



# CHE-MUN

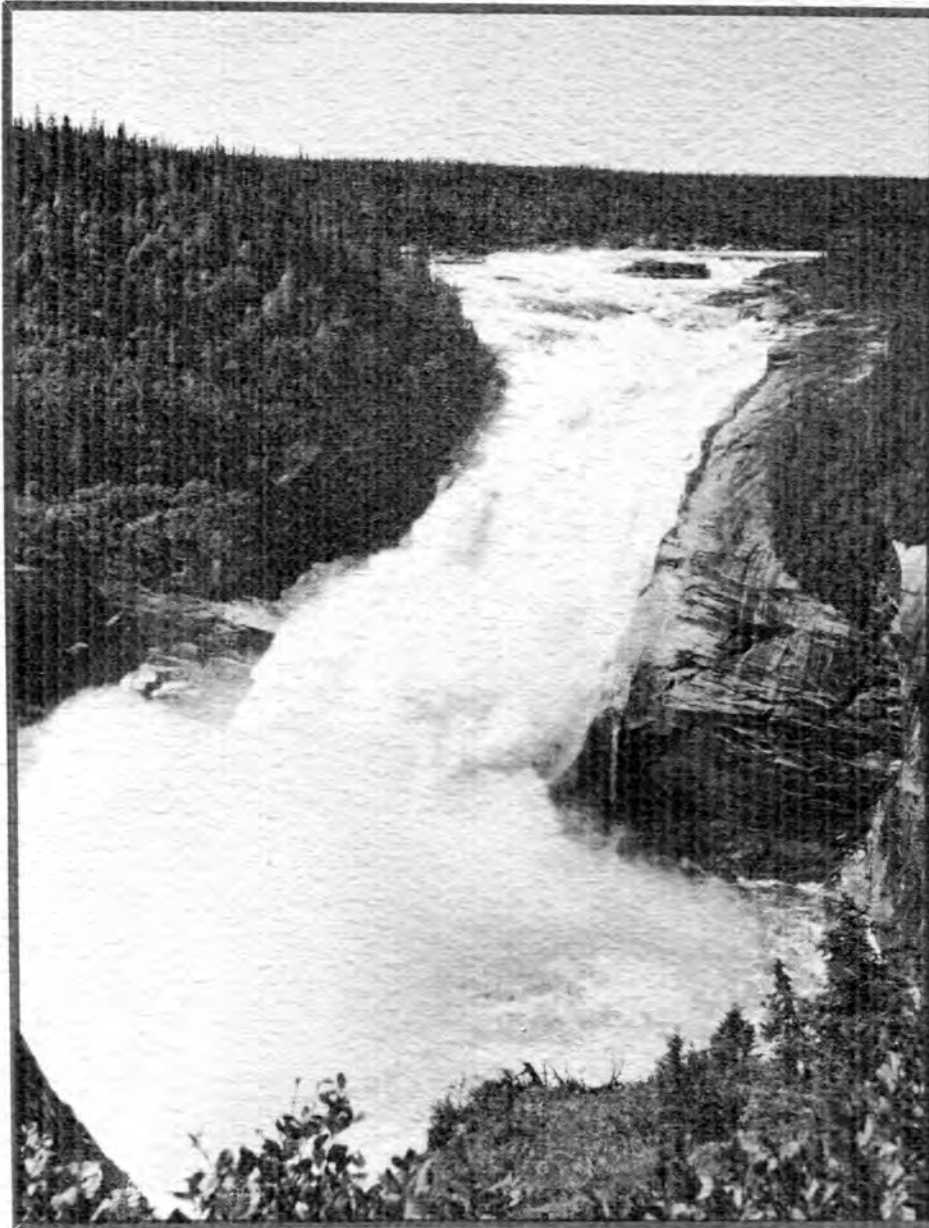
(Ojibway for canoe)

THE NEWSLETTER OF CANADIAN WILDERNESS CANOEING

OUTFIT 65

CHE-MUN

SUMMER 1991



## Churchill Falls

A Reawakening Giant?

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**GRAND FALLS** -- That was the name that John McLean of the Hudson Bay Company gave to these falls in 1839. He was the first white man to see the spectacular 245 foot cataract. That once-mighty flow is now reduced to a trickle thanks to the Churchill Falls power development. Plans to expand the scheme are in the works.

# Summer Packet



This issue of the Packet begins with a special letter about a potentially ominous development.

## An Open Letter to Transport Canada

There have been suggestions in the press of late that Transport Canada is giving consideration to imposing an annual licensing fee on all watercraft in Canada, including self-propelled craft such as canoes and kayaks. To require power vessel owners to pay for the services which Transport Canada provides makes perfect sense to me and in that capacity I will be happy to pay my dues. But as a canoeist, I find the idea both distasteful and impractical.

I can think of at least five reasons why canoes should not be required to bear a license:

1. It is an affront to our Canadian heritage. Canoes were the principal vehicle of exploration in this country. To tax them now, after all they have done to help build this nation, just tastes bad.
2. In this era of environmental concern, to place a tax on one of the few non-consumptive forms of leisure available to Canadians seems to be a regressive step.
3. I can think of virtually no case in which the average canoeist is likely to use the services of Transport Canada.
4. Requiring canoes to have a license seems like "too much government" — what will be next: a license for skateboards or perhaps cross-country skis?
5. Licensing canoes contradicts the very essence of canoeing. Since long before white man and his bureaucracies arrived canoes have been roaming freely through Canadian waters. When I'm paddling, there is a sense of celebration of the freedom of the wilderness that stirs in my soul.

I urge Transport Canada to reconsider and to take steps to ensure that canoes are not inappropriately included in what is otherwise reasonable legislation.

Yours Sincerely,

David Pelly

*(Transport Canada says canoes appeared by accident on a list of measures for reform. We will be watching them closely to see they are removed from the list - Ed. Note.)*

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"I have been a subscriber to your interesting newsletter and have been an enthusiastic canoe tripper in your wonderful wilderness for more than 30 years. While I have been in the Barrens with Alex Hall and on the Fond du Lac River with Cliff Jacobson, the great majority of the trips that my groups and I take are in southern Canada — the "Shield" country.

"We have canoed Temagami, Algonquin, Bowron and of course the great Quetico many times, and have one trip planned for this summer. We are now thinking about 1992 and would like to plan a trip in the Bloodvein River system of eastern Manitoba - northwestern Ontario.

"I have contacted the appropriate departments in Manitoba and have received all of the available information including maps required and float plane services but they can furnish very little in possible canoe routes.

"I know there is a great deal of canoe tripping in that area and I would like to correspond with someone knowledgeable about specific routes, length of time required, degree of difficulty, portages, etc."

Che-Mun has very little info on this area so if there is anyone out there who can help please write to Jack Fox, 730 Forest Ave., Wilmette, Illinois 60091 or call (708) 251-6313.

Ivar Robertson is a regular Che-Mun contributor who lives in Saskatchewan.

"I have a copy of Eric Morse's book *Freshwater Saga*. I found the book an inspiration to a canoeist like myself.

"A friend and I were canoeing the Dubawnt River in the summer of 1986. Starting at Black Lake and ending at Baker Lake. We stopped at a small beach on Selwyn Lake (on the Saskatchewan-NWT border) and decided to spend the night.

"The gruelling height-of-land portage into Flett Lake was ahead of us and we needed the rest. That's when we found your note in the champagne bottle. We left the bottle and note exactly the way we found them.

"We have been planning an anniversary trip in 1993. That would be 100 years since the Tyrrell brothers group first explored the Dubawnt River. J. B. Tyrrell is a kind of hero of mine.

"I spent a few years in Stony Rapids, Sask working as a bush pilot. There I met Marypat Zitzer and Alan Kesselheim. They were spending the winter at Otherside River on Lake Athabasca and they introduced me to Che-Mun. They have also seen another source of inspiration."

*(Ed. Note. There's a bit more of a coincidence here than meets the eye. Ivan's group was the second one to find our note from the 1985 Journey Across the Barrenland trip to the mouth of the Back River. That was the trip we named a river after Eric Morse. And the only other people to find the bottle that we know of? Alan and Marypat in the same year! It must be the best campsite on Selwyn.)*

David Pelly is a well travelled northern chap. The veteran Arctic sojourner will again be up north this summer but wrote Che-Mun of some recent adventures down south.

"I'm just back from Costa Rica where I spent nearly a month "working" with Monteverde reserve there. It was a fascinating place and there's a great story behind it.

"It was really Canadian money that got it started, a few years ago, and by now they have purchased tens of thousands of acres of rainforest for eternal preservation.

Latterly, most of the money has been raised by children's groups around the world (Sweden, USA, UK Japan) and Canada's efforts has sort of petered out.

"While I was there David Suzuki showed up to do a show for his new (starting next season) CBC nature show about the Monteverde Reserve, and no doubt playing on Canada's role.

I (and many other down here) would like to see a Canadian group formed — parallel to and with support of the sister groups in other countries — to raise awareness of and money for the rainforest protection program. It's a great way for kids to become aware of their connection to the rest of the world, socially and environmentally.

"I'll spend most of June at home at "Beaulieu" and then head north for the summer. First of all two weeks leading a scientific expedition on the Thelon River. Then four weeks split between the Thelon and Kazan working with a small crew putting together a show about the two heritage rivers.

"Tough job but someone's got to do it."

# CANOE TOONS

PAUL MASON



## Editor's Notebook

**W**ith any luck most of you Che-Mun readers will open this page in late August as you sort through the mountain of mail that piled up during your 60 day canoe trip. But since most of us are bound by the financial and other restraints that bind we mere mortals to an urban life — it's not too likely that scenario will affect many of us. In my last Notebook I lamented about the problems we were having raising money for our trip this summer. Boy how things have changed in a few months.

The Hide-Away Canoe Club is now fully funded as we head out for our 24 day trip in the Northwest Territories in August. Lands Forlorn is the title of our trip which will retrace the route of George Douglas 80 years ago from Great Bear Lake to Coppermine. The name of the trip is taken from the classic book by Douglas. The route leaves Great Bear and travels up the Dease River and into the Dismal Lakes, down the Kendall River where it joins the mighty Coppermine River and then down that rapidly flowing river to the sea.

The trip will include myself, Peter Scott, Peter Brewster — all usuals — and David Peake (the fourth brother) who will be partaking in his first northern trip. Sponsors include; Labatt's Breweries, Government of the Northwest Territories, the Toronto Sun and Loblaws foods. You can expect a full report in the next outfit.

There are other exciting things on the horizon. Woods Canada, the 106-year-old maker of fine packs and clothing have become a sustaining sponsor of the HACC. Besides being a major sponsor of this — and next — year's trip, they will be taking myself and brother Geoffrey to Japan this fall for a two-week series of slide talks and canoe presentations on canoeing in northern Canada. It will be much the same type of thing we do every year at the L.L. Bean North American Canoe Symposium.

In this issue of Che-Mun we are take a look at the ghost of a power project that is raising its head again — the Churchill Falls Project in Labrador. It was the first James Bay—style power development — even before there was a James Bay.

We also begin a regular update series on the many ins and out of Hydro-Quebec's James Bay power scheme. Many of our readers, especially Americans, find it hard to keep up on what is happening with this potentially devastating power project.

And we have a very interesting talk with Robert Perkins who has some thoughtful and provocative things to say about soloing, canoes and especially — cairns. Hope the rest of your summer is great.

Michael Peake, Editor.

## Downstream effects are being felt

FORT CHIPEWYAN, (Alta). Fred Fraser used to trap hundreds of muskrats in a single season.

Now, he's hard pressed to spot a single animal. Geese were once so plentiful they would turn the sandy shores of the Peace and Athabasca Rivers white.

"You never see geese here in the fall, now; it's a wonder they stop here in the spring," says Fraser, a longtime resident of Fort Chipewyan, a small northern Alberta community on the banks of Lake Athabasca.

The area is believed to be the largest freshwater delta in the world — 4,000 square kilometres of wetland around Fort Chipewyan. It once was known for a multitude of animal species.

But over the past 20 years, area residents have noticed a staggering decrease in wildlife, which they blame on a significant decrease in water.

They point an accusing finger at the W.A.C. Bennett Dam in northeastern British Columbia, which began holding back flood waters to the delta in 1968.

A recent scientific study backs that up, concluding that the dam is having a devastating effect on the area's fish and wildlife.

An independent study funded by Canada Parks Service shows 47 per cent of the delta's productive vegetation and wildlife habitat has disappeared since the dam was built.

The study estimates the amount will jump to 85 per cent by the year 2031 if the river waters continue to be restrained. That is likely to happen.

The dam's effects extend far past Fort Chipewyan to Wood Buffalo National Park, which contains 80 per cent of the delta.

Park warden Gordon Antoniuk says the drastic decline in the park's bison population was once thought to be solely caused by bovine tuberculosis, but it is now partly attributed to the disappearance of moist delta sedges, a bison staple.

The disappearing delta worries Dave Milne, a park warden in Fort Smith, N.W.T., just north of Alberta. He says the area is a prime breeding ground for waterfowl and the migratory causeway for many bird species, including the endangered whooping cranes.

"It would be a disaster if the delta dried out because it's a jewel," says Milne. "You just don't find other habitats of this kind."

Ducks no longer stop to feed in the delta in the fall, and in the last few years, only a few species showed up during the spring migration.

Fort Chipewyan resident Jim Moore, who hunted and trapped in the area when wildlife was plentiful, says the dam has changed his way of life.

"Nobody traps here anymore," he says. "There are no more animals to trap."

Before the dam was built, there were regular patterns of spring and summer flooding in the delta. Since 1968, there have been only three springs when river runoff produced flooding in the area.



# Bob Perkins: Solo man of our northland

**R**obert Perkins lives to love the north. The Massachusetts native got hooked on northern Canada early in life and it hasn't let him go. But Perkins takes a closer look at his travels than most of us because he prefers to travel solo.

But his solo trips are more populated than most other canoe journeys by those who read his writings and watch his films about them.

His early trips were in the rivers of Quebec that are no more. He went down the Eastmain River with five friends in 1970 — a year before Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa announced the James Bay hydro project. The long and powerful Eastmain now merely serves as a diversion channel serving Hydro-Quebec's massive LG2 hydro project. Most of the water from the Eastmain has been diverted into the La Grande River.

Perkins recalls the river that was:

"A big, big river that was chock full of geese and beaver.

"It was a wilderness river — one of the few in North America — where you could travel for two months and not see another person.

"We made a mistake in Ross Gorge — a big dog leg rapid. We had come into the portage incorrectly and put back in too soon. Two of our three canoes turned over and we lost half of the last month's food.

"I had a very damaged canoe that I was able to fix because it was wood/canvas. We were a little hungry for the last month — not starving because we had some food which is almost worse.

"What happened to me on this trip I'll always remember since as I was a first timer and since I tend to be an idealist. We found that the hungrier people became the more they put themselves first. We had always done things as a group and I thought this was too bad.

*Why the Eastmain when no one in 1970 even knew about the hydro projects or northern Quebec for that matter.*

"The Eastmain River was the furthest, most legendary river on our horizon at the time. My group had all gone to either

Keewaydin or Wabun camps in Temagami so we were aware of area.

"I went to Wabun where we had Cree guides. The Keewaydin campers did the Eastmain as part of their regular runs.

"While we were on the river we met some people who told us they were going to build some dams — but it didn't mean anything at the time.

"The idea that the Eastmain River is connect to the Grand Canal project is freezing to my soul.

Perkins has just produced a wonderful book — *Into the Great Solitude — An Arctic Journey*.

It's the story of a solo summer on the Back River. A uniquely, insightful examination of the inner thought of a man on an extended solo trip in the Barrens.

"This book is personal," Perkins said. That's my attitude about the way to convey information to people.

"Most nature books and books about canoeing are very stilted and objective and dwell on action, equipment and food. I wanted to do something different — so the book is written in the present tense. And it's a story.

"I think that those government musk-ox watchers have the same things going on in their head. But they're being paid to watch musk-ox so they're not going to talk about what's in their head they're going to talk about musk-ox.

"My challenge is to be honest and say what's occurring inside my head and those things that go on in there are different on a solo trip.

"I tried to include the human voice. In my film on the trip, instead of the narrator of a TV show, I put myself smack in front of the camera so to get the story you have to go through me.

*One section in the book dealt with his discovery of a cairn built by a canoe party in 1977. It opens an interesting discussion on the effects of canoeists on the land they travels in. The cairn Perkins criticizes was erected by the David Pelly-led trip. Che-Mun will give David a chance at a rebuttal in the fall issue.*

"I would not blame Pelly for not thinking too well of me for the way I talk about it. But it is not only my feelings, but those of people who spend a great deal of time in the north, that monuments are of several different kinds.

"Those that we find on the land itself — all those pointy rocks from the Canadian shield. The lakes themselves — they are monuments to Mother Earth.

"And then there are the people whose land it was their home for thousands of years. Their monuments range from small ones no higher than our knees, to the caches and hunting blinds to the tent rings and little scrapers. Those have a certain connection to the land the more modern efforts don't necessarily have.

"Those are what I call Canoeer Cairns. They are erected by people having a good time or who are windbound. But there are monuments such as the one erected by the Bromley family in 1987. (Ed. Note — Bromley and Caulder were two paddlers killed in 1967 at the rapid that now bears their name on the lower Back River.)

"It's not on the river. There are now two lakes named after the pair north of the river beyond Bulliard Lake. In 1987 the family erected a monument to them.

"That's a monument that's very worthwhile because it draws our attention, not only to the consequences of the land, but the spirit that persists beyond such a tragedy which is why I think the family did that.

*What about cairns from people like Franklin?*

"That great. This was the way they communicated. They were made big and solid with their trip notes and canisters. In fact that's the only way we know anything about the Franklin men because of that one cairn that had their log.

*We (Hide-Away Canoe Club) erected a cairn at the headwaters of the Morse River which we named in 1985. What do you think of that?*

"You've got a man (Eric Morse) who was never remarked in any other way. You were officially naming a river for him as part of Canadian history.

"The Pelly name was all over Canada and the trip they were on was doing nothing to contribute to further knowledge. It was a personal reminiscence which is nice to do but I'm not going to go around my hometown of Boston and paint personal reminiscences on the sides of buildings.

"I think Eric Morse should have gotten more — a bigger river.

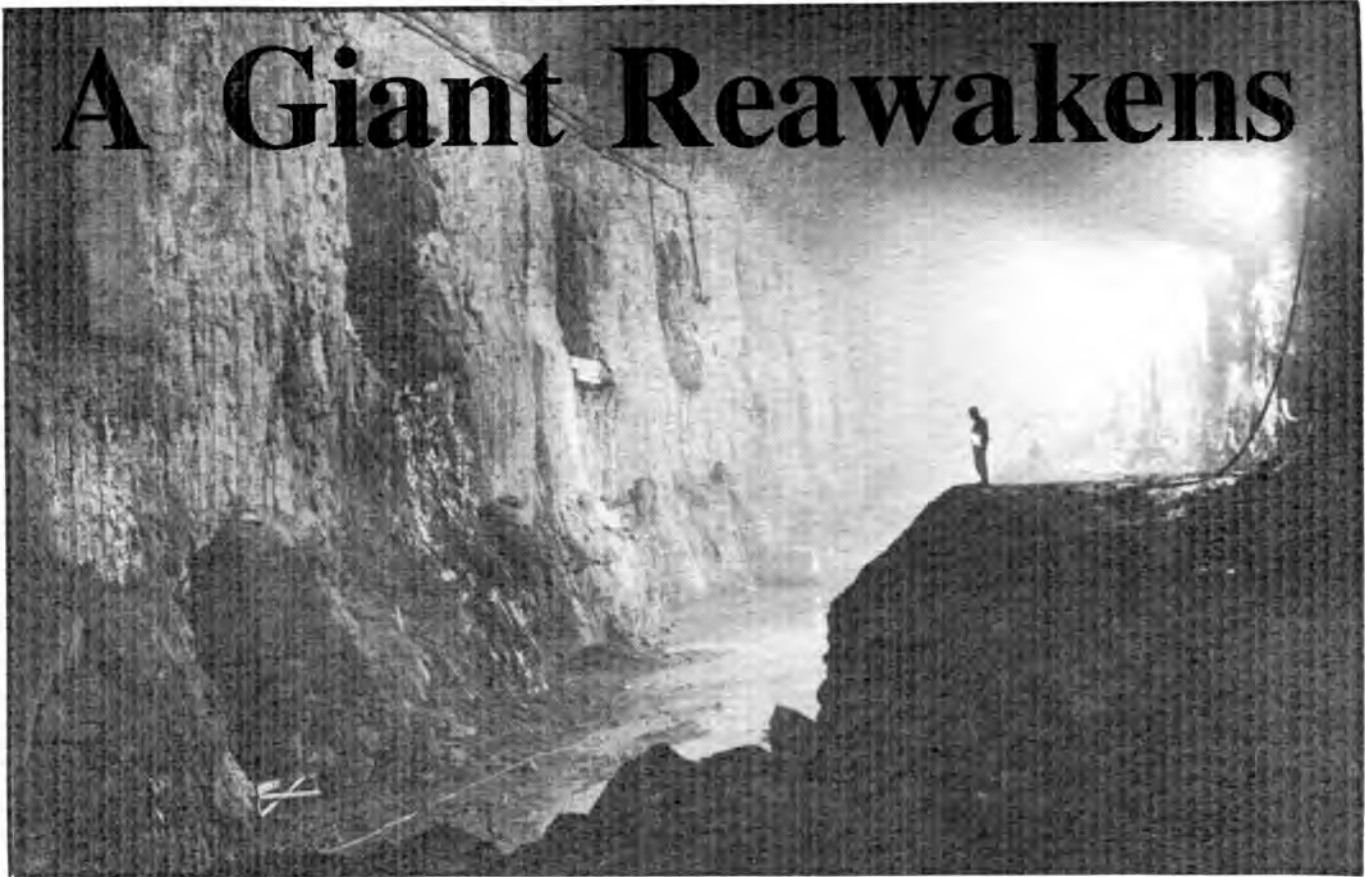
"I wish I could have been the person who took the Pelly cairn down. And it went to court and was debated about.

"The point of view which is often less hear is the one I represent. Instead of development — in whatever form it takes — things might be better off left alone.

Perkins in heading back to the Back River, the upper part of the Back.

"I'm saying thank-you to a river that has been so nice to me. I first did the Back first in 1976 then again in 1987 and 88 and 1989 I was on the Baillie. This time I have no projects, no film or anything. I'm just going to enjoy."

# A Giant Reawakens



CHURCHILL FALLS, Nfld.-- After 20 years, the cavernous tunnels and monstrous turbines that shake the floor with a deep hum still generate high-voltage animosity that hinders plans to build two more plants on the Churchill River in Labrador.

Newfoundland and Quebec started a new round of talks on a \$10-billion development downstream 18 months ago, and officials say there could be an agreement this year. But the project has seen so many starts and stops that even cautious optimism seems naive.

It all comes back to a 65-year deal signed in 1969. The contract became outdated almost as soon as the ink dried because it didn't include a price-escalation clause.

Ninety per cent of the electricity produced at the Upper Churchill station will be sold to Quebec at a rock-bottom price until 2034.

Newfoundland estimates Quebec makes \$800 million a year reselling the energy to the United States.

The hefty profits and Newfoundland's own increasing need for power it can't reclaim have been sources of acrimony for years.

The issue prompted a legal challenge that lasted 12 years. A Supreme Court of Canada decision in 1988 rejected Newfoundland's objections to the deal.

Outbursts from Newfoundland politicians have become routine, with the bitterness increasing in tense political times.

During the Meech Lake furore last year, Finance Minister Hubert Kitchen suggested that Newfoundland's opposition to the con-

stitutional accord favored by Quebec was motivated by revenge for the power deal.

"They got us by the short hair on Upper Churchill," he told the legislature. "We've got them in the same place on Meech Lake."

Locals who work in the plant or the company town say it's a topic that is often discussed, but there's a sense of resignation about the sour deal.

"I have a lot of friends who are Quebecers," says town manager Francis Clarke. "I don't hate them because they have a good power contract.

"Business is business. Any person who lives in this province would like to see more benefits. But in the operation of a contract, there is no room for politics."

Others worry that old wounds are preventing Newfoundland from sharing the spoils of a new development.

"Are we losing a big contract and the opportunity for employment to rewrite history?" asks Frank Hennebury, a plant supervisor.

Leo Cole, president of Churchill Falls (Labrador) Corp., insists that the old deal is a separate issue which is not on the bargaining table.

However, Quebec has hinted Newfoundland might get a better shake on the contract if it agrees on a plan for two more plants along the Lower Churchill, downstream near Goose Bay, Nfld.

The project would be larger than the Hibernia offshore oil deal signed last fall by Newfoundland, Ottawa and a consortium of oil companies.

If the two provinces agree on a letter of intent this year, a five-year construction phase would begin in 1995 at Gull Island and two years later at Muskrat Falls.

Newfoundland, with a jobless rate near 20 per cent, could use the work. The project would provide 3,200 jobs over five years, pay workers a total of \$1.3 billion and inject another \$600 million into the economy through purchases of goods and services.

When completed, the Lower Churchill would provide about half the amount of power generated at the plant upriver — which produces enough energy for three cities the size of Montreal.

Some of the new power would go to the island of Newfoundland on a new transmission line to St. John's. The surplus would be sold to Quebec.

Energy Minister Rex Gibbons says he's telling interested companies not to get too excited.

"We are continuing to make gradual progress," he says. "But I don't want to say it's going to be by this date or by that date.

"Don't do what was done in the early '80s a couple of times on Hibernia — go out and spend a bundle and end up with no project."

Hibernia, slated to start producing oil in 1996, could actually throw a wrench in the works when it comes to financing.

*Continued on Page eight.*



## News & Notes

**B**USY BARRENS . . . With the summer canoe season in full swing traffic appears to be about normal according to outfitter in the Northwest Territories.

The most popular river this year according to an informal poll done by Che-Mun is the Thelon River area, followed by the Back.

A group of six women are spending a 70-day tripping summer going from Healy Lake and then down the Back River. Several small parties are paddling in the Thelon Game Sanctuary Area including trips down the Mary Frances.

Noted northern guide, Jim Abel, is out on a two-person, non-guiding 80 day trip from that Thelon ending up at Queen Maud Gulf on the Arctic Ocean coast. Che-Mun reader, Steve Read from England is doing Reliance, Artillery Lake and then down the Hanbury/Thelon on a 70-dayer that began June 18.

Neither trip, according to our information, is getting re-provisioned along the way. One canoe is doing the Yellowknife River. Peter Cork from Ireland was planning to go up the Snowdrift River to the Thelon. Walter Lohaza is doing the Back River and several other small groups are doing the Thelon. No one was scheduled to do the Coppermine but it is usually one of the busiest rivers.

In far northern Quebec a group of six are planning to do the Povungnituk River from near the Nouveau-Quebec Crater. Che-Mun has no known descents of the Povungnituk. Four canoeists from France using Coleman canoes went up the POV in 1985 and down the Vachon into Ungava Bay.

**N**O MORE CABLES ON AUX SABLES... Canoeing groups are demanding the province complete an environmental assessment two more hydroelectric generators are built on a Northern Ontario river. The Ontario government should conduct an assessment because studies paid for by Electrogen Corp. aren't good enough, said Richard Culpepper of the Wilderness Canoe Association.

"The environmental work that was done was literally bought and paid for by the guy who wants the dam," Culpepper said. Electrogen Corp. was ordered by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources to conduct an environmental study before it could build its generators on the Aux Sables River, west of Sudbury.

Culpepper wants the ministry to reconsider its approval of the generators. One generator has already been built. Tom Brown, a spokesman for Canoe Ontario, is seeking a government assessment because Electrogen has not allowed the club to see the results of the original study. David Carnochan, a ministry spokesman, said the government was happy with the results of the study.

**T**IPPACANOE — AND BELL CELLULAR TOO... Modern technology came to the aid of a neophyte canoeist who tried to fool Mother Nature this spring. Randy Shantz, 36, used a cellular phone to call for help when he was tossed into the frigid waters of the Moon River near Georgian Bay in Central Ontario.

"He was loaded up with survival equipment. I guess he was thinking ahead," provincial police Const. Mark Thomas said today. Shantz, an Air Ontario pilot from the Toronto suburb of Etobicoke, was travelling alone down the river when waves began to buffet his canoe.

Thomas said Shantz decided to turn back and paddle upstream, but the river — swollen by recent rains and melting snow — was too strong. His canoe capsized about 1 p.m. "He had the presence of mind to snatch a backpack before swimming to shore," Thomas said.

Shantz dialed 911 on his cellular phone and, after a chilly three-hour wait, was picked up by Thomas and another constable, who had to trudge through thick bush with a canoe and then paddle down the river to reach him.

Shantz had been on the first day of a planned three-day 30-kilometre trip starting off in Bala, about 50 kilometres north of Orillia in Ontario's Muskoka cottage region.

"He was a little cold, but otherwise fine," Thomas said.

Police had warned other canoeists about the dangers of area waterways. "The river is as high as I've ever seen it," Const. Bill Soule said. "All of the docks are under water."

**C**ARDIAC CREE...A public-health program warning James Bay Cree Indians against eating mercury-contaminated fish may have been too successful, says a consultant for the Cree Board of Health and Social Services. Cree who cut their fish consumption for fear of contamination may be running an increased risk of heart disease as a result, Dr. Charles Dumont said.

"We are now noticing cardiac problems among the Cree of Chisasibi," Dumont said in an interview.

In the 1970s — before flooding for Hydro-Quebec's James Bay project contaminated fish with mercury — Dumont saw one heart attack in five years. Last year in the community of Chisasibi, on the east side of James Bay, there were five heart attacks, he said.

With fishing losing importance among the Cree because of the mercury pollution, people are also missing out on the exercise they used to get going into the bush and they are buying more fatty food from stores, Dumont said.

"Cree society is being swallowed by North American values," said Dumont, who has worked among the Cree for 22 years.

This has also produced an increased incidence of diabetes. "Fifteen years ago there were no Cree diabetics," he said. "Last year there were 30 diabetics in Chisasibi."

Naturally occurring mercury, usually contained in the soil and vegetation, is released into hydro-electric dam reservoirs when plants decompose after flooding. It accumulates in fish, a staple of the Cree diet.

**S**TUCK ON CANOEING . . . Canada Post is releasing two sets of stamps that will be of interest to wilderness canoeists this summer. (See Page 8.) They are continuing their Small Craft series with a four 40 cent stamp release in late July. The craft will feature a wooden cedar strip canoe — along with a kayak, rowboat and sailing dinghy.

A second series will feature Canada's River Heritage. The Post Office blurb says the series will "focus on rugged wilderness rivers." It turns out the four are the Main in Newfoundland, the Jacques-Cartier River — in southern Quebec, the Athabasca River in northern Alberta and the final one isn't a river at all but the Boundary Waters — Voyageur Waterway which runs along the Minnesota-Ontario border. These stamps will also be released in the 40 cent denomination in a booklet of 10 stamps, two each.

## Our Back Pages

**T**he following back issues of Che-Mun are available for four dollars each including postage. Those marked with an asterisk (\*) are photocopies of the original outfit.

- Outfit 38 - Fort William Rendezvous, Magpie River.
- Outfit 39 - Trans Canada Canoe Expedition/David Pelly.\*
- Outfit 40 - Eric Morse Tribute, Story of Les Voyageurs.\*
- Outfit 41 - Grand Canal Project, Thlewiaza River solo.\*
- Outfit 42 - The Morse River Expedition Part I.
- Outfit 43 - The Morse River Expedition Part II.
- Outfit 44 - Bill Mason & the Dog River, Athabasca Letter.
- Outfit 45 - Pipe River by Eric Morse, River flow chart.
- Outfit 46 - Hudson Bay to Ungava Bay, Stew Coffin report.
- Outfit 47 - Heritage Rivers, Trans Canada Expedition.
- Outfit 48 - Freshwater Saga, Morse R. Memoirs, Slide fest.
- Outfit 49 - Kayaking in the Queen Charlottes, HBC sell-off.
- Outfit 50 - Royal couple canoe the Hanbury/Thelon Rivers.\*
- Outfit 51 - Traditional canoeing through Quetico Park.
- Outfit 52 - Lands Forlorn, Atomic Arctic Proposal.
- Outfit 53 - Ungava Crater Expedition, Hubbard & Wallace.
- Outfit 54 - Povungnituk 88 - Ungava, Sleeping Island review.
- Outfit 55 - Memories of Bill Mason, Twin Otter disappears.
- Outfit 56 - Canoeing stamps, Hanbury review, WCA slidefest.
- Outfit 57 - North American Canoe Symposium, book reviews.
- Outfit 58 - Churchill River trip, Review of The Lonely Land.
- Outfit 59 - Tyrrell Brothers, Water & Sky, Alberta Pulp Wars.
- Outfit 60 - Via Rail, Missinaibi, James Bay Hydro, HBC exit.
- Outfit 61 - Inside LG2, Aki on the Barrens, Grey Owl.
- Outfit 62 - Across Ungava via the Kogaluk and Payne Rivers.
- Outfit 63 - Canoeing in the 1930's, Hydro-Quebec Chairman.
- Outfit 64 - Rupert River in 1914 remembered, Keewaydin Guide.

# Action heats up on James Bay II

With this issue of Che-Mun we start a regular one-page update on the massive Hydro-Quebec power project.

● July 11 -- Federal Environment Minister Jean Charest announced that the federal government will conduct a global environmental impact review of the controversial project in northern Quebec.

He also said there's no guarantee that work on the project will be halted until the federal review is over.

A federal environmental assessment of the Great Whale hydro project would be an illegal intrusion into provincial jurisdiction, Quebec Energy Minister Lise Bacon said.

Quebec insists on a two part review; one on the roads and infrastructure another for the actual dams.

Bacon refused to speculate whether the two levels of government are heading for a showdown in the courts over environmental impact studies of the \$12.6-billion megaproject.

Bacon, speaking to reporters in Quebec City after a cabinet meeting, refused comment on the key issue of whether construction will go ahead before the federal environmental assessment is completed.

Charest admitted that if it comes to a legal showdown, Ottawa may lose.

Cree representatives who attended Charest's news conference were angry that work might proceed while the review is taking place.

"We will take every action — legal, political or civil disobedience — to make sure the work doesn't go ahead," said Bill Namagoose, executive director of the Grand Council of the Cree of Quebec.

Namagoose said his people are prepared to lie down in front of tractors and bulldozers to prevent Hydro-Quebec from digging one shovelful of land before the review is completed.

Charest said it could take two years before the federal review is finished.

"Our global review will take a three-fold approach," Charest said. "First we'll look at the reasons for the project, then the infrastructure and then the project itself."

He said the global approach is necessary because the Great Whale project will affect other parts of Canada that are connected to the Hudson Bay water system.

Hydro-Quebec spokesman Jacques-Andre Couture said the Crown corporation wants to start building the roads this coming winter.

● June 27 -- Environmental hearings on the Great Whale hydroelectric project were cancelled — a day after Cree in northern Quebec stopped Hydro-Quebec experts from entering the village of Great Whale.

The decision was made by the Quebec government's Kativik Environmental Quality Commission after a two-hour meeting with Inuit leaders and representatives from villages in northern Quebec. Cree protesters again blocked the air strip at Great Whale in their bid to stop the beginning of the hearings. A peaceful crowd of about 100 Cree faced off with 15 Hydro-Quebec representatives and chanted "Hydro Go Home."

They are seeking a court injunction to prevent the split, which they fear will allow Hydro to build \$755-million worth of roads and airports before the environmental impact of the dams is known.

In Quebec City, leading cabinet ministers decried the Cree decision to prevent the Hydro-Quebec employees from entering Great Whale.

Environmental Affairs Minister Pierre Paradis said he sympathizes with the Cree and Inuit in northern Quebec but urged them to take part in the environmental hearings to voice their objections to the project.

● June 22 -- The Federal Court of Canada has turned down a joint request by the Quebec government and Hydro-Quebec to delay indefinitely a legal battle over the Great Whale hydroelectric project.

But Justice Francis Muldoon did agree to give the province and its utility an extra three weeks to get ready for the next court hearing.

At issue is a demand by the Cree Indians of James Bay, who want to force Ottawa to conduct its own environmental review of Great Whale before the project proceeds.

A court date been set for mid-July in Montreal.

The federal government has been trying to decide whether to conduct its own environmental study or co-operate with the provincial government on a joint study.

The Cree claim the provincial approach is flawed because it would let the access roads and airports be built before the rest of the project is fully assessed.

The merits of the case have yet to be heard in court because the parties have been haggling over jurisdiction. Hydro wanted further hearings suspended indefinitely until the Supreme Court of Canada can review the dispute.

● June 10 -- Hydro-Quebec argued in court that it will suffer big losses if its contracts to export power to neighboring states are compromised by federal environmental reviews.

Lawyer Bernard Roy said in Federal Court that putting two big contracts in jeopardy "could have a catastrophic effect" on the provincial utility and economy.

Roy, representing Hydro-Quebec, was appealing a National Energy Board decision of last September forcing federal impact studies of proposed massive hydroelectric developments in Quebec's James Bay region.

Roy declared that "there is no precedence to justify a federal interference" in the project.

Roy said the two contracts are worth a total of \$24 billion to the provincial economy, and "are indispensable for the development of Quebec."

One contract is for 450 megawatts of power to the Vermont Joint Owners, over 30 years, and worth \$7 billion in revenues.

The other, to the New York Power Authority, is for 1,000 megawatts over 21 years. Both contracts are for guaranteed power, meaning the flow cannot be interrupted for Quebec's own needs.

Roy added that it was urgent to have a decision from the court by Nov. 30. Quebec and the New York Power Authority agreed to postpone their deadline to back out of the contract to Nov. 30 from April 30. The cutoff date on the Vermont contract is April 1992.

Jean Bertrand, who is assisting Roy, said in an interview that the penalties to Hydro-Quebec could go as high as \$4 billion if the contracts are delayed as a result of extra environmental reviews and court appeals.

Roy also told judges Louis Marceau, Louis Pratte and Alice Desjardins that Hydro-Quebec will eventually need the power from the new dams just to cover its own needs and existing export contracts.

● June 10 -- Quebec Cree leaders say they will shun environmental hearings on access roads and airports for Hydro-Quebec's Great Whale complex because the review splits the \$12.6-billion megaproject in two.

"We've informed them that we're not participating in public hearings on just the infrastructure," said Robbie Dick, chief of the Cree village at Great Whale.

Quebec Environment Minister Pierre Paradis announced Saturday that hearings which began at the end of June in Great Whale — the community that would be most affected by the project — and continued in early July in Montreal.

But those hearings will be conducted by a committee with Inuit membership created by the 1975 James Bay agreement — the Kativik Environmental Quality Commission.

A similar committee with Cree membership, called the Review Committee, will not hold hearings in Great Whale after being rebuffed by the Cree.

The Cree oppose the split, which could allow construction to begin on the \$600-million roads and airports before the environmental impact of the hydro-electric dams is known.

The Grand Council of the Cree is seeking a court injunction to stop the Great Whale environmental review from being divided, and Dick said Cree participation in hearings on the roads would compromise that case.



## Churchill Facts

The federal government owns 49 per cent of the Lower Churchill Development Corp. and would be expected to play a large role in the project.

But after committing \$2.7 billion to Hibernia in cash and loan guarantees, debt-ridden Ottawa will have to think carefully about another big outlay.

There are other obstacles. The project would undoubtedly face opposition from residents of Labrador coastal communities who say the present Churchill plant altered water temperatures and has already extinguished the wealth of cod once available at their doorsteps.

And the Innu near Goose Bay are still reeling from the effects of the Upper Churchill plant, which flooded one-quarter of Labrador — the heartland of their traditional hunting ground.

The graves of their ancestors are under water, along with personal belongings and an Indian way of life hundreds of years old.

The new hydroelectric plants would take advantage of natural river elevations and would require little flooding. But the Innu, who have just started preliminary negotiations with government officials on their 14-year-old land claim, still oppose the development.

"We feel none of these projects should take place until the land-claims process has been clarified," says Innu leader Peter Penashue.

"The land they want to develop is clearly ours. But we should all take care of the environment first. We're all in this together and we can't afford to screw it up."

Negotiators are working on a \$10-billion deal to add two new power plants to the Churchill River. Here are facts about Labrador's massive water resource.

**DISCOVERY:** John MacLean, on an expedition for the Hudson's Bay Co. in 1839, was first recorded white man to see Churchill Falls, about twice the height of Niagara Falls.

**LEGEND:** Naskaupi Indians who occupied area for centuries told tales of two maidens who were entranced by the falls and fell. Condemned to live in caves below, they are said to appear through the mist with outstretched arms to entice others to join them.

**DEVELOPMENT:** It took 30,000 workers and nine years to complete the world's largest underground power station, which started producing electricity in 1971.

**CAPACITY:** The largest single source of electricity in Canada and third-largest in world. Plant produces enough power for three cities the size of Montreal.

**NAME CHANGE:** Originally called Grand Falls on the Hamilton River, the two names were changed to honor Sir Winston Churchill in 1965, the year Britain's wartime prime minister died.

**PLANS FOR FUTURE:** Two plants at Gull Island and Muskrat Falls on the Lower Churchill would produce about half as much power as present plant, most destined for Quebec. It's the cheapest undeveloped hydro site in Canada.

-Canadian Press



CANOE STAMPS: Two of the four watercraft stamps from Canada Post this summer. (Page 6)

### Future Che-Mun

Outfit 66 will feature a full report on the LANDS FORLORN expedition to the NWT this summer.

We'll also update you on the inevitable showdown brewing over the James Bay II power project.

THE CLASSICS will report on Needle To the North - a unique book on travel in Ungava in search of the elusive freshwater seal.

Founded by Nick Nickels

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