



Spring 2007

The Journal of Canadian Wilderness Canoeing

Outfit 128



photo: Michael Peake

Jumping Off: A Twin Otter Delivers

SELWYN LAKE, 60th PARALLEL, N.W.T. JUNE 22, 1985. It is one of the most memorable moments of a first northern canoe trip. After months of planning and bustle and days of travel and turmoil, the mighty load of gear stuffed into the Twin Otter is disgorged, with unseemingly haste - into the Barrenlands. The Twin turns to leave; one last whiff of turbine and the noisy plane departs leaving you overwhelmed by the silence, the big silence, the kind you have never experienced before because that plane's not coming back. This great plane of the north last built 20 years ago is coming back. More on Twin Otters on Page 5.

www.ottertooth.com/che-mun



Noted northern paddler **John Lentz** wrote about the *Winter Packet's* plea from Max Finkelstein on uranium mining in the Thelon Sanctuary.

You certainly gave lots of space to Max Finkelstein to protest a uranium mine on the upper Thelon River, but he didn't make the case! You then asked for "more concrete detail" in a second letter, but only received more generalities.

As a wilderness paddler in northern Canada for the past 45 years, I'm not here to cheer for the mining industry, though if the paddling community is going to have any effect on these projects we ought to start with some facts - the other side certainly will. Seems strange Max didn't even know where the mine was to be located, much less its size, and environmental hazard mitigation strategies. We are all pretty much aware that such development has to meet increasingly tough environment standards (and rightly so) these days to obtain needed permits so there are usually lots of facts and opinions on hand as grist for the mill. So where is the informed discussion?

If we paddlers want to have any real impact on these issues, we have to take into consideration Max's level of emotion, but also rise above it and deal with the actual issues - on both sides. Otherwise, we risk becoming just an elitist group of sometime visitors who can be relied upon to shoot from the hip. The results will be predictable.

Some interesting news in a release from David Pelly and his new book project.

Following the *Old Way North* will explore the historical geography of the travel corridor from The Pas and Reindeer Lake in Manitoba, north to Nueltin Lake and the Kazan River in (what is today) Nunavut.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, this was one of the three most important and well-used access routes for people involved in

the opening of our North.

Much has been written about the early development and exploration of the Northwest Passage access, by sea from the North Atlantic, and its role in mapping and exploring the northern reaches of our country. Similarly, northern history buffs are quite familiar with the overland route used by Alexander Mackenzie, John Franklin, George Back, and many others: from Edmonton north to Athabaska, down the Slave River to Great Slave Lake, and points beyond. But the central travel corridor, into what remains today the heart of Canada's northern wilderness, from Manitoba to the vast stretch of Nunavut on the west side of Hudson Bay, remains shrouded in mystery, uncelebrated, its natural and cultural history largely ignored in writing for popular consumption.

All three of these travel routes are a function of geography, as is so much of Canadian history. That underlies all the tales from this landscape, and forms an important element of this book - hence the description: historical geography.

Explorers, map-makers, geologists, fur-traders, trappers, Mounties, missionaries, and the Native people themselves, above all, all used this travel corridor extensively. Over a hundred years, roughly, the land and the people wove together some exciting but unknown chapters in the history of Canada, which will now form the basis of this book.

Several years of archival research have collected a mountain of written material - trip journals, police reports, government surveys, personal documents and HBC records - which will form the basis for much of the narrative. Visits to the Cree and Dene communities of northern Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and the Inuit communities of southern Nunavut, where the Native people who once used this land regularly, now live, all offered opportunities to collect oral-histories and personal reminiscences connected to the land. All of this will provide the material with which to reconstruct the many tales this land has to tell. (In some ways, the approach to this book is similar to that used in

Thelon: A River Sanctuary, where the object was to write a "biography" of a very special place.)

On this occasion, given the disparate elements of *Following the Old Way North*, the way used by so many different people, the book will use the trip of one little known but nonetheless significant man as a thread to tie together all these stories. Ernest Oberholtzer paddled this route in 1912, with an Anishinabe companion, Billy Magee. His timing was perfect for these purposes; the area was just on the brink of entering the modern era. Oberholtzer's trip journal will serve as a window on the world through which he travelled, so that the reader can be transported to different places and meet different people along the travel corridor. In this way - like the trappers and missionaries and explorers of old, and the Native People, and indeed like Oberholtzer himself - the reader will be taken on his/her own journey following the old way north.

The book is to be published by the Minnesota Historical Society Press, and David's writing on this project has received the support of the Canada Council for the Arts.

And finally some kind words and interesting news from the esteemed paddled Stewart Coffin.

One of the first things I look at when *Che-Mun* comes is the fine photographs and the superb printing reproduction. They get better every year. I have saved issues from far back, and the steady improvement is obvious. You are now using what appears to be a 175-line halftone screen, which is better than any other magazine I know. I wonder if any of your readers besides myself would be interested in knowing more about the process and how taken, such as especially the one on the back cover by Fabien.

It now looks like my *Black Spruce Journals* will finally be published, later this year, by Heron Dance.

Thanks Stew. We have worked hard to get better photos - and it's a 200 line screen, I'm told.



Editor's Notebook

Well another Spring has sprung, somewhat grudgingly, here in eastern Canada but always welcome nonetheless.

This paddling season is extra special as our oft-interrupted plans to head north again seem to finally be on track. You can read about **Northern Crossing**, the Hide-Away Canoe Club's latest adventure on Page 9.

As an added value which is part of our new subscription price - all current subscribers can get a full colour version of *Che-Mun* as a PDF delivered to you electronically - just drop us an e-mail and let us know you would like to receive it.

We are also pleased to offer our readers a sneak peak at a wonderful new book that will know will be of great interest to *Che-Mun* readers. *The Canoe Atlas of the Little North* (Page 6) looks to be a real winner. And though we did not have an actual copy of the book in hand - we had a very high quality PDF which should translate beautifully onto paper given the amount of care that has already gone into this great addition to many a canoeing library.

As you will see by the letters and news items in this issue, the mineral boom in on in earnest in the Canadian north. Whether it's gold, diamonds or uranium the action is fast and furious - and you have to wonder how much is real. One source told me there is enough existing uranium in the Athabasca Basin of northern Saskatchewan to supply the entire world for a centuries. All the other stuff in Nunavut is primarily a stock play and it seems the locals are getting swept up in it.

And as **Northern Crossing** heads into that uranium rich land this summer with our Saskatchewan trip, maybe with all the digital cameras, satphones and computers, some think should bring along a geiger counter. Not a chance. Because I already know what makes wilderness tick.

Michael Peake.



Che-Mun is produced by the Hide-Away Canoe Club and published quarterly. We acknowledge the help of the Publications Assistance Plan in defraying postal costs on issues mailed to Canadian subscribers.

Canoesworthy

The governments of France and Nunavut signed a unique deal in April to create tourism in Nunavut that would appeal to French tourists. The key attraction is the French have a strong interest in Inuit culture that will attract them to the territory.

Under the deal, the French government will offer advice and technical help from government tourism experts as Nunavut develops its industry. It is also trying to persuade tour operators to offer vacation packages, such as dog-sledding or trekking in Nunavut. For its part, Nunavut plans to develop attractions that cater to the typical French traveller.

Part of the plan would see Inuit families welcoming tourists into their homes. The Association des Francophones du Nunavut has trained 16 families in the art of cleaning, cooking and demonstrating customs such as curing seal skins and making bannock.

The French interest in Inuit culture dates back to the 1930s, when Paul-Emile Victor explored Greenland and lived among the Inuit there. France is the only country in the world that does not have an Inuit population but does offer college courses in the native language, Inuktitut.

French President Jacques Chirac is well known for his passion for native culture. Last summer, he opened the Musée de Quai Branly, which showcases Indian art and is meant to be one of his legacies in office. He has taken a personal interest in Nunavut ever since he travelled there in 1999 when the territory was created.

The federal government has issued its statement of defence in response to a lawsuit filed by Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. that alleges Ottawa has not done enough to help implement the territory's 1993 land claim.

Nunavut's land-claims organization filed the \$1-billion lawsuit in December, alleging that the government has failed to live up to its obligations and is thus violating the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement.

At the time the claim was filed, NTI officials said they had to turn to the courts, after five years of trying to work with the federal government on implementation issues yielded no results.

The group's statement of claim alleges 16 breaches of the land-claims agreement, which include the failure to help Inuit acquire skills needed for employment opportunities and inadequate funding for organizations such as the territory's planning commission and water board.

In its statement of defence filed in April, the government denies virtually all of NTI's claims, and is asking that the action be dismissed with costs against NTI.

The matter is expected to be heard by the Nunavut Court of Justice in Iqaluit, but no court dates have been scheduled.

Inuit languages would become more prominent in daily Nunavut life, from phone bills to bylaw tickets, under draft legislation the territorial government tabled in April. Under the official languages act, English, French and the Inuit languages of Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun would be the territory's official languages. The Inuit language protection act would give Inuit languages more priority in the workplace, schools and public life.

Under the current Official Languages Act, which existed when Nunavut was still part of the Northwest Territories, Chipewyan, Cree, Dogrib, English, French, Gwich'in, Inuktitut and Slavey are official languages.

The proposed laws, if passed, would have Inuit languages come into force gradually over the next decade. Eventually, people would see more language use on everything from phone bills to bylaw tickets and when contacting emergency services.

Some Arctic outfitters who lead tourists on adventure trips through the Far North have called for stricter rules and regulations to help prevent tourism-related accidents and deaths. A growing interest in Arctic adventure tourism has led to more people wanting to

◆ CANOESWORTHY continues on Page 10



Quetico and Beyond

By Kevin Callan

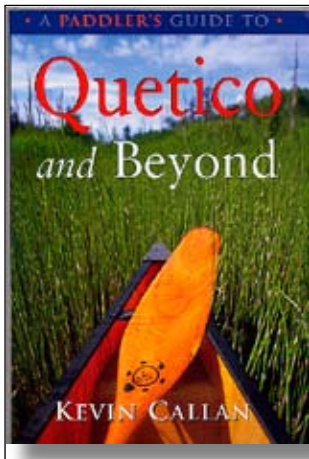
192 pp Boston Mills Press, 2007

\$29.95 ISBN: 1-55046-500-7

All Reviews by Michael Peake

This sloppily written and poorly edited book is barely worth the paper it is printed on. And furthermore . . . okay, I'm kidding. I just wanted to see what it would feel like to write the impossible—something bad about a Kevin Callan book. And it definitely doesn't feel right.

Quetico is one of my favourite places, and Kevin one of my favourite authors, so it's



pretty clear I love this book. And he nails it right off the bat. After his first early visiting to this million acre tract of wilderness west of Thunder Bay, Callan wondered what all the fuss

was about. But he soon came to realize that Quetico was never the biggest of this or the best of that. It is a wonderfully interconnected maze of historically significant waterways that maintain a wilderness allure despite sitting on top of the U.S. border.

With great maps and photos and a charming narrative, there are 11 routes inside the park and five outside described. I know a lot about Quetico history - and I still learned a lot more after reading this. Three of the other routes are written by other including the lovely Lynn Cox of *Canoe Frontiers*.

Kevin touches on what makes Quetico so special - its history. He writes about the voyageurs and *The Voyageurs*, of Eric Morse fame. He talks about Ernest Oberholtzer's 1909 circuitous route and of a young Bill Mason's first filming experience on the Maligne River.

All done with his usual wit and wisdom which makes Kevin Callan such a very special and valuable member of the Canadian paddling community.

Waterman back at it

On May 5th, 2007, Seth Wotten left Kenora, Ontario to resume his *Water for Future Generations Expedition*. This cross continent solo canoe journey aims to raise awareness about water related environmental issues and inspire people to take action to protect our water resources.

Wotten is canoeing from Montreal to Tuktoyaktuk over the course of 2006, 2007 and 2008. During his travels, he has been suggesting ways to take action for our water, promoting environmental campaigns, and making observations about the waterways.

While paddling from Montreal to Kenora in 2006, Wotten stayed afloat in the big water of Lake Superior, defended his food from wild animals, and spent 4 months by himself without going insane.

This year, he will be crossing Manitoba and Saskatchewan to end up in Fort McMurray, Alberta by the beginning of September. Once he passes Lake Winnipeg, he will be traveling mostly upstream on the Saskatchewan, Sturgeon Weir, Churchill, and Clearwater Rivers.

Wotten would like to see the federal government take leadership with a Canadian water act that recognizes the right to water (a concept which 97% of Canadians supported in a 2004 Ipsos-Reid Poll) and bans the bulk export of water. "Unfortunately, the government has been going in the opposite direction," says Wotten.

Another issue of concern for water is the regulation of toxic chemicals that are not only in industrial effluent but present in everyday consumer products such as household cleaners, cosmetics, and even baby bottles.

Wotten is working to gain support for some environmental campaigns. The Council of Canadians' Water Campaign is lobbying the federal government to recognize the right to water and create a national water act.

Since he has financed most of the expedition out of his own pocket, Wotten is looking for donations to help him cover his expenses. Information about making a donation can be found at www.wffg.ca. The web site features photos and stories from his first year on the water and more about his important project.

Lure of the Labrador Wild

By Dillon Wallace

Unabridged Audio Edition

Rattling Books, 2006

CD \$29.95 Download \$19.95

ISBN: 0-9734223-9-4

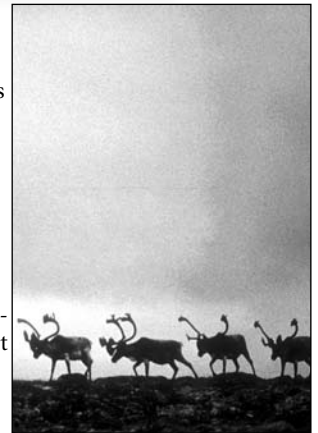
The story of the three Hubbard and Wallace expeditions have been well covered in these pages. And now along comes an audio recording of the book about that initial trip in 1903 with prose by Dillon Wallace - the same words that somehow riled his deceased travelling partner's wife to undertake her own epic journey to Ungava - and into the history books.

Readily clearly and faithfully by Jody Richardson, this CD is a straightforward reading of Wallace's first book. It tells the tale of Wallace, Hubbard and legendary guide George Elson's futile attempt to cross Labrador after taking the wrong river. Though quite familiar with the work it seemed to have had fresh air pumped into it and was more eloquent that I recall from

my own, silent, reading.

At more than nine hours in length, the best likely place to enjoy it all would be a long canoe trip shuttle or car ride. Then again, it is probably not the sort of uplifting tale you might wish to hear before heading out into those same sombre woods that claimed Leonid Hubbard.

There is something more searing about the the words when read aloud. The brutal weather and unrelenting hard work is sobering to say the least. An incredible tale of an almost unbelievable canoe trip - that none of us would like to be on.





DHC-6 Reborn: Ode to an Otter

By MICHAEL PEAKE

The crown jewel of northern aviation will shine again as a new generation of the venerable, and long retired, Twin Otter airplane is scheduled to make a return to the skies. Almost two decades ago, the last Twin Otter rolled off De Havilland's assembly line in north Toronto. [see *Che-Mun Outfit 55*.]

Yet it has never really left us. Though the plane cased production in 1988, a total of 844 Twin Otters were manufactured over two decades, more than 600 of which still fly in all kinds of conditions, from the Arctic to the tropics.

Now, a Vancouver Island company is taking over where De Havilland left off, producing the classic piece of Canadiana for the first time in 19 years.

Viking Air already has orders for almost 30 of the planes, known for their performance and reliability in rugged conditions. Parts will be manufactured on Vancouver Island and the aircraft assembled in Viking's 60,000-square-foot plant at the Calgary Airport.

The new Twin Otter Series 400 planes are being built in batches, with the first six scheduled to be ready in early 2009. The new planes will look similar to the old Twin Otter -- technical improvements are mainly internal and include a different engine for improved performance and the use of modern, lighter materials.

The number of Twin Otter orders surprised the firm, which initially expected about a dozen. Buyers and interest came from the Maldives, the Seychelles, Tahiti, Palm Beach, Singapore and Australia.

The world's best-selling 19-passenger aircraft, Twin Otters are respected for their capabilities, reliability and safety. De Havilland Canada began construction of the planes in 1965, and was later bought out by Bombardier.

For northern wilderness canoeists on a budget, the Twin Otter is the ultimate aircraft. Not that a twin engine airplane is a cheap ride. Current rates run upwards of \$20 per mile depending on how far north you are. For this summer's HACC trip, *Northern Crossing*, we had



photo: Michael Peake

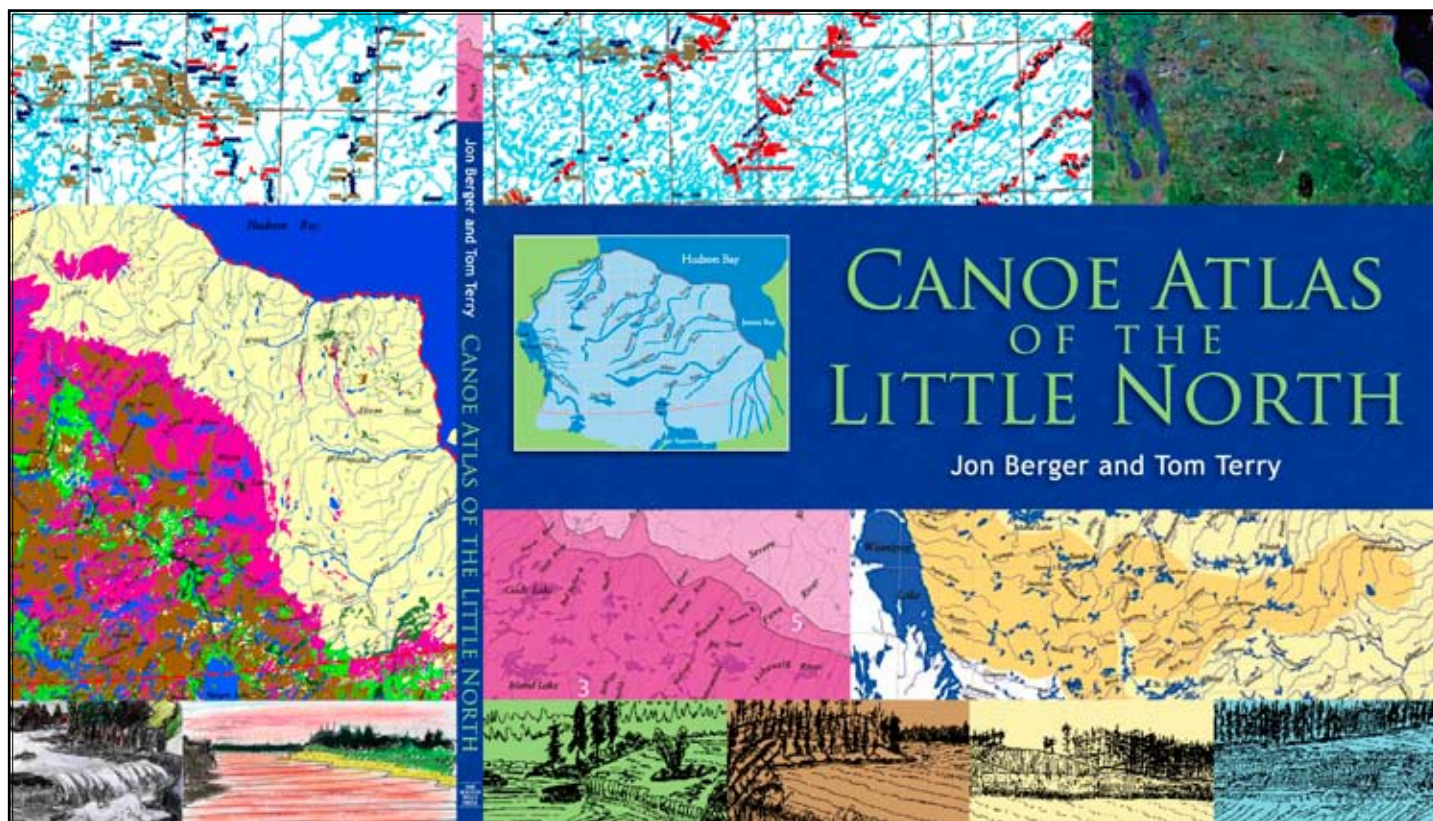
Unloading one of Air Tindi's Twin Otters on the east side of Great Bear Lake enroute to the Coppermine River in 1992.

to hunt around to find one operating out of Points North in northern Saskatchewan. We finally found a small regional airline that had no web site, no e-mail - but a Twin Otter - for our short, three-canoe hop into Reindeer Lake.

Twin Otters are seemingly built for canoes - at least those no longer than an Old Town Tripper - 17 feet, 2 inches. And where it becomes economical is that you can fit three Trippers *inside* plus all the gear and six paddlers into one flight. That works on the money side but there are other considerations as well. Having all trip members arrive as one group eliminates the often risky prospect of getting three flights to the same place in a short time as northern weather has a habit of making a mess of the best city-devised plan.

Having two engines, with two pilots, also greatly increases the safety factor. These planes can go almost anywhere. In 2003 they made the world news by doing a daring and risky medical evacuation from Antarctica. No other plane could have made that run - and it was a Canadian pilot, Sean Loutitt, and the crew from Kenn Borek Air in Calgary who did it.

The Twin Otter is the final act of the romantic northern bush pilot era that blossomed in Canada from the early 1920s. De Havilland Canada produced a series of famed planes mainly designed for Canada's north: The DHC-1 Chipmunk (1946), DHC-2 Beaver (1947), DHC-3 Otter (1951), DHC-4 Caribou (1958), DHC-5 Buffalo (1965), DHC-6 Twin Otter (1965). The Caribou and Buffalo were primarily military planes and the others, except for the Chipmunk, are still in wide service all across Canada's northland.



A cover-and-a-half of the fascinating and superb new book on travel in the vast area of northern Ontario known as the Little North. This large 1.3 million sq. km area remains largely uncrossed by roads and bridges and offers a lifetime of interconnected paddling routes for wilderness canoeists.

Canoe Atlas of the Little North
By Jonathan Berger and Thomas Terry
Boston Mills/Firefly Press
144pp 16 x 13.5 in. \$95 Limited Edition

I don't think there is a wilderness canoeist alive who doesn't love an atlas. After all, maps are the precursor to adventure, whether real or imagined, and we have all pored over many different map books to check out the small parts that might interest us. Well, now we have our own atlas that is custom made for northern paddlers. Imagine a book containing 50 cherished 1:250,000 topographic maps all annotated and appended. Not map likenesses - the real things - minus the contour lines. This book is not a finished painting - it's the paint - with a massively hued palette of colours that you get to complete. This is the Rosetta Stone of canoe route books.

This lavish and beautiful book has been a while coming and the reason is obvious with more than 1200 illustrations, and authoritative and experienced commentary - it's a big package. Jon Berger and Tom Terry have put together an instant classic. Much in the way Alan Cooke did with *The Exploration of Northern Canada 500 to 1920* and Gwyneth Hoyle and Bruce Hodgins did with *Canoeing North into the Unknown* - Berger and Terry have supplied the rich and raw elements that go into northern adventure in a very palatable way.

Those who don't slog through northern waters will probably not get it but there is a visceral thrill in just opening the pages of this atlas. I admit it, topo maps do it for me - and for you too, I'll bet, otherwise why are you reading this?

The book is presented in two parts. The first half, called the Overview, looks at the history and geology of the area covered called the Little North (see map). It was called *Le Petit Nord* by the fur traders, the diminutive of *Le Grand Nord* further west. The people of the First Nations call much of the Little North the Nishnawbe-Aski — Land of the Original People.

The second half of the book features, by map name, 50 of the standard Canadian 1:250,000 topo maps. Each has its own two page section with one full page of the map and the other on route details and history. The maps were purchased from Ottawa and extensively digitized at the Geographical Information Science Centre at the University of California at Berkeley with annotated info from the authors who based their research on their five decades years of canoe travel in the area. The results are first rate.

The overall theme is the interconnected nature of this vast area. Berger and Terry point out, quite correctly, that no matter the geography, there is almost no barrier to where a canoe can get to all through this 1.3 million sq. km. area.

They write. "Along the traverse from Great Lake to tundra, the canoe routes follow every type of waterway. No stream, rivulet or river is too big or too small for a canoe, and the routes go upstream as well as down. They skirt canyons and cataracts, zigzagging through island-studded lakes and threading mazes of island rapids. The routes glide down kilometres of



"We travel in a land of complete connection. We travel in a great rocky, sandy, bog covered, lake dotted, river cut and crossed forest filled with paths. The Little North is a forest whose roads are the waterways. The waterways are lined with rock channels through the shallows, rock art on the cliffs, cultivated wild rice beds in the marshes, blueberry grounds on the sand plains, fishing, hunting, trapping camps, and portage trails. The Little North is at once a northern forest and a northern garden."
from the Preface, Canoe Atlas of the Little North.



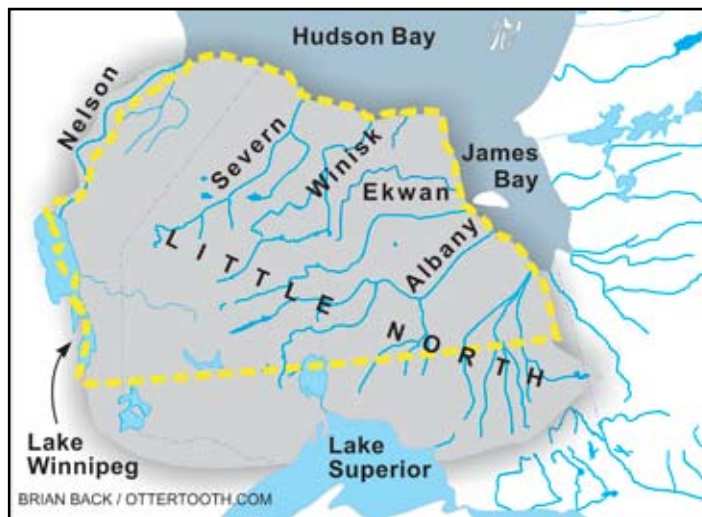
photo: Michael Peake

Peter Brewster (l) and Peter Scott negotiate Highrock Rapids on the upper Winisk River in July 1999. This majestic river of Ontario's Little North is included in the Canoe

horse races (long runs of fast current) and they ascend heavy falls, climbing up ledge to ledge."

The atlas covers the area north of the 50th parallel which includes seven major river systems and their many tributaries; the Moose, Albany, Attawapiskat, Winisk, Severn, Hayes/Gods and Nelson. The authors note they have limited themselves to route knowledge they have personally obtained and not relied previous published accounts. They have also omitted some of the more well-documented routes in the south end of the range.

They also make the point, noted often in *Che-Mun*, about the loss of land-based travel info included in maps. The older maps when reprinted lost some of those valuable portage and trail routes and only efforts like this book and others of its kind, coupled with recreational canoeists who still use the land, will keep that knowledge base alive. The many beautiful full page maps include fur trade and prominent explorations routes plus geology maps which show very clearly the swath the Canadian Shield cuts across the area creating thousands of rapids and falls.



Coupled with the atlas and topo maps are the many drawings of Jonathan Berger. These rudimentary drawings resemble pictograms, very simple in their nature but they work well when combined with the highly elaborate maps. There are no photos in the book, another rarity.

This is a superb effort made by dedicated and experienced canoeists for others of their kind. Berger and Terry have taken the culture of traditional northern canoe travel and focussed it through the best and latest digital technology to synthesize the essentials in a beautiful and impressive package. This is a book you will lovingly pore over, admiring its many thoughtful details. It

will launch your soul and paddle on limitless northern journeys.

This book will be published in limited quantities and should be available in June 2007. To order from Firefly books call: in Canada: 800-387-6192 or from the US: 800-387-5085. E-mail bkalb@fireflybooks.com. It is also available from Amazon.

50,000 Kids Can't be Wrong

By BRIAN BACK
Ottertooth.com

A century after the arrival of the first youth camp at Lake Temagami, the 50,000th camper will attend one of its nine youth camps this summer.

The lake plays an outsized role in youth camping. It holds one of the highest concentrations of camps of any lake in Ontario, a province regarded as a hub of world youth camping. Keewaydin Camp in the North Arm is the oldest camp in Canada — tied with Kanawa in Quebec — and the oldest canoe-trip operator in the world. Cochrane's Camp, formerly Camp Temagami in the South Arm, was one of the first camps started in Ontario.

Keewaydin's arrival in 1902 — it was founded in Maine in 1894 — launched the lake's second industry (after the fur trade), according to historian Bruce Hodgins. Cochrane's Camp arrived the following year. The third was Camp Cayuga, which opened on the Northwest Arm (today Northwaters occupies the site) in 1925. The number grew to eight by 1949, and has swung between eight and eleven since.

Sometimes the rustic base-camp facilities bordered on the outlandish. Cochrane's had a six-hole golf course. The first Wabikon had riding stables with a bridal path to Temagami Lodge. Keewaydin had, and still does have, clay tennis courts.

Of course, camping was a boys fiefdom in the beginning, broken when the second Cayuga opened in 1940 under Henry and Marjorie Woodman.

For the first six decades, youth camping on Temagami was a stable business. Aside from the 1932 closure of the first Cayuga (which never really reached viability), no camps closed until the first Wabikon in 1961. The quick-succession demise of Windshift, Metagami, Northwoods, Cochrane's, White Bear, and Wigwasati in the 1970s left the impression of instability, but a new generation of camps — Canadian Adventure, Pays d'en Haut, Lorient, Langskib, and the third Wabikon — opened in their wake, keeping the overall camp count fairly constant.

Lake Temagami seems an illogical place for camps as it is so far from a major metropolitan area, but the founders were attracted by the direct railway access and the boat lines. In the boat-line era, which ended in 1965, you could buy a passenger ticket from any major Canadian or

American city to a camp's dock. In spite of their isolation, the camps could move people and supplies to and fro with ease. And in Temagami they adjoined a stunning wilderness network of canoe routes that has become the third most-popular wilderness canoeing area in the world (after the Boundary Waters-Quetico and Algonquin Park).

Most operations have been canoe-trip camps. These are anything but typical youth camps. Campers spend most of their summer away from the comfort of base camp, confronting the challenges of weather, terrain, and each other, and go home more self-reliant and confident.

Until the 1980s, most canoe trips of five or more canoes were from

Temagami camps. Before then the colour of these slow-moving specks on the water was a sure identity of their camp: Keewaydin's green, Cochrane's grey, Wabun's and Northwoods' red, Wigwasati's yellow, Wabikon's blue and Wanapitei's white.

Grey Owl guided at Keewaydin from 1910 to 1911, and when he left for Biscotasing a few years later he was regarded as a poor trapper, but an outstanding canoeist. He would have honed his canoeing prowess at Keewaydin where he paddled every day, all day for the entire season. (He spent the summer of 1925 at Wabikon, made famous as the place where he met Anahareo, but it was a tourist lodge and would not become a youth camp for another 19 years.)

Lake Temagami without the camps would be like coffee without caffeine.

They provided some of the earliest employment for Bear Islanders. Many former campers and staff, particularly from Wabun, Keewaydin and Cochrane, became original island owners. The current and previous presidents of the Temagami Lakes Association, Vince Hovanec and Brad Hall respectively, are Keewaydin alumni. Camps hosted the founding meetings of the Save Maple Mountain Committee (at Wabikon in 1973) and the Temagami Wilderness Society (at Keewaydin in 1986), the groups that spearheaded the biggest conservation battles.

These island oases served as villages in the countryside. During the era of the boat lines, they were way stations for cottagers dropped off or picked up at scheduled boat times. They hosted dances, provided vital mail service through their post offices, and dispensed medical help through their infirmaries.

And Temagami is richer for them.



One of those 50,000 kids, Che-Mun Editor Michael Peake, left, while at his first year of the Camp Temagami in 1962 as a ten-year-old. It is his only remaining photo of three glorious summers that sparked a lifelong love of northern wilderness canoeing.

In the Footsteps of the Giants

With names like David Thompson and Eric Morse leading the way, the Hide-Away Canoe Club will again - and finally - embark on another onriver.online northern trip in the summer of 2007. Northern Crossing will traverse the historic waters and trails of several centuries.

By **MICHAEL PEAKE**
HACC Governor

The Hide-Away Canoe Club will again be onriver.online once again this summer with a new interactive canoe expedition called **Northern Crossing – On Thompson's Trail**. After a lengthy absence, it marks the fourth online journey for our group who have previously paddled the George, Winisk and Korok rivers.

In keeping with our motto, *Northern Crossing* will follow old trails that are new to us. The 18-day trip, entirely in northern Saskatchewan, begins in Reindeer Lake at the site of the old trading post Bedford House.

As the trip's title suggests, we will be retracing a very small part of the very long trail left by the incomparable traveller David Thompson who paddled, walked and rode 55,000 miles across the breadth of North America from 1784-1850, mapping and exploring some 1.5 million square miles.

We will, in our own small way, be adding one small part to the continent-wide, three year appreciation of the man who mapped Canada two centuries ago. For more on the myriad projects honouring this amazing man see www.davidthompson200.ca.

Trip member Sean Peake, one of the few to have edited all of Thompson's journals, will be supplying lots of info about the man known as Mr. Astronomer Thompson.

We are also very proud to be following, 50 years later, the trip of a remarkable group of



The crew of the 1957 Voyageurs trip in northern Saskatchewan from Reindeer Lake to Stony Rapids. The HACC will be re-doing the same trip 50 years later. L-R: Eric Morse, Elliott Rodger, Denis Coolican, Sigurd Olson, Tyler Thompson and Omond Solandt. Check their trip online at www.uwm.edu/Dept/JMC/Olson/voyageur/1957_reindeer%20lake_diary.htm

men whom we have admired for many years. *The Voyageurs*, with Eric Morse, Sig Olson & co. (as pictured) paddled this exact route exactly half a hundred summers ago. It is one of the few trips of their's for which we only have one photo of, but several are available on the web site noted in the picture caption.

We will begin July 4, flying in from Points North Landing to the old site of Bedford House about half way up Reindeer Lake. From there we head upstream towards Wollaston Lake via the Swan and Blondeau rivers over that height of land. We cross Wollaston to its exit at the start of the Fond du Lac river which drains west into Lake Athabasca. Our trip will end at Stony Rapids on Black Lake.

All the trip members, save one, from our *Labrador Odyssey 2001* trip will be back again. This includes Michael, Sean and Geofrey Peake, Peter Brewster, Tom Stevens and,

replacing Andrew Macdonald, as well as making a comeback after a 10-year absence will be Peter Scott who was bumped at the last minute from the Labrador trip due to the sudden passing of his father, the remarkable Angus Scott.

As before, we will be providing info for those following along on the web – info that has acquired some new names over the past six years. We will post daily photo galleries, journals (now called blogs) and even podcasts. Newer technologies will make our satphone very small and fast and we are all equipped with the latest digital cameras and laptops. A big change from our first online trip on the George where the satphone case was huge and heavy.

Once again we will be using the Canoe.ca web site to post our stuff but the trip will now be able to be accessed by our own URL at www.northerncrossing.ca.

We also fortunate to again have some sponsors helping us out. Saskatchewan Tourism, Churchill River Canoe Outfitters, Pronto Air, Roadpost Communications, Yamaha have all provided assistance to the expedition at this point. After six years away from the rigours of northern paddling, it is probably a good idea to return with a more southerly, and less arduous, trip. Not that we're getting older - maybe we're getting smarter! But, as *Che-Mun* readers should know, our great passion along with wilderness paddling is the history of the area we travel through and *Northern Crossing* certainly has no shortage of that.

The trip dates are July 4 – 21. We hope you will have the time to check in with us along the way.



CANOE SWORTHY *continued*

visit the North Pole, climb northern mountains, or trek across large areas of land and ice on foot, ski or dogsled.

That same interest has led outfitters like Josée Auclair to demand more rules about how they are to lead such trips and how prepared they and their clients should be.

Auclair, who has been organizing trips in the Arctic with her husband Richard Weber for the past two decades, said the northern adventure industry and government must work together to develop tougher guidelines, in order to ensure tour operators and customers are prepared to deal with inclement weather and emergencies.

"At this point, it's a free-for-all," she said. "If you want to be a guide in the Arctic, anybody can just go and say, 'Well, I'm good.' But it's not because you're good down south, you're good in the Arctic. So things should be more organized."

Jillian Dickens, a marketing officer with Nunavut Tourism, said her group is willing to work with the industry and governments to put better guidelines in place.

"This is something that Nunavut Tourism feels is a concern" she said.

In the last few years, there have been seven deaths during adventure tours in Nunavut and the Yukon. Other adventurers have lost parts of their hands or feet, or suffered nerve damage from frostbite.

It didn't take long for the Arctic to take its toll on soldiers participating in an unprecedented snowmobile trek to enforce Canadian sovereignty.

In late March, on the first day of their 8,000-kilometre patrol across and around Ellesmere Island, the 24 soldiers and Inuit Rangers lost two of their snowmobiles and all of their supply-laden komatiks, or sleds.

The frozen river bed the patrol had been following had seemed to offer easy passage. But eventually the way was blocked by boulders bigger than their snowmobiles.

The travellers were forced to winch everything over the boulders -- a process that tore the wooden sleds apart and punched holes in the transmissions of two machines, draining all their fluids.

So, ingenuity took over. First, patrollers lashed the sleds back together. Then they cut bits from some extra rubber snowmobile tracks, plugged up the holes in the transmission cases, topped up the fluids and headed out again.

It was one example of the determination required daily on Operation Nunavut, an epic journey across land some of which hasn't been visited since the early Arctic explorers were there a century ago. The idea is to demonstrate to the world that the Canadian military is capable of operating on sea ice and land that Canada claims for its own.

Near the end of the patrol, the soldiers will place a metal Canadian flag on Ward Hunt Island, a rocky outcrop off the top of Ellesmere Island, which is used by explorers from all over the world as a jump-off point for the North Pole.

Blowing snow obscures landmarks so completely soldiers have been relying on GPS to navigate. At day's end, they anchor their tents to their sleds so the wind doesn't blow them away.

Then, hunkered down in the freezing dark, the Inuit hunters trade stories. One of the soldiers pulls out a harmonica and plays old Newfoundland tunes. Temperatures plummet to -40 C. Winds howl.

One Ranger, Paul Ikuallaq of Gjoa Haven is the grandson of famed Norwegian Arctic explorer Roald Amundsen, who fathered a child during a stay there and whose boat gave the name to the town of Gjoa Haven on King William Island.

The age-old Inuit tradition of getting around on dogsled could make a come back in the eastern Arctic, if organizers of Nunavut's newest dog sled race have their way.

The first-ever Qimualaniq Quest, a 320-kilometre race between Iqaluit and Kimmirut on south Baffin Island, finished April 2 with longtime Iqaluit resident and lawyer Paul Crowley and his team winning the top prize of \$5,000.

Crowley and his dogs endured steep climbs and hair-raising descents to win the five-team race, but he said it was still a great experience.

Competitive dog sled races are commonly associated with big races in the Yukon and Alaska. Inuit in the eastern Arctic have used dogs, especially the hardy Canadian Inuit breed of dogs, for centuries to hunt, trap and travel. But in modern times, snowmobiles are the preferred mode of transportation in Nunavut.

"The snowmobiles came around and they're fast and they can go places where they want to, but [are] not as reliable as the dog teams," Lyta said.

One problem, said polar adventurer and second-place finisher Matty McNair, is the shrinking number of purebred Canadian Inuit dogs in the North. As well, keeping the dog teams require a lot of time and commitment, but something has to be done, she said.

"This is the last indigenous breed to North America. There are not many left; there are maybe 2,000 in the world," McNair said.

"A lot of interbreeding has caused them to have floppy ears, and they don't carry their tails snapped, and they don't have that double-coat on anymore. So there are not a lot of purebreds left."

Northern Greenland has bans in place on the import of other breeds, in order to keep sled dogs there pure. No such restrictions exist in the Canadian Arctic, but organizers hope the race will give sled dogs more popularity.

Just north of Baker Lake, Meadowbank Mining Corp. is preparing to build Canada's largest open-pit gold mine. That requires something new for isolated, landlocked Baker Lake - a 70 mile road into the tundra. To build it, Meadowbank plans to hire about 40 local people, which will inject about \$250,000 in wages into the community.

Already, the local Canadian Rangers and firefighters have had extra training in cleaning up oil and contaminants spills. Some people have been sent to Ontario for training as heavy equipment operators and are now earning five times what the government previously provided.

The Iglu Inns North Hotel has paid off a large heating bill and has no vacancy from April to November. Store managers say accounts are being paid and big-ticket items are selling out.

"One store has one snowmobile left; the other has three," said Moses Kayuryuk, the community's economic development officer, who reported on the changes at the 10th Nunavut Mining Symposium in Iqaluit this week. Premier Paul Okalik and Paul Kaludjak, president of Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., the land-claims organization, both insist they're ready for the resource boom, but many Nunavut residents are less sure.

It's a constant theme. Nunavut still does not have a trade school. The high school graduation rate is the lowest in the country, and the small size of most high schools and communities means there are limited opportunities for trades training in school or apprenticeships in town.

There currently are 125 exploration projects underway across Nunavut. Awareness is growing faster in the west, where Nunavut's first diamond mine opened last year and where half of the active projects are located. Miramar, which hopes to open its Doris North gold mine next year, is trying to help. The company runs a program that takes high



school kids from Nunavut to Yellowknife, where they can earn credits in shop class, something they can't do at home.

But many Nunavummiut worry that more mining activity will put pressure on already weak infrastructure and services.

Remote airports are getting busier, while runways age. One-person nursing stations are spending more time on out-of-towners. When hotels are fully booked in small towns, other groups - such as the travelling court that administers justice in the North - have to make new plans. And always, there are fears for the caribou and for fish habitat.

March was cold in the Arctic, but temperatures from elsewhere in the world show 2007 is on its way to becoming the hottest year in recorded history. Environment Canada's longer-range forecasts for the Arctic reflect this warming trend. In fact, these forecasts show Nunavut heading into a warm summer. And forecasts for the summer of 2007 are even more extreme from others, who predict that after a cool spring, the entire continent of North America will be "really, really hot."

A NASA map of average monthly temperatures around the world shows Canada's Arctic experienced below-average temperatures in March, while Russia's North saw temperatures as much as eight degrees higher than normal. Davidson calls this situation "remarkable" because last year the cold spot was frozen over Russia.

The cold weather followed by the upswing in temperatures provided Davidson with particularly good conditions to observe the sun. As soon as a blizzard moved the cold air mass over the High Arctic, his observations of sun disks showed "enormous gains" in heat. The Arctic's wonders may melt, sink or be blown away before the world has a chance to appreciate them.

Uranium exploration companies don't want Kuururjuaq, Nunavik's second provincial park, to prevent them from mining near the area. But several other groups want to see park boundaries expanded by 1,800 sq km to protect rare fossils, pristine lakes, and caribou breeding grounds nearby.

Arguments for the two opposing views surfaced during public hearings held in March in Kangiqsualujuaq on planning for Kuururjuaq Park. Azimut, a Montreal-based firm with a uranium property near Kuururjuaq, strongly opposes any limits on mineral exploration or mining near the park.

Azimut says Kuururjuaq is "an opportunity to demonstrate how the coexistence of mining and park activities can be successful." DeBeers in South Africa has mined close to protected areas, Azimut points out. There, DeBeers also collaborated with the South African National Parks agency and the Peace Parks Foundation to establish the Mapungubwe National Park near its Venetia mine.

Azimut wants a promise that lands around Kuururjuaq will "never be subject to prohibitions against mineral exploration." But Makivik Corporation said the birthright organization has "very serious reservations" about plans for uranium mining near Kuururjuaq, which includes a scenic mineral-rich belt near the Torngat Mountains.

And the Society for Nature and Parks in Canada and the Kativik Regional Government want to see a buffer zone as well as an expansion of the park's boundaries at Mont Nuvulialuk and around Tasikallak Bay.

These groups want the park's boundaries expanded by 1,800 sq km at the south and north ends to protect fossils and lakes near Tasikallak and unique land features near Nuvialuk that date back to the last ice age, including rocky ice fields and remnants of ancient shorelines. These

groups say thousands of mineral claims to surrounding areas should not be renewed after 2008.

The Society for Nature and Parks in Canada also suggests an additional 14,000 sq km be added to the park to protect the breeding and grazing grounds of the George River caribou herd.

They worry mining activity may frighten caribou, pollute nearby water, and damage permafrost already melting from climate change.

In contrast, Azimut and Northwestern Mining Ventures want a formal recognition of promising areas in Nunavik for mining, "just as governments designate protected areas in order to conserve biodiversity."

Azimut says it won't be able to afford working near Kangiqsualujuaq if a buffer zone limits access to its North Rae property, only 30 kilometres southeast of the community and skirting the future park's borders.

Quebec's department of sustainable development, environment and parks is now reviewing comments and briefs submitted at the hearings, and by summer, should release its recommendations. These will, among other things, touch on suggestions for changes to Kuururjuaq's boundaries and the creation of a mining-free buffer zone.

Although no mining is to be allowed anywhere in the Quebec park system, beneficiaries are entitled to continue hunting and fishing in Nunavik's future parks, just as they do now.

The northern mining boom continues in Nunavut and Nunavik as the latter's second nickel mine boasting a workforce of 400 mainly Inuit employees, four open pit mines and an ore processing plant is on the drawing boards from miner Canadian Royalties.

The extension of the Raglan Lake mine, at the head of the Povungnituk River will be only 20 miles from the famed Chubb or New Quebec Crater now called by the Inuktituk name Pingaluit.

Negotiations are also underway with Makivik Corporation to strike an Inuit impact and benefits agreement by next November. Nickel prices are expected to remain high, ensuring the mine will be a money-maker. And Nunavik can expect the spin-offs of its success because Inuit have priority for the estimated \$14 million worth of jobs every year and another annual chunk of \$50 million in spin-offs.

This summer, Canadian Royalties plans to sink \$10 million into more exploration and drilling of four deposits located south of Xstrata's Raglan mine. There will be about 60 workers at their exploration base camp and another camp for road construction teams building 35 more km of road around the property. In production, the Raglan South mine will produce 3,500 tonnes a day for 12 years. By contrast, the nearby Raglan mine produces 15,000 tonnes a day of a higher-grade ore.

Canadian Royalties is looking at new ways to make its mine even cleaner, such as a new tailings system. This would use waterproof liners to store the tailings away from any contact with the environment, even if rising temperatures start to melt the permafrost.

Global warming is a theme that runs throughout the company's \$1 million environmental and social study, which looks at the mine's potential impacts on archeological sites, waterways, soil, people, birds, fish and air.

The study says the mine's impacts should fall well within acceptable limits - mainly because the future mine is located in a cold and isolated place, even by Nunavik standards.

This means the fish are puny, vegetation is scarce, few caribou come around and Inuit have not heavily relied on this tough terrain for hunting. The mine's environmental impacts will be subject to close scrutiny and recommendations from Quebec and a lot of other people will be keeping a close eye on it as well.



photo: Michael Peake

One, final, Twin Otter story from our last trip Labrador Odyssey in July 2001. The photo above shows our Old Town Trippers being unloaded at Goose Bay, Labrador. We were enroute from Prince Edward Island to Saglek Fiord and had to stop because of bad weather over the coast ahead - not to mention gas. We had made the arrangement for the long charter from PEI with Air Labrador some months earlier. They were not very confident we could get our three canoes inside their Twin Otter. "Can't be done", they said. So when we arrived in Goose Bay, the manager of the base came out to have a look at the technique of layering three 17-foot canoes into the Twin Otter cabin. Well, it can be done but not with a much room to spare. We had to remove the fire extinguisher and a couple of layers of paint - but we got 'em in. We ended up waiting for two days in Goose Bay and repeated the procedure when heading north to Saglek - to a much smaller audience. The three canoes, by the way, remain (we think) at the lodge at the

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Founded in 1973 by Nick Nickels
NEW RATES: \$25 per year
US subscriptions in US dollars
Published by the Hide-Away Canoe Club

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The Journal of Canadian Wilderness Canoeing
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