

Canadian Wilderness Canoe Trips for Boys and Girls



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GREETINGS FROM THE DIRECTOR

December 2011

Dear Wabun Family and Friends:



Dick Lewis, Wabun's Managing Director

Welcome to the 10th edition of Wabun's yearly newsletter. I hope that you enjoy it even half as much as we enjoyed putting it together. Going through the hundreds of photos of smiling faces, magnificent sunrises and sets, picturesque campsites, and so many others reaffirmed just how wonderful the 2011 summer was. I think that you will get a sense of this through the summer logs and pictures included. Additionally, delightful articles have been contributed by many alums who chronicled their own trips in the Temagami area as well as personal ventures around the globe—love seeing great people doing great things in Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, and Jordan.

The newsletter is the results of summer efforts, so first off, a thank you to campers and staff, for making Wabun's 79th season the success it was. As we all know, the canoe trip provides us all with a chance to be the authors of our own successes and comforts. Wabun's agenda is to provide for the creation of individual and collective comforts and well-being in an exquisite wilderness territory. It is immensely rewarding and enjoyable. You, campers and staff, did a magnificent job of extracting every ounce of benefit from the opportunities the camp offers – thank you!

In your summer beyond electricity and electronics, countering the pace and frenzy of an over-packed daily schedule in your non-Wabun lives, and seeking the elegance of a simply defined and powerful personal experience in the Northland, you have taken full advantage of an exquisite natural environment where recreation is what you do with others, not what you

subscribe to, consume, or purchase. Your pleasures were the shared enjoyments of group accomplishment. Your successes were a well-constructed campsite, a delectable meal of your own devising, and the warmth of the evening's reliving of the day's traveling. Well-deserved pride abounded. You learned much about yourselves and others. You learned to count on and be counted upon. You bonded in common efforts, you celebrated, and you had great fun together – great, great fun together. Humbly, I suggest the world is a better place for what you have done, and I tip my Wabun cap to you.



Wabun siblings

In this Newsletter, you will find a Wabun Reunion Schedule for this winter. I would love to see you as we come together with alums to celebrate our Wabun experiences, and with families interested in learning about the opportunities Wabun offers. We do not advertise, so we depend on friends of the camp to spread the word of what we do – please invite or refer your friends and family to the Reunions, as well as our website, Blog, and Facebook page.

Marg, Nibby and I send our very best wishes to the 2011 campers and staff and thank you for all that you did and do to distinguish us.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dick Lewis". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Wabun is “Facebooked” and “Blogged”

Last April, Wabun ventured into the world of Facebook, offering the opportunity for campers, staff, alums, parents, and friends to share in all things Wabun. The response has been fun and phenomenal! More than 320 people have joined the page from 9 different countries including: France, United Kingdom, Germany, Ukraine, Portugal, Costa Rica, Chile, and Indonesia. Photos, stories, and updates are shared from current and past Wabunites giving the wonderful chance to connect with fellow red-canoes enthusiasts.

During the summer, pictures from on and between trips were made available for parents and friends to get a closer look at the joys that the campers experienced during the season. It’s a wonderful medium for communicating during the summer, and now during the winter months.

Please do check out the Wabun Facebook Page, scroll through the photos and posts, and feel free to share your own tales of times in the canoe.

Additionally, Dick and Marg are official bloggers on The Wabun Times. Through this regularly updated publication, they share news of Wabun gatherings and such topics as “what is it like to drive across the ice to Garden Island in the winter?” In the summer, it is another forum through which summer updates may be given. It gives a wonderful glimpse of what is going on at the Camp, especially for those not fortunate enough to spend their summer-months between the gunwales.



Click this icon to visit Wabun’s Facebook page.



Click this icon to visit Dick and Marg’s Wabun blog.



Click this icon to visit Wabun’s website.

Newsletter Acknowledgments

The Wabun Newsletter could not be produced without the help of many friends, staff, and campers. We would like to thank all of you who submitted written contributions. We would also like to thank the shutterbugs for allowing us to use their photographs. The above efforts are molded into a newsletter by Ben Simmons, who is also Wabun’s webmaster - many thanks.

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The Camper Membership Application is available on Wabun.com.



CAMP PHOTO 2011



Wabun 2011

WABUN 2011-2012, GATHERING/REUNION SCHEDULE

You are cordially invited to attend the Wabun gatherings listed below. These are opportunities for families who are interested in learning about Wabun's program to come together with alumni/ae as well as current campers and staff to swap and hear stories and share experiences, and to enjoy the camaraderie of being with fellow wilderness-canoeing enthusiasts. We'll have treats, and attending Wabun Directors will be on hand to show and discuss: a great video that captures the essence and magnificence of the Temagami area; the 79-year tradition of excellence of Wabun's style of canoe tripping; as well as to answer questions. Please contact Dick or Marg Lewis at 603-369-3677 or either rpl@wabun.com or mrl@wabun.com for the specifics of location and time.

| Date | Time | Location |
|------------------------------|---------|---------------------------|
| **Sunday, October 23, 2011 | 3:00 PM | Wellesley, Massachusetts |
| **Saturday, November 5, 2011 | 3:30 PM | New York, New York |
| ** Sunday, November 13, 2011 | 2:30 PM | Boxborough, Massachusetts |
| **Saturday, January 7, 2012 | 4:00 PM | Cleveland Heights, Ohio |
| **Sunday, January 8, 2012 | 4:00 PM | Columbus, Ohio |
| **Saturday, January 21, 2012 | 3:00 PM | Bethesda, Maryland |
| **Sunday, January 22, 2012 | 1:00 PM | Drexel Hill, Pennsylvania |
| **Thursday, January 26, 2012 | 5:30 PM | Minneapolis, Minnesota |

| Date | Time | Location |
|-------------------------------|---------|--------------------------|
| **Saturday, January 28, 2012 | 4:00 PM | Los Angeles, California |
| **Sunday, January 29, 2012 | 1:00 PM | Seattle, Washington |
| **Saturday, February 4, 2012 | 5:00 PM | DeWitt, New York |
| **Saturday, February 11, 2012 | 1:00 PM | Hopkinton, New Hampshire |
| **Sunday, February 12, 2012 | 4:00 PM | Portland, Maine |
| **Saturday, March 10, 2012 | 3:00 PM | Burlington, Vermont |
| **Saturday, March 24, 2012 | 2:00 PM | Temagami, Ontario |



Alumni/ae from all Wabun decades – 1930s-2010s – attend Harvard, MA, gathering/reunion, November 13, 2011

2011 ITINERARIES

| Section | WABUN A | CAYUGA A | WABUN B-C | CAYUGA B | WABUN B-S | WABUN D | CAYAUGA K | CREE | WENONAH | CHIPPY | Section |
|---------|------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------|
| 26-Jun | ARRIVE | ARRIVE | ARRIVE | ARRIVE | ARRIVE | ARRIVE | ARRIVE | ARRIVE | ARRIVE | | 26-Jun |
| 27-Jun | IN | IN | IN | IN | IN | IN | IN | IN | IN | | 27-Jun |
| 28-Jun | IN | IN | IN | IN | IN | IN | IN | IN | IN | | 28-Jun |
| 29-Jun | TRAVEL | TRAVEL | Cross Lake | Southwest Arm | Obabika Lake | Diamond Lake | Obabika Inlet | Denidus Point | Horseshoe Lake | | 29-Jun |
| 30-Jun | Root River | Root River | Temagami River | Cross Lake | Upper Goose Falls | Sugar Lake | Obabika Lake | Denidus Lake | Diamond Lake | | 30-Jun |
| 1-Jul | Blackstone Lake | Root River | Red Cedar Lake | Temagami River | Rawson Lake | Tall Pines | Wakimaka Lake | Denidus Lake | North Obabika | | 1-Jul |
| 2-Jul | North Bamaji Lake | Bamaji Lake | Hangstone Lake | Red Cedar Lake | McConnel Bay | Wakimika Lake | Diamond Lake | Cross Lake | Obabika Inlet | | 2-Jul |
| 3-Jul | Kezik Lake | Roadhouse Lake | Jumping Caribou Lake | Hangstone Lake | Rest | Obabika Lake | Diamond Lake | Lower Cleminshaw's | Upper Cleminshaw's | | 3-Jul |
| 4-Jul | Zionx Lake | Wesleyan Lake | Waskaksina Lake | Jumping Caribou Lake | Sturgeon | Upper Cleminshaw's | Ferguson Bay | IN | IN | | 4-Jul |
| 5-Jul | Kasgego Lake | Kezik Lake | Kokoko Bay | Waskaksina Lake | Upper Goose | IN | Kokoko Bay | IN | IN | | 5-Jul |
| 6-Jul | Rest | Before Dorothy Lake | IN | Kokoko Bay | Wawiagama | IN | IN | Sharp Rock Inlet | NE Arm | | 6-Jul |
| 7-Jul | Cat Lake | Dorothy Lake | IN | IN | Temagami | Obabika Inlet | IN | Wakimaka Lake | Iceland Lake | | 7-Jul |
| 8-Jul | Maxim Lake | Near Muskegoan | Rabbit Lake | IN | IN | Wawiagama Lake | Outlet Bay | Wakimaka Lake | Wasaksina Lake | | 8-Jul |
| 9-Jul | Upper Otokowin River | Dobie Lake | Four Bass Lake | Rabbit | IN | Upper Goose Falls | Wasaksina Lake | Obabika Lake | Cross Lake | | 9-Jul |
| 10-Jul | Before 4th Rapid | Herrogot Lake | Indian Portage | Four Bass | Shikwamkwa Lake | Rawson Lake | Shiningwood Bay | Upper Cleminshaw's | Lower Cleminshaw's | | 10-Jul |
| 11-Jul | Exploration Day | Rest | Lac Kipewa | Portage Sauvage | Goldie River | McConnell Bay | Kokoko Bay | Upper Cleminshaw's | Adventure/rest Day | | 11-Jul |
| 12-Jul | Otoskwin River | Nanos Lake | Lac Audoin | Premier Lac | Bolkow Lake | Rest | IN | IN | IN | | 12-Jul |
| 13-Jul | Wide section in River | Before Froats Lake | LacPommeroy | Kipawa | Height of Land | Fredrick Lake | IN | IN | IN | | 13-Jul |
| 14-Jul | Froats Lake | Bow Lake | Rest | Lac Audoin | Little Missinaibi | Sturgeon River | Sharp Rock Bay | Ferguson Bay | Kokoko Lake | | 14-Jul |
| 15-Jul | Bow Lake | Badesdawa | Lac Ogascanon | Pommeroy | Little Missinaibi | Upper Goose Falls | Lady Evelyn Lake | Animanipissing Lake | Red Squirrel Lake | | 15-Jul |
| 16-Jul | Badesdawa | Ozhuskans | Lac Ross | Rest | Rest | Obabika Lake | Centre Falls | Mountain Lake | Animanipissing Lake | | 16-Jul |
| 17-Jul | Ozhuskans | Kakagawizida | Lac Winniwash | Ogascanon | Missinaibi Lake | Charlie's Chop House | Divide Lake | Rest | Rest | | 17-Jul |
| 18-Jul | Kakagawizida | Above Sabrun | Lac de Veillard | Ross Lake | Peterbell Marsh | IN | South Channel | Theiving Bear Lake | Mountain | ARRIVE | 18-Jul |
| 19-Jul | Above Sabrun | Ozhiski Lake | Cinq Portage | Winniwash | Allan Island | IN | Willow Island Lake | Blueberry Lake | Theiving Bear Lake | IN | 19-Jul |
| 20-Jul | Ozhiski Lake | Otoskwin River | Grand Lac Victoria | Lac de Veillard | Splitrock Falls | Diamond Lake | Sharp Rock Bay | NE Arm | Cassels Lake | Philly Point | 20-Jul |
| 21-Jul | Otoskwin River | Kabania Lake | Rest | Cinq Portage | Brunswick Lake | Willow Island Lake | Upper Cleminshaw's | Spawning Lake | NE Arm | Kokoko Lake | 21-Jul |
| 22-Jul | Kabania Lake | Neskgandaga | Esker Portage | Grand Lake Victoria | Brunswick River | Center Falls | IN | Temagami | Temagami | Kokoko Bay | 22-Jul |
| 23-Jul | Neskgandaga | Rest - Reoutfit | Lac Timber | Chartier | Rest | Shangra La | IN | IN | IN | IN | 23-Jul |
| 24-Jul | Rest | Windsor Lake | Lac Labrador | Lac a la Croix | 2 Portage Falls | Macpherson Lake | Skunk Lake | IN | IN | IN | 24-Jul |
| 25-Jul | Rapid below 1/4 mile P | Rapid below junction | Lac Wald | Rest | N of Wilson Bend | The Forks | Turtlesell Lake | Obabika Lake | Lady Evelyn Hotel | Skunk Lake | 25-Jul |
| 26-Jul | Rapid below Junction | Pym Island | Coulonge Rapid #81 | Joncas | Sharp Rock Rapids | Florence Lake | Wawishkashi Lk | Upper Goose | Lady Evelyn Lake | Gull Lake | 26-Jul |
| 27-Jul | Pym Island | String Bogs | Coulonge Rapid #24 | Riviere de l'Original | Black Feather Rapids | Rest | Kelly Portage | Halleck Lake | Sugar Lake | Rest | 27-Jul |
| 28-Jul | String Bogs | Above Missa River | Old Bridge Site | Lac Dumoine | Isabel Island | Bluesucker Lake | Karl Lake | McConnell Bay | Lady Evelyn Narrows | Temagami | 28-Jul |
| 29-Jul | Above Missa River | Indian Site | Coreille River | Rapid #3 | Thunderhouse Falls | Pinetorch Lake | Matagamasi Lake | Wolf Lake | Hobart Lake | IN | 29-Jul |
| 30-Jul | Indian Site | Birthday Cakes | Rest | Rapid #6 | Rest | Lake #7 | Wolf Lake | Matagamasi Lake | Maple Mountain | IN | 30-Jul |
| 31-Jul | Birthday Cakes | Delow Double Portage | Chutes Diables | Big Steele Rapid | Pivabiskau Falls | Lake #14 | McConnell Bay | McCarthy Bay | Center Falls | Obabika Inlet | 31-Jul |
| 1-Aug | Below Double Portage | Lawashi Channel | Coulonge River | Dumoine Club | Soweska River | Dorothy Lake | Rest | Karl Lake | Rest | Obabika Lake | 1-Aug |
| 2-Aug | Open | Island Site | Enraged Rapids | Robinson Lake | McCuaig Creek | Wakimika Lake | Halleck Lake | Wawishkashi Lake | Willow Island Lake | Wakimika Lake | 2-Aug |
| 3-Aug | Lawashi Channel | Attawapiskat | Coulonge | Bowman's Portage | Portage Island | Obabika Lake | Obabika River | Turtlesell Lake | Diamond Lake | Diamond Lake | 3-Aug |
| 4-Aug | Attawapiskat | Attawapiskat | Terry Fox Bridge | Stonecliff | Tidewater Park | Devil's Mountain | Obabika Lake | Skunk Lake | Obabika Lake | Sharp Rock Inlet | 4-Aug |
| 5-Aug | TRAVEL | TRAVEL | TRAVEL | TRAVEL | TRAVEL | TRAVEL | Temagami | Temagami | Temagami | Temagami | 5-Aug |
| 6-Aug | TEMAGAMI | TEMAGAMI | TEMAGAMI | TEMAGAMI | TEMAGAMI | TEMAGAMI | TEMAGAMI | TEMAGAMI | TEMAGAMI | TEMAGAMI | 6-Aug |
| 7-Aug | IN | IN | IN | IN | IN | IN | IN | IN | IN | IN | 7-Aug |
| Section | WABUN A | CAYUGA A | WABUN B-C | CAYUGA B | WABUN B-S | WABUN D | CAYAUGA K | CREE | WENONAH | CHIPPY | Section |

2011 SECTION ALIGNMENT

| Wabun A | Wabun B | Wabun B | Wabun D | Cree | Chippy |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pete Gwyn Will Blackwell Cam Alden Max Bresolin Chris Douglas Reece Echelberger Mike Finnegan Marc Foster Wyatt Grant Jeff Harrington Paul Lindseth Kiwi Sheldon | Andrew Stachiw Max Flomen Sean Barnebey Jacob Blankemeyer Roman Halabayda John Hunger Jackson Larrabee Lucas Rooney Drew Sarno Charlie Sipp Phillip Taylor Aaron Zucker | Jesse Coleman Brydon Brancart Adrian Buehler Nick Everett Lars Gardner Nate Geyer Hamish Gibbs Will Ryan Mark Tipton Andres Victorine | Aaron Coleman Alden Mahoney Jasper Bresolin Will Collis Alex Larrabee Emmett Tabor Isaac Traynor York von Schlabrendorff Ryall Willemsen Isaac Woods | Paul Sipp/Casey Forbes AJ Malcomson Taylor Wright Isa Zinser Nat Alden Noah Budros Brian Burns Michael Cameron Eamonn Dundon Cass Farr Nicholas Lindseth Noah Traynor Will Wrede | John Kilbridge Ian Christie Nate Levin Rob Meffert Robin Hartzell Jay Harvey Pierce Hovey Finn Johnston Willson Moore Wills Moskow Trevor Rich Cooper Tuckerman |
| Cayuga A | Cayuga B | Cayuga K | Wenonah | Directors | Kitchen |
| Jess Lewis Katherine Finnegan Isabel Cochran Savy Dean Sarah Langfitt Sarah Grace Longsworth Jo Moore Heidi Nocka Jessie Paulson Annie Reagan Marcy Shappy Annie Sherman Mary Therese Snyder Elizabeth Worgan | Elisa Morris Tara Hartzell Stef Clement Kylie Burns Zoe Collis Tristyn Kurkowski Alison Kurtz Amanda Sundheimer Lan VanDe Hei Kysa Willemsen Carly Rich | Halley Keevil Ursula Kilbridge Maggie Minor Emma Gwyn Olivia Hillmeyer Meara Maloney Laura Peck Sam White | Julie Mercurio Natalie Fortier Helen Kilian Saffy Bowman Ellen Brancart Sara Hibbitts Lily Johnston Nina Moore Sofia Verheyen | Nibby Hinchman Dick Lewis Marg Lewis | Robin Potts Emily Truman Amber Kennard |
| | | | | Trip Coordinators | Base camp staff |
| | | | | Sarah Flotten Julie Hinchman Jason Lewis | Ian Cameron Robert Kurkowski Tom Stiverson |
| | | | | Infirmary staff | Tuck Shop |
| | | | | Andy Sipp Edna Wright | Ann Hinchman |

Staff are in bold.

Andy Sipp Graces Wabun with a Visit

Dr. Andy Sipp returned to Wabun for a two-week visit after a 26 year absence. Andy was last a camper in 1985, as a member of the Wabun A section. Andy, his sister Betsy, brother Paul, and nephew Charlie have all leant their talents to Wabun over the years. Charlie was a member of the Wabun B section this past summer, traveling the Missinaibi River to James Bay, and Paul was a Head Staff in our Cree section.



Paul, Charlie, and Andy Sipp

Andy volunteered his efforts at the beginning of the 2011 season, working with staff in the preparation of our Canoe Trip Medical Kits – greatly appreciated. We have yet to attract Betsy back for a visit, but we’re working on it!

My Daughter and a 43-Year-Old Duffel Bag

A Letter Written by Kevin Maloney

Dear Dick and Marg,

It was nice to receive a letter from our daughter Meara last week, I believe it was the first one ever. She sounded excited about leaving on the first trip, and the group of girls she was with.

She also mentioned that she got everything that I told her to get at the camp store, a Mackinaw if she wanted, some other supplies, and a duffel bag. I thought we would be able to find something at our house to put her items in for her trip to camp and then she could get a duffel bag there, but what did we have?

Three years earlier we were cleaning out the attic at my parents’ house, with my father, and he handed me a folded up piece of canvas that came from between the joists and asked “what’s this?” It was my Wabun duffel bag, it even still had the Wabun destination tag on it. It had been stashed up there in late summer 1968 and was making a re-appearance after forty years. Well, you won’t need that anymore, was the concensus, and we were really trying to clean up. Besides smelling musty, I didn’t see anything that wrong with it, so I stashed it in the garage when no one was looking, and put it high on a shelf where it couldn’t be seen. Three years later, and I saw a need. “You can use my old duffel bag,” I told my daughter, as leaving time approached and the pile of stuff on the dining room table we were using to stage everything grew larger. “NO WAY,” said the fashion conscious girl. But on the day before her flight, I threw it into the washing machine and then hung it in the sun to dry. It didn’t look bad to me, so I pulled parental rank and said, “It’s going.” She was focused on other things then anyway.

So after forty- three years, my duffel bag made a trip back to Wabun. If she got another one, that’s all right, they are a different color and maybe a little different, but it was neat to stand

in the airport, watching the plane get loaded and seeing my old duffel bag go up the conveyor.



Judging by the pictures you are posting it looks like everyone is having a great time and I am glad we sent Meara this summer.

Robin Potts: Feeding the Wabun Armies

Robin Potts was a camper at Wabun in 1985. She was a member of our girls’ section, as were a number of other youth from the Teme Augama Anishnabi Community on Bear Island, our neighbors to the south of Wabun on Temagami. Adding to the fun and depth of our connection with the Potts family is the fact that Robin was a student at the Bear Island School in the early 80s when Marg and I lived on the lake and did part-time teaching at the school. Imagine that, it didn’t dissuade her from spending the summer with us as well.

Robin’s daughter Kylie was a camper at Wabun in the 2010 season, and when the two of them attended the winter reunion on our island last March, they were joined by Robin’s son Bry-

an. Long story made short, both Kylie and Bryan were with us as campers this past summer, and Robin joined us as our Head Chef – it was wonderful! Robin’s understanding of what Wabun is all about, the phenomenal importance of food in the lives of our campers and staff, combined with her culinary talents uniquely positioned her to make a fabulous contribution to our quality of in-camp life in 2011 – thanks to all three Potts.



Robin and 2nd Chef Emily Truman, on left, preparing an in-camp birthday cake



Robin and Bryan

Wabunite Lives Real-Life *Lion King*

Written by Stacy Hartzell

On July 5, 2011, when I boarded the plane that would take me to Africa, I could barely contain my excitement, or my anxiety for that matter. I was leaving for a yearlong internship with the School for Field Studies to live on a wildlife management field station in Southern Kenya. I truly only had a vague idea as to what to expect from my job and my surroundings. I knew I would be working with American university students studying abroad, and there would be no hot showers. When I landed in Nairobi, Kenya, I knew instantly that Africa is like nowhere I’ve ever traveled to before.

Now that I am four months into my internship, I feel much more comfortable and settled into the African lifestyle. I am stationed in Kimana, Kenya, a small village in the shadow of Mount Kilimanjaro between Amboseli and Tsavo West National Parks.



My neighbors are Maasai bomas and giraffes. Olive baboons roam around the field station every day. The curriculum actively engages the students in not only learning about the African wildlife, but also going into the field and talking about elephants while there is a large herd of them only a few feet from the Land Cruisers.

We take frequent trips to Amboseli National Park to do game counts and vegetation transect walks. On a quarterly basis, we join Kenya Wildlife Services to do an official mam-



mal count in the park. We also walk around the local community to conduct interviews with local farmers and pastoralists about their personal experiences with human-wildlife conflict.

This experience has been amazing to not only learn more about wildlife management, but

ALUMNI/ALUMNAE NEWS

to actually be living it and go into the field every day and see what the faculty are teaching right in



front of you rather than in a photo on a Powerpoint slide.

My role as an intern, I feel, mirrors my role as a Wabun staff. I cater to all student affairs outside of the academic arena. I look after student health and safety and group dynamics, as well as organizing events such as dance parties, sports tournaments, community service, and non-class days. On an almost daily basis, I reach back to my Wabun experiences in order to perform my job well and connect with the students just as I do with my Wabun campers when I am a trip staff. Sometimes I feel like the only differences between being an SFS Intern and being a Wabun trip staff are the lack of lakes, the age difference, and all the Swahili I speak. Though even the Swahili is reminiscent of my Wabun summers, as my campers can tell you, I have woken them up with “The Circle of Life” on many occasions. The camp itself is also quite rustic and reminds me of the simplistic nature of the Wabun Base Camp. We do have some luxuries here that I cannot say I do not very much appreciate, like electric-

ity in the bandas, or houses, and having Wi-fi, though temperamental, helps get the job done as well as staying connected to the world back home through news and email. Of course, there is also the duty of chasing baboons away from the potato box every day. I guess everywhere has that something.

This experience is absolutely amazing and has taught me a lot about what I want to do with my career in the future. I don't think I will ever get used to seeing zebra and giraffes every day and that feeling you get when you see an elephant, lion, or leopard.

It is simply surreal. I get that general feeling of “Wow, I am so lucky to be here” that I get when I am on trip in the Ontario wilderness also. Wabun has given me many skills that has proved invaluable in my internship here in Kenya, but I also think many of things I am learning here I will take back with me to apply to my



future experiences as a Wabun staff. Even though Garden Island is just a small island in the middle of Ontario, you can find pieces of it everywhere, even thousands of miles away in the dusty world of Kenya.

Halloween 2011: Wabun Style!



Pierce Hovey, Wabun Chippy section 2011, entertained and informed his schoolmates with his canoe-tripping inspired Halloween costume this past fall.



Sarah Grace Longworth carried her 2011 portaging memories forward with a Pumpkin Portage Post on our BLOG.

Wabun Swag Around the World



Wabun campers, staff and families have traveled from KoKoKo to Kasabonika, from the Sturgeon River to the Severn River. During our six-week season, our sense of adventure takes us into some of the most remote territory Northern Ontario has to offer. But...what about the other forty-six weeks of the year? We are an adventurous bunch.

These three Wabun ambassadors brought their wandering spirits beyond the bush and into the wider world, Wabun swag in tow!

Stacy Hartzell (top right), camper and staff of many years, toasts the African morning with her Wabun mug. Mt. Kilimanjaro rises in the distance. We at Wabun missed Stacy's warmth and energy this summer, but are excited to hear of her time in Kenya. Check out Stacy's article for more about her adventures.



Stephanie Clement (top left), camper and staff, wears her Wabun red on the steps of a neolithic amphitheater in the ancient city of Petra, Jordan. Stephanie lived in Jordan for many years and now resides in Vermont. Wabun was lucky to have her back this summer where she joined Cayuga B on the Coulonge River. Check out the Cayuga B log for details of their trip.

Peg Clement (bottom right), longtime Wabun parent and seasonal Temagami resident, shows off her Wabun tote on the shores of Issik Kul lake in Kyrgyzstan. The Tien Shan mountain range towers behind her. Among other places, Peg resided in Jordan for many years and has traveled extensively throughout the Middle East/Central Asia. Summers draw Peg North to her family cabin on Temagami.

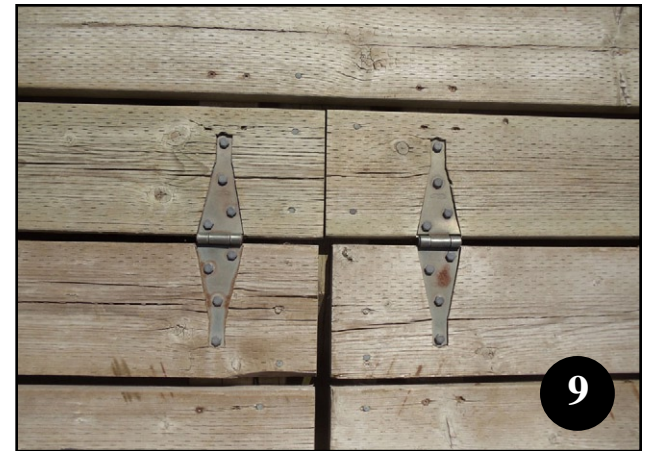
Peg, Stacy and Stephanie brought a bit of Wabun with them on their travels. They have also brought back to the Wabun community incredible stories of adventure and growth.

Do you have a photo and a story to share? Please post your pictures and tales on our Facebook wall. Safe travels, and keep in touch!



WHAT AND WHERE IS IT?

Can you guess what these are and where they are on Garden Island? Answers are on page 39.



WHAT AND WHERE IS IT?



POST-SEASON TRIPS

37 Years Ago This Summer

Written By Casey Forbes

I was a camper at Wabun in the summers of 1964, 1965 (the rainy one), and 1967. I was on the staff for the seasons of 1970, '71, '72, '73, and '74. This summer, 37 years later, I returned to staff the Cree section. Taking 6 weeks off from your “normal” life is a bit unusual and requires a loving, understanding spouse and family. Co-workers and business partners need to be aligned, and a good personal trainer is required.



Alumni Cree staff, Casey Forbes and John Kilbridge

Most of my friends/colleagues think I'm nuts. But I know, if they haven't done Wabun style canoe tripping, they just don't and won't get it, they just won't understand.

Back home, people ask about my experi-

ences. After a sentence or two, they interrupt and tell me about their “camping” experience. I nod approvingly and change the course of the conversation. I have found it easier to just say, “Yes, I had a great time, yes, I would do it again if I could.” For those who show further interest, I tell them I lived outdoors for six weeks, up at sunrise, down at sunset, every meal cooked over a fire, and it was a tremendous amount of work and fun. Then they change the conversation.

Others who have been to the Temagami are curious about noted changes over the years since my last summer there. Here are some of my impressions:

What has changed:

- Some of the equipment has changed – Nylon tents with waterproof floors, aluminum poles and pegs. Gone are the canvas tents with or without mosquito netting, and no more cutting tent poles at the end of the day
- Wannigan lids have small added pieces on the handles that fit into indentations on the wannigan sides so tops won't slide off
- My wannigan had rope handles
- Pannikans are mostly plastic (and they float)
- No more can dumps – haul your trash out
- First aid kits are much more complete
- Spot Locators or Sat Phones are carried by each section
- Everyone – except old guys – has wet feet all summer
- Menus have changed – less dependant on Monkey Meat (RPLjr's only source of protein)
 - o Pot Lag, Ham Lo Mein, Smoked Bacon

- o Train Wreck, Spanish Rice, Calzones
- o Fresh Veggies: Cabbage, Carrots, Peppers, Turnips, Cucumbers
- o Soy Sauce, Hot Sauce, Spices, Herbs, Margarine
- o Tuna, Chicken, Pepperoni
- o Whole Wheat Flour, Tortillas, Crackers



Onion rings and home fries



Asian feast, Wabun styler

- Parchment paper to line the reflector pan – genius!
- Number of parents on the beach on Aug 7
- Vastly improved Staff Training: group dynamics,



Prepping pike sushi and fried bass

adolescent behavior, Wilderness First Aid

- In camp, after each trip, sections are debriefed, by “the Brass”
- More islands have summer “cottages” (shoreline development on Temagami is still prohibited.)
- More people on Temagami: summer residents, weekend tourists, summer camps, Amateur Campers and Programs

What hasn't changed:

- Style of tripping has not really changed. Wood/canvas canoes are still the primary means of transportation, they are still fragile, and still need human intervention for propulsion.
- Boys will be Boys, Girls will be Girls
- Amount and intensity of Work
- Amount and intensity of Laughter

- Amount and intensity of Sleep
- Beauty of the region
- Head winds, tail winds, cross winds
- Tumplines, Paddles, Muskeg and Bugs
- Pots and Pans – some of the frying pans must be at least 50 years old – and are great!
- The taste of bannock after dinner
- The thrill of swimming in the middle of a lake on a hot day
- The thrill of coming to the end of a tough portage
- The sound your tumpline makes when portaging a well balanced canoe
- Singing songs to which you know only some of the words
- Walking back for the second load on a portage



Casey on the renowned Chiniguchi muskeg portage

- Giving and receiving help
- Drinking water from any lake
- The trademark Wabun campsite: a well pitched dining fly near the cooking area, wannigans lined up, wood stacked up, a clean and neat site
- Powerful Rain/Lightning/Wind/Hail Storms

- Paddling a canoe
- Old Growth Pines, Granite formations
- Blueberries, Raspberries
- Amateur Camp Groups
- Sunsets, sunrises, cloud formations, stars, temperature variations
- Rising mist on the water in the morning
- Bush Coffee
- Rock beats Scissors, Paper beats Rock, Scissors beat Paper.
- Enjoying Simple Pleasures
- Renewed mental, spiritual and physical strength
- Camaraderie with other alumni/ae
- Knowing, confident smile when remembering or talking about Wabun
- The high quality of life while moving a group through the Temagami area

There is Tough, then, there is Wabun Tough. There is Canoeing Tripping, then, there is Wabun Canoe Tripping. Wabun has been a force in all our lives. As alumni/ae, we share common ground, common experiences, and common



The boys of the Cree section

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results. We learn new skills, and prepare ourselves for the adventure. We know what to do and we do it well.

My friends think I am nuts – that’s OK with me. Not all who wander are lost.

Section G Takes To The Water

Written By Bill Green

We traveled from the Great Northwest to the Great Northwoods for a family pilgrimage to Temagami, arriving at Garden Island on August 15. The plan: a 4 or 5 night trip on the Diamond-Wakimika-Obabika circuit. The group: me, my wife Diane, my son Alexander



Bill and Diane

and daughter Whitney, my sister Nancy and her husband Tony and son Ted, and my daughter’s friend Cormac. Wood and canvas for all was the order of the day – “old school,” as the kids said.

After a warm welcome from Dick and Marg, 2 glorious nights in the cabins at Wabun Point, one day to outfit and cover all the tump-ing, rolling and portaging basics, and one special delivery of Canada’s best slab bacon, we were paddling north.

We marveled at the weather (only 30 minutes of rain on the entire trip) and the lack of bugs -- but there were plenty of challenges with the winds that came our way. Strong tailwinds/sidewinds on the first day to Sharp Rock Inlet (not easy for the first-time paddlers); and brutal headwinds the second day on Diamond, where we pushed through at a glacial pace to a beautiful site near the Wakimika portages by the end of a long afternoon.



Beautiful Wakimika Lake

Day one was the intro; by day two, the group was doing everything needed to build the fireplace, put up the fly, chop the wood, dice the potatoes and mix the bannock – all while loudly



Not your typical Wabun meal

extolling the virtues of the Wabun Way!

Other challenges were met and handled with new-found skills – portages into Wakimika, pulling over beaver dams on Wakimika creek. Then, another headwind on Obabika and the half-mile “bowman’s portage” into Temagami.



Alexander and Ted’s encounter with a beaver dam



Whiney and Cormac

Along the way there was unanimous agreement on a few things -- bannock is delicious and better than anyone expected; bush coffee is outstanding; wood and canvas is sublime; and the bacon is perhaps the best thing that any of us had eaten in years.

And a final challenge – our last day took us from the island campsite on Wakimika to Garden Island, in one day. When we reached Obabika Inlet around 3:00, we took a vote (yes, on a family trip there is a bit more “democracy” in action, and my former ability as a staffman to impose decisions on the group went for naught), and the group decision was to paddle on to the luxury of the cabins at Wabun Point, where we arrived at 6:30 pm. We may have set a one-day record for a family trip return to camp -- having done the Diamond-Wakimika-Obabika loop in 3 beautiful nights, 4 long days . . . and 5 slabs of bacon.

Our deep thanks to Dick and Marg for all the help and hospitality, and to Sarah and Nibby, whose efforts in organizing much of our gear before we arrived were duly noted and much appreciated!



Back at the cabin - well earned rest

Combatting Wabun Withdrawal

Written By Elisa Morris

For me, and for most Wabun campers and staff, the end of the Wabun season is always a very confused emotional experience. Sure, there’s the sweetness of reuniting with family and friends, the pride gained from reflecting on the achievements of the summer, and that indescribable feeling that one can only get from spending six weeks in Northern Ontario. But then comes the bitterness of saying goodbye to section-mates who may not be seen until next summer, and the difficulty of leaving the comforts and routine of life in the bush. I usually treat my Wabun Withdrawal by immediately flying back to the Pacific Northwest and throwing myself into the whirlwind of school. But this year was different—I didn’t go home right away and I had already graduated college. I didn’t have my usual remedy and thus my Wabun Withdrawal seemed even more acute than usual.

So I gave in, I went back to Wabun. On August 31st I hit the road with my boyfriend David and good friend Tyler. We headed north from Connecticut, stopping in Montreal for a night where we picked up fellow Wabun staff Max Flomen and Tara Hartzell, who decided that the first two days of Law School and undergrad at McGill could be missed—Wabun was calling. We arrived on Garden Island late the next evening, where Marg graciously welcomed us into the Lewis home. It felt great to be back on Temagami and we quickly began preparing for our four-day

trip around the Cross-Wasaks loop. The next day we hopped in wood-canvas canoes and gave Marg a rousing “Section X” cheer as we paddled away from the dock. Despite the rain which had been falling all morning, spirits were high.

With three Wabun staff to teach them and a very eager desire to learn, David and Tyler quickly picked up the Wabun Way. By day two, they were tripping like old-timers and our pair of red canoes sailed through the water and flew across portages.



Tara, Max, Tyler, Me, and David setting out for Cross-Wasaks

Woodcrew was speedier and more productive than ever, with three Fannos (really cool commercial grade pruning saws that Wabun sections carry), two axes and one bow saw between the five of us. At every site after unloading our gear and setting up the fly, we each grabbed at least one sharp tool and headed into the bush. Not a word was spoken as we sawed and axed away, reemerging a few minutes later with an

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abundance of wood. Meals were also a highlight: due to the shortness of our trip we were able to splurge a bit on provisions. We feasted on the meatiest A-Mac I think on record, and fajitas complete with fresh salsa and guacamole.

At the end of the trip, David, Tyler and I said good-bye to Max and Tara who headed back to Montreal. The three of us spent a couple of days airing out our gear and relaxing on Garden Island as we waited for our friend Nick. When he arrived, Tyler and David could fill the role of staff – instructing and supporting a fellow newcomer to Wabun. Although they had only just finished their first trip, Tyler and David’s enthusiasm to teach Nick what they had learned proved that you don’t have to be a camper to learn the Wabun Way.



Tyler and Nick tumping duffels at Center Falls

In a few days, the boys and I left for a spot I hadn’t visited in years – Center Falls. I pushed them on the way up, but they responded well, embracing the value and reward in a long day of paddling and portaging. Although the falls

were small -- being late summer and all – bringing these friends from my life outside of Wabun to such a familiar and beautiful place gave me a fresh appreciation for this classic trip.

While there are many reasons to love a Section X trip, this, perhaps, was the top: the opportunity to share this immeasurably important part of my life with close friends and for them, in turn, to give me new perspective on something so familiar. And while it will always be hard to leave Wabun, this year, at least, I got just a little more time.

5 Days, 5 People, 2 Canoes... And 1 Zebra.

Written By Heather Larrabee

As a parent of Wabun campers I have heard other parents exclaim how they would love to taste “the Wabun Experience.” At the end of the season, our family did. I will be the first to admit with a little trepidation. My husband, Jon, was a camper and staff. My two sons, Jackson



and Alex each had a few years of tripping under their belts. I knew I was in good hands. But you wouldn’t see me flipping a canoe on my head!

In our family I am the planner. You know, the one who handles all of the details from doctor’s appointments to family vacations? Not this time. I couldn’t even make a hotel reservation, or map the best route on the highway. I sure didn’t have any experience packing a wannigan! I handed over the reins (not an easy thing to do!), sat back, and enjoyed the ride – well, we will get into that part later.



Jon was our head staff. He mapped out a couple of different routes for us to take – weather and time permitting – “D-W-O” he called it. We made a menu (trip eating is so different – and no, veggies are not a priority!), went shopping, and made lists of what to pack. Five people, two canoes, and five days worth of supplies are challenging. Abby, our seven year old, was heartbroken when she found out her pillow pet had to stay at base camp. Taking care of his ‘little girl’, daddy made sure her Zebra traveled in style in her day

pack, right next to her the whole trip!

Finally, the day arrived to set out. Jackson and Alex, back for one day from Sections B and D, put their trip clothes back on and jumped into the routine. Jon orchestrated. They just did what had to be done. It was fun. The canoes were loaded. I was handed a paddle. Abby sat on her “throne” as the mojo princess. We had a Wabun send -off by those still in camp.



The excitement of exploring and going on an adventure was fueling our momentum. We headed north up Temagami and past Rabbit Nose Island to look at pictographs on the cliffs. Along the way the kids told us stories of their trips and pointed out landmarks.

After lunch below Seal Rock, the water started to get choppy. We paddled hard. Harder. There was no stopping. The stories ceased. Jon’s comment was to keep the canoes close. We paddled for our lives! Our two canoes, a north wind, in angry water. Where were we? Devils Bay? Yes. Devil’s Bay, home of Keewayden.

Finally pulled together for a “butt break.”

However, our butts never did get a break. Only our arms – so whoever thought that one up.... We had a drink. Ate some trail mix. Looked up at the cliffs. As ferocious as the angry waters were, making us feel like unwanted guests, the cliffs emanated a sense of power. Substance. Permanence.

We searched for signs of people visiting that same spot hundreds of years ago. We did this many times. At one point Jackson stood up in the canoe and reached his hand up to a handprint that was left many years ago. Alex did the same – comparing the sizes of their hands, imagining the size of the man who was there before. We questioned why someone would leave a handprint on the side of a cliff. Was it territorial? A kind of map? Or simply someone expressing oneself with age-old graffiti?



One of my favorite stops that first day was at the Lady Evelyn Hotel. Jon told us of how the Chippies partake in the tradition of the chocolate bar wrapper exchange. The staff would dutifully collect the empty Jersey Milk wrappers and

exchange them for chocolate bars at the hotel. The campers have to wait by the canoes for the candy. Even I was not able to go up to the hotel, but we had no Jersey Milk wrappers, so we moved on. I will say, what I saw looked nothing like the picture in the Tuck Shop at camp. The romantic in me conjures up images of a grand hotel in a serene location. You can almost feel the presence of hotel guests milling around the grounds. Some say they are still there... eating their Jersey Milk chocolate bars.

Our paddling continued up Sharp Rock Inlet. The names are so precise! At this point in time I was cursing our head staff, and terrified that I send my children away for the summer to carry canoes on their heads up sharp rock cliffs! The kids didn’t seem to notice. They just did what had to be done. It was fun.

Our destination for our first night was on Diamond. A sense of relief was felt when we made it to camp. We were exhausted! Camp was set up in record time. Dinner was made and we all collapsed into bed. I think it was 6:00 pm.

The next morning Jon told us that we did really well for our first day. Apparently, we did in one day what Chippies do in two, on their last trip - when they are in shape! Now, I feel proud of what we did. At that time I was angry for being pushed so hard and feeling like a wet rag that dried in the sun! “But it is always better to get off Temagami” Jon states. We broke camp and continued on.

Diamond led us to the most amazing sight! The South end is home of the infamous Rock Beaver! Rock beavers are said to be the size

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of polar bears. They would have to be to move the rocks and boulders they used for their lodges. The lodges were easily 30 by 100 feet, constructed more of rocks than wood. We looked around to see if we could see any swimming around. No sightings were made. Jon said it was because we were too loud.



Farther down the inlet, some older gentlemen were fishing and thought Abby looked like an Indian princess, sitting on her duffle throne. She liked that. They took her picture.

The second night we spent on the beach site of Wakimika. That was not until after the boys unloaded their canoes in a small bay of muskeg, (AKA soupy compost that would probably turn my house plants into a primordial jungle) portaging through boulders the size of sheep, up, over and down a sheer rock face to reload the canoes for a 500 foot paddle to another portage. They just did what had to be done. It was fun.

Back to the Wakimika beach sight. This was a wonderful respite – we had a private beach, went swimming, and recharged. The tent was pitched just inside the trees, but with a view south across the beach. Jon, Alex and Abby went fishing. Thunderstorms broke out. The fish were lucky that day. We sat under our fly, eating our bannock, and watched two other sections move on through the wind and rain.

In the morning, we paddled down Wakimika. Looking for pictograph was becoming a hobby, and we looked for more on Wakimika Island. One of the groups that fought past us in the wind and rain the evening before was camped there and were not so early risers, so we could not search the whole island. Jon thinks they are on the north side of the island but I think he is only



using that as an excuse to return.

We continued our trip down the Wakimika River. As we broke out onto Obabika, Jon commented on how strangely peaceful it was. We booked it across the lake towards Grandparent's Rock. I wondered why he wanted to get



to the other side. The sky darkened. The water picked up. The wind lashed out. We made our way to our next campsite with a tail wind, but the waves kept getting bigger. "Dad, is that a rain wall headed down the lake?" Alex asked. Well, we unloaded the canoes in a wet, windy, deluge. "Yup, Alex." The weather continued. Jackson and Jon whipped up the fly and threw the packs and



wannigans under it. They just did what had to be done. Was this fun...? Abby and I huddled under the fly. Where was my hot cup of tea and piece of bannock now?

We set up camp as best we could. The north wind kept blowing. Abby with all our rolls was sitting in the tent so it wouldn't blow away – I thought she was going to pick up and take off like Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*! The wind continued all night, the rain let up before dinner. Jon woke us in the morning exclaiming “Rise and Roll, we are getting out of here!” So much for a rest day! As we were breaking camp, I asked Jon what Obabika meant. “Windy Lake!” Ahhhh. Now it all made sense.

Charlie's Chop House was our next destination. How I was hoping that it was a nice steak bistro, or as a minimum the floating McDonald's Jackson mentioned. As we made it back to Temagami, we had one more portage, took a break in the rock chair and entered back into civilization. We met up with some trippers from Florida that we connected with periodically on our journey. There is a sense of camaraderie in the wild, among strangers.

Coming back to Temagami also meant back to motor boats. Noise. Water skiing. It is strange how you don't miss the absence of noise, yet you miss the absence of silence. Now the push the first day made a little more sense, but only a little....

I did not find my Bistro at Charlie's, but by now we had established a routine that was a well oiled machine. We each had our job. I would set up the tent with Alex and Abby (no three-



man tent here, try a 3 room tent, my friends!). Jon would set up the fireplace, fly, and kitchen. Jackson would gather firewood. Jackson and Alex were very excited and thanked the last Wabun campers who stayed at Charlie's. They left enough firewood for a week! Thank You!

Abby fell in the lake, but at least the sun was poking through the clouds and the wind had subsided, and the zebra was warm and dry; its head poking out of the day pack, making sure it did not miss anything.

The night was perfect. There was a full moon. Loons. S'mores and wapoose stew. Well,



my version of wapoose stew – hot cocoa with bunny shaped marshmallows! Our trip brought us through large lakes, small ponds and creeks. We lifted the canoes up over beaver dams, ducked under low lying branches. We watched eagles soar, identified animal tracks, and enjoyed the beauty of nature.

The next morning we broke camp for the last time. We paddled into camp which was a bit anticlimactic. We raced in, just like all the sections. The beach was empty.

I didn't care. All I wanted was a shower. Hot water. Clean clothes.

Overall, we had an amazing experience. How often can you experience nature pure and simple? Live with what you have, work with nature, and respect the earth around you. This was a wonderful way to reconnect with our family. With work, camp and school, we were able to completely disconnect and focus on one another, just did what had to be done. It was fun.



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The Saga of Wabun's 2011 Long Trips (An Exercise in Wilderness Canoe-Tripping – Ending with Unscheduled Planes, Trains, and Automobiles)

Phase One – Minor Adjustment

On June 29, 2011, the Cayuga and Wabun A sections left Temagami and began the two-day, 1,000 mile drive out to western Ontario to launch their 1,100 mile trips to James Bay via the Otokwin and Attawapiskat Rivers. Heeding reports of forest fires burning near the Pickle Lake area (the intended point of origin for the trips), we did a mid-drive correction and decided to move the sections to a safe starting spot, not in the path of such conflagrations – the Root River, near Slate Falls, Ontario. We dropped the groups off in the afternoon of June 30 under sunny skies and still breezes – Tisdale Transportation bus driver Norm, Sarah Flotten, Dave Thompson and I then turned the bows of our land vehicles east, back to Wabun.



Good to start from Boat Line Bay

Here is an accounting of the next six weeks - they are excerpts from letters to the parents of Wabun and Section A, and notes that we kept at Wabun's base camp:

Phase Two – Life Gets Interesting

“Dear Cayuga A and Wabun A Families,

I write in the wake of three younger sections having headed out on their third trips of the season this morning – Crees, Cayuga K, and the Wenonahs. It is a beautiful sunlit day, gentle winds from the north, and a long-term forecast of more of the same for the next week, with some showers on Sunday just to keep the fire danger down – doesn't get much better than that.

The Wabun and Cayuga A sections have not, however, enjoyed such climatic serenity – the map of forest fires burning in their territories of travel (northwestern Ontario) is riddled with indications of fires being monitored and managed by the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR). We have been in constant contact with the MNR, commencing even before the sections left Wabun on the 29th, including a visit to their office in Slate Falls on June 30th before we dropped the sections off. Since then, it has been a rather delicate balancing act of checking in with the sections and all known government players in keeping track of the fire situation in that area of the province to make sure we are safeguarding the groups' wellbeing.

The bottom line – as of today Wabun A is on itinerary, and Cayuga A has been relocated from Dobie Lake to Pickle Lake.

Here is the sequence of events leading to today, July 14, 2011:

June 30 - both A sections dropped at Root River to avoid smoke on Pickle Lake Road/Lake St. Joseph and a fire (nearest fire # 35 as per MNR labeling system) on the Albany River

July 5 - call from Jess Lewis at the community of Slate Falls because she was smelling smoke, camp talked with the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) in Sioux Lookout, Bob Thomas (Wabun alum and former Fire Supervisor with the MNR), and Slate Falls people - fires were north and she was fine to proceed to Dobie River as planned, asked Jess to hit SPOT locator every night so we could monitor progress, camp began checking daily with the (MNR) about active fires and emailed both section itineraries to MNR in Sioux Lookout for their counsel



Smokey travels

July 6 – monitoring the active fires map, we noticed a fire near Hergott Lake (Sioux Lookout # 66) and called MNR to check on status of fire which was small and south of Cayuga A route
July 7 - Pete called from the community of Cat

Lake, reported lots of smoke, we updated Pete as to smoke being from fires north and west of him, and that his route was clear, asked him to hit SPOT locator regularly as well

July 8 - 10 - Daily MNR checks

July 11 - Call from Jess because she was smelling smoke, she reported the Dobie as being very low, Jess briefed about SL66 (nearest fire to her as per MNR labeling system) and we told her to proceed as fire was south of route, not easily seen by MNR planes, and not growing, she was to proceed to Dobie Lake and check in with camp once there



Yonder, the fires are burning!

July 12 - Camp checked in with MNR in morning, they reported conditions were very dry but planes were grounded due to cloud cover, camp asked North Star Air & MNR to fly over fire so as to provide camp with a visual update, Jess was asked to call camp before leaving Dobie Lake to get an update from flyovers, MNR said conditions were extreme, fires burned power lines west and cut power to several communities, MNR resources were stretched, and more fires

popping up as a result of lightning and dry conditions, recommended Cayuga A paddle back to Slate Falls (MNR fire base there, road access, but no power), camp called North Star Air to fly over, they said closest fire was 40 miles south of Cayuga A, we called Bob Thomas and he confirmed MNR recommendation to not proceed, we discussed relocation to Slate Falls, and also looked into Pickle Lake. We chose Pickle Lake (MNR crews there as well, though no power, closer to option to continue route, and on a paved road). We called North Star Air and arranged relocation of section. Jess called and we confirmed plans to fly the section from Dobie to Pickle Lake the next morning



Relocation Airlift 101

July 13 - Cayuga A section and gear flown in three trips by North Star Air in Turbo Twin Otter to Pickle Lake Airport, North Star Air land-transported section and gear to campsite (owned by them on the Kawinogans River - 1 day paddle from there to Badesdawa Lake), arranged for a propane stove (Pickle Lake Township has a fire ban), Jess checked in at night that all went well and section feels safe and secure. Pete hit SPOT OK message showing him on Otokwin Lake and heading for Badesdawa on schedule. We contacted MNR to identify both sections' locations for purposes of their monitoring of our itineraries

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Heading for Badesdawa

July 14 - Cayuga A planning to spend today helping North Star Air clean and organize their camping gear, will check in this afternoon – preparing to progress to Badesdawa to resume the scheduled second half of the 2011 trip itinerary.

While all of this can seem or sound unsettling, the sections are in a good place right now, and all indications we have are suggesting that they are postured for a full and complete resumption of their planned trips in the next few days – we have no knowledge of fires on their intended routes between Badesdawa and James Bay. Please know that we will continue our close communication with the MNR, our friend Bob Thomas, and the local monitoring agents who can, in combination, provide us with the most accurate and dependable information needed to make responsible decisions going forward.

Sarah Flotten, our Long-Trip Coordinator, and I are the best people to answer any questions you might have, and I invite you to be in touch with us to address any concerns you might have. Respectfully, Dick Lewis”

Phase Three 2011 – Alterations in the Eastward March to James Bay

“Dear Cayuga A and Wabun A Families,

I am writing to bring you up to date on our latest (and we hope final) change of plans, made to ensure maximum safety of our long-trip sections in response to forest fire occurrences reported or feared in their territories of travel.

When I last wrote on July 14, I reported that Cayuga A had just been flown out of Dobie Lake to Pickle Lake and was preparing to head on to Badesdawa where they would resume their initial itinerary, albeit with a modest time modification. Since then:

On July 15, Cayuga A was trucked to Badesdawa to save an extra day of paddling, and in hopes of being sure to intercept Pete Gwyn and Wabun A to exchange information. Cayuga A arrived at Badesdawa that morning to begin preparing for a July 16 resumption of route. They were to be on the lookout for Wabun A, who were scheduled to be a day or two shy of Badesdawa at that time. Throughout the day of the 15th, we here at base camp were in touch with the Fire Base at Sioux Lookout to monitor any late-breaking news on course-changing or new fires in the general area. That afternoon it began to look like we would need to alter, yet again, our intended routes for both sections. We spoke with the folks at the air base in Pickle Lake as well as the Sioux Lookout Base - bottom line, a chopper flew into Badesdawa that evening and told the Cayuga A section not to advance until we had a clearer picture of the fire situation ahead of them.

July 16 - Wabun A arrived at Badesdawa - nice to be on schedule - and the two sections sat tight awaiting the best up-to-date reports on the conditions they might encounter, were they to continue on to Lansdowne House and Attawapiskat. A massive information swap that afternoon and early evening resulted in our moving both sections back to Pickle Lake from Badesdawa, and making arrangements to move them both completely out of Northwestern Ontario. Both sections then camped out at the North Star Air Campground and awaited the arrival of our favorite Tisdale Transportation driver, Norm, who was dispatched to begin a 1,000 mile trek to pick them up the next day and move the sections to the now familiar KOA Campground in Thunder Bay.

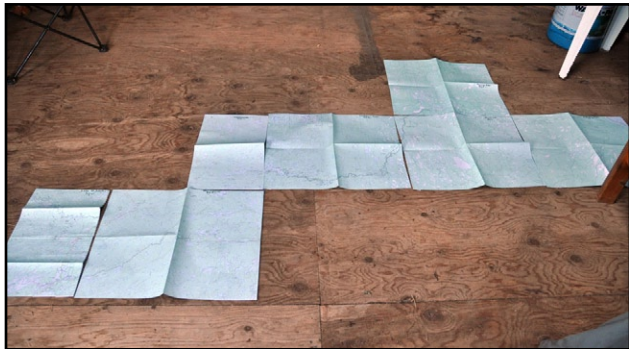


Heading for the Groundhog

July 17 - Tisdale Transportation picked up both sections and all their gear and moved them from Pickle Lake to the KOA in Thunder Bay in preparation for their move eastward.

July 18 - The sections traveled from Thunder Bay to the intersection of route 101 and the Groundhog River. There, they were met

by Julie and Ann Hinchman who were delivering maps and logistics for new routes and all of the resupply that was ordered and was intended to be picked up at their original resupply on July 23. The sections camped out there last night and resumed their travels to The Bay this morning



Get out the maps - here we go



New destination reached

The Groundhog River is located in north-eastern Ontario. Both sections will travel separately along the same route on the Groundhog, then on to the Matamagami and Moose Rivers, and will complete their trips in Moosonee where they will board the Polar Bear Express the morning of August 5th, travel by train to Cochrane, be picked up by Tisdale and Wabun, and travel by road south to Temagami, arriving in the wee small

hours of August 6.

What is not apparent in all of this is the behind-the-scenes work of the many who have spent days researching, reorganizing, and reorienting itineraries, revising the travel logistics out of James Bay at the end of the trip, etc. To all of these folks, I can't extend a hearty enough thank you – it has been a hugely successful effort - - truly an exercise of making lemonade out of lemons.

The spirit of the two A groups as seen by Julie and Ann last night was magnificent – they saw the sections as equally pleased to get out of the bus and be out of the smoke, and excited to start a new adventure.

I am attaching a photo, below, taken by Julie last night – truly, as you can see, these kids are in the very highest spirits!

Again, please visit the combination of Blog, Facebook, and Website for additional photos and updates. Respectfully, Dick”



The drop-off for the Groundhog

Phase Four – Further and Final Fine Tunings – No Water Left for Canoeing!!

Well, here we are. The sections were on the Groundhog – a mid-stream report on word

from Pete Gwyn as reported to Long-Trip parents on July 28:

“Just heard from Pete Gwyn via sat phone. The section is on schedule and loving where they are. They have been catching loads of fish, though, as Pete said, ‘really not more than 2 or 3 each day.’ They have seen over two dozen moose - bulls, cows, and calves - have enjoyed beautiful weather, high water, great rapids, a sighting of a ‘slinking lynx’ who posed for them in silhouette while climbing a shore log, have encountered the breaching sturgeon, some over 5 feet long (a phenomenon unique to the river), and, overall, have loved the Groundhog River.

We’ll keep you posted as we hear more Cheers, of the Wabun variety, of course, Dick”



Fruits of the Groundhog

We at base camp were at that point organizing for them and their loads to be transported around the Smokey Fall Dam on the Groundhog via a 20 KM dirt road established to allow canoe travel such as ours (that went without a hitch), and set them up for their final push to Moose Factory Island on James Bay.

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Sights along the way



Navigating around Smokey Fall Dam

Then, both sections ran out of water – literally. Another flurry of phone calls and travel revisions made for a final alteration. At the beginning of the summer, the sections were scheduled to fly two chartered flights out of At-tawapiskat to Timmins. The most recent revision had them planning to take the Polar Bear train from Moosonee to Cochrane. Instead, for lack of their ability to reach Moose Factory/Moosonee,

we contacted the Ontario Northland Railway and arranged for the sections to halt their march at an abandoned rail stop called Tommyville. There, the train would make an unscheduled stop to pick them up, equipped with an extra empty box car for their canoes, wannigans, packs, etc.

They arrived safe and sound, and truth be told, absolutely delighted with the route they had pioneered down the Groundhog for Wabun – a route I am sure will figure importantly into our repertoire of possible routes to James Bay given their glowing reports.



Loading the trains...



Help us ONR!

Wabun's Mattawa Roots

Written by Bob Thomas



A fur trade canoe on the Mattawa River, Ontario, pictured by Frances Hopkins

For thousands of years prior to the arrival of Europeans in eastern Canada, First Nations peoples freely travelled the trails and waterways of a land rich in natural resources. They plied these routes to reach traditional hunting and fishing grounds, to visit and to trade.

One of these major travel routes is what we know today as the Ottawa River, flowing southerly through the Ottawa Valley, dividing Ontario and Quebec, and flowing into the St. Lawrence River and on to the Atlantic Ocean. Midway down the Ottawa Valley, another river, the Mattawa, water gateway to the west joins the Ottawa in its migration to the sea. It is here that one chapter of the history of Camp Wabun gets its start – Wabun and the Mattawa guides.

Keeping in mind that Camp Wabun was started in 1933, and in order to get a complete picture of the Wabun/Mattawa relationship, we journey back to 17th century Mattawa. Samuel de Champlain, French explorer and the 'Father of New France', canoed from Montreal to Mattawa in 1615 on his way west through Lake Nipissing,

the French River and on to the Great Lakes. He would be followed in the years to come by many others, including the fur traders.

Mattawa, an Algonquin term for 'meeting of the rivers', was a junction, a natural meeting place and a jumping off point. From here one journeyed west to the Great Lakes, north to James Bay or south to Montreal. The Algonquins were the largest group of indigenous peoples in this area but there were also Hurons and Iroquois from the southwest and south, Cree from the north and Ojibway from the west.

From the early French who followed Champlain, there also came Scots, Irish and English, some with the flourishing Hudson Bay Company. The growth and development of the community in the mid-19th century became dependent on natural resources and attracted men who could earn a living in the logging industry, while supplementing their livelihood through trapping, hunting and fishing. Hunting and fishing would develop into industries as well, with the men acting as paid guides for the well-to-do sportsman from the south.

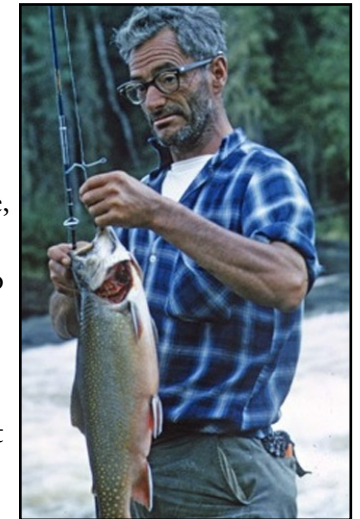
It was in 1902 that the relationship between Wabun and Mattawa would get started. But just as Wabun grew from Keewaydin, so would the Wabun/Mattawa connection. Gregg Clarke journeyed from the eastern U.S. to Mattawa that year in search of a site to start a new canoeing camp. Mattawa was accessible by river, train, and by road.

Beyond that was wilderness and Clarke would require guides, men who not only knew their way around but who could as act as cooks,

porters and interpreters. He hired three such men – Frank LeClaire, Peter Brown and Joe Levigne.

LeClaire, by example personified the Mattawa guide. He was a Metis of mixed French and First Nation ancestry, he spoke English, French, joul (a colloquial Quebec French), Ojibway and Algonquin. The LeClair name would be solidified in the guiding union between Mattawa and Lake Temagami. Other well known guiding names at Keewaydin

and Wabun, associated with this family include sons-in-law Joe Fleurie Sr., Alex Jocko, Gordon Dufoe, George 'Shiner' Ferguson, and Ken Jocko (son of Alex). Henry 'Babe' Fleurie and Joe Fleurie Jr. were grandsons, and Albert 'Nishe' Belanger was the son of Frank's wife's cousin.



Nishe Belanger with fish

Peter Brown's daughter Marjorie would marry a Woodman and they would start another Temagami canoe tripping business, Camp Cayuga for young ladies.

In 1902 Clarke would find Lake Temagami. Led by LeClaire, Brown and Levigne, they took the train north from Mattawa along the Quebec side of the Ottawa River, disembarking at Lake Temiskaming. Here they boarded the steamer Meteor, which took them to Montreal River Landing back on the Ontario side. They

WABUN'S MATTAWA ROOTS

travelled the Matabichuan River using a series of portages and lakes until they reached Caribou Lake and the northeast arm of Lake Temagami. It was here that Clarke would start Camp Keewaydin. By 1915 all of the guides at Keewaydin would be hired through Mattawa, although not all of the guides came from Mattawa.

In 1933 Camp Wabun was started at Garden Island. Along with the directors and campers who left Keewaydin, there were also some guides. Joe Tennesco was Wabun's first head guide, a position he would hold annually until 1939. Other guides that first season were Ted Lefebvre, Joe



Dick Lewis, Jr, Mac McLellan (one of Wabun's founding directors), and Shorty Montroy at Wabun's 50th Year Celebration in 1982

Meilleur, Murdock Meilleur and Tom Montroy, father of Wabun's longest serving guide, Isadore 'Shorty' Montroy.

Over the years the family names of the Wabun guides partially reflected their ancestry – English, French, Scottish, native Indian (as they were called then), and Metis (children of mixed native and European marriages). First and foremost they were outdoorsmen. They earned their

living from the land – hunting and fishing, logging and trapping in the winter, log drives on the Ottawa River in the spring, fighting forest fires in the summer, and guiding sports fishermen.

Their faces were weathered from their outdoors existence – tanned and lined from years of exposure to wind and sun. As a matter of necessity they honed the outdoor skills necessary to their existence, and occasionally, their survival. They were adept with the canoe, not only in plying the lakes, river and rapids but in maintaining and repairing the craft. Finely sharpened axes and knives were extensions of their arms. They fully adopted the Indian ways on portages, utilizing the wannigan and the tumpline to carry heavy loads over rugged terrain. They could bake bread (bannock) over an open fire without an oven and could boil water without a pot, using birch-bark containers. Their livelihoods depended on nature. Their lives often depended on being able to read nature – weather, wind and water – and respecting, not challenging those elements.

It was these characteristics that led Gregg Clarke to hire men whom he knew he could trust and depend on in the Northern Ontario bush, when he was seeking a location for his new camp in 1902. Attracting young and impressionable American boys to the wilderness experience by having them led by real 'Indians' was a plus for marketing the adventure, and for the men who were seeking employment as guides. The progression to having guides on staff was a natural one.

Since those early days the roles of the guide and other staff on section canoe trips was well defined. The head staffman had overall

responsibility for the section's campers but the guide was generally in charge while they were travelling, especially on the water. His inherent respect for nature told him when it okay to be paddling and when it was prudent to seek shelter, when it was safe to shoot whitewater and when it was wiser to portage. The guide was responsible for fires for cooking and warmth, which meant finding good firewood, after having found or selected a suitable campsite.

Whether on the water or on a campsite, it was expected that the guide would impart his traditional outdoor skills to the campers. They would learn how to use a canoe on different types of water, how to repair a canoe that had been damaged. They became adept at outdoor cooking, which meant first knowing how to find and split good firewood, and building a fire that would readily boil the water and bake the bannock, or cornbread.

It wasn't a rule. It was an understanding – campers never used the guide's axe. It was a tool that he depended on. But he showed campers how to care for and safely use the section axe. Generally, meals were cooked from what you carried from camp. A treat would be fresh fish, of which there was an abundance, if you knew where they were and how to catch them. The guide usually did, and the avid anglers in the section were quick to pick up those skills as well.

Another somewhat unique aspect to the typical guide was his sense of humour. Their humour, reflective of Native roots, was non-hurtful, non-racial. It almost had a child-like innocence. They often wore a smirk as if a joke was pend-

WABUN'S MATTAWA ROOTS

ing, and often it was, often at their own expense. They made light of everyday life. By example, "I didn't see my pay cheque for three days. My boss hid it under my work boots." They played with words: "Sure hope that rain keeps up." Why,



Preparing Mattawa guide's cuisine

you ask? "So, it won't come down," he replies. In telling tales, particularly to the gullible novice camper, they knew they had them hanging on every word, hook, line and sinker, and wouldn't hesitate to haul them in. While one may strongly suspect that the guide was wildly exaggerating, the seriousness of his face left some doubt as to whether you should question his claim, lest he be offended. But the veracity of his tale would soon be betrayed by a snickering laugh, since their stories were meant to amuse everyone, including themselves.

The number of guides at Wabun each summer varied, starting with five in 1933, 11 in 1945 and only two in 1948. In the late 1950s there began a drop in the number of Mattawa guides at the camp, which was sometimes a result of a lower number of campers that summer.

The year 1958 was a notable year for guides at Wabun. It was the last summer for



Harvest of the lakes

Shiner Ferguson and the first year back after a 12-year hiatus for Shorty Montroy. Shorty would be named head guide in 1964, a position he held until he retired from Wabun and guiding in 1971. His Keewaydin counterpart, Nishe Belanger retired from guiding the following year. Both Shorty and Nishe spent their last seasons at their respective camps doing maintenance work, carpentry and various other tasks associated with daily in-camp operations.

The lengthy association with Mattawa guides on Lake Temagami was all but ended in 1970. At Keewaydin, Rheal Delage guided one trip. At Wabun, John 'Bully' Bellaire became the



Wabun guides, Cyril McIsaac & Joe Baptiste

last of the Mattawa trip guides. Jack McIsaac, who guided at Wabun in the 1930s before going to Keewaydin, and whose son Cyril would become a Wabun guide in 1956 and from 1964-66, was the last connection to the Mattawa guides when he retired from Keewaydin in 1978. Jack had spent his latter years repairing and rebuilding canoes at the camp.

Just as hiring guides on staff for a number of reasons many years before was a natural thing to do, the gradual phasing out of the Wabun/Mattawa guide connection was a natural thing too. Young Mattawa men were no longer following their fathers' footsteps. Skills associated with canoeing and the wilderness experience weren't being passed on. The seasonal employment lifestyle of their fathers held less and less appeal. They were pursuing education and a full-time job or a career. On the flip side of the coin, campers who relished their Wabun summers returned year after year, progressing through older sections and gaining knowledge through experience, experience that would lead to a staff position as an assistant and eventually, section leader, or section guide.

Wabun, and the few camps like it, carry on the basic tripping styles of the Native peoples who gave us the canoe, the paddle and tumpline, and an appreciation of the wilderness experience.

The involvement of the Mattawa guides with Wabun is part of the camp's history. The traditional knowledge and skills that the Mattawa guides brought to Wabun and to generations of campers, especially in the early days, is part of Wabun's culture.

TONKA REFLECTS

For Me, It Started a Little Bit Before Wabun Itself

Written By The Rev. John B. Edmonds (Tonka)



The Reverend today

By the time I was ten I knew how to swim. Actually, I guess I was swimming well before that. My family retreated every summer to my father's family farm, called 'Northlands' just outside Boonville, which is north of Utica, New York. My grandfather had created a small pond on 'Crystal Creek'. We kids got used to the water. I have never known a time when I was afraid of water.

My folks also acquired a ten-foot aluminum canoe. It got overturned more than it got paddled. I learned that a canoe is a friendly beast. Also, my father had tripped with my grandfather

in Quebec. Dad had stories about trips and fishing and guides. He could tell I was listening.

Then it was time for sterner stuff, and I got sent off to camp. But this was Keewaydin. And it was Keewaydin in Vermont. One of my life-long secrets: I started at Keewaydin.

That summer was OK. But I was not an in-camp kind of person even then. Didn't like the activities. Didn't like the routine. I wasn't that kind of a kid. I couldn't begin to deal with the Boy Scouts. So, my Dad, who was a teacher, asked around. He had a friend -- Richard Lewis (1st of 3). Soon I was on my way to Wabun.



Founding Directors, Dick Lewis, Sr. and Bill "Big Russ" Russell

We'd board a train at the North Station in Boston. This was the 'Boston and Maine' (Busted and Maimed) Railroad. All the engines in those days -- early 50's -- were coal burners. We'd wheeze through Lowell to White River Junction -- where we'd stall for a long time. Then, off to Montreal -- where there was another delay. Then on to another (very big) train and off to North

Bay -- all through the night. In the morning we'd be in North Bay. Then we'd walk across gravel and weed fields from the Canadian National (or was it Pacific?) Station to the Ontario Northland Station. I remember those brisk mornings just after dawn -- the Boston crowd walking in a line to the little Station, our duffels slung over our shoulders.



Getting there was half the fun.

The Ontario Northland train was smaller than the grand trans-Canada train we had taken from Montreal. It wheezed along at a whopping 20 mph -- or so it seemed. Sometimes the tracks appeared to be in a tunnel of sorts -- with the bush to each side and branches towering overhead. The last car on the train had an open platform. Half a dozen of us would pile on to the platform and watch the tracks receding as the train worked its way (slowly) north.



Heading north with the ONR



Temagami Train Station

Finally we would stop at Temagami. Those were the days of the Minniwassi Hotel –which is where guides could sometimes be found. Also the Busy Bee Restaurant was there. (It's there still.) In the jukebox was a disk of Enrico Caruso singing his aria from 'Pagliacci' and another from "L'Elisir d'Amore". In Temagami (or 'T Station') the 'Aubrey Cosens' awaited us. Bob Thomas tells me: "Aubrey Cosens -- the man -- was a Victoria Cross winner



Temagami Station

from Latchford, Ontario. The Victoria Cross is the highest medal awarded to military personnel in the British Commonwealth. The first Victoria Crosses were awarded following the Crimean War and the metal was struck from melted down Russian cannons that were captured during that conflict."

Aubrey Cosens -- the BOAT -- was old when it got to Temagami. I think it used to be used somewhere on Lake Huron -- maybe around Parry Sound. Perhaps, once upon a time, it ran on coal. While at Temagami it had two diesel en-



Heading for Wabun on the Aubrey

gines. (Campers notice things like that....) When it was first used on Temagami it kicked up such a wake, the engineers had to slow it down -- a lot. Even then, the wake from 'The Aubrey' was nothing to fool around with.



Campers arriving at Wabun's dock

The Aubrey Cosens was guided by the sure hand of Captain Guppy, who was ageless. Below -- in the hold -- there was a cafeteria of sorts. I must believe that the boat made half its money from the ravenous Wabun Campers.



Ice cream line at the porthole

TONKA REFLECTS

The boat made a daily run from Temagami, past Wabun, and up The Lake to Keewaydin -- maybe to Sandy Inlet and Camp Wanapatei, and then returned to Temagami. When it eased up to the Wabun dock we all would be ready to pounce on a certain porthole that looked right into the cafeteria. Time was short. You had to be organized to achieve results. We'd have the money ready and would shout our orders through the port hole into the kitchen. Then we'd hand over the money. Then a brick of ice cream would come out -- a brick just small enough to fit through the port hole. Ordinarily we'd split it two or three ways. That was one of the major high points of in-camp life.



The inimitable style of Dick Lewis, Jr.

There were the baseball games -- and always at least one with Bear Island. I gather that tradition continues. At mid-season we had cooking contests, camping contests, a canoe race around The Island. And we did skits, though I can't remember a single one.

And there were the square dances.... At the square dances we had a fiddler and piano

player from Bear Island. Alas, I forget their names. Big Russ would play the drums. Whitey Canon banged a thing he called the hoodle-toodle. The hoodle-toodle was a contraption indescribable, rarely musical, but occasionally rhythmical.

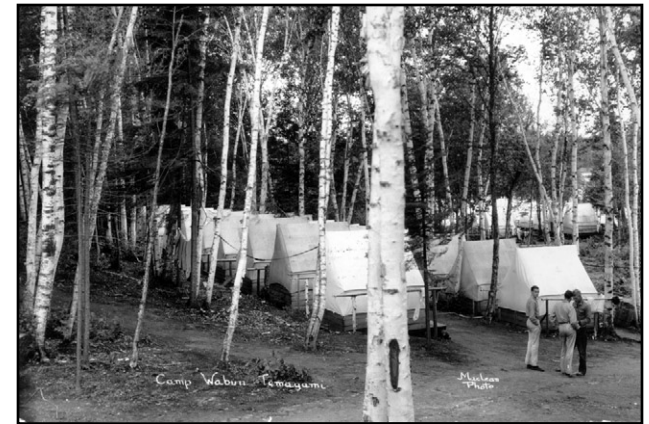


Russ on drums, and Whitey Canon, on "hoodle-toodle" accompanied by Wabun camper on piano and Bear Island musicians

I think it was Cayuga Camp, then, that filled out the other half of the dances with grace and beauty. Wabun in those days was all boys, and we were animals. There was no electricity -- of any kind -- on Garden Island. No phone either. The nights went black when the Coleman Lanterns quit. Hopefully the girls were on their way back to their island well before that happened. Then all was quiet.

The cabins were all built on what had been tent platforms. There were two of us to each cabin. Big Russ had a cabin for himself on the front row when there were any of us in camp.

The trips were much the same as they are today -- though Section A could not go nearly



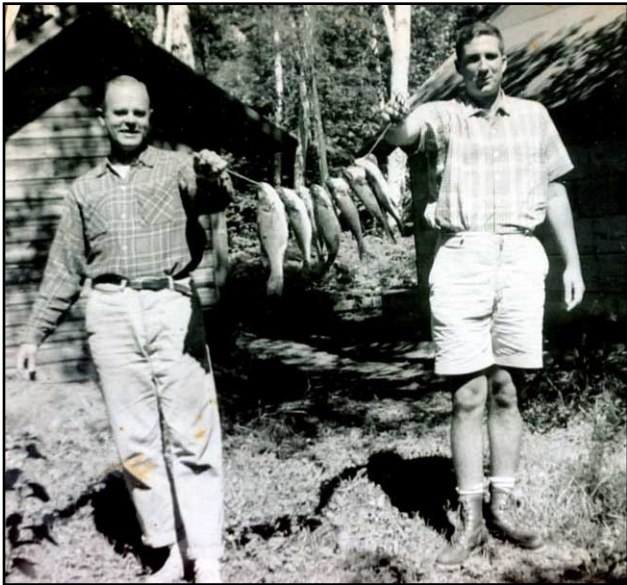
Original tent platforms



42nd Street, "modern" style

as far afield then as they can now. We had Native Guides in those days, so the configuration of expertise was different. That is, with a Guide you knew you probably were safe. But many of the skills we utilize today and really take for granted were not called from us in quite the same way then. By and large we are better trippers now than we were then. We have to be. And I think that is a good thing.

The first guide I tripped with was Big Mac -- Lloyd McCullough. That was in a Cree B section staffed by Ed Thode.



Ed Thode with a prize catch

The Assistant was Bob Lentz. I remember those guys as though we had come back from the last trip yesterday. I think that was back in about 1955 or 56, when I was about 13 or 14 years old.

In the beginning of the summer I was in the bow of the canoe. At some point, though, I started carrying the canoe. It was a beast -- a double ribbed 16 footer. I think I got it half way up the Helen's Falls portage. Mac carried it the last bit. That was the last time someone else carried my canoe -- except on the bowman's portage.

I was enchanted by the Guides (please refer to the Bob Thomas article in this Newsletter for the history of the Mattawa Guides at Wabun). I was smart enough to realize that I would never even approximate some of their skills -- particularly their skills with an axe. My Dad had prepared me for them, I now realize, in that

he had talked about the Guides he and his father had known in their canoe trips in Quebec years earlier. The second year that I tripped at Wabun I tripped with Dick Butler. I think it was Dick that got me going on baking beans. I bake them still -- though not in the sand or by the campfire.

I was a camper at Wabun only two years -- that first year with Ed and then the next year. I loved the tripping. And I liked the atmosphere of the place. It was laid back, relaxed. And that was really good for my spirit. At least I thought so. After I had been a Wabun for a month I knew I was 'home'.

THE STOKY YEARS

Maybe it was a little too laid back, however. The camp was falling on rough times in the mid to late fifties; these things happen in camps and schools. After the two years that I had tripped as a Camper in 'Cree B' I did odd jobs back in Massachusetts where we lived then. When I turned 17, my Dad -- who knew I had really liked Wabun -- suggested I try for a job there. They had a new Director. He was from Milton -- which couldn't be too bad. My brother had gone to Milton. I sat down and wrote Mr. Stokinger a letter. I think I had to go down to Milton for an interview before I actually got the job. Whether it was then, or later, Stoky had a way of greeting me. It always was around lunch-time. And there always was a ham sandwich lurking in the fridge. Stoky had a way with kids. No doubt about it. He was like a second father to me -- and to a thousand others.



Herbert G. and Esther Stokinger

I was signed up as an Assistant and worked my first year (I think in 1959) in the Chippies Section with Dick Cardin. Stoky had brought several people in from his previous incarnation at Kieve. Dick was one of those people. To give you an idea of how hurting we were then as a camp, I was placed in front of the section as 'guide'. We had no maps. I got confused (and lost) in Kokoko Lake. On that most memorable occasion dear, dear Billy Thode (son of Ed) who was blessed with mouth, announced: 'There goes Tonka -- the Great Indian Guide.' I never shook the name. And knew better than argue with Billy. It could have been a lot worse.

There were some friendly rivalries then. Some of them came with the Camp Kieve staff. Doug Crowe and Dick Cardin had a continuous thing going -- rocks in the wannigans, midnight disturbances, and all the rest. Very sadly, Doug died later in Vietnam.

Stoky certainly tried valiantly to bring a certain amount of spit and polish to Wabun. We

TONKA REFLECTS

were coached on the combing of hair and the brushing of teeth. Most of us endured -- more or less -- the civility. The trick, we learned, was to get in good with the locals on Garden Island. That included Ida Moore, the cook, and Shorty Montroy, Head-Guide-Omniscient-Presence-and-everything-else. It didn't hurt, either, that Rusty Lambert was an expert at picking locks. The Kitchen would simply yield itself, uncomplaining, to the ravenous beasts at 1 AM. Ida was smart; she'd put things where we could get at them -- without knocking over barrels and dishes in the middle of the night.

TRIPS

Soon, maybe the next year, I was an Assistant in a Cree Section. Dick Neunherz was Head Staff. One of the other Assistants was Peter Woodward. Peter HAD done a Long Trip or two. I think he shot The Albany and took the Thunder Bay circuits (originating out of Nakina) with Andy Smythe. There were others around, including Jon Berger. I have been able over all these years to keep up -- more or less -- with Jon and Andy. Peter died of cancer a few years after his marriage to Susan. In the late winter or early spring of 1970 she and I left his ashes at High Falls on The Dumoine -- Peter's favorite place on this earth.

I think that Peter's favorite route in the Temagami area was anything to do with The Sturgeon River, Wolf and/or Chiniguchi Lakes. Through Peter I got to know Pete Peloquin who lived and ran a lodge on Chiniguchi. Pete Wood-

ward brought his folks to that lodge for a week or so of rest and recreation. I understood that they really enjoyed themselves. I was reminded of Pete Peloquin this last spring (of 2006) when there was the tragic drowning of his grand-daughter, Zanna, on The Harricanaw River (endnote #1).

Peter and I tripped together for years: first with Dick Neunherz in a Cree Section. Then we co-staffed a Cree Section. Then, at least one Section B. In time Peter moved on to academic work, and I ended up staffing Section B for a few more years. On three of those years I tripped, again, with Native Guides. I tripped with Cyril McIsaacs, Joe Baptiste, and Bob Thomas.



Cyril McIsaac and Joe Baptiste

I was talking several weeks ago with someone here in Moose Factory whose in-laws are related to Joe. Some of that family was located around Hunter's Point (on the Dumoine route.) But I haven't kept up with Joe or Cyril. Bob and I swap letters once or twice a year. Bob has kept an eye on Wabun's Bay Trip Sections when they have been in Ontario, as he worked (before retirement) for the Ministry of Natural Resources



Bob Thomas

out of Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. I heard about Wabun's problems with lightning one summer from Bob before I heard that news from anywhere else (endnote #2).

I learned a lot from Joe. I just wish I had been around him when I was younger and that I had been able to observe him for years and years instead of just a few weeks. I was just beginning to know enough to know that there was a whole world there that I could never have imagined.

The skills I acquired from Joe that summer had to do -- for the most part -- with handling a canoe. I learned something of what you can do when standing in the canoe. For one thing, I could see more. That really helped in a rock dodging exercise, which is what The Dumoine is. Sometimes Joe would explain to me what he looking at and what he was learning as he read the water. He could do a lot of that from the canoe. When things were rough, however, he'd scout from shore. The trip down The Dumoine with Joe was rough on canoes. We left one of them in one of the rapids. But I learned a lot!



Modeling standing shoot in leading a section down a rapid

I think it was during the season I tripped with Joe -- maybe it was when I tripped with Cyril -- that we did The Wanapatei River as part of The Sturgeon circuit. On the Section B trips I tried to take a different route -- or a different variant of a route -- each year. On The Dumoine trip, we took a longer route each year. That soon brought us into Grand Lake Victoria -- and then south over any one of a number of routes. Besides making the Dumoine trip more interesting, we also were laying the ground work for an approach to The Coulange -- which I did with Peter, after the regular season, along with Brian McColl and John MacNaughton. Also, had we wanted to, we could have worked our way north from Grand Lake Victoria to the routes to The Bay.

At the end of the 1960's there were a few years I didn't trip, as my studies and church work dominated my calendar. It was during this time that the tragedy involving Jon Williams occurred on The Albany River. I think it was the summer after that when I sprung myself loose from parish

work long enough to bounce down The Dumoine yet another time -- this time with Dick Lewis (3 of 3) and Bob Lentz. (Remember Bob Lentz?) I think there were two sections of us -- just a lot of people. Jon Lichtman, also, was with us. This year (1969), again there were more rocks than water in The Dumoine. Some of the canoes got really beaten up. But I learned something from each catastrophe. By the time I was tripping to The Bay the canoes came back in much better shape. They had to. On The Dumoine you learn. On The Bay Trips, you avoid risk.

In 1970, I was lucky enough to snag a teaching job, so I tripped the next four summers with Wabun. I ran out of summer vacations, finally, after the 1974 season. In 1970, Ted Nye and I staffed Section B. Ted had been with me earlier -- I think when I tripped with Bob Thomas (again, down The Dumoine.) This trip in 1970 was my last run down The Dumoine. Such worthies as George (Jumping George) Chase, John (Maloney) Monroe, John (Klikkenberkker) Kilbridge, John (and why did John never get a nickname?) Cross, Charlie (Boom-Boom) Baylies were in that crowd. As long as they could eat, they moved like hell. We discovered the logging camp at Joncas Lake; and we, in turn, were discovered by the Quebec Lands & Forests authorities. Most notably we were discovered to have been without any of the proper papers, certificates, or credentials. I really didn't want to have to call Stoky (collect) from a provincial jail. Fortunately we had an Official Ontario Highway map. I managed to explain in English to the authorities who spoke only French that we were convinced we

were in western Ontario. All went well -- almost -- until George (my otherwise trustworthy bowman) tried to explain to me that now my brains were really cooked. Then someone inadvertently dropped a wannigan on his head, and the subject changed.

BAY TRIPS

In 1971 I began staffing Section A and paddling to The Bay. The first run was down The Albany, starting from Savant Lake. In those days we used the train on the northern track in western Ontario to access the route. We'd prevail upon the Conductor (with a bottle of Rye) to stop the train out in the middle of nowhere. The crew knew exactly what we wanted and where we were headed. They would stop the train with the door of the baggage car precisely at Chivelston Creek, which was all of ten feet wide at this point. Bowmen and freight would get off here. Sternmen would continue on the train to Savant Lake. There the canoes awaited us in a box car that had been sent out ahead of us. We'd portage the canoes back to the creek and then set off to make camp.

This particular year there was a major tragedy. Matt Ridgway died in a freak accident with a moving freight train. Matt was the Guide with Heb Evans in the Keewaydin Section that travelled on the same train with us out to Savant Lake. In the summer of 1971, this summer, they were headed for The Attawapiskat River. This very sad story is well presented in Brian Back's *Keewaydin Way* (endnote #3). And, even though

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any one of us would have done anything to have avoided the mishap, some good things did come of the matter. The two sections, for a moment, merged into one. The guys cared for each other -- learned a lot about being a neighbor. Those in our Wabun Section each had a perspective on life at the end of the trip that they had not had before. As Stoky noted later, they had really grown. Finally, Heb was inordinately kind to me ever thereafter by freely sharing his trip information. That made it possible for us to run The Attawapiskat and Eastmain Rivers in 1972, 73, & 74.



PBV for the trip home

I think this was the last year Wabun actually finished the trip at Fort Albany. It was the first Bay Trip that Wabun sent out without a Native Guide. Also, we were the last group to fly out of Albany on a PBV -- Canso -- WWII surplus amphibious plane. The planes were made of wood and canvas (Duck Tape & Ambroid), two gas guzzling engines, and a lot of hydraulics. The hydraulic hoses had lots of valves on them -- valves that controlled critical kinds of things.

And they leaked -- a lot. Being thrifty, the airline placed coffee cans under each of the valves. The cans were suspended on bailing wire. They caught -- or were supposed to catch -- the leaking/squirting oil -- much as the pail catches the milk from the cow. In addition to all that adventure we had a kennel of very young, vigorous, and frequently sick puppies. Finally, Ted had wisely packed two or three days of fire wood in the otherwise empty wannigans. Ted, also wisely, made a point of assisting the airline staff in the weighing of those wannigans before we all boarded. We cleared the trees by a foot and a half at take-off, and the crew may have wondered how they ever missed a thousand pounds in the weighing.

I remember particularly some of the guys on the trip. Ted Nye, again, was a real help. Julian Greeley, John Cross (again), John Kilbridge (again), Billy Green, Brad Hastings -- and there were others -- all fun to be with. I was really lucky to have Clay Spalding in my bow.

The Albany is a wonderful trip -- particularly the upper Albany. AND there are interesting rapids on below, including Tom Flett Falls which is a world unto itself. After laboriously and meticulously studying the rapids for days and hours, examining every ripple, facet, and angle, we shot it with excellent precision -- only to remember that we had then shot the Bowman's Portage. The only solution I could think of was for us to carry everything back up to the top of the Portage -- which I had finally managed to locate -- and then take pictures of the Bowmen carrying the blessed canoes. Julian thought about this and thought



Cast of Bay Trip characters

there must be a better way. I can't remember what that turned out to be. There were some cold days that summer. John Cross reminded me that we had snow on July 19 -- his Dad's Birthday. We got snowed on again at Moosonee -- on our trip south to Temagami.

The last one or two hundred miles of The Albany are flat water, and people are not usually fond of that kind of tripping. Now that I've come to know The Cree a little better and to love their world even more, I could return to those mud flats and enjoy them. And now I might even find good places to camp. At the very end there are some rapids that are drowned out by higher water. In low water, however, they can be dangerous -- or so I'm told. We had no trouble. More recently, however, a year or so ago, one or two folks from Kashechewan drowned at the foot of those rapids.

In 1972 Section A ran The Attawapiskat.

It was Wabun's first run down The Attawapiskat, thanks to Heb Evans, Andy Smythe, and Jon Berger who supplied me with information and advice. Again, Ted and I staffed. Such worthies as Tom Woodman, Bill Porter, George Chase (again in the bow and keeping me from all that is dangerous) kept us moving -- or laughing -- or both. Steve Kilbridge kept us all sane -- or sort of... This was my first of two runs down The Attawapiskat. The weather was persistently gray, often wet, and always really cold. We ate to keep warm. And fortunately we didn't run out of food. There's a slide of the Section standing in the middle of the (gray) day next to a rapids. Each guy is wearing everything he owns. It was a trip of discovery for each us. Somewhere in all

of that George tells me he mastered the fine art of log-rolling, but I can't remember where that happened. Tom and Bill ate geese; I can't remember if they bothered to cook them or not. And there were lots of delightful rapids -- and stunningly beautiful scenery.

1973 was the Eastmain trip. A lot of the trip is written up in my Eastmain Journal -- available on my web site. Also, Ted's write-up of the Log is there (endnote #4). There are people from that trip I still keep up with: Tom Stiverson who continues to staff at Wabun! Eric Essig (my ever faithful bowman!) Bruce Egdahl (who is still trying to get those cinnamon rolls just right!) and John Monroe. And, of course, Ted. This was the last year that Ted and I tripped together.



William Green's shot of Conglomerate Gorge from the James Bay Highway Bridge

The preparation for this trip was long and arduous. Good maps of the region did not yet exist. We used air photos for most of the route(s).

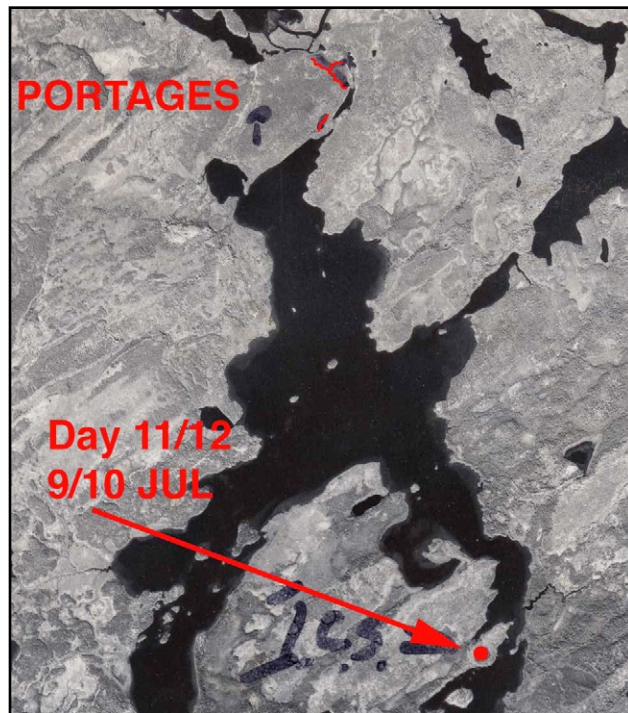
That is, we had hoped to take one particular route in the cross-over between The Rupert and The Eastmain. However, we got slowed down at the beginning of the trip and decided to take a slightly shorter route on the cross-over -- giving us an extra day or so for margin. As it turned out, we didn't need that extra time. The traveling conditions at the end of the trip were near perfect, but of course we wouldn't have known that at the beginning. We traveled with the full complement of food right from the beginning. There was no possibility of any re-outfitting along the route of the trip that ran 40-45 days. We were very, very careful.

As I noted, we used air photos in place of maps at several places along the Eastmain route. Also, I relied on a compass. Techniques on using both of those kinds of resources are



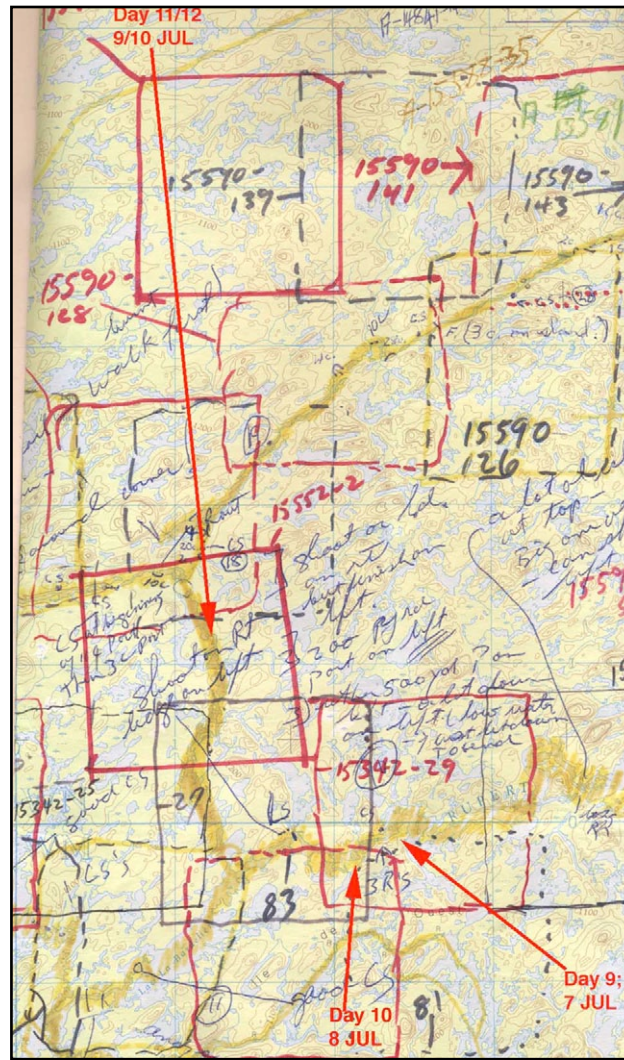
Log-rolling

TONKA REFLECTS



Air photo

more rarely used now. Satellite/GPS technology often is used today. Also, we didn't carry a phone or radio. Again, this was before those technologies had become very useful. I WAS in correspondence with Motorola which was making a 'portable' single side band transmitter/receiver -- of about 20 pounds. We would have been able to get permission to broadcast and receive on the frequencies used by the airline (Austin Airways) and The Hudson Bay Company. I think I may have been writing International Nickel as well -- to be able to get in on some of the channels their survey crews were using. But nothing came of it. I quit tripping after the next year. And soon satellite phones came on the market. Of course,



Marked Maps

all of that stuff works on batteries; and you have to understand very clearly what you are going to be doing when there are no batteries....

1974 was my last year. I ran out of summer vacations after this trip -- my second run down The Attawapiskat. On my website there are

lots of slides of the two Attawapiskat trips -- all jumbled together (endnote #5). You can tell the first year from the second pretty easily, though. If the sky is gray, it's 1972. If the sky is clear, it's 1974. This year Clay was the Assistant. We were in good hands. We had perfect weather for almost all the trip. I knew the route -- though I think I varied it a bit on the approach to The River. We still took the train from Moosonee to Temagami in those days. This year we managed to get our canoes out of Attawapiskat, and we had them with us when we got to the Temagami Station. We paddled the Northeast Arm that night, starting just after midnight. We got to the Chippies Campsite on Bear Island around dawn -- just in time to enjoy a cup of coffee and to visit. Their staff, of course, were largely old Section A Trippers.

That was my last paddle.

Since then I've created a website by which to share some of the memory -- and the information. My old maps, trip reports, slides, and books -- are all going to the Archives at Trent University in Peterborough, Ontario. Our documentation in the 60's and 70's of many of those routes -- particularly on the East Side of James Bay -- may turn out to be extremely valuable. There just weren't that many people making those trips -- or documenting them in trip reports and photographs. Those of us who ran The Eastmain understood very clearly how much of a privilege that was. Hopefully some of the memory will endure. And, one of these days, the water will flow freely once more.

NOTES...

1. *Moose Factory Journal*. "Death of A Paddler." <http://www.jedmonds.net/?p=268>.

2. Bob wrote me: You mentioned the unfortunate lightning event on the A trip. I really didn't have anything to do with that. While I was able to monitor what happened, it was MNR firefighting staff from Pickle Lake using a helicopter hired out for firefighting, and a private aircraft that were able to effect the rescue and transfer. The year

previous, I was able to assist the A trip. Most of Northern Ontario was under a Restricted Fire Zone, which meant no open fires and the A trip having to carry propane fuel and stoves for cooking. In my capacity as provincial information officer for Aviation and Forest Fire Management, I was made aware of plans to lift the RFZ several days in advance. I passed that information on to Jason Lewis on the eve of his A trip departure and they were able to drop the propane, grab their fire irons and more enjoy a key part of northern tripping.

3. *The Keewaydin Way* by Brian Back. Roy Waters Scholarship Fund, 2004. "Ridgway's Last Summer" by Douglas Keith, Pages 228-230. Or http://www.ottertooth.com/keewaydin/K_Misc/ridgway.htm.

4. Eastmain Journal: Ted's Eastmail Log. http://www.jedmonds.net/?page_id=508.

5. Attawapiskat Pictures. http://www.jedmonds.net/?page_id=525.

ANNUAL BEAR ISLAND BALLGAME

**79th Annual Softball Game With Bear Island:
a win, A Win, A WIN!!!
The Friendly Rivalry Lives On**

On June 27, 2011, the Bear Island and Wabun teams again squared off in their annual softball match – the 79th Annual. This year Wabun was blessed by a powerhouse crew. The defense was tight, highlighted by some shoestring catches in the outfield and a stellar 6-4-3 double play. The offense was off the charts, yielding a final score of Wabun – 8, Bear Island – 1.

In the interest of full disclosure, I must point out that: 1, Wabun had done some extra preparation of the field by clearing the brush into the woods along the outer limits of the outfield (making the retrieval on long-hit balls a bit more expeditious - it paid off on a couple of long-throw outs), and 2, by arranging at the beginning of the game to limit it to 5 innings so as to allow our opening campfire at the conclusion of the game. Bear Island knew of the latter, but the clearing of the brush remains a secret until this writing – I suspect Wabun should be on guard for 2012.



Answers to 'What and Where Is It?' on page 12: 1. canoe paint drying; 2. camper arrival on barge; 3. footwear samples; 4. groceries arrive at Wabun dock; 5. kitchen herb garden; 6. under the Absolutely No Diving platform; 7. ladder to the Absolutely No Diving platform; 8. another view of the Absolutely No Diving platform; 9. dock hinges; 10. flag pole stanchion; 11. beaver work on the beach; 12. more beaver work; 13. beaver tracks into the water; 14. Wabun's 911 number; 15. diving platform rule; 16. canoes in front of Cayuga Cabin; 17. tractor headlight.

2011 SUMMER LOGS

Wabun A

I arrived at camp in early June with a plan: Fix the fleet, finish planning the meals, and load the 12 wannigans and 6 food babies for an



Pete "Git 'er done" Gwyn

extended canoe trip in Northwest Ontario. This first part of the plan went without a hitch.

But the next part of the plan, on where we would start the trip and what direction we would take, began to get cloudy - or should we say smoky.

The bush is always changing; it always



Tumping up the rouge bateau



Smoke on the horizon

does. Fires burn over the land, riverbanks slump into the water and get carried away by the current, and windstorms wreak havoc with the North.

This summer happened to be an exceptionally dry one. The bush we were traveling through was a tinderbox just ready to explode with flames, although we did not know this at the time of doing trip planning.



Late-breaking news!

Due to smoke from a fire near our proposed drop off, our starting point was rerouted through Sioux Lookout, Ontario, where we entered the Root River. Upstream travel is always a

good way to begin a trip as the boys learn to work the currents to their favor and use the eddies to either speed them up or slow them down.

Up the Root we traveled to Lake St. Joseph and then on up the beautiful Cat River system. With its big lakes and small rapids we could either line or take short portages up. July 6th we were to travel towards Cat Lake, our farthest point west, before we were to swing into the sun and our eastbound travels. The smoke from the fire to the west really began to get thick. For the next 10 days as we descended the beautiful Otoskwin River, the smoke from the fires blackened the skies all around us. Yet we enjoyed the nice rapids, good fishing and each other's company as the bush got progressively drier around us. We were surprised to see the Cayuga section camped at the bridge across the Otoskwin River.



Unloading at the Groundhog

The bush was ablaze and our time in northwestern Ontario was over for the summer. The government had shut down the bush to all travelers. "No worries," I told the guys. "We will

paddle someplace” – the Groundhog River. With many thanks to all the in camp staff, a new river was a great option: with a brief 2000 km trip by bus we were dropped off by Norm on a small bridge over the Groundhog River.

The Groundhog River was awesome to say the least. Beautiful rapids and waterfalls as the river dropped off the Canadian Shield and more wildlife than I had seen in years. Our boys bought into the plan that if we are quiet in the morning, we’ll see animals. 12 moose, 5 wolves, 1 lynx – for the summer, 4 bears and 25 moose in total.



Whatcha lookin’ at?



Fresh fish abounded

The Groundhog flows into the Matagami River, and then the Kapuskasing River also joins in to create quite a flow. This river system is really cool – on the upper sections logs were driven so old logging camps are along the shore.



Remnants of long-ago logging

Just back in the bush in the tag alders with only 6 canoes in the group, the track down the system proved very easy with the muscles honed on the upstream travel to the west, and rapid skills refined on the tight upper Otokwin River. The Groundhog and Matagami were nothing but a joy ride with rapid after rapid after rapid for all to enjoy.

One rapid in particular was special for the boys – a rapid named Hamilton Rapids on our maps – a good scout revealed our safe line of descent so off we went, flying around curves and dropping between some big waves only to eddy out below onto a beautiful cobble beach full of driftwood to cook the evening meal and a comfortable campsite between the canopy of cedars. After the junction of the Matagami River we were trucked 18 km around a large-scale hydroelectric

development – a billion dollar payment that will take another 5 years to complete.



Approaching Smokey Falls Dam

Below the dams was a bit of a surprise to me. While the maps showed a wide line we ended up running small rapids and almost a constant swift for 3 days until we reached the junction with the Missinaibi River. River travel in the summer time – there’s nothing like it! Each river has its own feel to it yet in a way they are similar. Unfortunately, below the junction of the Missinaibi and the Matagami Rivers, the water basically evaporated off the wide limestone ledges.



Really, really low water!

It was time to end the summer’s journey – not at Attawapiskat, not at our next proposed destination, but at a spot called Tommyville. This enchanted spot, complete with old boxcars

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Camping out at Tommyville



Wabun A, taken by Kiwi Sheldon

and perched above a rapid in a white spruce and poplar stand, was a haven for not only us but the other two groups descending the river as well.

With the start of every summer you genuinely do not know the boys you are going to get to be with in the bush. This summer was no

exception. Usually the young guns from Wabun B are eager to get involved with a little longer trip. We had 6 boys – Max, Reece, Kiwi, Paul, Campbell, and Wyatt – return to join 3 returning campers from last year’s expedition to northern Quebec – Mike, Marc, and Jeff. Last but not least, Chris, from Wabun C in 2009 came back after a year off, to round out the group. I really cannot say enough about those young men, but let me begin by saying that I have never traveled in the bush with a group that was 1- kinder to each other and 2 - caring for each other’s needs and the section. Never.

Even with all the changes that took place during this summer’s travels, the community we worked hard at building early on in June was never strained but just got tighter as the summer progressed. Whether it was bushing campsites (and we bushed 26 sites) or cutting portage trails up the Root River at the start of the trip, these guys took care of each other. Each evening we would circle up before our dinner meal was eaten to check in. These brief but powerful moments grew more special to all of us as the trip progressed. By the end of the summer we were circling up before we pushed off from shore to begin the day’s travel on the lower rivers that flow to the Bay just so we could reinforce our sense of community and trust within that place for each other.

When the time comes, as it does every summer, to return to Garden Island, as a long-trip staff I ask myself, and others ask also, “How was it?” I would re-outfit tomorrow for another trip with these guys – anywhere, anyplace, anytime.

These fine and special young men have helped me to reinforce the foundation on which I try to build a Wabun section. Caring and good-heartedness is a great way to build a section.

When you have attained this level of group dynamics in a Wabun section, or any group, what you are doing or where you are going does not matter. It’s being with the group that is the key ingredient to success and fun.

Thanks for listening folks. I hope to see you all here next summer, and bring a friend! Meegwich.

(For additional information on the relocations due to fires, please see the article ‘Fires, Fires, Fires’ in this Newsletter.)



Back home, to much fanfare and warm greetings

Cayuga A

Ah, where to begin? The dusty Root River Bridge? The end of the Wabun dock with a cheer and the blast of a cannon? After that, flying over the Dobie? In Pickle Lake? At Badesdawa? Or perhaps on the Groundhog River- deep and green? Through many new beginnings the Phoenix Women of Cayuga A have risen from ashes

and reinvented ourselves on rocky rivers stretching from the Northwestern borders of Ontario to the sandy tidal pull of James Bay in the East. We have traveled far and wide, paddled up and down waterways from here to there, and found kindred souls in the river villages of the North. And in our section we found strength, comfort, confidence, and joy. This summer, more than any other, we learned that it truly is the journey and not the destination (or destinations!) that matters. Though we paddled many strokes, portaged many loads, and traveled many miles this summer, our trip was not about getting from here to there- it was about, as my friend Pete says, the journey from head to heart.

I would say that our journey really began with Norm. Like it always does. A bus and a van, two canoe trailers, four drivers, four staff,



Bussing our way to Thunder Bay

and twenty-six campers piled into roughly as many seats tucked in amongst packs and wannies, babies and canoes, for what we came to know fondly as “bus camp.” Thirty-six hours, a stay at the lovely Thunder bay KOA, hundreds of sandwiches and thousands of kilometers later we arrived. We waved goodbye to Norm and the

Wabun van at the Root River Bridge, cheered goodbye to the boys and we were off.

The Root River, our gateway to the North, is a steeply up-hill and little traveled waterway. Beautiful rocky drops and a stiff current helped us fine-tune our Wabun muscles and appreciate the subtlety of the ferry angle. Eddy by eddy we climbed the river, and the exertion left little breath for talking. The resulting quiet allowed us glimpses of the wild things that shared the woods with us. Moose lifted dripping snouts from lily roots to watch us pass. A big black bear sow lumbered along shore sniffing the air. Curious otters tried to make heads or tails of our dipping paddle strokes.

The hot sun, dry wind, and strong current on the Root heightened our appreciation of the wide flat water and deep swimming holes of Lake St. Joseph on the Cat River. With the decrease in volume as our section sang and swam our way North, our days of wildlife viewing had come to an end, but for the hundreds of bald eagles that circled and soared above our sound. They were companions throughout the summer.

The Cat River pools into a series of big and beautiful lakes. The rocky islands create a glittering labyrinth that stretches south from Blackstone Lake to North Bamaji Lake. We paddled its course up the river ducking back into the bush each evening to make camp. Some evenings we came across old Wabun-bushed sites complete with stacks of firewood and fly poles leaning in the trees. Other evenings we picked out a rocky outcropping or the rare cedar grove and played house, carving out a kitchen area and choosing

just the right spot for a fireplace. As we dined on calzones or licked the icing off of warm and gooey bannock, it never ceased to amaze us how we were able to work with the wilderness to create a cozy and welcoming home for ourselves in the wild. Even in some pretty unlikely spots. On North Bamaji Lake, we stopped by the native community of Slate Falls. We chatted with some of the folks who call this stunning part of the country home. Elsie at the band office shared some fishing tips with us as she opened her office for us to check in with Wabun. Our call south was to discuss what would come to be a fixture of our summer: the smell of smoke on the wind. Wabun confirmed our suspicions that a fire was burning to the north and west on us. Wabun and the MNR assured us our route to the east remained clear and so we continued on our way with scheduled check-ins to Wabun and thanks to Elsie.



Smokey evening

As we moved north and east out of Kezik Lake and off of the Cat River onto the Dobie, the smell of smoke intensified. The fires remained many, many miles from us and our section was never in any danger - the fire did, however, make for travel

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conditions unlike any we had experienced before. Columns of smoke rose like tree trunks into the sky and branched out in streams that flowed from Ontario and drifted into the skies as far east as Nova Scotia. Our days were seen through a softening filter of haze, blurring the tree line and painting the sun a brilliant red ball as it traveled its course across the northern sky. Moss crunched under our feet and crackled into flame at the strike of a match before supper. She was a dry one! We dug our fire pits deep down into the clay of the banks, doing our part to prevent a burn. MNR helicopters and Pickle Lake attack base water bombers buzzed above us doing their part to protect the woods.

The North was burning, its residents were mobilizing, and we were witnessing history. The routes that Wabun travels weave a web of waterways cast across the wilderness of Northern Ontario. This summer many of those routes and rivers were deeply changed. In summers to come... green shoots of new growth will spring up on old portage paths and brilliant fuchsia fire-flowers will blossom in the burns. These forests are resilient. Ancient trees with roots that reach deep into old soil will survive. Jackpine pods will awaken in the flames and their craggy trunks will spiral up from the ash. In the future we'll cut trails in the new growth and stake out our tents in clearings where bare trunks of black spruce stand silver. But, not this summer.

This summer, Nature said, "No". She asked us all to step aside while she reset the woods in a cycle as old as the forests themselves. And so we said goodbye to the woods of the North West.



After a previous burn – readying for regeneration

A series of flights and van shuttles later, we began again. At bus camp, with Norm. Like we always do.

Back through the KOA, south along the Superior shore, and we found ourselves at a new beginning. The Groundhog River welcomed us. Deep, green, and moving. The rocky drops and swift current, moving down stream this time, offered us our first rapids of the summer. Our seven canoes wound down swifts, swirled into eddies, and skirted around the stacks of the dramatic six-



Regrouping our two sections for the trip to the Groundhog

mile rapids and the continuous stand-and-shoots snaking through ten-mile rapids.

On bedrock campsites and fairyland cedar grove bush sites, we outdid ourselves felling gigantor woodcreeper and cooking up delicious pots of chicken risotto, cheesy breadsticks, and caramel popcorn. The Groundhog's swift currents allowed



Working our way downstream

us to travel for miles, as we floated for lunch, pulling bass and pickerel out of eddies and fronds of strainers. Warm sunny days made for frequent swim breaks and vats and vats of Gumperts. We made human chains as we floated down the washout at the bottom of the Bridge Portage. We floated hand-in-hand through the confluence of the Groundhog and Matagami, the merge of rivers marking a turning point as we began our transition toward the end.

As days slipped by, chats over dinner lingered into dusk. Section huddles included some tears among the laughter. And conversations changed tone from the favorite hot-topic of every kind of food everyone likes, to one more reflective, awakening memories of the summer we shared and reliving them as a section that would soon fade from present to past.

It is the strong hearts and bright minds of these young women that made this section and this summer a success. It seems that a Bay Trip is 10% about what happens and 90% about the attitude with which we react. The positivity, courage, and grace with which this family of women rose together to meet every challenge encountered, every curve ball thrown, and every change of best-laid-plans this summer was nothing short of humbling. Girls, I have learned so much from you, and feel honored to have been a part of this family. Elizabeth's artistry, Heidi's compassion, Izzy's wisdom, Jessie's charm, Jo's happiness, MT's positivity, Marcy's spontaneity, SG's initiative, Savy's honesty, Reagan's wit, Sarah's adventurousness, and Sherman's thoughtfulness brought light, laughter, and love to our section. Thank you all.

Our unit of fourteen is tight, motivated, and powerful. Out on trip it can seem that we are a self-sufficient unit with no strings attached. This summer though as we were faced with some tough decisions, we were so grateful for the ties



Bussing our way to Thunder Bay

that bind us to the incredible base camp staff. The guidance, comfort, and support that we received from Sarah, Julie, Marg, Dick, Nibby,

and Ann, this summer was phenomenal. Phone calls to Bob Thomas—Thank you Bob, Mattawa is in the works! Emails, boat trips, car trips, hours researching routes, marking maps, and mocking up itineraries, meant that our section could move safely from dry, smoky woods of the North to the welcoming watery rivers of the East with minimal intrusion to our summer. We appreciate you, and we thank you for working so hard to keep us safe in the woods.

(For additional information on the relocations due to fires, please see the article 'Fires, Fires, Fires' in this Newsletter.)

Wabun B-C

Hi my name is Jesse, head staff for Wabun BC. Now, I've always been told that these logs should have a little explanation for the parents about what Wabun is and then some more specifics for other Wabun sections about what made our summer different from theirs, so here it goes. Parents: Wabun is hard work.



Yup, it's hard sometimes!



But, then, sometimes the elements make it wonderfully easy!

Wabun sections: the Coulonge River trip is very hard work--tackling long and hard portages such as the Esker, the four-mile road portage where you feel that you are walking up the same hill over and over again until you realize the hill is just getting bigger, or The Indian (the portages that is not to be named), or the loooonnnng paddling days capped off with a 47K lake paddle to a much needed rest day on Grand Lac Victoria. The Coulonge River trip can leave sections

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tested from the 20 days before the Coulonge River. Now I am sure that there are many ways to get through these trials, but from the beginning of the summer our section found only one. A transformation from Wabun BC into Wabun FL. Yes, becoming section Friendship and Love was the only way that this particular group of eight young men could even dream of finishing such a trip. And the only way we were able to make this transformation was because Brydon and I were given eight campers who not only had a willingness to learn, but are also just good people. It might seem a rare thing to find in this world, but these eight young men have continued to impress me all summer with their actions and I am very proud to be a part of their section.



The young men of Wabun BC

Guys: I have to say that when you gave Cayuga B a Wabun cheer after about eight hours of lightening position for no reason other than to let them know they had friends around thinking about them, it made me very proud. With the transformation to Friendship and Love complete, we were able to finish full day after full day in good spirits ready to laugh during a meat-filled

dinner and go to sleep ready for whatever the next day had in store.



Anticipating a dinner celebration

I think one story from our summer really sums up how our section really thought and operated. During one of our long lightening positions in the woods, Will asked Nick where else in the world he would rather be, which I think was a very valid question at that time. Nick thought for a little while and then replied, "Nowhere, who else can say they have been rained on in the Canadian wilderness?" Now while I might not have shared his opinion at that exact moment, I think it shows some of the love that was brought to our section this year. With spirits high we floated down the Coulonge River to the bus. Picked up the better half of our super section "Wayuga" and came back with thoughts about this year and years to come at Wabun.



"Floating down the Coulonge"



Wabun BC and Cayuga B combining efforts on the Trout Lake Portage

Cayuga B

It didn't take more than a few days of the first trip for us to know that this group was ready for the next month we'd spend in Quebec. The returning campers quickly refreshed their skills while those new to camp learned the techniques and tendencies engrained in all who trip the Wabun way. With light wannigans and clean clothes we spent eight days south on the Temagami River, getting familiar with the current we'd see much later in the summer.



Picnicking Cayuga B

After a quick stop on Garden Island to freshen up and re-pack our wannigans, our five canoes headed east under sunny skies. Twenty eight kilometers the first day, twenty five the second, our section flew toward Temiskaming where we were all eager to say “Goodbye Ontario, Bonjour Quebec!” For those of you who have paddled Temiskaming before, I can’t imagine anyone has seen it as calm as we did on July 11 as we approached the ever infamous Portage du Sauvage. Hand in hand with the B-C boys, Wayuga B completed the first load in time to enjoy a celebratory pot of cocoa on the other side. The next morning after completing our second loads we learned that two sections can be better than one and that by working together, a feat as dreaded as the Indian truly isn’t that bad.

Continuing on, the red canoes of Cayuga B sailed down Kipawa, Audoin and Pommeroy, each day tanner and stronger than the one before. The first rest day of the summer on Pommeroy graced us with blue skies and cool water, allowing our muscles to rejoice in the well-deserved reality of a day without paddling, tumping or portaging.

After almost a week of traveling through the large and beautiful lakes following Pommeroy, we approached the next hurdle of the B trip – the notorious Riviere des Cinc Portage. What the Indian is to portaging, the Riviere des Cinc Portage is to creek work. Sections of years passed tell horror stories of the creek. Legend has it that some have spent hours, even days, working their way down the Riviere, breaking down beaver dam after beaver dam, trying in vain to find some

navigable path down the dried up creek bed through the snarl of rocks, logs, and mud. With these stories in mind and dread in our bones, on day fourteen we paddled our way up Lac Kakontis to the Riviere des Cinc Portage.

Our first moments on the creek were tame enough – only a couple of beaver dams and a few muddy patches – but surely there was worse to come, there had to be, it was Riviere des Cinc Portage. However, as the day moved on and the creek snaked along we realized that maybe Riviere des Cinc Portage wasn’t too bad this year. It seemed we had gotten lucky and that thanks to the high water level we were actually able to paddle down almost the entire creek. And I hate to say it, but we even had fun while doing it. No horror stories this year.



Creek work

After thanking our lucky stars for our leisurely ride down the creek, we excitedly spent the next days paddling through some of the most beautiful lakes Quebec has to offer toward Grand Lac Victoria. There we reached our Northernmost point of the trip and turned our bows south toward the Dumoine River. We also took a rest day

on Grand Lac which was sunny and warm and filled with pancake making, swimming, and lots of rest – in other words: perfect.

After this much needed relaxation we eagerly embarked on the next leg of our journey – a five-day jaunt to the top of the Dumoine. During these days we worked our muscles paddling upstream on the Riviere des Baies and spent two days going down the Moose River.

The Moose is an interesting little river, displaying the full spectrum of moving water – from puny, winding creek to beautiful, cascading, whitewater river. Leaving the Moose, we paddled onto Lac Dumoine, the headwaters of the Dumoine. Here we congratulated ourselves on making it to our destination.

After twenty-one days and three hundred and eighty kilometers, we had finally arrived at the mighty Dumoine. We dipped our paddles into the first tugs of current with a mixture of excitement and anticipation for the next week to come. We hoped that all of our hard work would be rewarded on the Dumoine and we hoped that we would be ready for the rapids the river had to offer.



A river's rapid offering

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The Dumoine exceeded our expectations in every way. It delighted and challenged us with rapids ranging from gushing impressive shoots to kilometers of small playful swifts. We were awed and amazed by the scenery surrounding us – we watched as the river snaked its way between rolling green hills and thousand foot cliffs. We swam in the gentle current below waterfalls and were lulled to sleep at night by the rapids beside us. The Dumoine was beautiful, it was exciting and it was fun. I can't imagine a better finale to our trip.



On the Dumoine – scenery galore

Wabun has done the B trip for years, for decades. Countless sections of Wabun boys and girls have paddled from this dock on Garden

Island to the end of the Dumoine River. It's been a privilege to be a part of that history, knowing that we follow in the footsteps of many before us. However, I am confident in saying that no one has done the B trip quite like Cayuga B of 2011. Cayuga B is more than just the name of our sections. Cayuga B is Zoe, the zany entertainer, Tristyn the craft queen. It's Kysa the eternal optimist, Lan the quirky questioner, and Kylie the section beast. We're Allison, the reassuring realist, Amanda, the generous friend to all, and Carly the wacky impersonator. Cayuga B is more than just the name of our section. Cayuga B is in the portages we walked, it's in the lakes and rivers we paddled, it's in the relationships we fostered between the ten of us. Cayuga B is the world we created these last six weeks, and what a world it was. Thank you, girls of Cayuga B, for helping to create such a funny, courageous, kind, strong and caring world. I hope you all can find a way to incorporate a piece of our world into your worlds at home and I sincerely hope to see you all back here on Garden Island next year.



Cayuga B at High Falls

Wabun B-S

Summer. That magical season. When young entrepreneurs peddle their lemon-based wares while the older ones golf and barbecue late into the afternoon. A time for family vacations to places with more sand; running through the sprinkler; going to the ballpark. Well, we didn't do any of that. We cashed out for a crack at something totally different. An opportunity to really get along.



On the road to the Missinaibi



On the river

When I think about Wabun, I always come back to the why? Not so much the why red boxes, leather straps, bugs or rain. I got over that long ago. Mostly. These days I think more about the why together. Why 8 or 10 or 14; why young

and (slightly) older together. I wonder because I know major production companies are lining up to make TV shows and movies, spend 'big bucks' about individuals who will wander off to face the Alaskan wilderness alone, slap a grizzly bear or cut off their own arm. I wonder because I could use the dough myself, I need like Nibby needs exotic vacations.



Fearless leaders of Wabun BS

This summer there were 12 of us and we went down a river. A beautiful river. I could tell you a lot more about where we went, what exactly we did or what we ate. Instead I invite anyone who is really curious to ask the guys, they were all there; saw, ate and did everything I did (mostly). Exactly as all of us did. Or maybe just look into their eyes, at their faces; they sure don't look the same to me. The truth is, all the real fun, the laughs, the great moments are just between us. It was like a private party, except we went to bed hours before other parties really get started. I will mention that we had frostings of the same consistency and flavour, delicious, on 25 consecutive dinner bannocks. Wherever the annals of Wabun lore are secretly stored, I'd like that written down.



Good bannocks come from good kitchen areas

Ultimately, we were given the opportunity to test the emotional weight of the journey vs. the destination. Because we never got to where we were going. The river didn't stop so much as it just dried up; so we stopped. In Tommyville. But all of our friends were there too. So everything was okay.



Two Wabun BS staff in Tommyville

Since my thoughts are with people rather than places this afternoon, I'd like to mention two in particular. Two very decent men. I happen to think that's quite a compliment. The first is Peter. I remember getting off the barge 11 years ago, my first summer at Camp Wabun. I was wearing a Montreal Canadiens baseball cap, the only sports team that has ever mattered to me.

"You like hockey?" Pete asked.

"Sure," I said. I had never met a lumberjack before.

"Good, I'm from Quebec City and I love hockey too." Then he moved on. That nervous 14 year-old could never have imagined he would be standing here now. Then again, no one can predict the future. I certainly could not predict the Boston Bruins would win Lord Stanley's Cup after falling into a 0-2 series deficit. I do not like the Bruins; if you are not a Habs fan then no other explanation is possible. Well, when Peter asked me to carry this towel for the summer, I did it. I did it with a smile. Because Peter helped put my mind at ease when I stepped off that barge. The second person I am thinking of is my great friend Andrew. Traveling with him has made all the big things; running the big water, waiting out the bad storms, going for a long day, seem small. Everything else goes something like this:

"Where are we?" I ask, "I turned off my maps awhile ago."

"We're about here," he replied.

"Good, buttbreak around the next corner?"

"I'm ready whenever you are." Then they looked at each and nodded.

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“Okay,” he said, “let’s go.”

Moments on the Missinaibi – One of Wabun’s great new river trips



Cayuga K

Good afternoon everyone. My name is Halley and I am the head staff of Cayuga K. My fellow staff are Ursi and Maggie. Before I tell tales from our final trip of the summer, I would like to introduce the lovely ladies of Cayuga K.

In canoe number 121 is Laura– hilarious and entertaining, her mood and laughter always contagious. There is never a dull moment when Laura is around. She surprises us with her bursts of energy – particularly when she practi-



Ladies of Cayuga K

cally jogged the entire 3500 yard Kelly portage in record time. In canoe number 18 is Olivia, who picked up the Wabun way as soon as she set foot on Garden Island. She is very skilled with knots and ropes, and if you ever need help setting up a masterful fly, she is your girl. In the bow of canoe number 82 is Sam, master of the fire and a powerful paddler who is always willing to lend a helping hand. In a literal sense, she is always standing at the trickiest spot on a portage just waiting to pull the other girls up. Her hand is trusted, her strength obvious after she single-handedly tossed Maggie off the dock like a ragdoll. In the stern of canoe number 82 is Emma, who practically grew up on Garden Island. She has spent every summer of her life at Wabun and she helped to teach the new campers the Wabun way. She carried a wood canvas canoe that rivaled her weight across even the trickiest of portages, and much like her grandfather is filled with random interesting facts about almost everything. In canoe number 131 is Meara, who can always be counted on to do a

thorough job of anything around the campsite, even if it isn't her job. She has even been seen trying to do jobs that don't exist. One day when I asked, "Meara, what are you doing?" she responded, "I'm trying to do wash, but I can't find anyone's pannican!" I informed her, "Meara, we ate bannock for lunch. There are no pannican to wash!" to which she replied, "Oh, no!" Needless to say, we have quite the colorful cast of characters.



The "cast of characters"

Our final trip began 15 days ago when we left Garden Island and set out for Wolf Lake and McConnell Bay. Upon our arrival at Skunk Lake, Emma was telling us all stories about an obnoxious red squirrel the previous summer at the same site. Sure enough, the boldest of squirrels spent the evening wannigan-hopping and we had to build Fort Knox around our breakfast muesli before going to bed. After paddling through Turtleshell, Manitou, and Grassy Lakes, plus or minus a few moose ponds, we made it to the much anticipated Kelly portage: 3500 yards on our 4th day with almost full wannigans. The girls did exceptionally well on the Kelly, and with the

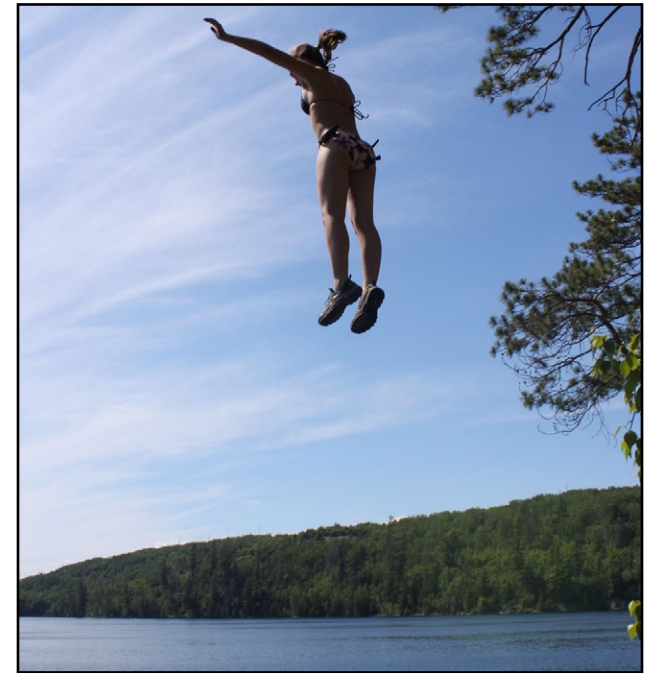
hardest part of the trip behind them were eager to continue into the beautiful waters that lay ahead.



Heading for "beautiful waters"

With a half-day the next day on the Karl Lake portage, we let the waterfall on our campsite give us much-needed back massages and made the girls' favorite meal – calzones. After paddling up Matagamas Lake and taking a dip in the spectacular Paradise Lagoon, we arrived at the thriving metropolis of Wolf Lake, population 3.8 million. It seemed that everyone and their dog was there for the holiday long weekend, but luckily we had planned a half day and snagged the best site on the lake. We explored the old gold and silver mine and invited the Crees over to our site for a cocoa party and a game of charades. After Wolf Lake we had a rest day on McConnell Bay, where we played in the sand and swung on a rope swing.

During a game of gunwale wars, 5 canoes pulled up with 19 people in them. Watching their gunwales touching the waters edge as they approached the beach, we heard babies crying, dogs barking, and teenagers yelling while flailing pool noodles out all sides of the canoes. It was the



Swingers!

Brady Bunch! After our section dressed up for a formal dinner at a wannigan table with place settings and centerpieces, the Brady Bunch invited us over to their campfire where they serenaded us with campfire songs that included back-up vocals.

After McConnell Bay we headed back towards camp through Halleck Lake with its snapping turtles that we lured over to us with cans of tuna, down the Sturgeon, and up the Obabika and Wawiagama rivers. After the bowman's portage from Obabika Lake, our trip ended back on Temagami where our girls eagerly awaited their parents, mail and candy. So, parents, we return your girls to you as young women, having portaged miles and paddled even more miles, ready to face the outside world once again.

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Navigating the Sturgeon River



And to all, a Goodnight

Wabun D

From the Greek *The Works and Days*, as translated by Richmond Lattimore:

“Work is no disgrace; the disgrace is in not working; and if you do work, the lazy man will soon begin to be envious as you grow rich, for with riches go nobility and honor.”

With this in mind, let us begin to describe the ways in which the boys of Wabun D pursued nobility and honor this summer.

There are few places on earth so untouched, so untamed, where a group of 13, 14, and 15 year old boys can set out, timid as individ-

uals, yet return confident as a group having tamed the untamed and touched the untouched.



The young men of Wabun D

Such is the purpose of the Wabun way. Heading through the north arm of the trout streams, we learned the finer techniques of canoe care. Hidden within the trails leading to Florence Lake, we found rocks – rocks – rocks – rocks – rocks – rocks – and more rocks. And that was just the river. On the portages it was a little different. We encountered, wait for it, rocks – rocks – rocks – rocks – rocks – rocks, and not surprisingly where one finds rocks, CLIFFS!

Leaving the safe haven of the fabled Shangri-La, we pushed ourselves and each other for a very filling two days until at long last, we passed from the murky waters of the Lady Evelyn River into the deepening and ever so blue waters of Florence Lake. Enjoying a clear presence of mind, paralleled by equally clear waters, the section took stock in the truly beautiful country that they had found themselves surrounded by. The staff, in anticipation of the arduous travel ahead, geared up and prepared to enter the unnamed. We say unnamed, for the land we crossed in the

7 days proceeding from Florence Lake remains as untouched and unused as many camper bannock boxes up to this point, and similarly required no name.



Unnamed Lakes

Climbing in both altitude and aptitude, the section pursued a heightened sense of canoeing skill, which in turn allowed them to excel as they sojourned quietly through the equally quiet dead lakes. Passing from blue to even bluer waters, we found ourselves sitting atop the almost transparent visage of Lake 14, which to some would seem just as unimaginably transparent if not for the memory still lingering in the corners of our minds. Sharing our last supper, we despaired at the downward descent that signaled the trek back. In one single portage, dropping 120 vertical meters, we entered the Nasmith Creek; whose shallow waters echoed the trudging of our feet with the trudging nature of our hearts. In two days we returned to paddle amongst the familiar, seeing familiar sights and hearing familiar voices; In short, we were almost home.

It is strange to think that sitting on familiar campsites and paddling on familiar waters,

we ourselves felt foreign, for the goals we set, both individually and as a section, were achieved elsewhere, far from where any wandering eyes aside from your own could give you praise. With the wind at our backs, and the sun on our face, we concluded our summer as quickly as it began. With five canoes, ten duffels, ten wannigans, and nothing but our feet to carry us and our perseverance to carry us farther, we stand before you not timid individuals, but the product of a confident and complete summer that we gracefully washed ashore today on the beaches of Garden Island. We are Wabun D, and we are home.



Sunset of a summer experience like no other

Wenonah

On the evening of June 26, 2011, I stood on the Wabun dock and smiled, watching the camper barge arrive. I smiled and smiled and just kept on smiling—a little phenomenon we like to call “overcompensation”, in this case, for the growing nervousness of a first year staff. Having been absent two years from Garden Island, I

knew nothing about the six girls with whom I was about to spend 42 days—24 hours per day—other than that they had all been Wawatays the previous year, and therefore undoubtedly came equipped with an irrational dislike of cheddar cheese and an arsenal of original Wabun songs most likely adapted from the latest Justin Bieber hit. Thank goodness that within mere hours of actually meeting whom I had previously known only as “last year’s Wawatays”, Lily, Saffy, Sara, Nina, Sofia, and Ellen put all of my fears to rest.



Young women of Wenonah

Allow us to introduce you to our six wonderful Wenonahs. Saffy likes to make kindling. In fact, she likes it so much she will make it throughout the entire dinner process... enough for the next 15 meals. She has also developed an eagle eye for finding perfect birch bark. Saffy, we’ve loved seeing you take on new challenges this summer. We look forward to seeing you next summer and hearing all your new catchphrases—it’s been lovely jubely.

Ellen has a fantastic singing voice. Well...

this may not be so true, but Ellen can carry a canoe with the grace of a seasoned Cayuga. Ellen, keep on having fun and remember to always be yourself.

Sara has come leaps and bounds this summer. From her top-notch portaging skills to her knack for fire building and cooking, we’ve been extremely impressed by her growth. Sara, we’ll miss your giggle and the squeak of your Crocs across the campsite in the early morning hours. It is possible that Nina has eaten twice the desert bannock of any other camper this summer as payment for nightly backrubs in Natalie’s never-ending quest for The Camper With The Strongest Hands. Nina, you have become a true leader in the section and we cannot express how much we appreciate your hardworking attitude.



Planning the next trip’s route

Lily never met a pot she couldn’t kill. And every glopper goes straight to her rippling back muscles. Her loveable, easy-going spirit can be summarized by her common smiling response, “I just don’t care.” Lily, you are an absolute joy to be around and the anchor of this section. Thank

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you.

Sofia bravely carried the K on all four trips like a beast (and she'll be the first to tell you about it). Sofia, thanks for the many singing concerts and we all hope to finally hear what's in that song journal one day. Maybe next year...

So as you can see, our section is, well, stacked. Was there a mistake in the books, we wondered? Surely we were supposed to have at least one camper who didn't know the difference between her tump and her shoelace, but no! The slope of the Wenonah's learning curve was remarkably flat. We soon realized that the metamorphosis from little larval Wawatay to soaring Cayuga butterfly would undoubtedly be achieved by the end of our six weeks together...despite my metaphorical pitfall that casts our Wenonahs as caterpillars.

Regardless, with grace, poise, laughter, and a healthy dose of good old brute strength, the Wenonahs successfully completed trips one, two, three, and four: five day, six day, ten day, and twelve day loops of Diamond-Wakimika-Obabika, Iceland-Wasaks-Cross, Mountain Lake, and Center Falls, respectively. Not only did the girls master tumping, portaging, and paddling, but they taught us staff a thing or two as well. They demonstrated, for instance, how to communicate with loons—every single loon in Ontario. They taught us how to truly carbo-load at the Busy Bee—the Northeast Arm paddle does, in fact, necessitate eating both toast and waffles. The girls showed us how to kill—nay, destroy—any pine bug within 100 feet of a given campsite. I believe pine bug mortality rates climbed to the double

digits by about day three. Finally, these young Wabun women conducted us in renditions of my personal favorite original ditty, “O Temagami,” to the chagrin of any remotely trained lyricist...but mostly Natalie.

For six weeks, we watched these outstanding girls develop a solid group dynamic. Those trained in group development (i.e. the entire Wabun staff) would tell you that the Wenonahs progressed straight from “forming” to “norming”, not once—unlike today's weather—“storming”. And so, it is with incredible pride, and obviously a measure of bittersweet sadness, that I release these former Wenonah caterpillars as full-fledged future Cayuga butterflies. I know I speak for all three Wenonah staff when I say that while the territory we traveled was beautiful and awe-inspiring, it was truly this section of amazing young women that made our summer the incredible experience that it was.



Smiles of pride and satisfaction – nice job ladies!

Cree

A quick overview of our trip was the Chiniguchi / Wolf Lake circuit.

This went as follows: Wawiagama Lake, Upper Goose Falls, Halleck Lake, Laura Lake, McConnell Bay, Wolf Lake, Matamagasi Lake, McCarthy Bay, Karl Lake, Edna Lake, Lower Matamagasi Lake, Maskinonge Lake, Kelly Portage: from Kelly Township into McNish Township, Wawishkashi Lake, Manitou Lake, Turtle Shell Lake, Skunk Lake, Temagami Lake – many of you know this route.



Crees on the move

Some of the highlights of this trip included the following:

- 26 portages
- A number of pull-ups, line ups
- Residue from amateur camp groups
- Beaver dams
- Sauna at McConnell Bay
- Blue water at Wolf Lake and McConnell Bay
- Cayuga K at Wolf Lake
- Paradise Lagoon
- Rain Storm on Round Lake, complete with sunset – then the storm blew back on us
- Morning Rain on Grassy Lake
- Residue from amateur camp groups
- Kelly Portage
- Climbing the sand cliffs on the Sturgeon River
- Variety of bannocks

- Residue from amateur camp groups
- Sunsets and storms
- Smell of smoke from distant forest fires
- Residue from amateur camp groups
- Formal dinners
- Calzones
- Short days, long days, push days
- Dishpan full of blueberries
- Nightly appointments with Dr. Zinser
- Singing songs that we don't know the lyrics to
- Sailing 8km on Matamagasi Lake
- Being on a river, a lake and a bay simultaneously: Chinaguchi River system, Matamagasi Lake, McCarthy Bay
- Pot Killers: we only bushed food twice – the boys were hungry
- Residue from amateur camp groups
- The Wright Way – fantastic dinners that Taylor assembled
- Use of Wilderness First Aid to deal with a leg fracture



Pike sushi and fried bass

Special presentation: My all time favorite piece of real estate in Ontario is the patch of land between Laura and McConnell Bay. In recognition of times gone by, I have a special present for my friend, colleague, mentor and friend John– a jar full of lovely Ontario Northland Asphalt – muskeg from that wonderful portage.

Our boys:

Brian from Ontario: First in the water, comfortable in the bush, jug head pajamas for dry pants, fantastic portager, runs back to get his second load. Eager to help others, loves to make bannock with an extra pannikan of sugar

Second year, Eamonn from Maine: 2 degrees of separation – he is related to or knows someone who is related to every know person. Somewhat inflexible maneuvering between logs.

Second year, Michael from Ontario: Camper stern – powerful and he looks it. He is built to carry canoes. Loves to eat, fish, swim and is very comfortable in the bush.

Nat from South Carolina: An amazing bowman, always smiling in all circumstances. Carried the K (yuck - no one likes to do that). Wabun's most creative tumper. Brother in Section A.

Second year, Nicholas from New York: Generally the first one up and rolled, tough, rugged kid, always carries his load and completes his tasks. Forever, offering to help others. Has a brother in Section A, and alumni include his grandfather and his father.

Noah from Bexley, Ohio: He is the kid

with the heaviest daypack. Was always eager to be involved in all aspects of camping. Wonderful tan from his eyebrows down – his bright blond hair serves as a visor and a beacon in our otherwise darkened lives.

Second year, Noah from Washington: Muscle man, multiple shades of gray and pot-black black. Best portage face –like the Maori tribe performing their Haaka to intimidate the enemy of bugs, muskeg and deadfalls. Never avoids what needs to be done and always seeking creative ways to solve issues.

Second year, Will from New Jersey: Camper stern, powerful paddler and portager. Classic stroke that would impress John, Pete or RPL Jr, RPL III or even RPL the original. Always willing to help others and mighty handsome on dress up nights.



The Crees and their mascot

The Staff:

Paul set the tone for the entire group Taylor from Ohio in his fifth season, two Bay trips to his credit and an incredible cook.

AJ from Illinois is in his seventh summer, alumni of the Dumoine and the Missinabi. An

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expert wood gatherer.

Isa– Doctor Z – from NYC and in his tenth season. His NYC friends call him Lumberjack – he is essentially a 13 year old boy at heart with an oversized Pete body. Veteran of three Bay trips.

All the assistants had been trained by Pete. Thank you Pete for doing a great job!

I am Casey in my ninth season and first after a thirty-five year gap. I am and will be eternally grateful to this Wabun Family and am forever in your debt and at your service.

Chippy

The Players-

Willson from Maine

Robin from Vermont

Cooper from Montana

Finn from Maine

Jay from Kentucky

Wills from Massachusetts

Trevor from Georgia

Pierce from New Jersey

With the assistance of: Rob, Nate, Ian, and John, and pinch-hitter Tom

The Action-

Three weeks: fourteen traveling days to Kokoko, Gull, Diamond, Wakimika, and Obabika Lakes

The Highlights-

Shiskong Abikong Lake and trail system

A fantastic golden eagle drying its wings in the

top of a tall red pine tree
the Yosemite like cliffs on Gull Lake



Chippies heading out

The Food-
Walleye for breakfast
Black Forest Bannock
Rocky Road Bannock
all of the suppers



Best buds

The Memories-
Willson was first camper wannigan carrier, and

unstoppable after that
Robin brought anthroposophical philosophy to the muskeg patch

Cooper's dissertations on everything - won "hearts and minds"

Trevor, who could take a stick of beaver wood and any rock off a campsite, and hit it over the Green Monster

Finn's dedicated fishing which, with the bannocks, constituted a new miracle of the loaves and the fishes

Will's semi-formal attire, in the Chinese fashion, wowed the crowd at Cleminshaw's

Pierce was the bowman with the perfect paddling cadence, who never let up



Chippies 2011

Jay's wildwood plant know-how and nature lore that never ceased to amaze.

Three weeks of sun, swimming, paddling, portaging, and the camaraderie of a band of young brothers, came to a conclusion as we hit the beach at Wabun.

Summer 2012, here we come!