



nastawgan

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Dave and Barb running the C-4 rapid "Bill"

KATTAWAGAMI RIVER

Bruce Bellaire

The idea for this trip began in the Monarch Collegiate cafeteria as we were discussing river trips with Pat and Bryan Buttigieg during the 2002 Wilderness and Canoeing Symposium. We (D & B: Dave and Barb Young; B & B: Bruce and Beth Bellaire) have been canoeing together for about ten years and enjoy river trips with lots of whitewater. When Bryan and Pat suggested the Kattawagami River in northern Ontario it sounded perfect.

Preparations for the trip included receiving map and trip descriptions from the Buttigiegs, arranging for a shut-

tle from Cochrane to the start of the river trip, and arranging for freighter canoes from the end of the river to Moose Factory. The map we used was photocopied from the Buttigiegs' map who originally got it from Wanapitei. We also had two trip descriptions from Wanapitei and the Hamilton/Buttigieg report from the Autumn 1994 edition of *Nastawgan*.

The Kattawagami River—also known as the Lawagamau on some Ontario road maps—is 169 km long. The put-in is 150 km northeast of Cochrane; from

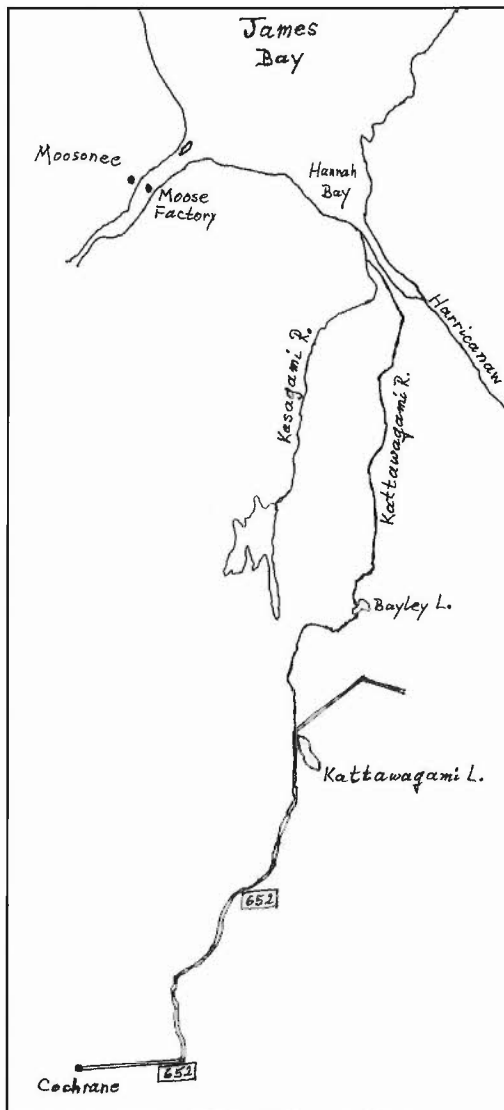
there the river flows north into the Kesagami River and then into Hannah Bay at the bottom of James Bay. You may choose to paddle the last part of the trip along the bottom of James Bay to Moose Factory rather than arrange for pickup by freighter canoe, as we did. In 2002 there was no air service available.

The four of us drove together to Cochrane on August 8.

Day 1, on the river

Shortly after 8 a.m. on August 9, Rick Chartier of Coureur du Bois Adventurers transported us with our canoes and gear to the Kattawagami River along a well-paved road to a point where the road crosses the river. It began to drizzle as we started out on the water and it rained off and on for most of the day. The river was very low and we had to walk the canoes through some of the swifts and C-1s.

The land surrounding the river is flat, covered in bushes and stunted trees. We were not optimistic about finding a good campsite. However, just after 4:30 Beth spotted a knoll on river right so we stopped to investigate,



following a path we found on the shore. The knoll looked okay and we were certainly ready to get off the river and out of the rain, which let up as we were eating. The sun finally came out a bit before 7 and brightened up the campsite, which was not very attractive being situated in a burned-over area.

Everyone retired to the tents early to escape the bugs. After a bit of reading, it was easy to get to sleep. Later in the night we could see the Northern Lights, which were not pulsating but shone with a steady, bright glow.

Day 2, on the river

We were up around 7 and on the water by 9:45. As we headed downriver we had some wind at our backs. We were able to track our location on the map by several river meanders, but then lost count of the number of swifts that we sped through and so were not exactly sure where we were. With the aid of the tail wind and the current we were making better time than expected, even though we were frequently bumping and grinding over rocks and occasionally walking through the swifts and also a C-1, which rapid showed us we were nearing Bayley Lake. Arriving at the lake shortly before 5, we could not find the south beach to our right and so decided to sail across to the "north" beach, reaching it shortly after 5.

It had been quite windy, which had kept the bugs at bay, but just before dinner, around 7:30, the wind died completely. After dinner, it became very hot and humid. "Swimming" was really wading and floating; the lake just did not get deep enough. The bugs did appear after the wind died but were not as bad as on the first night.

Day 3, on the river

We awoke to a sunny morning with few bugs. Dave pointed out that the "north" beach was not a good description for this patch of sand. Not because it was not a beach but because the sun was rising behind us. Everyone was feeling quite good about the trip, despite the low water levels in the river.

After our usual starting time of 9:45, we thought we'd found the entrance to the river but it seemed too wide and we could not locate any of the features on the map. After paddling and sailing north for some time and not finding an outlet from the "wide part" of the river, we turned around and did some much harder paddling into the wind. Now it was clear that we were somewhat lost and definitely not oriented with the map. Bruce stopped and took a GPS reading but, since our borrowed photocopied map did not have co-ordinates, the reading didn't help much.

Finally, while stopped for lunch at 1:30, Dave came up with the right hypothesis. We had been camped on an unnamed lake south of Bayley. We had turned into Bayley when we exited that lake and now were in the upper part of Bayley, well away from the river outlet. We had a very hard paddle against the wind to reach the main section of Bayley and followed its shore to the river outlet. To prevent getting lost on this section we



Second campsite on beach of unnamed lake near Bayley Lake

should have followed the river to the left of the island as we approached Bayley Lake.

Once on the river proper, everyone recovered their composure. We saw lots of osprey on our way north and finally reached some swifts and Pineapple Rapids, classed as an unrunnable C-3 due to the low water levels.

We were all tired and had difficulty deciding what to do. Just as a revolt was brewing, we discovered a couple of small but quite serviceable tent pads in the woods on river left below the rapid. From here the portage was more readily visible, a short but somewhat tricky carry across the rocks to the beginning of the trail, then easier going on the path to the tent area, and past it to the put-in. We had a quick dinner and then retired to the tents due to bugs and fatigue.

Day 4, on the river

A light, misty rain started falling soon after we left the tents. The rocks quickly became slippery. We packed up the tents before breakfast in order to keep them as dry as possible, and got away at 9:40.

After running some bouldery swifts, we came to a series of C-1s. Shortly after that we reached another C-1 just before an island, which was a good map checkpoint. We ran all sections of Eddy Hop Rapid, a C-3, using the eddies. Since it was 12:45 when we arrived at Eddy Hop, we realized that we were only about three hours behind our original schedule, since we had expected to camp there on the third night.

We ran down through more swifts to a C-1 with large, flat rocks where we stopped for lunch, then continued on through more swifts and C-1s.

Triple Tongue Rapid was quite interesting. It has lots of exposed rock with many fissures and what looks like fossils. We did not think this rapid rated only as a C-2! There was indeed a choice of three tongues at the top but they all had significant drops. We ran the middle one after scouting. Triple Tongue was a potential campsite—the Wanapitei map group had stayed there—but we decided to continue on to Little Spruce.

We travelled through many more swifts, most of them bouldery, and left lots of canoe paint along the way. There were also several C-1s and a final C-2 before Little Spruce. The C-2 was fun, except, once again, the bottom was a rock garden.

Little Spruce came up shortly on river left after the C-2 and we had just enough room to camp on the flat rocks. We had spaghetti for dinner with sun-dried tomato sauce fortified with onion, garlic, and re-hydrated mushrooms! Yummy! Beef jerky and wine completed the feast. It was a warm evening with lots of flies before and during dinner, then mossies after.

This day had been a bit of a confidence builder. We would need the confidence for all of the whitewater coming up. The tents beckoned early once again to escape the bugs.

Day 5, on the river

We awoke a bit before 7 to a sky that was mostly clear at first, with just puffy clouds, but became overcast during breakfast. Since we were expecting a shorter day, we had pancakes. After the sky darkened, however, we hurried and took down the tents.



How rocky the river was above Pineapple Rapids

A large family of mergansers started to come through the rapid but they kept getting spooked when they saw us and swam back upstream. We were on the water by 9:30 after putting on the spray covers, which we had used previously at Eddy Hop and Triple Tongue. (The very useful spray covers had been custom-made for our Swift Dumoine canoes by Thomas Benian of Outdoor Solutions.)

We ran Little Spruce, a C-2, bumping over rocks, then stopped and scouted Big Spruce, a C-3, and decided to run it on the left. B & B got through, just bumping. D & B got hung up at the top then had a good run over ledges and around boulders. When we reached the Snout (a C-5) it was raining. We investigated the right side since the trip map described a portage on that side. However, we could not see any route through and therefore went to the left side and ended up sliding the canoes over a big drop and then lining to the next drop and lifting over, followed by a short run at the bottom of the rapid. The slippery rocks made these manoeuvres treacherous.

We bumped through two C-2s, scouting from the river, then bumped through a series of swifts. This brought us to Adrienne Falls at about 1:30. When we stopped for lunch and to take pictures, Beth found a grotto on river right that was a real photo op. The weather had been mixed, once again, but it was sunny while we were at the falls.

We considered sliding the canoes down on river right but decided first to ferry over to an island on the left

where other groups had lined according to their descriptions. We also wanted to check out the portage trail and campsite—the Buttigiogs had camped here—and found the portage trail but no sites. Since we had worked hard to get to that point, we decided to carry, even though the trail was bushy with quite a few trees across the path. The put-in was good if slightly muddy.

We bumped down Adrienne Rapids at the bottom of the falls (mostly a rock garden except for one drop) until we spied flat rocks on river right at a bend. This looked like a good site so we stopped a bit before 3. There was lots of wind and hence no bugs. The water was so shallow you had to lie down flat in order to get wet to wash. However, this site was our best yet.

We relaxed, played some bridge and frisbee before supper. We did have a campfire this night and stayed up until dark. There were stars in a clear sky at bedtime but later some rain moved in . . .

Day 6, on the river

. . . and stayed. We awoke to heavier rain, which continued for most of the morning, so we stayed in our tents and read. Well, B & B read. D & B could not find their books. They turned up later under their air mattress.

We set up the tarp after leaving the tents at 11. By the time Barb had the porridge ready, the rain had stopped. After breakfast, we packed up wet and headed down through the rapids. We bumped through some swifts to Staircase Rapids, then scouted this C-3 from



Grotto at Adrienne Falls

the shore. D & B went first and had to step out several times to get through. B & B went for a similar line but had many step-outs. Cedar Rapids was next and turned out to be the best yet; real water and real waves. We scouted this C-3 from the shore before running and took pictures of each other going through the drops.

It was mostly flatwater after that to get to Maze Falls. Some islands before the falls provided a reference point. At the top of Maze Falls there was no clear place to stop. Here the river splits into many channels. Eventually we stopped on the left side of the central island and portaged to a flat rock campsite beside the falls, or at least one of the falls. They were everywhere! The sun came out and made this great campsite look even better. Plenty of flat rock and a few trees for a clothesline and tarp. There was even a swimming hole at the bottom, deep enough to swim in.

After dinner we enjoyed a beautiful sky as the sun set and turned all the surrounding water pink. We had a second late evening with a campfire. The night was a bit cooler with dew.

Day 7, on the river

We were up shortly after 7. Eggs with bacon, onion, and toast for breakfast then on the water around 9:30.

The rain from the previous day seemed to have helped, as there was more water in the swifts and lots more water in the C-3s, as we would discover later on. The



Relaxing at Raindrop Falls

run-out from Maze Rapids had some significant drops and waves for a C-2.

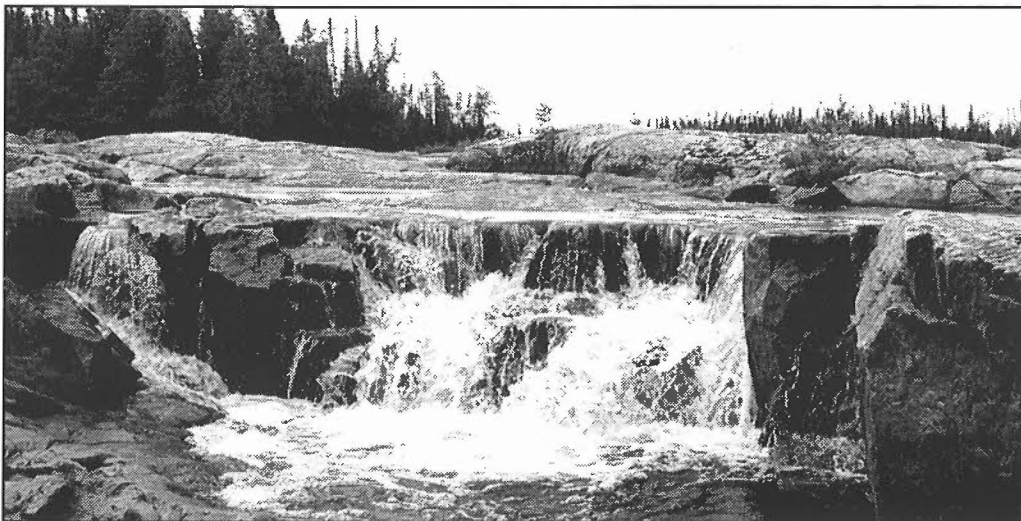
We ran C-3 Runabout Rapids with the spray covers on, and needed them. Then some swifts and a C-2 took us to Terrace Falls, which we passed by lining and sliding the canoes on the left. We took photos both here and at Driftwood Rapids, another C-3 with some large waves.

Then we lined and walked through Quinby Rapids, a C-3 where we could not find a channel. We lifted over the top at Pearson's Pitch on the left (a C-4) and ran the C-2 below, which had some big drops and large waves.

We ate lunch at Quick Fist Rapids, then took pictures of each other going through the big drops of this C-3. Both canoes shot through faster than expected.

By 2:30, we made it to Raindrop Falls and decided to stay, even though it made for a short day. This was another site with acres of flat rock and plenty of trees as well. The weather had varied between cloud and sun all day but with a steady wind. The site was quite breezy.

The breeze continued into the evening, although a few bugs did appear. We had a rice pilaf for dinner. Dave made up some ice tea and Cranberry Breeze. Thinking he was adding whiskey, he mistakenly poured maple syrup into the drinks, making for a rather unusual concoction. No one asked for seconds.



Pretty waterfall at The Slide



Spectacular view from the portage at Jackpine Falls

Day 8, on the river

The morning started with sun but then we saw some dark clouds moving in and decided we'd better not waste time. We quickly finished breakfast and packed up.

We paddled into the rapids below Raindrop Falls. Dave's interpretation of the map was that the left side of the island below the falls had all C-2s while the right side had an eight-foot ledge. This was proven correct as we were able to run everything to the left, including some interesting ledges and waves. This was followed by another C-2 with a three-foot ledge, which we shot without any difficulty. We lifted over the next drop, a C-5 that was unnamed on the map. Then it was on to Swift Finger Rapids, classed as a C-3 to C-4, where we lined down the left over several shelves.

Box Rapids came up next. We ran this C-3 and enjoyed the large waves. We did a lift-over at the C-4 that came up shortly afterwards, followed by a C-1 and C-2 that took us to The Slide, a 20-ft fall where we stopped for lunch and photos. This area would have made a great campsite. After lunch we lined, slid, and carried partly loaded canoes down below the falls.

We ran through some interesting C-2s with lots of current that required some tricky manoeuvring on our way to very scenic Jack Pine Falls. We paddled a small channel on the right into an eddy at the top of the falls. After climbing a hill beside the falls and taking some photos, we lined and slid the canoes down the rocks to the right of the falls. There were several more small rapids before Peace Falls. We "lined" the right channel,

which was almost a tunnel under cedars growing out from the bank, very pretty but making for difficult lining. Dave waded into the water up to his waist in fast current at one point to guide the canoes. It also rained during this exercise. Barb noticed the rain as she was outside the "tunnel" at that point, but the cedar bower was so dense that those of us underneath did not even feel the rain.

Then it was down through a swift below the falls. The river is quite narrow here and at first we thought it might be The Needle. However, after checking for tent pads in the area beside the swift, we thought we would continue downriver to see if we could find anything else that was needle-like.

The real Needle was pretty apparent. The river is very narrow with lots of current rushing through the rocky gap, although with little drop. The rapid was only given a C-1 classification on our map, with a strong current and large waves. No manoeuvring required, of course, except that we had to stop in the middle of the rapid to check for campsites. Finding nothing on the left, we ferried across to river right and located the trail through the trees back to the tent pads. The tarp was put up first as dark clouds were passing overhead. We were off the river about 3, making for a fairly short day.

We found a place downstream to wash and swim but spent most of the afternoon reading. This site was pleasant except for the bugs. There were lots of black-flies in the afternoon and mosquitoes in the evening. The night was the coolest of the trip so far, which made for sound sleeping.

Day 9, on the river

After porridge we packed up and were on the water by 9:15. Island Rapids came up immediately. We went left, as suggested on the map (the Wanapitei map group had gone right and found it difficult). There was not a lot to run on the left; we did a small lift-over followed by two big drag-overs.

At Arrow Chutes, we did the 100-yards portage over rocks on the left of the right channel. The Faucet, which was listed as a five-foot drop on the map, seemed more like ten feet. B & B lined a middle channel while D & B did a slide down a slanted falls. The area was pretty and had lots of places for tents and exploring but we felt it was too early to stop.

Both canoes ran The Ledge, a C-3 with big waves. The Hole was next. There was something about this scary looking C-4 rapid that appealed to Beth, so we decided to run it. It was a bit like dropping into an abyss but we kept our balance and stayed upright. Dave and Barb lined and lifted over the big drop and then we all ran some C-2s, including one called The Wave.

Next came a 15-ft drop named Lover's Leap. We stopped for lunch at the take-out on the left after portaging the canoes and packs for 50 yards along a quite good, short portage trail.

We lined Lost Wanigan Falls on river left, then ferried over to river right where we decided to set up camp. (We later discovered a portage on river right—one would need to pull out of the C-1 rapid above the falls to the far right to find the take-out.) This took us off the river at 2 p.m. The weather had been mixed all day. After we stopped, there was very little breeze and quite a bit of humidity. Just right for, as one would expect, annoying insects!

After setting up the tarp and tents we had swims in the eddy beside the site. We noticed that the water was colder than it had been previously and discovered the reason a short time later—it was being fed by a spring. We were able to fill up our water container, which lasted us for the rest of the trip.

Around 3 p.m. a fine rain started. We retired to the tarp where we played bridge, had a late dinner, finishing at 8.

Day 10, on the river

We awoke to gray skies. After coffee, the clouds starting breaking up but were still moving very quickly. Before too long the clouds closed in again and another misty rain started. We went back under the tarp to make pancakes with wild blueberries.

The day was spent playing bridge, eating, wandering about the

campsite, eating, napping, eating, and so on. The weather kept clearing only to be followed by another misty rain. By late afternoon the temperature dropped and the wind picked up. We were glad we stayed.

Day 11, on the river

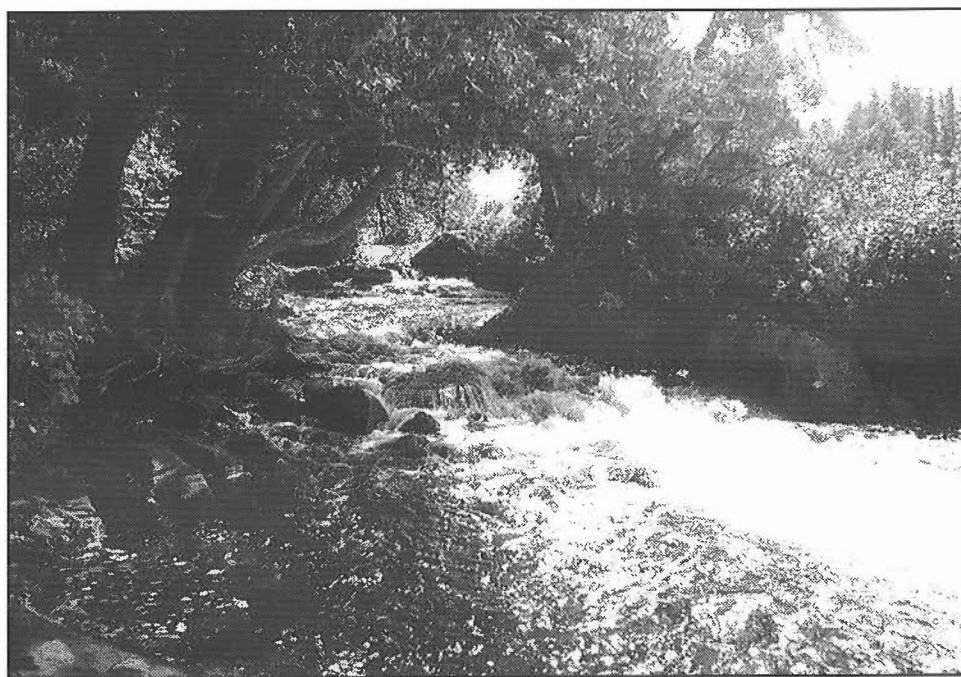
We were up before 7 for an early start to what we expected would be a long day. Dave and Barb had the coffee ready and we had a quick breakfast of granola with fresh blueberries, then packed up and were on the river before 8:30. Wow, we really can get going before 9!

We ran a C-2 and a C-3, which had some good waves, on our way to the Autobahn, a fast ride with big waves.

It was steady C-1s and C-2s down to Frog Song Falls, a pretty spot that looked good for camping. We lined down the right side of the island, then shot the bottom as indicated on the map.

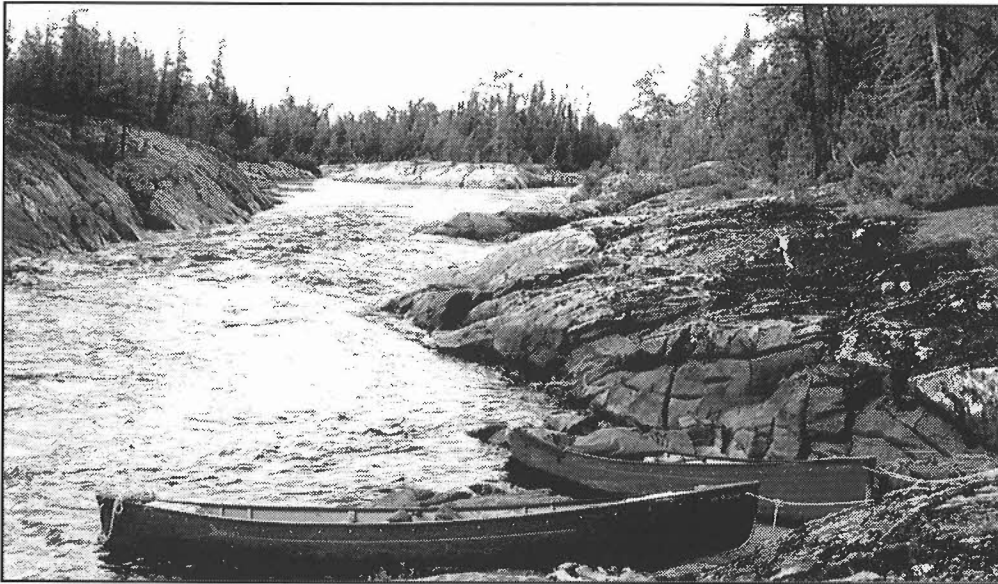
The Devil (described as "weird, dangerous" on the map) was more technical than the other C-3s we had run. The channel moved back and forth across the river, so some negotiation was required. It seemed more fun than dangerous to us.

D & B decided to run "Bill", the first of two C-4s. They made it look easy, so B & B ran it as well. "Jane" did not look quite so friendly, so we lined and lifted around her. The Rollercoaster, another C-3, was well named as it elicited whooping yells of excitement over the big waves. We ran a C-1, then arrived at the first of the Three Companions, a set of three 15-ft falls. D & B lined the first companion while B & B portaged to get the water out of the canoe. Both groups lined the second companion. We stopped at the bottom of this falls for lunch and to take some photos.



Tunnel formed by cedars over a small channel at Peace Falls

Photo: Barb Young



Very narrow part of the river at The Needle

We lined the third companion, then ran the four-foot ledge that followed, which we named The Fountain for a spot in the main flow where the water hit a rock and shot up into the air like a water fountain. There was consistent fastwater with occasional drops and waves on our way to Windigo Falls.

We portaged around Windigo Falls, carrying mostly over rocks. Interestingly, there was a chocolate-colored boulder beside the trail that looked exactly like it had been painted. The portage was fine on a sunny day but likely would be treacherous in the rain as some parts have a steep pitch over smooth rock. We ran the rapids at the bottom of the falls, then began looking for The Finale, a C-1, C-5, C-3 combination.

The C-1 was not difficult but we were anxious, looking for the start of the C-5. We finally stopped on the left and lined down to the final drop, where we took out a couple of packs and then lifted the partly loaded canoes over. The put-in was quite precarious, requiring a step down into the canoe in a narrow back-eddy at the edge of fast current, then a launch directly into a large-volume C-3. B & B had an extra challenge since they did not have anyone to hold their canoe while they stepped in. Just to add to the challenge, Beth picked this moment to add to her souvenir stone collection. However, both canoes came through unscathed.

This piece below Windigo Falls could have been dangerous as it came towards the end of a long, tiring day. It would have been better to have done a smaller section of river on this last day of rapids.

Although The Finale is the last major obstacle, it is not the last rapid. There still is a set of C-2s that contain several ledges. The best channels were not always apparent when scouting from the water and we bumped over rocks through this section and took on some water.

The last rapid is a C-2 with a three-foot drop. The best channel, on river left, became apparent as we approached, so we slid down the drop easily. Then we

had some pleasant flatwater paddling with a little current and a gentle breeze to push us along.

We came to an island, which showed some signs of having been used for camping, but the tent pads did not look very promising, so we continued on. The next island was judged similarly. We found a small gravel beach on the right that would have been adequate but decided to press on to Last Island, hoping it would be better. We were in shallow swifts by then, making it hard to move back and forth across the river. D & B were able to approach the top of the next island, which was fairly large, but could see no trails or traces of camping. They went right while B & B went to the left. Neither party found any place to land.

By now it was 7 p.m. and everyone was ready to call it a day. We realized that we had no idea which island might have been the "Last Island" referred to in the various trip descriptions. We finally found a limestone beach on river right with just enough room for two tents. Since it was 7:30, we decided it was good enough. We hurriedly set up the tents and made dinner while trying to dodge mosquitoes and no-see-ums. By dusk we had had enough of the bugs and retired to the tents.

Day 12, on the river

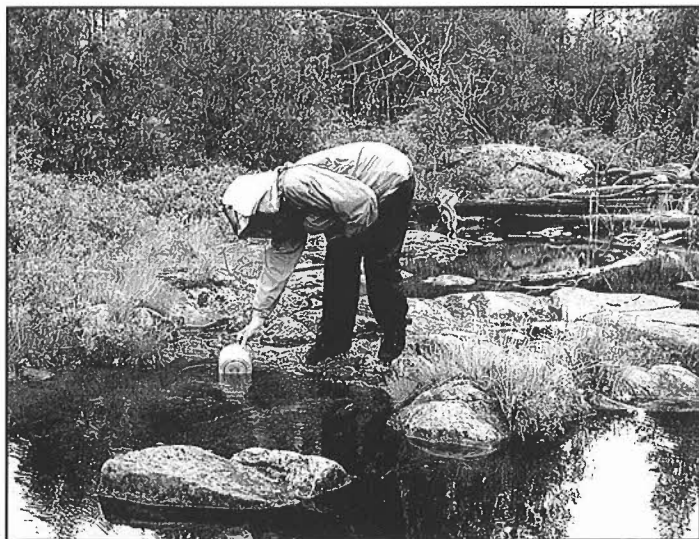
Up shortly after 7 and away by 9:30 after a granola breakfast. Our little limestone beach served us well, even though we had some rain during the night that induced thoughts of getting washed away by a rising river.

We paddled through several more miles of shallow swifts. Even though we had to move back and forth across the river to find water, there was not much scraping and we seemed to be making good time. This section was reminiscent of the Royal Ride on the Spanish River. We noticed that there was a better spot to camp about 400 yards downstream from our beach along the right shore between swifts. There was an even better spot one

or two miles farther downstream on the left around a bend on a bit of a point.

Eventually, the swifts petered out and the water became deeper. The map did not have much detail along this section so we were not able to determine our progress. We stopped on a sandy beach for a swim but the breeze and water were cool.

It took longer than expected to get to the confluence with the Kesagami River, so at one point we rafted up to



Scooping water from a large spring at Lost Wanigan Falls

eat lunch. It took until nearly 3 to reach the Kesagami, then things seemed to go faster. We reached the large island indicated on the map in less than half an hour and took the narrow channel to avoid the wind, which was now in our face. The breeze had felt somewhat cool but the sun was warming us up and the afternoon was starting to feel hotter.

We reached the Chum Family Camp (where we had been directed to meet the freighter canoes) around 4. Beth walked in to check out the site and decided it was not a desirable place to stay. Since we were not right at the confluence with the Harricanaw River—the supposed location of the Chum Camp—we decided to proceed downriver. Ten minutes later we heard a motor and saw a boat in the distance. As it approached, it turned out to be a freighter canoe and we learned that it contained our guides, Peter and Sinclair, who had been heading out to fish. They were staying at the Hannah Bay Goose Camp on the Harricanaw. They had not been given specific details about our trip so did not know from where we were to appear; it was simply luck that we ran into each other when we did. We loaded the gear into their freighter canoe, stowed the canoes along the shore, then sped off around the point and up the Harricanaw to the goose camp.

Landing in the weeds, we unloaded the packs and carried them up to a substantial building. It turned out to be

Kattawagami Campsites

| Day | Name | Latitude | Longitude | Size | Swimming | Rating |
|-----|----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------|----------|--------|
| 1 | Knoll on river right | N 50°04.881' | W 80°05.867' | Medium | Poor | + |
| 2 | Not Bayley Lake | N 50°09.122' | W 79°50.033' | Large | Poor | ++ |
| 3 | Pineapple Rapids | N 50°16.166' | W 79°47.171' | Small | Poor | + |
| 4 | Little Spruce Rapids | N 50°28.424' | W 79°46.317' | Small | Poor | ++ |
| 5 | Adrienne Rapids | N 50°31.888' | W 79°46.720' | Large | Poor | +++ |
| 6 | Maze Falls | N 50°34.304' | W 79°43.692' | Large | Good | +++ |
| 7 | Raindrop Falls | N 50°36.361' | W 79°41.597' | Large | Medium | +++ |
| 8 | The Needle | N 50°40.751' | W 79°42.625' | Large | Good | ++ |
| 9 | Lost Wanigan Falls | N 50°42.248' | W 79°42.836' | Large | Cold | +++ |
| 10 | Limestone beach | N 50°51.051' | W 79°37.884' | Small | Poor | + |

a new ecolodge that the Moose River Cree were putting up. The exterior was finished but not the interior. Sinclair invited us to camp inside the structure.

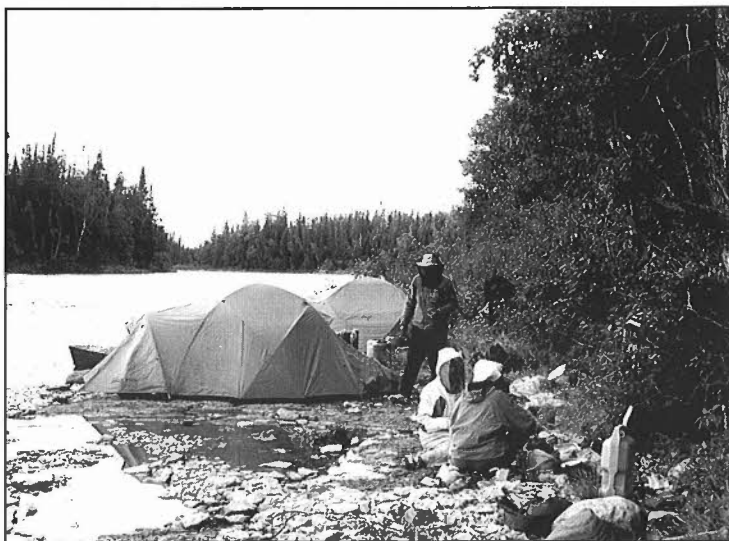
Peter and Sinclair headed back out to fish, leaving us to explore the building and the site. We also played some frisbee and drank whiskey sours while putting the tents up inside the lodge before dinner.

Day 13, on the river

We were up before 7 to pack in anticipation of leaving for Moose Factory at 9. It was fairly windy, so we knew there was a chance we would not be leaving.

At 9 our departure was postponed to 11, then to noon to catch the high tide. At high tide it is possible to motor between Big Stone Island and the mainland, a channel that is at least partially protected from the wind.

At noon we ate lunch, then settled down to wait some more. We telephoned our families using the satellite phone we had rented for the trip. The wind continued to



Last campsite showing narrow limestone beach

build and chances of a getaway were becoming less likely. Sinclair told us it would probably be Thursday. He said we could leave at 5 a.m. and still make the train at Moosonee.

Later, Sinclair came to say we might be able to leave at 6 p.m. as the wind was abating. The wind did continue to drop but the rest of the guides were nowhere to be found. They had gone fishing and did not return until after 7. This did not leave us enough daylight to safely get to Moose Factory.

We did benefit somewhat from the fishing expedition. Sinclair brought us a heaping plateful of fresh fish, a combination of pickerel and pike, fried in a light batter. It was delicious.

A thunderstorm blew in after we had gone to bed. Now one might think that, being inside a building, such a storm would be of no consequence. However, there was a small cupola at the top of the great room of the lodge, which had not yet been glassed in. The plastic that had been used to cover it blew off in the storm and water began to rain down on B & B's flyless tent. We moved the tent and kept dry but the sound of water falling onto the plywood floor from such a substantial height produced thunderous notes that were not conducive to sleeping!

Day 14, on the bay

Sinclair called us shortly after 4 a.m. to say we could go. The moon was still up but low in the sky. We packed up quickly and took our packs down to the freighter canoes. The mosquitoes were fierce down by the water, even the guides were complaining.



Ecolodge at the Goose Camp

Everything was ready to go by 5 a.m. One freighter canoe was to be used for our canoes. A second was to carry passengers and gear. The third boat the guides had brought was to transport a wood-chipper back to the mainland. We climbed in the passenger boat and off we went.

The river was calm but the breeze and waves picked up as we rounded the point. The waves continued to build and the guides decided it was too rough to travel on the bay side of the island. We would have to stop and wait for the tide to come in so we could go through the inside channel.

They anchored the freighter canoes and we waited for the tide to finish going out. Once there was only a little water left on the mud flats, we started walking towards a sand spit connected to Big Stone Island. Of course, we really had no idea where we were going, we just followed the guides. It was treacherous walking on the mud flats.

Once at the sandbar, the guides built a fire and we made coffee. After a while, we went for a walk to the island. There was a cross there as a memorial to a number of people that had drowned just a couple of years before when a freighter canoe swamped in rough conditions trying to make the same trip we were on. Not exactly reassuring.

When we got back to the fire area, the younger guides were already walking back out to the boats. Sinclair explained that they were going to bring the boats around to the point, making our walking easier. We walked out to the point to wait for them and discovered that once the tide reached you, the water became deep very fast!

We all climbed into the freighter canoe and, after a short wait until the white rock that looks like a bear was under water, we set out slowly. The guides had a technique whereby the steersman swung a paddle to test the depth of the water. Once the tide was fully in, the waves started building again. As we neared Netitishi Point, the waves grew large again, resulting in a very bouncy ride. Both of the plywood seats in the freighter canoe broke! We eventually made it to a beach in a protected area to wait for the third canoe. With the expedition again intact, we headed in to Moose Factory, reaching the landing at 3:30 p.m.



At the Goose Camp

Darrell (the company co-ordinator) was there to meet us. We checked in to the local Ecolodge, carried in our gear, and showered. The Ecolodge is a beautiful, new building, built and run by the French Cree who are newcomers to Moose Factory. We ate dinner in the restaurant at the lodge then went for a walk. The grass in the cemetery held hordes of mosquitoes that rose for us as we disturbed them.

The other option for accommodation is a campground, Tidewater Provincial Park, across from Moosonee. It looked like it would be okay but we were glad to be in the lodge due to the hordes of mosquitoes that had blown in from the Bay.

Day 15, at Moose Factory

We spent the day exploring Moose Factory and taking some packs to the train station in Moosonee. The paddle from Moose Factory to Moosonee was somewhat difficult; the channel leading out from the lodge was easy but the next piece had high wind and waves. The tide was out so we needed to paddle and line around the sand bar in front of the docks. The carry from the dock in Moosonee to the train station was hot, somewhat long, and buggy; it turned out to be our most difficult portage of the trip.

The paddle back was easier as the tide had come in so the sand bar was mostly covered, making for a shorter paddle.

Beware: Friday night fare in the Ecolodge—Chinese buffet!

Day 16, going home

We were up at 5:47 a.m. with the alarm. After a quick breakfast it was out into the rain with the rest of the packs. It was a much easier paddle to Moosonee than the previous day as there was little wind and the sand bar was covered.

It started raining hard just as we got to Moosonee and we had our second hardest portage to the train station, which didn't open until 8 a.m. However, we were able to load the canoes onto the canoe car. We met another paddler who had soloed the Missinaibi and was on his way home. Later, we also got to discuss canoe trips with several of the groups that boarded the train at Moose River Crossing. It sounded like water levels in the Missinaibi were very low this year.

Eventually we reached Cochrane where we were met by Rick Chartier. We loaded up the canoes and gear in the rain, which had followed us down from Moosonee, and headed home to Brampton in Ontario.

Even though the low water levels of the first couple of days had us wondering about how good this trip would be, it turned out to be everything the Buttigieg had promised and then some. Great campsites, wonderful rapids, and complete isolation were the highlights. If we could only have convinced some wildlife to show up it would have been perfect. Where were those moose, woodland caribou, bears, etc?



Canoe car at Moosonee



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

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

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

EDITORIAL

Finally, after 18 years, common sense triumphs. It took me that long to come to grips with the fact that the correct way to write English words is not always the commonly accepted way; that writing a date as 15 March 2004 is maybe correct, but (Canadian) society says that it should be March 15, 2004. And that color should be spelled colour. OK, I give up; *Nastawgan* will follow the way preferred by the masses from this issue on. I feel a bit sorry for our USA members who will now have to perform even more mental gymnastics to read this Canadian journal, but tough wilderness canoeists can surely take that, eh?

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:

| | | | |
|---------------|-------------|-----------------------|------------|
| <i>issue:</i> | Autumn 2004 | <i>deadline date:</i> | August 1 |
| | Winter 2004 | | October 31 |

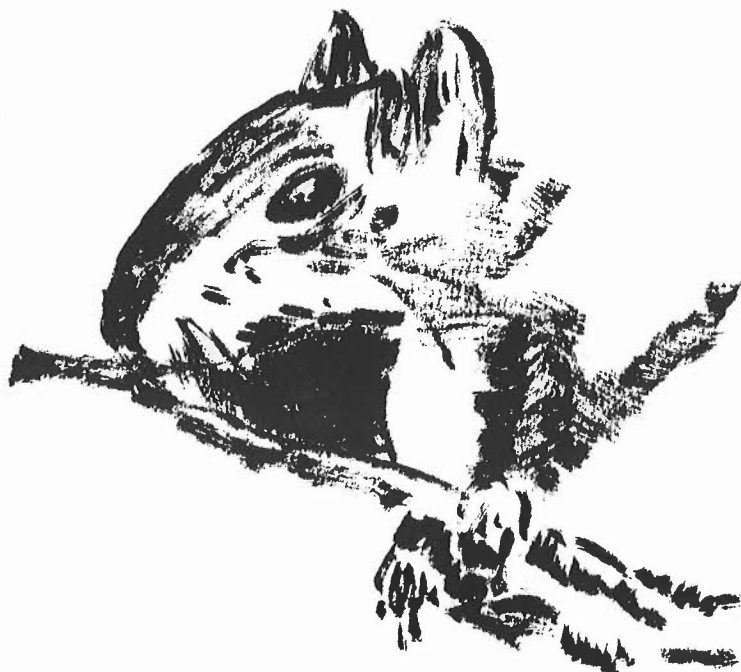
MULTIPLE-YEAR WCA MEMBERSHIPS are now possible, albeit with no discount. This will help alleviate much of the (volunteer) administrative work, save time & post-age, and also hedge against future fee increases. Contact membership secretary Gary James for more information.

ROCK QUARRY In response to numerous complaints from various sides, among them the WCA, the Ontario Ministry of the Environment is contemplating a full envi-

ronmental assessment of the proposed Lake Superior shore rock quarry west of Michipicoten. (See the item on page 13 of the Spring 2004 issue of *Nastawgan*.)

SEE YOU AT THE FALL MEETING

The WCA Fall Meeting is a great time to get together with fellow WCA members to share stories of summer paddling adventures and to wind down the paddling season. This year the Fall Meeting will take place on September 17–19 at the Haliburton Forest Reserve. A registration form with more information is printed on the inside back of the cover wrapped around this issue of *Nastawgan*.



This letter was received by the WCA Chair, George Drought:

George,
As a WCA "out-of-Toronto" member, I would like to disassociate myself from some of the comments expressed by Mr. Hooper in his letter on the membership fee increase that was published in the Spring 2004 *Nastawgan*.

Living in Edmonton, which is even further from Toronto than Thunder Bay, it was pretty obvious to me from the beginning that I wasn't joining the WCA to participate in club activities. I joined to get *Nastawgan*. I don't look on that journal as "a thin, black and white publication that does not pay its authors." I think it is the best wilderness canoeing / travel publication in Canada. The variety of its topics and the varied perspectives of

its contributors set it far ahead of its glossier alternatives. I don't subscribe to *Kanawa*, or *Rapid*, or *Canoe&Kayak*: and I wouldn't if they cut their prices in half. But I would - please don't take this as a hint - continue to belong to the WCA to get *Nastawgan* at twice the price. I don't think the recent 20 cents a week fee increase will crimp my lifestyle unduly.

I greatly appreciate the efforts Toni makes to put out such a fine publication. I know he put a lot of work into improving an article I submitted a few years ago. It was fun working with him - even if I didn't get paid - and I hope others will write in like this to show we appreciate his hard work, even if Mr. Hooper does not.

Thank you.

John McInnes; Tel. 780-422-6693; Fax 780-427-8065; john.mcinnis@gov.ab.ca WCA member #1917.

P.S. And the Symposium is overpriced at \$45? Give me a break.



FROM THE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

The membership committee has been busy over the winter working on the database, which was created and designed by Jan Tissot van Patot who has decided to retire from the Symposium and WCA membership committees. I thank you, Jan, for taking the time to enter all the information, train me, and keep the back-up copy of the membership database. I also thank Doreen Vella who continues to assist me by mailing out the membership cards and new members' information packages. Our new programmer is WCA member Margaret Butler, who has pulled all the loose ends and tables together into an efficient format; thank you Margaret.

All the labels will be white with black ink; the brightly coloured (reminder) mailing labels are gone. However, if your membership has expired or is about to expire, the line with the membership number and the expiry date will show up in colour. This change will also allow the labels to be sorted in one batch and make it easier for the secretary to do the mailing.

If you have given me your e-mail address, I will make every attempt to send a friendly reminder to you when necessary. If you have not received e-mails from me, then I may not have your address. Please send it to me at wca@sympatico.ca and I will add it to the database.

As the tables in the database are combined, omissions and errors may occur. If you notice any changes or want to check your membership information, please call me.

Happy paddling,

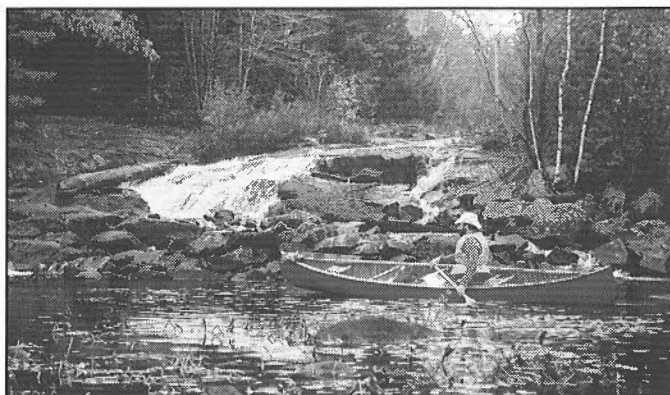
Gary James

NEW WCA WEBSITE PHOTO GALLERY

I would like to thank all of you who have contributed to the new WCA Photo Gallery, which is now live on the WCA website: www.wildernesscanoe.ca. I hope that the gallery will continue to grow to show more diversity in contributors and canoeing locations.

If anyone would like to contribute to the Photo Gallery, please send your photo by e-mail to jhaymer@ion-sys.com. Your photo should be 72 dpi and the size should be well under 75 kb. Include with your photo the name of the photographer, a descriptive title of the photograph, and about one to three sentences describing the trip or the scene. In order to save download time (to my non-high-speed computer), please do not send more than one photograph per day. Alternatively, if you have photographs on your own website, you may direct me to the site and I will download what I need.

Jeff Haymer



FEES FOR OVERNIGHT CAMPING

This message was received through the office of the Ontario Recreational Canoeing Association:

French River Provincial Park Tel: 705-287-2900x224
Hwy. 637 Fax: 705-287-292
Killarney, ON P0M 2A0 www.OntarioParks.com

Dear Stakeholder,

April 1, 2004

We wish to inform you about upcoming changes to the management and operation of six Northeastern Ontario provincial parks – the French River, and the Temagami area parks which include Sturgeon, Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater, Obabika, Solace and the Makobe-Grays rivers. Starting in the spring of 2004, Ontario Parks will begin collecting fees for overnight camping in these parks. The intent of this letter is to explain what these changes may mean to you, as a park user.

The French River and Temagami area parks have long been popular backcountry destinations for campers and day-users. However, intense use coupled with lack of staff, equipment and financial resources has resulted in a slow, but steady decline in the condition of campsites and portages and, in the end, a decrease in visitors' enjoyment of the backcountry experiences these parks offer.

Ontario Parks needs a variety of resources, most particularly financial resources, to help protect the natural and cultural features of the French River and Temagami area parks. Revenue collected through charging fees for overnight camping will allow Ontario Parks to hire staff to actively patrol and work in these parks. Staff will also teach visitors how to travel with care and respect through these unique natural environments, maintain and rehabilitate campsites and portages, and enforce regulations which protect the integrity of the natural and cultural features of these backcountry areas.

Fees collected for overnight camping will be used to protect, operate and manage the French River and Temagami area parks. All fees collected under the *Provincial Parks Act* are deposited into a Special Purpose Account from which Ontario Parks draws funds to aid in the protection, management or operation of individual provincial parks.

Permits for the French River will be available from select lodges and marinas in the French River area. Camping permits for the five Temagami area parks will be available through Finlayson Point Provincial Park. Reservations for camping are not available at this time.

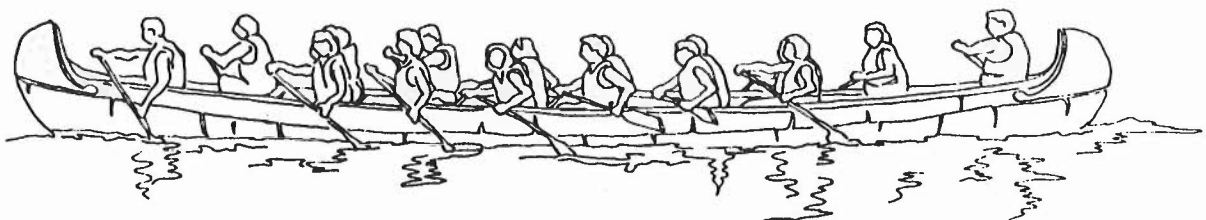
Fees will take effect on April 30, 2004 for the Temagami area parks and on May 21, 2004 for the French River. Backcountry/interior camping fees will be \$7.50 per night per adult (18 years of age and over). Youth, Ontario Seniors and Ontario persons with disabilities will pay lower rates of 50 per cent and 20 per cent respectively. These rates are consistent with fees charged in other Ontario provincial parks with backcountry camping opportunities.

Ontario Parks appreciates that many outfitters and user groups have already planned their trips to these natural areas and that camping fees were not a consideration. This year, when encountering visitors without camping permits, staff will take into account the late notification of fees and exercise discretion. Ontario Parks anticipates compliance of close to 100 per cent in 2005.

For specific information about obtaining permits, access points, overnight parking and trip planning please contact the parks directly at the numbers and/or addresses listed below:

French River Provincial Park
Attn.: Chuck Miller
Park Superintendent
705-287-2900
Fax 287-2893
Email: chuck.miller@mnr.gov.on.ca

Temagami Area Provincial Parks
Attn.: John Salo
Park Superintendent
705-569-3205
Fax 569-2886
Email: john.salo@mnr.gov.on.ca



REVIEWS

BARK CANOES: The Art and Obsession of Tappan Adney by John Jennings with photographs by John Pemberton, published by Firefly Books Ltd., Richmond Hill, Ontario, 2004, hardcover, 152 pages, \$35.

This wonderful book, published in association with The Mariners' Museum in Newport News, Virginia, presents for the first time beautiful colour photographs of 110 historically accurate models of Native bark canoes, built by the legendary Tappan Adney in the 1920s and 1930s. The book not only profiles Adney's life and life's work, it also presents excellent information on the making and use of birch-bark canoes and on the canoe frontier, the extensive area in North America where the canoe was the preferred means of transportation for many hundreds of years. The photographs are simply gorgeous; all the 1:5 scale models look as if they are full size with the delicate details clearly visible. The canoes seem to be begging to be taken to the water and lovingly paddled down the river and across the lake. Jennings and Pemberton have done a marvellous and important job by making Adney's creations available to us in this beautifully produced book that is a feast for the mind and the eye. The extensive bibliography and the index make this a most useful basis for further study. The book is a fine companion to Jennings's previous book, *The Canoe: A Living Tradition*, published by Firefly in 2002.



UP THE CREEK: True Stories of Canoeists in Trouble edited by Doug McKown, published by Ragged Mountain Press, Camden, ME, 2004, softcover, 186 pages, US\$12.95, C\$18.95.

This is a curious and thought-provoking book. It does not present the usual happy trip reports about heroic rapid running, blissful campfires, and beautiful sunsets, but instead offers (as written on the cover): "Forty-six tales of whitewater rapids, hypothermia, medical emergencies, wildfire, and wildlife encounters, with insights and lessons for all wilderness travelers." Indeed, there are many valuable lessons to be learned from these true accounts, related by the paddlers—several of them belonging to the international wilderness tripping elite—who experienced them. It's an eye-opener to read how some of the big shots among us can and do make the most stupid mistakes that might easily endanger the lives of their partners and themselves. As the editor mentions in his Introduction: "The goal [of the book], rather, is to bring to life the potentially serious, even deadly consequences of

just about every possible activity or decision on a canoe trip." Study this small but important book carefully and with humility and you may become a wiser and therefore better tripper. It is unfortunate that the colour photo on the cover and the few rather bland black-and-white photos in the book show us almost nothing of the actual situations described in the stories.



THE FORGOTTEN SKILLS: Expert Techniques & Equipment Tips to Make Your Camping Experience More Rewarding, a DVD video by Cliff Jacobson, W10070 State Road 29, River Falls, WI 54022, USA; 715-425-9545, cliffjacobson@presenter.com; 90 minutes, US\$19.95 plus US\$3 p/h.

Forever-young Cliff is at it again! He has pulled another little educational gem out of his teacher's hat. In this nicely produced colour video he tells us in his relaxed and very personal style about various solutions to the two main concerns in surviving the outdoors: how to stay warm and how to stay dry. I don't think these skills have really been forgotten by many WCA members, but it makes much sense to learn what an experienced guy like Cliff has to say about the issue. In this video he gives numerous valuable tips, based on decades of first-hand experience travelling in many parts of North America, on several subjects that play a role in staying comfortable when the weather turns nasty.

He discusses subjects such as: tent selection, bathtub floors, vestibules, plastic ground cloth inside the tent, rigging storm- and rainproof tents and tarps, sleeping bags, foam pads, pitching your tent on an incline, tarps, stakes, lines, knots, fire, knives, axes, saws, and more. (His explanation of three simple but important knots is in itself worth buying the video!) In some cases he shows us things in an ingenious manner. For instance, he uses a cute tent model (about 1/4 full size) to discuss various tent-related issues, and also uses a model when he talks about the design and use of tarps. If all Cliff had ever done for the outdoors was to make this video, he would already have earned high marks as an outdoors educator. (I still think that from a certain angle Cliff looks like Woody Allen . . .)

Reviews by Toni Harting

BIG SALMON AND YUKON RIVERS

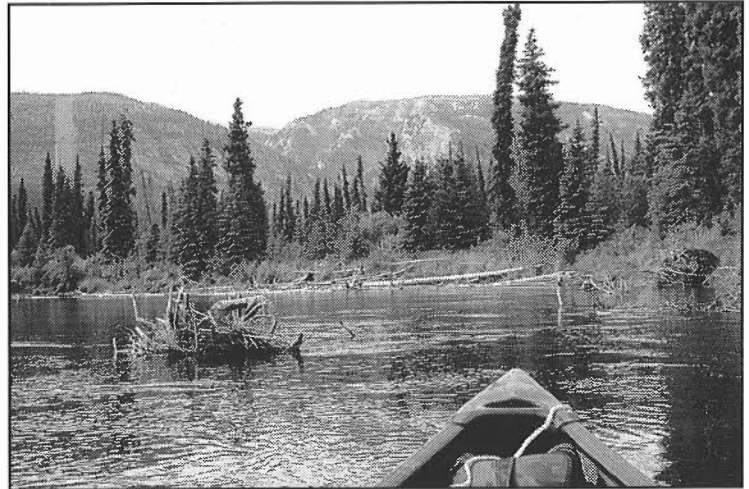
Robert Pavlis

After several years of tripping in Ontario it was time for more excitement. I wanted to go to the real North and paddle through real mountains. After a lot of research I decided to do the Big Salmon and Yukon rivers from Quiet Lake to Dawson City. A two-week paddle through Yukon mountains without a single portage. Try to find that in Ontario.

This is a great trip with simple logistics. Fly to Whitehorse, rent a canoe, and shuttle to Quiet Lake (3.5-hr drive). You can then spend one week to get to Carmacks and end your trip there, or add another week and go all the way to Dawson City. You can drop off your canoe in either town and take the bus back to Whitehorse. Total cost, including return air fare from Toronto, is about \$1,500.

Guided trips are usually done in about 16 days, but I find that I travel faster paddling solo and decided 14 days on the river would be plenty of time. I had trouble getting the flights I wanted and suddenly it was a 13-day trip. People in Whitehorse told me how great Dawson was, so I decided to spend an extra day there, reducing the paddle to 12 days. Not a real problem since there was only 755 km of paddling.

Early August 2002, I left home in Guelph, Ontario, at three o'clock in the afternoon and was paddling on Quiet Lake exactly 23 hours later. Who says the logistics of these northern trips are difficult?



Big Salmon River

A detailed day-by-day report on my trip, including information about good campsites, can be found at <http://www.kayak.yk.ca>. In the present article I'll provide highlights of the trip, describe some lessons learned, and give the impressions of a first-time traveller in the North.

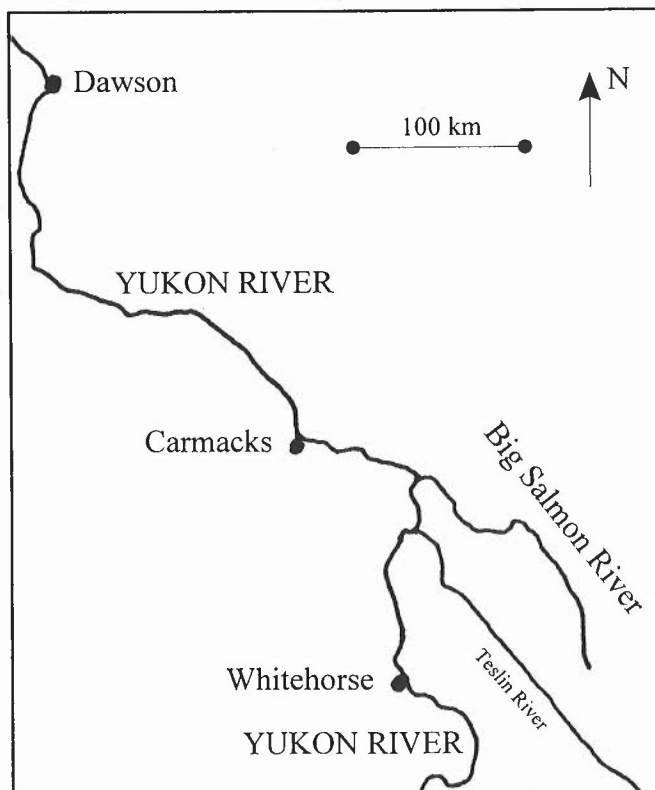
Every trip needs some challenges and since the paddling on this trip is fairly easy, I wanted to add some man-made goals. I set three goals for myself: see my first grizzly, paddle a 100-km day, survive alone for two weeks.

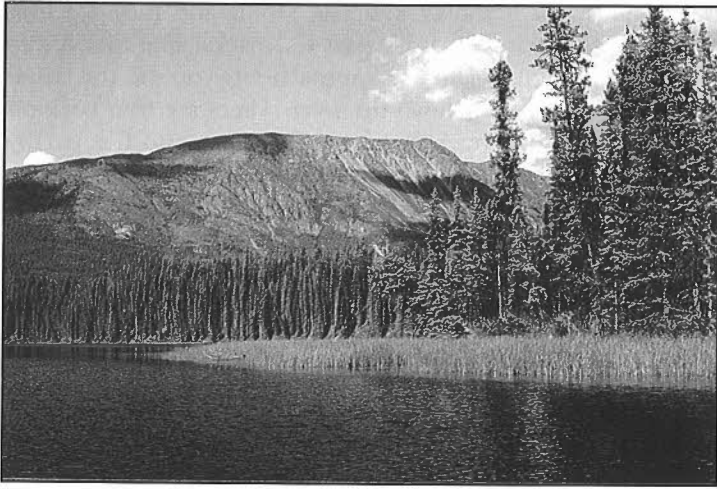
The start of the Big Salmon River is great. You pass through several small, beautiful lakes and soon descend a fairly small river with good current. Over the next five days, the current pulls you along as the river slowly gets wider and wider. The river constantly winds back and forth with the scenery changing at every turn. The mountains are all around and play hide and seek with you. You never know what view you'll get around the next bend. After only a few kilometres of travel your orientation is completely shot, due to a combination of the changes in direction and the longer days. It seems to be high noon most of the day, and navigating by the sun just doesn't seem to work as well as back home.

The water is crystal clear and in some areas only 30 cm deep. Below you is a constant stream of 90-cm-long chinook salmon. Thousands of them, all a deep brick red.

I consider myself an experienced tripper and things have always gone fairly smoothly. For some reason this trip was different and I learned several valuable lessons. Before I even left Quiet Lake I found the handle on my frying pan completely broken off. I had planned to buy a pot holder, but never got around to it. Lesson one: plan ahead.

In the weeks leading up to the trip I read up on some safety tips. One of them said that a dull knife is an



*Silent Lake*

accident waiting to happen. My knife never gets sharpened, so I got it out and gave it a fine edge. At camp the first night I cut my finger, not seriously, but enough to make me sit down and think. I was alone in the Yukon many miles from anyone. Lesson two: never sharpen your knife and if you do, don't cut yourself.

The second day out I dropped my paddle into some swift current. I had laid it across the gunnels instead of tucking it under a thwart. I quickly grabbed the spare and retrieved the lost one. Lesson three: gorp in the hand is not worth a paddle in the water.

One of the challenges of a longer trip is bringing enough fresh meat. Emulating the experienced northern trippers I've read about in this great journal, I decided to bring a big slab of smoked bacon. Breakfast on day three, and time for some fresh bacon. I unwrapped it from the brown butcher paper only to find it covered in mold. I had lots of extra food, but bacon is just sóóó good in the morning. I washed it and for the next two days let it air-dry on the front seat of the canoe. The cold, drizzly rain cleaned it up nicely. Lesson four: there is a reason butchers hang this bacon. Keep it dry or wrapped in vinegar-soaked cloths. On a more recent trip I used vacuum-packed smoked bacon and it kept fine for three weeks.

The upper part of the Big Salmon has some swifts but no real rapids. It does have fast water, lots of turns, and some easy sweepers. To paddle this river, you should be comfortable in strong current and have a good front ferry or you could be in serious trouble.

On the third night as I closed the screen on the tent the closed part of the zipper popped open. Lesson five: buy better equipment next time. I found out after the trip that this problem is usually due to a faulty zipper toggle and not a faulty zipper. Since most tent zippers have two toggles, you can use the second one in an emergency. You can also try to squeeze the toggle tighter and it might fix the problem—assuming you brought pliers.

The next day I passed right under a very large, black-and-white, mottled bird with huge claws. I later learned

that this was a baby bald eagle. That is hard to believe since the babies look larger than the adults, probably due to their down underwear. Over the next five days I saw four or five adults and numerous chicks every day. Most were on low branches allowing me to get as close as 10 m—close enough to see the gold in their eyes.

The bacon on the bow seat was also working well and it did not take long before it attracted my first wild grizzly. She was drinking at the side of the river and as I drifted closer she turned, stuck her head in the trees with her bum hanging out. Cute teddy bear face—at least from a safe distance.

Lesson six: don't leave the stove pressurized when you pack it away. Gas leaks out, and dries up your plunger. A little cooking oil solved that problem.

One day I was playing leap-frog with a couple of Yukoners out on a fishing holiday. In one short section of the river I got very close to a cow moose and her calf. Then saw two more cows. The locals passed the same area about 20 minutes later and only saw one bull. The woods must be full of moose.

Seven years earlier the river created a shortcut eliminating a large oxbow, but when I travelled through this area the landscape looked as if it had happened yesterday. The shores were littered with clean, round river rocks and in one spot they were piled seven metres high, cutting off the previous section of the river. The whole area looked like a bomb went off with dead trees everywhere. This must have been some spring run-off.

When asked to describe this trip, one word sums it up: BIG! Everything seems big. Big water. Big mountains. Everything is larger and farther away than you think. The only way to understand this feeling is to experience it for yourself. Even as I travelled down the river, I kept mumbling to myself: god that's big, what big salmon, huge mountain . . . tiny me . . .

*Ready to register a gold mine claim at Big Salmon Village*

Big Salmon is an old abandoned town located at the confluence of the Big Salmon and Yukon rivers. Several cabins and native barrel grounds make this a great place to camp. The natives build spirit houses on top of the graves, which can be simple fences or houses complete with windows and doors. There is a good example of this at the town of Big Salmon and an even better site at a town called Little Salmon, a few kilometres down the river.

I was missing maps for the next section of river so I just drifted along. The river goes down hill so you don't really need maps except to let you know how far you have travelled. To keep my schedule, I now needed to paddle about 80 km each day. I was hoping for either good current or an understanding airline check-in clerk.



Spirit fence at Big Salmon Village

There is a recommended camp in Carmacks, but it is better to stay at a camp on river right just before town. It is run by a local outfitter and they will drive you to town to get supplies. I, of course, chose the other camp, which is on the main street between town and the liquor store. A virtual highway of society's best.

Two of the local native people stopped by to talk. It turned out to be the daughter of the chief and a guy who was next in line to become chief. He told me how to take care of a grizzly when it comes into camp. Just stare it down and it will go away. He was quite old so maybe there is some truth to his advice. He also told me stories about his people, the Northern Tutchone, and how sickness almost wiped them out. I asked about the spirit houses since many of them seemed quite new and looked more like modern white man's houses. He insisted that his people have been building them for many generations. He also invited me to stop at any of the fish camps along the river. Visitors are always welcome.

A fellow from Japan arrived at the camp paddling a folding kayak. He had just finished the Teslin River, which flows parallel to the Big Salmon. The previous year he had done the Big Salmon and said that it was much nicer than the Teslin. In about one hour he was packed, and walked away with his kayak in a suitcase.

his trip has only two real rapids and they are both located about half a day past Carmacks. The first is Five Fingers Rapids, and the approach lets you see the white-water a long way down the river. There are four rock pillars across the river that force the water into five narrow channels. Portaging is almost impossible since the river banks go straight up. As I got closer my heart was pounding faster and faster. No chance for scouting, alone on the river, and people have died at this rapid. All the advice I had gotten told me to stay far right.

The rapid turned out to be no big deal. Take the center of the right channel, but not the far right as everyone says. The right channel is just a big tongue with some standing ways at the bottom. Stay far right on the Rink Rapids as well. These rapids look much worse than they are because you can see them from so far away. For a good 20 minutes, you see nothing but a wall of whitewater ahead.

Fort Selkirk used to be a popular town on the river until they moved the road. It has been restored and is now maintained by the local natives. It's a very interesting place to stop and provides a lot of historical value. It is a living museum in the middle of nowhere. The view back across the river to the confluence of the Pelly River is one of the best views of the river.

From here to the end of the trip I experienced very strong headwinds. They came up around noon, and ended around six in the afternoon every day. Paddling solo was next to impossible and I took long lunches and paddled in the evening. It was the only way to get down the river. Except for a herd of mountain goats, wildlife was sparse.

The winds were making it hard for me to stay on schedule so one morning I was up at four o'clock and on the water by five. At that time of day it is still dark, but light enough to be able to see well. At this latitude it was only dark for about four hours each night.

The first few hours were magical. I drifted in and out of fog, with the thick, dark clouds rolling past overhead. Except for the current I had no idea what direction I was travelling and rarely saw the shore. Slowly the sun came up and burned off the fog, I had just experienced the best two hours of the trip.

I paddled hard until two o'clock in the afternoon when the wind became too strong. I had lunch, sunbathed, and fell asleep naked on the beach. At six I got back on the water and soon connected with the White River. At this point two massive rivers of about equal size



Spirit houses at Little Salmon Village



Group of scouts on the Yukon River

meet, one with clean water, the other white with silt. For the next 20 minutes it was like paddling in a boiling pot of stew. The swirling brown gravy produced mini-whirlpools that banged the boat around.

At Excelsior Creek the river widens and the wind howled towards me, whipping up the waves. I was getting very tired and was mostly drifting with the current, keeping the boat aimed into the waves. I looked at the cliffs to my right and realized that if I dumped here, I was dead. The cliffs were a short swim away but there was no place to climb out of the water. The other side of the river was much too far away. Adrenaline rush big time.

The river turned to the right and the wind and waves got stronger. Both the waves and my knuckles were getting whiter by the minute so I decided to make a dash for a nearby island. Just as I got to lee of the island a loud crack scared the life out of me. It was only a beaver.

Magically, as I got to the end of the island the wind stopped completely. I was beat, physically and mentally. I paddled a few more kilometres and camped at nine o'clock. Not sure if I had much supper, but my trip notes say "too much rum tonight."

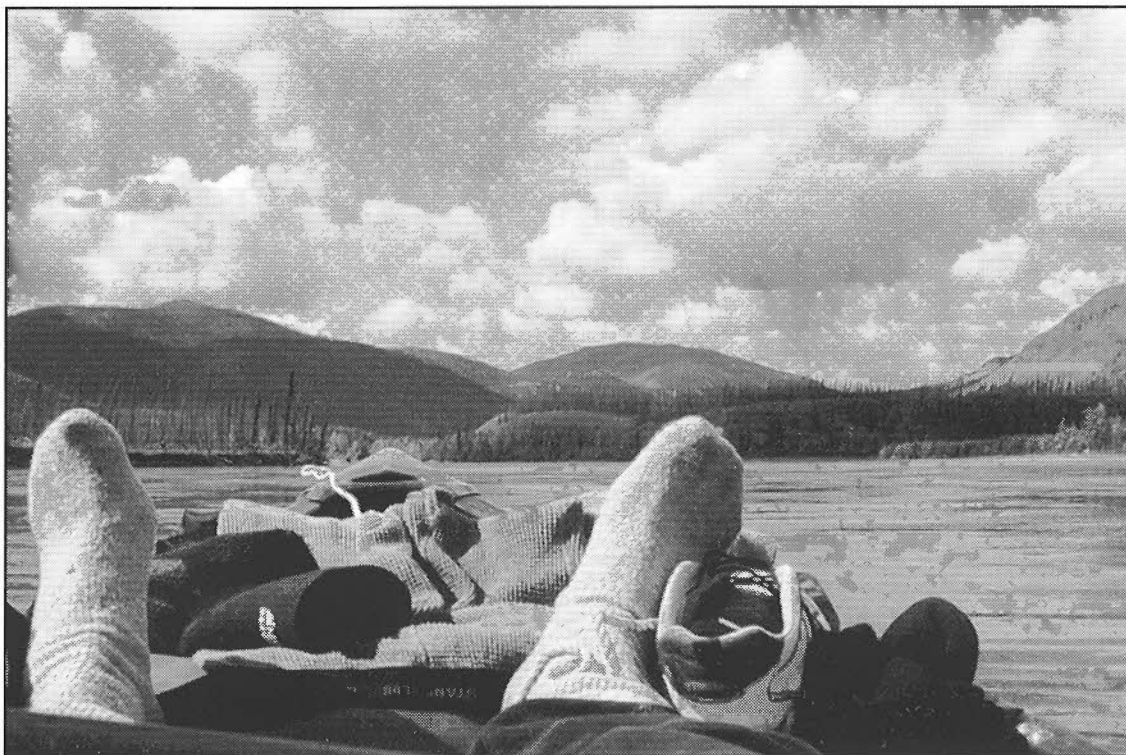
What a day. Saw three moose, two bald eagles, two beavers, drifted in complete fog, paddled 111 km, and lived through the cliffs of hell. Life doesn't get any better than this.

I arrived at Dawson City on schedule about two hours before the historical boat that was used to film "Quest for the Klondike." Dawson is a great town to end a trip. The Discovery Day festival was on the next day and I got the last room in town at the Bunk House—the smallest, noisiest room in town. The best place to eat here is Klondike Kate's.

Lesson seven: spend more time researching the local history before the trip. This trip exudes history at every turn of the river and lets you relive the gold rush days.

This is the best trip I have ever done, and I highly recommend it.

Editor's note: more information on these rivers is presented in the Winter 2001 issue of *Nastawgan*.



Drifting down the Yukon River

BANGING BEARS

A (slightly edited) e-mail discussion on how to scare off bears

James Boone wrote on March 30, 2004:

Dear Fred,
Just finished your article about the Mountain River trip in the recent Nastawgan. Though I have aged beyond Arctic canoe travel, I can still enjoy a well-written description of a personal trip. Thanks so much.

I have a question. My first Arctic trip was the Hanbury-Thelon in 1969. We were advised by Eric Morse to take some firecrackers to ward off grizzly bears if the necessity arose. We came across one bear eating a freshly killed muskox about noon one day and that was it.

My son and his wife, who are experienced trippers, are taking their two daughters ages 12 and 14 to an easy part of the Thelon this summer. My son asked for my opinion about their taking a gun for he had read about frequent bear sightings on the Thelon. I think keeping a gun handy at all times on a trip would be a damned nuisance and besides, he doesn't even own a gun, let alone have a license.

You made reference to 'bear bangers' in your article. What are they and where can they be obtained? My wife and I stopped in a 'Fireworks Store' on the way home from Florida. The loudest item they had was a 3 cm x 1 cm firecracker. When I told the lady manager that I wanted something loud enough to scare a bear she just about fell over. "Where the hell do you live?" she said.

So my son has 12 firecrackers that they will pack in ziplock bags with a small lighter. Will bear bangers be better?



Fred Argue wrote on March 30, 2004:

Dear Jim,
Thanks for the note. Glad to hear that your paddling genes live on with your grandson.

Fire crackers would be a good alternative to a gun. As children we had something called 'cherry bombs' because they were a deep red and round and about the size of a cherry. They only made a large bang, no show.

The advantage of the Bear Banger is that it acts as a small missile and flies itself some 30 to 40 metres, like a rocket, then explodes at some distance and in the air. I've

only set off two of these devices and so I'm not much of an expert. On both occasions there were no bears in sight, but I figured we moved them from the woods back into tundra by letting them know of our presence.

As to where to get them—I would suggest the Mountain Equipment Co-op; that is were I bought mine. These items should not be on commercial airplanes, so you need to have an outfitter at the northern end get you these mini flares. (Pen Type Launcher— Size of Flare M9x1—six to a box).

This device comes in two parts. The firing mechanism looks like and is the same size as a fountain pen. There is a small clip along the side and this is a spring-loaded hammer that, when released, will set off the mini rocket. The fuel cell is about the size and shape of an outdoor Christmas tree light bulb. At one end there is a thread that screws onto the end of the pen. When you flick the hammer it drives up into the bulb, the mini rocket takes off, and after a few seconds of flight it explodes, hopefully right over the bear.

The website of the Bulgarian company that makes these flares is www.tru-flare.com. We have model 01.

As a further point of interest, my father was a friend of Eric Morse in Ottawa.

I've made a cc of this note to Gary James as I believe he is headed to the Thelon this summer also and you may wish to compare notes.



Gary James wrote on April 7, 2004:

Hello all,
Thanks for letting me in on this subject and the discussion on the Thelon River, which we'll be visiting from July 17 to August 1, 2004. The reason we are going to this river is to see the wilderness and the wildlife. Jim, if you still have your trip report, I would be interested in reading it. Also, I would welcome any suggestions or ideas about footwear and camp sites etc. When are your son and his family going?

As for taking a firearm on the trip, I would not recommend it to anyone. You have to be trained (licensed) in the use and handling and storage of it. You also have to be proficient in using it. Your party also have to be trained in its use, if they pull it out or need to use it. Transporting it

from home to the start of the trip would also be a headache. If you think you need one, then I would suggest a guided trip and the guide would have one.

As for bear spray, again training is required in its use and storage. Most people will panic and stop thinking when they want to use it if confronted by a bear. Most will not think of their position when using it or not be in the right position to use it. They will fire it off up-wind and get covered with the blow-back. This would incapacitate them and their group and add a marinating sauce for the bear.

As for bear bangers, one of our party has three pen launchers and is shipping them to the outfitter who is flying us in. In his e-mails he refers to them as pen launchers, flares, and bear bangers. He is also arranged to rent bear spray for the trip from the outfitter. We will be having some pre-training in the use of all of them. I have heard stories of people improperly using them and firing them off in the wrong directions or worse, over the bear, which caused the bear to charge forward.

I would have your son contact the outfitter he is using and rent any of this equipment he needs. Your son would not have to worry about shipping and handling these items in today's world of increased security. Secondly, it is my understanding most of the rental fee is refunded if it is not used.

The bear sightings we have had have always been at a safe, enjoyable distance. At the three bear encounters we have had camping in Ontario we used a whistle (everyone in our group carries one on them) and also sticks and rocks to make a lot of noise and scare them off. If we all practise safe and smart clean-camping skills, then we lower the chance of encounters.

Also I believe that if we keep our heads, think, and not panic, then we stand a chance. We all think that the encounter will come in the daylight with lots of warning and you will have the equipment on you to use. However, I think they will come in the middle of the night (when you're awaking from a sound sleep) or when you least expect it and are in no position to deal with it. Is your son AND his family all going to carry the bear equipment at all times? Would the daughters be able to not panic and know where the stuff is and be able to get it out and use it? I have read too many news reports of people using firearms and fireworks improperly and causing death and injuries.

Another thought: will they have the training and a first-aid kit to deal with gunshot wounds and explosives if needed? I am more afraid of a person or a group with a gun who are unlicensed and untrained than I am of a bear. What did you think and do when you saw the bear eating the muskox? How many other bear sighting and encounters did your group have?

We have read a lot of trip reports and no-one has had a bear encounter. One highly experienced outfitter/guide, Alex Hall, writes in his new book about a few he has had and advises how he dealt with them.

Left Behind

A twist of grass:
This day break's gift-
Each emerald blade bequeathed
Its jewelled
Morning
Kiss
Of dew
By midnight's dying breath.

Defiant pine
On granite cliff-
With gnarled root, it clings.
Umbilical lifelines
Tracing
Ancient
Faultlines
To drink of summer springs.

Blue-green ribbons
Beneath our bow -
Trailing wisps of dreams
Undulating
underwater
tentacles
Seeking downstream scenes.

Sentinel spruce
In silence waits,
And holds its secrets close,
It knows
That soon again
T'will bend
Beneath its winter cloak.

beth bellaire

THE ESNAGAMI, WHO GOES?

Hank Samulski

Trip planning for our group usually starts in January. Remoteness is key to our trips and so we often reflect back to a trip we took into the Nakina area—north of Longlac, which is on Hwy 11—some 20 years ago. Since then we have always wanted to go back and perhaps run another one of the feeder streams to the Ogoki or Albany rivers. The problem has always been finding first-hand info and help with logistics.

The topographic maps of the area and old canoe route reports describe a route that has intrigued me, the circle route down the Esnagami River and then up the Little Current River. Smaller, more intimate water has always been our style. But who would want to go up the Little Current?

The Canadian Canoe Route Forum at times can offer some help. I was fortunate enough to get some first-hand knowledge on these flows through e-mail with Ed Allen. Ed's descriptions were enough to get a good feel for what the route would be like and so we decided to try it. In the spring of 2002, six of us, Den Butchereit, Howard Hiron, Lehm Lehman, Hank Samulski, Edju Spurgiasz, and Luke Watson, set out to take a look for ourselves.

We left the Toronto area for a 16-hour all-nighter in the Captain Fantastic Van, an '87 Dodge fully decked out with loungers etc. and hauling a canoe trailer. The ride was

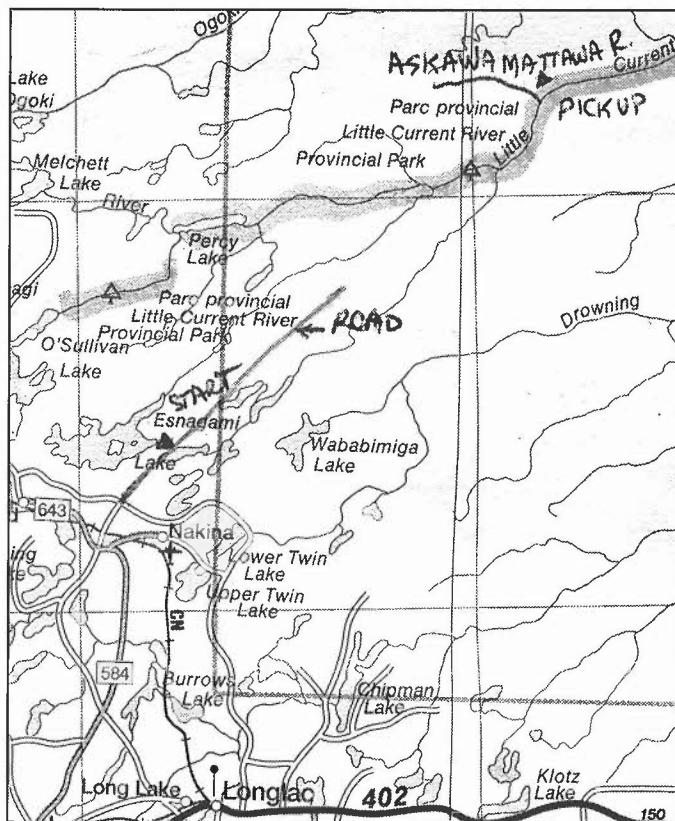


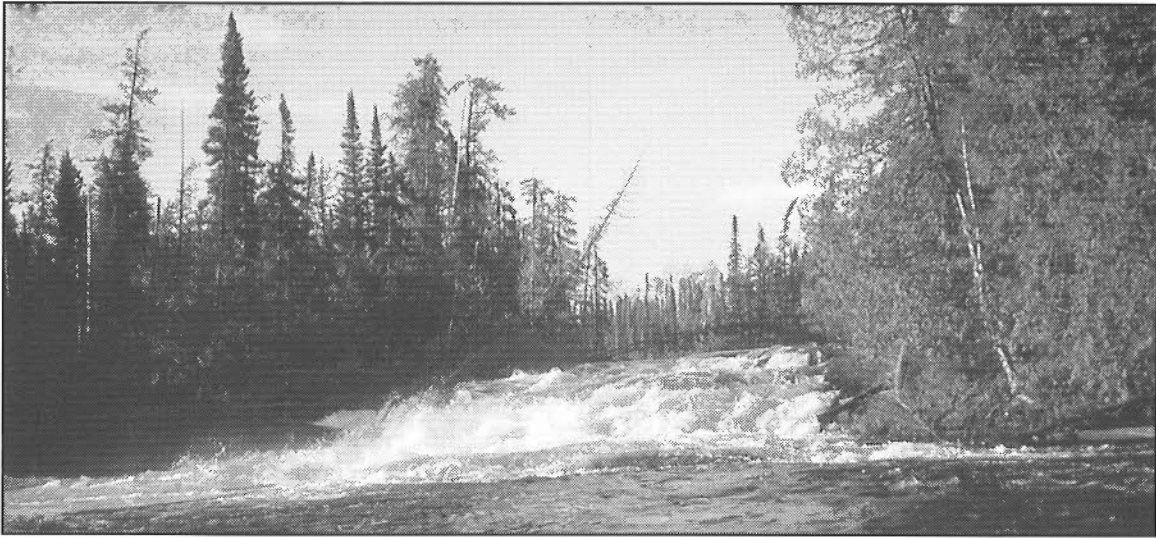
smooth sailing except for the snow squalls between Hearst and Longlac on the 24th of May.

We arrived at the end of the road in Nakina where everyone was running around in toques and whining about the cold. So at Leuenenberger's—a large outfitter operating out of Nakina, using four Turbo-Otters and a Turbo-Beaver—we completed all our final arrangements and picked up our shuttle guy Johnny, a man of few words. After an hour's drive, Johnny wagged his hand indicating we were at the creek mouth, which was our start. Our driver just kept on going happily for some time before realizing we had passed our put-in. So off we went, armed with our motto, "take the time."

The first 15 miles of the trip are a variety of big-lake crossings interspersed with sections of fast water in the gently rolling terrain, pleasant indeed. The weather had turned agreeable and once we hit Merkle Lake the Esnagami started in earnest. To our surprise there were still large patches of snow in the bush and ice at river edge. We were thankful, though, that not a mosquito or fly could be found. It wasn't too long before we realized what the Es is made of. We ran a few sets of rapids and did a bushwhack to get around a trashy class-3 rapid before calling it a day. A couple of realizations came up pretty quickly for us: firstly, bushwhacks were going to be the norm on this river, and secondly, whatever rapids we picked off on the topo maps had nothing to do with what's really out there. So with those comforting thoughts and a few rusty nails—two parts Scotch and one part Drambuie liqueur—we turned in for the night.

The next 15 miles was the crux of the trip with many class-1 and -2 to bushwhack around and several falls. This section of the trip took us three long days to complete. So





much for “take the time.” We also had to drop the customary lunchtime siesta. We were on the water until nine o’clock all three days through this section, always with the nagging feeling that we were a day behind.

We always eat in the dark on our trips but on this one it didn’t get dark till eleven o’clock. We ate in the dark anyway. Any site that we stayed at looked like it hadn’t been used for years but generally the sites were terrific. Four days to do this section would have been much better, allowing more time for the fine fishing along the way.

The river is “run & gun,” which means that in many sections the opportunity to scout is limited so that one is forced to run and react quickly to whatever circumstances unfold. “No-way-out Falls” is a big drop around both sides of an island. Steep banks everywhere and very fast water leading in. The sneak route involves crashing through alder bush as far as one could go and then orchestrating an upstream ferry in heavy water to avoid smashing canoes in a bolder-laden chute if you miss, going backwards of course. All three canoes got into some difficulty here but came out intact.

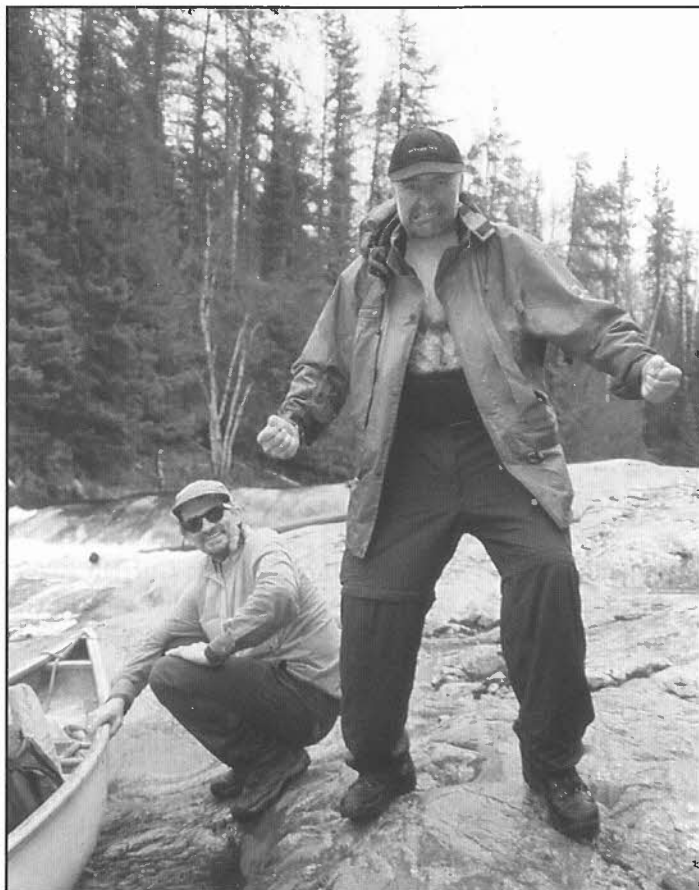
We found that the water was really high and any of the take-outs at the big drops were difficult, just nowhere to go. No sneak-arounds or outcrop exposed to haul over so we had to go overland. This was a journey on its own; there was wood everywhere, some sections looked like they had been logged over. Apparently a very bad winter storm went through this part of Ontario a few years back and knocked down a lot of bush. We spent most of our time balancing on fallen timber while fully loaded with gear. It was quite incredible. We were unable to line anywhere and mostly ran the river with the exception of our bushwhacks, which were all short; but it took us a while to find an appropriate technique. The best method seemed to be sending two guys through to scout and blaze a trail and then to do single-carries between and over the fallen trees where one’s feet seldom touched the ground. We sure got banged up, though, and our rate of travel through the bushwhacks was about 100 yards an hour.

The last 10 miles down to the Little Current River is mostly lift-overs, swifts, and class-1–2 rapids; we were surprised how fast we made it to the mouth. There is an eerie calm once you hit the Little Current, but the slack water didn’t mean that the fun was over.

It should be noted that the Little Current is no little current. The first rapid below the confluence of the Es, about four miles down, was totally intimidating in high water. The haystacks were canoe eaters, kind of like going down Coliseum Rapids on the Ottawa River, the biggest I’ve seen. Even the sneak route after the portage was worrisome. This high-volume river was cooking; we were averaging about eight miles per hour through this section. Circle route, indeed! It’s funny to think that we did the equivalent of three days paddling on the Esnagami in two hours on the Little Current.

We made camp that last evening on the river on a high bank where Squaw Creek enters the Little Current, with a great lookout but a lot of junk at this camp. Breaking camp early we easily made our pick-up point by eleven o’clock for the noon flight out. However, the winds were swirling and, as is often the case in the North, we were





windbound for the day and had to settle in for another day. Finally the aircraft buzzed us at a quarter to six Saturday morning for the flight out. We'd made it! Leuenenberger's plucked the six of us off the river with an Otter and a Beaver.

What a great trip; pristine and remote, it really should be paddled more. Ernie of Leuenenberger's was telling us that they use their five bush planes to move 1,000 people a weekend in the area north of Nakina but I don't think any of them were bound for the Es. We kept a trip log and tried to map the river on the way down. The log and map mark-up was pretty good but with so many closely spaced rapids and bushwhacks our mapping began to break down. We'd have to go down again to really get it right. The trip length is about 60 miles and although we did the trip in six nights plus a wind day, I would really recommend setting aside eight days. Campsites are wherever you can find a bit of flat outcrop.

Just a few thoughts on timing based on my correspondence with Ed. His group did the river in early July. The difference, I gather, is that generally it seemed that they were able to line more of the difficult areas we could only run or bushwhack in high water conditions. Also they had concerns as to whether there would be enough water at the pick-up point near the mouth of the Askawamattawa to land the aircraft.

If you like a challenge, this river really sneaks up on you and is never out of surprises.

MELOZITNA SANDBARS

Finding a decent campsite is always a high priority on a wilderness canoe trip. Every day at the lunch stop, maps are scrutinized to see where possible campsites for the night might be.

Marked portages are good bets. Usually one end of the portage has a site that's been used by earlier travellers. Islands often make good campsites. Creeks joining the river sometimes have sandy banks that will do. The map study gives us clues as to where to look for a spot to spend the night.

On many of our past trips, campsites were not plentiful. But not this year. The Melozitna had campsites. Lots of them. On every bend of the river. Sandbars.

Normally sandbars are a function of mountain rivers with steep gradients and lots of winter snow-pack. Rivers where there is a huge difference in water levels between early spring and late summer. High spring flows scour all the banks, sweeping the sandbars clean. Grass and trees don't stand a chance. After the spring flood is over, the river drops back into a more narrowly defined channel and the sandbars stand out at every bend.

The daily search for a campsite that could hold two tents on flat ground consumed a lot of the early evening hours on past trips. That task was abandoned this year. Stopping for the day was dictated more by the need to fish, rest, and eat, rather than finding a passable site with doubts as to where the next passable site might be. A big worry lifted from the daily push for mileage. Not a bad problem to have gone.

The sandbars were outstanding in views, soft sleeping, and room to spread out the gear. Often, when we first stepped out of the canoes we could see prints of others who had visited the sandbar before us. Moose, bear, and wolf. We added our prints to theirs. Just more travellers passing by who stopped for a while.

I hope that wolf, bear, and moose will not mind sharing their resting place with us. The Melozitna won't mind. With next spring and the next high water, the tracks of all the travellers who came by this year will be erased. The river will just be sweeping up in preparation for the next visitors.

Greg Went

WCA OUTINGS

WANT TO ORGANIZE A TRIP AND HAVE IT PRESENTED IN THE AUTUMN ISSUE? Contact the Outings Committee before August 8

For questions, suggestions, proposals to organize trips, or anything else related to the WCA Outings, contact any of the members of the Outings Committee: Bill Ness, 416-321-3005, bness@look.ca; Barry Godden, 416-440-4208; Gisela Curwen, 416-484-1471, gisela.curwen@utoronto.ca

WCA outings 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.

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All Season **HALIBURTON COUNTY/FROST CENTRE**
Ray Laughlen, 705-754-9479 ----- Seasoned tripper living in Haliburton willing to help organize leisurely paced trips in this area. At participants' request may become involved with some equipment, logistics, 'base camp' meals, etc. Willing to share information on tripping and camping techniques. Not limited to weekends; I am often free during the week. Suitable for entry or novice level but all others welcome.

All Season **BLACK (WASHAGO), HEAD, MOIRA, ETC. RIVERS**
Fred Lum, 416-482-3774 ----- The Black near Washago and the Head a little farther southeast have some very interesting whitewater sections if you catch them at the right levels. Both are quite different despite their close proximity. The Head is a technical little creek with a number of small ledges that will test a good intermediate's route finding and precision boat-handling skills. The Black has some super surfing waves that make for a day full of fun even for experienced novices. Down Belleville way, the Moira has a very challenging upper section at Lost Channel, requiring solid intermediate skills to negotiate a series of ledges with large waves. There is also a roller-coaster-ride section farther down through long, easy rapids from Chisholm's Mill to the takeout at Latta that all paddlers from skilled novice up will enjoy. I keep my eyes on water levels and go when things look good. If you want to get on my call list for these trips, just send me an e-mail to: roocnu@wepaddle.com.

July - September **MINDEN WILD WATER PRESERVE**
Bill Ness, 416-321-3005 ----- I'm frequently at the Gull River on weekends through the summer, so if you would like some paddling companionship at Minden, give me a call. I'm sure that you can persuade me that paddling is more important than staying home to paint or to mow the lawn. You need to be at least a strong intermediate to run the lower course, but the bottom can be played by novices. Happy to provide informal instruction for novices needing some moving-water practice or to give you help in rolling your canoe or kayak.

July 3 - 10 **NORTHERN ALGONQUIN TRIP**
Anne Lessio at 905-686-1730 or alessio@istar.ca, or Gary James at 416-512-6690 or wca@sympatico.ca; book immediately. ----- Starting at access point # 1 Kawawaymog (Round) Lake, this one-week loop takes us east to through Biggar Lake to Maple Lake and then north to Kioshkokwi Lake and west to complete the loop. Limit of four canoes. Please call for details if you are interested in joining us.

July 10 - 11 **PALMER RAPIDS PLAY WEEKEND**
Bill Ness, 416-321-3005, book by July 1 ----- The best park-and-play whitewater boating for novice to intermediate paddlers in Southern Ontario is found at Palmer Rapids. There's a little sand beach for the kids, making this a great family location for a summer weekend. The water is warm and most of the bugs have departed. If you took a WCA whitewater workshop earlier this season, why not join us for some more practice. We can work on specific skills, depending on participants' interest. No limit to the participants or the fun.

July 31 - August 2 **OTTAWA RIVER**
John & Sharon Hackert, 416-438-7672, book before July 24 ----- 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.

August 12 – 18

GEORGIAN BAY

Don Andersen, dhandersen@aol.com, 716-873-4476, book before August 1 ----- The area of Georgian Bay located between Byng Inlet and the French River Delta comprises an excellent cross-section of the northeastern shore of Georgian Bay. Sparkling waters and sun-drenched islands can characterize this spectacular area of the Big Bay in August. Starting and ending at Byng Inlet, we will paddle to the Churchill Islands, Fox River Delta, Bustard Islands via the Northeast Passage, Roger's Gut Islands, and Cunningham's Islands. We may be exploring each island group by canoe and on foot. This trip will use available sheltered waters whenever conditions require it. Suitable for parents with mature adolescent children and for retired folk alike, provided they are competent novices who can manage windy conditions and waves. Limit seven canoes.

August 20 – 22

ALGONQUIN PARK

Geri and Gary James, 416-512-6690 or wca@sympatico.ca., book immediately ----- A long weekend of family canoeing, hiking, and camping in Algonquin Park (tentative location). Join us at the Whitefish Group Campgrounds where we will circle the tents on a large site to ourselves. We can hike, canoe, swim, and play to our hearts' content. Water games are always a part of the weekend to keep cool and get everyone involved. The weekend timing is firm; however, the Park booking cannot be made until March 20. Check out the Park website for fees and details at: www.algonquinpark.on.ca/campcan/moreinfo/campgrd.html. Let us know as soon as possible if you are interested in attending so we can make the arrangements.

September

ORCA CANOE TRIPPING 1 AND 2 COURSE

Barry Godden, 416-440-4208, book by August 1 ----- If you would like to earn ORCA Canoe Tripping certification, join our group for this course. The week of the course will be decided by early spring. Call for details.

September 4 – 6

OTTAWA RIVER

John & Sharon Hackert, 416-438-7672, book before August 27 ----- 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.

September 11 – 12

BLACK RIVER

Anne Lessio at 905-686-1730 or alessio@istar.ca, or Gary James at 416-512-6690 or wca@sympatico.ca, book by September 1 ---- - This relaxed weekend trip will take us from Victoria Falls to Hwy 169. See Kevin Callan's *Cottage Country Canoe Routes* for additional information. Listed as 30 km, with six portages, the longest being 650 meters, and a "moderate level of experience needed in canoe-tripping with some experience in whitewater canoeing." Limit four canoes.

September 12

BURNT RIVER

Bill Ness, 416-321-3005, book before September 6 ----- Between Kinmount and the village of Burnt River, the Burnt is a placid stretch of water with a few small riffles and a couple of larger scenic drops, which are easily portaged. This leisurely Sunday paddle makes an excellent family outing or a gentle introduction to canoeing for non-paddling friends. Limit six boats.

Sep. 27 – Oct. 2

NIPISSING RIVER

Ray Laughlen, 705-754-9479, book by September 20 ----- Join me on a leisurely trip in Algonquin Park, going down the Nipissing River and back up the Tim River. Hopefully the leaves will be in color. We will likely see moose, otter, and a full moon. Suitable for novices who can enjoy portages of up to 1370 m. Limit four canoes.

October 2 – 3

ALGONQUIN PARK – LITTLE BONNECHERE RIVER

Anne Lessio at 905-686-1730 or alessio@istar.ca or Gary James at 416-512-6690 or wca@sympatico.ca, book by September 15 ---- - This trip will take us from the Algonquin Basin Depot to Round Lake. See Kevin Callan's *Further Up the Creek* for additional information. Listed as perfect for novice canoeists, with maybe three portages, the longest one being 520 meters. Limit four canoes.

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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 (<http://www.wildernesscanoe.ca>) 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.

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

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

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

- Algonquin Outfitters, RR#1, Oxtongue Lake, Dwight, ON

- Suntrail Outfitters, 100 Spence Str., Hepworth, ON

- Smoothwater Outfitters, Temagami (Hwy. 11), ON

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

MEMBERS' DISCOUNT Peterborough-based outfitter, Human Heights, who is also the Ontario sales representative for Esquif canoes, will provide a club discount for WCA members who want to buy an Esquif boat through him. Contact Bill Ness for special WCA price list: bness@look.ca

WCA MERCHANDISE We have a wide selection of WCA merchandise available for purchase at all WCA events (but not by mail order). Items available include WCA mugs (\$5), crests (\$3), and decals (\$1). We also have WCA clothing in a range of colours and sizes. Each item is a high-quality product that has been embroidered with a colourful WCA logo. At your next event plan to purchase one of these garments and proudly represent your organization. Golf Shirts:\$30; Fleece Vests:\$40; Fleece Jackets:\$60. (Cheque or cash only.)

GEAR FOR SALE Wave Sport X kayak (like new) \$700; Dagger Vengeance kayak \$350; Werner Ococee kayak paddle (brand new, 203 cm, 45 degree twist) \$200; Salomon downhill ski boots (size 10, red) FREE! Contact Barry at 416-440-4208.

CANOE FOR SALE Mad River Flashback, Royalex, pedestal seat, airbags, grab loops, vinyl gunnels. Good condition, great for smaller solo paddlers. \$500. Sandy Harris, 416-489-8980, sandyandroger@sympatico.ca.

CANOE FOR SALE Dagger Impulse, 12' 8", teal blue. Exceptionally good condition. This is a great canoe for the paddler just making the move into solo whitewater. One of the most stable and forgiving solo boats ever made, but it also has good manoeuvrability and speed. It makes a good river tripper as well. Fully outfitted with saddle and airbags. \$750. Contact Bill Ness, 416- 21-3005, bness@look.ca.

DRYSUIT FOR SALE Kokatat Multisport drysuit , new 1996, used twice, stored cool and dry, Oxford nylon with urethane laminate coating, size XXL, suitable for 6-ft tall or more, front entry, zipper from chest to shoulder, Dynat zipper lube included, grape and red colour, over-cuffs and collar protect the latex gaskets. Paid USD\$396 from Kokatat, firm price now CAD\$225. Phone 905-792-2436, evenings please, (Brampton).

STOVE FOR SALE Collapsible sheet metal stove with carrying case, damper, set of stove pipes and spark arrestor, suitable for winter tent with stove pipe opening, used carefully, well maintained. Price negotiable. Phone 905-792-2436, evenings please, (Brampton).

CANOE END FLOAT BAGS FOR SALE used carefully in Mad River ABS Explorer. Price negotiable. Phone 905-792-2436, evenings please, (Brampton).

BLUE CANOE BARRELS Members of the Durham Outdoor Club buy 30-litre blue canoe barrels for \$7.00 from a man named Reg (last name not known or offered) at 718 Dundas Street West (opposite a Tim Horton's coffee shop) in Whitby, Ontario; 905-665-6132. Call him first to see if he has any or when he will get them. If you are driving by you can see the display on his front lawn. They are clean and seconds from a company he works for. Wall Mart sells a back-pack that fits the barrel nicely. These are made by Aero Luggage and carry the name Outdoor Gear on the pack; cost is \$19.96 plus tax. This pack also has side pockets and extra room at the top and straps for more gear if needed. This barrel+pack combination is much cheaper than buying them in camping stores. (Information supplied by Gary James.)

ADVENTURE PADDLING

— Anyone having done the Caniapiscaw River from Schefferville (via Swampy Bog River) to Kuujuaq, please contact Werner at www.adventurepaddling.com with details.

— Adventure Paddling Inc. provides ORCA and WO certified canoeing and kayaking instruction in both flat- and whitewater. Check out our website at www.adventurepaddling.com for details.

ONE MAN'S JOURNEY Three films by Robert Perkins, to be aired by PBS in 2004. Check www.gotrob.com for show times.





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| <p>WCA Postal Address: P.O.Box 91068 2901 Bayview Ave. Toronto, Ontario M2K 2Y6</p> <p>BOARD OF DIRECTORS</p> <p>George Drought (Chair) 43 Brodick Street Hamilton, ON, L8S 3E3 905-528-0059 gdrought@wildernessbound.ca</p> <p>Doug Ashton Cambridge, Ont. 519-620-8364 doug.ashton@sympatico.ca</p> | <p>Elsie Carr-Locke Toronto, Ont. 416-463-9019 elsiescot@yahoo.ca</p> <p>Bob Bignell Dundas, Ont. 905-627-3730 thebiggy@hotmail.com</p> <p>Gillian Mason Toronto, Ont. 416-752-9596 gmason@capam.ca</p> <p>Martin Heppner Toronto, Ont. 416-465-1558 mheppner@anchorsecurities.com</p> | <p>WCA Contacts</p> <p>SECRETARY Bill King 45 Hi Mount Drive Toronto, Ont. M2K 1X3 416-223-4646 lyonrex@aol.com</p> <p>WCA OUTINGS Bill Ness 194 Placentia Blvd. Toronto, Ont. M1S 4H4 416-321-3005 bness@look.ca</p> | <p>http://www.wildernesscanoe.ca</p> <p>JOURNAL EDITOR Toni Harting 7 Walmer Road, Apt. 902 Toronto, Ont. M5R 2W8 416-964-2495 aharting@sympatico.ca</p> <p>TREASURER Howard Sayles Toronto, Ontario 416-921-5321</p> <p>WEBMASTER Jeff Haymer Toronto, Ontario 416-635-5801 jhaymer@ionsys.com</p> | <p>MEMBERSHIP and COMPUTER RECORDS Gary James 27 Canary Cres. North York, Ont. M2K 1Y9 416-512-6690 wca@sympatico.ca</p> <p>CONSERVATION Erhard Kraus Scarborough, Ont. 416-293-3755 erhard@interlog.com</p> |
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