

CHE-MUN

(Ojibway for canoe)

THE NEWSLETTER OF CANADIAN WILDERNESS CANOEING

OUTFIT 66

CHE-MUN

AUTUMN 1991

Lands Forlorn *1911-1991*



ACROSS THE DIVIDE -- The end is in sight for David Peake and Peter Scott and their Old Town Tripper canoes on the 10 km long portage that leads to the Dismal Lakes. It was the last one after 12 days of upstream travel.

The Classics

Needle to the North

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Fall Packet



Che-Mun readers will be familiar with the exploits of Alan Kesselheim and Marypat Zitzer. The pair wintered over again last year in northern Saskatchewan as part of their second year-long canoe trip.

We hope to have a full report in Outfit 67 but here's their fall wrap-up letter. As you'll see, one part of their activities made a mockery of the word Barrenland.

"We're back! With 1700 miles and 13 months of wilderness living in our canoe wake, we've returned to our Montana home.

"It's impossible to adequately summarize the breadth of country we traveled through, or properly convey the many experiences and emotions we enjoyed over the past year. From the foothills of the Rockies to eight feet above sea level at Baker Lake, NWT, we witnessed nearly every environment the Canadian north has to offer.

"Along the way, wildlife encounters, fun whitewater, and tremendous scenery lifted our spirits.

"At the same time we encountered the signs of intruding resources development in places like northern Alberta and witnessed careless littering even on the Barrens of the far north; frightening and sobering sights in such a fragile land.

"Once again we endured and prospered through a long winter in a landscape where that season dominates the yearly cycle.

"Visits by local friends relieved the long, quiet stretches of time, and my parents actually came to stay for ten days at

Christmas, shuttled by ski plane to our cabin. Despite the minus 40 degree temperatures, our family time together was profoundly memorable.

"Winter was, however, largely a solo experience. We skied many quiet miles, observed our local wildlife neighbours, worked on our projects, read books. News of the outside world, especially the Gulf War and environmental disaster, reached us as though from another planet.

"The most significant event of the entire expedition occurred in mid-winter, when we realized that Marypat was pregnant. Since we've been striving for this condition for some time, it was good news, but, as you can imagine, the development shed a new light on our journey.

"Suddenly we were skiing 30 miles round trip into Fond du Lac for our prenatal visits, flying to Uranium City on the "ultrasound charter", reading pregnancy books borrowed from local nurses.

"In addition, the second summer of the trip was cast into doubt. Many hours were spent balancing the risks and rewards of continuing against the benefits of going home early.

"We pored over maps, asked doctor's advice, and discussed ways to mitigate the hardships of travel. Finally we decided that we would go on as planned, much to the worryment of family members.

"Once underway for the second summer, we adopted the "pregnancy pace" and plunged once more into the exhilarating and awesome tundra wilderness found in

the Barrens. Along the way we opted to alter our route slightly and finish at Baker Lake rather than Eskimo Point (Arviat).

This shortened travel time by 1-2 weeks and lopped off 6-8 extra portages. portaging proved to be a pretty stressful activity for Marypat, six months pregnant at the time.

"The Barrens rewarded our efforts with pure and exciting water, views of musk-ox and caribou, silence unbroken by the sounds of voices or motors of vehicles, more than five weeks of solitary travel without human contact. (There were of course the less uplifting mosquito and blackfly encounters, periods of miserable weather, and tormenting headwinds as well.)

"By the last few weeks, Marypat's swelling belly hindered her paddling rhythm and made camp exertion difficult. We finished the journey, healthy and still growing, in early August.

"We also made a commitment at the end of the summer to give our baby the middle name, Kazan, after that powerful and magical river that epitomizes much of what the north means to us. And, as Marypat said, the trip isn't really over until the baby arrives."

And Che-Mun is very happy to report the well travelled baby - a boy - did arrive. Eli Kazan Kesselheim was born right on schedule - just like a good canoe tripper - on Oct. 26. Congrats to Al and Marypat.

If you're interested in reaching them their address is P.O. Box 6328, Bozeman, Montana 59711-6328.

News & Notes

COMING HOME. . . The Canadian Recreational Canoeing Association has begun a three year "Home For Canoeing" campaign. The project is designed to raise \$150,000 towards the construction of an outdoor education and learning centre in the Ottawa area. The new facility will also be a new home for the CRCA. The national canoeing association, which has noted northern canoeist Prince Andrew as its patron, has been located in southwestern Ontario, near London, for many years. That's definitely well of the beaten path for wilderness canoeing.

All donations to the cause will receive a charitable donation tax receipt and will be recognized in perpetuity at the new

Page 2.

Home For Canoeing. There are five donation levels; up to \$50 (Friend of Canoeing); up to \$100 (Eric Morse Adventurer); to \$500 (Omer Stringer Patron); to \$1000 (Nor'Wester Society) and up to \$5000 (Voyageur Club).

The CRCA runs the Bill Mason Memorial Scholarship Fund, Canadian Canoe Route Environmental Clean Up Project and assistance to groups fighting to protect threatened river systems such as the Kam in Thunder Bay and the Tatshenshini in northern B.C.

For more info or to send cheques marked "Home for Canoeing" write to CRCA "Home For Canoeing" Campaign, CRCA, 1029 Hyde Park Rd. Suite 5, Hyde Park, Ontario N0M 1Z0 or call/fax 519/473-2109.

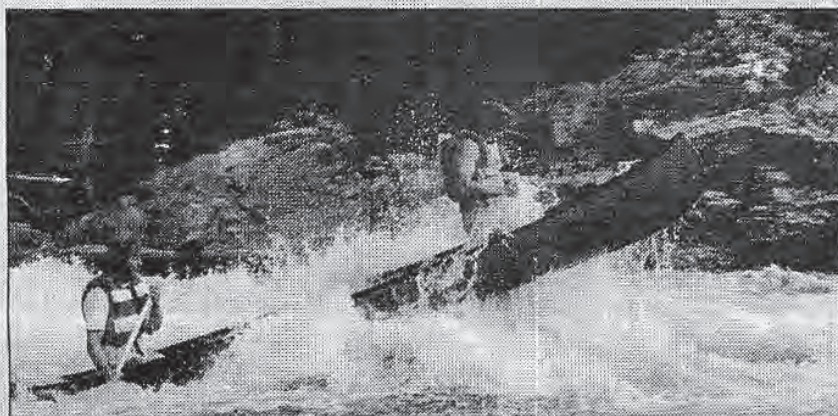
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SYMPOSIUM 7 . . . It's happening again. George Luste and the Wilderness Canoe Association are doing their annual slide-a-thon once more this January in Toronto.

Continued on Page 10.

CANADIAN CANOEING Wilderness Adventure

カナディアン・カヌー・アドベンチャー



カナダの大自然を経験しよう

Canadian Wilderness Canoeing 発行のニューズレター「CHE-MUN」の編集者、マイケル・ピークと Canadian Wilderness Guide のエリック・ゴッパウが、歴史と冒険がいっぱいのカナダの大自然、カヌーの魅力を是非とも紹介し

ます。ゾーク兄弟は、開拓者たちの歴史のカヌー・ムートを探るカナダの大自然に挑戦してきました。これは、そのドラマチックな記録です。

期間：1991年10月8～13日

東京：10月7,8,9日
大阪：10月11日

札幌：10月12,13日

お申し込み及び詳細はウッズ・カナダ代理店まで

Editor's Notebook

Long paddle

It seems we say this with every issue but here we are again - a little late. But we have a good reason as you can see above.

Che-Mun was off to Japan in October for an interesting two weeks of slide talks about Canadian canoeing. You can read all about it on Page 9. In Japan the open canoe, as we know it, is called a "Canadian" canoe and that term applies to all aspects of open boat paddling.

We produced a special Japanese-English edition of Che-Mun that was distributed at each talk. The entire thing was organized and paid for by Woods Canada and Canadian Airlines. And it may become an annual event.

Last spring we had a lot of comments on our *Rupert River Remembered* story (Outfit 64). It told the tale of John McDonald who paddled and worked in the fur trade of northern Quebec for Revillon Freres from 1914-17. John McDonald died on September 6 of this year at the age of 98.

I will never forget interviewing him in the veteran's hospital just outside Montreal. A tingle went through my spine when he asked me if I ever heard of his old friend George Elson, the legendary guide of the original ill-fated and then successful Hubbard expeditions. Had I ever!

Mac worked with Elson on the upper reaches of the Rupert River in a time when that part of the country was still well out of the sight and minds of hydro developers.

It was a great privilege to meet Mac and chat with someone who lived in a very different world the one we now inhabit. Another link to our vanishing past is gone. I'm just happy that some of those memories will remain with us forever.

Michael Peake, Editor

The Crees and trees are winning

It's been an amazing three months for Quebec's Crees in their battle against the James Bay power plans of Hydro-Quebec.

A stunning series of court and public relation victories has changed the timetable and maybe the very fate of the Great Whale project.

At the end of October, the Quebec government and Hydro-Quebec officially committed themselves to reviewing the Great Whale hydroelectric project as a whole in an agreement signed with lawyers for the Quebec Cree.

The agreement — greeted by the Cree as a victory in their battle to force a full review of the controversial project — means Quebec will have to live up to the promises of a "global" environmental review made in September by Quebec Energy Minister Lise Bacon and Environment Minister Pierre Paradis.

As a result of the agreement, approved by Superior Court Justice Denis Levesque, the Cree agree to drop their court action seeking to prevent Quebec from approving the access roads for Great Whale before the dams were evaluated.

The agreement says the project's roads, dams, transmission lines and all related works must be studied together.

Initially Hydro had sought to review access roads and airports first so it could get an early start on construction for the \$12.6-billion project.

But a Federal Court ruling in September said that the project must proceed according to the rules defined in the 1975 James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement that the province signed with the natives.

That deal, signed by the Crees and Inuit, meant they forfeited their rights to the huge northern area in return for strict rules protecting the environment and their way of life.

It also meant Ottawa had to have a say in the environmental review and that the project could be axed if it didn't get an environmental okay.

There's no word yet on when the new global environmental review will begin or how long it would take. Both Ottawa and Quebec will participate in the process.

A sign of changing fortunes appeared in August when the utility dropped one of the most contentious aspects of the new project - development on the Nastapoka River, home of the rare freshwater seal.

The Nastapoka was one of five rivers Hydro-Quebec was planning to divert to drive some of the Great Whale project's turbines.

In the process, Hydro would also largely dry up the Nastapoka estuary, where the beluga come to feed. Inuit hunters say generations of beluga whaling there would come to an end.

But after months of low-key negotiations with Inuit representatives, Hydro-Quebec quietly dropped the Nastapoka from its plans.

Not necessarily forever, Hydro officials warn. But the Nastapoka is no longer part of the Great Whale project, and it will be at least five years before Hydro-Quebec can cook up a new development project that would entail the river.

Needle to the North

by Arthur C. Twomey.

The story of an expedition to Ungava and the Belcher Islands.

Houghton Mifflin Company.
Boston. 1942. 360 pp.

Ungava is a native word meaning 'far away'. But however far away northern Quebec remains today - it is still light years closer than when Arthur Twomey wrote this book.

Needle to the North sheds light on perhaps the darkest spot of our continent, the Ungava region of Quebec.

Written with the cooperation of the Carnegie Museum in Pittsburgh, this is the story of a 1938 scientific expedition into the area. Unlike the relatively short journeys of today - getting there was half the fun and a big part of the trip.

Ontario-born Twomey takes the reader on two different expeditions. One to the Seal Lakes in search of the elusive freshwater seal or kasagea; the other to the remote and frozen shores of the Belcher Islands which lie 60 miles offshore in the chilly waters of Hudson Bay.

Twomey's journey takes you inside the daily life of someone living on the coast of Hudson Bay in the 1930s. It is a land, as he states, governed by the sun, not the wheel.

Twomey had problems getting aband of Indians and Inuit. He spent some time trying to task was to round up enough natives to help him with his party's journey inland in search of the freshwater seal.

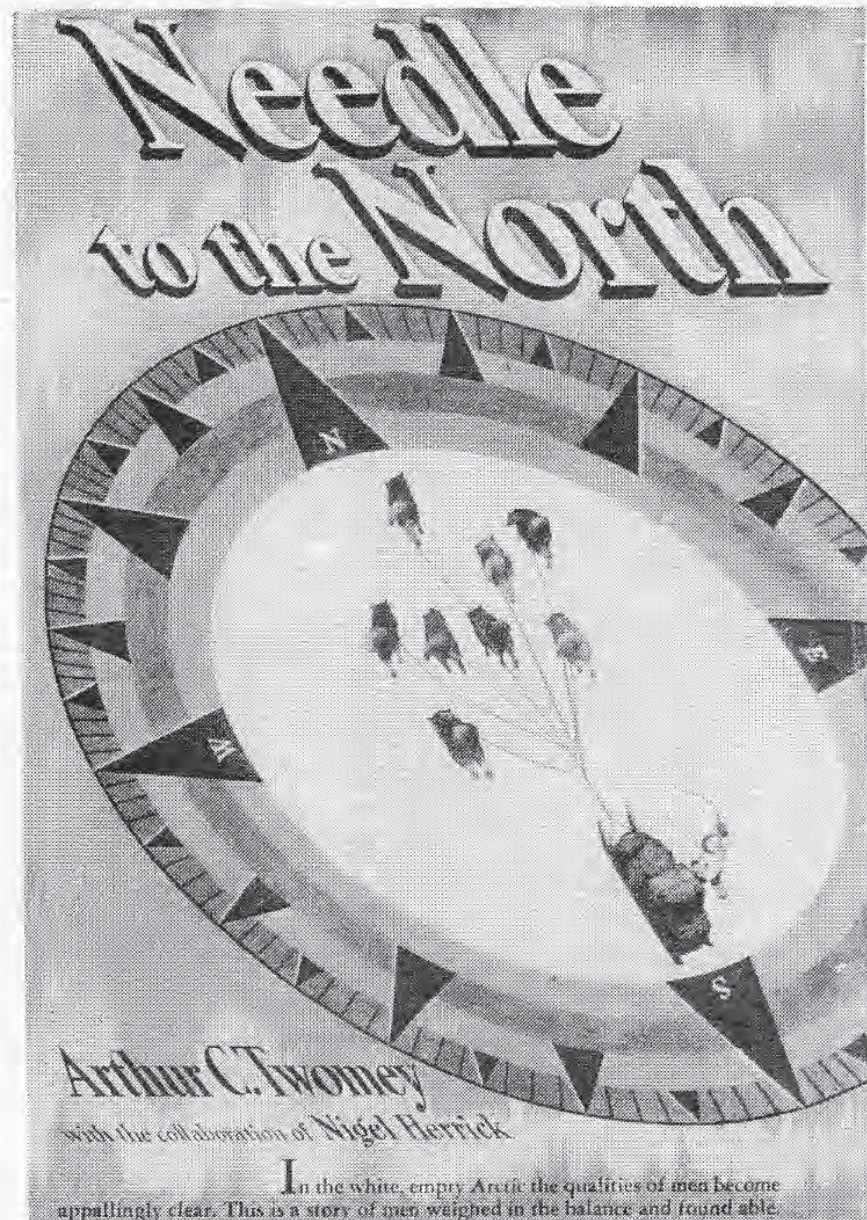
Twomey paints a vivid picture of life in Great Whale, the small settlement at the mouth of the Great Whale River.

His travels took him on an extended journey with the Inuit and Cree guides and much of their social customs and personalities are revealed by Twomey without too much of the usual Great White Father syndrome.

They traveled up from Richmond Gulf to Clearwater Lake on their way to the Seal Lakes.

There was quite an epic effort expended by all in order to get a seal specimen. But they finally did it, with their food supplies running out.

Twomey's narrative makes this book a human story - not a scientific one. His description of the Inuk Ekumiak's faithful devotion to his old dog, for example, is quite touching and it lends a nice sympathetic and readable touch to the book.



NORTHERN DUST--The original dust jacket of the 1942 book. The collaborator Nigel Herrick was actually a woman who helped Twomey with the manuscript.

Traditional travel by toboggan and life on the trail are described well by Twomey. He was a trained scientist who was keenly aware of the many different birds and wildlife that lived in the cold barren wind-swept Ungava plains.

The second half of the book describes a visit to the Belcher Islands. These were first "discovered" by Robert Flaherty in 1914 and one of the islands is named after him. Twomey has a keen eye for the way of life on these desolate isles. The book's second half is more a description of the islands. They were not on a particular scientific mission there.

While his work is not ground breaking, it is detailed and comfortably written. Two-

mey also had the privilege of crossing to the Belchers on the massive ice bridge that tenuously connects the island to the mainland more a short time each winter.

He recounts a story of three men who attempted the risky paddle over to Great Whale in their kayaks. Two of them wanted an Indian native canoe and they traded their boats for one.

On the return crossing the canoe dumped and both men drowned while their friend, still in his kayak, watched helplessly knowing if he tried to save them - he too would perish.

There was a reprint done of the first half of the book in 1982 by Oberon press

but without any of the photos or the nice map.

While the second edition is abbreviated it does contain an excellent introduction and a nice review of Twomey's work by Queen's professor William James.

James points out that the book was never properly recognized when it was published. Yet it remains a valuable contribution to one of the most mysterious and unique areas in the world.

James believes the book never received the attention it deserved. Perhaps the fact that the book was published in the middle of the Second World War had something to do with it.

James documents several cases of the book being completely ignored by the academic press. The *Beaver* did publish two pieces by Twomey on the expedition in 1939 but James points out that no other Canadian magazine or periodical gave it any notice or review at all.

However, it was praised in a *New York Times* review. So typical of many Canadian endeavors.

Needle to the North is an essential book to any canoeist who travels in Ungava. Especially since there are very few books written on the region. Fortunately it is not rare. You should be able to get a hardcover copy for \$20-\$30.

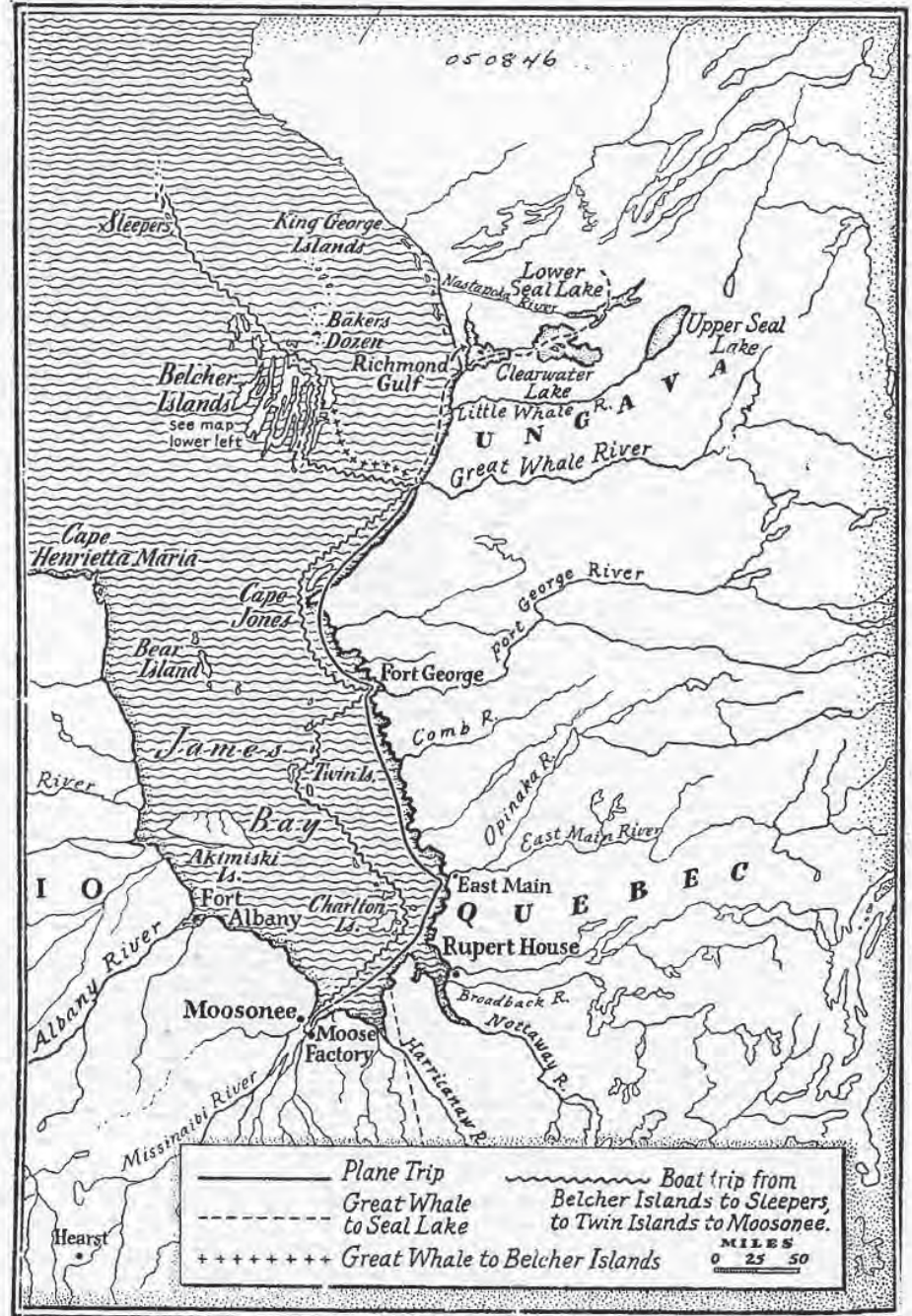
Michael Peake

A taste of Twomey

"One question inevitably arises at any discussion of the Ungava expedition. Why didn't we seek for kasagea in the summertime? It would, of course, have been quite possible to go inland on a summer expedition, but far less easily, perhaps, than you imagine.

"Few people realize that sub-Arctic summer has hazards almost equal to those of winter. Potentially, the summer sub-Arctic is a slough of mud. Like a saturated sponge the land yields water at every touch. There are lakes, swamps, rivers in every summer valley. There are bare rocks, waterfalls and lichens on the hills. Between the hills, inescapable pools, bogs, muskeg and soggy-floored evergreen forests occupy the plains (and probably the hilltop plateaus). Like oozings from an overloaded mop, the melting snow runs out into countless ponds that never sink below the pitted surface.

"The summer sun returns Ungava briefly to insects birds and animals. Even the Indians largely desert it. Canoes are the only boats capable of shooting the fierce Ungava rapids and of accommodating the half-ton of food, clothing and camp equipment such as we should have been forced to transport in summer. But on a waterways expedition and boats and loads must frequently be carried on men's shoulders across boggy portages and around torrential waterfalls. Ungava summer, moreover, like winter, is a very uncertain season. I have seen a severe snowstorm on Hudson Bay at the end of July.



"To have sought kasagea in summer would have left undone all the winter bird work which I, as an ornithologist, deemed so important a part of the Ungava expedition. Any scientific work in Ungava, except along the banks of streams, must be accomplished only when the ground is frozen, for only then may one walk freely over the countryside.

"It was necessary, furthermore, to be in Ungava in winter if we were to combine the Ungava expedition (at a great saving of time and money) with our second expedition, the summer research on the Belchers.

"The Seal Lakes in Ungava lie in transitional territory from tree to tundra (or

"bush to barrens" as Northerners say), where much is still to be learned. How could men live there - get wood, meat or shelter? What living things survive there the whole bitter year? They were vital questions.

"For me, Ungava was to add a new chapter on man's dependence upon birds. When noraluk (meaning the birds-that-flew-over) first cast shadow of winds upon Tukarak, I must of course be there; but in the meantime, I thought, while ranging the icy uplands of Ungava upon the mystery of the strange seal, further research, perhaps of great significance, might also be accomplished.

Lands Forlorn

An expedition
Coppermine
1911 route

By MICHAEL PEAKE
Che-Mun Editor

The footsteps of Richardson, Hanbury, Simpson and many other northern historical travelers awaited the Hide-Away Canoe Club on this year's expedition.

Lands Forlorn, the superb title of a wonderful book by George Douglas gave us the name for this year's trip.

Douglas, from Lakefield, Ontario, was on his first and only northern canoeing expedition. Those same historical same footsteps awaited him in 1911 when he along with brother Lionel and geologist August Sandberg explored the area during a one year stay. Their trip was among the last of its kind, for less than 10 years later airplane travel would eliminate the need for extended canoe transport. (For a review of the book, see Che-Mun Outfit 52).

We followed Douglas' route exactly 80 years later. The HACC crew consisted of myself, brother David, a Toronto furniture designer, teacher Peter Scott and journalist Peter Brewster. It would take 24 days to cover the 250 mile route.

This history-soaked trip would retrace, in one direction, the Douglas route. The passage from Great Bear Lake to the Coppermine River had been used by natives for years and it wasn't until the second Franklin expedition that Dr. Richardson used it after ascending the Coppermine.

The route was officially explored by Thomas Simpson in 1836 for the Hudson Bay Company. It was he who gave the name to the lakes midway between the two great bodies of water. Simpson named the Dismal Lakes during a spring crossing in very bad weather. Many pathways connect through the region and we decided to stick to the route used by Douglas. This meant ascending the Dease River and Sandy Creek, portaging six miles to the Dismal Lakes, paddling down the Kendall River to the Coppermine which then flows north to the Arctic Ocean.

Douglas used the notes of David Hanbury who passed through here in 1901 as a guide to the region. Douglas' party had to paddle and track their way in from Fort Norman on the Mackenzie River, going up the Bear River into Great Bear Lake and then around to Dease Bay in the northeastern corner of the massive lake.

When they were in Fort Norman, Douglas took the last known photo of the ill-fated Radford and Street expedition just as they were setting out. It was also on the way that they met the legendary John Hornby who was leaving the region after two years exploring and hunting with Cosmo Melvill.

The four of us flew in to start the trip at Old Fort Confidence, the site where Simpson's wintered, just a few miles from the mouth of the Dease. At one time there had been six wooden buildings standing here. Hanbury's book shows a photo of them.



KENDALL CANYON -- Peter Scott and Peter Brewster paddle through the rocky canyon at the end of the Kendall

River about a kilometer before it joins the Coppermine River. The cliffs were lined with eagle and falcon's nests.

They had all burned down by the time Douglas arrived 10 years later. Now only two chimneys stand in a growth of willow. It was a mild and calm day on August 1 and very buggy. Our stay there was brief thanks to the bugs and we immediately got going towards the Dease.

This was the first trip that David Feake had been on. My other brothers, Sean and Geoffrey, are seasoned travelers. We were going to give David a taste of the north with a stiff trip that had a lot of upstream work, portaging and some very big whitewater. Might as well find out right away if he can handle the real stuff.

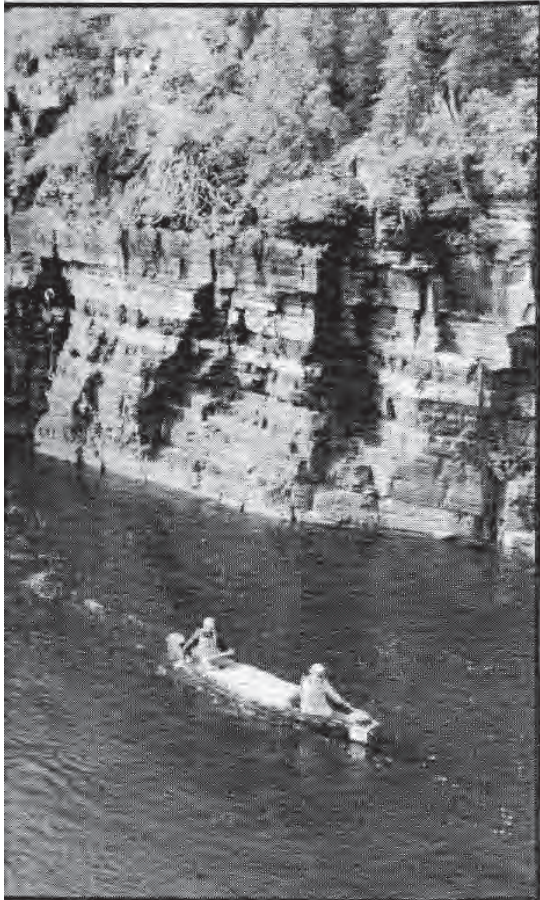
We camped that first night at the site of the cabin where the Douglas party wintered in 1911-12 (see back page). It was a great moment to finally be at the small, battered shack that had been built with great care and skill by Lionel Douglas while the other two were on a scouting expedition to the Coppermine. The roof had

caved in but the bed frames were still visible and the stone chimney, patched together with sandstone and mud still looked firm.

While sitting in there that evening contemplating the past, I glanced at the floor and saw a scrap of paper with my name on it. It was a note to our trip from the July 1989 expedition by veteran Toronto canoeist and symposium organizer George Luste. We'd planned to do this trip that same summer but had to cancel. George who has more time for such things than we mere mortals had begun on the Camsell River and paddled around Great Bear.

We began what we knew would be a slog the next morning. David's presence meant we had an early riser who loved to get coffee ready before everyone else got up. And sometimes even deliver it to the tent! He also brought some great cooking skills and his homemade pancakes that morning were delicious mileage makers.

edition to Hearne's nine River following the oute of George Douglas.



The Dease is a pleasant little river about 150 feet across at the mouth. It is several feet deep in spots and dotted with shallow rapids. Most of the five days it took us to reach the turning off point were dotted with short stretches of paddling interspersed with much dragging up wet rocks. A thick ribbon of trees followed the river most of the way even though we were above the Arctic Circle for the entire trip.

The weather was warm, not too buggy and the water temperature was about 57 F. On the third day Peter Scott lost his glasses after they fell from an open pocket on his anorak. He said he really only needed them for rapids. Hmmm.

The water began to get more silty the further upstream we went. This was very strange and by the fifth day it was totally opaque. We referred to it as "zoo water" from its unfortunate resemblance to the water in a monkey's cage.

While the river has mostly vegetated river banks there was one section called the Old Man of Hoy by Douglas where the river cut through a small but beautiful canyon with sheer rock walls. A 6-foot falls

was just upstream of this and it was there we had to do our first portage. Just after that we, like Douglas, climbed a large hill close to the river for a great view of the barren area around us.

There was a lot of bird life along the river and we saw a big brown wolf on Day 4. There were also many of the usual comic scenes with the Canada geese who were molting. They'd run in dizzied groups along the shoreline trying desperately not to be seen. We also ended up unintentionally heading many Mute swans down the river.

As the water got siltier, it began to give me some indigestion problems - nothing serious but unusual. The hardest thing about the entire ascent was the slippery rocks in the river. They had a lot of algae on them and were extremely treacherous. I even had on usually infallible Vibram soles but they too were slipping.

We had a new wrinkle this year - a video camera. Woods Canada, our principle sponsor, had furnished us with it to make a movie for our upcoming Japan Trip. (See separate story.)

It was a superb Sony machine with a 10 times zoom which we kept in a waterproof case. The main problem was the batteries. It was powered by AA's and they would get used up in a couple of minutes in the cold. It was also more difficult to shoot with a video, it takes more time and you have to be more careful. The shot about 4 hours but they didn't make a film because of the high costs.

On Day 6, the mystery of the murky water was solved. A small creek was pouring pure mud into the crystal clear Dease. It was a stark contrast and we assumed it was a natural occurrence and not the result of some upstream mining operation. We noted on an unpublished map done by Douglas several years after the trip he marked a creek called 'Muddy' in about the same place. But he never commented on similar problems.

Smoky day

No sooner that we had cleared up our water problems, it sure tasted great now, that we had an air pollution situation. We were dragging along between the high riverbanks of sand on a beautiful summer day, still enjoying the clarity of the water, when on the horizon a whitewash cloud appeared. A forest fire. The smoke, which at first was log cabin sweet, swept over us in ever increasing intensity. It began to get uncomfortable and while we were certainly a long way from the source there was no place we could hide.

We reach Sandy Creek just below Hanbury's kopje, a flat topped hill noted by Hanbury and named by Douglas. We encamped in the smoky haze which thanks to a wind change soon departed.

Sandy Creek proved to be barely that for most of its length. It certainly was sandy, but we were less certain about the creek part. It was merely moist in many sections and the dragging was fierce. We had thought we might continue up the Dease to Lake Rouviere where John Hornby had built a cabin in 1912. But the water was so low and the work so hard we decided to take the traditional route.

The weather continued very mild as we ascended the Sandy into a vast open plateau that Hanbury had called a "sportsman's paradise". Indeed it was, the occasional caribou trotted past, sic-sics (Arctic ground squirrels) peered from their maze of tunnels, the sky was blue and the rolling land stretched to the horizon.

Our dragging ended the first day where a 1.5 mile portage began around a very rocky section. We camped on what was obviously a very old traditional site. The small grove of stunted spruce trees and stumps shows ancient axe marks. We found a bundle of wooden stakes probably from an old prospecting crew.

A long tiring day of dragging brought us to another campsite where a tributary of a small creek joined. We found an old fire pit here and knew that we were very close to where Hanbury camped about 90 years ago - and on the exact same day - August 9. We took a day off here and it was a cloudy one with some rain. We had Hanbury's notes and noted that he too, took this day off - and it rained as well! The temperature plunged about 25 degrees that evening and the bugs beat it. It was nice to finally use the sleeping bag again.

Another of David's great culinary contributions awaited us the next morning - hot cornmeal muffins - terrific. It fueled us for another morning of dragging up the meandering Sandy. Incidentally the creek was named by Hanbury - not for its characteristics - but after his traveling companion.

The weather cleared as we came to a giant sand dune that paralleled the creek. Fresh grizzly tracks were seen improbably head right up its steep sides. At the exact end of the sand hill the river completely changed character and deepened for the rest of our time on it - about four hours. It was now a superb little stream with lots of water in its meandering bends. Ptarmigans were making themselves known as we began looking for a jumping off point to head to the Dismal Lakes.

The six mile carry was broken up with a couple of short lake paddles. The terrain was open and rolling with some huge 150 foot eskers barring the route. Unlike the more easterly Barrengrounds the footing in this region is quite good. The ground is usually solid and dry unlike the quaking wetness of the Keewatin district.

Even though we were well into August the long days persisted. The sun would set about 10:30 p.m. and that lovely long evening light would linger for quite a while. It was a noticeable change from our last few years of tripping in Ungava where it gets dark early because of the lower latitude.

David learned about the unique torture of the long distance canoe portaging on our first full day of carrying. He kept muttering that there must be a better way etc. I certainly began to feel my age that day - not as spry as I used to be as I approach 40. Peter Scott, on the other hand, was full of energy and would occasionally carry the canoe right through a two mile carry. Ah, to be 30 again.

Another half day of portaging brought us to the western end of the Dismal Lakes which of course are anything but. It was a

Continued on Page 8.

great relief to get to the top of the hill knowing that the only direction left is down.

We celebrated our ascent along with Peter Scott's wedding anniversary with a special feast that evening. Appetizers began with a rum boisson accompanied by Crab salad - with tinned crab and real mayonnaise. Dinner followed with fresh caught Dismal Lake trout, delectably fried in butter. A finely brew of double roasted coffee with a selection of the finest Belgian chocolate and a sampling of Courvoisier poured from a silver flask made for an enchanting evening.

Peter and I ruminated over a couple of superb hand rolled Cuban cigars as we watched a golden panorama unfold. The late sun peeked out from behind the clouds over the lake to make a mockery of the name Dismal. It was a most pleasant evening, in every respect. And most important - it was well earned.

It was not an early morning the next day and we didn't get away until noon. We worked our way down the unaccustomed flatness of the largest Dismal. The western end of the Dismals are ringed by steep, rocky hills. Actually the Dismals are really one big lake with two narrow sections with slight flow that require wading.

We camped at the first narrows, the site of a large traditional caribou crossing. This was also the traditional camping spot of Inuit who have hunted the passing animals for generations. There was certainly a lot

of activity around us. Caribou were crossing the few hundred yard wide section - in both directions - all day. A herd of more than 100 grazed on a plain across the river.

Our second day here found us lashed with a heavy storm with high winds - very Ungava-like. But unlike northern Quebec the storm passed quickly and was not immediately followed by another. Within a few hours in was calm and sunny.

We almost lost a canoe when our boat, which we thought was protected, was flipped into the water, PFDs, paddles and all and blown across the narrows. It was an easy matter to get it but had we been anywhere else, well...

We continued to make our way towards the Kendall River which drains these lakes. We took time for a three hour hike up the valley of the Teshierpi River which comes in from the direction of Lake Rouviere. This had been our possible route and may well be if we come back here.

We found a several claims stakes in the area including a cairn with a note from a C. Taylor who staked them in August 1967. We continued down the final Dismal Lake and entered the Kendall River late in the afternoon. We soon spotted the remains, as Douglas did, of the provision station built for the Simpson expedition, It's really just a pile of logs.

The small tree-lined rapids of the Kendall would take another day to shoot. It was a bit bigger than the Dismal and certainly much more runnable. It had very rocky

rapids with relatively small flow - except for the very last one. The Kendall flows through a curving canyon right before it joins the Coppermine. We did a couple of short liftovers in there and sailed down to join the BIG river.

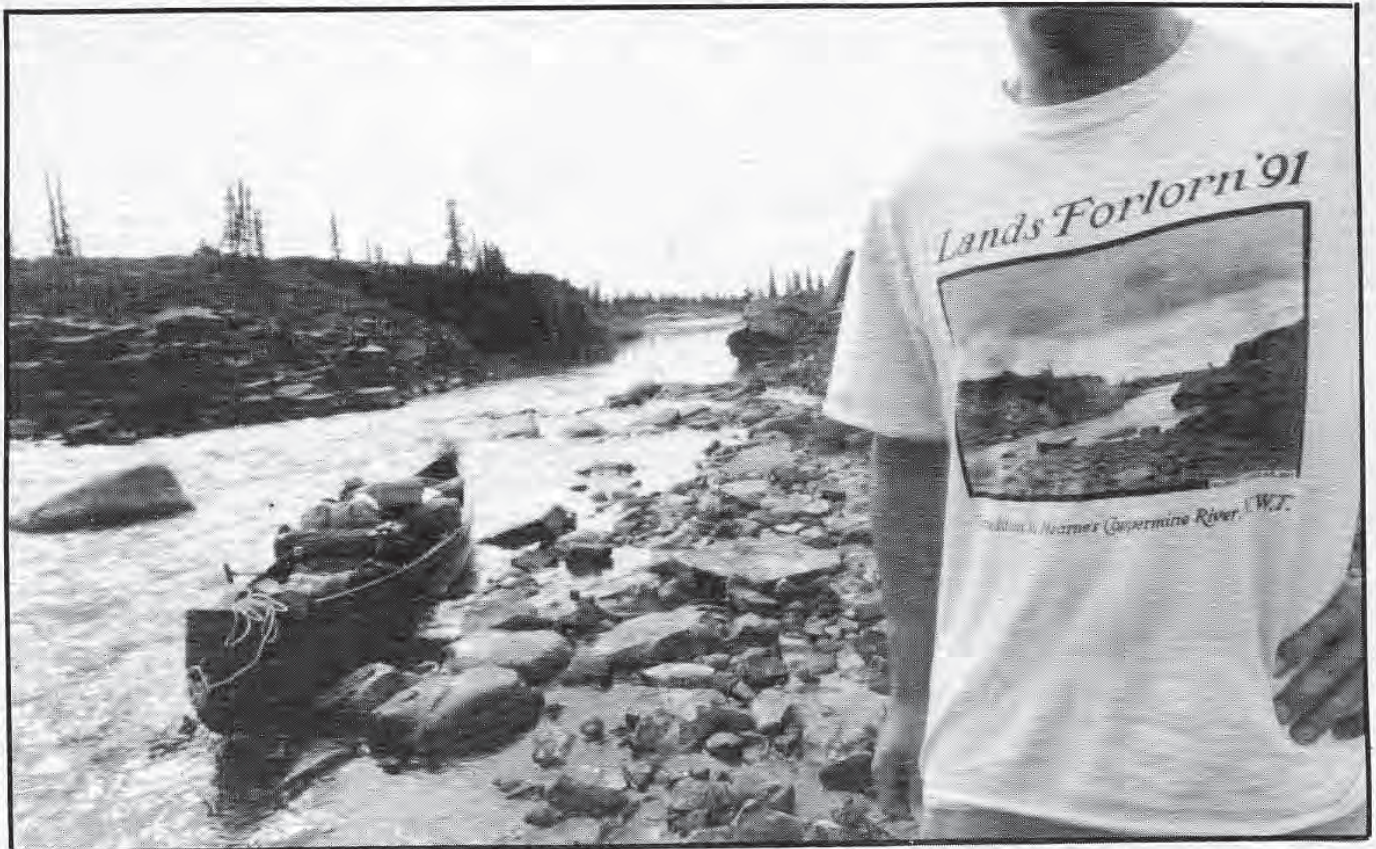
The powerful pull of the legendary Coppermine grabbed our boats as soon as we entered it. We stopped to do some fishing - at the insistence of Peter Brewster who knew this junction to be a prime Arctic char hole. It was.

Within minutes Peter hooked into a beautiful char in spawning colours. The tremendous fight of the fish, the great location made for some super fishing. We looked up at the sky to see a serious dose of mare's tails coming and we knew that we should find a good camping spot. It was a signal to the end of the mild temperatures for the trip.

We moved a couple of miles down river, which was ridiculously easy in the strong current. That evening's meal - a fantastic fish chowder - also gave us a hearty lunch on the cold, drizzly day that followed. We could see snow on the hills south of us and we knew we were in for a touch of early winter as we dug deep into our clothing bags for the pile and wool.

The next day, August 19 was 34 degrees F. Our kitchen towel was like a board. We bundled up and pushed off down the great river. It was a speedy day with no rapids and lots of current. We stopped to try and

Continued on Page 11.



OLD AND NEW -- The same location 80 years later. David Peake wears the official

T-shirt of the Lands Forlorn expedition showing a photo taken in 1911 by

George Douglas in a spot he called Notman Dyke. Little has changed since.

HACC in Nippon

Canadian canoeing Japanese style

By MICHAEL PEAKE
Che-Mun Editor

TOKYO -- The Hide-Away Canoe Club took its longest trip ever this past October when we winged our way to Japan for a demonstration of northern Canadian canoeing.

The trip was the brainchild of David Earthy, managing director of Woods Canada, a 106-year-old outdoor clothing and equipment company in Toronto.

As Che-Mun readers are aware, the HACC has been using Woods canoe packs for many years. We feel their rugged design and traditional appeal makes for a superior canoe pack.

Woods have been a minor sponsor of our trips for a while and this year took the big plunge to become a major financial contributor in the Lands Forlorn expedition.

Under Earthy's guidance, Woods has been building a market in Japan for the past few years and he wanted the company to offer something more than just equipment to the Japanese.

My brother Geoffrey and I flew over to Tokyo courtesy of Canadian Airlines on October 4. Even though this was an official HACC trip we took no canoe with us. Old Town was a sponsor of the jaunt and they provided boats there.

There was one canoe trip-like aspect of our urban journey through Tokyo. Constant rain. Not one, but two, typhoon systems were hovering south of Japan and spreading their wet tentacles north.

Geoff and I gave several talks at the new Canadian Embassy in the Japanese capital. Posters had been distributed to local outdoor shops and canoe clubs by Woods' trading partners in Japan - although somewhat late we discovered. That, coupled with the torrential downpour all week, kept the numbers at the embassy shows down from our predictions.

The show I chose for Japan was picked from my best shots of 15 years of canoe tripping. Along with my brothers, Geoff, Sean and David, we have shown slides and given demos at the L.L. Bean canoe symposium every year since it started in 1986. We like to keep our talks fun with a lot of humour thrown in.

That was one of the first problems to deal with in Japan. Our humour may be marginal in English but it doesn't go too far in Japanese. We were fortunate in having the services of Hikari Mori, a 28-year-old Japanese climber and outdoorsman who understood the message we were trying to get across.

Geoff and I gave Hikari an intensive 12 hour session with the slides; explaining the message, the jokes and the stories behind the pictures. Instead of doing a straight translation to the crowd, of who perhaps 20% spoke or understood English, Hikari would do most of the talking and we would add bits here and there.

That was frustrating to say the least.

Also, Japanese audiences are very quiet. Perhaps it is not normal to laugh at such presentations - but we got them going



PEAKE-SAN--Wilderness guide Geoffrey Peake gives a technique tip to one of the

Japanese paddlers who attended the Peake's talk near Sapporo, Japan.

anyway - albeit in a somewhat restrained fashion. We were able to speak with people afterwards and they showed an interest in the map of Canada and a special delight in examining the dried food that Geoffrey brought.

Some of the people present, who were a good mix of men and women in their 20s and early 30s, had been to Canada. Several had heard and seen Canadian paddlers including Gary and Joanie McGuffin, who had been over to Japan in the past couple of years. A few Japanese had been to Algonquin Park in southern Ontario as part of a tour package.

They were quite eager to learn about our paddling. As far as canoeing in Japan goes we discovered it was very limited around Tokyo. Because of the coastline and the bulkiness of canoes in the cramped space of Japanese urban centres, most of the canoeing is done of the northern island of Hokkaido. That's where we headed next.

Sapporo is the big city on the northern island and it is the same latitude and similar climate as Toronto. It was here we met the real canoeists and were also able to give a hands-on demo of some of our skills. A crowd of about 50 paddlers watch us bake bread, pack boats and joined us for a paddle on 1000-foot-deep Lake Skikotksu, in

a national park south of Sapporo. Geoff and I enjoyed their food too. They grilled a salmon on a beach BBQ and showered it with veggies.

One thing we noticed about Japanese paddlers is that they come well equipped. One man joined us one the lake with in the latest multi-coloured wetsuit and a whitewater playboat filled with airbags. All this for a flatwater paddler where Geoff

and I wore sweats and shorts respectively.

I believe it is hard for people in a small country that doesn't have a river with potable water to conceive of our trips where a thousand miles can be paddled drinking the water all the way and passing no signs of man. They seemed very interested in all the photos, especially the wildlife. Many expressed a desire to see a muskox.

We had a look and three outdoor shops in Sapporo and they would put anything in Toronto to shame. The stores are filled with the latest gear, beautifully presented with lots of selection. We would love to have purchased some things - but about those prices!

Our favorite boat, the Old Town Tripper, would cost about \$2600 over there. Of course the Tripper doesn't sell here because it is too big.

Most canoes run up to 16 feet, with 14 being a more popular choice. Over 80% of Japan's canoe sales take place on the island of Hokkaido. We also found that an average canoe outing in Japan is just a day trip. Very little overnight camping is done.

Their canoe magazines are quite large and crammed with photos. And we had much more luck following the stories when we discovered the pages run from right to left - so the front cover is really on the back.

The Woods/Peake Tour may become an annual event. We will be assessing the results of the trip and seeing how we could do it better. It was certainly a wonderful experience for Geoff and myself.

It certainly made us think again just how fortunate we wilderness paddlers are to live in a country like Canada. We'll do our best to help keep it that way.

News & Notes cont'd.

The annual *Canoeists' Slide Fest and Wilderness Symposium* has drawn thousands of mid-winter, canoe-starved voyageurs over its many years.

The location for this year's intense examination is Northern Quebec. That will include Ungava and the James Bay region - but not the North Shore rivers which will be the subject of a separate talk in the future.

This year's speakers include Rod Beebe (Hudson to Ungava by Canoe), Hugh Glassco (Living and Canoeing in Ungava), Michael Peake (Povungnituk - In Flaherty's Footsteps), Maine Guides Alexandra and Garrett Conover (Winter Walk to Kuujuaq) and ol' man Luste himself (Eastmain Memories) and many, many others.

The format will remain the same, that is, a couple of hours Friday night followed by a 12 hour marathon of half hour talks all day Saturday. That dates are January 24 & 25. The cost is \$33 which includes reserved seating at Monarch Park high school auditorium. Meal costs are extra. This is a unique and very informative show - a must for northern canoe aficionado. And it's the only place you can directly purchase back issues of Che-Mun.

It is always a sell out so get going now. For registration write the Symposium, Box 211, Station P, Toronto, Ontario M5S 2P7 or call George Luste at 416/534-9313.

INUK HERO . . . Publicity over a new book has moved Canada's Governor General to reopen dusty files on the unrecognized heroics of an Inuit youth who starved to death while helping a bush pilot survive a plane crash.

David Kootook was credited with saving the life of Marten Hartwell after a 1972 mercy mission in the Arctic wilderness ended in disaster. Hartwell was forced to eat human flesh to survive after Kootook's death.

The move is directly related to the publication of *The Survivor*, a book about the mercy mission written by Peter Tadman, a former journalist who now works in the press office of Alberta Premier Don Getty.

Hartwell set out in questionable weather for Yellowknife with a British nurse and two patients - a pregnant Inuit woman and her nephew, who was suffering acute stomach pains. The plane crashed hopelessly off course, and Hartwell had to watch helplessly as his passengers died one by one.

Hartwell broke both ankles in the crash and was unable to move. The 14-year-old youth became Hartwell's legs, setting up a makeshift camp, collecting fuel and whatever food he could locate. He starved to death after 23 days in sub-zero temperatures.

HYDRO HOPES . . . Ontario Hydro has pulled the plug on plans to build or redevelop eight dams on Northern Ontario rivers until agreements are reached with native groups in the area.

Bruce Campbell, a utility lawyer, told environmental assessment hearings about the suspended projects this week, noting the Crown corporation's "higher level of priority and commitment on aboriginal and native affairs."

But Hydro still plans to go ahead with the redevelopment of four dams on the Mattagami River, he said. One of the dams is the subject of a \$250-million pollution lawsuit by the Moose Factory and New Post First Nations.

Native groups have long opposed further development of the Moose River basin after watching Cree in Northern Quebec lose their fishing and hunting grounds to Hydro-Quebec's massive hydroelectric projects.

Natives argue development of the Moose River, which drains into James Bay, would be disastrous for their way of life. Dams would flood some areas and drain others, wildlife would flee and fish beds would be destroyed as rivers are diverted from their natural course.

Campbell said the decision to stall eight of the dams was as a result of uncertainty over when area natives and Hydro could reach a deal on the projects. The eight stations - when and if they are built or redeveloped - would eventually supply 1,511 megawatts of power. Peak energy demand last year in Ontario was about 24,000 megawatts.

Five new stations under long-term consideration for the Moose, Abitibi and Mattagami Rivers were also put on hold, he said.

Page 10.

DEET DILEMMA . . . Canada's federal agriculture and health departments are reviewing the possible side effects of DEET, a component of many insect repellent lotions. Products containing the component - listed as N, N-diethyl-m-toluamide on product labels - have not been banned.

"Based on the information we have available there is no reason to pull it off the shelves," said Health Department spokeswoman Joanne Ford.

But officials in New York state have warned consumers not to use insect repellents with high percentages of DEET. It can cause skin rashes and scarring in adults and - in rare cases - reported neurological problems. New York officials are considering a ban on all products with more than 30 per cent DEET.

Products for sale in Canada that contain 50 per cent or more DEET include:

-Uncle Keith's Bug Free Insect Repellent (100 per cent DEET)

-Combat Liquid Insect Repellent (100 per cent DEET)

-Deca Insect Repellent (100 per cent DEET)

-Off! Insect Repellent (50 per cent DEET)

-Deep Woods Off! (100 per cent DEET)

-Muskol Insect Repellent (100 per cent DEET)

-Repel 100 Insect Repellent (100 per cent DEET)

An official with Agriculture Canada's pesticides directorate said high concentrations of DEET don't provide higher levels of protection against bugs, but simply tend to last longer after application.

Repellents that contain the chemical ethylhexanediol were banned from sale in Canada on July 30.

The Health Department is not aware of any adverse health effects to humans, but warns consumers should not use products containing the chemical.

BLOODY SHAME . . . Yes, they're planning to build a hydroelectric facility at one of the most historic sites in Canada's North.

Bloody Falls, on the Coppermine River, was named in 1821 by John Franklin to commemorate the massacre of Inuit by the Indians whom Samuel Hearne accompanied on his traverse of the N.W.T in 1771.

While the actual scale of the massacre may be disputed by historians, Bloody Falls remains a special place where natives have fished for centuries.

The two stage fall, actually more of a giant rapid is the final push for the mighty Coppermine which flows to the Arctic Ocean from the central Territories. A run-of-river, 2 megawatt generating station is being proposed by NWT Power, an arm of the territorial government.

An 17-foot wide underground tunnel on river left is proposed to be blasted through the ancient rock. The plan was presented to the village of Coppermine last summer and they voted on more study. The area is still a valuable fishing hole and part of the engineering problem revolves around not disturbing that. Also there is an area above the falls that apparently stays unfrozen for most of the winter. That would also create problems for hydro engineers.

The dam will not be constructed without local permission since most of the power would be used to supply the town of Coppermine. The area is also part of an existing land claim.

NWT Power has small existing hydro facility on the Yellowknife River, north of the NWT capital. Another generating scheme is also being proposed for the Sylvia Grinnell River.

DOUGLAS TO A T . . . Many people who have seen our *Lands Forlorn* T-shirts want to buy them. As featured on Page 8, these handsome and well made shirts are yellow with red writing and feature a reproduction of George Douglas' photo of Notman Dyke on the Dease River. The photo is reproduced from an original copy, not the book. The type is taken from the cover of *Lands Forlorn*. The shirts were done on 100% garment dyed cotton and are available in XL only. We only had two dozen printed for the crew members and sponsors and they're all gone. If we get enough orders we'll print some more. The cost will be about \$30 each. Let us know if you are interested and we'll let you know if we will do another batch.

Lands Forlorn cont'd.

find the location of Douglas' Boulder Bed Camp but couldn't. It had been accidentally discovered by a canoeist four years earlier and all the stuff had been removed including a canoe frame and paddles made by Douglas when it looked like the river was going to melt and they would have to go by boat. It didn't and they continued on foot and with the dogs.

Many groups of caribou were in the area and they were crossing the river frequently. We thought it would be here on the Coppermine that we'd see other paddler or fishermen but we never did on the whole trip. That's a contrast to Luste in 1989 who saw more than a dozen groups along the Coppermine.

We made it down to the serious section of the river - from MuskoX to Escape Rapids. All the rapids here were named by Franklin in 1821 who was the first group to paddle the length of the river. This particular 35 mile stretch of water is almost continuous, runnable rapids and offers the wilderness canoeist a day he or she won't forget.

High cliffs box in most of the river. Many eagle, peregrine and swallow nests plaster the cliff faces. In the rapids, large rocks are always present along the way just in case you thought you could go in a straight line. Hugging the corners is the smart thing to do but not always possible. Spray

decks are a must, in my opinion, though people get by without them.

I had David in my boat and no doubt the day was a revelation to him. The Coppermine has every kind of wave and situation - it never stops. And by the time we got to the big one - Escape Rapids, the long day and threatening weather combined with the tricky run called for a portage. Escape is a sharp left turn but you cannot hug the left shore which is a maze of rocks. There are some monster holes to get by and it offered John Franklin an exciting run in 1821 as he just about swamped.

We camped a few miles below Escape on a rock beach that was filed with shattered stones. They looked wrinkled but a touch of your hand or foot would crush the rock into a thousand little pieces. it was as though it was all pre-cut for you.

A long gravelly rapid brought us to the expansion before the legendary Bloody Falls. It was a real thrill to be here. For many years I have dreamed of being at this famous spot where the natives whom Samuel Hearne accompanied on his traverse of the Territories in 1771 massacred Inuit fishing here.

The two stage drop of the falls is impressive. Less impressive were the many signs of civilization (aka garbage) that littered the area. These falls are accessible from the village of Coppermine about 10

miles downstream. It is a great fishing hole and Peter Brewster hauled in several pure silver, and very strong ocean-run char from the foot of the last drop.

We got a real treat as we headed past the various fishing and hunting cabins into town. A very strong south wind pushed us along and made the job a breeze.

Arriving at Coppermine is so easy after canoeing Ungava. The tide there is less than a foot so you can just paddle right up to the town which sits just around the left land bank of the river right on Coronation Gulf. It is a bustling place with about 1200 residents and a building boom in progress.

We asked to camp near someone's house and then they invited all four of us to stay inside - great northern hospitality was shown by Fred and Edna Elias.

After three and a half weeks of wilderness travel we were instantly zapped up to date on the Soviet coup. The house was welcome and especially since the next day was cold and wet. We didn't get much of a chance to go through the town but a stone marker out in front of Fred's house caught our eye.

It was 1938 monument to the first Masonic service ever held north of the Arctic Circle. We noted among those brother Masons officiating was Wop May, legendary bush pilot, and J. B. Tyrrell, noted northern traveler and editor. He was the chaplain.

DOUGLAS MAP -- Detail from a map of the Lands Forlorn trip made several years later by George Douglas.



Our Back Pages

The 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, Thlewiazia 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.
- Outfit 65 - Churchill River hydro, Robert Perkins, James Bay.



HODGSON POINT -- David Peake (rear), Peter Brewster (center), and Peter Scott stand in the ruins of the cabin where the George Douglas party spent the winter of 1911-12. The old fireplace (right) is still standing but the cabin in losing its battle with the elements. It was built by Lionel Douglas while his other two fellow travelers were exploring up the Dease and Kendall Rivers. The old bed frames are still visible. The area where it was built still has many big trees.

Lands Forlorn Sponsors:



Labatt's

Che News

The winter season is upon us and that means research and canoe symposiums are being planned. We'll tell you about a couple next issue as well as having a batch of book reviews for you to catch up on. Don't forget, we love to hear from you and what you're up to.

Founded by Nick Nickels

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