December **HUT!** 1976

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE MINNESOTA CANOE ASSOCIATION, INC.



Canoeing in the Midwest

FEBUARY ACTIVITY MEETING
WEDNESDAY, FEB. 16
7:30
COOPER HIGH SCHOOL
8230 47 Ave. N.
New Hope

About 2500 miles North of Minnesota Bob O'Hara and Tim Rice were forced to leave their canoes when the ice of August put an early end to their 1976 expedition. Although their trip from Baker Lake (West of Hudson Bay) to the Artic Ocean was aborted, Bob and Tom have returned to give us an exciting view of their experience.

Join us - and bring lots of friends.

Our Cover Picture

In the winter, one need not give up canoeing. If you are well-dressed and equiped, poling a small shallow stream can be the safest way to go. Here Syl Beletz poles one of the many thousands of much-overlooked creeks and small shallow streams open for poling.

This issue of HUT is being sent to former members who have dropped their membership in the last year. Give yourself a gift -- rejoin before January 1.

Activity Meetings 1977

February - Bob O'Hara's Artic Expedition
March - Builders' Show
April - Cascaders Whitewater Presentation
June - Marathon Jensen Handicap
July - Voyageur's
August - State Fair Display
September - Color Cruise and Builder's Contest
October -Banquet
November - Hobby and Craft Show

"HUT" is the signal said by one canoer to their partner in order that both paddlers may switch sides in unison. This practice was originated by canoe racers of Minnesota in the late 1940's with the word "hut" first used by Eugene Jensen, who still builds and races canoes. This swift and distinctive style of paddling has since been recognized as the most effective way to move a canoe by both recreational and racing paddlers.

HUT! Magazine is published monthly by the Minnesota Canoe Association, Inc., a non-profit organization, and is distributed to more than 1500 members and numerous friends of the MCA across the nation. Our purpose is to distribute information about canoe sports and canoe camping, to preserve and promote wild rivers, to effect conservation of canoeable waterways, and to encourage canoeing as family recreation.

OFFICE HOURS

Evenings only so far.
Almost every Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday.
Second Monday each month for publications.
Fourth Friday each month for building.

MINNESOTA CANOE ASSOCIATION
HUT AD RATES

1 inch on Trading Post Page	$5.00	
¼ Page	$30.00	6 - 150.00
		12 - 300.00
½ Page	$50.00	6 - 250.00
		12 - 500.00
Full page	$80.00	6 - 400.00
		12 - 800.00

Calendar of Events

Monday, December 13

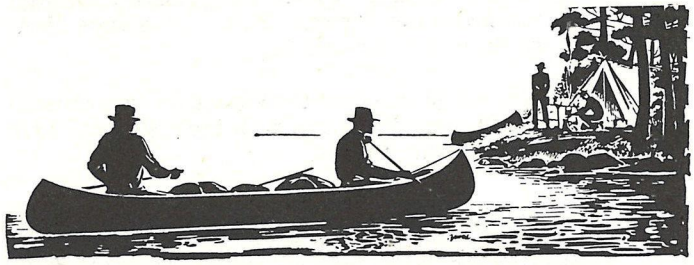
Cascaders Board Meeting at the home of Lee Stocking at 6:00 p.m. 698-4331.

Monday, December 22

Cascaders General Meeting at Logan Park (Monroe and Broadway N.E., MPLS.) at 7:00 p.m. Pool session sign up and films on rolling.

Sunday, January 9

First Cascaders Rolling Lesson at the Brooklyn Center Pool. 6301 Shingle Creek Parkway. 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.



Walt Says:

Now that we have an office and plenty of space to store our things, look through your basements, and if you have anything that belongs to the MCA call me at 488-4570.

Walter Jones, President



Cascaders' musings

The Cascaders were well represented at this year's Last Ditch Slalom on the Wolf River in Wisconsin. The Wisconsin Hoofers managed to put on a well organized, smoothly run race despite low water. Thanks to Bob Obst. Notables were John Butler who finished first in C-1 defeating several nationally known paddlers and Mary Purcell who finished third in K-1W.

Coming soon in a newsletter near you will be the Cascaders own newsletter insert. Unlike rival chapter inserts (i.e. Mississippi Crud), it promises to be interested, witty and a Pulitzer candidate.

Wendy Quam reports that Larry Johns lied about his age to his optomitrist. Dick Simmons reports that Larry is overweight and can no longer fit into his kayak (thus his move to the Voyageurs Chapter). Why is everyone picking on Larry?

Sixteen members of the Cascaders were in attendence at the MCA banquet to watch Bob Schuetzler accept our X-C ski trophy from the Merrython racers. Bob is currently planning a marathon slide show contest with them despite overwhelming odds.

Get Rolled!!

This is not an expressin for masochistic involvement in crime or kinky sex. It's the announcement of the Cascader's yearly pool sessions to teach the Eskimo roll to new kayakers and canoeists.

A six week course will begin Sunday, January 9th at the Brooklyn Center Community Pool. The course will cover basic paddling techniques and safety for new paddlers interested in whitewater boating. Registration for these sessions will begin on December 22 at the Cascaders General Meeting at 7:00 p.m. at Logan Park (Monroe & N.E. Broadway). Because of limited space, registratin will be restricted to the first 35 people signing up. The cost is $27.00 for 8 weeks or $22.00 for 6 weeks.

Contacts for further information are Tom Rice 484-5519 or Al Button 776-4607.

"APOLOGY"

The MCA Board wishes to express its regret at any seeming defamation of Bob O'Hara in the secretary's minutes, and to acknowledge the many past services he has given the club. The secretary apologizes for an erroneous impression that Bob was solely responsible for what was a complex snafu, and for the unwarranted assumption that Bob didn't care. His record speaks for itself.

Three decisions by the Board

1.

Resin sales are being discontinued.
See the article by Jim Malek.

2.

The MCA has entered into a short term contract with the publishers of CANOE. Members of the MCA will receive CANOE in November, January, March, May, July, September and HUT on the other months.

3.

Effective on January 1, 1977 MCA dues will increase.

Annual Single Membership $8.00
Annual Family Membership $10.00
Annual Supporting Memership $25.00
Annual Contributing Membership $50.00
Life Member $100.00



Eleventh annual builder's contest

by Jim Malek.

The 11th Annual Canoe Builders Contest was held on Saturday, September 25th. For the second straight year the weather was sunny and warm and O'Brien State Park was open between numerous closings this year.

The turnout was lower this year as only six canoes turned out for the voting. The woodstrip cruising canoe class was won for the second year in a row by Chuck Alberg.

Chuck's entry this year was a 17 foot redwood guide model weighing 65 pounds. Chuck put a full length multicolored inlay right above the water line, cane seats and fine handcrafted finishings to make one of the finest canoes shown anywhere.

Tom Babcook took second place with a sleek looking, beautifully finishished 17 foot explorer model weighing only 54 pounds.

Third place went to Gary Olson and Ken Espersen who combined to build a nicely fitted 17 foot redwood guide model.

Lew Miller's 18 foot guide, a new MCA design, weighing 65 pounds took a solid fourth place. Or was that Dean's canoe?

There were two entries in the New Design Class both 14 foot one man or solo canoes. Jim Jahnkes 25 pounds of cedar took a first over lew Miller's (or was that Dean's) 33 pounder, the difference probably being that Jim used epoxy resin. These are the first 14 footers built since the design was made available this summer. Both canoes were nicely finished and rigged for solo cruising.

And lest they go unnoticed the Voyageurs were there to take an unchallenged first place with their 30 foot North Canoe - a very nice canoe at that.

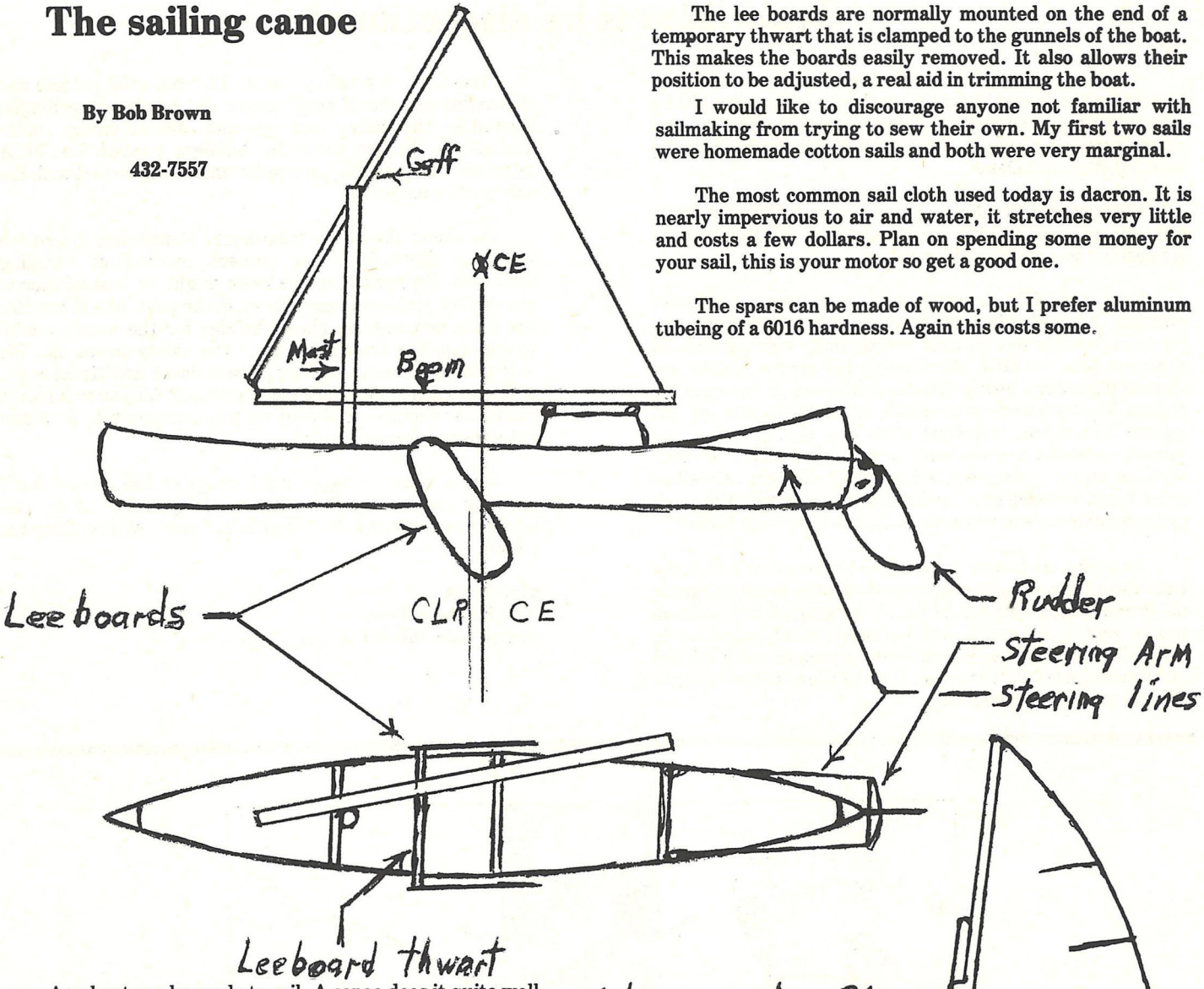


Jim Jahnke and Lew Miller with their 14 foot solo canoes.

The sailing canoe

By Bob Brown

432-7557



Any boat can be made to sail. A canoe does it quite well.

A canoe sailing rig can be built by anyone with a little skill. A modest cost can add a new facet to your canoeing experience.

The rig described here will not interfere with the normal use of the canoe as most of it is removed when not in use.

The two most common rigs used for canoes are the lateen and sliding gunter rigs pictured. Both types are good. The sliding gunter rig is the more efficient of the two .

On either rig I suggest that the mast step be secured permanently at the forward thwart. The rudder hinge should also be mounted permanently to the stern.

Anyone interested in building a sailing rig is invited to join our new sailing chapter. Hopefully when we get this group started we can combine our experience and come up with some good sailors.

Anyone desiring to go it alone, I'd like to advise making the lee boards of no less than ¾" lumber. Plywood doesn't make it. A section of 1X10 lumber with a little shaping makes a fine set of boards. This same material is also suitable for the rudder.

The lee boards are normally mounted on the end of a temporary thwart that is clamped to the gunnels of the boat. This makes the boards easily removed. It also allows their position to be adjusted, a real aid in trimming the boat.

I would like to discourage anyone not familiar with sailmaking from trying to sew their own. My first two sails were homemade cotton sails and both were very marginal.

The most common sail cloth used today is dacron. It is nearly impervious to air and water, it stretches very little and costs a few dollars. Plan on spending some money for your sail, this is your motor so get a good one.

The spars can be made of wood, but I prefer aluminum tubeing of a 6016 hardness. Again this costs some.

At present there are several small sail boats on the market that have a small lateen sail. A "Snark" is one of them. The Snark has a sail just about the right size for the beginning sailor.

One might find a dealer who will sell for a reasonable price the spars, mast and sails for a Snark. You might also find one of these boats badly busted up and be able to buy the rigging from the former owner.

I have drawn a lateen rigged canoe and named the parts. Basically this is what most sailing canoes look like.

Get busy. Spring is right around the corner. Building a sailing rig will make the winter pass more quickly. I hope to hear from anyone interested in sailing.

Resin sales to be discontinued

At the October 13th Board meeting it was voted to discontinue resin and fiberglass cloth sales under the MCA's present distribution method. This will go into effect as soon as the remaining supply of material is exhausted from the North (Dahlquist) Depot.

Resin sales have always been a service that the MCA has offered and I think an explanation of the reasons influencing this decision are in order.

First, the MCA depots have always been a volunteer position. A small reimbursement is made to the volunteer for storage space but his time is essentially volunteered. At the same time the MCA membership has grown to over one thousand putting a heavy demand on the one or two existing depots. The time to dispense resin, cut cloth, handle money, answer the phone, schedule sales and put up with last minute demands has resulted in a greater than expected sacrifice on the volunteers (wives included) part as well as much inconvenience on occasions. In other words its tough to get volunteers and when we do its tough to keep them.

Secondly, and more important, is the quality and the hazards of the resins. Because we buy by the drum and draw off as needed it is difficult to assure a thorough and uniform mix of wax in the resin. And because we rely on users to bring their own bottles it is difficult to control compatibility and contamination of the resin. Both of these factors control the end product - your canoe.

Also there is a safety factor. This material is toxic and flammable and should be packaged and labeled accordingly. Currently the only handling and precautionary notes available to the user are in the builders manual. The MCA must realize its liability as a seller and be concerned with the safety of its members.

So where do we go from here? Remember I said we voted to discontinue our present method of handling materials. Prepackaging the resin might be one solution to the quality problems encountered in the past. Metal cans for the resin and suitable plastic bottles for the catalyst with proper labeling are a solution to the safety problems. We only need increase the selling price to cover additional costs. A bigger problem is who's going to do it? All you volunteers raise your hands -- or should we pay somebody to do it and raise the price accordingly?

I have some thoughts and feelings on the subject but I am only one user. Let us know how you feel about this situation as well as your thoughts and suggestions. Drop me a note.

Jim Malek
9384 N. Shore Trail
Forest Lake MN 55025



New Members

Kruger, James
7709 N. Florida Circle
Brooklyn Pk, MN 55445
561-7887

Schroer, James
1677 Jerault
St. Louis, MO 63125

Butler, Marna
3201 49th Ave. N.
Brooklyn Center, MN 55429
535-1913

Ludwig, Terry
5624 W. Leawood Dr.
Littleton, Colorado 80123

Olson, Richard
110 7th Ave. S.E.
Milaca, MN 56353
983-3757

Roser, Peggy
434 Goodrich Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55102
225-2251

Sam Honda
3935 Lakewood
White Bear Lake, MN 55110
733-9285

Johnson, Lew
324 Woodhill Dr.
Woodbury, Mn 55119
739-6088

Huntley, Elizabeth
Carleton College
Northfield, MN 55057

Hastings, Arthur, R.
4107 White Bear Ave.
White Bear Lake, MN 55110
426-2998

Persson, Robert
Rt. 2 Box 369
Rockford, MN 55373
477-5971

Membership and volunteer survey

As a member of the MCA you can help us by helping yourself. Just help yourself to a generous portion of canoeing. That's our main reason for being here: to go canoeing. Go alone, with friends, or with us, but go a lot and anywhere. Then for dessert our chef recommends that you avoid indigestion by sharing your knowledge and experience and energy with other MCAers. Just offer your assistance -- we need all we can get. Please fill out the following questionaire on whether or not you wish to volunteer your services. If you can't spare the time, we most certainly need your ideas. Return this questionaire to Volunteer Coordinator, Box 14177, University Station, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55108. Better yet, bring it yourself to our next activity. All of the present volunteers would like to meet you.

I JOINED THE MCA BECAUSE (Rank the Top Three):

———for the building book
———for the trips
———to join a special interest chapter
———to join a local club that is a chapter
———to get MCA resin and fiberglass
———to support a statewide canoeing voice
———for canoeing companions
———to get the Hut or newsletter
———other ————————————————————

I HEARD OF THE MCA FROM:

———a friend
———an enemy
———at a school ————————————————————
———at an activities meeting that attracted me
———in the news media (TV——, radio ———, newspaper ———)
———at the State Fair
———at a canoe race (long distance ——, white water,,,)
———from an MCA publication
———from a retail shop ————————————————
———from a stranger who had an MCA strip canoe
———other ————————————————————

I AM INTERESTED IN SPECIAL INTEREST CHAPTERS OF THE MCA:

———Cascaders - Whitewater racing, cruising, and kayak and canoe building.
———Marathon Racing - Long distance racing in open canoes and olympic flatwater.
———Voyageurs - Historical interest in the stories and activities of these early visitors to Minnesota.
———Other - Specify what special interest you have that could become a chapter in the future ————————
———None
Other chapters are small clubs that draw their members from a local area. I wish to be contacted by:
————————————————————
———Hiawatha - Owatonna, Faribault, and Northfield areas are into all phases of canoeing.
———3M - Open to employees of 3M; active canoe builders and cruisers.
———Grand Rapids - "Unorganized canoe club" that has developed many young canoers and builders.
———Apple Valley and Shakopee - For all canoeing interests and ages.

WHERE I CANOE:

———BWCA ————————————————
———rivers ————————————————————
———lakes ————————————————————
———urban (metro areas) ————————————————
———whitewater ————————————————
———Canada ————————————————
———other states ————————————————

MINNESOTA CANOE ASSOCIATION INC

We now have a new supply of MCA jacket patches. The price is just $1.50. You may order by mail from Membership Services Director Barb Babcook or buy at the next activity meeting.

I AM INTERESTED IN BUILDING:

———I built the following canoes from MCA plans:

———I had particular problems with:

———I had particular problems with:

———I would make the following suggestions for changes in the building book and plans:

I would like to help the MCA building activities by:
———dispsensing resin and glass to members
———answering questions of new members about building
———teaching a class in canoe building
———helping to update the building book
———designing new canoes
———building an MCA canoe in a public demonstration

I AM WILLING TO HELP THE MCA BY :

———serving on the Board of Directors (maybe——)
———working in a chapter
———leading a canoe trip
———attending public hearings, writing letters, speaking to government representatives, and generally helping with our lobby efforts
———helping with the planning and conducting of monthly activities meetings
———spending a couple of hours helping with office chores and paperwork
———assisting at whitewater and marathon events with timing and judging
———working on canoe trails, river mapping, or campsite planning
———writing, reporting, photographing, or cutting and pasting for the newsletter
———I know of companies that should be advertising in Hut and I would be willing to contact them (please list them)

I AM INTERESTED IN CLASSES:

———The MCA should have more instructional classes available (maybe ————————)
I would like to take a class on the following subject(s):
———Beginning Canoeing
———Efficient Canoeing
———Beginning Whitewater
———Intermediate Whitewater
———Basic Long Distance Racing Technique
———Canoe Design
———Solo Canoe Paddling
———Canoe Poling
———Wilderness Canoe Camping
———Others ————————————————

I FEEL THAT:

———I would like to talk to a member of the Board of Directors (phone ——————————)
———I want to see more of:

———I want to see less of:

———I think that the goals of the MCA should be:

OTHER SPORTS I'M ACTIVE IN - please list (Such as cross country or down hill skiing, hiking, sailing, etc.)

I CANOE:

———never
———once a year

———2 to 4 days a year
———5 to 10 days a year

———11 to 20 days a year
———21 to 50 days a year

———more

Name————————————Date————————

Address————————————————————————

Phone————————Number of canoes owned?———

Number of years spent canoeing? ——— Number of years in the MCA?————————————

The Wayward Wind

By Bill Fisher

(This is the first in a series of seven articles published in HUT! in 1970.)

Of the many who have written of their adventure in this area, Sig Olson speaks as no other man can. But each man who has traveled the canoe country has known special moments and places, and two elements common to all: the spell of the wilderness and the companionship that developes when men share this experience.

Many MCA members know this land well, going each summer with family or friends, or having guided at camps which cruise through it and beyond. Some will wish to write and add another story about a lake or portage mentioned.

Windbound -- and a "time schedule" to meet. Sooner or later one admits that such a schedule is not part of the wilderness and he can then sit with his back against a great pine and watch it sway and feel the interplay of forces. He knows that evening will bring a gently rolling lake and after eating where he is, he can navigate the big lake in darklight if he must (only once did I get a 48-hour blow).

In the mid-1950's when I began from the Ely end, moving northeast and circling back (the Knife chain, Kekekabic, Thomas -- or Ogishkemuncle, Little Sag, Alice, Insula), the lakes were small or broken by islands and the wind made work for us but did not halt us. But when we headed farther north (the Man chain, Saganagons, and down the river to Kawnipi) we heard the warning, passed in small exchanges at portages -- "Hope you don't get a southwester on Agnes."

Mid-morning we came into Agnes from the East Branch River, thinking on reaching Louisa Falls in the afternoon and showering there. A steady wind blew occasional gusts -- from the southwest. By the time we made the south end of the big island we were glad to get off the lake. We held a war council (three of us in a 17 ft. Grumman). We watched the whitecaps roll by and estimated the troughs at five feet and decided to give up reaching the Falls and take the alternate Silence-Shade route. It was a mile and a half to that portage -- if we could quarter to the west shore, a half mile across, we hoped to dodge in and out of the bays for the remaining mile.

Once on the open lake again, we took the mainline waves, which had come rolling four miles from the south. Someone wrote of the 7th wave that rolls in from the ocean-- it is supposedly the heaviest, after which the cycle begins again. In the stern of that canoe with a 650 lb. load, I discovered the fourth one was the one to fear. The biggest rollers came in groups of three -- we tried to hold our quarter angle as these hit us, but each one swung us slightly more broadside, and we knew that if a fourth roller came it would swamp us.

We made the far shore. We tried to work down the shoreline but somehow there were always those rollers pounding the points. Each time we went out we told ourselves we should not have -- we debated portaging the last point but finally paddled round it and escaped into Silence.

Some say a tailwind is more dangerous than a headwind. Twice since then I have been out in bad winds on Pickerel Lake on the northern border of the Quetico, both times running with the wind. The one time we were seeking help for a tragedy-stricken party. The other time the wind came on us we were too far from shore and we knelt and drifted to the nearest island, each canoe arriving at a different one. I still see the other canoes rising and disappearing into troughs, and my bow man perching on a crest before plunging down. "I'm getting seasick," he said.

The wind and the river currents are realities of wilderness canoe travel, and those who choose the journey must measure the challenges with good judgment.

SCHEDULE FOR MCA OFFICE

The address for the new MCA office is:

MCA	St. Paul, MN 55101
YMCA Bldg.	Phone: (612)222-0771
475 Cedar	extension 41

Be careful as there is a little trick to calling the MCA by phone or coming in person. The MCA is entirely a volunteer organization and we can only people the office as volunteers come forward. Presently office hours are restricted to:

Tuesday 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. - Walt Jones & Karl Ketter
Wednesday 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. - Dan & Joyce Bush
Thursday 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. - Barb & Tom Babcook

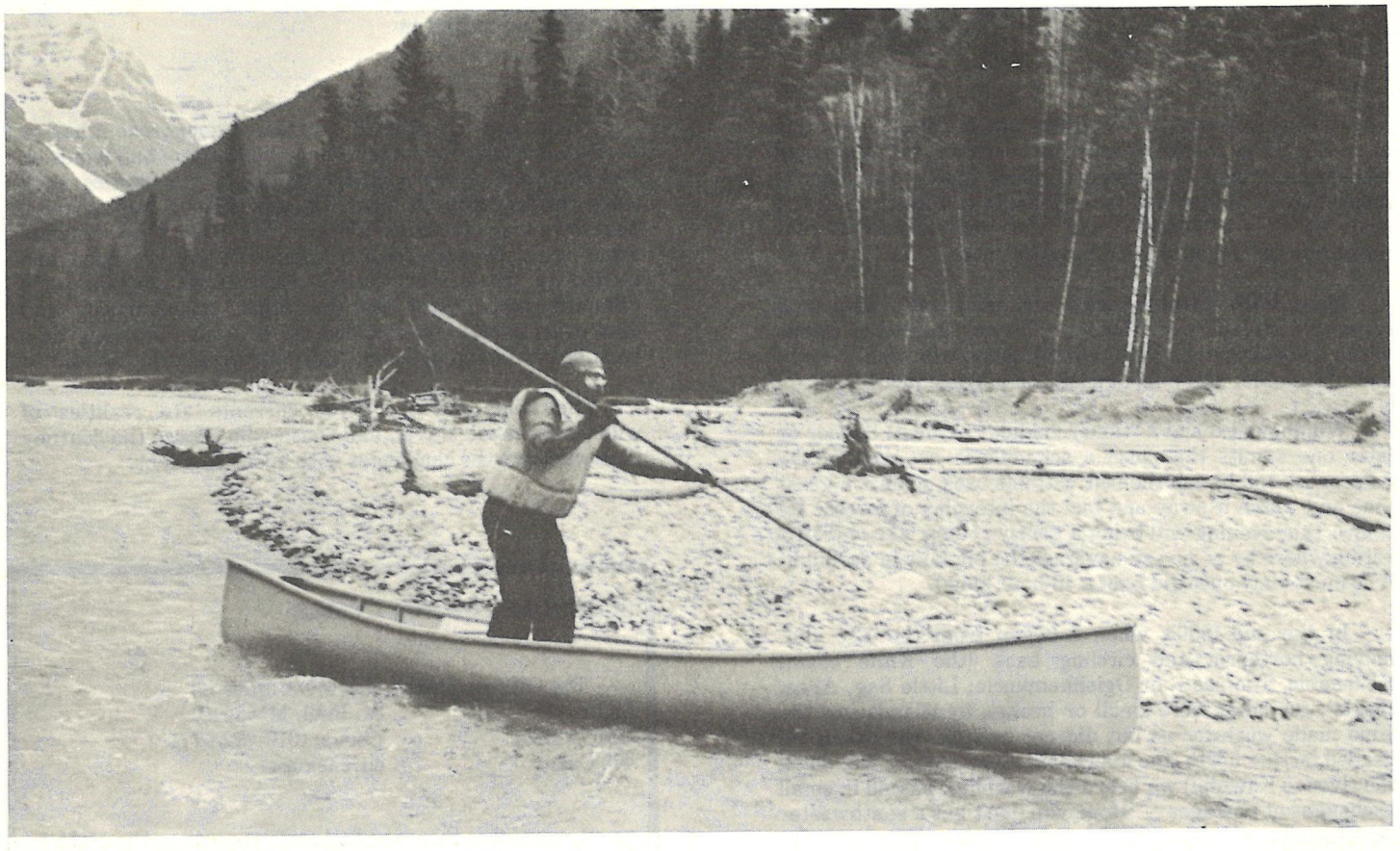
The volunteers who are listed above are MCA Directors. Hopefully we'll soon have a director at the office each evening of the week. All members and any non-members are invited to call or come to the office to meet these directors. WARNING: A non-member will probably be asked to join the MCA and members bearing complaints will be encouraged to stay and help work out the solutions: Intentions are that specific nights will be used to discuss and work on specific projects of the MCA.

Dan and Joyce are in attendence Wednesday evenings to discuss conservation related matters. On Thursday nights Tom and Barb will answer your questions on the Voyageurs Chapter and will be processing new membership and would appreciate your help.

If you can help us out, set us straight, or have nothing else to do, call Karl or Walt on Tuesday night at 222-0771, ext. 4

Poling- Canoeing's way to the wilderness

Al Beletz National Poling Chairman



Al Beletz poling the upper Fraser in British Columbia where he and his brother were invited to run a four-day poling clinic for their canoe instructors. Now before becoming a certified canoe instructor, a British Columbian must know the old art of poling.

Have you ever had the yen to place your canoe aboard a time-machine and paddle a wild river in 1792? How about 1899 or 1933? Many would settle for 1959 as the great upsurge in canoeing has occured since then. Many of our choice streams are overcrowded, seem worn, especially on summer weekends, when a decent campsite is hard find. Are canoeists driving out the very thing they seek? And is there a solution?

Today, with the advent of the new lightweight collapsible aluminum pole, to some degree, we have found the key to our time machine. A whole new world of small streams and shallow upper stretches have been opened up to the downstream paddler. The new poles have not only made poling an easy effort but recent tests have established poling as the fastest means of canoeing not only upstream, as earlier men of river travel knew, but also down most of our streams - by human power. While the speed at which one may canoe is not all that important, poling has become practical for most paddlers, not just the well-conditioned athlete or river guide. It is important to note that while the paddler needs twenty to thirty inches of water depth, to obtain a decent paddle-bite, the best poling is performed in water four to thirty-six inches deep. There are few, if any paddlers that care to break-blade their way in this shallow water, while the polesman can thrive in it. At the upper-most put-ins, where the paddlers head downstream with the weekend crowd, the poler will head upstream thus finding maybe ten, twenty or thirty or more miles of wilderness-type river seldom seen by the eyes of men. But more importantly, there are thousands of creeks and small streams, too shallow for the paddle, now open to the polesman.

Additionally, poling the small streams in the winter, is the safest method of canoeing, from a hypothermia viewpoint. There is little chance of one becoming more than partially drenched in the shallow water.

At the time of the first national poling championship in 1965 only the wood pole was in use. Shortly thereafter my brother Sylvester started experimenting with aluminum poles. He tried many different sizes and weights in addition to many types of pole shoes. At first there didn't seem to be any difference and others wondered what he was doing. However he felt that all the strokes could be improved and new ones could be added to the poleman's repetoire. This he felt was especially true due to the great amount of inertia in the movement of a long pole.

During implementation, a pole weighing three pounds instead of six can make a significant difference, while the same proportional weight difference between two short paddles, is far less tiring. He finally found a pole that offers superior strength, will bend without holding to the curve and is light enough to float, when plugged, and will handle with ease.

The result was that the polesman's over-all performance greatly increased. Now he could not only perform the old poling strokes more effectively, but many new strokes were developed under the exacting measurable eye of national competition. In fact, slow-motion movies of these events were taken and studied.

Sylvester utilized the aluminum pole and applied the new strokes that were impractical with the old wood poles. He not only won the national poling cup on one occasion, but captured two seconds and a third against well-conditioned athletes half his age.

Soon all the winners converted to the aluminum pole, and by 1974 over ninety percent of those entering the national poling championship also made the switch. To the vast majority of canoeists winning a poling championship may not seem very important in itself. But it sould be remembered that these events, held in a rough-water rapids, is an exacting measurable way of demonstrating not only the speed but more importantly, the ease and new techniques that have developed. Thus a whole new world of canoeing activity has developed whether it be wilderness cruising, exploring new whitewater, competition or just poling up and down a river on a Sunday afternoon.



Syl Beletz, past national poling cup winner, in competition on the national poling course while in the process of developing one of his first Sylvester poles.

The Survival of the Bark Canoe by John McPhee

BOOK REVIEW **By Lew Miller**

How much equipment goes on a canoe trip is a reflection of the criteria that go along as well. ... You set your own standards. Travel by canoe is not a necessity, and will never more be the most efficient way to get from one region to another, or even from one lake to another - anywhere.

For over a year now I've carried in my brief case a long two part article clipped from *The New Yorker* of February 24 and March 3. It's helped many a dull time pass swiftly - almost as in a dream.

I've dreamed for years about building a birch-bark canoe. Even before th Brigade of the North started planning their North Canoe I had memorized much of the Smithsonian's *Bark Canoes and Skin Boats of North America*. In *The Last Whole Earth Catalogue* I found an ad by a guy named Henri Vaillancourt who built birch canoes for sale. I clipped the ad and kept it in my billfold.

At Ely and Grand Portage I studied the Voyageur canoes built by Bill Hafeman, and spent hours watching him artictically constrcut a 16 footer.

No, I'm not quite ready to start my birch canoe. But if I read John McPhee's little book one more time there may be one less perfect birch tree in the country.

McPhee's articles, *The Survival of the Bark Canoe*, have been printed as a book. Though not cheap it's a pearl worth possessing. A dream-maker.

What John McPhee does is take you on a visit to Greenville, New Hampshire to learn how Henri Vaillancourt builds birch bark canoes. Then you go along as five men make a canoe trip into the Penobscot-Allagash wilderness in Maine - using two of Vaillancourt's birch canoes.

But he does more than tell a simple story. We learn of Edwin Tappan Adney and his lifetime spent in research and model making. Do you know what a crooked knife is and where to get one? Why does Henri split the ribs and planking instead of saw them? What part does a birch canoe builder make first? Who in Wisconsin owns a Vaillancourt canoe and why? Why did the Malecite's scribe a lynx on one side of their canoe and a rabbit smoking a pipe on the other? Who was Joe Polis? What did both the McPhee group and Thoreau search for? What is dry-ki? Why aren't white spruce roots used to sew the bark together?

Those of us who create an object of beauty out of strips of wood, glue, resin and fiberglass know that it is an artistic thing we do. We have a kinship with sculpturers, painters, molders of clay. That the finished object has utility, becomes transportation, is a bonus. And when we mount that finished creation, a dimple on the water, the emotion is nearly sexual in its satisfaction.

Henri Vaillancourt is one of us. He says "The first canoe I ever got into was one of my own. I can launch the best ones now and they don't thrill me one-tenth as much. It was the glide, the feel of it, just the sound as it rustled over the lily pads."

McPhee takes us inside the mind of this 26 year old artist, and we are at home there.

McPhee likes loons too. "The loon here is laughing again, so I laugh back. He laughs. I laugh. He laughs. I laugh. He will keep it up until I am hoarse. He likes conversation." A good, sensitive, appreciative man!

If you are looking for the simple, unvarnished facts on how to build a bark canoe this book will be useful.

But there is much more than that. For McPhee is poetical in his description of the craftsman, his craft, and of the indispensible wilderness. A dream maker of a book.



Review

By Lew Miller

Ultimate North

Our goal was a double one: to reach the Artic - and get back again - under our own power, by canoe; and to follow as closely as we could the route taken by Alexander Mackenzie down the river that bears his name when he made his voyage of discovery, also by canoe, in 1789.

Many of us dream of a long wilderness trip into the far North. A few actually accomplished that which they dream. *Ultimate North* is a book for all of us. Robert Mead is a proficient canoer, a skilled observer of the environment, and what is most important an extremely able writer. And so his book fits on my shelf beside those of Sigurd Olson.

In June 1974, the author and his son began their 1700 mile trip. The refreshing thing about Mead is that he is honest with his reader concerning the problems he faced, his joys, disappointments, and fears. He admits a debt to and a respect for Sigurd Olson. But Olson often glossed over the difficulties of his trips. This is not true with Mead If you could only read one book before canoeing the Mackenzie River better make it *Ultimate North.* Mead is a more thorough historian too.

The Canoer's Bible

For the time that you are on the water in your canoe, you depend on no one but yourself, your own combination of strength, skill, experience. The canoe itself, slipping in silken silence through the water is the intimate source of that feeling of independence. Of all the vehicles human inventiveness has evolved, no one is more perfectly adapted to its physical medium.

I sought out this book after reading *Ultimate North* and don't regret for a moment its purchase. Robert Douglas Mead is easy to read. And most of the time I agree with his conclusions. To read two books by the same author in as many weeks is to come to know him well.

Contained in the 164 pages of the book are nine chapters including selection of equipment, handling the craft, where to get help, places to go and some very helpful information in the appendixes.

He has some good things to say about the MCA too.

A few of these local groups [notably the Minnesota Canoe Association] are sufficiently strong and well organized to rival the national one [American Canoe Association] in influence, activity, and general usefulness.

Mead's chapter on choosing a canoe was quite well done. He recognizes that different folks need different boats. I think he stresses to heavily the tendency of wood-and-canvas canoes to gain weight through water absorbtion of interior wood. And he doesn't seem to know about our fine cedar strip canoes.

But I'm being picky. It's a good book. I enjoyed it. It may be hard to find (Daltons doesn't stock it). Buy both books - they're well worth the price.

Reflections From the North Country by Sigurd F. Olson

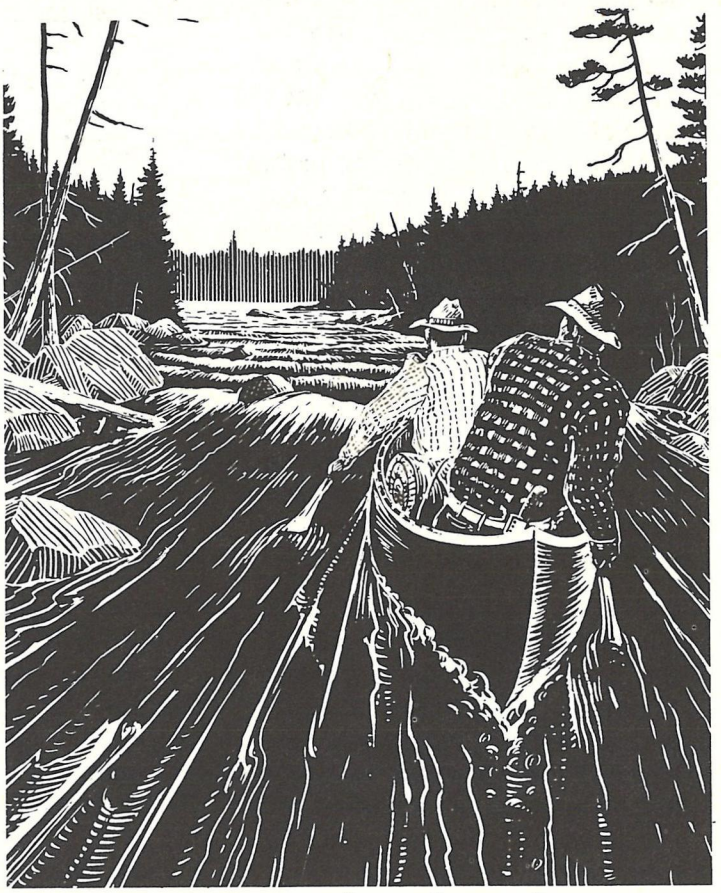
This may be Siguard Olson's last book. I hope not. But the book has the tone of a man of many years saying "This is what I believe, if I am remembered for nothing else, let it be this."

Reflections is a book quite unlike any that Sig has written before. Though anyone reading *Listening Point* or *Wilderness Days* might predict that a book of meditative affirmations would be necessary for a man possessing such extraordinary talent.

It's a book that is extremely hard to write about. For what one reads seems so personal, honest, and open that to comment is to break trust with the confidences of a dear friend. More than anything else this is a book containing man's deep reflections, philosophy, and theology. A private thing shared.

I was lucky enough to get my copy autographed. The words "Kindest Regards - Siguard F. Olson" combined with what the book contains make it worth many times more than what I paid.

LM



Illustrations by Leslie Kouba

Palefaces on the Peshtigo—a Legend

by Jim Rada

With only the breathing of the pines to betray the serenity of the June evening, Little Red Fox sat with his father, Old Long Nose, at the edge of the rock-strewn river. Old Long Nose had come to this spot often, and now that Little Red Fox could walk, he, too, enjoyed the peace of this point of rock, where earth met water. The nearly-full moon had raised himself over the low ridge in the east and cast his sheen on the broken waters. The gleam sparked in Little Red Fox's eyes as he asked his father, ''Are the palefaces children of the moon?''

''Palefaces?'' muttered Old Long Nose as though waking from a life-long spell. It had been many years since a paleface had been seen in this land. At one time they'd covered the land with their cities and towns, but no more. Not since their eagerness for firewater, their love of loud clanging tin beasts, their love of hating had brought them to ruin. The few that had remained after the Great War VI and the Food Riots, the Injuns (as Old Long Nose's people called themselves) had tried to civilize. But the palefaces inevitably chose the ways of impatience and ruin of the land, and eventually it had become necessary to segregate them on ''reservations,'' barren pieces of land, really.

Old Long Nose indulged in a moment of pity at the thought of the desolation of those places, Man-hate-on, Palm Beach, El A, and Cleevlan. Only now that which had been before the wars had never been, what came after was forgotten, and now even the reservations were dim memories of the old, and palefaces—a legend.

Noticing his son again, he said, ''No—moon too patient to be father of palefaces.'' And then reclining on a boulder he continued, ''Actually there is only a legend of where they came from, and it is said they came from this very stream. But it is an old story—''

''Oh, Father, please tell me!'' said Little Red Fox, and the father began:

* * *

Many, many moons ago a young Injun named Quinn came to our land on the winds of the first blizzard. The ice had not yet covered the Great Lake, and he had paddled across it in a thin boat, which he called a ki-yak. That winter he lived with our people, and many thought him not bad, for he caught fish through the ice and told many wonderful tales in the wood-huts. Some of his tales were of adventure, and the young braves listened with fire in their eyes to his songs of deeds done by the Es-ki-mo. Two especially listened with ears as rabbits and gorged on his words. One was Red Skull, who was a legend in himself, for his hair burned with the rays of the setting sun. He it was that first made fire-water when his wild berry-pot spoiled and he drank its juice when he was not many leaves old; and some say that was why his hair turned the color of fire and berries—but that is yet another story (and Little Red Fox hid his smile well at such rambling.) The other was Smith Eye, who worked the rock into arrow-heads, and was a quiet Injun.

Well, winter passed and the snow-turned-water flowed white in the arms of our River Peshtigo. Quinn fished in the many beaver ponds with his ki-yak and brought much fish to our tribe with his Es-ki-mo ways. The spring sun warmed the blood of the braves and they longed for adventure, most especially Red Skull, who drank late into the star-light from his spoiled berry pots (he let all his berries spoil now), and pinched the squaws in the meadows. He sometimes paddled the birch boat with Smith Eye across little lakes and ponds, but what adventure was this? Even old men and squaws could do the same. So Spring wore on and Red Skull, Quinn, and Smith Eye grew restless.

One terrible night in the Moon of Flowers, as they sat in the wigwam and listened to the boulders fall and watched fire jump above the River Peshtigo, Quinn said, ''In my land near the cold sea we sometimes even paddled through the rivers of rock and water.'' Smith Eye peeled his lids far back and said, ''You paddled in the...the rapids?!!''

''Yes,'' smirked Quinn, wishing to seem a brave wanderer, ''yes, some as fierce as the River Peshtigo.''

For a moment Red Skull pulled the berry pot from his mouth, and then spit in the dirt. ''Bah—stories, stories, Quinn, you think we are women who believe any lie you twist from your tongue?'' and, as he had gotten a head-ache and a long tongue from all the berry pots of that day, he spit again and said, ''Let us then paddle the Peshtigo tomorrow.''

Smith Eye pretended not to hear, and mumbled that he'd better check on his arrowheads, but Quinn said with a smile, "Then let us get ready tonight. I shall bring my ki-yak and you and Smith Eye a birch boat."

"At sunrise!" said Red Skull between laughter and belches.

"But my order of arrow-heads—" started Smith Eye, with a slight tremble in his voice, only to be interrupted by Quinn's calm voice, "Come along, Smith Eye, you'll like it."

Thus soothed, Smith Eye agreed, and even though he muttered "What'm I doing with drunks and devils?" as he left the hogan, inside his chest blood shivered with gladness and excitement.

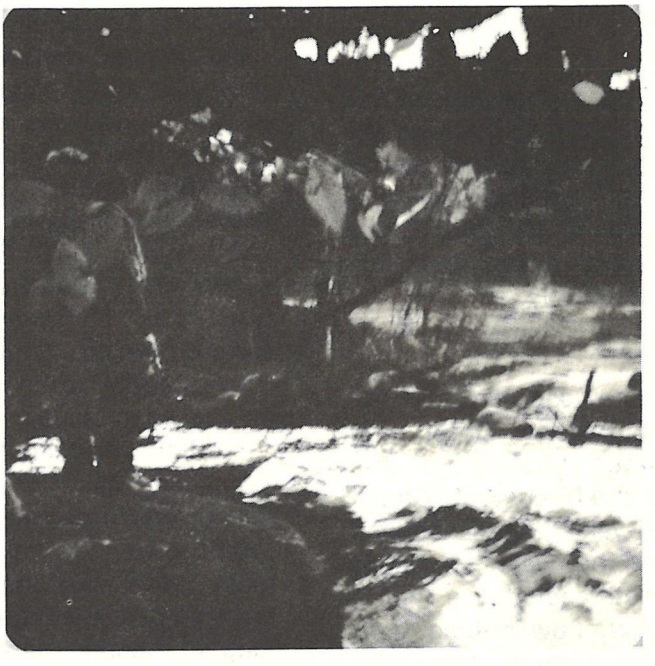
The sun littered the woods with sunbeams the next morning as they carried their boats to the little point we're sitting on now, and after looking over the small rapids here, they put in. First Quinn pushed his ki-yak between the boulders, and then Smith Eye and Red Skull with the birch boat found several boulders they hadn't seen before. Red Skull growled that this was more work than adventure, but Smith Eye was gladdened to see that he might yet survive this day. Passing on down the stream, Peshtigo pushed their boats more and more like leaves on a windy day, and they glided through the deeper water with ease. Soon Smith Eye and Red Skull learned how to avoid most of the humped-back rocks. The pines gave their scent to the breeze, and the sun shone kindly, so that all three were warmed. The warmth made Red Skull think fondly of the berry pot he'd brought.

Morning was well into afternoon when they heard a roaring around a rocky bend, and quickly their paddles pulled to reach the shore. What they had come to, my son, is of course the eye of the giant Peshtigo—the rapid "First Drop." They watched the water tumble over the ledge for many moments, until Quinn, inwardly quivering at the sight of the thrashing stream, pushed off into the current and slipped over the lip. Surely the very demons in him were shaken in that heaving hole of foam, when suddenly out he came, smiling to see the light of day again.

Quinn beached and laughed, "This is easy, like sleeping or eating venison, compared to the rivers of the North."

Red Skull, who had watched from the rocks with his berry pot in hand, put the pot down and said, "Smith Eye, let's try it."

Smith Eye passed a quick prayer to the River Peshtigo and joined Red Skull. The boat crept forward, twisted in the cross-currents, then slowly and fatefully slipped over. A curious sight it was for the birds and fish; two wet Injuns splashing heavily in the golden waters with boat overturned, and Quinn running frantically along the shore shouting encouragement. As luck or demons planned it, the water there was calm enough so that they soon had paddles and boat together. Red Skull and Smith Eye were both chilled by the water, and Red Skull muttered a few mild curses, until suddenly his eyes lit up. A slow smile spread on his face as he remembered the berry pot left back on the rock. Sprinting back, he hoped to warm his chilled bones, but instead chilled the woods for a league around with the sudden shriek of a man shot in the heart. At his feet lay



Red Skull and Quinn overlooking First Drop
Dave Smith photo

the broken pot, and the stain of the spilt juice. Quinn, it seemed, had accidentally kicked it over in his haste to run laughing at the can-u-ists.

Red Skull eyed the broken, empty bottle with sadness, and then, seeing the merry face of Quinn, said with a twisted snarl, "You frozen-hearted dog of the ice sea, you drank my fire-water!"

In his heart Red Skull knew this was not so, for Quinn never sipped of the brew; but nevertheless Quinn leapt into his ki-yak. As soon as he was in the current he laughed mockingly, "Come get your firewater, Red Skull!" Red Skull jumped into the stern of the birch boat and yelled for Smith Eye to get in the bow. Ah, Smith Eye, the poor Injun, he would've gladly sat in his tipi that day and chipped stones to sharpness, bothering no one. Now he was trapped by the evil spirits, Red Skull screaming madly behind him in the boat and all around him the cold liquid fangs of the Peshtigo leaping at him.

* * * *

Here Old Long Nose paused and said, "This, my son, shows the wisdom of having no evil ones as companions—for Smith Eye was now indeed in the grip of the devils," and Little Red Fox nodded obediently.

* * * *

Anyway, they soon crashed the waves of Second Drop, and much water sloshed in the bottom of the birch boat. Ahead Quinn's ki-yak still danced like a spider on the water. As Red Skull's wrath cooled, the river's frenzy grew, now pulling both boats down through the rocks with an ever-strengthening power. Before they could think where they were, they slid over



Red Skull (stern) and Smith Eye (bow) running Five Foot Falls **Jim Rada photo**

the sloping ledge of Third Drop and into a quiet stretch of water. Dazed by the wild bouncing ride they'd all been through, all three sat drifting downstream slowly, with Red Skull and Smith Eye looking in awe at all the water that lay in the bottom of the birch boat—making it as a heavy log to paddle. Soon into their ears crept a small rumbling, a hideous laughing of Peshtigo, and Quinn screamed, "A falls!" He paddled hard for the left bank, for it was the Five Foot Falls, as we well know. Smith Eye and Red Skull watched as Quinn neared the bank—30 feet away, 20, and then suddenly the ki-yak slipped out of sight as silently as a star falls through the night. Smith Eye jumped to his feet and prepared to leap into the river, but Red Skull screamed, "Paddle!"for the boat was drifting broadside toward the lip. Smith Eye sat down, paddle frozen in his hands as the boat moved closer still. "Paddle!" Red Skull bellowed again, and this time Smith Eye took a forlorn pull at the water, the boat spun slowly into alignment with the current and plunged over the edge on a long tongue shooting down into the boiling pool below.

There the boat, with belly full of the river, submerged; and Red Skull and Smith Eye floundered their craft to shore. Smith Eye lay down, thankful to be alive, and stiffened as if dead when he heard twigs cracking in the woods. It was no wolf, only Quinn. The Es-ki-mo had been swept all the way through Horse Race, which is the rapids just downstream from Five Foot Falls. Much to his amazement, he'd made it through, and was now returning for the bodies of his friends, for he thought they must surely have died.

There they lay, two bodies with skin as pale as spirits. Smith Eye didn't move, but Red Skull shouted, "Quinn, help me take this boat downriver, for Smith Eye is dead and the evil spirits will soon be on us." So they took Smith Eye, rolled him up in a black blanket, and put him into the middle of the can-u. Unsteadily they shoved off, Quinn in the bow, Red Skull in the stern. Carefully they picked their way through the boulders as the river necked narrower and narrower into horrible Horse Race Rapids. Quickly their speed gathered as they entered a tight channel, the waves climbing higher with every stroke until suddenly the river plunged between two boulders big as buffalo and into a pool.

They had much water in their boat—but were alive, though pale as snow. They continued on, for the sun was fast falling in the west and they were cold and miserable, especially with Smith Eye dead. Almost immediately they were spun through the S Curve Rapids, and battered by the churning rapids below until they came to a rapid called "Bikini Rock" in the legend. Here it is said they surprised some maidens bathing, all of them running into the woods except one. Bertha Bear-Skin alone remained. She swooned like a squaw over their bravery and fell in love with Red Skull on sight. Here they pulled the can-u to the bank and were surprised when they lifted the heavy-bodied blanket to hear, "Magnificent! Magnificent!" come from Smith Eye's body. Hurriedly they unwrapped him, and found him much joyful to be alive and to have been spared seeing the last rapids. Later he insisted that he thought he had, indeed, died, and that the evil spirits had gotten him. While the braves rested, the Injun girls from the woods reported what they'd seen: three men with pale faces on the Peshtigo.

* * * *

"So, my son, the story ends, these three who were once Injuns had now pale faces. Red Skull married Bertha Bear-Skin and drank ever more firewater. Smith Eye later met a beautiful young princess named Pocahontas, which is yet another story, and Quinn reassumed his role of boaster and storyteller. Indeed, because of this legend, rapids became known to some as "whitewater," for white these three friends remained ever thereafter."

Little Red Fox spoke up after a moment, "Is that the whole legend, Father?"

Old Long Nose replied, "Yes, little one. For from this group of three "whitewater" boaters the whole paleface race came. And they have ever had the same traits: possessed by demons they are loud and boastful as Quinn, loving curses as Red Skull, lazy as Smith Eye who never finished his arrowheads, indecent as one must be to have a squaw like Bertha Bear-Skin, and perhaps the root of their rottenness, their incessant love of firewater."

They sat in silence for a good many minutes watching the moon, which now stood high in the south. Finally in a low voice Little Red Fox asked, "Father, what is a bikini?" and Old Long Nose rose, turned slightly away from his son to hide a toothy smile (that his son saw anyway), and replied, "That, my son, is yet **another** tale...."



Bikini Rock! **Craig Johnson Photo**

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