



Summer 2011

The Journal of Canadian Wilderness Canoeing

Outfit 145



Photo: Michael Peake

A GOLDEN MOMENT - Peter Scott takes in a magnificent northern sky on Saskatchewan's fabulous Fond du Lac River in July 2007 near Manitou Falls. This Outfit features selections from a trip report down this river in August 1963 by Richard Matteson and two of his children. They didn't get many beautiful nights like this it would appear. We have published selections of his detailed trip report which is available online at hacc.ca and it offers a glimpse into the quickly receding past. Many things are the same but a way of life has changed in many respects.

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Summer Packet



We are extremely grateful to veteran Arctic guide **Alex Hall** who runs the long-standing outfitter **Canoe Arctic** for this update on the subject of flying with canoes in charter planes.

I have learned a few more things on this topic lately so will tell you all I know here. It's true that Air Tindi, which is the main air charter company that canoeists use out of Yellowknife, will no longer fly canoes and passengers inside their Twin Otters. I don't believe this has anything to do with Transport Canada regulations. The initial story I heard back last fall was that their pilots (who are ultimately responsible for the safety of their passengers) refused to fly 3 seventeen foot canoes, six passengers and gear in a Twin Otter as they have always done, because with this load there is no aisle left which could be deadly in case of an emergency. As you know, passengers have to climb over the folded down seats in the Twin Otter with this load to access and exit their seats along the left-hand wall of the cabin of the Twin Otter.

However, the new operations manager for Air Tindi who lives here and commutes to Yellowknife every week (and who formerly was a senior operations manager for the air charter company I use in Fort Smith) told me a few weeks ago that the reason for not flying passengers and canoes in a Twin Otter was that the exit was blocked with this load. I didn't ask him to elaborate,

but as you know, it's only the right-hand smaller rear door that is blocked---not the larger left-hand rear door. Then Al Pace told me a week or so ago that the new owner's (Air Tindi is now owned by Discovery Air)



Twin Otter, 3 canoe pickup after 55 days out. Chantrey Inlet, mouth of the Back River, August 1985.

board members decreed Air Tindi would no longer carry canoes and passengers inside a Twin Otter for safety reasons. Anyway, the upshot is that six canoeists using Air Tindi must now fly their three canoes and packs in a Twin Otter, then hire a Cessna Caravan for the six people, making the air charter a lot more expensive than it used to be.

The other issue about flying canoes is the external load issue. Transport Canada has been getting sticky about this in the last few years. For the last two years or so, any air charter company in Canada wanting to fly external loads (canoes, motor boats, refrigerators, etc.) had to meet certain conditions stipulated by Transport Canada including photographs of the load and detailed reports of every external load they

flew. The air charter company I use in Fort Smith informed me (to my astonishment) that only a few air charter companies in all of Canada had applied to fly external loads with Transport Canada and I was told by my air charter company about a year ago that there were only about four companies in the entire nation that had applied, and that the company I use and Air Tindi were two of them. Then, about a year ago my air charter company told me that the rules were changing with Transport Canada re external loads. I was told that as of the fall of 2010, Transport Canada would send an inspector to test the aircraft performance with specific external loads and if Transport Canada passed that specific type of airplane with that specific external load then the air charter company would be

granted permission to fly that external load in the future. Additionally, that air charter company would also be permitted to SELL permits to other air charter companies for that specific external load for that specific type of aircraft. For example, if a company's Cessna 185 aircraft on amphibian floats with wing-tip fuel tanks was given permission to fly a 17-foot canoe externally, that company could sell the permit to fly a 17-foot canoe on a Cessna 185 with amphibian floats and wing tip tanks to another air charter company (but not to a company using a Cessna 185 on straight floats or an 185 without wing-tip tanks). So it gets very specific.

Anyway, the inspector and the tests were supposed to happen last fall but Transport Canada apparently didn't get its act together

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Editor's Notebook

Another short northern paddling season is upon us and for many paddlers that means a trip north, if you're lucky, really north.

I am lucky enough to be heading off again to the wonderful Keele River in July for 12-day trip down the lovely mountain river guiding for Canoe North Adventures. We have a few surprises in store after the trip that I will be able to share with *Che-Mun* readers in the Fall Outfit. So stay tuned.

For many canoeists heading to the glamour rivers of Nunavut and the NWT like the Coppermine, Thelon, Back, Hood etc. that means a costly charter flight in that appears to be getting more costly every year. Never mind that escalating oil prices are driving things up but the Liability Monster has reared its ugly head north of sixty. It is the surest sign of a mature infrastructure and that only means more rules and more money.

The *Summer Packet*, (opposite) thanks to Alex Hall, outlines the evolving issue of flying with canoes inside a Twin Otter - for decades the most economical way to get to a distant and expensive trip. So if you fly with the huge carrier Air Tindi out of Yellowknife you will end up with a plane for you and another for your canoes. That means two meters are running - and adding up fast. There are some expensive options for companies to get around it but expect a bigger bill when you head into the great rivers.

We also have yet another look at the ever-changing Rupert River as the Rupert-Sarcelle Project nears completion on Page 9. You can see all about this project on HQ's very pretty website at <http://www.hydroquebec.com/rupert/en/index.html>

One thing we have learned about Hydro-Quebec is they never rest. Several other projects are on the go including the Romaine and Petit Macatina and there seems little doubt the Great Whale Project will surface again despite Cree leadership assurances.

The latest provincial initiative *Plan Nord*, is conspicuously devoid of any detailed river damming plans. But you know they are in there. They have already done studies on the George and Povungnituk rivers and many others in Ungava. Their remoteness will protect them for a while but *Plan Nord* will make remoteness a thing of the past.

-Michael Peake

Canoesworthy

Northern rivers are also expected to play a large role in recently announced Plan Nord for development in northern Quebec, although Quebec isn't ready to say yet where new hydroelectric projects will go.

Plan Nord has also raised fears that Hydro Quebec will revive its plans to dam the Great Whale River, a project that met with stiff opposition and was eventually put on ice in 1994.

Among the Cree leaders against the Great Whale hydroelectric project was the current Cree grand chief Matthew Coon Come, who spoke in favour of the Plan Nord at its May 9 launch.

"[The Great Whale project] was another time," Coon Come told reporters. "It's a different era. But I made sure there was no Great Whale project in the Plan Nord, as far as I know."

Environmentalists and Inuit from Umiujaq also say that they're against any plans to dam the Nastapoka River, which runs into the Hudson Bay north of Umiujaq. A dam on the Nastapoka would be a threat to the tiny population of freshwater seals who live in the river's watershed.

The Nastapoka's headwaters are protected under the Tursujuq provincial park project's borders. But that's not enough to protect the unique sub-species of seals, whose population is said to have dwindled to about 80.

The Nastapoka, whose development is mentioned in the 2002 Sanarrutik deal signed between Quebec and Nunavik, could produce up to 1,000 megawatts of power, enough to meet the daily needs of about 250,000 homes.

Quebec's power corporation wants to see 3,500 megawatts of new renewable power from the North in addition to the 24,000 megawatts already generated in the North through projects like the La Grande complex.

The new projects are to include a Hydro Quebec-operated wind-diesel power project in Kangiqsualujjuaq, slated to be installed between 2015 and 2017 — although it's impossible to say exactly when that wind farm would be in operation or how much the project will cost, Hydro Quebec said.

They believe seven Nunavik communities have enough wind for a wind farm, although Kangiqsualujjuaq will get the test run. A second wind farm will go to Akulivik, Hydro Quebec said. Wind farms would offer a cleaner form of energy, Hydro Quebec maintains.

Quebec is also eyeing other alternative energy sources, such as underwater generator in Kuujjuaq's Koksoak River for 2012.

For more than 80 years the wreck of the *Maud* has stayed right where it sank in 1930: in a bay outside today's community of Cambridge Bay, Nunavut. However, wealthy Norwegian investors have now cooked up a plan to bring the *Maud* back to Norway and build a futuristic museum around it.

"No" is Cambridge Bay mayor Syd Glawson's response to this scheme, which would see his community lose a tourist attraction — and a piece of its local history. Officials from Parks Canada, the Government of Nunavut, and the International Polar Heritage Committee, are also wary of the plan to take the *Maud* away from Nunavut.

But the Norwegians are serious. "A future Maud Museum . . . will present the remains of the ship, which will become a national treasure, well taken care of," says a website called maudreturnshome.no.

The plan is to raise the *Maud* from underwater with balloons, drag the hulk over to a barge and take it to Norway — a 7,000-kilometre journey.

To that end, a Norwegian investment company, Tandberg Eiendom AS, has already purchased a barge and is willing to spend \$5 to \$6 million — or more — to bring the *Maud* back to Norway.

The wrecked *Maud* actually belongs to the Norwegian community of Asker, a wealthy seaside suburb of Oslo, which bought the *Maud*, as is, for \$1 back in 1990. At the time, that seemed like a fair deal to the hamlet of Cambridge Bay.

Then, officials in Asker applied for and received a cultural properties export permit from Canada's federal government, but never acted to bring the 36.5-metre boat back. The permit

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Rewriting the Oldest Line in the World

By ROBERT LOVE

A tumpline is an ancient method of carrying a load, consisting of two straps or ropes attached to a head band. The ropes are tied to the load and the headband is worn just behind the forehead, so that the weight is transferred vertically to the spine. Tumplines were used by many cultures around the world, and were fashioned from leather, canvas or woven fiber. They are still frequently used in places like the Himalayas and Andes where heavy loads have to be moved through roadless country. With some practice and perseverance you can carry more weight, more comfortably, than you can with shoulder straps.

In early Canada, where voyageurs employed in the fur trade traveled in canoes and on snowshoes, and used tumplines to carry gear across portages. Since they were paid according to the weight they could carry and the speed they could make, the voyageurs perfected the use of the tumpline. They routinely carried loads twice their body weight, and there are records of rendezvous contests where some men packed four hundred pound loads for several hundred yards. Although modern day canoeists use canoes and paddles made of Kevlar and carbon fiber rather than birch bark and ash, many of us still use tumplines.

Two summers ago, during the course of a two-week canoe trip in northern Saskatchewan, I jury-rigged a tumpline on one of our food packs. We'd only been out two days, so the pack, a Kondos Outfitter Special, weighed about ninety pounds. This is a soft, frameless pack, built for canoe travel. It's fitted with padded, adjustable shoulder straps as well as an adjustable hip belt and chest strap. There are also straps on the sides which allow you to expand the pack or compress the load. The pack has two heavy D-rings sewn into the webbing on the side panels near the top. This seemed like a good place to attach a tumpline. The pack was serviceable without a tumpline, but we were in remote, little-traveled country where we often didn't have any portage trails, and the existing trails were brushed in, and I thought a tumpline might make the pack more manageable. For the tumpline straps, I used some quarter-inch blue nylon rope I'd found along a trail the day before.

While rope would work for the straps of the tumpline, finding something suitable for the headpiece proved to be more challenging. Birchbark was an option, but I couldn't figure out how to attach the rope to it. A t-shirt or a pant leg would work, but I was reluctant to experiment with my scant wardrobe. I was willing to sacrifice a washcloth, though, as it didn't qualify as essential equipment on a wilderness expedition. It was obvious that the rope would cut right through the terry cloth as soon as there was any weight on it, so I inserted black spruce cones into the fabric and tied the rope around them. This would have worked, but the washcloth was too short to fit comfortably over my head once the material bunched up around the cones.



I was about to admit defeat when I noticed the rubber straps wrapped around my sleeping pad. I'd cut them out of an old truck tire inner tube and used them to keep the pad compressed and make it easier to pack. I peeled them off the pad and placed one inside the other. I had four pieces of rope, each about three feet long, which I doubled, and tied into either end of the tire tube bands. To avoid tearing the rubber I tied a clove hitch with the doubled rope. Then I tied the ropes into the D-rings, put some weight in the pack, and adjusted the ropes until they took some of the weight off the shoulder straps.

On the portages, I used the tumpline in conjunction with the hip belt and chest band to shift the weight of the pack to compensate for obstacles, terrain and fatigue. Although the rubber tubing wasn't as comfortable as a leather or cloth headpiece, the elasticity of the headband made the load seem lighter. I use a rifle sling with an elastic material sewn into it that works in the same fashion; the elastic absorbs and dissipates the load, unlike a leather sling, which transfers the weight of the gun directly to your shoulder. The elasticity of the rubber also made it handy to put on or remove the headpiece, or ease into or out of the pack.

Over the winter I thought about ways to refine the elastic tumpline system, and brainstormed with a friend who does industrial sewing. He made a padded nylon headpiece with loops on each end. We tied a carabinier into each loop with heavy bungee cord and clipped the carabiniers into the D-rings on the pack. We used carabiniers so the tumpline could be removed or attached quickly. The stretch of the bungee cord varies according to its diameter, so we experimented with different diameters until we found that quarter-inch cord stretched, but didn't bottom out, under a load of about a hundred and twenty pounds. The length of the cord is adjusted with a fisherman's knot. The only drawback is that untying the knot after it's been used repeatedly requires either needle-nose pliers or well-rooted teeth and fingernails. Incorporating some elasticity into a rigid tumpline could be easily done by attaching loops or D-rings to the headpiece and straps and splicing in some bungee cord.

Before I left for last summer's trip I rigged both of my Kondos packs with elastic tumplines. The nylon headpieces are more comfortable than my original rubber tubing headpiece, and the bungee cords worked well. I carried some extra cord just in case, but the original ones never broke, and once I got the length adjusted properly I never had to re-tie the knots. Although tumplines are most frequently used by canoeists, backpackers, trappers and hunters may find them useful. A friend of mine uses a tumpline on his backpack weed sprayer, and prefers it over the shoulder straps because it allows more range and freedom of movement.

Blending traditional and modern technology can be satisfying and practical. A tumpline, although it's ancient technology, can make even the most modern pack more versatile and comfortable to carry, and building some stretch into a tumpline with some high-tech bungee cord lightens the load and shortens the trail.



Top 50 Canoe Routes of Ontario By Kevin Callan Firefly Books, 2011. \$29.95

Kevin Callan is getting thick in his old age. No, I don't mean mentally and certainly not physically. Rather, Kevin's previously somewhat slender volumes of canoeing are fattening up and looking even better than before.

His latest - and lucky 13th book, is a thick and solid job combining the bright, breezy and thoughtful trip descriptions and some superb maps by Gareth Lind. There really is no one else who has this canoeing niche cornered better than Kevin who lives in the midst of traditional Ontario canoe country - Peterborough - close to the Canadian Canoe Museum.

Last summer, my half-brother Dr. Bill Bensen had a close friend and colleague looking for some canoe trip info in Ontario. Bill, from the non-canoeing side of our family, referred her to me. I, of course, went right to the source and asked Kevin for some help, he had just returned from, what else?, a canoe trip and he thoughtfully helped the woman out.

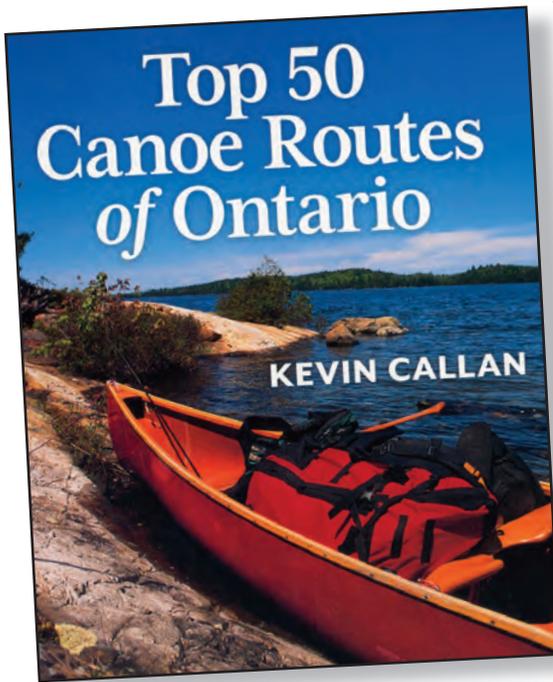
She wrote back to Bill that she was over the moon that Kevin had helped her. She was already reading his book and to know that Bill's relative, whoever that guy was, actually knew KEVIN CALLAN. To quote her. "That's unbelievable!! Thank you a lot! I am jumping up and down!"

But that's Kevin.

Top 50 Canoe Routes of Ontario offers a breadth of great canoe routes from across this

huge province. (Publishers really love numerical lists for readers.)

I investigated the routes I was familiar with to see how they jibed with my memory. Quetico, Missinaibi, Mattawa etc. were all perfectly described and illustrated. The only flaw in this otherwise perfect book for me was the complete absence of caption info on the photos. While they obviously illustrate the accompanying routes, they should have been more specifically described. But a small nitpick.



The book is divided into nine areas of Ontario; Southern, Cottage Country, Algonquin, Central, Eastern, Temagami, Near North, Northern and Northwestern Ontario. Routes covered include Steel River, Wabakimi Park, Mississagi River, Spanish River, Ranger Lake loop, French River's Old Voyageur Channel and even the giant Hunter's Island Loop in Quetico. This was our group's first real taste of the north. We did a 17-day circumnavigation of Quetico in the

fall of 1976 and it lit the fuse of a lifetime of northern paddling.

Congrats to Kevin and Firefly Books for such a superb offering. We'll look for *Another 50 Top Canoe Routes of Ontario* next spring!

The Men of the Last Frontier By Grey Owl Firefly Books, 2011. \$29.95

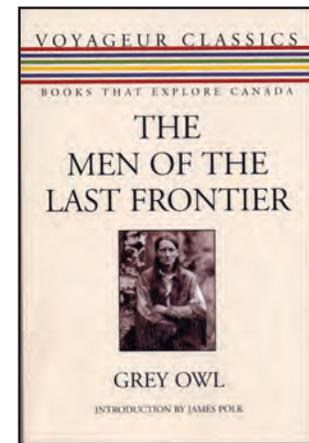
Grey Owl never grows old. While his story is well known, I suppose with today's media he would have been unmasked before he wrote this first of his many successful books. Because the story of Grey Owl is not whether or not he was a true Indian, but what his message was. That some-

times gets lost in all of the fakery.

This new edition of this 80-year old classic by Dundern Press features a scholarly introduction by James Polk who gives a great overview of the author in his Introduction to *The Men of the Last Frontier*.

The book is not really about men so much but about nature of course and his observations of what was happening to it in his travels as a Ranger and guide through the north woods.

I was struck while re-reading this book how two of the key figures in the burgeoning Canadian north 80 years ago were two wiry



Brits. Grey Owl (aka Archibald Belaney) and John Hornby have a lot in common it would seem. Both escaped the cloying clutches of a straightlaced post-Victorian England for the al-

luring wilds of Canada. And each man had a wide influence on this country's conservation ethos. Both began as hunters yet each contributed to the preservation of game. Grey Owl though his massive media presence both in Canada and abroad with a private audience with King George VI and future Queen Elizabeth who was enthralled with him.

Hornby, who shunned the limelight Grey Owl craved, pushed the limits in the far north and wrote a report urging the creation of the Thelon Game Reserve, now Sanctuary, which carved out a huge chunk of what is now Nunavut, twice the size of Belgium, 20,000 sq. miles, still a haven from hunting and mining.

Hornby wrote "... there is a large uninhabited area where muskox are plentiful, swans and geese nest, and caribou have their young undisturbed by man ... if it is desired to protect the game in this part of the country it is essential to take measures to prevent traders from encouraging natives to hunt in this district. A few years, perhaps, and it will be too late."



Lifting a Fond du Lac Log from 1963

LOG OF THE MATTESON CANOE TRIP FROM THE HUDSON'S BAY - Arctic watershed down the Fond du Lac River to Lake Athabasca, August 1963 (WOLLESTON L (post) - STONEY Rpts)

Aug 15 Daidie (daughter) & Robbie (son) and I left our summer camp on Burgundy Point, Lake Namakagon, Wisconsin at 4 pm Thurs. Aug. 15. We were setting out on a trip that would take us, our canoe & provisions 500 mi by car to Winnipeg; 600 mi by Canadian National Railways to Lynn Lake, Manitoba; 150 mi by chartered bush plane to Lake Wollaston in northern Saskatchewan; and over 200 mi by canoe along the river route to Lake Athabasca - first explored by David Thompson in 1796 for the Hudson's Bay Co. Mr. Sigurd Olson, in his

One of the things we inherited more than a quarter century ago were the trip files of *Che-Mun's* founder Nick Nickels. We have also added reports over the years and Gwyneth Hoyle sent us many of the reports that went into her and Bruce Hodgins' great book *Canoeing North Into the Unknown*.

Many of Nickels reports are carbon copies [Ed. Note to readers under 40 - ancient copy technology using a piece of black carbon paper under typewriter original.] We should probably also explain what a typewriter is! Though decidedly ancient, carbon copied trip reports have a certain gravitas. Nowadays, I think they are only produced by movie art directors as props. But we have a few interesting ones and I came across this one quite by accident as it was buried in the trip binder for the HACC's Missinaibi trip, in 1981, our first northern river.

The writer, Richard E. Matteson, who was unknown to Nick or even the legendary Stewart Coffin who passed it along to Nick by way of LaVerne Baldwin, who had passed away in Connecticut and his wife invited Steve to go through his trips reports.

Matteson's name did not register with me so imagine my surprise to find out he was a contemporary of Sig Olson and Eric Morse and was the first director of the Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute in Ashland WI. I have also spoke there twice over the years.

Richard E. Matteson, 1914-1994, was born and lived in Minnesota. Matteson was a state department desk officer briefly in 1943, but went on to serve in Patton's third army, during which time he earned the silver star for capturing Nazi Gestapo and intelligence chief Ernst Kaltenbrunner in the Austrian Alps.

After World War II, Matteson was research director for Harold Stassen's 1948 presidential campaign (1946-1948). Matteson's government career began in 1953 when he joined Harold Stassen in the Foreign Operations Administration. Still associated with Stassen, Matteson was then director of the White House Disarmament Staff (1955-1958). He stayed with the Eisenhower administration after Stassen left in 1958, first as assistant to Sherman Adams, White House chief of staff, then with the CIA's Board of National Intelligence Estimates (1959-1962). Matteson's personal friends and professional associates included many top level government officials.

He was also a canoeist and the trip report we found details a trip down Saskatchewan's Fond du Lac River with his two oldest children. It is a meticulous trip report of several thousand words. We have space here to highlight some observations about paddling in that summer of 1963, nearly half a century ago. The entire trip 11

page report is available online at our website - www.hacc.ca

Like the Eric Morse's 1957 trip, Matteson portaged the tough Elizabeth and Woodcock Falls coming out of Black Lake. No doubt the subject of some of his letters to Morse. We hope you enjoy this peek into the past and we will occasionally bring you other tales of interest from our files. All spellings etc. are original.

-Michael Peake

With two of his children - Adelaide, aka Daidie, and Robbie who would have been no more than 20 years of age, Robert E. Matteson set out from northern Wisconsin for what would have been a long trip to northern Saskatchewan.

August 15, 1963.

We had a 17-foot aluminum canoe, five paddles, two compasses, maps from the Canadian Dept. of Mines and Technical Surveys, a 17 -ft. aluminum frame Bemis Bag tent, 3 sleeping bags, an axe, a hatchet, 1 fishing rod, enough food for 12 days. For the 1st and last parts of the trip, the maps were on a scale of 8 miles to 1 inch. (not very satisfactory for canoe trip purposes) and for the middle part of the trip on a scale of 4 miles to the inch.

August 17

We had a good breakfast on the train and changed trains in Le Pas (Ed. Note - Now commonly referred to as *The Pas*) for Lynn Lake. We looked up Arthur Lamb, head of Lamb Airways [Ed. Note - That would be Tom Lamb] who with his 6 sons runs bush planes into the far north. He expressed some skepticisms to whether a Norseman aircraft would be able to carry our canoe and us.

The train trip from Le Pas to Lynn Lake was slow, averaging only 20 miles per hr. and stopping at every milk stop. One car was filled with Cree Indians who were carousing on beer. There was no diner, only a "newsie" who sold sandwiches and tomato juice. The car was labeled "air conditioned" but the air conditioner didn't work and under a hot sun all day with the windows permanently shut, the temperature rose to 90 degrees.

August 19. Wollaston Lake near mouth of Fond du Lac River.

The next morning the sun was out bright and the NW wind was blowing in fair and cool weather. The thermometer showed 58



degrees. We weatherproofed the tent and reorganized our packs. I went in swimming and found the water cold and crystal clear. We could see large fishing swimming against the current. For breakfast we had prunes cooked the night before, instant oatmeal and Tang. We shot Rs out of Hatchet Lake and had lunch a few miles later above Cascade Raps – sausage, cheese, raisins, chocolate and Rye Crisp. Cascade Raps has a sharp drop at the beginning. In trying to avoid this we steered way over on the R side and then had to cut back sharply though heavy backlashes to the L. In doing this Robbie and I swamped the canoe. Daidie was taking movies from the rocks and we were carried with the canoe upside down to a point 100 yards from the end of the rapids. We pulled out the packs on the rocks, reloaded the canoe and picked Daidie up at the bottom.

Poplar Rapids didn't look too bad as we approached but we quickly found out that the backlashes and side waves were

too high for our heavily loaded canoe. Water came over the bow and the sides and in a minute we were swamped. The Rap was fast and very rocky. I told Daidie and Robby to try and ride the canoe so as to avoid injury to their legs which I tried to slow down the speed of the canoe, which was full of water. The packs all floated out ahead of us with the paddles. Halfway down the canoe crashed with a loud noise into a submerged rock putting a large dent in the L side of the canoe about a foot square (but luckily no hole) and finally the canoe came top a halt on a rocky spit near the end of the Raps.

We looked to see what was left and found the pack with the tent and the dishes and the fishing rod were still with us. Everything else had either sun or floated on ahead. [*Ed. Note -Always lash in your packs!*] My Hudson's Bay jacket and belt with Jack Burke's fine hunting knife were gone, together with the waterproof container of matches, my compass and my set of maps. They had been wrenched loose and disappeared into the churning water. The remainder of the packs we could see floating on ahead toward a second series of Raps 300 yards away. Robby and I jumped into the empty canoe and shoved off using our hands as paddles until we reached shore in the fast water below the Raps and could grab a fallen tree for a pole. With this we were able to pick up the 3 paddles and 5 packs that were still afloat. Two paddles had been broken, the axe was gone, all of our canned goods including our Crisco and salt. We found a good open campsite between the Raps and dumped all our water-soaked packs and went back to pick up Daidie. The rubber bags in which were the

clothing, food and sleeping bags, saved us, for they had enough air in them when tied to keep all of our packs afloat except the canned goods. Nevertheless, much water had seeped in and everything was wet. All the matches that we had tied in rubber bags we found useless, even after we dried them out, except for the 24 matches that Robbie had in a waterproof container in his clothes pack. The oatmeal, cocoa, Tang and instant milk were half wet, the white and brown sugar were all wet and the salt was gone. In the canned goods, in addition to our Crisco, were all our vegetables. We made ourselves

a wonderful stew that night (Armour's Starlite, potatoes, tea and pudding). Delayed by the two swamplings we made only 12 miles that day. We still had 1 set of maps, a 2nd compass that didn't dry our and work again for several days. We had also soaked the 3 cameras and all of our film.

Through rainy weather and one more swamping the threesome made it to Black Lake where most people would embark to Stony

Rapids by road. In 1963 there was a cart track there. They enjoyed a cabin at Camp Grayling and owner Oscar Sanderson provided a much-needed hot meal. That camp is still there and they afforded us great hospitality and a ride to Stony Rapids in 2007.

August 25. Black Lake.

Mr. Sanderson transmitted my message to the radio operator in Stony Raps, asking a plane to meet us on the day after next at Stony Raps. I also made arrangements for Daidie to go in the next day over the wagon road to Stony Raps with the with the once-a-week mail and provisions truck. Robbie and I were to take the canoe and 1 pack and do the 4 mile portage around Elizabeth Falls (110-ft. drop), the 153-chain (*Ed. Note 1 chain is 66 feet*) portage around Woodcock Falls (61 ft. drop) and the 15 mile paddle across middle and Stony lakes and the descent through Stony Rapids (25 ft. drop) to our destination at the seaplane base in Lake Athabasca.

I inquired about the 2 long portages. The people at the camp thought we were crazy to portage 6 miles around the 2 falls when we could get a free ride the next day on the mail and provisions truck. For the first 4 miles there was a rut road to Mikke L. around Elizabeth Falls, the second 2 mi. was an unused portage from Middle L. to Stony L. Oscar Sanderson said he didn't even know where the second portage started and when I asked of the Indians he didn't seem to know them. We had heard from one of the Indians that the second portage was full of swamps and seldom used.



Tom Stevens and Michael Peake paddle on Cascade Rapids on the upper Fond du Lac River.



August 26. Camp Grayling.

I got up at 6am letting Daidie and Robby sleep an hour longer and took the canoe the first half mile down the portage trail. Then I walked back to meet them for breakfast at the camp. We had a big breakfast; orange juice, eggs, sausage, pancakes, toast and coffee. I paid the bill, and to

my surprise, it was only \$17 for everything for 3 people including the cabin, 3 meals (including a packed lunch) and the tow into camp. Then I took down the trail once more with Robbie to follow as soon as he had packed his pack. Taking the 4 mile at quarter-mile intervals we were able to reach the end of the portage in 1 hr and 50 min. We paddled across Middle L. and began the search for the un-



Tom Stevens and Geoffrey Peake paddle the famed Thompson Rapids where the noted explorer near met with disaster.

used portage. The first effort produced no portage so we went back up the lake about a quarter-mile and spot that appeared open. After 15 min. of looking Robbie found a path that looked like the old portage trail. The going was much rougher, uphill across two swamps and with the path completely lost in the underbrush the last half mile. After getting off the trail twice we could finally see the L in the distance through the branches of the burned trees. We arrived at Stony L. at 1 pm. Having taken about the same time on the 2 mile portage that we had taken to go over the 4 mi. portage.

We paddled in the sun, which no put in one of its rare appearances, out to a rocky ledge where we took a swim and then had lunch. The 12 mi. paddle down Stony L. was against the wind under a cloudless sky. By 4 pm. We could see the old Indian mission at the end of the L and then we looked for and found the portage on the R side of the river. At Camp Grayling, the night before, we had heard the usual stories about the rapids and decided to look them over carefully before making up our minds on whether to shoot them or not. We didn't want particularly to come to the end of the trip at the seaplane base upside down in front of whoever might be there.

The rapids were very broad (about 200 yards) with volumes of water, the Fond du Lac by now having picked up the volume of several other rivers. From the R side, as we looked across the rapids and as far down as we could see down it, about 95% seemed impassible. However, far over on the L shore there looked to be a narrow channel without too much whitewater that seemed passable.

I asked Robbie if he wanted to try it; that if he didn't want to, we wouldn't do it. He gave again the reasons why we shouldn't do it but agreed it might be possible, so into the canoe we got, paddled to the L a ways in order to be able to come down on the L side and down we started. About 100 yards down the L side hugging the bank, we glanced

off a rock that sent us to the R but we managed with the lighter canoe to get it back again to the L bank and before we knew it we had covered the mile of rapids down to the seaplane base in Stony Rapids next to the Hudson's Bay store. There we found Daidie waiting on the dock surrounded by about 10 Indian children. A couple of the Indian boys were drinking beer from the Hudson's Bay store and pitching pennies. The rapids had turned about to be one of the

fastest but one of the easiest of all the river.

August 28 On the train back to The Pas.

Again there was no diner but we brought along sandwiches from the Chinese restaurant. We had a long talk with the "newsie" a 70-year-old man resembling a character out of Dickens. He told us he had \$70,000; that his children had all married and left home and his wife had died. He said he wanted to spend the rest of his years in some active job and that money was no importance. Three times a week he rode the train up and back to Lynn Lake from Le Pas talking to people and telling everybody, as he told us, that he was the happiest man on earth.

Later that evening waiting to board the Hudson Bay - the train from Churchill to Winnipeg.

Meantime, we had picked up passengers coming from Fort Churchill on Hudson's Bay (sic). They turned out to be a mixed international group who had come by freighter from Europe. There were Austrians, Swedes, British, Germans and some American boys from universities in California. Because the train was not leaving on time Daidie and a group of foreigners together with their guitar, an accordion and a harmonica organized dancing and singing on the station platform. The scene resembled a stage setting with people in the coaches hanging out the windows and joining in the songs. Many of them came down and joined in the polkas and other dances that went on far into the night.



The Rupert that Was, Ain't Anymore

The photos in the left column are from Hydro-Québec's website and show Quebec's Rupert River last year with the new modifications. The older photos on the right side are by MATTHEW DIAMOND, son of the late Billy Diamond who has been documenting the river near his home in Waskaganish.. The river has been narrowed to support the 70 per cent flow reduction and in some cases a rock blanket was added to keep the width intact. (Bottom left.) The KP numbers, Hydro-Québec's names, indicate the distance from the end of the river in kilometres.



KP 85 Weir



Km 85 - One of The Fours Rapids



KP 49 Spur



Km 20 Smoking Hills Rapids



KP 20 Rock Blanket near Smoking Hills



Km 20 Smoking Hills Rapids



SUMMER PACKET *continued*

in time so the first test flights did not happen until May. The owner of the air charter company I use told me it cost him a small fortune testing his Turbo-Otter and Cessna 185 in May because the Transport Canada inspector was here for over a week and they flew long hours every day doing the tests. The upshot however is that this air charter company will be able to sell permits to other air charter companies IF THE ARE PASSED BY TRANSPORT CANADA--- so hopefully the airplanes here will get a pass and the owner will at least be able to recoup the money it cost him to test his airplanes for specific external loads. That's where things stand here right now and that's all I know. Hopefully, what I've told you is accurate. It is to the best of my knowledge.

Quebec Premier Jean Charest's unveiling of the \$80 billion Plan Nord project (shown below) was not completely embraced by all Natives, namely Chief Ghislain Picard, Chief of the Assembly of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador (AFNQL).

Chief Picard called it an "incomplete process for First Nations" in a press release the same day Plan Nord was unveiled. The Plan Nord



project, announced May 9, will see mining firms and the Quebec government invest \$80 billion over 25 years to mine gold, diamonds and uranium in Northern Quebec.

"I refuse to participate in a process which does not yet adequately meet the expectations of all concerned First Nations," said Picard in the press release.

The AFNQL is the regional organization regrouping the 43 Chiefs of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador.

Quebec Minister of Native Affairs Geoffrey Kelley believes major steps have been taken towards working with Natives inhabiting the area and remains open to work with those who have not yet signed the agreement.

The Plan Nord project covers nearly 1.2 million sq km. and covers nearly 72% of Quebec's geographic area. The area accounts for less than 2% of Canada's population which is equivalent to roughly 120,000 people, including 33,000 Aborigines.

"The grand council of the Cree, which represent 9 Cree communities and 16,000 Cree were full partners in the announcement," said Kelley. "Makivik Corporation and Kativik Regional Govern-

ment which represent 10,000 Inuit in the 14 Northern villages (also signed Plan Nord)"

"The Naskapi community of Kawawachikamach which is on the territory was a full partner and signed the agreement as did two Innu communities," added Kelley. The AFNQL represents both the Cree and Naskapi communities, among others. Kelley remains optimistic about more Native communities taking part in the Plan Nord project and leaves



the door open for further negotiations.

"The Plan Nord is an occasion to sit around -what I call a large kitchen table and talk about how we want to develop Plan Nord," said Kelley. "And for those communities that so far have not gotten on board, they're still welcome to and I'm hopeful that they will join us as we move forward."

Generating Jobs for Natives Part of Plan Nord

The Plan Nord website states that one of its goals is to create or consolidate on average, 20,000 jobs per year.

"Our hope is that the First Nation communities will be able to benefit both through direct employment and through economic spinoffs and contracts so that they could participate in the various Plan Nord projects," said Kelley.

One project, the creation of Assinica National Park Reserve located near Ujé-Bougoumou, Quebec, was announced May 17 and will be under Cree management. The Assinica National Park Reserve will be Quebec's second largest provincial park and it will protect 3,193 square kilometers.

Assinica National Park is expected to create jobs for the Cree as well as boost tourism in the area. The project is expected to be declared a park by 2013.

Another initiative is the creation of 500 new houses in Northern Quebec, which Kelley said is not an easy feat. Due to the short summer, the shipping season is short, making it difficult to move all the materials and equipment needed to build the homes in Ungava Bay and Hudson's Bay.

"We'll have to sit down with our Inuit partners to see how we can get going on increasing the number of houses," Kelley said.

With several construction projects on the horizon, proper training is also a priority as Plan Nord will require significant manpower.

"One of the key goals for the First Nations, is to make sure that they have access to the training they need to participate in these new development projects, whether building highways, improving airports, building houses, working in mines (or) working on dam construction."

Though the Plan Nord website states a goal of 20,000 jobs per year, Kelley said there isn't a final estimate on how many positions the Plan Nord project will create for Natives.

"It's still early days, a lot of these are negotiated project by project so I wouldn't want to hazard a guess as to how many jobs are being created," Kelley said.



CANOE SWORTHY *continued*

expired.

But now Asker, with the financial backing of Tandberg Eiendom AS, is expected to apply for new permit, so the *Maud* could be back in Norway this year for the 100th anniversary of Amundsen's successful trek to the South Pole.

Amundsen left Norway again in 1918 with the *Maud*, planning to drift with the ice across the Northeast Passage. The *Maud* was launched in June 1917 and christened by Amundsen by crushing a chunk of ice against her bow.

The *Maud* was to sail through the Northeast Passage to get into the ice northwest of the Bering Strait. The plan was to drift in the ice from there westwards and maybe over the North Pole.

But they never got into the westward current, although the expedition did produce some excellent scientific results. The *Maud* was finally sold by creditors in 1925 to Hudson Bay Co., which renamed it the *Baymaud*. The ship ended its days as a floating warehouse and radio station, sinking at its mooring in 1930.

In 1990, the Hudson's Bay Co. sold the *Maud* to the hamlet, which then transferred the ship's ownership to Asker.

Biologists are sounding an alarm over drastic declines in the numbers and overall condition of caribou in northern Quebec. As recently as 2001, caribou numbered more than one million in Nunavik; now there could be fewer than 300,000 caribou.

Some say the drop - as much as 80 per cent in the case of the George River herd - is just part of a natural cycle that has seen caribou populations go up and down.

But that argument no longer holds because new factors have come into play, says Joelle Taillon, a graduate student at Université Laval and member of Caribou Ungava, a five year, \$1.7-million research project on Nunavik caribou.

"We're in a different context now. We have climate change, more development, industries and more activity than we had 40 to 50 years ago," Taillon told Nunatsiq News.

Although studies can't yet say exactly what is affecting caribou numbers in Nunavik, Quebec has moved to limit the damage to the herds. Earlier this year the province's natural resources department announced cuts to the caribou sports hunt, which takes some of the 40,000 caribou hunted every year from the Leaf and George River herds.

The federal government is beginning the expensive task of surveying the Northwest Territories-Nunavut border, which was established in the 1990s but has yet to be marked on the ground.

The 2,400-kilometre border, considered the longest jurisdictional boundary in the country, came into effect when Nunavut became its own territory in 1999.

But with more mineral exploration work starting up near the border, the need to pin down a physical line has become more important, a senior federal surveyor told CBC News at a national industry conference this week in Yellowknife.

"The border on the map is just a picture; it's a picture on a flat piece of paper. In real life, the Earth is round and it will affect where you think the line is and where you really are," said Nancy Kearnan, the government's deputy surveyor general for the N.W.T. and Nunavut.

"So in some areas, it was very important to find a clear physical demarcation on the ground, so that there is no ambiguity."

Knowing the location of the border is important, as mining companies in the area need to know which territorial government and regulatory system they must work with, she added.

Crews began surveying the border near Kugluktuk, Nunavut, where exploration for diamonds, gold and base metals is already in full swing.

Ottawa spent \$1.1 million on surveying work in March, when travel on the land was easiest. Varrick Ollerhead of Ollerhead and Associates Ltd., the Yellowknife-based firm that did the work, said his crew drilled 70 metal pins into rock along a 668-kilometre stretch of the border over a 30-day period.

Ollerhead said the work revealed that some images of the N.W.T.-Nunavut border, such as those shown on Google Earth, appear to be several kilometres off.

Citing one minesite on the Nunavut side of the border, Ollerhead observed, "You get very close to the border [and] you would've thought they were five miles inside or 10 miles inside.

"But once we were done, like really, their airstrip is almost in Northwest Territories and their minesite is in Nunavut," he said. Parcels of land transferred to Inuit land-claim beneficiaries in Nunavut have already been surveyed, according to officials. Work on surveying the rest of the N.W.T.-Nunavut border is expected to continue next winter.

A cluster of lakes in Nunavik is home to the world's only known population of a unique harbour seal - and its fate is uncertain, even as major development is planned for northern Quebec.

The Lacs des loups marins harbour seals, *Phoca vitulina mellonae*, live in remote lakes about 160 kilometres east of Umiujaq, on Nunavik's Hudson Bay coast, principally in the lakes of the same name. The series of interconnected lakes and rivers are described in Inuttit as "kasigiak-siovik" or "place of harbour seals." It is believed the freshwater seal, a subspecies of harbour seal, got separated from the ocean 3,000 to 8,000 years ago, following the final retreat of the Laurentide Ice Sheet.

Today, there may be as few as 80 of the Lacs des loups marins harbour seals left, researchers say, a threshold at which their survival is threatened. A 1991 survey put the figure at approximately 100 seals. Early records suggest the population was larger before hunters started using rifles.

Yet even though the government of Quebec listed *Phoca vitulina mellonae* as "likely to be designated as threatened or vulnerable" in 1992, the seal is still unprotected, facing threats from hunting, and now from tourism and the exploitation of northern rivers by Hydro-Québec, a likely outcome of Quebec's new Plan Nord.

As it stands, the seal population has not yet been added to Canada's Species at Risk list. This potentially species-saving designation is awaiting a recommendation from a diverse group: the Canadian government, the government of Quebec, the Cree, the Inuit and Hydro-Québec.

And while the border of a recently designated provincial park, Tursujuq, includes part of the seal's habitat, Hydro-Québec argued at public hearings against enlarging the park since that might impact its future plans, so Tursujuq excludes the watershed of lakes and smaller rivers that feed into the Nastapoka River. These boundaries will not protect the seal, argues the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society group.

The seals eat whitefish, lake char and brook char, and the Cree have described "a noticeable difference in the taste of the meat, which they prefer to the other harbour seals. The Inuit believed that the pelt of this freshwater seal is not only darker but also softer and shinier than that of the other seals. Its skull, too, apparently has a distinctive shape."



Quebec is a massive province. But many people are not aware that much of its land mass was a gift from Canada in 1912. That huge area of northern Quebec or Ungava was part of the Northwest Territories and much of that was part of historic Rupert's Land, deeded to the Hudson's Bay Company on May 2, 1670 by King Charles II. Rupert's Land, named after Charles' cousin Prince Rupert, comprised 1.5 million sq. miles and was turned over to Canada in 1868. Much of that became the North West Territories in 1870 and, on April 1, 1912 it added to northern Quebec, thanks to The Quebec Boundaries Extension Act of that year. The southwest corner of the new territory was the mouth of the Eastmain River which has now been almost totally diverted into the La Grande hydro project. The huge land transfer was a nice present to a burgeoning province.

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