-9267. Ask for Bruce Kitchen, who is the person actually in charge of dam control. He can tell you the current level and if it will be changing for the weekend. Unfortunately, as far as I can tell, he can't be bribed. Barebones minimum for the Mississagua is about 5 CMS, and 3 for Eels Creek. Below this, they're hiking trips. Double these numbers if you want a decent fun trip that doesn't leave too much plastic on the rocks.

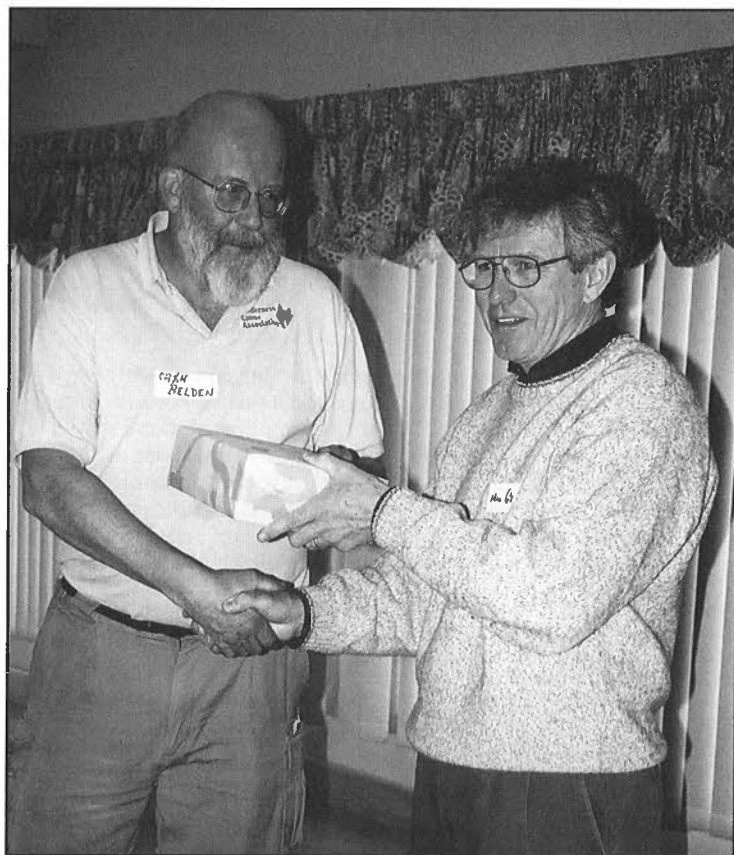
Water levels, and even water temperatures, for the Grand River system can be obtained from pre-recorded messages at the Grand River Conservation Authority. Call 519-621-2763. Summer levels in the Elora Gorge run around 5 CMS. You can get down the river with some scraping at this level, but there isn't much there to play in. It's better around 15 CMS or more. Heavy local rains can bring the watershed's levels up dramatically. When it gets up to around 35-50 it's got some challenging pushy water in places. Over 50 you need to be a very skilled paddler.

For other rivers, local MNR offices and conservation authorities can be called for river levels in the locale. District phone numbers are always available on the government websites, or by contacting the Ontario Travel Information office at 1-800-ONTARIO. Unfortunately, the people who are trying to help you often aren't paddlers

and may not understand what is a good level for you. Consequently, you should use their advice with caution.

Local canoe outfitters can also be an excellent source of information on river conditions. As an example, if you wanted to paddle the Madawaska, a good source would be SWAT at Palmer Rapids (613-758-1092; www.madawaska.com). This is a good tactic for rivers anywhere in Canada. I would prefer the outfitters to government offices as the people you are talking to are fellow paddlers and usually have a better idea what levels you need to have a good time on your trip. However, if you do pick their brains, courtesy would dictate that where feasible you use their services for accommodation, shuttle, boat rental, etc. as a demonstration of your appreciation. Of course, lastly, don't forget those paddling friends you've made in the WCA who live all over Southern Ontario, and can give you advice on local paddling conditions. Needless to say, this is another good reason to get active in the club.

Bill Ness



Cash Belden receives a well-earned 'moving-on' present from chairman Hal Graham at the AGM on 16 February

SYMPOSIUM: NORTHERN TRAVELS AND NORTHERN PERSPECTIVES

An enthusiastic crowd of more than 650 paddlers and other lovers of the outdoors thoroughly enjoyed the 17 presentations made at this annual symposium, organized by George Luste and sponsored by the WCA, held in Toronto on 1 and 2 February. The following presentations were made:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| - Northern Perspectives, with Music | Ian Tamblyn |
| - Arctic Flora, Fauna and Conservation | Peter Ewins |
| - 25 Years of Arctic Paddling, a Retrospective | Jim Abel |
| - Swampy Bay River, Quebec | Mike Wevrick and Sara Seager |
| - There Ain't No Water In This River | Max Finkelstein |
| - Reflections: Two Trails, Two Peoples | John McInnes |
| - Arctic Land Expedition 2001—Solo Journey | Paul van Peenen |
| - Five Trips to Baker Lake | Gavin Jenny |
| - "Rowing to Latitude" Experiences | Jill Fredston |
| - Arctic Winter Experience | Marilyn Friesen |
| - Hudson Bay Watershed | John Macfie |
| - Canadian Arctic Expedition of 1913-1918 | David Gray |
| - Our First Ellesmere Kayaking Adventure | Vicky Stikeman and Paul Green |
| - Wintering on Ellesmere, with Family | Graeme and Lynda Magor |
| - Inuit Art and Mythology | Carol Heppenstall |
| - Some Words on Niliujuk | Peter Irniq |
| - "Nulijuk: Mother of the Sea Beasts" | John Houston |

In addition, a number of Northern Songs were performed by Dave Hadfield and friends.



THE FISHING REGULATIONS

Just pulled up on shore. A long paddle in the rain to get here. Still shaking with cold and wet. We pushed it this far because this creek is a likely one for fish. Called Grayling Creek on the map. A good first indication. Confirmed after we went over to the creek for a look-see. It really does look fishy. First order of business will be to get a fire going. After that, we'll set up camp and then break out the fishing gear.

Fishing Alaskan rivers is different from fishing Canadian rivers that flow on the Shield. On Canadian rivers, the good fishing is found below the many rapids as the rivers drop down off the Shield. In Alaska, the good fishing is found where feeder creeks join the main river. Salmon spawn in all of these creeks, and grayling follow to gorge on the eggs.

We have been stopping to fish almost every creek as we paddle down the river. The creeks are mostly small, three to four metres in width. They are also easy to walk up, consisting of quiet pools connected by short stretches of shallow riffles. Each pool holds ten to twenty grayling. The fisherman can fish each pool until the grayling quit biting and then walk a short way upstream to the next pool for a repeat. You can catch fish after fish with no end of it. One of the great memories of this year's trip was looking upstream at the end of a long day of fishing pool after pool and seeing still more pools. Pools that have not seen fishing lines this year.

The rain has not quit today, so we are going to build a fire to dry off before starting to fish. It's early afternoon, but this is as far as we intend to go today. Fishing ranks pretty high on our wilderness activity list.

Anticipation growing. This creek really does look like a good one. It's bigger than most, about six metres wide, and the dead salmon scattered on shore at the creek mouth attest that the fish are here.

And then one of the buddies saw him. Big grizzly. Fishing about three pools up. Two hundred metres from us. His fishing technique was different from our technique. He just waded into the pool until only the hump on his back was showing. Then he tried to drive the fish to the shallow riffle where he could pounce on them. Hoping for salmon. He came out of that third pool and started walking down to the second pool.

Now only a hundred and fifty metres from us. Without a word being said, the buddies and I packed the gear into the canoes and left.

Still cold. We'll stop a couple of kilometres downstream and build a fire. All of us are disappointed at not being able to fish Grayling Creek. However, the grizzly was there first. And sometimes in the wilderness, the fishing regulations are not made by man.

Greg Went

BREAK-UP 1994

Every year the ice leaves the lake differently. Sometime between the middle of April and the middle of May, the massive sheet of ice retreats. The lake is free again.

One spring a few years ago we had very little rain in the first month. The snow melted only slowly from the bush. The ice on the lake took on a different kind of texture, with only the sunshine and warm winds to melt its surface.

In years of plentiful rain, the ice alternates between smooth and rough. Rainy days followed by freezing nights would give us a perfect skating rink that carried on mile after mile along the length of the lake. But there was no skating that year. Water drained from the surface of the ice almost as soon as it melted.

That year the warm days followed by cold nights gave us a wonderfully rough textured ice that was perfect for bicycling. My daughter, Vesta, and I would go out each morning to explore the lakeshore and the ice itself as spring turned winter away.

Even though the details of the retreating ice are different each year, I take great comfort in the predictability of the order of the events. The snow melts from the surface of the ice and surrounding shoreline. The heat of the sun on the land at the edge of the lake melts the ice nearby. The edges of the lake first appear on the south side of the island just out front.

Weeks before the ice gets too soft to walk on, we watch as this slip of water by the island grows wider each day. Slowly, the south-facing shore of the land begins to have a slip of water around it too. The lake is shallow there, and the meltwater coming off the shore quickly warms the lake, melting the ice even faster. Though the ice itself still holds strong to 99% of the lake, we can no longer step onto the land of the south-facing shoreline.

Day by day, this gap widens and I begin to crave that first day in the canoe. I'm almost tempted to drag the canoe across the ice to make the first launch of the year. But I know that though the gap is wide between ice and shore, the water is shallow—far too shallow to paddle a canoe.

So, my wanderlust must be satisfied with long walks in the evening, watching the beavers slip onto the ice—and long bicycle rides in the mornings. Often we'll see tracks on the ice from the wolf or the otter and, in late April, even a bear.

Ah, but even these excursions on the ice must come to an end. Once the temperature stops dipping below freezing at night, the ice melts even faster. The top surface gets too soft for biking, then a few days later it's too soft even for walking.

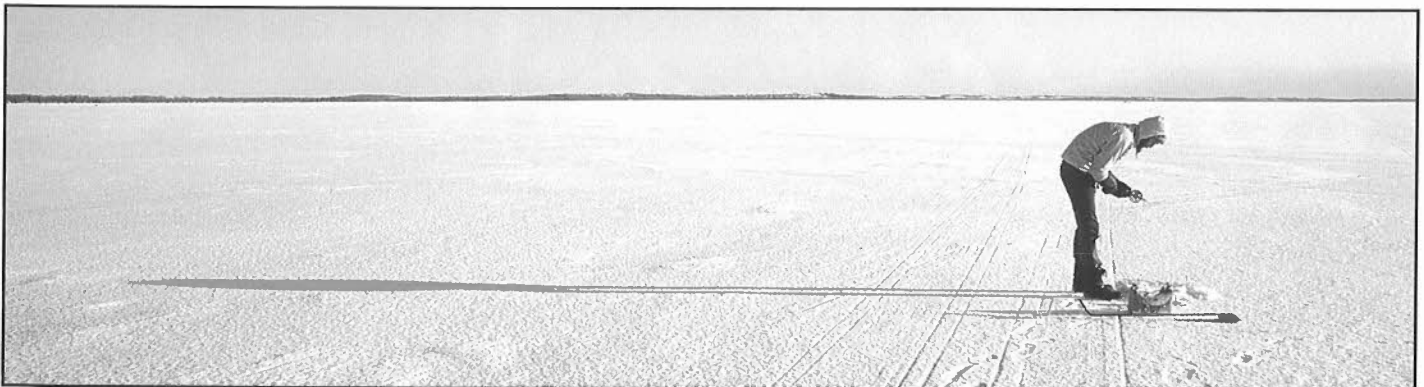
But mostly, the last two weeks of break-up are spent watching and waiting. For as long as the ice is strong enough to walk on, I will go out with the ice pick to check the depth of the ice. That year, it was 16 inches 100 yards from shore on 22 April, and 18 inches at the end of our bay on 23 April.

All this information is noted in our journal. As the ice thins I read the notes from years past and add notes to refer to in years to come. When will the ice no longer be safe to travel on? When will the peepers begin their chorus? When will the loon return to our bay? And, of course, the underlying question to all—when will the ice go out?

Watching and waiting. We're stuck here for a week or two while there is too much ice to cross the lake by boat and not enough ice to cross on foot. Still, this is a time I look forward to. I think of it as a time of retreat, not so much as a time of isolation. It is a time to putter around the garden and the cabin, a time to take long walks through the awakening forest, a time to contemplate the cycles of life.

These few weeks of isolation give me time to reflect on how lucky we are to live in the bush. Time to enjoy the quiet. Time to sit in the sun without the bother of blackflies. And, of course, this is a time I spend poring over maps and canoe routes, aching to be out on the lake again.

Viki Mather



Ice fishing on Lake Simcoe

photo: Toni Harting

A LAST HURRAH

Hugh Valliant and Jim Morris have decided that 2002 will be the 20th and last year of their annual canoe clinic at Palmer Rapids. They may be taking liberties with the math, as the earliest notice Hugh can find is in the 1984 issue of *Nastawgan*, but Jim has never let accuracy get in the way of a good canoeing yarn.

So the year 2002 will be the last year for these annual teaching weekends. On 15 and 16 June, instead of the normal clinic, it will, hopefully, be a giant reunion of all those who have taken part in these beginner and intermediate whitewater classes. So, get your memory boxes working and try to remember who you first paddled with at Palmer. Give them a call and arrange to get together at Palmer Rapids this year.

Hugh, with his organizational skills and the help of his computers, has lists of those participants since he took over the organization. Prior to that it was all done by phone calls and scribbled notes, which Jim, in his casual style, has lost.

Where are they all now? What rivers and trips have they taken? There should be some great stories of paddling success and lessons poorly remembered.

Jim has found an old group photograph—how young we all looked then—taken on the French River in 1985. It was a combination of the second half of the annual clinic

combined with a group that Paul Barsevskis had organized for that weekend. Was that the weekend where all 30 of us in the photograph floated together down through Blue Chute? How many can you name?

We averaged 24 students per year, some of whom came for two years, so over an 18- or 19-year period that's about 300 paddlers introduced to the joys and trials of canoeing by Jim and Hugh. It should be one hell of a reunion.

Think about who you met and paddled with, what trips you took, where you went, what adventures you had. Dig out the old photos and plan to be at Palmer in June.

Some of the highlights we remember:

— Two guys, who finally stopped fighting the water and for their first time successfully surfed a standing wave. They were so rock solid on it that, after they had whooped and hollered, they almost panicked, yelling, "How do we get off this thing?"

— On the only really wet and cold weekend we had in all those years, one couple, trying to keep warm, dressed in every stitch of clothing they had brought, and were of course the first to dump. With nothing dry to wear they had to sit on shore wrapped in sleeping bags.

— The weekend the island caught fire and all the



French River 1985

photo: Toni Harting

classes stopped to form a bucket brigade with bailers, wash buckets, pails, and anything else we could get our hands on to put the fire out. We were feeling so proud when the professional firefighters arrived and congratulated us; then they showed us the underside of the smoldering logs and all of the root fires, which were still hot.

— The lady who was initially terrified of any moving water but then, after experiencing surfing a wave at Double Rapids on the French, couldn't get enough of it. Wore her partner out and anyone else who would paddle with her.

— The guy who arrived at Palmer Rapids with the plastic rental boat, which swamped and sunk at the bottom chute, never to appear again. Still hasn't, to our knowledge.

— The weekend on the French River, which Hugh realized was a Blue Moon. He led a midnight party down the Blue Chute during the Blue Moon.

— The weekend when over 30 of us floated down the Blue Chute in one big raft of people.

— When Marg and Charlie were surfing on the French, Charlie flipped out of the boat and Marg kept calling for more power, more power from the stern, not realizing that her sternsman was gone.

— When Jim and Anne were kibitzing in the hole at Double Rapids their canoe filled with water; then Anne tried for an eddy turn with a big lean. They floated past a very alert group of students with an invisible, totally submerged boat.

— The couple who really paid attention to back-ferrying. They got caught on the wrong side of the ledge at Palmer, when the river was in full flood. But they really hung in, trusted their back-ferry to successfully slip down a small channel on the far right.

These are a few of our memories; we are sure that you have many more.

Many of you were using these clinics to brush up on your skills before doing some of the big northern rivers. We remember the Nahanni, Stikine, and Thelon being mentioned. Were you successful and did you put the lessons to good use? You must have many tales to tell. Send them to us and we will include them in an article in *Nastawgan*. Call Jim at 705-756-8852 or better still e-mail Jim at morris@csolve.net or Hugh at valliant@micomtech.com and let them know who you remember and to tell them tales of your adventures. We'll pass them on and ask the editor to put some of this nostalgia in *Nastawgan*. (Or send them directly to Toni.)

Call us and let us know if you plan to attend the June meeting, so that we can arrange space with Harold Jessup. We will bring the barbeque drums, but as we don't know how many will be coming, bring your own steaks. And memories!

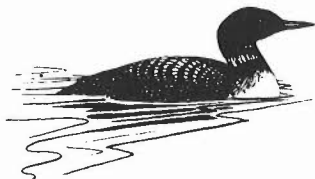
Hugh Valliant and Jim Morris

PADDLERS' MEETINGS

From Becky Mason we received information regarding two meetings that should be of interest to paddlers:

CANADIAN CANOE AND KAYAK FESTIVAL to be held on 9-11 August 2002 at Victoria Island near Ottawa. Contact: George Wieringa, Executive Director, The Canadian Canoe and Kayak Festival; P.O. Box 214, 410 Bank Street; Ottawa, ON, K2P 1Y8; tel. 613-235-9998; info@canoe-kayakfestival.org; www.canoe-kayakfestival.org

MUSKOKA CANOE SYMPOSIUM to be held on (tentatively) 13-14 July 2002 in the Muskoka area. Contact: Jodie Lalonde; Turtle Paddle Works; 441 Stephenson's Road 1, East; Site N, Box 2, RR#1; Port Sydney, ON, P0B 1L0; tel. 705-385-8211; turtlepaddle@sympatico.ca



FEBRUARY

In February the maps come out
Are pinned upon the floor
And I with wine and quiet talk
Trace lines of lakes once more

The world tonight is cold and white
The map stays green and blue
And every lake's a route I take
In thought, with my canoe

This winter night canoes are light
The days forever shine
And a tent unfolds by waterfalls
On every thin blue line

Larry Everson

INNU SUPPORT AND THE MYTH OF WILDERNESS

Jennie Barron

The following is a condensed version of a presentation I gave at the WCA/Luste Wilderness Canoeing Symposium in February 2001. For the full text, please contact me at jenerik@netidea.com or 718 Radio Ave., Nelson, BC, V1L 3L3.

My starting point is the question, "How do we, as southern, urban, recreational canoeists and environmentalists, connect with and speak of contemporary Aboriginal struggles in the places we visit?" To get at this question, I want to take a deep look at something we often take for granted—the whole notion, or 'myth,' of wilderness. For a brief history of this cultural 'myth,' I borrow heavily from an essay by environmental historian, William Cronon, in a book titled *Uncommon Ground*.

Cronon's essay is titled, "The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature." In it, he argues that wilderness, "far from being the one place on earth that stands apart from humanity...is quite profoundly a human creation—indeed, the creation of very particular human cultures at very particular moments in human history." That is to say, that if we go back a mere 250 years in North American and European history, we do not find people wandering around remote corners of the planet looking for the 'wilderness experience.' And it's not that they couldn't do so; they didn't want to; for 'wilderness' didn't mean to them what it does to us today.

As late as the 18th century, the most common use of the word 'wilderness' in the English language had to do with landscapes also described as desolate, savage, or a wasteland. The connotations of 'wilderness' were nothing like they are today, and if you found yourself there, you would likely have found yourself feeling bewildered or terrified, hardly at peace with the universe. The wilderness was a place you went to only against your will, in your darkest hours of fear. It was the antithesis of all that was orderly and good.

However, by the end of the 19th century, these meanings had been turned on their heads. This is when we find Thoreau declaring, "In wildness is the preservation of the world." This is when the North American public is starting to see in the wild spaces on their map, a little piece of heaven on Earth. Yosemite and Yellowstone are declared the first American wilderness parks, and in the first decade of the 20th century we see the emergence of the movement to actually protect wilderness. As Cronon writes, "In a mere fifty years, Satan's home had become God's own temple."

How did that happen? Cronon cites two influential and pervasive cultural constructs: the romantic notions of the sublime, and the frontier. The doctrine of the sublime derived from the theories of people like Edmund Burke and Immanuel Kant. According to them, sublime land-

scapes were those where the supernatural lay just beneath the surface, the places where God was most likely to be encountered: on the mountaintop, in the canyon, the waterfall, the thundercloud, the towering forests. Most of the most popular and celebrated landscapes in North America are sublime landscapes. As are most areas designated national parks. (It is only recently that we have begun using other criteria—ecological criteria, for example—as a basis for judging and valuing less sublime landscapes, like grasslands or wetlands.)

The second cultural movement that helped turn wilderness into a quasi-religious icon derives from the Romantic attraction to primitivism: "the belief that the best antidote to the ills of an overly refined and civilized modern world was a return to simpler, more primitive living." Cronon describes how this European ideal of the primitive was embodied in (North) America through the myth of the frontier, wherein the frontier represented not just the edge of 'civilization,' but the whole process by which Europeans and easterners moved west, and "shed the trappings of civilization, rediscovered their primitive racial energies, reinvented direct democratic institutions, and thereby re-infused themselves with a vigor, an independence, and a creativity that were the source of American democracy and national character." In this way, the frontier—i.e., the wilderness—became associated with the very essence of what it meant to be American. In Canada, of course, the frontier myth looks a little different. For one thing, the frontier is to the north more than to the west, in the sense that the North has been more closely associated with our national character and self-image. But the mystique and the feelings of longing associated with the lands beyond the frontier are just as familiar to Canadians.

The point is that by the early 20th century, wilderness had not only become sacred—that is, imbued with the presence of God—it had also become inseparably associated with our respective national identities. To lose wilderness would be to lose our myth of origin.

My reason for giving you all this history of wilderness, of course, is to show just how culturally specific the idea of wilderness is. 'Wilderness' as we understand it today is largely the product of religious, historical, and cultural influences: By association with the sublime, 'wilderness' has come to be sacred. 'Wilderness' has also been made more-or-less synonymous with 'emptiness'—it is the place beyond the frontier.

Now, it is no accident that we don't live in the places we call 'wilderness,' because the myth of wilderness is rooted in the idea that for a place to be really natural it must also be virtually pristine. The problem with the myth of pristine wilderness is that it is in many ways an illusion: You probably know that many places that we consider

pristine are not in fact "pristine." Historians are just now learning about the history of modifications and adaptations of the land for human uses—including fire-setting, even the domestication of plants in the middle of places we think of as virgin forests. And you may also know that the establishment of the first large 'wilderness' parks in the U.S. followed hard on the heels of the Indian wars; so the fiction of the pristine in these places was made possible precisely by removal of the parks' original inhabitants! But the myth of wilderness suppresses this history.

This is not just a matter of forgetfulness or even cruel irony. It's more of a sleight of hand, that some would say amounts to racism, because representations of the wilderness as empty, unnamed, unmapped territory, as places awaiting discovery and ownership by Europeans, have been used historically to dispossess Aboriginal people of lands they have used, travelled, named, and made homes in for thousands of years. As one example, the original case of the Gitskan and Wet'suwet'en—the ruling that was later overturned with the Delgamuukw decision—Judge Allan MacEachern dismissively described the Gitskan-Wet'suwet'en traditional territory as "a vast emptiness," but noted that it nonetheless contained "immense forestry reserves...of great economic value." The suggestion is that land is empty when the Aboriginal people claim it as theirs, but can become full when thought of in terms of logging leases and mining permits.

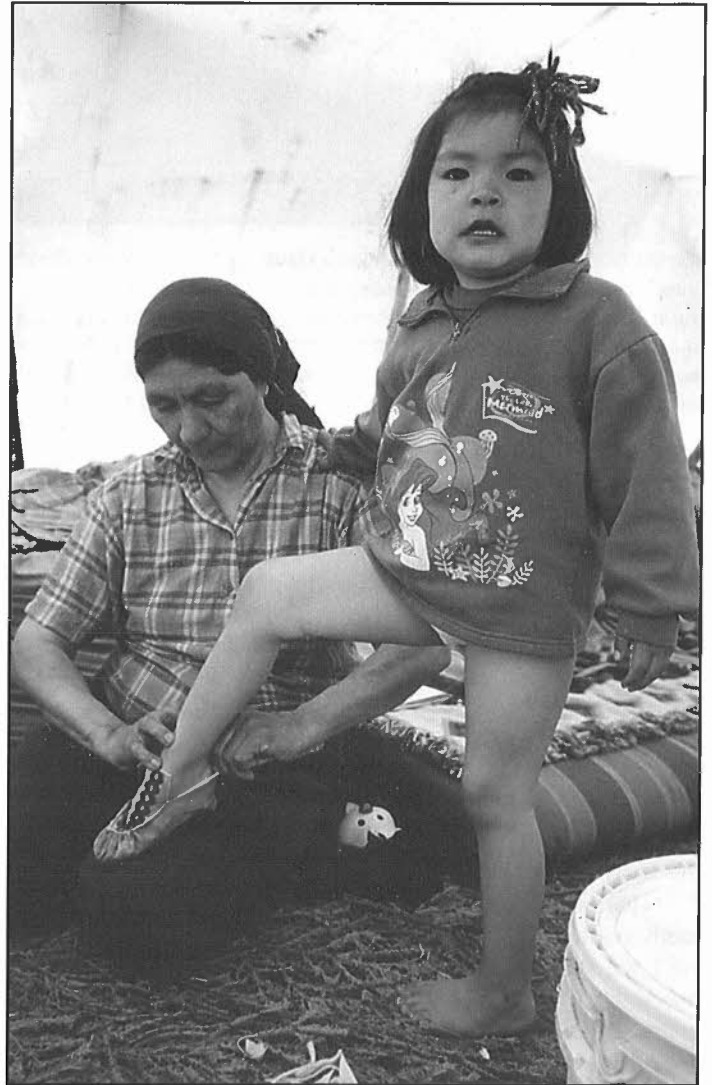
So here is where we encounter our contradiction. Many of us are wilderness advocates. We love these stunning places that we visit by canoe. We want to protect them. At the same time, many of us recognize the terrible things that have been done by colonial governments in our name, and want to take part in healing and reconciliation with Aboriginal people. We want to support Aboriginal rights and see Northern people like the Innu regain their health, autonomy, and self-reliance, with a fair land base of their own. But when we try to bring together our concerns for both the place and the people of Labrador, we run into problems, because the discourse of 'wilderness' is highly restrictive when it comes to Aboriginal rights, i.e., human rights.

I learned this the hard way. In May of 1997 I took part in organizing a public talk in Toronto by Innu leader Daniel Ashini. Our group had decided to set the stage for Daniel's talk by presenting a slide show prepared by another Innu support group in Vermont, who call themselves the Friends of Nitassinan. The slide show came with a prepared script, which gave me great discomfort to read, though I did not at the time understand quite why (nor did I have the knowledge or experience to narrate the slides without a script). On the night of the event, I got my first clue. After our somewhat stiff and self-conscious presentation of the slides, Daniel Ashini took his place at the microphone and began his talk with words to this effect: Although you may not have seen it in those pictures, there are people living in Nitassinan.

Daniel's was a brief and tactful comment, but it illuminated in a moment for me the contradiction inherent in

the literature of that other support group: they called themselves "Friends of Nitassinan" and yet described their mandate as "Defending Eastern North America's Last Frontier." Where notions of the frontier—a fundamental part of the wilderness myth—imply emptiness, the word 'Ntsenin,' meaning homeland, implies occupation. So what kind of human occupation can this contradiction allow? In a phrase, romantic primitivism.

Sure enough, if we go back to the Friends of Nitassinan slide show, we see ample evidence of an effort—however subconscious—by the FON to sort of massage Innu reality and objectives and get them to conform to a romantically primitive image. This is done



Tradition is the thread of continuity that links past, present, and future in a dynamic flow: Innu elder Elizabeth Penasbue fitting three-year-old granddaughter Petish with hand-made moccasins at the family camp in 'nutshimit' (the bush). (Minipi Lake, May 1998.) Minipi Lake is one of the places from which the Canadian military now wants to exclude the public (including the Innu) for eight months of the year. The military wants to establish a 2000 square kilometre "safety" or buffer zone around the already-existing target bombing practice range so that military allies can practice dropping "smart" bombs.



The author learning to clean caribou skins. (Northwest River, December 1997.) This photo illustrates just one step in a process that still today connects Innu to the land: hunting the animal, removing the hide, scraping off the flesh, soaking it, cleaning off the hairs, tanning it, smoking it, and finally, cutting, embroidering, and sewing it into the moccasins shown in the first photo. Maintaining such direct connections to the land is vital to Innu people's identity and health, especially mental health. This is what the Innu refer to when they talk about protecting their "way of life" —this and the active lifestyles they lead when they are in nutshimit, even though this may be only for several months, or even weeks, of the year.

through their choice of images, as well as through what they say, and what they fail to mention (for instance, there is no mention anywhere of Settlers or other Labradorians). Of 73 slides in the show, only six show people. The Innu and Inuit are not even mentioned until slide #21 and the mention is indirect, with an image of a caribou skull left hanging in a tree. That skull, and the next slide, showing ancient tent rings, is presented as "the evidence of the continuing occupation of the land by the Innu and Inuit." (As if that was the only evidence.) And the text reads: "The Innu and the Inuit are as much a part of the ecosystem as the animals. They have evolved together." The script overall boils down to one simplistic message: Save the Innu because they are part and parcel of wild Earth.

This is a problem. Not only because that message is easily contradicted by the tragic images (gas-sniffing youth etc.) we see on TV and in the papers, but because it is based on the delusional desires of the so-called support group, more than on the actual goals and realities of those whom they profess to support. And when supporters project those desires onto the Innu, it can lead to major problems:

First, this sort of Chief Seattle-ization, this romanticization of real people, puts the Innu on a pedestal from which it is impossible not to fall. It creates the expectation that the Innu, or Native people in general, should live more honorably than we do, and not make the same mistakes. So when Aboriginal people litter, overhunt, log, or build hydro dams, they are doubly condemned: high expectations produce bitter disappointments.

The second problem with this kind of representation is that it perpetuates the idea that Aboriginal claims to the land are only legitimate if Aboriginal people continue to live as their ancestors did a hundred years ago. This is a silly expectation to have of any ethnic group. In fact, opponents of the Innu have used this way of thinking to argue against Innu land rights by claiming that the Innu are no longer 'traditional' because they take planes to their hunting territories, and take along store-bought food. This is an idea supporters have to challenge, in the name of fairness, pragmatism, and the right of the Innu to self-determination. We have to learn to see tradition not as stasis, or preservation of a thing or technique, but more as the thread of continuity that links past, present, and future in a dynamic flow. Moreover, the continuation of traditional life in the modern day is often, in fact, enabled by planes, radios, skidoos and other modern means.

Perhaps the biggest problem with the discourse of 'wilderness' in support work is that wilderness leaves precisely nowhere for real people to live permanently inside its boundaries, and no way for them to make a living. This may be where it's hardest for supporters to reconcile their environmental priorities and their wish to support Innu self-determination. It's not that the political goals of environmentalists and Innu are fundamentally incompatible; many Innu themselves choose to speak as protectors of the land, and they choose to work with environmental groups as allies. No, the problem with such Aboriginal-environmental alliances is more that it's too easy to assume that our issues and goals are the same, or at least

more similar than they really are. Consequently, those who insist on seeing Nitassinan as that last-chance place to preserve Wild Earth are often shocked and dismayed if and when the Innu decide it's in their best interest to embark on joint ventures, engage in forestry, or benefit from a mine. Even if those developments are carried out in ecologically and socially responsible ways, many environmentalist supporters often can't bring themselves to support them.

This is not to say that the Innu do not have a special culturally-rooted relationship to the land. But in my experience, when Innu speak about their concerns for the land, they do so not as primitives or innocents in the wilderness, but as participants in a peopled and productive landscape. Their concerns for the land and animals are inseparable from their concerns for their health, and their way of life—that is, life in the country, or *nutshimit*. (Notably, Innu discourse is different from that of environmentalists—they, like most Northerners, tend not to speak of 'wilderness' but rather of 'the land,' 'the country,' or 'the bush.')

In contrast to the discourse of wilderness, their words convey a sense of there being a place for humans in Nature, not alienated from it.

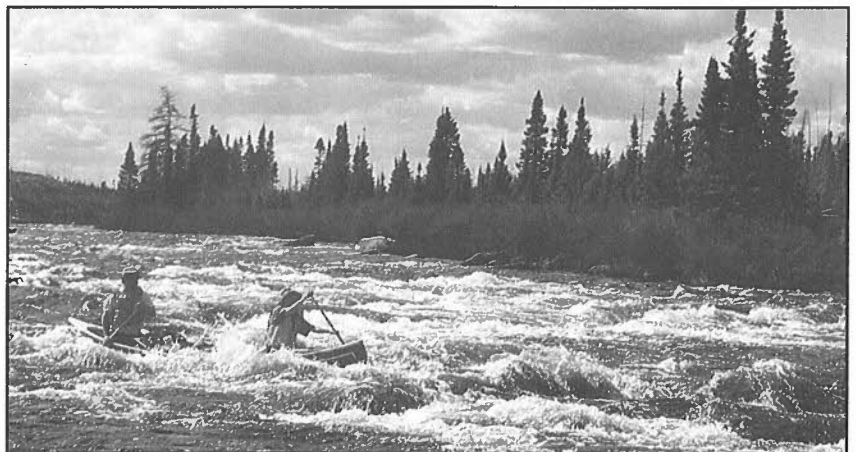
So how do we connect with, and speak of, contemporary Aboriginal struggles in the places we visit far from home? Whether we call ourselves environmentalists, recreational canoeists, or wilderness advocates, I think we need to recognize the origins of our own perspectives on the lands we call 'wilderness'; that is, the cultural and historical roots of the myth that has cast us as visitors-only to these stunning places. In describing these places for others, we need to choose language that, far from suggesting emptiness, reflects and respects the prior occupation and continuing use of these lands by Aboriginal people. We need to admit that the interests of recreational canoeists, of urban environmentalists, and of Aboriginal people are different; at times, closely aligned and complementary, but nonetheless distinct. Consequently, we need to take great care not to appropriate (and distort) another's cause to bolster our own. Finally, where our interests do not coincide or complement each other, we need to feel free to admit some disagreement. For instance, where we may recognize Aboriginal title to land, and support the

Aboriginal right to self-determination, we need not always favour all the things that are done with this right (e.g., if they include environmentally unsustainable practices).

In closing, I want to note that the challenge of reconciling our advocacy for wild places with Innu support is not just about making room for Aboriginal rights. It's ultimately about the challenge we all face, of bringing our love of 'wilderness' to bear on the places that we ourselves live: those local, less pristine, less sublime places that make up most of the natural world. It is not enough to save large tracts of wild lands that only the few most privileged among us can ever visit, and then only for a few weeks a year. Certainly there are substantial ecological non-human benefits to wild lands conservation and protection; for that reason these are laudable and important goals. But they can also lead us to fetishize certain distant and beautiful places as an escape from the forsaken lands we inhabit, driving an ever-deeper wedge between who we are and where we want to be. As William Cronon writes, "to the extent that we celebrate wilderness as the measure with which we judge civilization, we reproduce the dualism that sets humanity and nature at opposite poles. We therefore leave ourselves little hope of discovering what an ethical, sustainable, honourable place in nature might actually look like."

This is today's environmental challenge: not just to preserve wild lands and species, but to transcend the human-nature dualism at the basis of the 'wilderness' myth. If we can do this, we will have found not only a comfortable co-existence for environmentalism and Aboriginal rights, but also the philosophical basis for a new view of humans as belonging to this Earth. As we strive for ethical, sustainable, and honourable living, we will be welcoming ourselves back home.

Jennie Barron is a keen recreational canoeist, and past active member of the Toronto-based Voisey's Bay - Innu Rights Coalition. She completed a Master's degree in Environmental Studies in 1998, focusing on Innu support work. Her research in Labrador was enriched by paddling the tumultuous Kenamu River with several Innu and non-Innu friends. She now lives in Nelson, BC with her partner, Erik Leslie, and their two-year-old son, Quinn.



The author paddling the wild and beautiful Kenamu River in Nitassinan (Labrador) in June 1998.

MINDEN OPEN CANOE RACES

Two important open canoe races will be held this summer at the Minden Wild Water Preserve on the Gull River near Minden, Ontario:

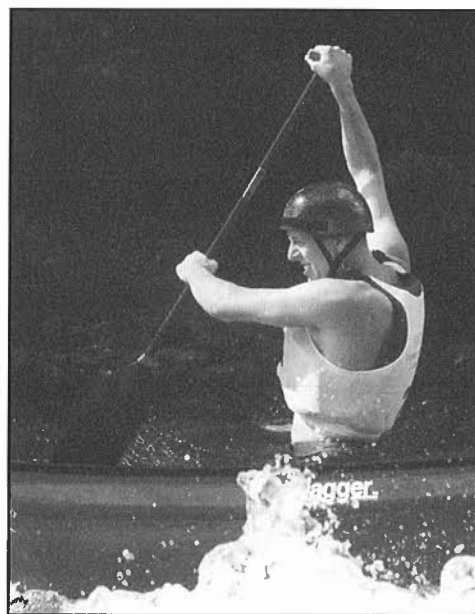
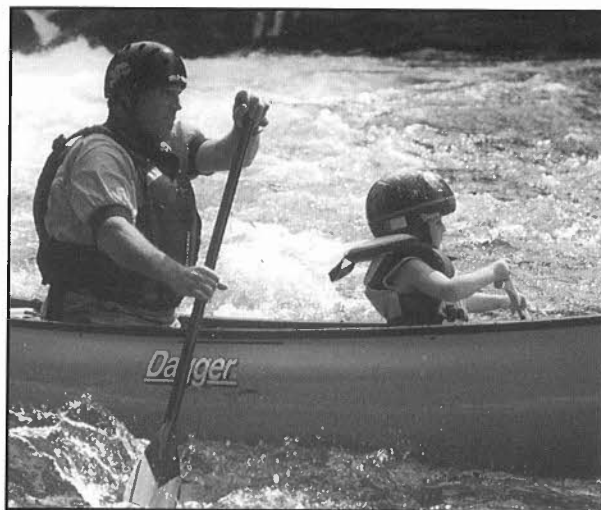
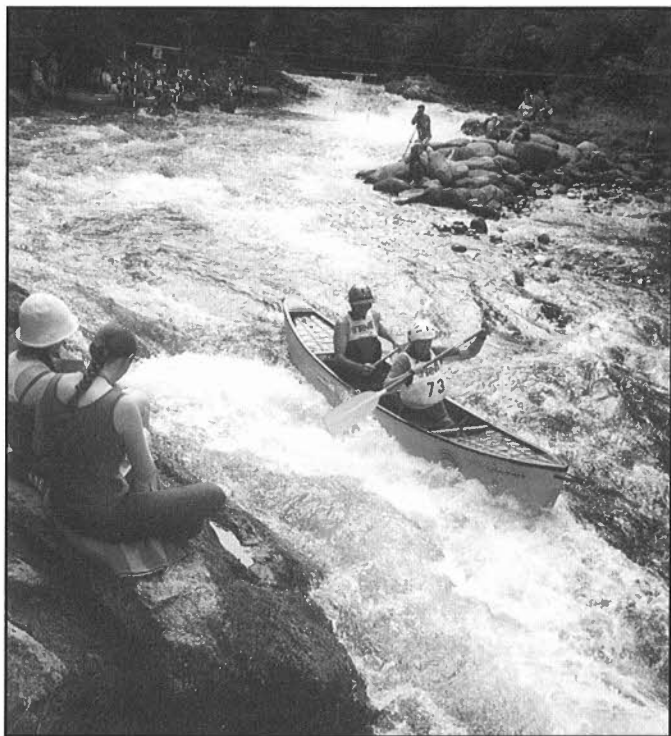
2002 NORTH AMERICAN OPEN CANOE CHAMPIONSHIPS will be held on 19–21 July (practice days on 17 and 18 July).

ONTARIO OPEN CANOE RACE will be held on 7 and 8 September.

For more information, contact the organizer Mike Yee at 905-649-1999 and www.mikeyeefitting.com/mikeyee/default and mikeyee@idirect.com. You can also try www.netrover.com/~kayaker/index.html and www.white-waterontario.ca. Two websites giving useful information on the area and the race course are www.minden-times.on.ca and www.canadaquest.ca/minden.html

Information supplied by Jay Knaapen-Neilson who also made the photographs.





FOOD FOR PADDLERS

This recipe comes from a good friend—Keith Rawson.

Corned Beef Hash

These ingredients will make enough hash for four people. You may adjust as necessary for other numbers.

1 can corned beef (standard triangular-shaped can, with roll-up edge)
 3 medium to large boiled potatoes (left over from the night before)
 1 medium to large cooking onion
 1 dash of salt
 1 teaspoon pepper
 1/4 cup cooking oil
 4 eggs (optional)

Dice the onion and potatoes. Put the oil in a medium-sized fry pan (cast iron is good) and heat to medium. Add the onion. Fry the onion until tender, then add the potatoes. Reduce heat to low-medium. Fry the mixture for about five minutes. Meanwhile, remove corned beef from can and dice it (messy job, but possible). When the five minutes have elapsed, add the corned beef (mashing it in to mix it up with onion and potatoes). Add salt and pepper. Cook for additional five minutes. Serve.

Optional: during last five minutes of frying, poach the four eggs (fry pan with water, and a little vinegar, if available). Serve eggs on top of hash.

If you would like to share your favorite tripping recipes, please contact Barb Young, 12 Erindale Crescent, Brampton, Ont L6W 1B5; youngjdavid@rogers.com.

FORTHCOMING BOOKS

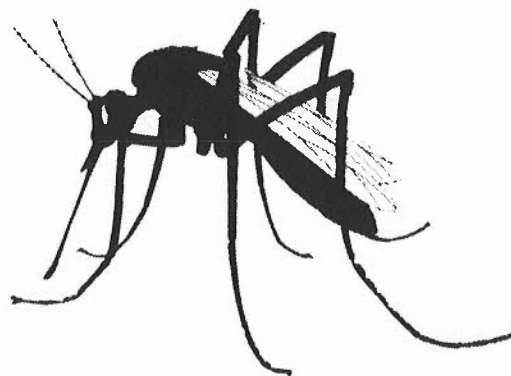
We've received press releases on two books of interest to paddlers that will be published in the near future. The following notes are copied from these releases and are therefore not independent book reviews.

LANDSCAPES OF THE HEART: Narratives of Nature and Self, edited by Michael Aleksuk and Thomas Nelson, to be published in March 2002 by NeWest Press, Edmonton, AB (www.newestpress.com).

This collection of personal essays looks at how our interaction with the environment—be it a river, a block of ice, a bolt of lightning, or a piece of land—shapes who we are and how we connect with our world. The contributors include writers, environmental activists, and academics in the field of eco-psychology, psychology, law, environmental studies, geography, botany, and English.

CANOEING A CONTINENT: In the Wake of Alexander Mackenzie, by Max Finkelstein, to be published in April 2002 by Natural Heritage Books, Toronto (natherbooks@idirect.com).

More than just a travelogue of a canoe trip across Canada, this is an account that crosses more than two centuries. It is an exploration into the heart and mind of Mackenzie, the explorer, and Max, the “voyageur-in-training.” Using his own journals and the writings of Mackenzie, Max creates a view of the land from two vantage points. The author retraced the route of Alexander Mackenzie across North America from Ottawa through to Cumberland House in Saskatchewan.



A CANOE-SAILING QUEST

David Lyon

I had no business being out there. I thought I knew the Channel. And besides it was only about four kilometres across. But the water was heaving up into 1.5-metre swells topped with that white froth that canoes don't float in.

But I felt that I had to try. This trip had been a compulsion since the message first came into my head a year earlier. It was my first day out. My wife had left the landing dock to drive back and I couldn't just look over to the Turnbull Islands from my launch spot at Algoma Mills on the north shore of Lake Huron's North Channel. I had pushed off well loaded with gear for a potentially 21 days journey down the North Channel and Georgian Bay to Honey Harbour. I was alone, solo, me and my 16' cedar Chestnut and a new homemade sailing rig. I didn't know anyone crazy enough to join me!

I dropped the leeboard in not far from shore to test its stabilizing effect and was impressed. It was like having a bow paddler, steering. I hoisted up the sail quickly, not wanting my hands off the paddle for long. The gusting air caught and filled the eight-foot triangular sail, stretched the light rip-stop nylon fabric to a grand curve, and the canoe ploughed forward, very, very quickly.

The route I needed basically placed me broadside to the lively, liquid dunes of water, which I knew was not a pretty picture, so I pointed up a bit, into them. That leeboard was invaluable. This, I figured, would allow me to "crab" or track a vector down to my intended hunk of distant island.

A loud slap at the bow and a splash refocused me instantly as a large volume of foam jumped over the bow gunwale and into the boat. Much more of that and I would be in trouble. I was over-powered. Too much sail! Had to

drop it fast and thankfully the lines were clear. I had rigged the sail similar to a jib or a genoa, so there were lines lying all around, a sailor's nemesis.

The sail down and stowed quickly, I resumed under paddle power, or rather under power-paddle power! Controlling the boat now was a mind game involving speeding past whitecaps, slowing and letting some chum past, hip-rolling the canoe on its lee side so errant crests hit the lower windward side rather than over the side, and changing course to use the big waves and wind as propulsion when possible.

Another wave did get in and the slosh of water between the leeboard and the tumblehome was continually wetting the ribs and planking. I was soon kneeling in two to three inches of rocking ballast. I couldn't stop to bail. I needed the power to maintain the course. I gambled and did win...sort of. I was humbled.

As I finally snuck behind the first island and rested, I felt the message loud and clear. "Dave, you bit off too much today. You were granted a safe passage. Good effort. But that water condition is more than you can handle safely right now. It is your limit. Don't do it again!"

I thanked the spirits greatly for the passage. I was truly scared and respectful. And I heeded the message for the rest of the trip. As I cruised around looking for a campsite, a male bald eagle flew out from behind a point. I knew a sign like that was to be noticed, so I went around that point and found a perfect little beach with one tent site waiting for me. A gift to end the day and begin an adventure. A gift that was to be re-experienced daily for the entire trip.



TRIP'S LOG

day 1 start trip at Algoma Mills on north shore of Lake Huron's North Channel; to Turnbull Is.; paddle mostly; very rough and windy; 7 km

day 2 down Whalesback Channel to John Is. (Moiles Harbour); mostly sail; 20 km

day 3 along north side of Aird Is. and Eagle Is. to Croker Is.; great sail; 30 km

day 4 calm paddle to cottage near McTavish Is.; 8 km

day 5 soft breeze along south side of island chain down North Channel; tour of fish farm; at Bay of Islands, wind picked up a lot; fast sail to La Cloche Channel; camp at south end of Little La Cloche Is.; two more fish farms; 42 km

day 6 down Lansdown Channel to Killarney for famous fish and chips and a beer; good wind all day; sailed down the open to the middle of Philip Edward Is.; an awesome day, long again but productive; the topography change at Killarney is stunning; 40 km

day 7 sail all day to the Bustards; the Chickens could have been dangerous but were really a watery labyrinth and Point Grondine was peaceful; saw an interesting self-sufficient home at Fingerboards; water bomber at forest fire in Park; 35 km

day 8 windy; wild paddle across Northeast Passage to islands, weather closed in; Outer Fox Is. to Dead Is. is

scary; thunder and lightning in big water and the 9' mast could be a lightning rod; topped on Dead Is. and camped with German kayaker; only 12 km

day 9 paddled all day with kayaker to Byng Inlet; beautiful area; 24 km

day 10 to Pointe au Baril; great morning sail but too rough afternoon; in at Charles Inlet for island protection and sailed Hangdog Channel; across mouth of Nares Inlet was wildest ride of trip; bronco ride through shoal bed; 35 km

day 11 all day rest over at friend's cottage; huge storm came through but I was warm and dry and well fed

day 12 paddle through archipelago to Shawanaga Channel and sail all the way to south end of Franklin Is.; 27 km

day 13 morning paddle and sail the rest to north end of Moon Is.; hard to navigate among islands; stopped at Sans Souci for more famous fish and chips; too many boats!; erratic waves make a wild ride; 35 km

day 14 rest-over at friend's cottage and another huge storm attacked; safe again

day 15 longest day to Honey Harbour; paddle to Twelve Mile Bay, sail the rest; more and more cottages, scarce camping; 45 to 50 km

day 16 paddled around until afternoon pick-up and home for a hot shower

CANOEING BIRDERS NEEDED

The Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas is a volunteer-based project to determine the current distribution and relative abundance of the bird species breeding in Ontario. The project will be completed between 2001 and 2005. To cover the whole province, we need crews of people interested in canoeing remote rivers in northern Ontario and collecting bird data along the way. While we are particularly interested in dedicated atlassing trips, we also want to alert canoeists who will be travelling anywhere in Ontario that the atlas is underway, and that we are interested in records of the birds they observe during the breeding season (primarily June and July).

The Atlas is a collaborative undertaking of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Bird Studies Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service, Ontario Field Ornithologists, and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. Data collection will take place over five years (2001–2005) with the Atlas being published in 2008 in book form. This second atlas is an enhanced, updated version of the first atlas project, which ran from 1981 through 1985, producing the Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Ontario in 1987. The extensive database created by the Atlas has numerous applications in resource management, environmental assessment, research, and conservation. For more on the Atlas, see our website www.birdsontario.org.

The website includes (under atlas/get involved/going north) a list of suggested trips we will be trying to make happen over the next four summers. On each of these trips, we would like to have four participants, at least two of whom are expert birders and at least two of whom are expert canoeists. Everyone involved should be experienced in remote area work, and interested enough in birds that they would enjoy accompanying the experts on daily bird surveys. Although these are suggested trips, which would ensure that our coverage goals are met, we are happy to have people suggest other atlassing trips, and will work with them to help make the trip happen.

We are seeking funding to help support the costs of atlas trips, and expect to have heard about these subsidies by April 2002. So, if you are interested in a trip, or in participating in any way in the atlas, check out our website or give us a call toll-free at 1-866-900-7100. If you're interested in a dedicated atlassing trip, read our Northern Manual and fill in the application form on the website.

Mike Cadman
Atlas Coordinator

WCA TRIPS

**WANT TO ORGANIZE A TRIP AND HAVE IT
PRESENTED IN THE SUMMER ISSUE?**
Contact the Outings Committee before 13 May!

Another paddling season is upon us. Time to dust off the paddle and evict the squirrels from their winter nest under the boat. Our outings organizers have provided us with an outstanding selection of trips and educational workshops for paddlers of all interests and levels of experience. If you are a new member, please do join in our activities. We can guarantee you will learn about new places to paddle and develop new skills. You will also meet a lot of interesting people who are fun to go out with. For those of you who aren't new to the WCA, make this the year that you try a new type of paddling experience with us. If you've always paddled lakes, try expanding your skills with one of our moving-water clinics. If you've always been a whitewater fanatic, learn the joys of poking around in marshes or an evening paddle across a moonlit lake.

Please remember, however, that canoeing and kayaking, whether on lakes or rivers, carries an element of risk. Our organizers expect that you will come with appropriate equipment, and that you have the necessary skills, experience, and physical and mental fitness to undertake the activities they are offering. They will be happy to explain any such prerequisites when you call to book.

WCA trips and other activities may have an element of danger of serious personal injury. You are ultimately responsible for your own safety and well-being when participating in club events.

We want to take this opportunity to thank all our organizers for their generous support in making these outings possible. We are grateful for your dedication and enthusiasm.

We hope to see all of you out there on the lakes and rivers with us. Have a great paddling season.

WCA Outings Committee

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, adixie0405@rogers.com; Gisela Curwen, 416-484-1471, gisela.curwen@utoronto.ca

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All Season

HAVE PADDLE WILL TRAVEL

Barry Godden, 416-440-4208; Steve Bernet, 519-837-8774; Harrison Jolly, 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 one of us a call to find out where we are going.

All Season

FROST CENTRE CANOE ROUTES

Ray Laughlen, 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.

24 March

LOWER CREDIT RIVER

Barry Godden, 416-440-4208, book before 17 March. --- From Streetsville to the golf course, the Credit can provide some exciting challenges for intermediate paddlers. The fast-moving, icy water requires properly equipped boats, and wetsuits or drysuits. Limit six boats.

29 March

MOIRA RIVER

John and Sharon Hackert, 416-438-7672, book before 22 March. --- A great early spring whitewater run for anyone who has a good wetsuit/drysuit and isn't adverse to a swim in cold water. We will only be an hour from our cars at most if the weather turns cold or you need and après-swim warm up. The technical difficulty is about a class 2. As long as you have protective clothing for swimming in cold water, the river isn't a problem. This is a good river to paddle to get experience for more difficult rivers. Tandem canoes must have full flotation bags. Limit six boats.

31 March

LOWER CREDIT RIVER

Bill Ness, 416-321-3005, book before 24 March. — A repeat performance for those who missed Barry's trip, or enjoyed it so much they want to do it again. Only difference is that I normally paddle down to the mouth. Limit six boats.

6 April

FOOD SEMINAR

Doug Ashton, 519-654-0336, doug.ashton@sympatico.ca, book before 20 March. — Interested in some new food ideas? This seminar is designed to offer an opportunity to exchange ideas on food preparation, dehydration, organization, cuisine, and baking. The organizer will offer a structured opportunity to discuss and share recipes, ideas, and experiences. Some people eat so they can canoe while others canoe so they can eat. Either way, join us for some fun, laughs, and great information. Participants are encouraged to bring with them recipes and food-related information.

6 April

BEAVER CREEK

John and Sharon Hackert, 416-438-7672, book before 31 March. — This will be a challenging whitewater run suitable for advanced-level whitewater paddlers with fully outfitted canoes and proper cold-weather attire. Limit five boats.

6-7 April

RANKIN RIVER

Roger and Sandy Harris, 416-489-8980, book before 30 March. — This will be an easy, relaxing spring overnight trip taking us across marshy lakes and quiet waterways with the occasional swift. There could possibly be some leftovers. Great location for bird watchers. We'll be on the lookout for wood ducks. Suitable for novices. Limit three canoes.

7 April

MOIRA RIVER

Bill Ness, 416-321-3005 before 9:00 p.m., book before 31 March. — The weather is warming up, the bugs aren't yet out, and the water is still high. Who could ask for more. This is the perfect opportunity for newer whitewater paddlers who want some intermediate experience to get on this classic spring run from Lost Channel to Latta. There are some good surfing spots and loads of eddies to practise catching. Limit six boats.

13 April

BEAVER CREEK ENCORE

John and Sharon Hackert, 416-438-7672, book before 6 April. — You had so much fun with us last week that you want to come back again; and besides, you have to pick up the Thermos that you left at the lunch spot.

13-14 April

BEAVER AND UPPER BLACK RIVERS

Steve Bernet, 519-837-8774, book before 6 April. — Saturday's run follows Beaver Creek down to Fiddler's Rapids. Sunday we run the challenging Upper Black River. Both of these require advanced paddling skills. Wetsuits or drysuits as well as full flotation for canoes are needed. Limit five boats.

20 April

UPPER MADAWASKA RIVER

John and Sharon Hackert, 416-438-7672, book before 13 April. — A day of whitewater excitement for advanced paddlers. The upper Madawaska is a fast-flowing pool-and-drop river with quiet stretches interspersed with some very serious rapids. All rapids can, and some must, be portaged. Wet- or drysuits, helmets, and fully outfitted whitewater boats with full flotation are a must. Six boats.

20-21 April

SALMON AND MOIRA RIVERS

Glenn Spence, 613-475-4176, book before 13 April. — Just north of Belleville, these two rivers offer exciting whitewater and fine scenery. The Salmon is the more gentle one but has some ledges to practise your skills. The Moira has larger rapids, possibly up to class 3. These are some of Southern Ontario's finest spring rivers. Intermediate paddlers welcome. Limit six canoes.

27 April

UPPER MADAWASKA AGAIN

John and Sharon Hackert, 416-438-7672, book before 20 April. — Just can't get enough of the Upper Mad. Join us for a repeat of last week's exciting adventure.

27-28 April

SPRING IN THE KAWARTHAS

Gisela Curwen, 416-484-1471, gisela.curwen@utoronto.ca — We will paddle a route still to be decided and experience the returning birds and discover other flora and fauna emerging from hibernation. On past trips, we have encountered anything from cranberries to turtles. We will hike some of the exposed ridges surrounding the lakes, and, as on our previous outings, clean up portages along the way. There will be prizes for the best junk collected! Limit four canoes.

27-28 April

MISSISSAGUA RIVER AND EELS CREEK

Bill Ness, 416-321-3005 before 9:00 p.m., book before 20 April. — For the past few years, dry springs have prevented me from paddling these rivers, but let's cross our fingers and pray for rain. On Saturday we will paddle the Mississagua, north of the village of Buckhorn. This is a classic pool-and-drop run. The river is a series of rapids in the class 1-3 range separated by flat sections and scenic falls (class 4-5). All major rapids can be easily portaged, making the trip suitable for intermediates, or even experienced novices who don't mind doing some extra carrying. The next day we will run Eels Creek near Apsley, which is similar to the Mississagua but narrower. It's a very pretty little creek with some real fun drops, but you must be a solid intermediate with good boat control in class 2 water to be able to navigate it. The scenery justifies toting a camera. Limit five boats.

4-5 May POKER AND CINDER LAKE LOOP

Ray Laughlen, 705-754-9479, book before 28 April. — A pleasant, relaxing day outing lead by a local resident through a chain of small lakes, over easy portages. If we have time, we may poke into places Kevin C. has never seen. Suitable for novices. Limit of four boats.

4-5 May MAGNETAWAN RIVER

Harrison Jolly, 905-689-1733, book before 28 April. — The Magnetewan is an exciting whitewater river containing class 2-3 rapids, as well as some falls that must be portaged. We will paddle from Ahmic Lake to Maple Island both days, running one of the two outlets from Ahmic Lake for variety. This is a great trip for strong intermediate paddlers. Wetsuits or drysuits, helmets, and properly outfitted boats are a must. Limit six boats.

10-12 May STOPLOG LAKE LOOP

Roger and Sandy Harris, 416-489-8980, book before 3 May. — Three days in the rugged backcountry south of Long Lake in the Apsley area. We will hopefully beat the bugs and the other canoeists to get away from it all for a while. There is a long bushwhacking portage into Stoplog Lake, but getting there is half the fun. Suitable for novices who don't mind exercising their legs as well as their arms. Limit four canoes.

11-12 May MADAWASKA AND OPEONGO RIVERS

Frank and Jay Knaapen, 613-687-6037, book before 28 April. — Two days of whitewater for intermediate to advanced paddlers, able to run class 2 rapids without scouting. The Opeongo contains long stretches of continuous class 2 plus several significant scoutable rapids. In high water, this river can make for a strenuous trip. The upper Madawaska River is a fast-flowing pool-and-drop river with quiet stretches interspersed with some serious rapids, which can all be portaged. Wetsuits or drysuits, helmets, and fully outfitted whitewater canoes with full floatation are a must. Limit six boats.

18-20 May PETAWAWA RIVER

Frank and Jay Knaapen, 613-687-6037, book before 5 May. — This river is an excellent choice for strong and enthusiastic intermediate whitewater paddlers. There are some major rapids, which are all portageable, and some long class 1-2 sections. Wetsuits or drysuits, helmets, and fully outfitted whitewater canoes with full floatation are required. Limit five canoes.

18-20 May LOWER MADAWASKA RIVER

Larry Durst, 905-415-1152, Larry.G.Durst@snapon.com, book by 11 May. — We will paddle from above Aumonds Bay to the take out at Griffith, a distance of 28 km, with only the Sunday being a full day of paddling and most of that spent on the Snake Rapids section of the river. Rapids will range from grade 1 to 4 and there are a couple of short portages around falls. All rapids can however be easily portaged. Water levels are likely to be quite high and the water cold. Participants will need to dress and pack appropriately. Suitable for intermediate level paddlers. Limit six boats.

18-20 May SAUGEEEN RIVER

Anne Bradley, 519-855-4835; Barb Maughan, 519-893-0380, book before 15 May. — We will paddle through farming country from Hanover to Southampton. Swifts and easy class 1 rapids allow novice paddlers to work on moving water technique. Limit four canoes.

19 May NONQUON RIVER

Rob Butler, 416-487-2282, book before 11 May. — Trip starts at 10:00 a.m. Take Hwy 401 east to Whitby and exit onto Hwy 12 north. Turn right at Scugog Line #8, which is the third road past the Manchester stoplight. Drive about 1 km to the river bridge. Join us on a moderate paddle of 14 km through pleasant southern Ontario countryside. The Nonquon is a flatwater river with numerous bends that will test your turning skills. A mere 20-minute car shuttle is involved. Suitable for novices.

25 May EXPLORE THE WYE

Hal Graham, 905-584-2109, hal@interwild.com. — Join Stan Van Zuylen and Hal Graham to explore the backwaters and recesses of the Wye Marsh near Midland. We love to poke along and look at the beauty of one of nature's most interesting tapestries. Solo or tandem canoes are fine. The area is highly recommended for photographers, so bring your camera.

25-26 May INTERMEDIATE WHITEWATER CLINIC

John and Sharon Hackert, 416-438-7672, book before 11 May. — Saturday will be spent on the Lower Madawaska, and Sunday the clinic will move to Palmer Rapids. Participants can camp overnight on Saturday at our cottage. This clinic will focus on refining the skills of intermediate moving-water paddlers, teaching them more advanced open-boat skills. Limit six boats.

25 May ELORA GORGE

Bill Ness, 416-321-3005 before 9:00 p.m., book by 10 May. — One of the few outings at this time of year for which you don't have to come prepared for winged biting insects, and the only wildlife you'll see is walking on two feet. Just a relaxing fun day on the water in the very scenic Elora Gorge, followed by a beer or ice cream in Elora. At this time of year the water is pretty tame and has warmed enough to make an unplanned swim little hardship. All long-time Gorge fans are welcome, but this is a special opportunity for novices who want to get some moving-water experience in a low-stress environment. Informal coaching can be provided. This section of the Grand River at this level contains a series of class 1 rapids and riffles, as well as a class 2 chute in the middle for the adventurous. The chute is easily portaged. Suitable for novices. Limit five boats.

- 1-2 June LOWER MADAWASKA RIVER**
Paul and Leslie Wilcox, 416-424-1087, book by 26 May. — This is an excellent trip for intermediate whitewater paddlers. We will camp at Palmer Rapids and paddle the Snake Rapids section of the river each day. Flotation, wetsuits, and helmets are required. Limit six boats.
- 8-9 June POKER LAKE / BIG EAST LAKE**
Anne Bradley, 519-855-4835; Elsie Carr-Locke, 416-463-9019, book before 30 May. — Flatwater loop trip in springtime Muskoka. Come prepared for winged biting insects. Limit four canoes.
- 22-23 June PALMER RAPIDS BEGINNER TANDEM WHITEWATER CLINIC**
Al and Debbie Sutton, 905-985-0261, suttond@sympatico.ca, book by 1 June. — Build your skills and confidence for moving water. ABS canoes required. Helmets highly recommended. Limit six boats.
- 29 June – 1 July ALGONQUIN PANHANDLE**
Anne Bradley, 519-855-4835; Elsie Carr-Locke, 416-463-9019, book before 21 June. — Perhaps we can avoid summertime crowds by checking out this area of the park. Be prepared for some longer portages. Limit four canoes.
- 13-14 July OXTONGUE RIVER**
Anne Bradley, 519-855-4835; Elsie Carr-Locke, 416-463-9019, book before 5 July. — Moving-water trip parallels Hwy 60 in Algonquin Park. Suitable for novices. Limit four canoes.
- 13-14 July INTRODUCTION TO C-1 FREESTYLE**
Steve Bernet, 519-837-8774, book before 1 July. — For all you budding rodeo stars. If you have a low-volume C-1, or can beg, borrow, or rent one, and want to learn how to do those flashy rodeo moves, this is your opportunity. This weekend at the Minden Wild Water Preserve will teach you the basic freestyle moves. Suitable for intermediate or better C-1 paddlers. Limit five participants.
- 10-11 August HERB AND GUN LAKES**
Anne Bradley, 519-855-4835, book before 2 August. — Flatwater loop trip in area of Leslie Frost Provincial Natural Resource Centre near Dorset. With luck we may find blueberries. Limit four canoes.
- 3-5 August OTTAWA RIVER**
John and Sharon Hackert, 416-438-7672, book before 27 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.
- 17-18 August CANOE TRIPPING CLINIC**
Barry Godden, 416-440-4208, book before 1 July. — Are you interested in getting your ORCA Canoe Tripping I certification? Join me for a weekend clinic that will improve your skills and enable you to earn your ORCA certification. As well as the weekend, participants will be provided with two weekday classroom sessions. There will be preparatory readings required of attendees to enable them to more fully benefit from the clinic. Limit of six participants.
- 31 Aug. – 2 Sep. OTTAWA RIVER**
John and Sharon Hackert, 416-438-7672, book before 24 August. — Please see description above for details.
- 16-21 September CENTRAL FRENCH RIVER**
Anne Bradley, 519-855-4835; Barb Maughan, 519-893-0380, book before 6 September. — Wolseley Bay to Hartley Bay with possibility of a side trip to Georgian Bay if we make good time. Limit four canoes.
- 5-6 October EELS CREEK**
Anne Bradley, 519-855-4835; Barb Maughan, 519-893-0380, book before 27 September. — Leisurely trip from Haultain to Stony Lake with a hike to Petroglyphs Provincial Park. Limit four canoes.

FOR SHORT-NOTICE TRIPS, CHECK THE WCA WEBSITE BULLETIN BOARD

Suddenly find yourself with a free weekend and want to go paddling? Need a partner for an upcoming trip? Take advantage of our website bulletin board to post notices for impromptu trips or partners required. Also, bookmark this page to regularly check for new posted outings. This service is a valuable addition to our regularly published quarterly outings list. We encourage members to use it. However, please note that only members may post notices. As these activities are not pre-screened by the Outings Committee, they are considered privately organized affairs and we can take no responsibility for them.

<http://wildernesscanoe.ca>

WANTED: SENIORS WHO LOVE CANOEING!

Are you 55 years of age or older, an outdoors enthusiast, who, in addition to canoeing, also probably loves camping, hiking, cycling, or cross-country skiing? You may canoe infrequently, or perhaps you are an experienced canoeist who has led multi-day trips into the wilderness.

We are the Seniors for Nature Canoe Club (SFNCC) and we are actively looking for new members. Club activities include scheduled outings throughout the year. Daily outings are held each Tuesday and Thursday and include canoeing, hiking, cycling, and cross-country skiing. In addition, multi-day canoe trips of varying lengths are

scheduled to provincial parks and wilderness areas. The Club can supply some canoeing and camping equipment. Training is available as is the opportunity to find a canoeing partner.

It's widely accepted that exercise can add quality and perhaps even years to your life. If you are interested in more information or a membership application, send an e-mail to sfncc@rogers.com, or send a letter to SFNCC, Box 94051, Bedford Park P.O., Toronto, M4N 3R1. Our website is www.sfncc.org

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 nonmembers for their announcements regarding items for sale, special products, discounts, services, courses, etc. Contact the editor if more information is required.

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

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

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

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. See Becky's video contact info (item above).

BOAT WANTED I'm looking for a used whitewater solo boat, preferably outfitted, Dagger would be fine. Contact: esinclair@golden.net or phone 519-624-2328 or cell 519-577-6820.

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

HERON DANCE A quarterly wilderness journal. Watercolor art, interviews, excerpts from the best of nature writing, essays. Introductory annual subscription CDN\$30, renewals \$40. Send to: Heron Dance, 52 Seymour St., Middlebury, VT, 05753, USA, or call 1-888-304-3766.

WOMEN'S TRIPS Thelon River, 13-28 July 2002, women of all ages. Baffin Island, summer 2003, cultural trip, boat travel and hiking. Pukaskwa Park canoeing, 2003. Contact: Judith Niemi, Women in the Wilderness, tel. 651-227-284, judithniemi@hotmail.com

WHITE NIGHT WRITERS' WORKSHOP in Hofos, Iceland, June 2002, 2003. With poets, essayists, ornithologists: David Arnason, Robert Bly, Bill Holm, Judith Niemi, John Weier. Contact: Judith Niemi, see item above.

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